



Regional Cooperation Council

Outlook on regional cooperation - Role of the RCC -

Lidija Topic

Advisor, RCC Liaison Office Brussels

SARAJEVO

17-19 NOVEMBER, 2010

South East Europe is moving forward to durable stability through enhanced regional cooperation on the path towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

- Regional cooperation – from fulfilling EU accession criteria to a complementary segment of national European policy agenda - a value *per se*
- A new sense of responsibility, rapprochement and reconciliation-aimed dialogue.
- Laying ground for the resolution of remaining issues – developing a new image.
- Synergy of strategic vision, coming from both the EU and the region - the greatest achievement over the recent period.
 - Intensive bilateral communications
 - Slovenian-Croatian Initiative – high-level Brdo conference
 - Western Balkans - a foreign policy priority for Visegrad Group
 - Turkish initiative - trilateral matrix Turkey/BiH/Serbia, Turkey/BiH/Croatia
 - Igman Initiative high-level Sarajevo meeting and other CSOs initiatives
 - EU-WB High-level Meeting, 2 June, Sarajevo
 - SEECP Summit, 23 June Istanbul

Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) two years of operation

- As a new, regionally owned organisation the RCC represents the region, supports and initiates regional cooperation - 13 SEE beneficiaries.
- The RCC operates under the political umbrella of the South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP). Its objectives, working methods and priority areas for action are defined by the Statute and other documents adopted at Annual Meetings and endorsed by SEECP Summits.
- As the main focal point for regional cooperation, the RCC:
 - has a key role in supporting economic and social development and related reforms;
 - promotes the region's European and Euro-Atlantic integration of which regional cooperation is an essential part;
 - links the region with donor community in areas with a regional dimension.



Membership

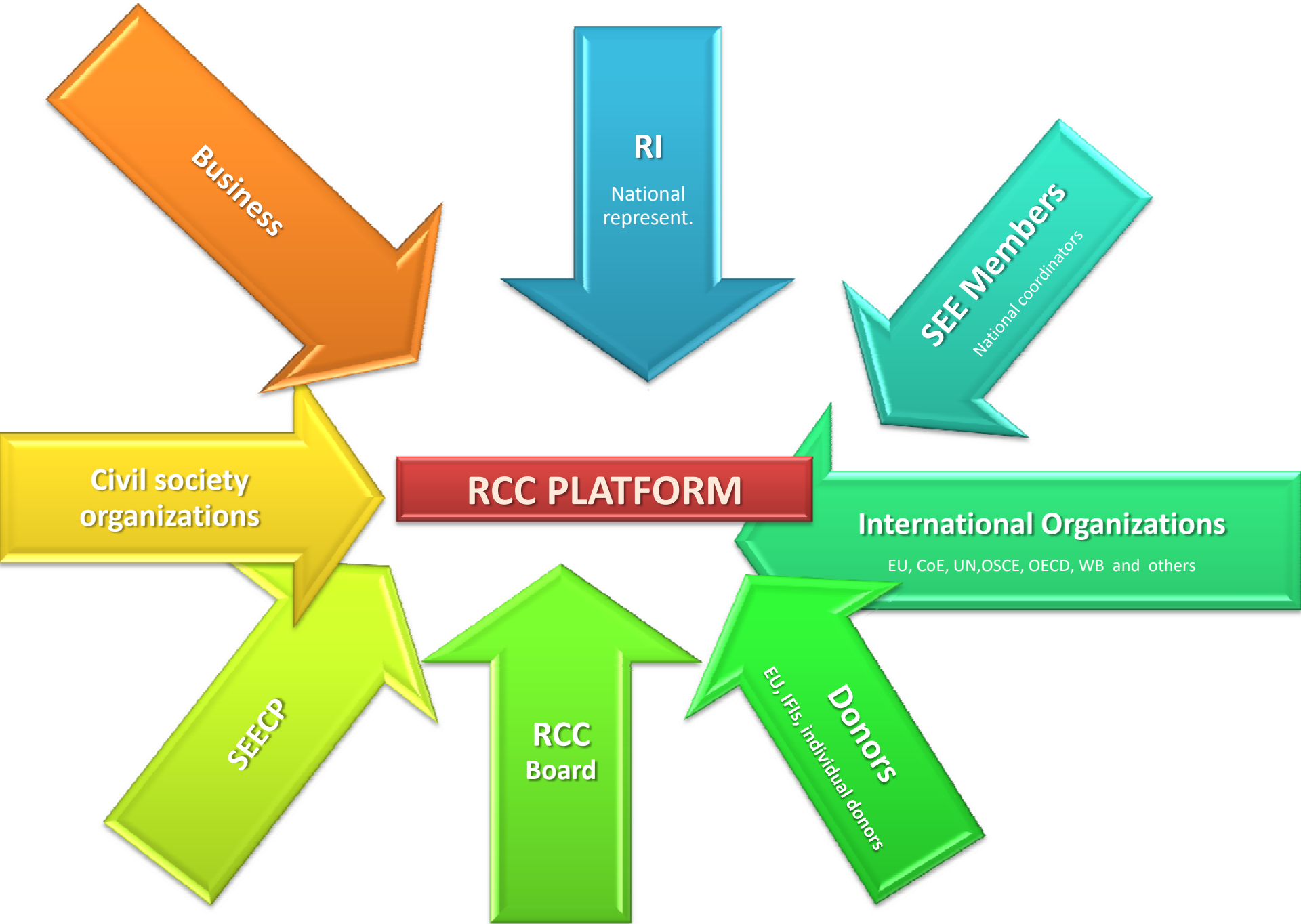
- **Members from the South East Europe** (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey) and UNMIK on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with the UNSC Resolution 1244
- **European Union**, represented by the Troika (European Commission, EU Presidency, Council Secretariat)
- **Donor countries** (Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States)
- **International organizations/institutions** (CoE, Council of Europe Development Bank, EBRD, EIB, European Parliament, OECD, OSCE, NATO, SECI, UN, UNDP, UN ECE, World Bank)

Horizontal activities of the RCC

- Representing the region;
- Assisting the SEECP;
- Supporting, incubating and monitoring regional activities;
- Exerting strategic leadership in regional cooperation
- Providing a regional perspective in donor assistance, notably in EU assistance under IPA;
- Supporting increased involvement of civil society in regional activities.

RCC Programming Role – complex inputs

- 5+1 priority areas: Economic and Social Development, Energy and Infrastructure, JHA, Security Cooperation, BHC and Parliamentary Cooperation
- 4 categories of beneficiary countries: EU members, candidates, potential candidates and a country covered by EU Neighbourhood Policy
- Diversified players: beneficiary countries' institutions, regional initiatives, EU, IFIs, other international organizations, individual donor countries, private foundations, business sector, local communities' networks etc.



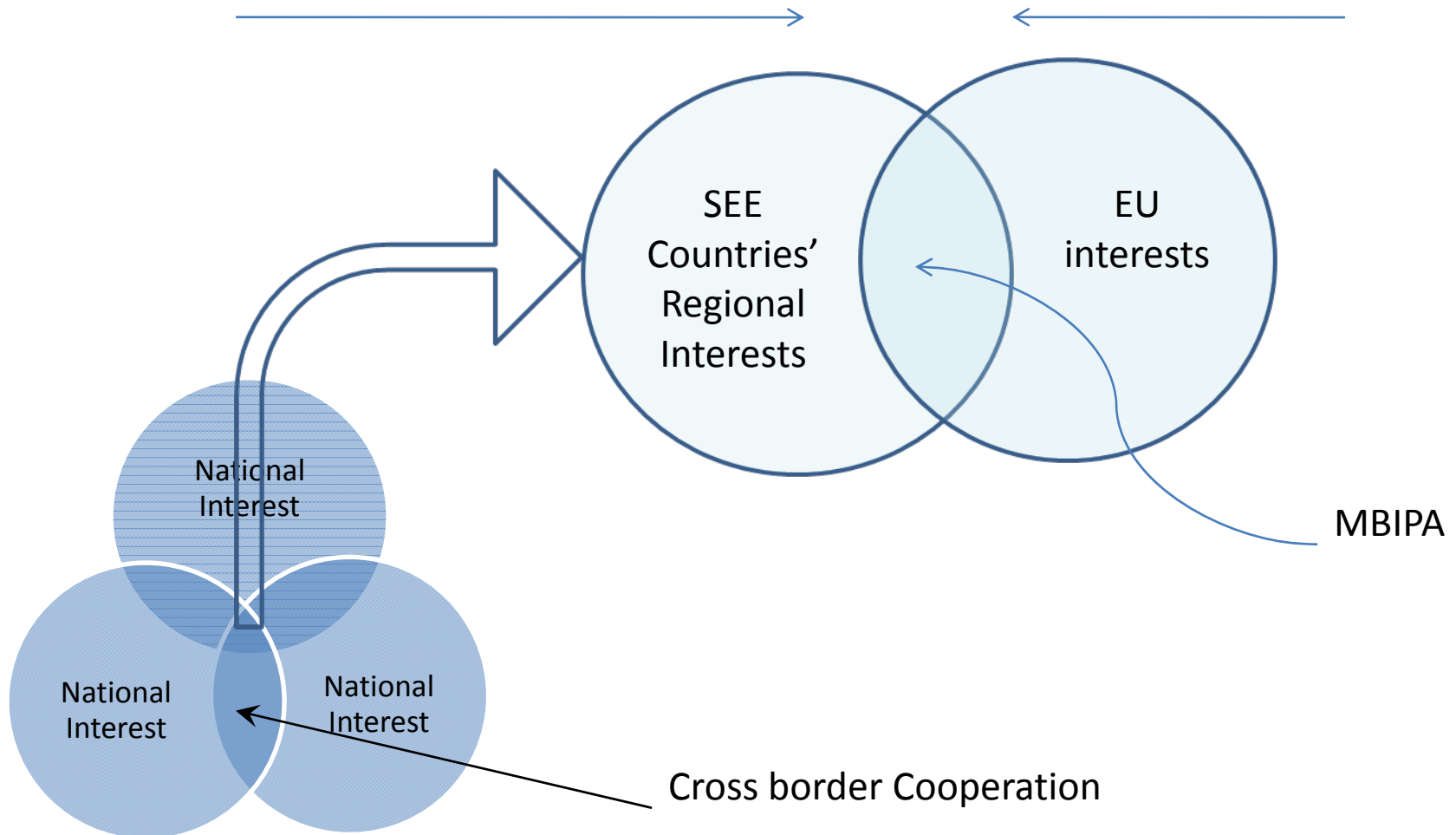
RCC-EC MBIPA Programming Process

SEE efforts to achieve:

- Regional development priorities
- EU standards

EU Assistance for IPA Beneficiaries:

- Achievement of the EU standards



RCC Achievements 2008- 2010

- Mapping of national priorities regarding regional cooperation in SEE.
- Mapping, coordination and streamlining of SEE regional initiatives and structures.
- Improved exchange of information, data and expert knowledge – strengthened regional cooperation.
- Bringing together all relevant stakeholders when addressing specific issues, increasing cooperation efficiency and decreasing related costs.
- Initiated networking process among RCC Secretariat, members from SEE, EC and IFIs (including Multi-Beneficiary IPA and IFIAG).
- Launching projects of regional relevance - RSRDI, PPP, Women Entrepreneurs, WB 2020, SEDRI, Climate Change Initiative, SEE Aviation Cooperation , Regional Strategy in JHA, Defence Establishments Cooperation, SEEFREC, SECE CRIF, Higher Education Reform, Pipeline of Parliamentary events, Expert Networks).
- Cooperation with other regional organizations and initiatives (CEI, BSEC, All, Danube Cooperation Process, Sava Commission).
- RCC Strategy 2011-2013 with high involvement of the RCC Board .

Taskforces and Initiatives in SEE

	Country	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Republic of Moldova	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Turkey	UNMIK/ Kosovo	Others
Economic and Social Development	Regional Initiative													
	SEE Investment Committee (SEEIC)													
	-Paris	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			
	Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)													
	-Brussels	x	x		x		x	x		x	x		x	
	Business Advisory Council (BAC)													
	-Thessaloniki	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Regional Network of National Investment Promotion Agencies in SEE (RNIPA)													
	-Rotating	x	x		x			x			x	x		
	SEE Regional Network of Policy Makers (IFC)													
	-Belgrade	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG)													
	-Skopje	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	
	SEE Employment and Social Policy Network (SEESPN)													
	-No headquarters	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	
	Centre for Public Employment Services of SEE Countries (CPSSC)													
	-Rotating		x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		Slovenia
	SEE Trade Union Forum (SEETUF)													
-Zagreb/Sarajevo	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x		
Adriatic Region Employers' Centre (AREC)														
-Zagreb	x	x		x			x		x	x				
SEE Health Network														
-Skopje	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x				
Centre for eGovernance Development (CeGD)														
-Ljubljana													RCC	
eSEE Initiative and bSEE Task Force														
-No headquarters	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x		x		

Taskforces and Initiatives in SEE

Regional Initiative	Country													
	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Republic of Moldova	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Turkey	UNMIK/ Kosovo	Others	
Justice and Home Affairs	Migration, Asylum and Refugee Regional Initiative (MARRI) -Skopje	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	Regional Anticorruption Initiative (RAI) -Sarajevo	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		Observer		
	Southeast European Cooperative Initiative - Regional Centre for Combating Transborder Crime (SECI Centre) , future Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC) -Bucharest	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	Observer	Hungary, Slovenia
	Southeast European Prosecutors Advisory Group (SEEPAG) -Bucharest	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X		Slovenia
	Southeast Europe Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA) -Sofia	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			
	Women Police Officer Network (WPON) -No headquarters	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			
	Secretariat of Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe (PCC-SEE Secretariat) -Ljubljana	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x			
	Western Balkans Prosecutor Network (PROSECO) -No headquarters	x	x		x			x			x	x		

Taskforces and Initiatives in SEE

Country		Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Republic of Moldova	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Turkey	UNMIK/Kosovo	Others
Regional Initiative														
Parliamentary Cooperation	Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South Eastern Europe (RSPC SEE) -Sofia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	Conference of the European Integration Parliamentary Committees of States participating to the Stabilization and Association Process (Western Balkans COSAP) -Rotating	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	CETINJE Parliamentary Forum -Cetinje	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x			

Total: 41	Per country	37	39	23	38	8	19	38	24	38	38	12	15	
Headquarters in South East Europe: 24 + 4 rotating	Per country	0	3	2	7	1	0	2	2	3	4	0	0	8

Key economic challenges in the Western Balkans

- Necessity for a new model of development and growth.
- Re-positioning in European and global constellations.
- Poor physical, institutional and social infrastructure.
- Under-utilization of existing resources.
- Low innovation capacity.
- Slow reforms – strengthening the EU Accession leverage.
- Better synchronizing and focusing activities of regional cooperation networks.

RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013

- **Introduction**
- **Strategy**
- **Work Programme 2011-2013**
 - Economic and Social Development**
 - Energy and Infrastructures**
 - Justice and Home Affairs**
 - Security Cooperation**
 - Building Human Capital**
 - Parliamentary Cooperation**
- **Annex I – Work Programme per Priority Area**
- **Annex II – Overview of RIs and TFs**

Current regional instruments

- CEFTA 2006
- SEE Investment Committee (SEEIC)
- Energy Community Treaty (ECT)
- SEETO/Transport Community Treaty (TCT)
- Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA)
- Regional School for Public Administration (RESPA)
- SEE Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL)
- e-SEE Agenda+, SEE ICT Forum, Centre for eGovernance Development (CeGD)
- Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI)
- Regional Strategy on R&D for Innovation for the WB
- Regional Project on Higher Education Reforms
- Western Balkans in 2020

List of RCC events in September-October 2010

- 1. First Forum for South East European Women Entrepreneurs**
21.09.2010 - 22.09.2010, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2. International Forum on Higher Education Reform Foresight 2020**
27.09.2010 - 29.09.2010, Dubrovnik, Croatia
- 3. Regional Workshop on Democratic Policing: Organizational and Managerial Issues in the Police**
30.09.2010 – 01.10.2010, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 4. First Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative Task Force meeting**
07.10.2010 - 08.10.2010, Trieste, Italy
- 5. Regional conference on role of parliaments in fight against poverty and social exclusion in EU integration context**
11.10.2010 - 13.10.2010, Belgrade, Serbia

- 6. International conference on digitalization and sustainability of public service media in South East Europe**
14.10.2010 - 15.10.2010, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 7. Regional Conference: Role of Inspectors in Education Quality Assurance**
20.10.2010 – 21.10.2010, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 8. Workshop – Reducing Emissions from the Energy Sectors in the Energy Community**
25.10.2010 - 26.10.2010, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 9. South East Europe regional workshop on national coordination and regional cooperation in counter-terrorism**
27.10.2010 – 28.10.2010, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Civil Society in RCC Strategy

- Supporting increased involvement of civil society in regional activities
- The RCC will also support the establishment of a regional consultative assembly composed of social partners and civil society and conducting analysis and recommendations in the interest of regional development
- It will also focus on ensuring participation of local authorities associations, civil society and media in the process.
- Developing supportive networks among civil society and youth organisations and their inclusion in BHC projects is of great importance for reaching set objectives