

Capacity-Building Programme for Regional Cooperation

Background

The launch of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) within the framework of the South Eastern European Cooperation Process (SEEC) substantially changes the situation in the region as regards the responsibility for promoting and supporting regional cooperation by shifting the lead away from external actors and finally putting the region itself in the driver's seat.

This development is equally to be witnessed in the spheres of cooperation in education, science and research, marked also by a shift from assistance to cooperation and partnership in support of the reform agenda as well as the identification of education, science and research as a priority area of the RCC under the joint name "Fostering and Building Human Capital" (BHC).

Fortunately, existing cooperation networks, often balancing their work between national priorities in the region, the possibilities and limitations provided by EU instruments as well as the political dialogue within - previously the Stability Pact and now - the RCC, have attained a satisfying level of institutional stability and continuity. This, however, has also led to a differentiation of their spheres of action, which comes along with a considerable political, institutional and content-wise complexity.

To meet the challenge of coordinating these cross-sectoral set of agendas, the Regional Cooperation Council agreed on launching a new Task Force on Fostering and Building Human Capital, which was put in charge of facilitating dialogue and cooperation in this priority area and of promoting coherency and coordination between the relevant areas and stakeholders.

At the same time the success and sustainability of regional activities in this complex context depends inter alia on the availability of capacities and know-how within the Ministries of the sectors concerned in dealing with instruments and networks of relevance for regional cooperation in education and research.

The TFBHC therefore proposes a **mobility programme for capacity-building in regional cooperation management**. The programme will be designed as a support measure to avoid potential shortages on middle-level civil servants who are acquainted with and capable of managing regional activities and programmes in education, science and research, and acting as contact points for the existing networks of cooperation.

Mobility Programme – Overview

The programme will be based on short-term placements at key institutions and networks in the area of cooperation for building human capital. This should provide partner ministries with

impulses and possibilities for a sustainable development of capacities, possibilities and know-how of relevance for their obligations in regional cooperation.

The programme will be initially implemented in a pilot-phase through grants provided by the Austrian Co-Chairmanship of the Task Force, and will be cooperatively supported by the seconding and receiving partner institutions. A decision on the continuation and possible modifications of the programme could be taken towards the end of the pilot-phase, and in time for a full scale implementation in the year 2009.

Mobility Programme – Details

As the mobility programme should include all sectors within the priority area of “building human capital”, initially short-term placements are foreseen in **Sarajevo** (RCC Secretariat), in **Zagreb** and in **Vienna**, in institutions involved in the field of SOE regional cooperation in education and research.

The mobility programme will consist of different modalities, depending on the spheres of work, needs and intake-capacities of the respective hosting institutions. This should secure a sector-specific approach. Whereas in cases such as ERI SEE and the RCC, the mobility programme could take the form of internships, other measures (i.e. “Shadowing”, “peer learning” etc.) are envisaged for other networks or institutions.

Each mobility grant in the full scale implementation phase (2009) should cover a period of three months, consisting of three placements in three different cities of relevance for the coordination of regional activities. Placements in each city therefore would last between approx. 20-30 days.

In the pilot phase, only non-EU-member and non-EU candidate Ministries responsible for education, science and research will be invited to nominate one intern for the first round.

KulturKontakt Austria (KKA) will be put in charge with the overall implementation of the pilot-phase. A close cooperation with the CEEPUS Programme will be established, which will be subcontracted for the implementation of certain programme aspects, i.e. in the areas of tendering and application procedures.

Pilot Phase

Annex 1. General Framework

Overall Duration: 15.10.2008 – 20.12.2008 (66 days)

Number of Internships: 3

Placement Cycles:

- A. 15.10.08 – 05.11.08
- B. 06.11.08 – 27.11.08
- C. 28.11.08 – 20.12.08

Internship grant: **1000,- Euro /Month** (*aliquot*)
Travel costs will be covered separately (lump-sum)

Preliminary Placements Overview :

Location	Institutions (selection)
Vienna, Austria	Austrian Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture, Directorate for international Affairs: selected departments, Task Force secretariat, KulturKontakt Austria
	Austrian Ministry of Science and Research: selected departments
	Center for Social Innovation: Information Office of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries, WBC INCO.NET
Zagreb, Croatia	Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Regional Cooperation Council: Secretariat, Expert Pool

Eligible Countries/Institutions:

Albania	/Ministry of Education and Science
Bosnia and Herzegovina	/Ministry of Civil Affairs
UNMIK/Kosovo	/Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Serbia	/Ministry of Education; Ministry of Science and Technological Development
Montenegro	/Ministry of Education and Science
Moldova	/Ministry of Education and Youth