

**REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL**  
**with a focus on human capital building**

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## Why Regional Cooperation?

- An important mechanism contributing to the lasting stabilization of South East Europe and its faster integration into the EU and NATO.
- The RCC addresses the two key dimensions of regional cooperation: the political and the project/program-oriented

## Who We Are

The RCC is an inter-governmental framework which serves as the operational arm of the South-Eastern Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP). The RCC has 46 members, including individual countries, international organizations and international financial institutions.

## What We Do

- Facilitating regional cooperation in South East Europe
- Helping to accelerate reforms in the region
- Supporting the delivery of commitments with regard to European and Euro-Atlantic integration
- Encouraging the EU and international community to engage in the region; promoting donor involvement and coordination.

## The RCC's Objectives

- Contributing to the enhancement of stability, security, mutual respect and open dialogue in South East Europe
- Rebranding the image of SEE and instilling the notion of regional cooperation
- Acting as key interlocutor and operational link between the EU and the SEECP with regard to project generation and prioritization particularly in the context of the European Commission's Multi-Beneficiary Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (MB IPA)
- Coordinating international political, technical and financial support
- Presenting a regional forum for dialogue among different countries, international organizations, and other partners

## Founding of the Regional Cooperation Council

- Launched in February 2008 as the successor to the Stability Pact, the RCC provides a new and regionally-owned framework for the countries of the SEE, the European Commission and the international donor community to undertake projects of mutual interest in order to foster further development of the SEE region.
- Fully operational since May 2008.

## RCC Structure

- **Secretariat in Sarajevo:** Provides expert, technical and administrative support to the RCC, the RCC Secretary General and the Chairmanship in Office of the South East Europe Cooperation Process.
- **Liaison Office in Brussels:** Lobbies for projects of regional importance with EU institutions, international financial institutions and other Brussels-based institutions. Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for relations with the EU presidency is also based in Brussels and closely coordinates his work with the RCC Liaison Office.
- **Staff:** The RCC Secretariat and Liaison Office consist of 32 staff (25+7) including twenty experts and political analysts covering strategic priority areas of RCC activity.

## RCC Priority Areas

- Economic and social development
- Energy and infrastructure
- Justice and home affairs
- Security cooperation
- Building human capital

Parliamentary cooperation (as an overarching theme)

Three additional cross-cutting issues include gender mainstreaming, social cohesion and civil society.

# Competitiveness

- A study by OECD - Defining and Strengthening Sector Specific Sources of Competitiveness in the Western Balkans – Recommendation for a Regional Investment Strategy
- Potential sources of, and obstacles to, competitiveness in the Western Balkans
- Cost competitiveness in key sectors



# Identified weaknesses

- Significant gaps in human capital;
- Limited focus on value-added services and innovation;
- Insufficient links between the research and businesses communities;
- The absence of long-term sector-specific strategies and institutional methods for continuously identifying and removing sector specific barriers to competitiveness

# Recommendations

- Promote human capital development,
- Foster research and innovation,
- Promote sector specific sector reforms: automotive, textile and garment, ICT, and business process outsourcing

# Research strategy

- Draft Project Regional Strategy for Research and Development for the Western Balkans
- Ministerial conference - *Developing the Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans*: Joint Statement on developing Regional Strategy for Research and Development for the Western Balkans
- Strategic approach to develop a roadmap that the countries of the region will follow jointly

# SEE Cooperation on Climate Change

- Roadmap for environmental cooperation in SEE - combating climate change in SEE, Natura 2000, priority environmental investment projects and cooperation in SEE through the implementation of multilateral environment agreements
- Combating climate change in SEE – the ministerial conference in 2008: adoption of climate change action plan for adaptation
- Activities on adaptation to climate change are recognized by RCC of high priority and need to be supported by the donor community
- Adaptation measures need to be supported by mitigation measures.



Regional Cooperation Council

**THANK YOU!**