

## SOUTH EAST EUROPE INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

### SEE Investment Committee Working Group on Competitiveness

#### Terms of Reference

19 June 2013

#### Introduction

In accordance with the mandate and the Work Programme 2013 of the SEE Investment Committee (SEEIC), as well as with ongoing developments in preparation of the SEE 2020 Strategy (SEE 2020), the Secretariat is putting forward a proposal for establishment of the Working Group on Competitiveness (hereinafter: “WGC”) under the auspices of the SEEIC. The WGC will operate as a standing Working Group of the SEEIC, ensuring continuity of the activities done so far and assisting in the achievement of the SEEIC’s objectives contained in the Work Programme, particularly in development of the SEE 2020 Pillar: Sustainable Growth – Competitiveness Dimension. The emphasis of the WGC’s activities will focus on improving the economic competitiveness of the Western Balkans by supporting policy reforms and initiatives aimed at enhancing the business environment for SMEs and entrepreneurs. The WGC will also develop policy responses at the sector level to strengthen the region’s value chains in the global market place. In this endeavor, WGC will be the primary body at the level of experts that will support the Competitiveness Dimension of the SEE 2020 Sustainable Growth Pillar, as well as the implementation of the Next Generation Competitiveness Initiative.

#### Composition and Mandate

The WGC will consist of two officials from each of the SEEIC members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo<sup>\*</sup>). Other members of the SEEIC will be encouraged to nominate their representatives as well, in the interest of better policy learning and coordination. The members of the WGC shall be nominated by the respective Country Economic Team Leaders. It is preferable that the WGC members originate from government institutions and departments in charge of competitiveness, industrial and sectoral policy.

The WGC will meet at least once per year and will serve as a body where senior policy makers and experts from the Western Balkans can exchange ideas, evaluate lessons learned and propose actions to improve competitiveness in the region, mainly within the scope of the SEE 2020 Pillar: Sustainable Growth –

---

<sup>\*</sup> *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence*

Competitiveness Dimension. The SEEIC and the RCC Secretariat will provide primary oversight and management of the WGC to ensure it contributes to the achievement of the SEEIC's objectives.

The WGC may invite regional partners, private sector representatives, members of academia and other committed donors and relevant institutions to attend its meetings as necessary. The SEEIC / RCC Secretariat will do its utmost to ensure full participation by beneficiary economies in the WGC.

A simple majority of the seven beneficiary economies in attendance will constitute a quorum for meetings of the WGC to proceed.

The scope of the WGC's deliberations will include, but not be limited to:

- Promoting regional cooperation in competitiveness policy reforms;
- Considering measures to support future attainment of SEE 2020 goals, particularly the Competitiveness Dimension of the Sustainable Growth Pillar;
- Identification of sectors with potential regional value chains;
- Assessing policy barriers to greater value chain development;
- Developing policy recommendations at the industry and sector level to enhance regional value chains;
- Reviewing actions to promote regional value chains in the global marketplace;
- Strengthening regional value chains by actively supporting the creation of transnational clusters and business networks;
- Encouraging private sector competitiveness by enhancing activities in support of SME development;
- Enhancing coordination and peer reviews on SME policy
- Promoting venture capital and business angel networks in the region;
- Promoting regional co-operation in diversification of export markets;
- Promoting regional co-operation in business access to finance;
- Raising awareness on business integrity at a regional level.

### **Organisation and reporting**

- The SEEIC / RCC Secretariat will call upon the WGC meetings in a timely manner;
- The SEEIC / RCC Representative will chair the working group meetings.
- The SEEIC / RCC Secretariat will prepare minutes of all WGC meetings;
- The SEEIC / RCC Secretariat will distribute minutes from WGC meetings to committee members in 10 working days;
- WGC members will have 10 working days to submit comments; If no comments are received by the SEEIC / RCC Secretariat within 10 working days, the minutes will be considered final;

### **Remarks**

This Mandate Note on the Working Group on Competitiveness of the South East European Investment Committee is subject to changes and modifications as per agreements among the members of the SEEIC.