

THE SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

GENERAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY

December 14, 2021, Belgrade

DRAFT RESOLUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Economies of Southeast Europe in the Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Stakes and Perspectives"

Welcoming the efforts made so far and the enhancement of cooperation within the South East European Cooperation Process since its establishment in 1996, and encouraging further activities of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly, which have institutionalized parliamentary cooperation within the SEECP;

Guided by the Rules of Procedure of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly adopted in May 2014, which set out the rules of procedure and procedures of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly;

In accordance with the Work Program of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly for 2021/22;

Aiming to further strengthen cooperation between the participants of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly in all areas, to exchange experiences and best practices, and to encourage economic development and the strengthening of democratic institutions;

Aware that the numerous challenges related to sustainable development, investment cooperation, competitiveness and mobility, environmental problems and ultimately the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have a global character and strongly affect the life of an individual;

Aware of the importance of the European perspective of the region that will also help to reap the full benefits of mutual cooperation and cooperation with the EU institutions in the implementation of reforms;

The General Committee on Economy, Infrastructure and Energy, at a meeting held in the format of a video conference on December 14 in Belgrade:

1. ***Calls*** on the political leaders of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly to work for the recovery of the SEE economies from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to implement activities in the areas of rule of law, achieving resilient and sustainable economies, environmental protection and clean energy transition, which will further affect economic growth;
2. ***Calls*** for effective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection, inter alia, through the consistent application of legislation, and encourages its harmonization at EU and regional level, in support of the recovery of SEE economies;

3. **Stresses** the importance of legislation that is flexible, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and in close cooperation and coordination with the health sector, so that citizens are protected and informed in a timely manner;
4. **Points out** that the economies of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly participants are linked by a dense network of trade and investment relations and is concerned that the COVID-19 pandemic may have a rapid and negative impact on commercial activities and the economy as a whole due to the restrictive measures taken;
5. **Recalls** that the COVID-19 pandemic has largely confronted the SEE financial markets with the greatest challenge since the global financial crisis in 2008 and reaffirms the importance of supporting the SEE economies in overcoming the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining a fair competition and equal opportunities;
6. **Expresses** its concern at the challenges posed by the outflow of people, the lack of financial resources, technical capacity and social capital needed to tackle the SEE economies with the medical and economic dimension of the crisis;
7. **Emphasizes** the intention to intensify joint efforts aimed at diversification of energy supply routes and sources and cooperation in the region and the importance of access to uninterrupted, reliable and affordable energy sources for the energy security of the region and beyond;
8. **Reaffirms** its commitment to provide parliamentary support to SEECP initiatives in developing economic cooperation, strengthening interregional infrastructure, migration management, and cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism and youth support;
9. **Stresses** that pandemics are not one-off events, but are recurring throughout human history and that consequently there are reasons to predict new global epidemiological challenges in the coming decades;

In line with the above, recommends that the parliaments and governments of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly participants:

- A) Continue to support the exchange of information between SEECP Participants on the current epidemiological situation caused by COVID-19.
- B) Work together to ensure interoperability and mutual recognition and access to digital applications, validation of pandemic testing, vaccination and recovery certification, all in order to facilitate the free flow of people, capital and services.
- C) Work together to find rapid, effective and fruitful solutions to disasters and crises by strengthening mechanisms for joint response and cooperation between the SEECP Participants, expanding and strengthening regional cooperation institutions, especially in the field of economic cooperation.
- D) Work together for the promotion of the Green Lanes / Corridors project, among economies of the region, according to EU Guidelines and the Transport Community roadmap, as a value added initiative for trade and transport facilitation, as well as for economic recovery and resilience.
- E) Take appropriate measures which should have as their main objective the preservation of economic stability with the support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the private

sector, such as tax policy measures, direct assistance to enterprises for employees, measures for economic liquidity, etc.

- F) Promote the development of scientific, technical, technological, legal, administrative and commercial cooperation in the field of energy and sustainable development, in order to reach targets in renewable energy and energy efficiency, taking into account relevant requirements, priorities and policies.
- G) Promote knowledge and exchange of experience among SEECF participants regarding innovation, and continue to implement the digital transformation, which will enable more efficient public administration and contribute to the fight against corruption, but also faster economic growth.
- H) They work to improve cooperation on cyber security and the fight against cybercrime through the exchange of knowledge and experience, which has become even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic.