

Small States Regional Cooperation

Montenegro

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Regional Cooperation - Introduction

- Overview:
- Montenegro is a member of around 30 regional initiatives, mostly aimed at fostering the EU integration process.
- We could identify three major goals:
 - a) economic development – small import dependent market (cooperation focused on resource management and capacity building)
 - b) regional stability and security
 - c) institutional development and capacity building for EU integration process
- Montenegro joined SEECP in 2007, Adriatic Ionian Initiative in 2007 and Central European Initiative in 2006, Regional Cooperation Council in 2008.

Small States First Example of Regional Cooperation: History

- Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) was founded at the summit in Ancona in 2000.
- All started as a cooperation mechanism for 5 states, currently includes 10, and is linked with the Council of EU „Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region“ EUSAIR resulting in an institutional merger between highest political level of AII and EUSAIR
- The AII was build upon common cultural heritage, as well as dependance on a common sea and the necessity to both protect the common resource and enhance the economies in the region.



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First Example of Regional Cooperation: Institutions

- All has several bodies through which the decision making process occurs. These bodies include Committees of Senior Officials, Adriatic and Ionian Council (AIC) and a permanent Secretariat.
- The executive body of All – The Committees of Senior Officials meets in between the Council of EU meetings and at least 3 times per year. Each state has one representative in the body.
- Adriatic and Ionian Council meets one a year, of more frequently under extraordinary circumstance on the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Decisions made in the AIC are unanimous (consensus based).
- The All operates in 6 specific areas:
 - a) Transport and Energy Connections
 - b) Sustainable Tourism and Culture
 - c) Inter-University Cooperation
 - d) Environmental and Civic Protection
 - e) Blue Growth – Maritime Cooperation
 - f) Parliamentary dimension

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First Example of Regional Cooperation: Policies

- The last meeting of the AIC was held in Budva, Montenegro where the member states agreed to include North Macedonia in the EUSAIR and confirm San Marino as 10th participating state in the All.
- All is closely coordinated with EUSAIR and a program designed by the EU to implement specific projects in the identified areas of cooperation – Intereeg Adrion.
- As an example – Montenegro participates in several Intereeg Adrion funded projects aimed at ie. sustainable small fisheries (ARIEL), sustainable water management in tourism (TOUREST), or enhancing the transport sector and identifying key bottleneck issues (ADRIPASS)

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Second Example of Regional Cooperation

- Regional Cooperation Council was found on the initiative of in 2008. Main decision body is the RCC Board conveying 3 times per year, consisting of National Coordinators and chaired by the Secretary General.
- Regional Cooperation Council implements (among others) Roma Integraton project in the Western Balkans region.
- The issue tacked include: housing, employment, health care and protection, education and general wellbeing.

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Conclusion on regional cooperation

- The topic is not frequently discussed in the media and generally unknown to a wider audience.
- Proclaimed benefits are mostly aimed at capacity building to adapt European standards that should foster the integration process.
- Generally focused on the same areas as before, tourism, maritime and transport and economic development in general.