



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) & Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)

The promotion of regional cooperation is a fundamental component of Greek and EU policy in the Western Balkans. Regional cooperation functions as a vehicle for the incorporation of Southeast European countries into European and Euroatlantic institutions.

The South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) was founded in 1996 and is the region's only "home-grown" cooperation platform, consisting exclusively of states in Southeast Europe (the members are, in addition to Greece, Albania, FYROM, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova and Montenegro).

In 2008, the regional cooperation mechanism was upgraded through the establishment of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat, which is based in Sarajevo and is the SEECP's operational arm. The aim of this new organ, which has a six-member Liaison Office in Brussels, is to promote specific regional cooperation initiatives through implementation of regional programmes in six priority sectors (economic & social development, infrastructure, security, justice & home affairs, human resources development, and parliamentary cooperation).

SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office

Turkey held the SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office from June 2009 to June 2010, promoting regional cooperation as a model for multicultural co-existence in societies, with particular emphasis on "regional ownership" and "all inclusiveness", as well as on targeted collaboration in vital sectors, including infrastructure, energy, free trade and the promotion of investments.

The Turkish Chairmanship of the SEECP culminated in the Istanbul Summit Meeting held on 21-23 June 2010, at which time Montenegro assumed the Chairmanship for the following year. At the first meeting of member-state Political Directors (Podgorica, 10 September 2010) Montenegro presented the priorities of its Chairmanship, which include promotion of the European course of the Western Balkans through strengthening of institutional dialogue with the EU, and cooperation and coordination of SEECP and RCC actions with the aim of achieving true regional ownership.

Within the framework of promoting regional cooperation, Greece not only participated in the institutional upgrading of regional cooperation and SEECP-

RCC proceedings, but also took part in 2010 in the following trilateral cooperation platforms aimed at promoting mutual understanding and coordinated action on issues of regional interest, to the benefit of security, stability and development in the region:

- Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Hungary and Serbia, with the participation of the Croatian Foreign Minister (Budapest, 29 March 2010)
- Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Bulgaria and Romania (Bucharest, 21 May 2010)
- Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia (Sofia, 11 December 2010)

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