

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

**PROGRESS REPORT<sup>1</sup>  
on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC  
(December 2010 - May 2011)**

**1 Policy actions**

**2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework**

Current work on 2011-2012 TF Action Plan (see point 6)

**3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.**

Regional Workshop for Senior Officials and Experts on Cooperation around Clusters of Knowledge (Dec. 14/15 2010, Sarajevo)

The main aim of this workshop was to exchange ideas about future cooperation around Clusters of Knowledge, as well as discuss effective ways of bridging a gap in dialogue among EU member states and SEE partner countries in the field of education and training. The workshop enabled a platform for discussion on cluster proposals Vocational Education and Training under Romanian leadership and National Qualification Framework under the Croatian leadership, and the expression of interest from the Serbian side about Evidence Based Policy Making in Education.

The emphasis was put on Clusters of Knowledge as an effective way of harmonizing the goals of "EU 2020", "ET 2020" with the SEE regional activities, as well as inclusion of SEE countries into the EU cooperation framework and networks. This will provide a better insight at the level of development of policies, secure better translation of regionally-agreed reforms to the national level and improve programming of IPA towards EU 2020 goals and prepare WB countries for the EU membership.

Participants welcomed the TF's proposal of enhancing regional cooperation through clusters and expressed commitment to furthering cooperation, aimed at contributing to the creation of knowledge, support policy development, policy in action and policy evaluation. The EC expressed willingness to support this process and the RCC invited SEE countries to get actively involved in clusters, based on thematic areas proposed and lead by the SEE region.

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<sup>1</sup> The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage ([www.wbc-inco.net](http://www.wbc-inco.net)) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to [office@wbc-inco.net](mailto:office@wbc-inco.net) until Monday, May 16, 2011.

### Cluster of Knowledge Activities

- Improving performance , quality and attractiveness of VET (May 30-31. 2011, Bucharest)

The cluster envisages to organize a number of expert meetings and develop mechanisms and instruments in order to implement, at a school level, a quality culture and to allow an increasing attractiveness of VET as a training pathway, which ensures equal opportunities for students and the skills that are required on the existing and future labour market. The cluster invites participants to exchange best practices on specific issues in order to allow the development of concerted tools to enhance mutual trust and to learn from each other. (see Annex 1)

- Cluster Kick – Off Event. Evidence Based Policy Making in Education – Turning Research into Practice – Learning from PISA (June 16/17. 2011, Belgrade)

The aim of this cluster is to advance the mechanisms of regional cooperation in the fields conducive to the achievement of following objectives: enhanced communication and cooperation between the research community and policy makers; identification of mechanisms for a better utilization of research findings by decision makers; advanced research practice in education policy development and a more efficient utilization of EU mechanism and funds for enhancing evidence-based policy making in education. (see Annex 2)

- Development of National Qualifications Framework (planned for October 2011)

The aim of this cluster is to enhance cooperation on specific segments of national qualifications framework development: Cooperation on self-certification process, Comparability of qualifications, and Recognition of prior learning. (see Annex 3)

### 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body (March,11. 2011, Belgrade)

TF as a Co-Chair of the ERI SEE participated at this meeting where Serbian Minister of Education and Science Obradovic officially assumed the position of the Chair of the ERI SEE from Croatian minister of Science, Education and Sports Fuchs. At this occasion Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the ERI SEE Memorandum of Understanding.

Among other things, at the meeting a discussion was lead about establishment of the ERI SEE Secretariat in Serbia, as well as drafting of legal documents, namely the Host Country Agreement and the Statute. TF is actively involved in assisting in drafting those documents as well as seeing the establishment of the new Secretariat to its completion.

### RCC Western Balkan Donor Coordination Conference (March 31 2011, Brussels)

TF participated in this meeting which brought together representatives of the main donors and implementing agencies in the WB with the representatives of the international and regional organizations, task forces and initiative dedicated to advancing cooperation and promoting development in the region.

### Task Force Website ([www.taksforcehumancapital.info](http://www.taksforcehumancapital.info))

With the aim of enhancing information exchange and better coordination among WB regional stakeholders as well as the EU, the TF website is regularly updated. The E-Calendar of events is especially significant as it gives an overview of not only TF events, but also other events in WB in the field of Human Capital Development.

## **4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA**

### Mobility Programme for Capacity Building in Regional Cooperation

The Mobility Programme will be continued in autumn 2011. It is designed to foster human capacities within the respective Signatory Ministries responsible for education, science and research of the Istanbul Memorandum of Understanding in South Eastern Europe. The aim of the programme is to strengthen the already existing and create new networks of relevance for regional cooperation in the field of education, science and research. This year's programme will offer placements in Belgrade, Chisinau, Sarajevo, Sofia, Vienna and Zagreb. (see Annex 4)

## **5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data**

## **6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months**

### TF 2011-2012 Action Plan

Currently a 2011-2012 activity oriented Action Plan is being drafted by the TF leadership which should be adopted at the next Leadership meeting.

### EP Discussion about HCD in SEE

TF, together with ETF, RCC and ERI SEE is currently organizing a awareness-raising discussion on Human Capital Development in the European Parliament at the invitation of MEP Hannes Swoboda

## **Appendix: additional data**

Annex 1: Cluster of Knowledge terms of reference – Vocational Education and Training

Annex 2: Cluster of Knowledge terms of reference – Evidence Based Policy Making

Annex 3: Cluster of Knowledge terms of reference – National Qualification Framework

Annex 4: Mobility Programme description