

On the basis of the „Memorandum of Understanding on the Role and Organisation of the Education Reform Initiative of the South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)“ signed at Brdo, Slovenia, on the 5th June 2010 (hereinafter The 2010 Brdo MoU) the Governing board of the ERI SEE on the 21st September 2016 passed this

STATUTE OF THE EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE (ERI SEE)

Article 1

Establishment

The Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) is established by the “Memorandum of Understanding on the Role and Organisation of the Education Reform Initiative of the South East Europe (ERI SEE)”, signed at Brdo, Slovenia, on the 5th June 2010 (hereinafter “the 2010 Brdo MoU”) as an international organization.

Article 2

Mission of the ERI SEE

The Mission of the ERI SEE is to:

- a) Support sustainable education reforms on national levels through regional and international cooperation;
- b) Act as an interface to developments in relevant European Union, 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 (hereinafter “SEE”) and the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”);
- c) Support capacity building for increased use of the European cooperation instruments.

Article 3

Objectives

The ERI SEE`s objectives are:

- a) To contribute to the full integration of SEE into the emerging wider European Area of Education and to the success and sustainability of the EU integration process;
- b) To provide a platform which supports sustainable education reforms in SEE through regional capacity building, transfer of know-how, exchange of experience, peer– learning and linking these efforts to European frameworks for education development;
- c) To develop and maintain an innovative cooperation network as an added-value for national education development efforts in SEE and as an interface to relevant EU, European and international initiatives and networks in education;
- d) To actively promote regional cooperation between the education and research sector through exchange of information and experiences as well as cooperation within the Regional Cooperation Council priority area of Building Human Capital;
- e) To address more global developments in education and training, to which ERI SEE members have committed themselves: the World Declaration on Education for All and the Dakar Framework for Action, as well as the education objectives of the Millennium Development Goals.

Article 4

Activities and modalities of implementation

In order to fulfill its mission and objectives ERI SEE shall, in accordance with the 2010 Brdo MoU and this Statute undertake different activities in pursuit of its objectives.

ERI SEE's activities at content level shall be based dynamically on the cooperation context in SEE and at European level, including the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020") and its' four strategic objectives:

- making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

ERI SEE's activities will also reflect the role of education as seen in the "SEE 2020" Strategy with regard to the key strategy actions:

- Increase equitable access to, and participation in, high quality education at all levels, aligned with measures for a smooth recognition of qualifications supporting mobility in SEE
- Implement measures to prevent early-school leaving and 'drop-out' and improve completion rates at all levels, thus contributing to the inclusiveness and nurturing of lifelong learning
- Ensure education and training systems better meet economic and labour market needs (and provide learners with labour market relevant skills)

Aiming to perform those activities, ERI SEE shall:

- a) identify key priority areas in education and training for SEE in cooperation with its members and in line with current EU policies;
- b) prepare and implement an activity program through an updated spectrum of instruments, such as clusters, peer learning and mobility programs;
- c) develop and provide capacity building measures for policy makers and experts in education in the region through sustainable trainings and networking activities;
- d) organize Senior official and expert meetings, which will serve as a forum for exchange of experience and cooperation in education and training;
- e) work systematically on integrating and networking education and training systems from the signatory states of the 2010 Brdo MoU in the framework of education policy debate at EU level and in SEE;
- f) work on identifying additional funding options for regional cooperation in SEE (EU, bilateral donors, international organizations) in order to increase its scope of activities.

Article 5

Members and partners

ERI SEE is a joint initiative of ministries responsible for education and higher education of South Eastern Europe and the Regional Cooperation Council (hereinafter the "RCC"). Signatory parties and acceding parties to the 2010 Brdo MoU are members of the ERI SEE (hereinafter referred to as the "ERI SEE members").

Signatory parties of the Nicosia Memorandum of Understanding (2003) and the Istanbul Memorandum of Understanding (2007) which are not signatory parties to the 2010 Brdo MoU are invited to continue to participate in ERI SEE activities and to attend regular Governing Board meetings as observers at their own expense, unless otherwise decided by the Governing Board.

Each ERI SEE member shall appoint a high-level senior official as its permanent representative to the ERI SEE Governing Board and shall further nominate a National Contact Point to support the Governing Board member in fulfilling his/her national tasks emerging from the ERI SEE mission and to act as alternate member in cases of the Governing Board member's unavailability.

ERI SEE shall seek synergies and collaboration with other countries and organizations, including international and regional as well as governmental and non-governmental

organizations and initiatives (hereinafter collectively referred to as the partners) active in the same or a related field.

ERI SEE shall seek expert advice and support from the partners, particularly the European Training Foundation, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European University Association, the Council of Europe, the RCC and European donor countries.

Article 6

Working language

The working language of ERI SEE meetings, as well as of the Secretariat, is English.

Article 7

Institutional Structure

The ERI SEE institutional structure consists of the ERI SEE Governing Board, the Consultative Body and the ERI SEE Secretariat.

Article 8

The ERI SEE Governing Board

1. Competencies

The ERI SEE Governing Board (hereinafter "the Governing Board") is the decision making body of ERI SEE, responsible for developing ERI SEE policies and strategies. The Governing Board of the ERI SEE has following competencies:

- a) Provides an operational guidance and governance of the ERI SEE;
- b) Adopts Annual Work Program and provides support to the Director of the Secretariat in its implementation and reviews its implementation in the course of the year;
- c) Adopts the Annual Report on the implementation of the Annual Work Program of the Director, who upon adoption forwards it to the 2010 Brdo MoU Signatory Ministers of Education/Higher Education from South Eastern Europe;
- d) Appoints and releases from duty Director of the ERI SEE Secretariat;
- e) Upon recommendation of the Director of ERI SEE Secretariat elects the members of the Consultative Body;
- f) Adopts the Statute of the ERI SEE and any subsequent amendments;
- g) Adopts Rules of Procedures of the Governing Board;
- h) Adopts annual budget of the ERI SEE Secretariat for the coming year and approves report on the Budget from the previous year;
- i) Decides on the level of contribution of members acceding to the Memorandum of Understanding in accordance with criteria provided in Annex 3 of the Memorandum of Understanding;
- j) Determines levels of annual contribution after initial period of 2011 – 2013 in consultation with ministries of education of the ERI SEE members;
- k) Adopts staffing table and terms of reference for each position within the ERI SEE Secretariat;
- l) Adopts internal regulation of the ERI SEE Secretariat as provided in the Article 14. The procedure and deadlines for a submission of the Annual Work Program, Budget and Annual Report shall be provided in the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board.

2. Membership

The Governing Board consists of one representative from each signatory party of the 2010 Brdo MoU, one representative of the RCC, as well as of one representative of each donor, or donor institution contributing a minimum amount of € 30.000 to the ERI SEE budget annually.

The members of the Governing Board shall be at least the rank of high-level senior officials and appointed by the ministries in charge of education of respective signatory parties. The ministries shall also appoint a National Contact Point to support the Governing Board member

in fulfilling his/her national tasks emerging from the ERI SEE mission and to act as alternates member for cases of the Governing Board member' unavailability.

3. Chairs and Co-Chairs

The Republic of Serbia as the host country shall appoint the Chair of the Governing Board. The Chair summons the Governing board meetings. In case of the Chair's unavailability, the Chair shall be substituted by a co-chair.

The rules for co-chairing will be described in detail in the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board.

4. Meetings of the Governing Board

The dynamics of the Governing Board meetings, venues, financing, preparation and presence to the meetings shall be described in detail by the Rules of procedure of the Governing Board.

6. Decision making

The Governing Board shall adopt a statute of the ERI SEE, the Rules of Procedures of the Governing Board and the Budget, as well as any other rules governing operation of the ERI SEE, by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of the Governing Board members. All other decisions by the Governing Board are taken by a simple majority with at least two-thirds of its members present. The Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board shall also provide possibility to adopt decisions by written procedure, including silent procedure. The Governing Board may establish working groups for specific tasks.

Article 9

The ERI SEE Consultative Body

The ERI SEE Consultative Body (hereinafter the "Consultative Body") has advisory function and meets twice a year on the occasion of the Governing Board meetings. The Consultative Body shall be invited to participate in the Governing Board meetings.

The Consultative Body is open for participation to the main partner institutions supporting ERI SEE until 2010: Council of Europe, European University Association, European Training Foundation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; European Commission, representatives of EEA and EFTA countries, and in accordance with priority areas of the ERI SEE, any other institutions involved in European processes.

Article 10

1. The ERI SEE Secretariat

The ERI SEE Secretariat (hereinafter the "Secretariat") provides technical, organisational, and analytical support to the Director and the Governing Board. It supports the implementation of the Governing Board decisions. The Secretariat is managed by the ERI SEE Director.

2. The Establishment and the Seat

The Secretariat is established by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the other members of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe on the seat of the Secretariat of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe was concluded.

The Seat of the Secretariat is in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, Dečanska 8.

3. The Stamp

For its regular operations, the Secretariat uses the stamp of round a shape, with the title Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe in the middle of the stamp and (ERI SEE) at the bottom.

4. Legal Capacity

The Secretariat enjoys such legal capacity as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and the fulfillment of its objectives, including the capacity to contract, to acquire and to dispose of moveable and immovable property and to institute legal proceedings. To this end Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the other members of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe on the seat of the Secretariat of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe was concluded.

5. Competencies

The sphere of the Secretariat activities implies monitoring, evaluating, planning developing of education and implementing programs and activities in SEE.

The Secretariat provides:

- a) technical, organisational and analytical support to the Director, the Governing Board as well as operational support – if required – in preparing SEE ministerial meetings and summits.
- b) co-ordination framework for regional co-operation activities in education within SEE and acts as an information and focal point for such activities.

6. Responsibilities

The Secretariat is responsible for the implementation of the Annual Work Program adopted by the Governing Board within the overall objective of integrating SEE into the evolving Wider European Area of Education through networking, organisation and delivery of regional seminars and workshops, facilitation of cluster and peer learning activities etc.

In particular, the Secretariat is responsible for the following tasks:

- a) co-ordination and organisation of the activities of ERI SEE on the basis of the annual work programme adopted by the Governing Board. Activities will include: providing time-line of activities, organisational and conceptual preparation and implementation of meetings, workshops, seminars, peer-learning clusters etc. (drafting agendas, making travel arrangements, financial reporting, preparation of agreements, contracts, drafting reports etc.); providing ongoing information about planned and implemented activities to the Governing Board etc.;
- b) financial management and budget planning for ERI SEE according to the Financial Management Rules and in close co-operation with the Chair and Co-Chairs of the Governing Board;
- c) provide, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, annual report to the Chair/Co-Chairs and the Governing Board members on the implementation of the Annual Work Program (including financial report on budget execution in previous year);
- d) support the Governing Board in lobbying and fundraising activities by identifying potential donors in consultation with the Governing Board and the Consultative Body based on the overall fundraising strategy to be implemented by the Secretariat (contacting donors, organising meetings, providing necessary information, etc);
- e) collection and dissemination of examples of good practice in the field of education, presented within the framework of capacity building, seminars, workshops, etc. as well as of outcomes of ERI SEE activities;
- f) networking with other European and international institutions and initiatives thus contributing to a Wider European Area of Education (establishing, maintaining and expanding contacts) in order to facilitate the implementation of ERI SEE goals. A database should be established and regularly updated on relevant international networks;
- g) public relation tasks, e.g. regular update of the ERI SEE homepage, production of a regular newsletter etc.

7. Structure of the Secretariat

The Secretariat will consist of a minimum of two full-time persons, the Director and an assistant, and any other staff (i.e. IT assistant) as required and decided by the Governing Board. The size of the ERI SEE Secretariat might increase or decrease, depending on the workload and future developments.

The Secretariat's staff shall be recruited on a competitive basis in accordance with the competencies required, while taking into account gender and geographical balance as appropriate. In addition, the Director may accept staff secondments and internships for specific assignments upon approval of the Governing Board.

Article 11

1. Director of the Secretariat

The Director represents and acts on behalf of the Secretariat and is responsible for ensuring regular and efficient functioning of the Secretariat. In case of his/her absence, a person appointed by him/her shall exercise of his/her functions.

2. Responsibilities for and the use of funds

The Director is responsible to the Governing Board for the appropriate use of funds made available to the budget of the Secretariat. The administration and financial management procedures governing the budget of the Secretariat, including an independent audit, are outlined in a separate document, based on agreement of the Governing Board.

3. Competences

The Director shall:

- a) organize operation of the Secretariat and carry out its activities personally;
- b) undertake all legal actions for and on behalf of the Secretariat, including the signature of contracts;
- c) represent the Secretariat in all judicial, administrative or any other proceedings;
- d) be a designated signatory of the bank account in the name of the Secretariat;
- e) issue powers of authority to third parties aiming to represent the Secretariat in legal matters, within his/her area of responsibility;
- f) adopt internal regulations of the Secretariat that are not within the competence of the Governing Board as provided by the Statute;
- g) prepare a draft Annual Work Program of activities as well as a budget of the Secretariat for adoption by the Governing Board, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board;
- h) prepare annual report to the Chair/Co-Chairs and the Governing Board members on the implementation of the Annual Work Programme (including financial report on budget execution in previous year).

4. Legal and Financial Authority

Director is entitled to take all legal actions for and on behalf of the Secretariat, in accordance with the Financial Management Rules. Until the adoption of the new Financial Management Rules, the Rules of the ERI SEE Secretariat, the Secretariat shall provisionally apply financial rules of the ERI SEE before it was established as international organisation.

Director shall need previous approval or endorsement by the Governing Board for signing of any contracts for provision of services by the ERI SEE to other parties.

Director shall be entitled to acquire, burden or dispose real estates and other assets in accordance with the Financial Management Rules of the Secretariat.

5. Appointment and Dismissal

Director shall be appointed by the Governing Board for a term of at least three years through a transparent procedure following an international announcement of vacancy. This position will be open to citizens of Signatory members to the 2010 Brdo MoU. The Director shall be responsible directly to the Governing Board.

In case no application is received or none of the applicants is elected, the contest will be renewed. Until a new Director is elected, through a renewed contest, the Governing Board shall nominate an acting Director, whose term can not exceed one year. The Governing Board may dismiss the Director before the end of the term of his/her appointment for justifiable cause and based on the terms of his/her contract. Such justifiable cause includes, but is not limited to, unsatisfactory services and serious misconduct.

The Director may request to be dismissed on his own initiative before his/her mandate elapses.

In the event of incapacity or dismissal of the Director, the Governing Board can take decisions necessary to ensure the functioning of the Secretariat, including the appointment of an acting Director until a formal decision on the succession is taken. A call for the vacant position of the Director shall be announced within 30 days from the date of dismissal or the date when the incapacity was established by the Governing Board.

Conditions for the Director position:

- University degree of at least four years of higher education
- 5 years of work experience in education development and regional cooperation, where priority will have experience in the field of education in South Eastern Europe
- Experience in the field of international cooperation regarding EU integration and education priorities and EU policies
- Experience in strategic planning and project implementation
- Proficient knowledge of English language (verbal and written)
- Verbal and written communication skills
- Social skills
- Ability for individual and team work
- IT skills
- Readiness to travel
- Experience in financial management and budget planning
- Networking ability
- Good management skills
- Citizenship of the signatory of the 2010 Brdo MoU

Candidates should enclose to application the following documents: CV, copy of diploma and translation of foreign diplomas done by certified translators, passport copy, evidence on English language knowledge and motivation letter.

Article 12

Independence and transparency of work

The Director and the Secretariat staff shall not seek, receive or act on instructions from any individual member of the Governing Board, Consultative Body, or from any other third party. In fulfilling its duties and competencies as provided by the 2010 Brdo MoU, this Statute and any other internal documents of the ERI SEE, the Director and Secretariat shall take all measures to ensure transparent communication and coordination of all its activities with all ERI SEE Members and the Chair / Co-Chair.

Annex 13

Financial resources and management

The annual budget of the Secretariat shall cover the costs of its activities including the meetings of the Governing Board and staff.

The Secretariat shall receive annual contributions from all ERI SEE members.

The amount to be contributed by each ERI SEE member shall be calculated on the basis of the methodology developed for contributions to the Regional Cooperation Council, whereby ERI SEE members are categorized in four groups according to their level of gross domestic product and on the basis of available donor country contributions, in accordance with the provisional budget outlook in the Annex 3 of the 2010 Brdo MoU.

The Governing Board may in consultation with ministries of education of ERI SEE members determine a different level of contributions after the initial period of three years (2011-13). Financial contributions to the Secretariat shall be made by all ERI SEE members in the beginning of each year, and no event later than 1 April.

Failure to transfer financial contribution by 1 June will result in the suspension of voting rights of such ERI SEE Member in the Governing Board for the period until the financial contribution is made if not decided otherwise by the Governing Board.

Other expenditures required for the Secretariat's operations shall be covered by other sources, including financial contributions and contributions in kind by donors, including international and regional governmental and nongovernmental organizations and partner countries, as well as involvement in EU funded projects, i.e. under the multi-beneficiary IPA, the Tempus Programme and TAIEX.

In addition to annual contributions by the ERI SEE members, additional contributions by members, partners or observers may take the form of in-kind and/or direct financial contributions to the ERI SEE Secretariat.

The ERI SEE Secretariat will employ its sources, including an income gained through its operations, solely for the purpose of carrying out and developing ERI SEE Secretariat's activities, as established by the Annual Work Program and Budget in accordance with Financial Management Rules of the Secretariat.

Article 14

Internal Rules and Regulations of the Secretariat

Upon the recommendation of the Director, the Governing Board shall adopt the following internal regulations:

- Structure of the Secretariat including staffing table;
- Personnel Policy including provisions on the remunerations;
- Financial Management Rules.

The Director of the Secretariat shall adopt any other internal rules and regulations of the Secretariat that are not within the competencies of the Governing Board as specified in the Article 8 of this Statute.

Internal regulations shall be published on the notice board of the Secretariat.

Article 15

Interpretation of the Statute

In case of any ambiguities and disagreements in implementation of provisions of the Statute, the Governing Board shall provide for its interpretation.

Article 16

Amendments

The present statute may be amended on the proposal of an ERI SEE member. The procedure for adoption of amendments will be the same as for the adoption of this Statute as provided in the Article 8.1(f) of this Statute.