

**ERI SEE**  
EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE  
OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE



## **ERI SEE WORK PROGRAMME 2012**

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## ERI SEE WORK PROGRAMME 2012

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In June 2010, five ERI SEE member countries reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation within the ERI SEE initiative (Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) through signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Role and Organization of ERI SEE (MoU), which also sets a new framework for the transformation of ERI SEE into an international organization. Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina have also joined the MoU in 2011 by way of protocol.

Following the closure of the ERI SEE Secretariat in Zagreb, Croatia in June 2010, the ERI SEE Chairmanship has received an official expression of interest from the Government of Serbia to become the next host country of the ERI SEE Secretariat. In the process of transfer of ERI SEE operations from Zagreb, Croatia to Belgrade, Serbia a non-governmental organisation - Centre for Education Policy (CEP) – has been appointed to develop and implement the work programmes of ERI SEE, prior to the opening of the new ERI SEE Secretariat.

CEP accepted to host the ERI SEE Secretariat in the interim period until the launch of the ERI SEE Secretariat under the following conditions:

- The work programme and activities of CEP are to remain independent;
- CEP will undertake only those activities for which the funds have been secured in advance and will not take part in any fundraising activities;
- External representation is primarily the responsibility of the Chairmanship of the Governing Board;
- The transformation process and the founding of the ERI SEE Secretariat in Serbia is not in any way CEP's responsibility.

The Ministers responsible for Education and Higher Education have in the MoU signed in June 2010 reiterated that human capital development is the key priority for the South Eastern Europe region for finding innovative ways to back the economic growth, sustainable development, competitiveness and for safeguarding equitable and inclusive societies. Furthermore, the Ministers have affirmed their commitment to strengthen and broaden cooperation in the framework of ERI SEE that is will:

- Support sustainable education reforms on national levels through regional and international cooperation;
- Act as an interface to developments in relevant EU, European and international initiatives in education and to adjust ERI SEE's current thematic areas to the changed cooperation context both in South Eastern Europe and the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020");
- Support capacity building for increased use of the European cooperation instruments.

In line with the MoU ERI SEE's mission statement states that:

Education and training are crucial in promoting knowledge-based, competitive and socially cohesive societies in Europe, playing an important role in responding to the chances and challenges of globalisation. They are therefore a key to sustainable development and prosperity, in particular in South Eastern Europe.

The Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) supports sustainable education reforms through regional cooperation. It aims at fostering shared European standards in education and training for a rapid integration of its member countries into a wider European area of education, thus contributing to the success and sustainability of the EU integration process.

ERI SEE takes into account both country-specific needs and demands in education reforms, as well as present trends in the development of the envisaged European Area of Education, as outlined in the EU 'Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe', the 'Bologna Process' and the 'Copenhagen Process'.

ERI SEE seeks synergies between education and research through information exchange and cooperation in line with the priority 'Building Human Capital' of the Regional Cooperation Council.

ERI SEE work programme is built within the framework of the following priority areas which have been defined to provide wide and flexible coverage of numerous themes relevant for the region.

- **Lifelong learning**, with the following topics: VET development and links with the labour market, post-secondary VET, entrepreneurial learning, adult education.
- **Qualifications Frameworks**, with the following topics: NQF development with attention to non-formal and informal learning, NQF development and references to the EQF, recognition of diplomas and cooperation among the ENIC/NARIC centres, Europass, links between higher education and VET.
- **Quality and equity in education**, with the following topics: quality assurance at all levels of education, equity in education, governance and efficiency in education, the role of teachers in ensuring quality and equity in education.
- **The knowledge triangle: education, research and innovation**, with the following topics: change management; higher education development, the Bologna process and the role of the universities in the process of forward thinking; learning regions and evidence-based policy making.

Within these priority areas ERI SEE defined specific objectives in 2011 (see ERI SEE Work Programme for 2011<sup>1</sup>). Based on the activities implemented and achieved outputs in 2011 (see ERI SEE Activity Report for 2011<sup>2</sup>), specific objectives have been defined for 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2011/07/ERI%20SEE%20WORK%20PROGRAMME%202011.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.erisee.org/sites/default/files/ERI%20SEE%20Activity%20Report,%201st%20January%20%E2%80%93%2031st%20December%202011\\_Final.pdf](http://www.erisee.org/sites/default/files/ERI%20SEE%20Activity%20Report,%201st%20January%20%E2%80%93%2031st%20December%202011_Final.pdf)

## **ERI SEE WORK PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2012**

### **ERI SEE specific objectives for 2012 are:**

Building on the ERI SEE 2011 objectives: (1) to enhance mutual policy learning and institutional cooperation in vocational education and training in South East Europe; (2) to initiate institutional cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education for enhanced performance of the South East Europe in the European Higher Education Area; (3) to provide support to country initiatives in the domain of mutual policy learning and cooperation in the field of education, particularly through the support to joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge, as well as interaction with the ERI SEE countries and bodies which lead to identification of additional policy areas of importance for regional cooperation. The **objectives of ERI SEE for 2012 are:**

- Strengthening of the established institutional cooperation in the area of vocational education and training through implementing the SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012<sup>3</sup> which envisages: (1) enhancement of mutual policy learning on social partnership among EU member states and countries in South East Europe; (2) development of widely visible mutual data base on VET systems in the SEE countries and (3) capacity building of the SEEVET-Net Institutions representatives for effective roles and responsibilities in order to contribute in their full capacity to policy evaluation and policy advising;
- Enhancement of institutional cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education through establishment of a continuous peer-to-peer exchange programme between staff of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in South East Europe;
- Enhance the support to the three joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge lead by Romania in the area of Vocational Education and Training; Croatia in the area of National Qualifications Frameworks and Serbia in the area of Evidence-Based Policy Making;
- Support to regional cooperation and developing complementary activities to the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training;
- Develop mutual policy learning and cooperation in the field of education in general and especially in the fields of teacher professional development policies as well as in the field of standards and assessment in pre-tertiary education.

The envisaged specific objectives will result in the following **outputs:**

- Strengthened institutional cooperation in the area of VET through implemented SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012 leading to: (1) enhancement of policy knowledge on social partnership among EU member states and countries in South East Europe; (2) established data base on VET systems in SEE countries and (3) built capacity of the SEEVET-

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<sup>3</sup> SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012 is available at <http://www.erisee.org/sites/default/files/SEEVET-Net%20WORK%20PROGRAMME%202012.pdf>

Net Institutions representatives for effective roles and responsibilities in order to contribute in their full capacity to policy evaluation and policy advising;

- Established peer-to-peer exchange programme for the staff of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in South East Europe;
- Provided support to the lead and participating countries in the three joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge lead by Romania in the area of Vocational Education and Training, Croatia in the area of National Qualifications Frameworks and Serbia in the area of Evidence-Based Policy Making;
- Provided support to regional cooperation and developing complementary activities to the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training;
- Initiated mutual policy learning and cooperation the field of teacher professional development policies as well as in the field of standards and assessment in pre-tertiary education.

The specific objectives and outputs are to be achieved through the following **activities**:

- 5th meeting of SEEVET-Net together with representatives of the relevant EU institutions focusing on social partnership models and best practice examples presentation and exchange of experiences regarding the social partnership issues;
- Training of the SEEVET-Net Institutions representatives in graduate tracer studies in order to increase their capacities to conduct such studies and to fully contribute in the evidence based policy evaluation and advising processes;
- Pilot exchange of staff of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in South East Europe;
- Activities under work programmes of 3 joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge organized by the leading countries: VET (Romania), NQF (Croatia) and Evidence-Based Policy Making (Serbia)
- Seminar on challenges for teaching development in relation to the introduction of the educational standards and standardized assessment in pre-tertiary education.

## **ERI SEE WORK PROGRAMME 2012**

The Work Programme for 2012 is set within the wider ERI SEE mission statement, the MoU Brdo 2010 and the results achieved through the implementation of the Work Programme in 2011 as outlined above.

Having in mind the commitment of the countries signatories to the MoU to ongoing EU, European and international initiatives, while recognising the importance of the regional cooperation in education as a valuable instrument in addressing common challenges and the need to adjust the specific objectives in 2011 to the changed educational cooperation landscape in South Eastern Europe, the **ERI SEE specific objectives for 2012 are:**

1. Strengthening of the established institutional cooperation in the area of vocational education and training through implementing the SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012<sup>4</sup> which envisages: (1) enhancement of mutual policy learning on social partnership among EU member states and countries in South East Europe; (2) development of widely visible mutual data base on VET systems in the SEE countries and (3) capacity building of the SEEVET-Net Institutions representatives for effective roles and responsibilities in order to contribute in their full capacity to policy evaluation and policy advising;
2. Enhancement of institutional cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education through establishment of a continuous peer-to-peer exchange programme between staff of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in South East Europe;
3. Enhance the support to the three joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge lead by Romania in the area of Vocational Education and Training, Croatia in the area of National Qualifications Frameworks and Serbia in the area of Evidence-Based Policy Making;
4. Support to regional cooperation and developing complementary activities to the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training;
5. Develop mutual policy learning and cooperation in the field of education in general and especially in the fields of teacher professional development policies as well as in the field of standards and assessment in pre-tertiary education.

## **OUTLINE OF ERI SEE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES for 2012**

- 1. Strengthening of the established institutional cooperation in the area of vocational education and training through implementing the SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012**

SEE countries have identified VET development as an important factor for economic and social development. In its Work Programme for 2011 ERI SEE has identified the

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<sup>4</sup> SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012 is available at <http://www.erisee.org/sites/default/files/SEEVET-Net%20WORK%20PROGRAMME%202012.pdf>

development of mutual policy learning practices through enhanced institutional cooperation in Vocational Education and Training in South East Europe as one of its objectives and ERI SEE has supported the development of the SEEVET-Net in the past 3 years.

In 2011, the institutional network of VET centres – SEEVET-Net was established through signing of Cooperation Agreement<sup>5</sup> between VET Centres in South East Europe. The SEEVET-Net was formed in order to foster a greater relationship between SEE VET institutions and to promote regional co-operation of the National VET institutions acting in the SEECP region. The leading idea behind the network is to share information about good practices, to agree on coherent ways of action regarding the arrangements of exchange co-operation and to share experience on strategic VET issues.

The overall SEEVET – Net objective is to support implementation of policies in the VET sector contributing to human capital development in a lifelong learning perspective, through policy learning in the context of the objectives related to the EU accession and the “Education and Training 2020” and follow-ups.

In order to accomplish the set objective, during the 4th Meeting of the SEEVET-Net, held in July 2011 in Moldova, a Work Programme for 2012 was developed and adopted focusing on capacity building and mutual policy learning. The SEEVET-Net Work Programme for 2012 identifies the specific objectives and activities through which these objectives will be achieved.

**SEEVET - Net specific objectives for 2012 are:**

- Enhancement of mutual policy learning in Vocational Education and Training through the exchange of experience on social partnership among EU member states and countries in South East Europe;
- Development of widely visible mutual data base in which VET systems of the SEE countries will be presented, overview of the main national IVET and CVET strategies and presentation of the institutions dealing with VET issues including description of their tasks and responsibilities;
- Exchange of information on VET reform processes progress on a regular basis;
- Capacity building of the SEEVET-Net Institutions representatives for effective roles and responsibilities in order to contribute in their full capacity to policy evaluation and policy advising;
- Continuation of the established cooperation with 3 joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of Knowledge.

The specific objectives are to be achieved through the following **activities**:

- 5th meeting of SEEVET-Net together with representatives of the relevant EU institutions focusing on social partnership models and best practice examples presentation and exchange of experiences regarding social partnership issues;

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2011/07/1\\_SEEVET-Net\\_Cooperation%20Agreement\\_Chisinau,%20July%202011.pdf](http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2011/07/1_SEEVET-Net_Cooperation%20Agreement_Chisinau,%20July%202011.pdf)



- Creation of the framework and outline for development of the mutual data base on SEE countries VET systems including creation of the SEEVET –Net subpage on the official ERISSEE web page in order to make the data base visible;
  - Creation and development of the newsletter dedicated to the presentation of the progress of the VET reform processes in SEE countries;
  - Training of the SEEVET-Net Institutions representatives in graduate tracer studies in order to increase their capacities to conduct such studies and to fully contribute in the evidence-based policy evaluation and advising processes;
  - Experience exchanged and cooperation with 3 joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Clusters of Knowledge are continued.
- 2. Enhancement of institutional cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education through establishment of a continuous peer-to-peer exchange programme between the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies' staff in South East Europe**

In the past, peer to peer learning visits between Quality Assurance Agencies have been taking place under the ERI SEE umbrella and with ERI SEE support. During the networking visit to the Quality Assurance Agency and the Bologna Secretariat in October 2011 in Romania, a meeting between Quality Assurance Agencies was organised to discuss opportunities for institutional cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education for enhanced performance of the South East Europe in the European Higher Education Area. The attending representatives from higher education institutions and Quality Assurance Agencies in South East Europe proposed establishment of a continuous peer-to-peer exchange programme between the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies' staff in South East Europe.

- 3. Enhance the support to the three joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge lead by Romania in the area of Vocational Education and Training, Croatia in the area of National Qualifications Frameworks and Serbia in the area of Evidence-Based Policy Making**

ERI SEE has been supporting country initiatives in the domain of mutual policy learning and cooperation of education in general. In 2011, the support of ERI SEE and TFBHC led to successful establishment and initial activities through regional clusters of knowledge initiated and coordinated by individual leading countries – namely in the fields of Vocational Education and Training (Leading country: Romania), National Qualification Framework (Leading country: Croatia) and Evidence-Based Policy Making (Leading country: Serbia). Having in mind the successful work under each of the clusters in 2011, ERI SEE will enhance the support to the lead and participating countries primarily through support of activities under work programmes developed under each of the three joint TFBHC and ERI SEE clusters of knowledge organized by the leading countries: VET (Romania), NQF (Croatia) and Evidence-Based Policy Making (Serbia).

The plan of work of each joint TFBHC and ERI SEE cluster of knowledge is attached in Annexe 1 (VET, Romania), Annexe 2 (NQF, Croatia) and Annexe 3 (Evidence Based Policy Making, Serbia).

#### **4. Support to regional cooperation and developing complementary activities to the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training**

ERI SEE should seek to use the opportunities which are opened up by launching of the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training co-organised by DG EAC and DG ELARG as an initiative aiming at a progressive integration of candidate countries and potential candidates in the EU policy cooperation frameworks on education and training. In this respect, ERI SEE will act proactive towards the WB Platform and contribute by developing policy relevant output e.g. mapping exercise in the area of higher education, organization of project workshops and/or similar activities. The further details of this activity will be discussed and agreed between ERI SEE Chairmanship, ERI SEE Interim Secretariat and partners from the European Commission.

#### **5. Further support to country initiatives in the domain of mutual policy learning and cooperation in the field of education in general and especially in the fields of teacher professional development policies as well as in the field of standards and assessment in pre-tertiary education**

Further support to country initiatives in the domain of mutual policy learning and cooperation in the field of education in general is provided through support to countries in order to initiate cooperation and activities in themes deemed as relevant to countries themselves. In the past period the majority of the ERI SEE member countries initiated the reform process with the aim at introducing transparent outcome standards for different educational levels in pre-tertiary education. These reforms led to the reorganisation of the structure and content of the final exams marking the end of the primary and secondary education (introduction of standardised exams in the form of state matura). These changes represent a challenge for teaching practices and work of schools. This experience represents the potent opportunity for mutual policy learning and exchange of best practices. Therefore, ERI SEE will initiate regional cooperation in this policy field by organising a seminar on this theme in 2012.

In addition, to reach its widely set objectives of supporting the education related reforms in South East Europe, ERI SEE will facilitate information exchange through regular updates of the ERI SEE website resurrected in 2011. Regular updates on ERI SEE activities through the network of national contact points and with the members of the Governing Board will be continued.

Furthermore, the institutional support to ERI SEE activities will be provided through organisation of two regular meeting of the ERI SEE Governing Board in March and October 2012, assistance with the development of the ERI SEE Work Programme and Budget for 2013, as well as the financial and operational management in 2012.

With respect to the institutional transformation process under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia and the Governing Board members, CEP will hand over the relevant ERI SEE documentation to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia.

## ENVISAGED TIMELINE FOR THE ERI SEE ACTIVITIES IN 2012

*Nota Bene: The execution of the planned activities is subject to timely payments in line with the envisaged budgeted amounts. Belated payments and reduction in payments on behalf of one or more donor or countries will result in cancellation of planned activities.*

| ACTIVITIES  | MONTH AND PLACE   | TYPE OF ACTIVITY   |
|---|---|--|
| 16th meeting of the ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body   | March, Belgrade, Serbia   | Governing Board  |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Evidence Based Policy Making in Education Working meeting - Consultation on draft project concept note  | April, Belgrade, Serbia   | Cluster of knowledge   |
| The 5th meeting of SEEVET-Net together with representatives of the relevant EU institutions focusing on social partnership models and best practice examples presentation and exchange of experiences regarding the social partnership issues   | May, Montenegro   | SEEVET-Net   |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Modernizing VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET Workshop for concluding on good practices to be included in the compendium  | May, Romania  | Cluster of knowledge   |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Development of National Qualifications Frameworks Workshop on RPL   | May, Croatia  | Cluster of knowledge   |
| Pilot exchange of staff of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in South East Europe  | September-November, Based on short-term placements of SEE QA experts at QA Agencies in the region | Follow up of the 2011 Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies meeting |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Modernizing VET system – improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET Meeting for concluding on cluster's outputs and for identifying priorities for further development of VET policy in the region, adapted to national needs - recommendations for further cooperation | September/October, TBD  | Cluster of knowledge   |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Evidence Based Policy Making in Education Conference - Consultation on final project design   | September, TBD  | Cluster of knowledge   |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Development of National Qualifications Frameworks Referencing Conference  | October, Croatia  | Cluster of knowledge   |
| 17th meeting of the ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body   | October, TBD  | Governing Board  |
| Training of the SEEVET-Net Institutions   | November, TBD   | SEEVET-Net   |

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| representatives in graduate tracer studies methodologies in order to increase their capacities to conduct such a studies and to fully contribute in the evidence-based policy evaluation and advising                        |   |  |
| Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of knowledge: Evidence-Based Policy Making in Education Regional TAEIX event   | November, TBD   | Cluster of knowledge   |
| Seminar on challenges for teaching development in relation to the introduction of the educational standards and standardized assessment in pre-tertiary education  | December, Belgrade, Serbia  | Seminar  |
| Support to regional cooperation and developing complementary activities to the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training  | During the 2012;  | Mapping exercises, preparatory project activities and meetings |
| Creation of the framework and outline for development of the mutual data base on SEE countries VET systems including creation of the SEEVET –Net subpage on the official ERISSEE web page in order to make data base visible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January – Development of the data-base outline</li> <li>• February/August – filling in the data-base by relevant content</li> <li>• August/September – creation of the SEEVET-Net subpage on the ERISSEE web page</li> <li>• October - Publishing data-base on the SEEVET-Net subpage on the ERISSEE web page</li> </ul> | SEEVET-Net   |
| Creation and development of the newsletter dedicated to the presentation of the VET reform processes progress in SEE countries   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February – development of the outline and design</li> <li>• March/ June - development of the 1st newsletter content</li> <li>• July – Publishing of the 1st newsletter</li> <li>• August/ November - development of the 2nd newsletter content</li> <li>• December – Publishing of the 2nd newsletter</li> </ul>         | SEEVET-Net   |

**Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of Knowledge: Modernizing VET system –  
improving performance, quality and attractiveness of VET**

**Leading country: Romania**

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| <p><b>Composition</b><br/><b>Participating countries:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albania</li> <li>• Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>• Bulgaria</li> <li>• Croatia</li> <li>• The former Republic of Macedonia</li> <li>• The Republic of Moldova</li> <li>• Montenegro</li> <li>• Romania (leading country)</li> <li>• Serbia</li> </ul> <p><b>Participating organisations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ETF</li> <li>• Kultur Kontakt Austria (KKA on behalf of the TFBHC)</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Purpose and/or outcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support the regional cooperation in VET in accordance with the diversified needs of the countries for mutual learning, regional exchange of experience and good practice and for encompassing the specific phases of national reforms in VET</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Reference to Task Force Action Plan (2009-2010) and Task Force related documents:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Zagreb Plan of Action 2009-2010, Action line 3: Regional cooperation and common areas of interest, p.3, para s)</li> <li>2) Constitutional document of the TF BHC of the RCC – Working methods and instruments, p.3, para 3</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>Specific tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge transfer on the national policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ quality assurance</li> <li>○ VET attractiveness</li> </ul> </li> <li>- developing mutual policy learning practices and strengthening the exchange of information and good practice among the countries represented at the cluster</li> <li>- supporting intra-country and inter-country co-operation on VET at regional level</li> </ul>                          |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- formulation of recommendations for future ERI SEE support to regional cooperation in VET</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Reporting</b></p> <p>Minutes of cluster activities shall be made available by the lead country and forwarded to the Task Force Secretariat. The Task Force Secretariat should also receive regular reports and updates.</p>   |
| <p><b>Meeting schedule – 2 years period</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kick off meeting to agree upon the cluster’s objectives and timeline and to decide on cluster’s outputs - 30-31 May 2011, Bucharest</li> <li>• Workshop on exchange of good practices on the agreed topics of interest (with focus on quality assurance and cooperation with social partners in VET)- 24, 25 November 2011, AUSTRIA</li> <li>• Workshop for concluding on good practices to be included in the compendium - May 2012, ROMANIA</li> <li>• Meeting for concluding on cluster’s outputs and for identifying priorities for further development of VET policy in region, adapted to national needs - recommendations for further cooperation, September – October 2012, TBD</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Liaison with other action lines</b></p> <p><b>European initiatives:</b></p> <p>EQF for LLL<br/> ECVET<br/> EQARF<br/> New skills for new jobs</p>   |
| <p><b>Additional remarks</b></p> <p>Financial issues</p> <p>National Centre for TVET (NCDTVET) will ensure the costs for accommodation and meals for the participants for the meetings in Romania.</p> <p>KKA will ensure the costs for accommodation and meals for the participants for the meeting in Austria.</p> <p>Participants will cover costs for international transport from their own sources, from ERISSE, TAIEX or other funds.</p> <p><b>Synergies</b></p> <p>It is important to ensure the synergy with the VET agencies network from Western Balkans.</p>   |

**Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of Knowledge: Development of National Qualifications Frameworks**

**Leading country: Croatia**

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| <p><b>Composition:</b> Countries: Croatia, Macedonia as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania (awaiting formal confirmation)<br/>Int'l org's/institutions: support offered either through eligible funding sources or available expertise by EC (DG ENL), ETF, OECD.</p>  |
| <p><b>Purpose and/or outcome</b><br/>International cooperation focused at several specific segments of national qualifications frameworks development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation on self-certification process (quality assurance assessment)</li> <li>- comparability of qualifications: reaching agreement on mutual recognition of old qualifications/diplomas in the region</li> <li>- recognition of prior learning - RPL (validation of informal and non-formal learning).</li> </ul> <p>The outcome is heightened understanding, enhanced expertise and identified partnerships that will contribute to better design and implementation of several segments of the above outlined EQF-NQF process.</p>  |
| <p><b>Reference to Task Force Action Plan (2009-2010) and Task Force related documents</b><br/><u>Zagreb Plan of Action 2009-2010: Action line 35</u> – Regional Cooperation and Common Areas of Interest – Assisting in the organisation of clusters of knowledge (CoKs) fostering the creation of mechanisms for sustainable cooperation and dialogue. These clusters should sustain cooperation based on shared common topics of interest.<br/><u>Minutes and Conclusions of the Meeting of Senior Officials from the Istanbul MoU Region:</u> it has been announced that the meeting “The Western Balkans: Overcoming the Economic Crisis” (Brussels, December 2009) will stress importance of regional cooperation in building human capital, noting that “lifelong learning strategies need to be put into practice” and that “an important aspect of lifelong learning is the development of qualification frameworks”.<br/><u>Conclusions, International Conference on Fostering and Building Human Capital for Sustainable Knowledge Societies in SEE:</u> It has been concluded that the “TF should consider organizing knowledge clusters to sustain cooperation based on shared common topics of interest” and the Bucharest Conference stressed the importance of and provided an overview “regarding efforts on creating possibilities for future oriented knowledge management, supporting lifelong learning, the development of competencies and qualifications frameworks.”</p> |
| <p><b>Specific tasks</b><br/>To enhance expertise and quality in the implementation of specific segments of EQF-NQF activities through a set of regional meetings and workshops, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expanding understanding and expertise related to the requirements and implementation of self-certification process</li> <li>- removing obstacles regional mobility through reaching an agreement on mutual recognition of old qualifications in the Western Balkans (this strand of activity is focused mostly on WB countries with the same legacy of old diplomas, whereas other strands are envisaged for other interested SEE countries).</li> <li>- expanding expertise and forging partnerships in the process of developing national RPL models.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Reporting</b></p>  |

Minutes of cluster activities shall be made available by the lead country and forwarded to the Task Force Secretariat. The Task Force Secretariat should also receive regular reports and updates.

#### **Meeting schedule**

The first CoK has been organized back to back with the International Conference on Croatian referencing and self-certification process, 27-28 October 2011. The following cluster meetings have been proposed:

- Workshop on RPL on May 2012;
- Referencing Conference on October 2012.

The exact dates shall be determined in consultation with CoK participants. Schedule of other events and activity list can be expanded, if needed. It is envisaged that the cluster activities will span over 2 years. Desired outcome is a joint NQF project.

#### **Liaison with other action lines**

RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013: Building Human Capital – ERI SEE: “Thematic areas of ERI SEE’s work currently focus on areas of relevance for the increased role of education and training in the development of SEE countries, objectives of the Work Programme *Education and Training 2010* and education objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, such as Lifelong learning; European Qualification Framework and national qualification frameworks in SEE.

Annex 1 of RCC WP: (Support to education reform, with emphasis on higher education):

“Improved cooperation within the region in creation of National Qualification Frameworks).

ERI SEE 2010 Work Programme 2010: Establishment of Clusters of Knowledge in two thematic areas relevant for SEE cooperation in education and training, *point b*): *Qualifications Frameworks*, with the following topics: NQF development with attention to non-formal and informal learning, NQF development and references to the EQF, recognition of diplomas and cooperation among the ENIC/NARIC centres, Europass, links between higher education and VET.

#### **Additional remarks**

The interest and need for strengthened regional cooperation dealing with specific segments of the EQF and NQF processes has been reaffirmed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the CoE Regional Network on Qualifications Frameworks for SEE (September 9<sup>th</sup>&10<sup>th</sup> 2010, Zagreb).

Note on the implementation of activities: Cluster activities are to take place in any of the cluster countries. Croatia is open to organize and host most/all of them, but also welcomes the interest and initiative of other CoK members. The contents of any event are to reflect joint interests and proposals of all CoK members.

**Note:** ToR has been updated after the International Conference on Croatian referencing and self-certification process, 27-28 October 2011, Split, Croatia.

**Note on financing:** ERISSEE offered to co-finance cluster activities. Croatia proposes that co-financing encompasses primarily travel and accommodation costs, as well as the organization costs (costs of premises, catering, and local transportation).



**Joint TFBHC and ERI SEE Cluster of Knowledge: Evidence Based Policy Making  
in Education**

**Leading country: Serbia**

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**Composition**

The Evidence-based Policy Making Cluster is open for cooperation to all countries in the region and partner organizations.

**Purpose and/or outcome**

The Cluster aims, in cooperation with the countries in the region and partner organizations, to advance the mechanisms of regional cooperation in the fields conducive to the achievement of the following objectives: enhanced communication and cooperation between the research community and policy-makers; the identification of mechanisms for a better utilization of research findings by decision-makers; advanced research practice in education policy creation; mapping and launch of analyses relevant for education policy development; a more efficient utilization of EU mechanisms and funds for enhancing evidence-based policy making in education. Clusters should play an important role in harmonizing regional initiatives with the new frameworks set by the ET 2020, EU 2020 and VET initiatives (Youth on the Move and the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs) and more effective planning of IPA funds for achieving the objectives set in the EU 2020 strategy. The Evidence-based Policy Making Cluster is open for cooperation to all countries in the region and partner organizations.

**Reference to Task Force Action Plan (2009-2010) and Task Force related documents:**

The launch of this Cluster was initiated at the TFBHC Regional Workshop for Senior Officials and Experts on Cooperation around Clusters of Knowledge held in Sarajevo in December 2010, as well as the 14th Meeting of ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative body held in Belgrade in March 2011.

As a strategic priority, Evidence Based Policy Making is included in following documents:

**1. ERI SEE 2010 Work Programme 2010: Establishment of Clusters of Knowledge in two thematic areas relevant for SEE cooperation in education and training - "ERI SEE developed**

activities under the three action lines: sustained the networking of the SEE VET agencies and institutions (Action line 1); in cooperation with KulturKontakt Austria and the OECD co-organised the regional workshop "**Evidence Based Policy Making**" (Action line 2); organised cooperation, peer-learning and exchange of good practice under the four ERI SEE thematic areas for regional cooperation, and was involved in the initiation of CKs for enabling sustained cooperation based on shared common topics of interest (Action line 3). " (page 18)

Source:[http://www.erisee.org/node/downloads/ERI\\_SEE\\_Work\\_Programme\\_2010\\_za\\_web.pdf](http://www.erisee.org/node/downloads/ERI_SEE_Work_Programme_2010_za_web.pdf)

**2. ERI SEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011 – The knowledge triangle: education, research and innovation**, with the following topics: change management; higher education development, the Bologna process and the role of the universities in the process of forward thinking, learning regions and **evidence-based policy making**. (page 5)

**3. RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013: Building Human Capital – ERI SEE**

"There is an obvious need to modernize education systems in the region, with an emphasis on further involvement of democratization and reconciliation elements in teaching methodologies. Areas that are insufficiently developed and need to be approached in a coherent manner include life-long learning, **evidence-based policy making**, societal debate on education policy, stakeholder participation in decision-making, education institutions' autonomy as well as professional administration." (page 15)

Source:[http://www.taskforcehumancapital.info/fileadmin/documents/RCCStrategyandWorkProgramme2011-13-finalwith\\_annexes.pdf](http://www.taskforcehumancapital.info/fileadmin/documents/RCCStrategyandWorkProgramme2011-13-finalwith_annexes.pdf)

**Specific tasks**

- Promote evidence-based policy making in education within the region;
- Identify priorities for further development of evidence-based policy making in the region, adapted to national needs;
- Develop regional projects/initiatives with the purpose to foster evidence-based policy making at regional level (developing of mechanisms for regional cooperation in better use of evidence in policy and practice; capacity building for implementation of different techniques and tools for progressive policy-making among policy makers, public servants and researchers in WBC; and strengthening of the institutional capacities for monitoring of educational policies and other priorities);
- Use EU mechanisms and funds for enhancement of evidence based policy making.

**Reporting**

Minutes of cluster activities shall be made available by the lead country and forwarded to the ERI SEE and Task Force Secretariat and disseminate to the regional partner countries.

**Meeting schedule – 2012**

To be provided at a later stage, after consultation with interested countries/organizations. Draft proposal of content/dates:

First event/working meeting: April 2012 Belgrade

- Consultation on draft project concept note - develop regional projects/initiatives with the purpose to foster evidence-based policy making at regional level (developing of mechanisms for regional cooperation in better use of evidence in policy and practice; capacity building for implementation of different techniques and tools for progressive policy-making among policy

makers, public servants and researchers in WBC; and strengthening of the institutional capacities for monitoring of educational policies and other priorities);

- Second event/working meeting, conference: September 2012 - Consultation on final project design - develop regional projects/initiatives with the purpose to foster evidence-based policy making at regional level (developing of mechanisms for regional cooperation in better use of evidence in policy and practice; capacity building for implementation of different techniques and tools for progressive policy-making among policy makers, public servants and researchers in WBC; and strengthening of the institutional capacities for monitoring of educational policies and other priorities).

Third event/Regional TAEIX event: November 2012 tbd

- Monitoring education – data, indicators and challenges in education statistics – meeting with bodies responsible for data collection and monitoring of education systems