

Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI) in partnership with Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) invites you to the online seminar on the topic:

## Takeaways from Sofia Summit on Growth, Sustainability and Resilience in SEE6

**Date:** Tuesday, 17 November 2020

**Time:** 11:00 – 12:30

**Venue:** Zoom (pre-registration is mandatory)

The goal of this seminar will be to put Sofia Summit conclusions and engagements in the Enlargement dynamics. The Action Plan that will be attached to the Leaders' Declaration and Conclusions of the Summit, will be based on the four freedoms, and enriched with digital, investment, innovation and industry areas. With a population of nearly 18 million people, SEE6 is an important market for the EU and a transit area for European and international goods, with a skilled workforce for companies ready to invest.

The objectives of the Seminar will be to: i) assess the results of the Summit and how they contribute to growth, regional cooperation and finally in the Accession process; ii) explain the MAP REA 2 and Common Regional Market, and how the Economic and Investment plan contributes; and, iii) communicate the above to a larger audience in the region and in EU.

Currently in the preparatory work for the Sofia Summit there are a couple of actions that are being discussed. First is the presentation of REA MAP 2 and the establishment of a Common Regional Market where the main novelty is the two-pillar structure: i) 4 freedoms with the ii) Economic and Investment Plan in productive sectors and sustainable infrastructure. The next point is harmonising investment policies with the EU standards and best international practices to improve and attract FDI. Other very important developments are the integration of SEE6 in the EU digital market and shaping and integrating the SEE6 value chains into the EU ones.

SEE6 regional cooperation has shown success stories on which it can build. One can mention the Green Corridors and Green lanes. This good example can be extended to all BCP in SEE6, and of SEE6 with neighbouring EU countries. The mutual recognition programs can be extended to other goods and services including certificates and testing results for industrial and other agricultural products; professional qualifications; and licenses in tourism, selected financial services and other key services sectors.

The seminar will focus on:

- 1) How Covid19 disaster uncovered the vulnerability of the current economic models and the need to come up with future-proof solutions. Digitalization of both companies and of governments is one of the scenarios to increase their resilience;
- 2) Need for stronger linkages amongst Growth and Investment Plan (GIP) / IPA 3 disbursement dynamics with the progress of each country in Fundamentals. In practical terms this means linking the conditionality with the progress in institutional reforms, and not only on the technical merits of the financing dossier of the project in question. The focus here will be on: i) good governance and integrity compliance of institutions in charge; and, ii) underlying the need for greater local ownership by increasing the attention and resources allocated for active participation of CSO, SMEs and local government units in IPAI and GIP;
- 3) Promotion of SEE6 as a potential business destination for big EU companies / champions in search of new production locations (delocalization and outsourcing), by reaching out and design of specially-adapted certain incentives. This will also help the WB companies to better integrate into and reap the benefits of international value chains and speed up the internationalization of our companies

The proceeds of the Seminar will be redacted, edited, and published in the form of a Policy Paper before 31 December 2020.

## PROGRAM

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### **11:00-11:10** *Welcome and Opening Speech*

- **Klaus Fiesinger**, Hanns Seidel Stiftung Regional Director for South-Eastern Europe

### **11:10 – 11:50** *Panel Discussion*

- *Setting the Scene: “Main features of MAP REA 2”* - **Pranvera Kastrati**, Senior Expert on Economic and Digital Connectivity, Regional Cooperation Council
- *Novelties of “Common Regional Market”* - **Professor Vancho Uzunov**, National MAP REA Coordinator for North Macedonia
- *“New Elements of Innovation, Industrial Policy and Human Capital”* - **Dr. Odeta Barbullushi**, National MAP REA Coordinator, Government of Albania
- *Added Value of MAP REA 2 for SEE6 Businesses: is it sufficient?* - **Nenad Đurđević**, Political Advisor to the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia

### **11:50 – 12:20** *Discussion / Q&A*

### **12:20 – 12:30** *Conclusions*

- **Ardian Hackaj**, Director of Research at Cooperation & Development Institute, Tirana

\*The webinar will be moderated by **Ana Krstinovska**, President, ESTIMA.