

## Project Fiche – IPA Multi-beneficiary Programmes / Component I

### 1 IDENTIFICATION

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Support to the operating expenditures of the RCC Secretariat</b>
<b>CRIS Decision number</b>	2013/024091
<b>Project no.</b>	12
<b>MIPD Sector Code</b>	9. Support and other activities
<b>ELARG Statistical code</b>	01.72 – Administrative support
<b>DAC Sector code</b>	43010
<b>Total cost (VAT excluded)<sup>1</sup></b>	EUR 16 000 000
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 10 900 000
<b>Management mode</b>	Centralised, operational grant & joint management
	DG Enlargement, Unit D3
<b>Implementation management</b>	DG Enlargement, Unit D3
<b>Implementing modality</b>	Stand-alone project
<b>Project implementation type</b>	Activity 1 Grant Activity 2 Operational Grant & Contribution agreement
<b>Zone benefiting from the action(s)</b>	Western Balkans <sup>2</sup> : Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia  Turkey

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<sup>1</sup> The total project cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

<sup>2</sup> Croatia is not mentioned in the list, as it is expected to be a Member State of the EU in the period covered by this action.

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

## **2 RATIONALE**

### **2.1 PROJECT CONTEXT: ISSUES TO BE TACKLED AND NEEDS ADDRESSED**

The enhancement of regional cooperation is one of the priorities identified in the MIPD. By supporting the operational budget and specific actions of the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), which is the main partner for regional cooperation in South East Europe, the EU will also strengthen regional cooperation per se.

### **2.2 LINK WITH MIPD AND NATIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES**

The MIPD 2011-2013 mentions the RCC Strategy and Work Programme, adding that the priorities identified therein "set the scene for its political work in the region". The MIPD also identifies, among the priorities for IPA support, the enhancement of regional cooperation in the fight against organised crime and corruption and regional cooperation in education. Both areas are included in the RCC Strategy and Work Programme.

### **2.3 LINK WITH ACCESSION PARTNERSHIP (AP) / EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP (EP) / STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT (SAA) / ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

The Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012 states: "*The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) has started implementing its three-year strategy and work programme, working towards more result-oriented action*"<sup>1</sup>. Regional cooperation is one of the essential elements of the Stabilisation and Association Process, and progress achieved in this area is assessed every year in the Commission's Progress Reports on the Enlargement countries.

The Progress Reports often make references to the progress made in regional cooperation also thanks to the work of the RCC (for example, the Progress Reports for 2011 mentioned the adoption of a Regional Strategic Documents on Justice and Home Affairs, which had been elaborated by the RCC). Also, in the beginning of 2012, the RCC elaborated a "self-assessment" of the first year of the implementation of its Strategy and Work Programme, which was then endorsed by the RCC Board at its meeting in March 2012.

### **2.4 PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

EU assistance to regional cooperation had been provided mainly through support to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and its Special Coordinator, who was tasked to complement the EU Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) with the Western Balkans. Encouraged by the international community, the IPA beneficiaries and members of the South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECPP) agreed in May 2006 to take over the ownership of certain regional cooperation activities. This led to the decision a year later to establish the RCC, a regionally owned cooperation structure located in Sarajevo and co-financed by the IPA beneficiaries, the EU and other donors.

Considerable work was done in 2007 to establish the legal, administrative and financial basis of the RCC which formally commenced operations in early 2008. In the meantime, the Stability Pact handed over its activities to the RCC and closed down in mid-2008.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2011) 666 final/12/10.2011.

The RCC has been functioning since 2008 as the regionally-owned successor of the Stability Pact operating under the political umbrella of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). The RCC has now completed four years of operation. During this period, the transition from the Stability Pact to the RCC was successfully achieved. The RCC's structures and Secretariat have been set up and are fully operational. The new, regionally owned organisation covers five priority areas, namely economic and social development, infrastructure and energy, justice and home affairs, security cooperation, building human capital, with parliamentary cooperation as an over-arching theme.

The RCC adopted in 2010 its "Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013" (SWP), which was prepared with the help of the EU. It is an ambitious document, identifying areas where the RCC's work provides added value, in accordance with its mandate of: a) Representing the region, b) Assisting the regional cooperation political processes, i.e. the SEECP, c) Monitoring regional activities, d) Exerting leadership in regional cooperation and e) Providing a regional perspective in donor assistance in the identified priority sectors (for example, through its participation the Working Groups for the IPA Multi-beneficiary programme.

The RCC's immediate challenges is the efficient and effective implementation of the SWP, and the identification of lessons learnt from this exercise, that could then be used for the elaboration of a new programme, to take forward the work of the RCC beyond 2013.

In the course of 2011 and as foreseen in the framework of the SWP, the RCC took over responsibility for the Ljubljana Process on rehabilitation of cultural heritage as well as for the South East Europe Investment Committee (see below, section 2.5, for further details). Also, it elaborated a Regional Strategic Document and Action Plan on Justice and Home Affairs, which was adopted by all the members of the SEECP in March 2011. Currently, the RCC is developing mechanisms for monitoring regional cooperation in justice and home affairs, based on the Regional Strategic Document.

The RCC Board has approved a new Strategy and Work Programme for the period 2014-16, which focuses primarily on the SEE 2020 Strategy as the new growth and job agenda for the region. This is a welcome development, but due to the financial crisis, and subsequent budgetary constraints for the countries in the region it has become more and more difficult for the countries to increase their financial contributions to the budget of the RCC Secretariat. The EU has therefore indicated its willingness to cover most of the budget increase provided that the RCC ensures that the SEE 2020 Strategy gets fully implemented by the countries through the necessary national reform action plans.

RCC's new Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016 sets out the sectoral priorities chosen as well as the actions it intends to undertake to attain them. The sectoral priorities identified by the RCC are generally borne out from regional and national priorities.

With its new Strategy, RCC assumes a greater responsibility in fostering longer-term planning and vision building in regional cooperation, thus also reflecting the growing capacities of its main stakeholders. This Strategy is designed to be a platform supporting emergence and implementation of future strategies and has in mind the horizon 2020 by which time the countries in the region should be sufficiently prepared for EU accession.

In that context, South East Europe 2020 Strategy, whose development is being coordinated by the RCC, lies at the heart of RCC's activities going forward. This regional response to Europe 2020 is being put forward by the countries to help anchor their reform efforts, support the EU accession process and focus joint action on increasing competitiveness and creating jobs.

The SEE 2020 strategy places regional cooperation in a clear and coherent framework, linking national priorities with regional platforms and identifying the most important gaps to be addressed over the long term. The quantitative strategic targets adopted by the region's economies in the areas of economic growth, trade, investment, education, employment and governance are being translated into policy objectives, with plans for action at both national and regional level being developed.

The scope of SEE 2020 - with its pillars in integrated, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, within a good governance framework - enables the RCC to adapt its approach and combine activities in its priority areas to best address the multi-faceted, present and future challenges in the region. Economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, justice and home affairs, security cooperation and human capital development remain main areas of RCC's intervention, alongside with other significant areas such as parliamentary cooperation, media development, gender mainstreaming, and civil society development. All these areas are fully aligned with the region's main priorities and strategic interest and are appropriately reflected in the SWP 2014-2016.

The role of the RCC in SEE 2020, as defined by the Tirana Ministerial Statement of November 2012, is to coordinate the overall implementation effort and monitor and report to the countries on the progress being in the achievement of set objectives. RCC's Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016 reflects this central position that RCC intends to have in this process.

In order to fulfil this role, RCC is setting up a broad coordination mechanism, a comprehensive monitoring system and a clear governance structure. In addition to working together with the governments, RCC will provide support to the established and recognised regional structures and other partners in a particular field and where necessary undertake additional activities to address gaps identified.

As the operational arm of the SEECF, the RCC will fully cooperate with the SEECF C-i-O, to translate political guidance into operational plans and execute a number of general functions in line with its mandate. The SEE 2020 strategy is putting forward a system of governance for support the reform process, whereby clear mechanisms are being put in place to ensure decentralized implementation and enable regular monitoring of progress.

To this aim, The RRC will regularly organise political summits across all pillars of SEE 2020. To support these events, the RRC will prepare progress reports, based on the analytical work provided by other regional organisations, national governments and other contracted contributors. The RCC will engage with governments to ensure advanced political commitments of its participants from SEE and bring about a climate conducive for the successful implementation of envisaged regional and national strategies, programmes and projects.

It will pay particular attention to strengthening its dialogue with international partners active in SEE, enhancing its guiding and monitoring capacities over regional cooperation in SEE and further align its scope of work with the EU enlargement requirements thereby serving as an integrated regional platform. In performing these activities, it will be guided by the principles of regionally owned, driven and all-inclusive cooperation.

## **2.5 LINKED ACTIVITIES AND DONOR COORDINATION**

The European Union has been providing support to the operating expenditures to the RCC since the latter's establishment. The European Union committed to provide EUR 1 million per year to support around a third of the running costs of the RCC Secretariat for the first three years of its existence, i.e. 2008-2010, while the rest would be co-financed by the region (SEECF members) and other international donors (the US, Norway, Switzerland). The annual budget of the RCC Secretariat is set at approximately EUR 2.7 million.

In addition the Commission provided during early 2010 some small technical assistance which has proven very useful for the preparation of the first drafts of the "Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013".

In 2010 the Commission adopted Decision (2010) 7794, extending financial assistance to the RCC Secretariat for the period 2011-2013, for a total of EUR 3.2 million (2.4 million as assistance to the operating costs of the Secretariat at 0.8 million as a separate grant contract for strengthening the RCC Secretariat, the grant contract was awarded in 2011 to the Central European Initiative).

As of 2011, the EU is also providing funding to the RCC for two regional initiatives, namely the **Ljubljana Process II – Rehabilitating our Common Heritage** for a total budget of EUR 1.54 million and an EU contribution of EUR 1.5 million as well as **Support to the South East Europe Investment Committee** for a total budget of EUR 0.8 million and an EU contribution equalling 100%.

These ad-hoc projects would be integrated in the general operational budget of the RCC for the period 2014-2016, which partially explains the proposed budget increase.

## **2.6 LESSONS LEARNED**

The first four years of the operation of the RCC have shown that the organisation's work is more effective when it is focused on a smaller number of selected activities. Also, the proliferation of regional initiatives has made the monitoring role of the RCC increasingly important. The RCC should concentrate on a limited number of activities and develop its capacity to analyse the gaps and needs of the region, taking into account its limited financial resources, due to the withdrawal of some members from the Board and the inability of the countries of the region to increase their contribution due to the financial crisis.

## **3 DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT**

Continuing support to regional cooperation in South East Europe.

### **3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE PROJECT**

Activity 1: Additional support to the functioning of the RCC Secretariat in 2013.

Activity 2: Financial assistance to the functioning of the RCC Secretariat and contribution to the activities of the RCC as foreseen in its 2014 - 2016 Strategy and Work Programme, in particular implementing the SEE 2020 strategy.

### **3.3 RESULTS**

The RCC has fully implemented its Strategy and Work Programme 2014-16 including the targets related to the SEE 2020 Strategy and thereby ensures a more strategic role in promoting regional cooperation in South East Europe.

### **3.4 MAIN ACTIVITIES**

Activity 1 will be completed by end 2013, whereas Activity 2 starts in January 2014.

#### Activity 1

175 000 EUR grant contract with the RCC Secretariat. By contributing to the operational budget of the RCC, IPA assistance will help to implement the RCC's Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 and lay the foundation for its future role in the region.

It will specifically help cope with the work related to finalising the detailed SEE 2020 Strategy and Action Plan, which should be adopted by the Ministers of Economy of the Western Balkans in Q4 2013.

#### Activity 2

The IPA contribution will directly support the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2014-16 which was adopted by the RCC Board in April and endorsed by the SEECP Ministerial in June.

The main priority will be the SEE 2020 Strategy, and its 11 headline targets for economic growth and jobs, which was endorsed by the Western Balkan Ministers of Economy in Tirana in November 2012.

Activity 2a Pending the completion of the on-going 4-pillar assessment of the RCC, the implementation of this activity will be split in two separate parts for 2014 and 2015-16 respectively. For 2014, a grant contract will be signed with the RCC in order to make available the necessary European Union contribution to the operating expenditures of the RCC Secretariat in order to implement its Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016. The grant contract will specify the mandate and modalities for the implementation of this contribution as well as the mechanisms of control put in place. The budget will be executed in accordance with the conditions of the grant contract. An external auditor will also be contracted by the RCC Secretariat to audit its financial statements of the period covered by this grant.

#### Activity 2b

Before the end of November 2014, a contribution agreement with the RCC Secretariat will be signed to cover the remaining part of the RCC Strategy and Work programme 2014-16. This is done in anticipation of a successful completion of the on-going 4 pillar assessment.

### **3.5 ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACT, CATALYTIC EFFECT AND CROSS BORDER IMPACT (WHERE APPLICABLE)**

The MIPD 2011-2013 mentions the RCC Strategy and Work Programme, adding that the priorities identified therein "set the scene for its political work in the region". The MIPD also identifies, among the priorities for IPA support, the enhancement of regional cooperation in the fight against organised crime and corruption and to foster regional cooperation in education. Both areas are included in the RCC Strategy and Work Programme. In particular, the RCC's work on Justice and Home Affairs, with the elaboration of a Regional Strategic Document and Action Plan (see Section 2.4), will help achieve important targets in this sector.

Moreover, the global economic and financial crisis clearly affects also the Western Balkans, and the increased focus on economic governance means that the countries must invest more in increasing their capacity for generating economic growth and jobs, which is the main ambition of the SEE 2020 Strategy.

### **3.6 SUSTAINABILITY**

The RCC is the key regional organisation in the Western Balkan and but it is not realistic to expect that its ambitious agenda can be funded without support from the EU. An "exit strategy" does not exist at this stage, but will be discussed between the Commission and the European External Action Service. The discussion will take into account the implementation of the Strategy and Work Programme.

### **3.7 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS<sup>2</sup>**

International donors and the countries of the region continue to contribute financially to the operating costs of the RCC Secretariat

### **3.8 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Activity 1 and Activity 2a

The projects will be implemented by means of grant contracts with the RCC. According to Article 121 1(b) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, a grant can be awarded to finance the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general European interest or has an objective forming part of a European Union policy. The grant is awarded directly to RCC based on Article 190 (1) (c) of the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union on account of its de facto monopoly.

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<sup>2</sup> Assumptions are external factors that have the potential to influence (or even determine) the success of a project but lie outside the control of the implementation managers. Such factors are sometimes referred to as risks or assumptions but the Commission requires that all risks shall be expressed as assumptions. Pre-conditions are requirements that must be met before the sector support can start.

The RCC is thus a unique institution for regional cooperation, and no other organisation can perform this function. By supporting the operation of the Secretariat of the RCC, which is the main partner for regional cooperation in South East Europe, the EU will also strengthen regional cooperation per se. The EU has made a political commitment to support it as a forum for such cooperation. The first contract is planned to be signed in quarter 2, 2013, and it will end in December 2013. The second contract is planned to be signed in quarter 4 2013 and it will end in quarter 4 2014.

#### Activity 2b

The project will be implemented in joint management by means of a contribution agreement provided that the on-going 4 pillar assessment will be successfully concluded. This will allow the European Commission to support the RCC in a more appropriate manner, in particular by allowing it more flexibility regarding the implementation of the SEE 2020 Strategy which is the main element of the Strategy and Work Programme.

The RCC is a unique institution for regional cooperation, and no other organisation can perform this function. By supporting the operation of the Secretariat of the RCC, which is the main partner for regional cooperation in South East Europe, the EU will also strengthen regional cooperation per se. The EU has made a political commitment to continue supporting it as a forum for such cooperation. The contract is planned to be signed in quarter 4, 2014.

### 3.9 INDICATIVE BUDGET

Total budget for 2014-2016: EUR 16 000 000

Total EU contribution for 2014-2016: EUR 10 900 000 (68 %)

#### Indicative Project budget (amounts in EUR) (for centralised management)

<i>Support to the operational expenditures of the RCC Secretariat</i>			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE		IPA CONTRIBUTION			NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION				PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION
	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	% (2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1	X		175 000	175 000	100	0	0					
Activity 2a	X		5 275 000	3 575 000	68	1 700 000	32					
Activity 2b	X		10 550 000	7 150 000	68	3 400 000	32					
TOTAL IB												
TOTAL INV												
<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>			<b>16 000 000</b>	<b>10 900 000</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>5 100 000</b>	<b>32</b>					

Amounts net of VAT

(1) In the Activity row, use "X" to identify whether IB or INV

(2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

### 3.10 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN BY QUARTER)

Contracts	Start of Tendering/ Call for proposals	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Grant	N/A	Q2 2013	Q4 2013
Grant	N/A	Q4 2013	Q4 2014
Contribution agreement	N/A	Q4 2014	Q4 2016

### 3.11 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

#### 3.11.1 *Equal Opportunities and non discrimination*

The RCC is an equal opportunities employer and respects the principles of non discrimination in all aspects.

#### 3.11.2 *Environment and climate change*

N/A

#### 3.11.3 *Minorities and vulnerable groups*

According to its Statute, the RCC maintains close working relations with all actors of relevance in its priority areas, including civil society, other regional organisations and initiatives. Through its efforts on economic and social development, the RCC is working on improving conditions for the everyday life of the people of the region, regardless of their ethnic or social background.

#### 3.11.4 *Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement*

The RCC holds regular consultations with civil society organisations from the beneficiaries, and their input is requested in the preparation of RCC actions.

## **ANNEXES**

- 1. Log frame**
- 2. Amounts (EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of the project**
- 3. Description of Institutional Framework**
- 4. Reference list of relevant laws and regulations only where relevant**
- 5. Details per EU funded contract where applicable**
- 6. Project visibility activities**

## ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Project title and number: Support to the operational expenditure of the RCC Secretariat – number 11		
		Contracting period expires: 30 Nov 2014		Execution period expires: 30 November 2017
		Total budget	16 000 000	
		IPA budget:	10 900 000	
<b>Overall objective</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>		
Continuing support to regional cooperation in SEE Europe	Regional cooperation is improving, RCC SWP is implemented	European Commission's Annual Enlargement Strategy Paper and Progress Reports. RCC's Quarterly and Annual Reports.		
<b>Specific objective</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	
Continuing support to the functioning of the RCC Secretariat.	Payments made. Support to the RCC Secretariat provided. Capacity of RCC Secretariat is strengthened.	RCC's Financial Report Audit Report European Commission's Annual Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports RCC's Annual Report, including self-assessment RCC policy papers, reports of meetings.	Approval of Financial Report by RCC Secretary General, Financial Sub-Committee, and RCC Board.	
<b>Results</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	
Activities envisaged in the RCC's priority areas are implemented. Regional cooperation in SEE is strengthened.	Regional priorities are achieved. Work of the two initiatives taken over by the RCC (Ljubljana Process and SEE Investment Committee) is successful. Gaps in regional cooperation are addressed. Duplication of activities is avoided.	European Commission's Annual Enlargement Strategy Paper and Progress Reports. RCC's Quarterly Reports and Annual Reports. Evaluation/assessment (by RCC itself, European Commission, other donors).	RCC Secretariat is properly staffed. Political and financial support from the countries of the region and other donors is maintained. New Strategy (post-2013) is approved.	
<b>Activities to achieve results</b>	<b>Means / contracts</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	
Meetings/Conferences/Papers/Reports	Discussion documents/Policy Papers/Active participation in meetings.	EUR 10 900 000	All other contributions are provided.	

**ANNEX 2: Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project**

<b>Contracted</b>																
	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016			
Contract 1	175 000															
Contract 2a			3 575 000													
Contract 2b							7 150 000									
<b>Cumulated</b>	175 000		3 750 000				10 900 000									
<b>Disbursed</b>																
	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016	Q1 2017
Contract 1		157 500		17 500												
Contract 2a				2860000				715000								
Contract 2b							3 396 250				3 396 250					357500
<b>Cumulated</b>		157 500		3 035 000			6 431 250	7 146 250			10 542 500					10 900 000

### **ANNEX 3: Description of the institutional framework**

The RCC was established in 2008 to provide a regionally-owned cooperation framework to take over the role of the Stability Pact, and provide the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) with operational capabilities<sup>5</sup>. In particular, according to its Statute, the RCC "*will function as a focal point for regional cooperation in SEE and will provide political guidance to and receive substantive input from relevant regional task forces and initiatives active in specific thematic areas of regional cooperation*".

The RCC has 45 members of which 29 also sit in the RCC Board (*see list below*). The Board holds annual (ministerial-level) and quarterly meetings. Decisions are taken by *consensus*, although the *active* positive reaction of members is not necessary. The RCC *Secretariat* is based in Sarajevo (total staff of 25), and there is a *Liaison Office* in Brussels (staff of 7). The Secretary-General is appointed by the SEECP<sup>6</sup> summit, which also endorses the annual work programmes. The work of the RCC covers five areas: Economic and Social Development, Infrastructure and Energy, Justice and Home Affairs, Security Cooperation, Building Human Capital and Parliamentary Cooperation.

The EU participates in the RCC in a *troika* format (Commission-EU Presidency-Council Secretariat). Cooperation between the RCC and the Commission on a day-to-day basis is ensured by ELARG/D3 "Regional Cooperation and Programmes".

#### **RCC Members (\* Board members)**

##### Region

Albania\*

Bosnia and Herzegovina\*

Croatia\*

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*

Montenegro\*

Republic of Moldova\*

Serbia\*

Turkey\*

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244\*

##### EU and Member States

European Union (EU)\*, represented by a representative of the High Representative and a representative of the European Commission.

Austria\*

Bulgaria\*

Czech Republic\*

Denmark

Federal Republic of Germany\*

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<sup>5</sup> *Joint Declaration on the Establishment of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)*, Sofia, 27 February 2008, Annex II "Statute of the RCC" and its amendment in 2011 taking into account the Lisbon Treaty.

<sup>6</sup> SEECP members are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

Finland\*  
France\*  
Greece\*  
Hungary\*  
Ireland\*  
Italy\*  
Latvia\*  
Poland\*  
Romania\*  
Slovakia  
Slovenia\*  
(Spain)\*  
Sweden\*  
United Kingdom  
European Investment Bank

Other states

Canada  
Norway\*  
Switzerland\*  
United States of America\*

Other international organisations

Council of Europe  
Council of Europe Development Bank  
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation  
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
South East European Co-operative Initiative  
United Nations  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
United Nations Development Programme  
World Bank

The Expert Pool

The Expert Pool, currently composed of 15 members of staff (including the members of staff working for the South East Europe Investment Committee Project, attached to the Economic and Social Development Unit), is programme-oriented. It designs and implements RCC programmes and projects in five priority areas:

- Economic and social development
- Infrastructure and energy
- Justice and home affairs
- Security cooperation
- Building human capital and parliamentary cooperation

The RCC also works on promoting regional cooperation in the area of Public Service Broadcasting.

Each priority area is structured as a Unit, headed by a Senior Expert. The Head of the RCC Expert Pool also acts as Deputy RCC Secretary General. The Media Unit is in charge of the Public Service Broadcasting issues.

The experts represent the RCC Secretariat at regional coordination meetings (including the IPA Multi-beneficiary Working Groups), working groups (on energy, infrastructure, environment, and social infrastructure) or plenary meetings of the International Financial Institutions Advisory Group (IFI AG), as well as at different international fora, informing of RCC Secretariat's activities, initiatives and projects.

The RCC Expert Pool also provides input to the process of networking among RCC members from South East Europe (SEE) and the RCC Secretariat with participation of the European Commission and relevant IFIs.

The Expert Pool keeps regular contact with representatives of different national, regional and international organizations, foundations and networks interested to develop or strengthen cooperation with the RCC. Special attention is given to regional initiatives and taskforces, which have been mapped, while their activities are being coordinated and streamlined by the RCC Secretariat and its Expert Pool.

The RCC experts actively implement the RCC Secretariat's communication strategy. They deliver lectures on regional cooperation and RCC at different courses of postgraduate studies, as well as briefings for journalists from the region, young politicians, and other interested groups.

Together with the RCC Front Office, the Expert Pool conducts RCC outreach activities across the RCC area, to government officials, international organizations, business community, civil society, media and other stakeholders.

#### **ANNEX 4: Reference list of relevant laws and regulations**

- Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (2011-2013)
- Enlargement Strategy and key challenges 2011-2012
- RCC Annual report 2010-2011
- RCC Strategic Work-programme 2011-2013
- RCC Self-assessment for the first year of its implementation of the Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013.

### **ANNEX 5: Details per EU-funded contract:**

The European Commission and the RCC Secretariat will conclude two Grant contracts and one Contribution Agreement for the operating expenditures.

The essential selection criteria are financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The award criteria are relevance, effectiveness and feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

	<b>Type of Contract</b>	<b>Amount in EUR</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>Contract 1</b>	Grant	175 000	7 months
<b>Contract 2</b>	Grant	3 575 000	10-12 months
<b>Contract 3</b>	Contribution Agreement	7 150 000	24-26 months

Rental costs, exclusively related to the period of co-financing of the operation, may be eligible under this IPA programme.

### **ANNEX 6: Project visibility activities**

The RCC has already developed visibility capacities and, often with the participation of the Commission, has organised a number of awareness-raising events in the beneficiaries, which are envisaged to continue. Close cooperation between the Commission and the RCC ensures maximum visibility for the project.