

ERI SEE

EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE
OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

ERI SEE Thematic Seminar

“Investing Efficiently in Education”
Skopje, 24-25 November 2005

Background paper

In accordance with the *Memorandum of Understanding* signed by the SEE ministers of education and higher education, the **Secretariat of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)** has included in the 2005 working programme, a thematic seminar with the topic of *“Investing Efficiently in Education”*, taking into consideration the recommendations made by the ministries of education from the region.

There have been undertaken a lot of work in this field within the European Union and by the international organisations such as OECD, UNESCO or EUA.

As has been indicated in the OECD document *“Financing education – investments and returns, An Analysis of the world education indicators”, 2002*, *“it has become clear that educational attainment is not only vital to the economic well-being of individuals but also for that of nations. Access to and completion of education is a key determinant in the accumulation of human capital and economic growth. Educational outcomes also extend beyond individual and national income. Education is a force that develops well-rounded and engaged citizens, and builds more cohesive and participatory societies.”*

The European Commission has set up working groups of experts covering one or more associated objectives, including a working group on **“Making the Best Use of Resources”**. Investment in human resources was addressed in a **Communication from the Commission “Investing efficiently in education and training: An imperative for Europe”**¹ in January 2003 and was considered as one of the main priorities and levers for action in the first **Joint Council**

¹ See: http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0779en01.pdf

(Education)/Commission Interim Report ² on the implementation of the Lisbon strategy, adopted by the Council (Education) in February 2004. The question of resources is central for all aspects of the work and thus for all the working groups. The importance of education and training for the knowledge society and the need to provide life-wide and life-long learning (LLL) increases the overall need for investment in human capital. The LLL approach calls for new approaches to investment and requires resources to be allocated across the “learning spectrum” of formal, non-formal and informal learning. The European Council therefore called for “**a substantial annual increase in per capita investment in human resources**”. However, owing to the relative scarcity of public resources, there is **also a strong need for a more efficient use of existing resources and a larger contribution from the private sector and the social partners.**

Objectives of the thematic seminar:

1. To offer the framework for discussion the policies applied in European Union and countries from the SEE; are the objectives established at European level common for the SEE countries?
2. To disseminate best results, experiences and best practices, to discuss the relevance of transferring at regional level the best practice registered at national level
3. Make recommendations for policy makers

Expected outcomes:

1. Presentations of the latest developments at European level
2. Examples of best practices, practical examples of success stories relevant for the SEE countries
3. Recommendations for the ministries of education and finances from the region
4. Creation of a network of experts

Organizers

The workshop will be organised by the ERI SEE Secretariat with the support of the Macedonian Ministry of Education and Science.

Target group

The workshop is addressed to the representatives of the Ministries of education from the SEE countries and Moldova.

² See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/jir_council_final.pdf

Language of the workshop

The working language is **English**.

Organisational details

The ERI SEE Secretariat will support the cost of participation for 2 representatives of the ministries of education signatory of the Memorandum (one participant being the representative in the ERI SEE Senior Official meeting), respectively: transportation, accommodation, subsistence and visa costs.

Contact persons:

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