



Task Force Fostering & Building Human Capital

of the Regional Cooperation Council

Opportunities for Regional Cooperation in South Eastern Europe

**Investment Committee for South East Europe:
3rd Meeting of the OECD Human Capital Working Group
'Improving Skills for the ICT sector in the Western Balkans'
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Aim

- Promoting coherency and coordination between education, higher education, training *and* research by **creating a platform for dialogue** and cooperation of actors from the sectors and with relevant key stakeholders
- TF works on making Fostering and Building of **Human Capital a top priority**, both in South Eastern European countries and in the European Union policies vis-à-vis the region

Mandate

- Awareness raising
- Agenda setting in these policy areas and respective lobbying activities
- Information exchange and coordination of activities
- Promotion of priorities, partnerships and activities (MoU Istanbul, RCC)
- Building upon already existing regional networks and initiatives



Membership

- Members of the RCC Board
- Secretary General of the RCC
- Signatories of the Istanbul Memorandum of Understanding
- Members of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe
- Members of the Steering Platform on Research for Western Balkan Countries

Leadership

- Core team comprised of a chair and 2 co-chairs, whose positions are taken by the representatives of the founding members of the Task Force
- First mandate (2008-2010) ensured by Romania as chair and Austria and Croatia as co-chairs



Continuity of Frameworks for Cooperation

- Regional cooperation for human capital development as priority of the Task Force Education and Youth since 1999
 - Significant move from assistance for the region to genuine cooperation and partnership through handing over the responsibility in regional cooperation to a regionally owned and led framework
 - Initiation of regional, long-term instruments and agreements: MoU Nicosia (2003), MoU Istanbul (2007)
- Continuity of cooperation is of paramount importance**



Activities

- Implementation of a **Capacity Building Programme for Regional Cooperation** as a contribution to the strengthening of sustainable regional partnerships
 - International Conference on ***Fostering and Building Human Capital for Sustainable Knowledge Societies in South Eastern Europe***
6 – 7 March 2009, Bucharest
- To respond to the changing landscape by creating a forum for debate on the role of human capital for the development of sustainable knowledge economies and societies in the region as well as for the region's inclusion into an Enlarged Europe



Thematic areas crucial for HCD

- **Human capital contribution to regional development**
- **Using research and trends for creating effective policies for building human capital**
- **Fostering human capital for labour market needs and competitiveness**
- **Human capital contribution to sustainable development**



Conference conclusions 1

- **Human capital as a key priority for the SEE region for sustainable economic development, social cohesion and innovation**
 - Education, science and research are paramount for finding innovative ways back to knowledge based growth and competitiveness
 - New policy culture towards a **holistic approach to human capital development**



Conference conclusions 2

➤ Partnerships for innovation – innovative partnerships

- New **strategic partnerships** and comprehensive instruments for stakeholder participation and ownership need to be created
- The promotion of innovation and competitiveness goes beyond the scope of a single sector and asks for a dynamic relationship within the “**knowledge triangle**” of education, research and innovation.
- Research needs to be positioned and mobilised as a relevant partner for development.
- Adequate measures of stakeholder empowerment and capacity building as well as for combating brain drain need to promote the success of new partnerships in this regard.



Conference conclusions 3

➤ **Strengthening regional cooperation and common areas of interest**

- Existing regional networks in education and research need to be promoted and further strengthened as well as better utilised at national and regional levels.
- Making existing experiences visible, support their dissemination and fostering the exchange of experience in SEE.
- Contribute to operationalising policies as a precondition for achieving long-term development goals.
- Ensuring peer learning and developing joint best practice
- Mobility and exchange programmes for students, professors, researchers and administrators should be strengthened and information on existing instruments further disseminated.



Outlook on priorities 2009 - 2010

Zagreb Plan of Action (adopted on June 24 2009, Zagreb)

- **Political lobbying** within the framework of the RCC on **highlighting the role of education, training, science and research** for sustainable economic development and knowledge-based growth.
- **Promoting synergies with other events and actions** organised by institutions acting in SEE in the field of HCD
- Provision of a platform for debate and discussion for the **promotion of new strategic partnerships**
- Continuation of the TF **Capacity Building Programme**
- **Follow-up activities to the Bucharest Conference**
- Assistance in the organisation of **Clusters of Knowledge (CoKs)** fostering the creation of mechanisms for sustainable cooperation and dialogue.
- **Task Force website**
- Close cooperation and exchange with the **RCC** and relevant **regional networks**



Thank you for your attention!

More information available under
www.taskforcehumancapital.info