

Constituent document of the

Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital of the Regional Cooperation Council

The founding members of the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital of the Regional Cooperation Council, on the occasion of its constituent meeting on 13 June 2008 in Ljubljana,

In consideration of

- the *Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministers responsible for Education, Science and Research in South Eastern Europe* signed in Istanbul on 4 May 2007;
- the endorsement of the *Proposal for the establishment of a Task Force “Fostering and Building Human Capital” on behalf of the Regional Cooperation Council* at the meeting of Working Table I of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe on 3-4 December 2007 in Tirana;
- the adoption of the *Proposal for the profile and the structure of the Task Force “Fostering and Building Human Capital”* by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Board in written procedure on 10 June 2008;

Taking note of

- the *Strategic Outlook at the Priority Areas of Cooperation in South Eastern Europe*, the supporting document to the *Strategic Work Programme* of the RCC, endorsed by the RCC Board in Pomorie on 20 May 2008

Endorse

- the constitution of the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital of the Regional Cooperation Council as successor of the Task Force Education and Youth of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, as follows:

Profile

The **aim** of the Task Force Building Human Capital is to promote coherency and coordination between education, higher education, research and science by **creating a platform for dialogue** and cooperation of actors involved in these sectors, The subsequent goal is to maximize the benefits of investment in human capital development through its contribution to sustainable economic and social development by ensuring the coherency with other actions promoted at regional and national level.

The **mandate** of the Task Force includes in particular the following:

- Awareness raising for the importance of education, higher education and research
- Agenda setting in these policy areas and respective lobbying activities
- Promotion of **a regular dialogue, information exchange** and coordination of activities, where appropriate, between the areas of education, higher education, research and science in the SEECP region and formulation of recommendations for the Regional Cooperation Council;
- Coordination with **other priority areas of the RCC**, as contribution to a coherent and sustainable approach to regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe by all actors involved;
- Promotion of priorities, partnerships and activities in line with the Memorandum of Understanding from Istanbul between the Ministers responsible for Education, Science and Research of South Eastern Europe, and the Framework for Action to the Memorandum, as well as the priority of fostering and building human capital of the Regional Cooperation Council.

Structure

Membership

The Members of the Regional Cooperation Council Board, the Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council, the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding from Istanbul, the Task Force Education and Youth, the Members of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) and the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkans are invited to participate in the meetings of the Coordination Process/Task Force Building Human Capital **as its founding members**. Based on the principle of one vote per founding member, members are entitled to be represented by up to two representatives, securing the balanced representation of all actors involved. The members of the Task Force Building Human Capital decide about accepting new members beyond the ones listed above.

Leadership

The TFBHC is lead by a core team comprised of a chair and 2 co-chairs elected by consensus. Chair and co-chair positions are taken by the representatives of the founding members of the Task Force based on the following principles:

- All founding members are eligible to chair and co-chair the TFBHC on an equal basis
- Duration of the mandate is 2 years
- The first mandate counting from the RCC endorsement of the TFBHC profile and structure will be ensured by Romania as chair and Austria and Croatia as co-chairs. Upon expiration of the two-year mandate, new Chair and Co-Chairs are elected.

Secretariat

Secretariat of the TFBHC is ensured jointly by the Chairmanship and the Co-Chairs.

Working methods and instruments

In line with its mandate, recognising that Fostering and Building Human Capital (FBHC) is crucial for the overall stabilisation and prosperity of the South Eastern European region, the TFBHC will seek to enhance cooperation for developing knowledge based societies by promoting the knowledge triangle as a key driver in fields such as the Bologna process and follow-ups, Education and training 2010 and follow-ups, the European Research area.

In order to reach its aims , the TFBHC will build upon and draw on already existing and new regional networks and initiatives, and will ensure coordination with other RCC priority areas.

In view of enhancing coherency and complementarity the TFBHC may organise **knowledge clusters** based on shared common topics of interest expressed by its members. Their role is to contribute to creation of knowledge for informing the policy development and to support policy development, implementation and assessment closer to national needs.

In line with the high-level coordination process envisaged in the Framework for Action to the Memorandum from Istanbul, the TFBHC will hold its regular meetings once a year and promote and facilitate **regular meetings of high level/senior officials and senior experts** from the education, higher education and research sectors of the SEECP region. Additional meetings will be held as necessary. These meetings should feed – where appropriate – into the regular **meetings on ministerial level** in education, higher education and research.

Face to face and virtual communication will support TFBHC activities.

Relation of the TFBHC with RCC

In accordance with its mandate, the TFBHC regularly formulates recommendations to the RCC Board and informs at the annual meetings of the RCC.

The TFBHC closely cooperates with the RCC, in particular through the Senior RCC Expert on Fostering and Building Human Capital and in the framework of the regular Task Force meetings.

The RCC will assist the TF BHC and facilitate its work in accordance with the RCC Statute.

Funding

The Task Force is funded through contributions of Members and donors in kind and in cash.

In view of clusters activities, members of the TFBHC might participate in projects and/or programmes financed by different International Financing Institutions.