



Defining Sector Specific Policies to Improve Competitiveness:  
Developing Human Capital to Address Investors' Demands

## The Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe – objectives and cooperation in SEE

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### Content:

1. Development of the educational cooperation in SEE
2. ERI SEE work in the thematic areas:
  - Lifelong Learning
  - European Qualifications Framework and national qualifications frameworks
  - Quality and Equity in Education
  - The “Knowledge Triangle”: education, research and innovation

New phenomenon raised in the period of radical change and crisis – new states and new regimes

- Learning was seen as a tool for building new democratic values, developing tolerance, mutual trust, etc.

1998 – Austrian presidency of the Council of the EU. Graz Conference “European Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy” – Graz Process

1999 – Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe  
the Graz Process was put in charge of the coordination of the Task Force Education and Youth

Principle goal: to prepare, facilitate and support the participation of the countries of the region into the wider European Area of Education.

(Re)-establishment of networks of educational experts, initiatives and institutions at local, regional, European and institutional level.

Systematically involved key European and international organisations and institutions active in SEE and in the education reform area.

2000-2001: Quick Start Measures – substantial number of cross-border networking projects (8,5 MEUR)

- South Eastern European Education Cooperation Network (SEE ECN)
- OECD Thematic Reviews contributed to formulation of national reform priorities and strategies

Shift from project level to a long-term systemic approach.

Changed framework for education reforms: from contribution to post-conflict stabilisation of the region, to contribution for ensuring the individual European perspective of the SEE countries.

2003 – Thessaloniki Declaration from the EU Summit committed itself to fostering the European perspective of the countries of the Western Balkans.

Nicosia 2003 – Memorandum of Understanding on strengthening regional co-operation initiated by the Ministries of Education and Higher Education in SEE and the Task Force Education and Youth.

Signatory countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, UNMIK/PISG Kosovo, Romania and Serbia, as well as the Task Force Education and Youth and the Stability Pact.

Donor countries: Austria, The Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland.

The SEE countries committed themselves to the goals of the Lisbon strategy for the establishment of a knowledge based society throughout Europe:

- “Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe”
- Bologna Process
- Copenhagen Process

## Educational cooperation in South Eastern Europe 2004-2007

Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) was proposed as a regional platform for co-operation in the education area & interface between ongoing national reforms in SEE and current trends and developments in the education sector at EU level.

Croatia hosts ERI SEE since 2004.

In 2006 the ERI SEE Agency started its work.

May 2007 Istanbul Memorandum of understanding between the Ministers responsible for education, science and research in SEE, the Stability Pact and the Task Force Education and Youth.

Commitment to EU, European and international initiatives:

- Detailed Work Programme "Education and Training 2010"
- Copenhagen Process, including mutual recognition of qualifications and issues of mobility
- Bologna Process, including mutual recognition of qualifications and issues of mobility
- Development of sustainable research activities within the European Research Area
- Implementation of Education for All and of the education objectives of the Milenium Development Goals

## 2008: Definition of long-term goal, mid-term objective and outputs 2008-2010

**Long-term goal:** To contribute to achieving the overall goal "The South Eastern European countries have aligned the development of education standards and systems to the European developments; they have developed broad capacities and know-how in the region and are linked to the EU and international educational dialogue."

**Mid-term objective 2008-2010:** To become a sustainable, increasingly regionally owned platform for implementation of the education objectives and activities foreseen with the Istanbul Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministers responsible for Education, Science and Research in SEE and its' Framework for Action

- Lifelong Learning
- European Qualification Framework and national qualifications frameworks in SEE
- Quality Education and Equity in Education
- The “Knowledge Triangle” – education, research and innovation

**Development of LLL strategies with priority areas:**

- Development of work-based learning.
- Management and entrepreneurship training for small businesses and development of special programmes to address particular skill shortages.
- Improvement of basic literacy and occupational skills including key competences.
- Expansion and development of active labour market measures for the registered unemployed and inactive people seeking work.

**Participation in the European programmes in education and training**

- Capacity building for establishing the national agencies for management of the Community Action Programme for LLL.
- Capacity building for preparation of applications and project management.

**2007: Regional seminar on Project Cycle Management**

- Belgrade, 22 participants
- Recommendations:
  - Finalisation of the training on PCM with a seminar covering the activity schedule and the cost schedule
  - Cooperation of the ERI SEE countries in the process of establishing national agencies for administration of the Action Programme for Lifelong Learning

**2008: Regional seminar on Project Cycle Management**

- Planned: Belgrade, October
- On the agenda: PCM training covering the activity schedule and the cost schedule

**2008: First networking conference of VET agencies of SEE**

- Tirana, September
- On the agenda:
  - Qualifications frameworks
  - Lifelong learning
  - Networking day

**2009: Establishing a forum of SEE experts in LLL**

**2007: Briefing of high level officials from SEE on the developments at European and national level (ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body meeting, Vienna, May)**

- Expert presentations from the ETF and the EUA
- Presentation of the developments at national level by the members of the ERI SEE Governing Board

**Special session in framework of the Romanian Conference “Education and Training: social and economic benefits within a lifelong learning perspective” Sinaia, October, 15 experts**

Recommendations:

- NQF development to be based on permanent dialogue between the education sectors, the labour market, trade unions and other stakeholders
- Joint work of the VET and HE sector is crucial for covering the LLL span of education and training for each citizen
- The NQF to be flexible, simple, applicable and visible
- Credits that allow transfer and accumulation to be allocated in order to assure progress and recognition of prior learning

**2008**

- Briefing foreseen for the coming meeting of the ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body (Podgorica, November)
- Provision of selected information on QFs on the ERI SEE website
- Synergy with the activities of the Council of Europe and the European Training Foundation

**2009**

- Regional project to develop sectoral qualifications in tourism covering IVET, CVET and HE. To address credits for transferability and accumulation of prior learning.

**2007**

**Regional expert seminar on national and international assessments in education**

- Bar, 28-29 September, 27 experts
- Recommendations:
  - Seminar on Matura exams
  - Possibility to link an event with the IEA event in Sofia 2008
  - Seminar on use of different approaches to teaching and learning
  - The World Bank and the ERI SEE to continue the cooperation by supporting different aspects of regional cooperation in the field of assessments in education

**2007**

**International conference “Education Policies for Inclusion in SEE: Challenges and Opportunities**

- Co-organised by the OECD, the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the TFEY, Vienna, May
- Recommendations:
  - Continuation of the work on providing methodologically correct data on SEN in SEE
  - Dissemination of the results of the project
  - Joint actions needed at policy and administrative level, financial resources, practicable and result oriented research and technical assistance

**2007**

**Regional seminar “Equity in Education – a Challenge for SEE”**

- Prishtina, October, around 50 participants  
Preparatory capacity building measure: OECD and Norway invited representatives of the ERI SEE region to the International conference on Fair and Inclusive Education (Trondheim, June 2007)
- Recommendations:
  - Seminar on design of national policies, practices and resourcing to reduce failure and dropout
  - Platform for exchange of expertise in SEE, donor countries and others, dissemination of project results
  - Zurich University-dissemination of the EU funded project “MHADIE”
  - Study visit to Sibiu-Romania for the EU project “A Friendly School – Inclusive Education for Disadvantaged Groups”

**2008**

- Fourth Conference of EDC/HRE Network of SEE
  - Zagreb, June
- Study visit to Croatia to be acquainted with the ICT supported information system for QA in HE.
- Dissemination of the results of the EU funded project “MHADIE”
- Regional seminar on Matura exams, Bulgaria, December
- Establishing and moderation of a forum in assessment and evaluation
- Establishing and moderation of a forum in quality assurance.

**2009**

- Regional seminar on teacher training for inclusive education/teacher training for diversity

**2007**

**Regional round table on accreditation in higher education in SEE**

- Zagreb, June, 33 participants
- Recommendations:
  - Strengthening the cooperation between ministries, bodies for QA, and the HE sector
  - Sharing good practice examples
  - Croatian information system to become more visible in the region
  - ERI SEE event in Tirana, Albania jointly with the meeting of the General Assembly of the CEE Network on Quality Assurance
  - Application of the recommendations from the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education

**2007**

**Regional seminar “The Bologna Process after London: the challenges for implementation in SEE”**

- Zagreb, June, 33 participants
- Recommendations:
  - Exchange of experience, good practice examples and peer learning in the region
  - Synergy among the Bologna actors, actions and activities
  - Mutual cooperation and development of joint programmes leading to joint degrees
  - Network of offices for international cooperation of the universities in SEE
  - Recommendation to the authorities to increase the efforts to reduce visa requirements

## 2007

### **Co-organisation of the Dubrovnik Conference “Addressing Questions of Institutional Reforms in Creating the EHEA**

- Dubrovnik, November, over 80 participants
- Novi Sad University and the University of Zagreb
- Over 80 participants

### **Regional conference “Sustainable Development – the Role of Education and Training”**

Organiser: KulturKontakt Austria. ERI SEE joined as co-organiser

The need for regional cooperation, exchange of experience, good practice examples and networking of projects was recognised

## 2008

### **CEE Network General Assembly meeting and Workshop on Regional cooperation; special SEE meeting**

- Durrës, May, 25 participants
- ERI SEE enabled participation of non-member representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNMIK/PISG Kosovo
- Recommendations:
  - Increased networking and peer-learning among the SEE bodies for QA in HE
  - Placement of staff members of the BiH and UNMIK/PISG agencies in the more advanced SEE agencies (capacity building measure)
  - Increased internationalisation of the SEE agencies
  - Exchange of experts and their participation in external evaluations.

**2008**

**Establishing a moderated forum of different partners involved in the Bologna Process**

**2009**

**Participation of ERI SEE representatives to the conference on Building Human Capital**

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

**Thank you for your attention.**

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