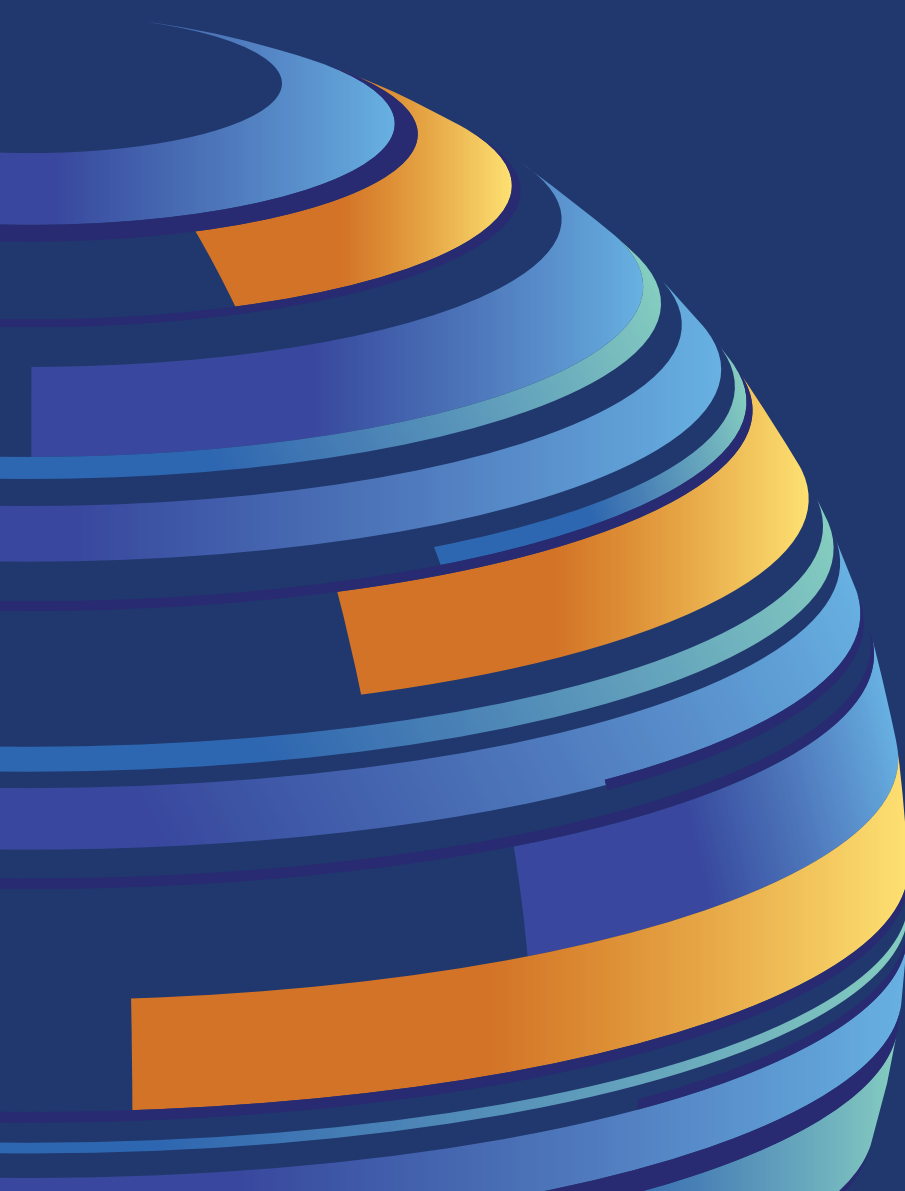


STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS REGION IN THE BERLIN PROCESS



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Title: Strengthening the Role of Parliaments of the Western Balkans
Region in the Berlin Process

Publisher: Regional Cooperation Council
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November 2020

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Acronyms

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
COSAP	Parliamentary Committees on European Integration/Affairs of the States Participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process in South East Europe
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IPI	International Parliamentary Institution
MAP REA	Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area
MP	Member of Parliament
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RICE	Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs
RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
VET	Vocational education and training
WB	Western Balkans

I. Overview of the study

Western Balkans Summit in Poznań, in July 2019¹ officially acknowledged the need to include national parliaments in the Berlin Process. The Chair's conclusions supported the proposal of several of Berlin Process Parliaments to contribute to this dynamic through organisation of parliamentary dialogue covering all the important fields of the region's relations, by also stating the great importance of involving the citizens and their representatives in the Berlin Process dialogue.

In line with the Poznan Summit Chair's conclusions, stronger regional parliamentary cooperation was considered as a requisite to ensure further intensification of the key EU-related reforms and for a strengthened regional cooperation at the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees on European Integration/Affairs of the States Participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process in South-East Europe (COSAP) held in Tirana on 16 and 17 January 2020. COSAP represents a regional forum for regular exchange of views among the parliamentary committees responsible for European Integration, on issues concerning regional cooperation, Stabilisation and Association Process, the EU membership agenda of the Western Balkan region and EU-related capacity building.

In this framework, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was invited to support COSAP' efforts towards the establishment of a parliamentary dialogue covering all the key areas of the region's political, economic, social, cultural and security cooperation.

Therefore the overall objective of this regional assessment is to support the strengthening of the role of Western Balkan (WB) Parliaments in the Berlin Process. To this end the assessment includes the analysis of the current involvement of Parliaments of WB economies in the Berlin Process, aiming to identify the steps needed to establish a formal parliamentary dialogue in line with the Chair's conclusions of the Western Balkans Summit in Poznań 2019 and pave the way for better information sharing on measures linked with regional integration agenda among the Parliaments so as to contribute to a strengthened consultation process at regional level.

¹ <https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/western-balkans-summit-poznan-chairs-conclusions>

1. Introduction

The Berlin Process launched in 2014 created a positive momentum for regional cooperation among the WB economies, supporting their European integration process. Two of its main objectives are intensification of regional cooperation and increase of prosperity through sustainable economic growth. The Berlin Process is an important high-level meeting point between WB governments and several EU Member States with the aim to bring a new impetus to the enlargement process and enhance regional cooperation in the WB. Since the start of the process WB citizens' support to regional cooperation has steadily increased. The Balkan Barometer of RCC shows a substantial increase of 10% in citizens support over the last several years (in 2015 the regional cooperation support stood at 67 % while in 2020 it is 77%).

The Berlin Process is not just a political forum, but it also gave space and opportunity to civil society, business community and think-tankers to be actively involved and provide a substantial contribution to its priorities. Since its start in 2014 an increased attention has been devoted to the Berlin Process from member states. The priorities have also been enlarged and cooperation extended in areas such as health, social inclusion, green agenda, security, etc. Seven years after the launch of the process the WB region has defined its own vision for a common regional market that will ensure regional economic integration and close the divergence gap with the EU.

The need to include parliaments of WB 6 economies in the Berlin Process was acknowledged at the Summit in Poznań, in July 2019. Chair's conclusions call for the organisation of a parliamentary dialogue covering all the fields of political, economic, social, cultural and security relations. This need was re-confirmed also by the 16th meeting of COSAP. This was not the first time that COSAP requested the inclusion of region's parliaments in the Berlin Process. COSAP meeting of October 2015, under Albanian Presidency, officially requested French authorities in the capacity of chairmanship of Berlin Process to include the parliamentary dimension during the Paris Summit². Joint Statement of 16th meeting of COSAP adopted in Tirana in January 2020 supported the active involvement of parliaments in the Berlin Process, which would further strengthen the mutual cooperation of parliaments in the region and their cooperation with the European Parliament and the EU member states.

² Towards the more visible, efficient and effective: Berlin Process 2.0. Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" – November 2017.

2. Methodology

The implementation of the exercise started with the analysis of a number of available documents. Reports, declarations, resolutions and decisions of the national parliaments and governments were carefully examined in order to draw the necessary conclusions. The documents of the national parliaments/governments were top-up with the papers of the relevant organisations and international researchers. Specific attention was given to the documents developed in the Stabilisation and Association Process, accession negotiations and the Berlin Process.

In the following stage a survey was planned and implemented. The survey was conducted in several steps:

- determining the participants in the survey - the survey targeted Members of Parliaments (MPs), more specifically Members of European Integration and Foreign Affairs Committees, and government representatives involved in the Berlin Process. A list of participants per each economy was defined and their contact details gathered.
- deciding on the type of survey - initial planning included implementation of interviews with selected survey participants. Due to the situation caused by COVID-19 pandemic, instead of interviews a Questionnaire was prepared and shared online with the respective participants.
- designing the survey questions – the questions were developed in a way to analyse the current involvement of the Parliaments of WB economies in the Berlin Process, aiming to ensure better information sharing on measures linked with regional integration agenda so as to contribute to a strengthened consultation process at regional level, as identified in the Open Call. Different types of questions were used and arranged in a logical order. The Questionnaire was organised into sections to help respondents understand what is being asked in each part. The Questionnaire is included in Annex I of this document.
- distributing the survey – the Questionnaire was distributed to the identified survey participants by RCC. Initially the responsiveness was very low, but through additional contacts with all competent parliamentary bodies and governmental institutions in the region the satisfactory level of responsiveness was achieved.
- analysing the responses – received responses were processed and analysed. Whenever possible the results were quantified and presented in the forms of table or chart. In the case where participants were requested to express their opinion, responses are presented under quotation marks and marked in red colour.
- writing the results - all the information gathered, results of research and findings identified in the interviews are presented in this Report. The Report was assessed by the RCC and the comments received are reflected and incorporated in the final text of this Report.

3. Key Findings

Key findings can be summarised as follows:

1. a) Poznan Summit Chair Conclusions constitute a very important step toward enhancement of the role in and contribution of the WB national parliaments to the Berlin Process;
2. b) The national parliaments appraised the contribution of the Berlin Process to boosting regional cooperation in WB, strengthening economic integration especially through MAP REA deliverables, and also accelerating the region's EU integration process;
3. c) However the respondents noted that there is a need for a more integral involvement of the parliaments in regional agenda and specifically in the framework of the Berlin Process. Parliaments' contribution toward achieving overarching political agreements, pushing reforms and scrutinising the regional commitments, contributes to sustainability of the process, and to prioritisation of the regional agenda;
4. d) While it is obvious that the parliamentary cooperation in the region is quite active and includes many networks and regional platforms, the involvement of Parliaments in the Berlin Process is not comprised as a priority. In addition to the respective national parliamentary committees, COSAP as a regional forum for regular exchange of views among the parliamentary committees responsible for European Integration on issues concerning regional cooperation and EU membership agenda, constitutes a suitable platform for the discussion and support of the implementation of the regional economic integration.

II. Framework of Berlin Process

Berlin Process was launched in 2014 to revitalise dynamic of the enlargement process – the EU’s main policy tool in the Western Balkans. The main priority in the Berlin Process is to enhance regional cooperation in economic and social areas, and its flagship initiative is the Connectivity Agenda established in 2014 – a complex plan to develop transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure to integrate Western Balkans, accelerate the economic growth of the region and tighten its links to the EU. More intense economic collaboration to be achieved via the Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) adopted in 2017 in Trieste, aimed at supporting the free movement of goods, services, investments and workers in the region. In the 2020 Sofia Summit, the WB6 adopted the “Common Regional Market- A catalyst for deeper regional economic integration and a stepping stone towards EU Single Market” as one of the steps towards the future establishment of the Common Regional Market, based on EU rules, and building upon the commitments and results of the Regional Economic Area.

Essential components of the Berlin Process are people-to-people contacts and good neighbourly relations. This stems from the assumption that fostering economic collaboration in the region is contingent on good cooperation at bilateral and regional level. The Process places strong emphasis on resolving bilateral disputes and striving for reconciliation between societies in the region. During the Vienna summit, the heads of governments of Balkan economies agreed to resolve bilateral disputes in the spirit of good neighbourly relations. Other priorities of the Berlin Process are issues related to broadly understood security and the fight against corruption and organised crime.

Regional collaboration in the region at societal level is furthered by the Civil Society Forum organised since 2015 in parallel with each Berlin Process summit. This also provides an opportunity to involve non-governmental organisations, experts and activists in the reform process. Key stakeholders in the process are business community. Since 2015, they have been an integral part of the BP.

Chart: Fields of activity of Berlin Process



As regards the involvement of national parliaments in the Berlin Process, so far it has been rather limited, despite their expressed interest to be involved in the process, as a good

prerequisite to enhance the oversight role of the Parliaments and contribute to strengthening political stability, and improve the political climate of the Western Balkan region.

Therefore, supporting the strengthening of the role of national Parliaments in the Berlin Process will contribute to bringing it closer to the citizens and also to an increased visibility amongst the wider public. Another added benefit of their involvement in Berlin Process is the inclusion of regional economic cooperation agenda in the priority agendas of the region’s parliaments.

In the period from 2014 to 2020 seven annual summits were organised (see Annex II for a summary of the summits).

III Overview of the inter-parliamentarian cooperation initiatives in the Western Balkans

There are several studies which explore regional cooperation between parliaments. One of the most comprehensive analyses of inter-parliamentary cooperation in WB was implemented for the EC in February 2015 "Study on parliamentary cooperation mapping and analysis of international parliamentary institutions and parliamentary networks in the Western Balkans and South East Europe". The analysis is made of two parts, first one is mapping of the existing Assemblies and parliamentary initiatives for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and South East Europe, and second part of the Study is an overview of the current parliamentary capacity building initiatives.

The mapping exercise includes an institutional analysis of all parliamentary cooperation platforms for the region, including the institutional landscape in which they operate, other parliamentary cooperation structures and synergies with the European integration process.

According to the Study, a complex network of inter-parliamentary cooperation exists in the Western Balkans. The importance and impact of the regional parliamentary cooperation platforms relate directly to the European integration process of the Western Balkans as well as the process of consolidation of democratic institution building in each of the economies of the Western Balkans. Study identifies and analyses fifteen parliamentary initiatives in the region:

1. Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)
2. Western Balkans Conference of the Committees on European Integration/Affairs of the States participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process (COSAP)
3. Conference of Foreign Affairs Committees (CFAC)
4. NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA)
5. Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC)
6. Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM)
7. SEECP Parliamentary Assembly (SEECP PA)
8. Parliamentary Dimension of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII-PD)
9. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
10. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
11. Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative (CEI-PD)
12. Cetinje Parliamentary Forum (CPF)

13. Danube Parliamentarians Conference (DPC)
14. Conference of Speakers of Parliament of Western Balkans (CSPWB)
15. Network of Parliamentary Committees on Economy, Finance and European Integration of the Western Balkans (NPC)

In addition to the fifteen regional parliamentary platforms, the cooperation platforms of the European Parliament with the parliaments from the Western Balkans is active as well as the cooperation networks between national parliaments of the EU Member States, in which EU candidates participate as observers. The most important initiatives are:

1. Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the EU (COSAC)
2. Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments
3. Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy
4. Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Economic and Financial Governance of the EU
5. Delegations of the EP, visiting the candidates and potential candidates
6. Inter-parliamentary meetings organised by the EP with national parliaments, including Inter-parliamentary Committee Meetings
7. Joint Parliamentary Meetings, co-chaired by the Presidents of the EP and the Presidency Parliament
8. The European Centre for Parliamentary Research & Documentation (ECPRD)
9. Inter Parliamentary EU information eXchange (IPEX)
10. EP Directorate for Democracy Support, Pre-Accession Actions Unit (PAAU).

The study concludes that since 1990 the number of regional parliamentary cooperation initiatives indicates that relations among the South East Europe and the Western Balkans are gradually becoming more and more intertwined and interdependent. Synergy and even a risk of duplication between several initiatives was identified and therefore further synergies were recommended with the aim of rationalising time and resources allocated by national parliaments. On the other hand, the parliamentary dimension of various inter-governmental structures has added a level of legitimisation to the process, provided a parliamentary context and contributes to a sense of common regional belonging. Summary of analyses is given in the Chart below.

Finding of this study were taken into consideration while drafting a recommendation for future parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process.

Chart 4: Summary of Analysis of Selected IPIs and Networks of Parliamentarians

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	PAM	COSAP	CFAC	NATO PA	PAB-SEC	PA-UfM	SEEC-PA	AIIPD	PACE	OSCE PA	CEI-PD	CPF	DPC	CSP-WB	NPC	
I. Constitutional Status																
1.1 Year of establishment	2005	2005	2012	1955	1993	2010	2014	2000	1947	1990	1989	2004	2013	2004	2009	
1.2 Affiliation to internat. org	no	no	no	recog. parl.	recog. parl.	recog. parl.	comm. parl.	comm. parl.	part of gov.	part of gov.	part of gov.	no	no	no	no	
1.3 Initiative of establishment	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	gov.	gov.	gov.	parl.	parl.	parl.	parl.	
1.4 Objectives of the IPI																
1.4.1 Regional Cooperation	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
1.4.2 European (EU) integrat.	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
1.4.3 Political dialogue	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	
II. Institutionalization																
2.1 Membership, composition																
2.1.1 Total full member parl.	27	5	4	28	12	43	13	8	47	57	18	6	10	7	7	
2.1.2 Number EU member st.	8	0	1	22	3	28	5	4	28	28	10	1	7	1	0	
2.1.3 Number SEE parl.	9	5	4	7	7	7	13	7	12	12	10	6	6	6	5	
2.1.4 EU Candidates	5	4	2	2	3	3	5	3	5	5	4	4	1	4	4	
2.1.5 Guests, observers?	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	
2.1.6 Guarant. women repres.	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	
2.1.7 Seat distribution	equal	equal	equal	degrees	degrees	degrees	equal	equal	degrees	degrees	degrees	equal	no info	equal	equal	
2.2 Governing structures																
2.2.1 President elected by IPI	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	
2.2.2 Collective bonus	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	
2.2.3 Rotating chairmanship	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	
2.2.4 Written RoP exist?	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	
2.3 Secretariat of the IPI																

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	PAM	COSAP	CFAC	NATO PA	PAB-SEC	PA-UfM	SEEC-PA	AIIPD	PACE	OSCE PA	CEI-PD	CPF	DPC	CSP-WB	NPC	
2.3 Fixed or rotating?																
2.3.1 Fixed or rotating?	fixed	rotat	rotat	fixed	fixed	fixed	rotat	rotat	fixed	fixed	rotat	fixed	rotat	fixed	fixed	
2.3.2 Permanent staff?																
2.3.2 Permanent staff?	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	
2.3.3 Parl. budget contrib.																
2.3.3 Parl. budget contrib.	parl.	host p.	host p.	parl.	parl.	parl.	host p.	host p.	gov.	parl.	host p.	host p.	host p.	host p.	parl.	
2.4 Committee structure																
2.4.1 Number of committees	3	no	no	5	3	5	3	no	8	3	3	no	no	no	3	
2.4.2 Cmrs have rapporteurs?	yes	N/A	N/A	yes	yes	yes	yes	N/A	yes	yes	yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
2.5 Frequency of meetings /y.																
2.5.1 Minimum of plenaries	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	4	1	1	2	1	1	1	
2.5.2 Minimum of cmt mtgs	1	N/A	N/A	2	2	1	1	N/A	4	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	
2.6 Decision-making rules																
2.6.1 Written rules on decis	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	
2.6.2 Consensus rule?	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	N/A	yes	
2.7 Factions in the IPIs																
2.7.1 Number of factions/del.	27	5	4	28	12	44	13	8	47	57	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	
2.7.2 Political groups or not?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes: 5	yes: 4	no	no	no	no	no	
2.8 Level of transparency																
2.8.1 Own web-site	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	
2.8.2 Draft documents public?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	
2.8.3 Final documents public?	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
2.8.4 Plenary meetings open?	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	
2.8.5 Cmt meetings open?	no	N/A	N/A	yes	no	no	no	N/A	no	no	no	N/A	no	no	no	
III. Institutional Authority																
3.1 Autonomy																
3.1.1 Free to consider issue	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
3.1.2 Free to determine RoP	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
3.1.3 Free to elect President	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	N/A	N/A	N/A	yes	

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	PAM	COSAP	CFAC	NATO PA	PAB-SEC	PA-UfM	SEECF PA	AII-PD	PACE	OSCE PA	CEI-PD	CPF	DPC	CSP-WB	NPC
3.1.4 Free to select SG & staff	yes	yes	N/A	yes	yes	yes	yes	N/A	yes	yes	yes	yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
3.2 Powers and competencies															
3.2.1 Decision making int. gov. org.	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
3.2.2 Agenda-setting int. gov. org.	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
3.2.3 Owersight power	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
3.2.4 Appoitments in int. gov. org.	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
3.2.5 Decision own budget IPI	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
3.2.6 Influence budget int. gov. org.	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	N/A	no	N/A	N/A
3.2.7 Approve treaty changes	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
3.2.8 Accept new member IPI	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes
3.2.9 Accept member int. gov. org.	N/A	N/A	N/A	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	N/A
IV. Synergies w other initiat.															
4.1 Formal status at UN	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
4.2 Observer to other IPIs	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
4.3 Insti. coop. w. other IPIs	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no

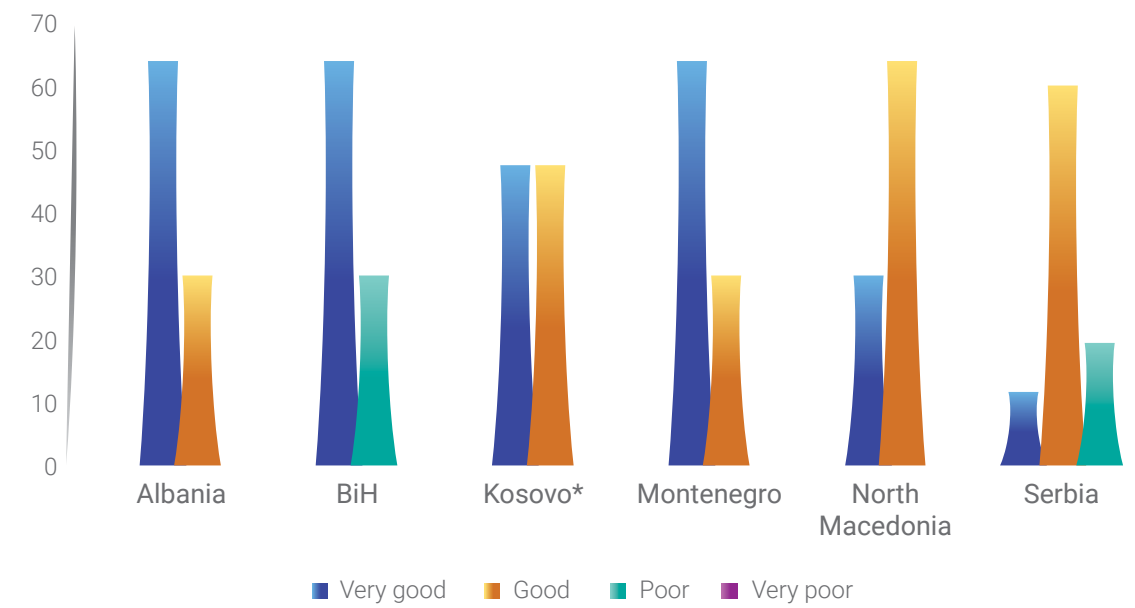
Source: "Study on parliamentary cooperation mapping and analysis of international parliamentary institutions and parliamentary networks in the Western Balkans and South East Europe", EC, February 2015

IV Results of survey

There is a sense of unity of standing among WB parliaments when it comes to the Berlin Process. The results of the survey show that there are no major discrepancies among the parliamentarians in that regard.

1. Berlin Process a driving engine to boosting regional cooperation:

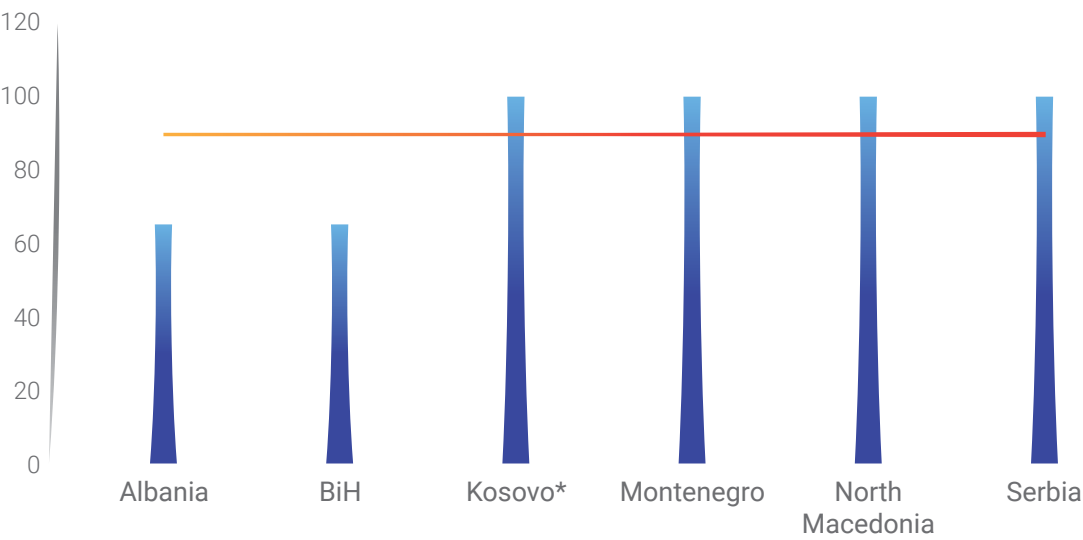
The Berlin Process is an important agenda in the region and we note that there is a good familiarity with the process among parliamentarians of WB 6. Overwhelming percentage of the respondents showed very good familiarity with the process and the respective agenda.



Furthermore, the respondents considered Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts. This finding is in line with the citizens' perception on regional cooperation. BB 2020 highlights that the regional cooperation continues to grow in prominence with an overwhelming majority of citizens (77%, up from 67% in 2015) and 65 % of them believe that what brings WB citizens together is more important than what separates us.

Another important finding from the survey is the confirmation that 90% of respondents do not see **regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU**.

The new structures established under BP, in addition to the existing ones (such as RCC), have contributed to strengthening the intergovernmental cooperation. 89 % of those interviewed considered the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.



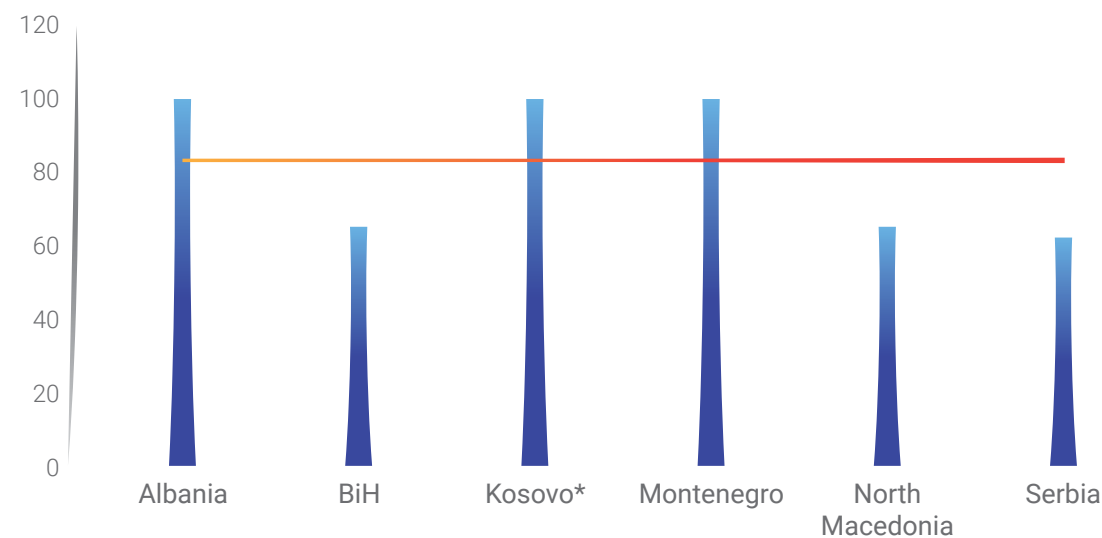
Majority of the respondents appreciated the contribution of RCC to the regional agenda, whilst it was suggested that there is a need to enhance involvement of parliaments in RCC events/activities as only one in three (34%) respondents participated in such activities.

2. Regional cooperation instrumental for economic development and reconciliation

90% of the interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy and they underlined the economic dimension of Berlin Process and also put emphasis on social and political dimensions. Additionally, **all respondents** highlighted the important role BP is playing with regard to reconciliation in the region.

	Albania	BiH	Kosovo*	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
people (social dimension)	X		X	X	X	X
economies (economic dimension)	X	X	X	X	X	X
governments (political dimension)				X	X	X
other						

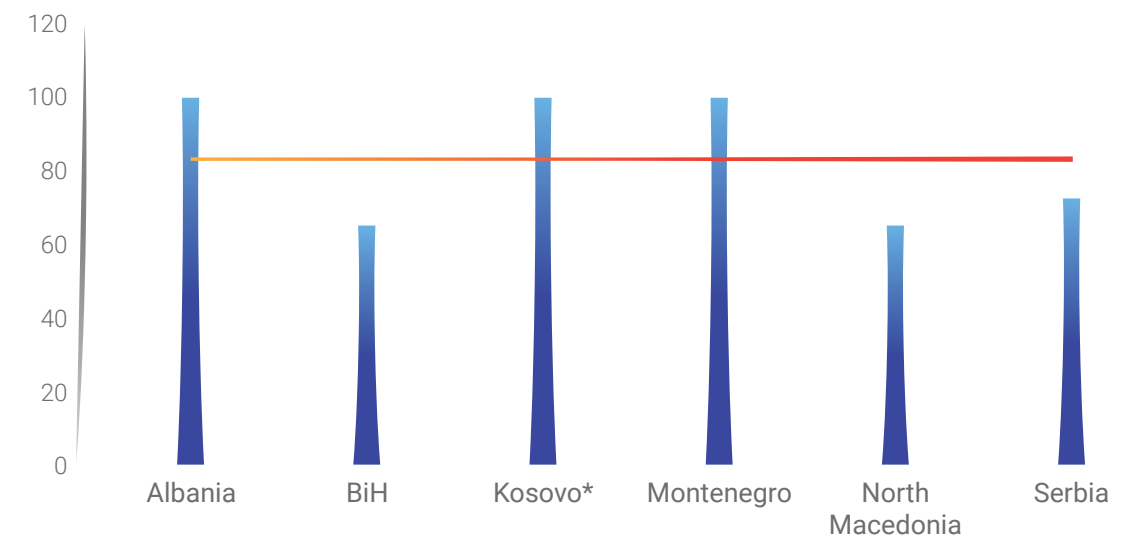
83% of survey participants is aware of Connectivity Agenda and correctly indicated that transport and energy are financed through Connectivity Agenda.



	Albania	BiH	Kosovo*	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
energy	X		X	X	X	X
transport	X	X	X	X	X	X
SMEs						
other						

The main areas of support under BP

Regional Economic Area (REA) and the respective Multi-annual Action Plan (MAP) for REA are considered crucial components of BP. 84% of interviewed parliamentarians have good familiarity with MAP REA and its contribution to enabling unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour within WB 6.



The interviewed parliamentarians identified that trade, investment and digital integration as the most prominent areas under MAP REA that contribute to regional cooperation (the answers which prevail are presented in the Table below):

	Albania	BiH	Kosovo*	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
digital integration	X	X	X	X	X	X
transport			X			
trade	X	X	X	X	X	X
investment	X		X	X	X	X
other						

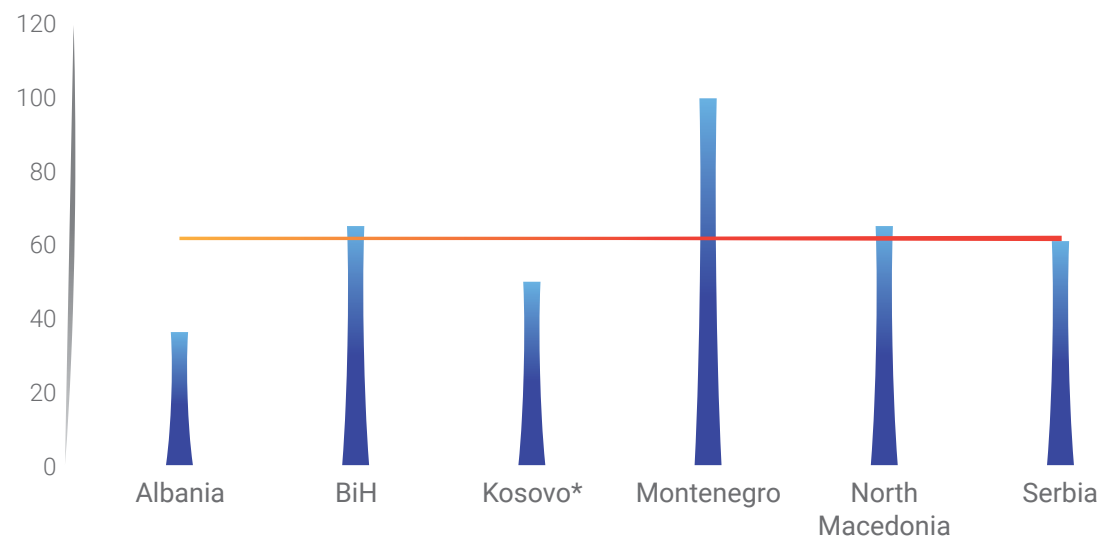
The recent achievements under MAP REA, such as the Regional Roaming Agreement, are considered good examples of enhancing regional economic integration. All respondents find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region as opportunity for cost reduction and improvements of mutual communication and cooperation.

When asked about the free movement with ID cards, parliamentarians overwhelmingly supported (by 75%) the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region.

3. Parliaments should be involved in regional agenda

93% of the interviewed see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives indicated economic cooperation and connectivity. 95% of those interviewed agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. 83% of respondents consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat in order to be successful and play a meaningful role.

There is a general concern (63% of those who replied) that there is a potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6. Furthermore, 54% of the interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.



While the role of inter-parliamentarian cooperation is considered vital, 99% of the respondents suggested the need to improve the transparency by making all relevant documents public. This would vitalise the initiatives and make them open to the public at large.

The following section shows the detailed results of the survey per each economy.

1 ALBANIA

THE PARLIAMENT OF ALBANIA

The Albanian Parliament³ is composed of a single chamber with 140 Members. It holds a number of international competencies as provided by the Constitution, and its rules of proceedings. Albania is an active player in regional parliamentary cooperation platforms and Parliamentary Assemblies. The Albanian Parliament has regular bilateral and multilateral relations.

The Parliament exercises its functions through permanent committees/subcommittees, special committees and investigative committees. Permanent Committees are:

1. Committee on Legal Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights
2. Committee for European Integration
3. Foreign Policy Committee
4. Committee on Economy and Finance
5. Committee on National Security
6. Committee for Production Activities, Trade and Environment
7. Committee on Labour, Social Affairs and Health
8. Committee for Education and Media.

Parliament of Albania has an important role in the European Integration process. Rules of Procedure and the Law No 15/2015 on the role of the Assembly in the accession of Albania to EU, stipulate a clear and central role of the Parliament in the accession process, mainly through, i) approximation of domestic legislation to the EU acquis, ii) oversight of the implementation of obligations and reforms undertaken in the framework of EU integration process, and iii) promoting the European integration process through inter-parliamentary cooperation and public information.

There are three parliamentary bodies responsible for carrying out tasks related to integration to the European Union:

1. The National Council for European Integration (NCEI) as the highest national advisory body on European Integration at the Assembly. The NCEI is an important instrument for an all-inclusive approach to EU-related reforms, established primarily to foster inclusiveness and unite all stakeholders around the reform process. It promotes and guarantees inclusive cooperation among political forces, public institutions and civil society and ensures transparency in the process.
2. Parliamentary Stabilisation and Association Committee – is a joint body of the Albanian Parliament and the European Parliament which works in line with the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
3. European Integration Committee – permanent body of the Parliament - primarily responsible for approximation of Albanian legislation to the European Union acquis, monitors the work of the Council of Ministers on the implementation of the obligation

³ <https://www.parlament.al/>

of the EU integration process, examines EU reports/conclusions and the position of Albania and may give recommendations, cooperates with the European Parliament and national parliaments of EU Member States, monitors the work of independent constitutional institutions on European matters, cooperates with civil society and interest groups.

RESULTS OF SURVEY IN ALBANIA

Representatives of Albania expressed very good familiarity with the Berlin Process and acknowledged the positive effects of such initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on the economic dimension of the process and connectivity. They also support implementation of Regional Roaming Agreement as well as creation of a regional framework for traveling with ID card in the region for all WB citizens. The interviewed support the idea of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between WB economies.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

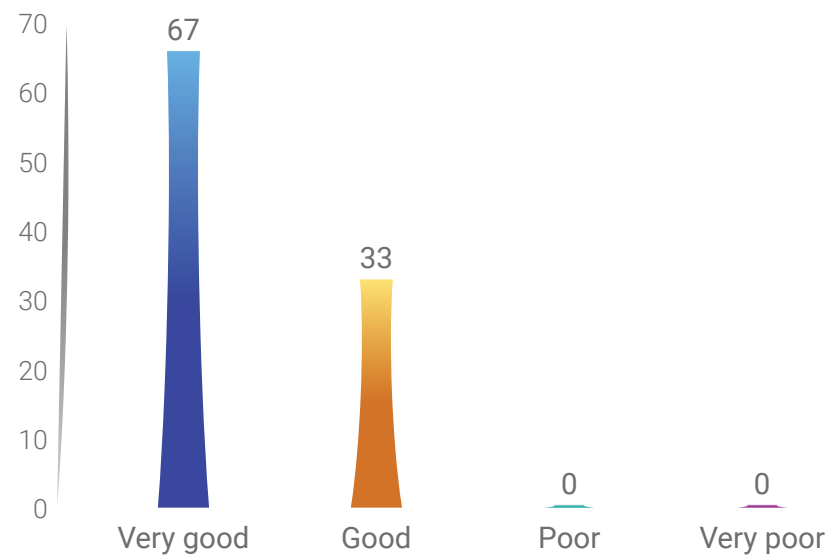


Figure 2 All interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the WB economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- “The interviewed consider Berlin Process as an initiative which aims to boost the WB toward the EU integration through its instruments such as political dialogue, economic incentives, regional projects and financial support. It contributes, through the regional cooperation, to harmonisation of the economies, of the standards and to cooperation between the governments. In this context, the government, civil society and the interest groups are to be in close cooperation for the harmonised development of the region.”
- “The Berlin Process is a high-level political initiative focusing on the WB6 and tackling core problems in the region. It started with a focus on enhancing connectivity and good governance through regional cooperation, and expanded to regional economic cooperation through the later adopted Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area, which aims to facilitate trade flows, services, capital and increase mobility of labour, while enabling the region to converge to EU standards. This would allow for

deeper trade and investment links with the EU, which in turn are expected to have a positive impact on economic development.”

- “Expansion of the existing spheres of cooperation in the Western Balkans region, improvement of connectivity along all of its dimensions: transport, energy, digital connectivity, interpersonal connectivity, bringing young people closer together through education, conservation of the environment.”

Figure 4 All interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

Figure 5 Those interviewed are primarily aware of social and economic dimensions of Berlin Process.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
people (social dimension)	X	X	X
economies (economic dimension)	X	X	X
governments (political dimension)	X		
other			

Figure 6 Survey participants are very well aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are very well informed about the Connectivity Agenda.

Figure 7 All survey participants are aware of 2015 Connectivity Agenda which sets aside one billion Euro in EU grants until 2020 to support connectivity projects.

Figure 8 Please mark the areas which are financed through Connectivity Agenda

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
energy	X	X	X
transport	X	X	X
SMEs			
other			

Figure 9 Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas:

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
technical assistance			
works (investment projects)			X
both	X	X	

Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of Albania are extremely well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 All interviewed are aware of MAP REA.

Figure 13 All interviewed agree that MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods,

services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Those interviewed identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
digital integration	X	X	X
transport			
trade	X	X	X
investment	X	X	X
other			

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council. 67% of the interviewed were involved in initiatives taken by RCC.

Figure 17 75% of the interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region and one participant did not reply to the question. The interviewed highlighted that the main reason for supporting this initiative is

- “The real problem in the Western Balkans is a lack of communication, lack of information and the objectivity of the issues linked to the disputes the WB has been suffering from for years. Communication with low costs will increase the information and the dialogue.”

Figure 18 All interviewed support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region.

Figure 19 67% of survey participants find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy for the following reasons:

- “Because the economy is based on exchange of people, goods, services and capital.”

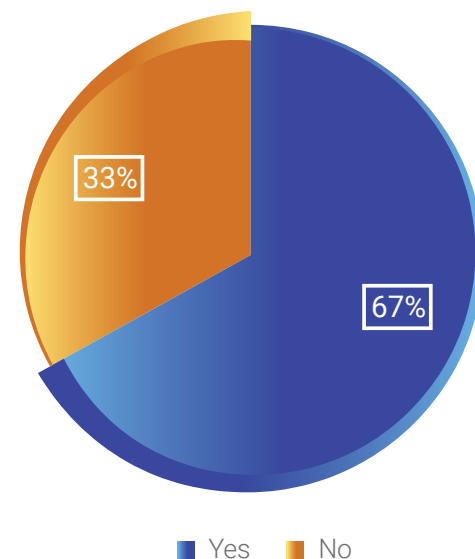


Figure 20 All interviewed consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 67% of those interviewed do not see regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.

Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin Process. 67% of those interviewed acknowledge the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation

within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives of Albania indicated economic cooperation and connectivity. 67% of the interviewed agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. Only 33% consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Science	9		
Reconciliation	2		
COVID-19	12	3	
Economic cooperation	1	3	
Climate	3		
Youth	6	4	
Culture	7		
Education	8	4	
Fight against organised crime	4		
Migration	10	4	
Connectivity	5	2	
Enlargement	11	1	

Figure 27: 67% of those interviewed already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.

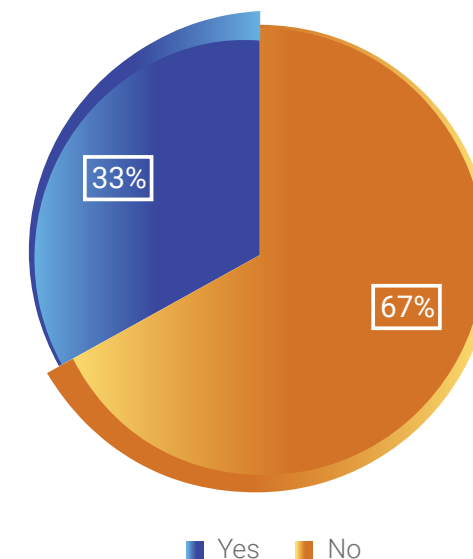


Figure 28 67% of those interviewed faced no difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.

Figure 29 All those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available.

Figure 30 gives an overview of additional comments, concerns or proposals made by survey participants in Albania:

- “The Western Balkans 6 are somehow underestimating the role of the Parliament and this is an index of the level of democracy in the region. The Parliament should be at the centre of the Berlin Process because the impact that the Berlin Process should have is to be supported primary by the citizens.”

2 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

THE PARLIAMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two Chambers: the House of Peoples and the House of Representatives. The House of Peoples has 15 members and three standing committees; the House of Representatives has 42 members and seven standing committees; and both Houses have six common standing committees. All legislative decisions enter into force upon adoption by both Houses.

Standing Committees of House of Peoples are:

1. Constitutional-Legal Committee
2. Committee on Foreign and Trade Policy, Customs, Transportation and Communications
3. Committee on Finance and Budget of the House of Peoples

The Committee on Foreign and Trade Policy, Customs, Transportation and Communications, among others, follows the conduct of foreign policy of the Presidency of BiH and the Council of Ministers of BiH; considers issues of cooperation of BiH with the United Nations and international community; considers issues of inter-parliamentary cooperation with the relevant parliamentary committees of other economies; considers issues of cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, OSCE and other international organisations; considers the activities of permanent or temporary delegations of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH in inter-parliamentary institutions; discusses ratification of international treaties, agreements and conventions; etc.

Standing Committees of the House of Representatives are:

1. Constitutional-Legal Committee
2. Committee on Foreign Affairs
3. Committee on Foreign Trade and Customs
4. Committee on Finance and Budget
5. Committee on Transport and Communications
6. Committee on Gender Equality
7. Committee for the Preparation of the Election of the BiH Council of Ministers

The Committee on Foreign Affairs monitors the conduct of foreign policy by the BiH Presidency and the BiH Council of Ministers; considers BiH co-operation with the United Nations and the international community; considers inter-parliamentary co-operation with the respective parliamentary committees of other economies; considers cooperation with the Council of Europe, Inter-parliamentary Union, Central European Initiative, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and other international organisations; considers issues related to the work of the institutions of BiH competent for foreign affairs and international relations; considers activities of permanent or temporary delegations of the BiH PA in inter-parliamentary institutions; considers granting and revoking consent to the ratification of international treaties, agreements and conventions.

Common standing committees of both Houses are:

1. Joint Committee on Defence and Security
2. Joint Committee on Supervision of the work of Intelligence and Security Agency
3. Joint Committee on Economic Reforms and Development
4. Joint Committee on European Integration
5. Joint Committee on Administrative Affairs
6. Joint Committee on Human Rights

Joint Committee on European Integration considers issues related to European integration; monitors implementation of the rights and obligations of BiH arising from international agreements relating to the Council of Europe; coordinates the work of the committees of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH in relation to European integration; analyses the results of the implementation of integration strategy for BiH and prepares comprehensive reports; considers plans, programmes, reports and information on the EU Stabilisation and Association Process; monitors implementation of the association strategy, launches initiatives to accelerate the implementation of the association strategy within the competence of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH; monitors the harmonisation of the national legislation with the acquis; cooperates with institutions in BiH (especially with the Directorate for European Integration), EU institutions and other economies on integration issues; organises presentation of public opinion research on integration issues; collects, stores and systematically presents to the members of the Committee information related to the EU; monitors the use of allocated EU funds; organises public discussion on European integration issues to gathers the views of representatives of civil society, NGOs, intellectuals, as well as governmental and non-governmental experts in specific fields; performs other tasks related to European issues.

RESULTS OF SURVEY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Representatives of BiH expressed very good familiarity with the Berlin Process and acknowledged the positive effects of such initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on fight against organised crime, economic cooperation, enlargement, connectivity, and migration. MPs fully support the idea of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between Western Balkan economies and underline the need to further improve transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

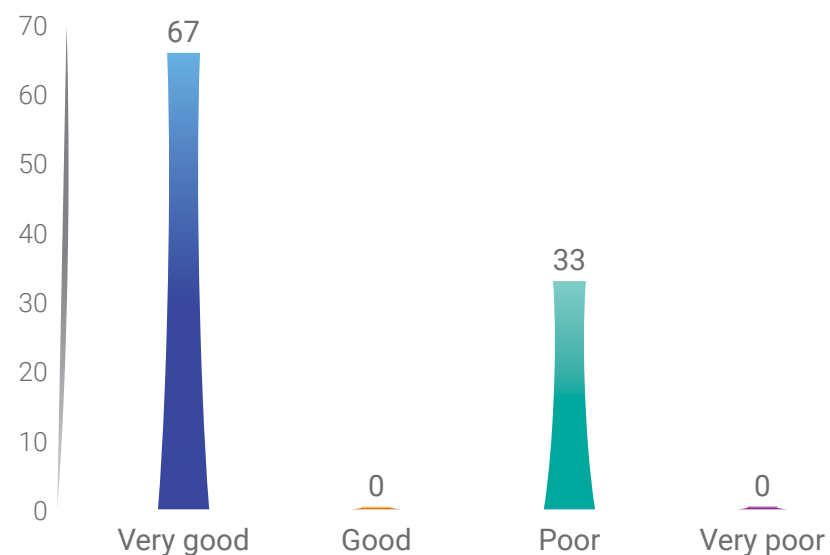


Figure 2 All those interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- “By exploitation and advancement of already established mechanisms such as RCC, SEETO, Transport Community, WBIF, CEFTA, etc. The most funds are committed to large infrastructure projects in the field of transport and electric energy.”
- “Process of EU integration was relaunched through the Berlin Process.”

Figure 4 All those interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

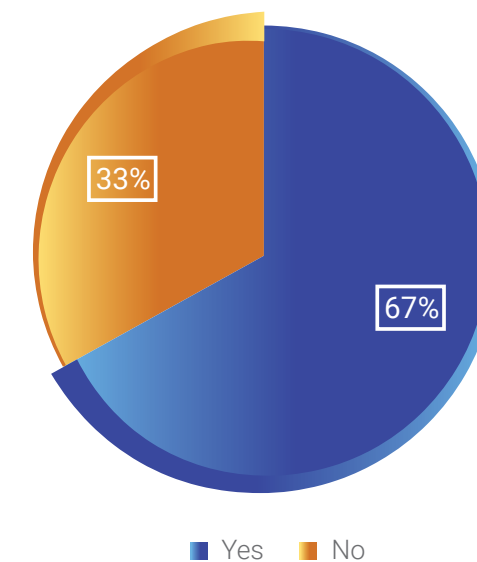
Figure 5 Those interviewed are primarily aware of the economic dimension of Berlin Process.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
people (social dimension)			
economies (economic dimension)	X	X	X
governments (political dimension)			X
other			

Figure 6 67% of those interviewed are aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are well aware of the Connectivity Agenda, however there is room for further improvements.

Figure 7 33% of the interviewed is not aware of Connectivity Agenda .



And Figure 8 indicates their perception of the areas most supported through Connectivity Agenda

	Ans 1	Ans 2
energy	X	
transport	X	X
SMEs	X	
other		

Figure 9 Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB 6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas

	Ans 1	Ans 2
technical assistance		
works (investment projects)		X
both	X	

Figure 10 67% of those interviewed recognised Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) as an independently functioning institutional mechanism aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programmes.

Figure 11 Are you aware of RISE project?

There is room to improve familiarity with RISE project.

Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of BiH are rather well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 67% of those interviewed is aware of MAP REA.

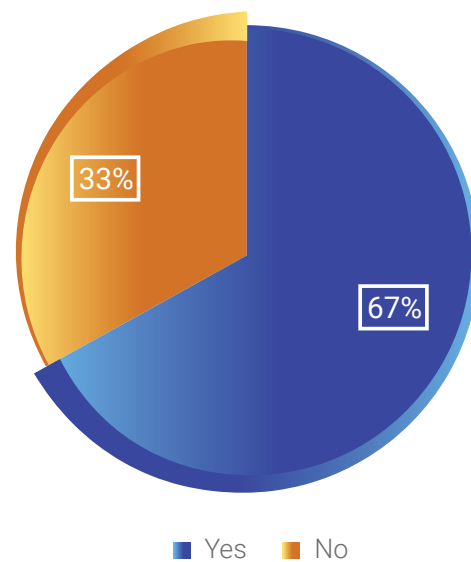


Figure 13 Those aware of MAP REA agree that it aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Those interviewed identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2
digital integration	X	X
transport		
trade	X	X
investment	X	
other		

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council. Respondents involved in initiatives taken by RCC were satisfied with their performance.

Figure 17 All those interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region. The reasons are following:

- “The Regional Roaming Agreement introduced significant reductions from its first day of implementation, 1 July 2019, and is to entirely eliminate roaming costs by July 2021. The introduction of roaming free regime in WB enables the prospective integration of our region in EU’s roaming free space – which can be a major accomplishment.”

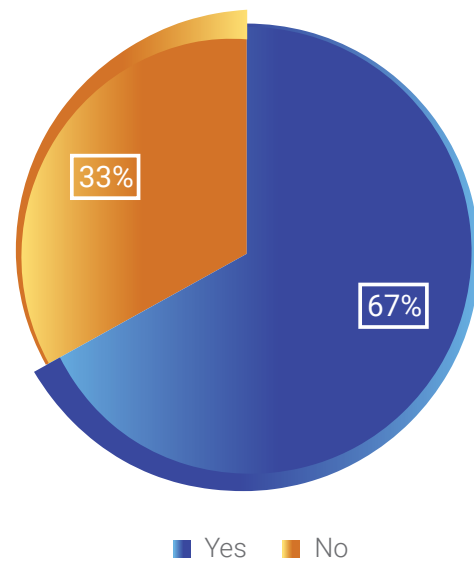
Figure 18 67% of those interviewed support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region.

Figure 19 67% of those interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy for the following reasons:

- “By committing to the development of a Regional Economic Area, the Western Balkan (including Bosnia and Herzegovina) leaders can help the region to make the most of its economic potential. Consolidating a market of 18 million citizens will create new opportunities for citizens and business alike. A deeper level of economic integration would bring about significant benefits for the region.”
- “They promote investment from abroad, EU in particular, as well as expertise. Additionally, such projects promote integration as a general idea, which bodes well for reforms needed for EU integration in particular.”
- “Regional economic initiatives are good, but they must deviate from political messages.”

Figure 20 All respondents consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 67% of the survey participants consider regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.



Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin Process. **All** interviewed see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation with-in the Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives of BiH indicated: fight against organised crime, economic cooperation, enlargement, connectivity, and migration. **All** those interviewed also agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. **All** consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Science	8	9	7
Reconciliation		1	11
COVID 19		5	10
Economic cooperation	1	4	6
Climate	5	12	8
Youth	10	11	9
Culture	9	10	12
Education	7	8	2
Fight against organised crime	3	3	1
Migration	6	6	3
Connectivity	2	7	4
Enlargement	4	2	5

Figure 27: 33% of participants already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.

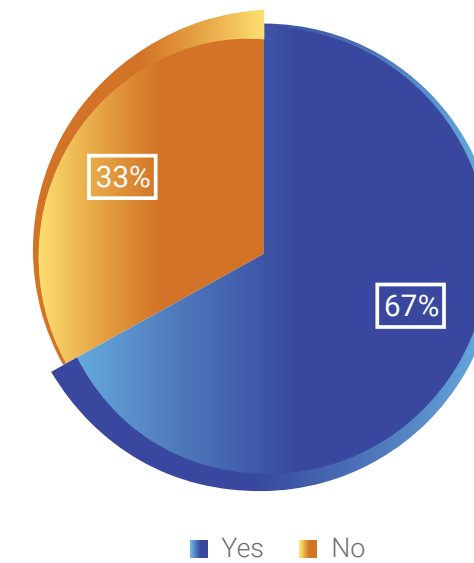


Figure 28 33% of those interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.

Figure 29 **All** those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available.

Figure 30 gives an overview of additional comments, concerns or proposals made by those interviewed in BiH:

- “Much greater outreach toward MPs is necessary. Only those who seek out information are fully familiar with these processes. This, to be sure, is partially due to BiH being completely undeveloped in terms of Parliamentary/legislative supremacy, and the resulting focus of international partners on the relations with the Executive level.”

3 KOSOVO*

THE PARLIAMENT OF KOSOVO*

Parliamentary committees are working bodies of the Assembly. Assembly of Kosovo* appoints standing (permanent) committees, functional (operational) committees and ad hoc committees that have the authority of the functional committee. The Committees are working bodies of the Assembly and most of them cover corresponding ministries in the government. Each Committee consists of 9 to 12 MPs.

The Assembly has four **standing committees**. Standing committees review all draft laws discussed in the Assembly. Those Committees are:

1. Committee on Budget and Finance
2. Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities and Return
3. Committee on Legislation and Judiciary
4. Committee on European Integrations.

Functional Committees have one or more specific fields of work covering the scope of work of respective ministries. Functional committees are:

1. Committee on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora
2. Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Culture, Youth and Sports
3. Committee on Economy, Trade, Industry, Energy, Transport and Telecommunication
4. Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Development and Spatial Planning
5. Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare
6. Committee on Public Administration, Local Governance and Media
7. Committee on Internal Affairs and Defence
8. Committee for Human Rights, Gender Equality, Missing Persons and Petitions
9. Committee for the Oversight of Public Finance
10. Committee for the Oversight of Kosovo* Intelligence Agency
11. Committee for the Oversight of Kosovo* Security Forces
12. Committee on Mandates, Immunities, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly

The Assembly may also establish **ad-hoc committees**. The ad hoc committee deals with the consideration of a particular issue.

Committee on European Integration – is the key Parliamentary body in the process of legal approximation and harmonisation of legislation with the EU acquis. The Committee oversees government activities related to the development of relations between Kosovo* and the EU, implementation of the SAA, implementation of the National Programme for the Implementation of the SAA, the findings of the European Commission Annual Reports,

4 *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244(1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

it oversees the implementation of the European Reform Agenda, and the priorities of the Government towards Kosovo*'s European integration process.

Within the parliamentary diplomacy, the Committee co-operates and coordinates with EU institutions and their offices in Kosovo*, it cooperates and exchanges best practices with EU member states and participants in the Stabilisation and Association Process. It also participates in regional and international organisations and initiatives.

Committee on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora – cooperates with the parliaments of other economies; promotes Assembly membership in regional and international parliamentary organisations; discusses ratification of treaties, which Kosovo* is to be a party of; follows the negotiations led by the Government; oversees the implementation of the laws related to foreign affairs, diaspora and diplomatic immunities; oversees the Government's actions in the area of foreign policy and diaspora; cooperates with counterpart committees of other economies' parliaments; promotes the parliamentary diplomacy of the Assembly; considers draft laws proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora; and considers the draft budget of the line Ministry.

RESULTS OF SURVEY IN KOSOVO*

Representatives of Kosovo* are highly familiar with the Berlin Process and are aware of the positive effects of the initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on the economic and social dimension of the process, and economic cooperation, reconciliation, enlargement, science and education are identified as the main priorities of cooperation. Representatives of Kosovo* put more emphasis on reconciliation than the other participants of the survey. All those interviewed are very well aware of MAP REA and support implementation of Regional Roaming Agreement.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

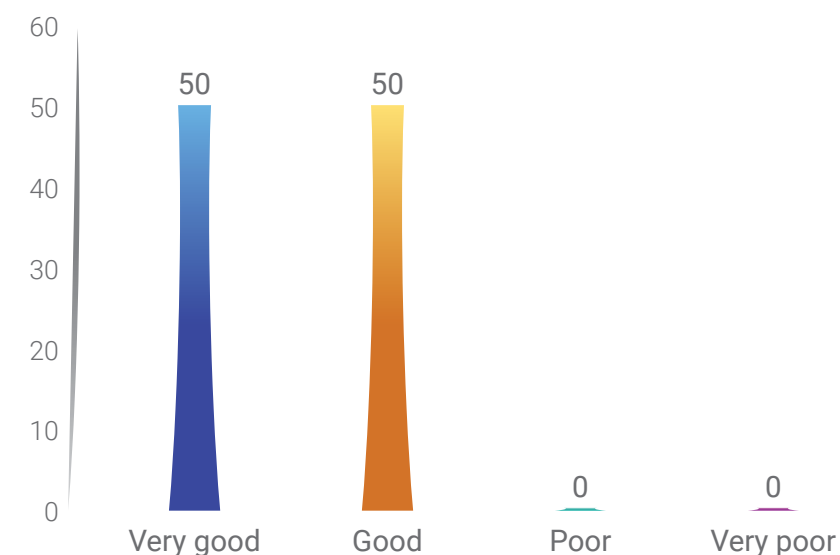


Figure 2 All those interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- “The Berlin Process has a positive impact on the economic growth of Western Balkan economies and the regional cooperation.”
- “With the aim to provide a framework for closer regional cooperation in view of achieving sustainable economic growth, fully-fledged market democracy, and reconciliation, the Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation through joint mechanisms and several projects in different sectors by providing regional economies with specific technical and financial means.”

Figure 4 All those interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

Figure 5 Those interviewed are primarily aware of the economic dimension of Berlin Process, but also underline social and political dimensions.

	Ans 1	Ans 2
people (social dimension)	X	X
economies (economic dimension)	X	X
governments (political dimension)		X
other		

Figure 6 All those interviewed are very well aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are well aware of the Connectivity Agenda, however there is room for further improvements.

Figure 7 All interviewed are aware of Connectivity Agenda. And the main areas financed through this instrument are energy and transport (Figure 8)

	Ans 1	Ans 2
energy	X	X
transport	X	X
SMEs		X
other		

Figure 9 Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB 6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas

	Ans 1	Ans 2
technical assistance	X	
works (investment projects)		
both		X

Figure 10 and 11 All those interviewed recognised Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) and are well aware of RISE project.

Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of Kosovo* are very well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 All interviewed are aware of MAP REA.

Figure 13 All interviewed agree that MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Those interviewed identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2
digital integration	X	X
transport	X	X
trade	X	X
investment	X	X
other		

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council. Respondents who were involved in such initiatives were very satisfied with the RCC performance.

Figure 17 All those interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region. The reasons are following:

- “Lower costs.”
- “In principle yes, but we are looking forward to the full implementation of the Agreement, so the citizens of Kosovo* can enjoy the benefits of this agreement.”

Figure 18 50% of those interviewed support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region, while 50% disapproves of such idea.

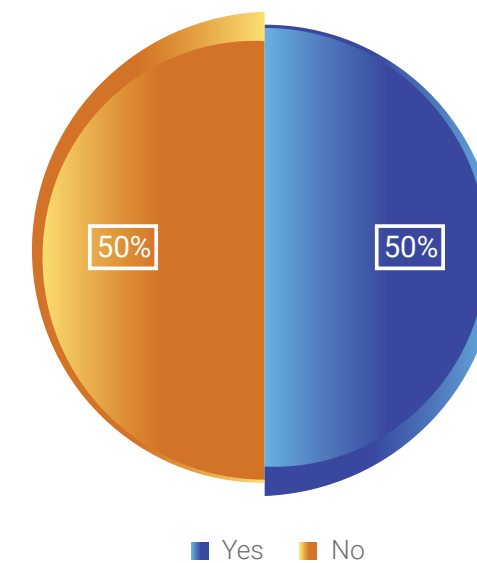


Figure 19 All interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy for the following reasons:

- “Regional initiatives are useful because they facilitate economic cooperation, transport, etc. between different economies in the region.”
- “Economies of our region need to cooperate much more in order to be competitive at European and global level. We see the potential regional initiatives are providing as a tool to bring better conditions to Kosovo*’s economy in order to establish connections

with partners in the region and subsequently cooperate in stages when approaching third parties.”

Figure 20 All interviewed consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 No one of those interviewed sees regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.

Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin Process. **All** interviewed see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives of Kosovo* indicated: economic cooperation, reconciliation, enlargement, science and education. **All** interviewed also agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. **All** interviewed consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2
Science	6	5
Reconciliation	5	1
COVID 19	2	8
Economic cooperation	1	2
Climate	10	7
Youth	4	6
Culture	9	12
Education	8	4
Fight against organised crime	3	11
Migration	11	9
Connectivity	12	10
Enlargement	7	3

Figure 27: 50% of respondents already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.

Figure 28 50% of those interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.

Figure 29 All those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available.

Figure 30 gives an overview of additional comments, concerns or proposals made by those interviewed in Kosovo*:

- “The region needs an updated agenda to target different levels of issues, especially at the bilateral level. Financing of projects for certain economies should be conditioned by the reciprocal implementation of existing agreements between WB6 economies, because lack of progress on a bilateral level (the reciprocal implementation of existing agreements) is impeding the progress towards a genuine process of regional reconciliation. The principle of equal treatment should be the basic principle for the development of regional cooperation.”

4 NORTH MACEDONIA

THE PARLIAMENT OF NORTH MACEDONIA

The Parliament of North Macedonia can establish permanent working groups to consider draft laws, monitor the implementation of acts of the Parliament as well as examine and discuss other issues under its jurisdiction. The working bodies can establish international cooperation in the areas for which they are established.

Permanent working bodies of the Parliament of the North Macedonia are:

1. Committee on Constitutional Issues
2. Legislative Committee
3. Defence and Security Commission
4. Committee on Political System and Community Relations
5. Committee on Foreign Affairs
6. Commission for European Affairs
7. Committee on Election and Name Questions
8. Existing Inquiry Commission for Protection of Freedom and Rights of Citizens
9. Commission on Supervision of the Work of the National Security Agency and the Intelligence Agency
10. Commission for Supervision over the Implementation of Communications Monitoring Measures
11. Committee on Financing and Budget
12. Committee on Economic Affairs
13. Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy
14. Commission for Transport, Communications and Ecology
15. Committee on Education, Science and Sport
16. Committee on Culture
17. Health Committee
18. Committee on Labour and Social Policy
19. Commission for Local Self-Government
20. Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
21. Commission on Rules of Procedure and Mandate-Immunity Issues.

Commission for European Affairs is responsible for:

- monitoring the implementation of the National Strategy for Integration of the North Macedonia in the European Union and regularly informing the Assembly on implementation;
- monitoring the fulfilment of the obligations arising from the agreements between the

North Macedonia and the European Union and the implementation of the programmes and other acts of the institutions of the European Union, including the financial assistance programmes;

- monitoring and encouraging the process of harmonisation of legislation of North Macedonia with the legislation of the European Union, as well as proposing measures for improvement of the harmonisation procedures, giving opinions and proposals for the activities of other working bodies of the Parliament and directing their attention to issues related to the accession of the North Macedonia to the European Union;
- monitoring the activities of the Government and the relevant administration bodies in relation to the accession of the North Macedonia to the European Union and giving opinions and recommendations;
- analysing the implication/consequences of the accession of the North Macedonia to the European Union and preparing reports on them;
- regularly informing the Parliament on all issues related to European integration, including through the collection of information, literature and other documents related to the European Union;
- proposing and carrying out activities aimed at informing the public about the processes of European integration;
- cooperating with the relevant commissions of other economies; and
- considering other issues related to the European integration and the accession of North Macedonia to the European Union.

Committee on Foreign Affairs is responsible for:

- foreign policy of North Macedonia and its relations with other economies and international organisations;
- the policy that ensures taking due regard for the position and rights of the members of the Macedonian people in the neighbouring economies and for the emigrants from North Macedonia, as well as for the cultural, economic and social rights of the citizens abroad;
- accession or secession of an alliance or union with other economies;
- accession or exit from membership of international organisations;
- the need to start negotiations for concluding bilateral and multilateral international agreements of the North Macedonia, i.e. for the platforms of these negotiations;
- ratification of international agreements;
- international regulations in the field of human and civil rights, freedoms and documents of international organisations and associations;
- establishing parliamentary cooperation of North Macedonia with other economies and international organisations;
- establishing cooperation with the foreign policy committees of the parliaments of other economies;
- initiatives and proposals for defining the foreign policy strategy of North Macedonia; and
- other issues related to the foreign policy of North Macedonia.

RESULT OF SURVEY IN NORTH MACEDONIA

Representatives of North Macedonia expressed very good familiarity with the Berlin Process and acknowledged the positive effects of such initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on the economic dimension of the process, but benefits are also seen in other areas such as reconciliation, fight against corruption, etc. They also support implementation of Regional Roaming Agreement as well as creation of a regional framework for traveling with ID card in the region of all WB citizens. Those interviewed fully support the idea of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between Western Balkan economies. There is room to further promote concrete projects implemented in the framework of this initiative.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

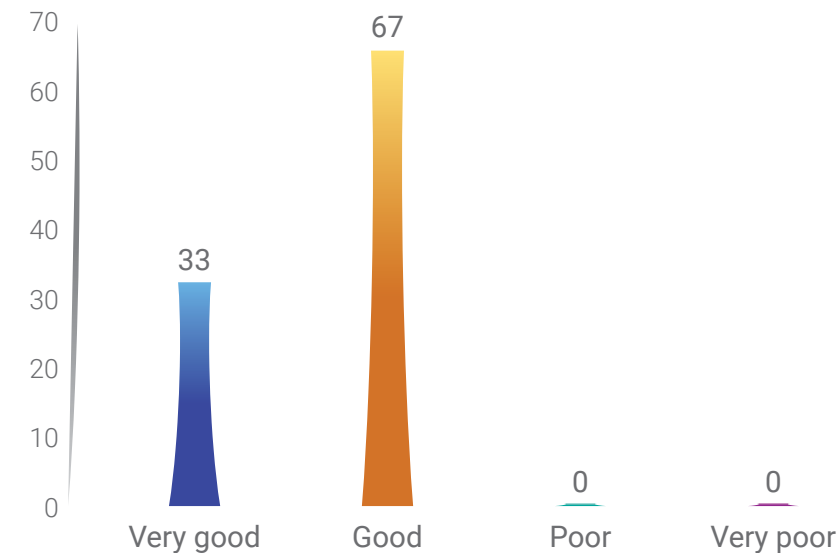


Figure 2 All those interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- "It has an impact on fighting corruption, improving the investment climate, strengthening regional cooperation; it improves infrastructure and energy, etc."
- "This Process definitely has positive impact on the regional economic cooperation and sustainable growth, initiating more projects in the fields of transport and infrastructure, economic connectivity, youth cooperation and cooperation among businesses and among civil societies of the Western Balkans."
- "The Berlin Process is mainly focused on the process of reconciliation in the region and overcoming the past animosities between different economies. Economic growth is mainly coordinated by the European Commission and other donors' financial assistance is aimed at improving road infrastructure and energy sector. The Chamber Investment Forum is mainly focused on establishing a more integrated regional market and creating a favourable business environment in their economies, which will eventually lead to normalisation of their bilateral relations. Supporting the resolution of political problems between the economies and deepening the connections between the people in the region paves the way for greater economic cooperation."

Figure 4 All those interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

Figure 5 Those interviewed are primarily aware of the economic dimension of Berlin Process, but also underline social and political dimensions.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
people (social dimension)		X	X
economies (economic dimension)	X	X	X
states (political dimension)			X
other			

Figure 6 All those interviewed are aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are well aware of the Connectivity Agenda, however there is room for further improvements.

Figure 7 67% of those interviewed is aware of Connectivity Agenda.

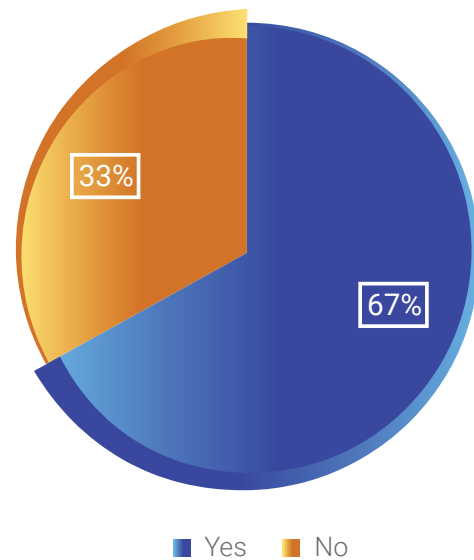


Figure 8 Please mark the areas which are financed through Connectivity Agenda

	Ans 1	Ans 2
energy	X	X
transport	X	X
SMEs	X	
other		

Figure 9 Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB 6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas:

	Ans 1	Ans 2
technical assistance		
works (investment projects)		X
both	X	

Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of North Macedonia are rather well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 67% of those interviewed is aware of MAP REA.

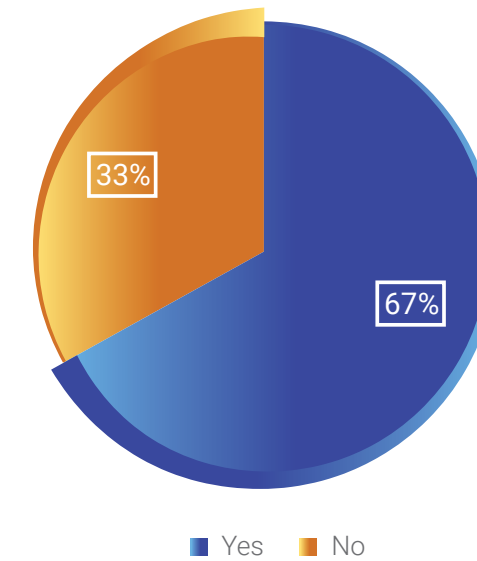


Figure 13 All interviewed agree that MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Those interviewed identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
digital integration	X	X	X
transport			
trade	X	X	X
investment	X	X	X
other			

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council and their level of satisfaction. **None** of the interviewed was involved in initiatives taken by RCC.

Figure 17 All those interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region. The reasons are following:

- "People will benefit when travelling abroad and the mobility among WB economies is very high. We will feel comfortable enough while abroad."

- “This agreement is very useful, especially because of lower prices, and faster lines. It means more frequent and cheaper communication, first of all for the citizens, as well as between the economic partners and companies in the region.”
- “It will increase both cooperation and contacts between people and the business community.”

Figure 18 All interviewed support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region.

Figure 19 All interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy for the following reasons:

- “Since we are a relatively small region with not so good history among us regional initiatives may play the role of “bridges” among people in order to go through the past and build a better and brighter future for the region.”
- “We find that this regional initiative means trade facilitation to support faster, easier and less costly trade.”
- “Regional cooperation is essential for the future European integration. Also, previous historical and economic ties and peoples’ familiarisation with the products go in favour of regional economy and trade, despite open bilateral issues. It will not only boost individual economies, but will also improve business environment, and make them more prepared for the eventual EU membership. Better connection at the same time means better living standard for the citizens.”

Figure 20 All interviewed consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 No one interviewed sees regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.

Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin Process. All interviewed see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives of North Macedonia indicated: economic cooperation, fight against organised crime, connectivity, and enlargement. All those interviewed also agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. 67% consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat, and 33% oppose the idea.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Science	9	11	
Reconciliation	12	6	X
COVID 19	3	12	X
Economic cooperation	2	2	
Climate	4	9	X
Youth	6	10	X
Culture	10	7	
Education	5	8	X
Fight against organised crime	1	5	X
Migration	11	4	X

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Connectivity	8	3	X
Enlargement	7	1	X

Figure 27: 67% of respondents already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.

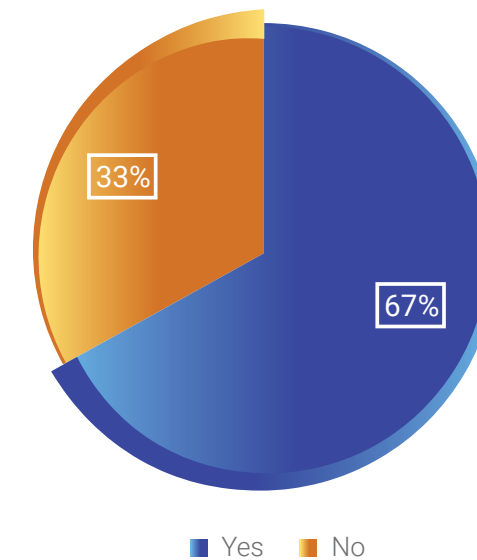


Figure 28 All interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.

Figure 29 All those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available.

Figure 30 gives an overview of additional comments, concerns or proposals made by survey participants in North Macedonia:

- “People in this region must have more cooperation and develop people-to-people diplomacy to understand that we share the same values, have the same goals and that the region’s past/history must not be repeated. We must show that we have learned the lessons from the past/ history. It can be done if we talk to each other, discuss with one another and get engaged in common projects (in different areas of social life, infrastructure, joint fight against crime, etc.) that lead to a better future for all of us!”
- “Any future activities both at governmental and parliamentary level should be observant of the principle of non-overlapping; each initiative and process should make its objectives clear and unique. It will help in the achievement of the envisaged priorities and consequently bring more results.”

5 MONTENEGRO

THE PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO

After the elections in August 2020 the Parliament of Montenegro established the Working Group for drafting proposals on amendments to the Rules of Proceedings of the Parliament of Montenegro. Working Group was established on 27 November 2020. Until 23 December 2020 the Working Group had nine sessions. By the time this study was finalised draft Rules of Proceedings was under discussion.

At the time the study was prepared the Parliament of Montenegro had following working bodies:

- Constitutional Committee
- Legislative Committee
- Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration
- Security and Defence Committee
- Committee on International Relations and Emigrants
- Committee on European Integration
- Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget
- Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms
- Gender Equality Committee
- Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports
- Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning
- Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare
- Anti-corruption Committee
- Administrative Committee
- Committee on Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure
- Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation
- Committee on Monitoring the Implementation of the Decision on granting a long-term lease of Island Lastavica with fortress Mamula, Municipality Herceg Novi and Decision on Accepting Annex No. 1 to the Lease Contract of the hotel "Kraljičina plaža", Budva

Montenegro has two parliamentary bodies involved in the process of European integration:

1. Committee on European Integration – responsible to:

- monitor accession negotiations of Montenegro to the European Union;
- monitor and assess the course of negotiations and gives opinions and guidelines, on behalf of the Parliament, on prepared negotiating positions;
- consider information on the negotiation process and considers and gives opinions on issues raised during the negotiations;
- consider and assesses functioning of the Negotiation team.

2. Committee on International Relations and Emigrants – with following tasks:

- consider issues related to foreign policy and international relations within the competencies of the Parliament;
- consider proposals for laws on ratification of international treaties;
- propose platforms for talks with foreign delegations and consider reports on visits, participation in international gatherings and study visits within the competencies of the Parliament;
- adopt annual program and quarterly detailed international cooperation programs;
- cooperate and exchange experience with relevant working bodies in other parliaments and international integrations, through the establishment of joint bodies, friendship groups, undertaking joint actions, harmonising positions on issues of joint interest;
- issue opinions on ambassador candidates and heads of other diplomatic representative offices abroad;
- consider issues related to the status of Montenegrin emigrants in other economies, and propose measures to exercise, promote and protect their rights;
- establish contacts and cooperates with associations of Montenegrin emigrants abroad.

RESULT OF SURVEY IN MONTENEGRO

Representatives of Montenegro expressed very good familiarity with the Berlin Process and acknowledged the positive effects of the initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on education, youth, and connectivity. They also fully support implementation of Regional Roaming Agreement and also creation of a regional framework for traveling with ID card in the region for all WB citizens. Those interviewed support the idea of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between Western Balkan economies.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

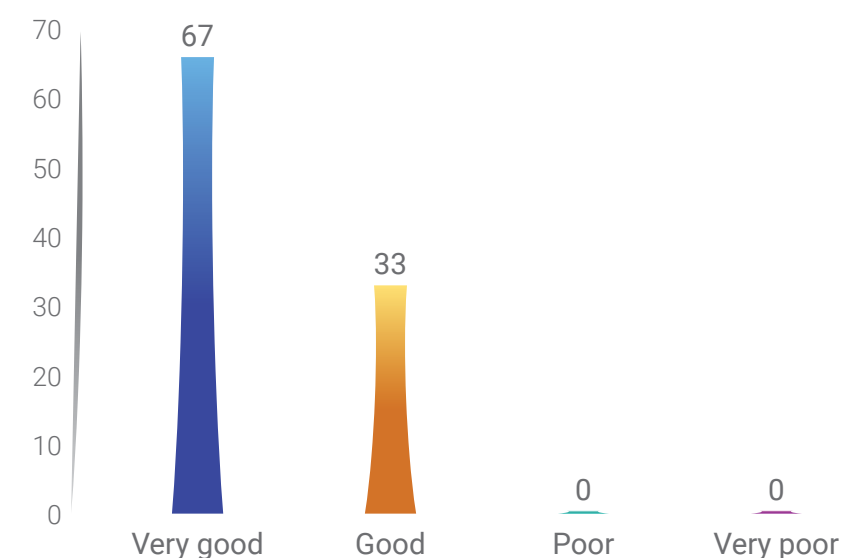


Figure 2 All those interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- “Investments through the Berlin Process contribute to development of infrastructure and better connectivity between Western Balkan economies. This is one of the key preconditions for economic development. In addition, the improvement of security and the rule of law, as well as the opening of centres for strengthening youth policy have a significant impact on regional cooperation.”
- “Berlin Process is an incentive to improve regional cooperation and is an important step that will contribute to the European integration of the region. Given the small size of economies in the region in the global market, the economy of the Western Balkans has a better chance of integrating into the global market if it is united [with other economies] in certain segments. Harmonisation of investment policies of the six economies of the Western Balkans, combined with the EU standards, contributes to economic growth, makes the region more prospective market and contributes to the overall development of the entire region.”
- “...support to the private sector for the benefit of developing economies and human capital and openness to establish WB Guarantee Fund. Support in sectors such as research and innovations should remain at the heart of the initiative, thus promoting prevention of brain drain and connecting the economy, science, technologies. It is important to mention the concrete results of the initiative such as the agreement on roaming tariffs which truly brought benefits for citizens.”

Figure 4 All those interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

Figure 5 Those interviewed are primarily aware of the economic dimension of Berlin Process, but also underline social and political dimensions.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Science		X	X
Reconciliation	X	X	X
COVID 19		X	X
Economic cooperation			

Figure 6 All those interviewed are aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are well aware of the Connectivity Agenda, however there is room for further improvements.

Figure 7 All interviewed are aware of Connectivity Agenda.

Figure 8 Please mark the areas which are financed through Connectivity Agenda.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
energy		X	X
transport	X	X	X
SMEs			
other			

Figure 9 Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB 6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
technical assistance			
works (investment projects)	X		
both		X	X

Figure 10 and 11 All interviewed recognised Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) and 67% are aware of RISE project.

Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of Montenegro are very well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 All interviewed are aware of MAP REA.

Figure 13 All interviewed agree that MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Those interviewed identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
digital integration	X	X	X
transport		X	
trade	X	X	X
investment	X	X	X
other			

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council. Respondents who were involved in such initiatives were very satisfied with the RCC performance.

Figure 17 All interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region. The reasons are following:

- “By eliminating the costs of roaming between the economies of the region, the communication costs will be significantly reduced, thus contributing to better social networking. Reducing costs will be another step in the field of integration processes.”
- “With lower prices of roaming from 1 July 2019, and from July 2021 we will have an equalisation [of these prices] with the prices of domestic traffic. Citizens and business community will benefit from this agreement.”

Figure 18 75% of those interviewed support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region. One survey participant did not reply to the question.

Figure 19 All interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy for the following reasons:

- “Through regional initiatives, it is possible to influence better infrastructural connections, construction of highways, railways, development of capacities in tourism sector, reduction of costs at border posts through simplification of procedures, quality and speed of customs services, unification of actions at border posts. Initiatives in the

field of digital technologies with the aim of technological development are a way to create new jobs.”

- “Improves the investment environment and investment reform; provides access to finance to support strategic sectors; improves attractiveness for foreign and regional companies; job creation.”
- “Finding common interests, building competition, connecting infrastructure among economies, people, and various sectors is a precondition of growth.”

Figure 20 **All** interviewed consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 **No one** interviewed sees regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.

Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin process. **All** those who replied see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. **All** those who replied also agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process and consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat. One survey participant did not reply to this bloc of questions.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3
Science	X	10	
Reconciliation		2	
COVID 19		6	
Economic cooperation		3	
Climate		7	
Youth	X	5	
Culture		9	
Education	X	8	
Fight against organised crime	X	11	
Migration		12	
Connectivity		1	
Enlargement		4	

Figure 27: **All** interviewed already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.

Figure 28 67% of those interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.

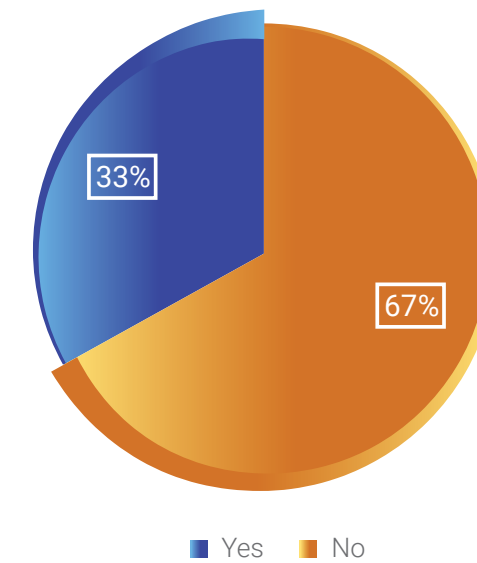


Figure 29 75% of those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available. One participant did not reply to the question.

6 SERBIA

THE PARLIAMENT OF SERBIA

The Parliament of Serbia has the following working bodies:

1. Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Committee
2. Committee on Administrative, Budgetary, Mandate and Immunity Issues
3. Committee on Constitutional and Legislative Issues
4. Committee on Education, Science, Technological Development and the Information Society
5. Committee on Finance, State Budget and Control of Public Spending
6. Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality
7. Committee on Kosovo*-Metohija
8. Committee on Labour, Social Issues, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction
9. Committee on Spatial Planning, Transport, Infrastructure and Telecommunications
10. Committee on the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region
11. Committee on the Economy, Regional Development, Trade, Tourism and Energy
12. Committee on the Judiciary, Public Administration and Local Self-Government
13. Committee on the Rights of the Child
14. Culture and Information Committee
15. Defence and Internal Affairs Committee
16. Environmental Protection Committee
17. European Integration Committee
18. Foreign Affairs Committee
19. Health and Family Committee
20. Security Services Control Committee

European Integration Committee performs the following tasks: considers draft laws and other acts and their compliance with the legislation of the European Union and the Council of Europe and gives a preliminary opinion on the justification of the abbreviated procedure; considers plans, programmes, reports and information on the stabilisation and association process with the European Union; monitors the implementation of the association strategy, proposes measures and initiates actions to accelerate the implementation of the association strategy within the competence of the National Assembly; proposes measures for the establishment of a general, national agreement on Serbia's accession to European institutions; develops cooperation with committees of parliaments of other economies and parliamentary institutions of the European Union.

Foreign Affairs Committee is responsible for foreign policy; relations with other economies, international organisations and institutions; ratification of international agreements in the

field of foreign relations; regulates the procedure for concluding and executing international agreements; protection of the rights and interests of Serbia and its citizens and domestic legal entities abroad.

RESULT OF SURVEY IN SERBIA

Representatives of Serbia expressed very good familiarity with the Berlin Process and acknowledged the positive effects of such initiative. Specific emphasis is placed on the economic dimension of the process, but benefits are also seen in other areas such as connectivity and reconciliation. They also fully support implementation of Regional Roaming Agreement and creation of a regional framework for traveling with ID card in the region for all WB citizens. Those interviewed fully support the idea of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between Western Balkan economies.

Figure 1 Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process (%)

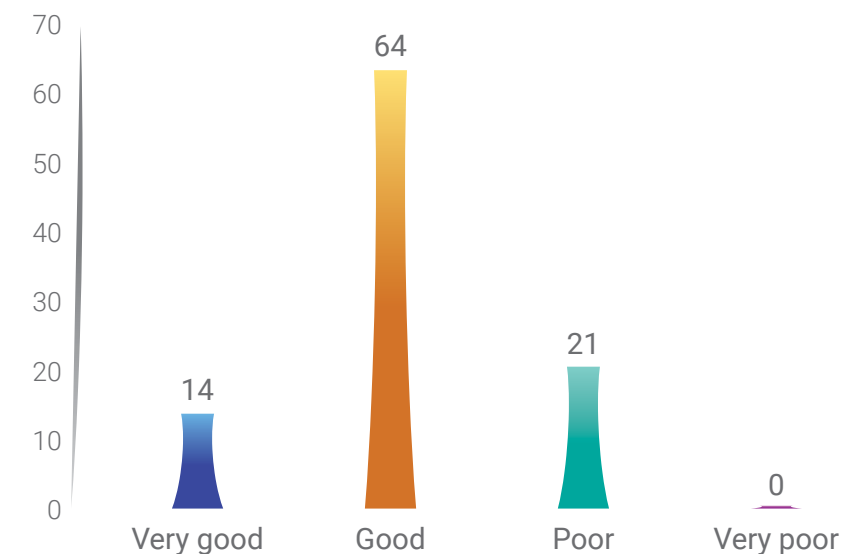


Figure 2 All those interviewed see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts.

Figure 3 Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

- “Since its inception in 2014, the Berlin Process has placed the economies of the Western Balkans back to the agenda of the European Union. The Berlin Process implies interconnection, but also regional cooperation, which, unfortunately, has been endangered lately. While the economies of the Western Balkans, on the one hand, are committed to connecting through this initiative, but also through the enlargement process – because connecting is part of the strategy announced by the European Commission – new barriers are being raised, which are reflected in political problems and less regional cooperation. This can have a negative impact on all previous achievements in large interconnection projects, such as railways, energy, transport and so on.”
- “By connecting people, calming down the tensions.”
- “The very contribution of the Berlin Process to the Western Balkan economies is in contributing to economic projects and regional infrastructure as well as connecting the

economies of the Western Balkans and facilitating access to funds for development and promotion of peace and relations as well as stability among Balkan economies and customs-free trade of goods and services as well as infrastructure projects that are of fundamental importance for the development of the region. Connecting young people and contributing to stability and peace through economic project development contributes to faster entry of Serbia into the European Union.”

- “Through various initiatives that have stemmed from the summits held.”
- “The Berlin Process was launched to contribute to resolving bilateral issues, foster reconciliation within the Western Balkans region and foster regional economic cooperation. Each summit has contributed to achieving these goals.”
- “By connecting economies in the region a good basis is created for better exchange of goods, services and capital. Regional cooperation, particularly in the area of transport and energy, is pivotal for socio-economic development. Good road infrastructure and a stable energy system will provide space for attracting investments and developing the economy.”
- “Barriers created due to political issues and low regional cooperation can unfortunately have a negative impact on the achievements made so far in the large connectivity projects, like those in the field of railways, energy, transportation, etc.”
- “It contributes by connecting the Western Balkan economies and by establishing cooperation among them for the purpose of achieving a common goal. In addition, the economies also receive some funds for the investments.”
- “According to the European Commission, cross-border bank fees will be lowered, investment policies will be aligned, and e-trade will be additionally stimulated, which will contribute to the economic growth and regional cooperation.”
- “Joint projects of economic entities increase success in the market and better positioning of economic entities, and their cooperation improves regional cooperation. Cooperation is needed at the economic, cultural and security levels. Regional cooperation between the economies of the Western Balkans is also necessary due to the migrant crisis.”

Figure 4 Most of those interviewed consider the existing format of Berlin Process to be appropriate.

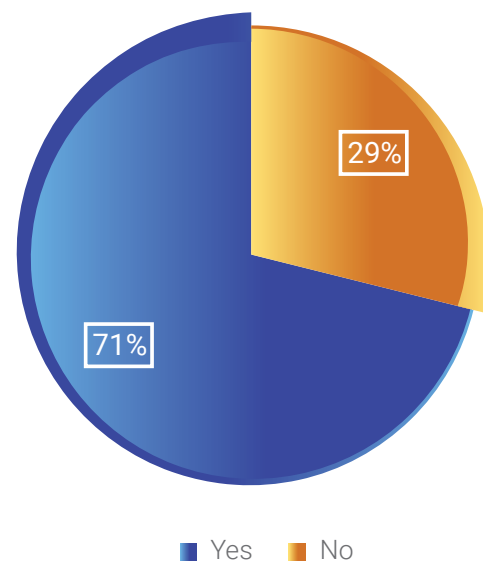


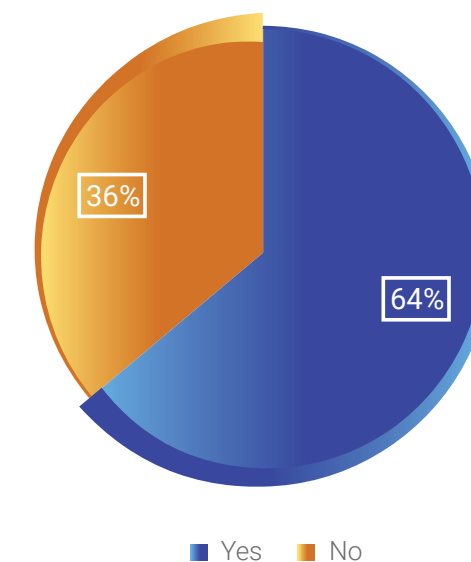
Figure 5 Those interviewed are very well aware of all dimensions of Berlin Process.

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3	Ans 4	Ans 5	Ans 6	Ans 7	Ans 8	Ans 9	Ans 10	Ans 11	Ans 12	Ans 13	Ans 14
people (social dimension)		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
economies (economic dimension)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
governments (political dimension)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
other														

Figure 6 All those interviewed are aware that intergovernmental cooperation in the framework of the Berlin Process is strengthened through the establishment of: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) as tangible outcomes of the Berlin Process.

Blok figures 7 to 9 are related to the 2015 Connectivity Agenda. Those interviewed are well aware of the Connectivity Agenda, however there is room for further improvement of their knowledge.

Figure 7 64% of those interviewed is aware of Connectivity Agenda.



Figures 12 to 14 are related to Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. Representatives of Serbia are well informed about MAP REA.

Figure 12 71% of those interviewed is aware of MAP REA.

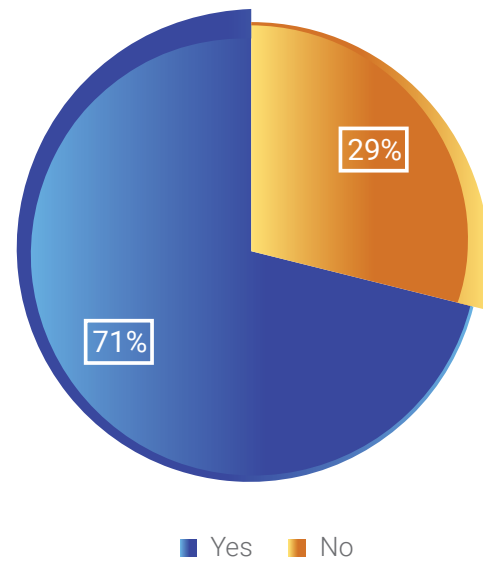


Figure 13 Those aware agree that MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour.

Figure 14 Respondents identified the following areas as focus of MAP REA:

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3	Ans 4	Ans 5	Ans 6	Ans 7	Ans 8	Ans 9	Ans 10	Ans 11	Ans 12	Ans 13	Ans 14		
digital integration	X	X	No reply	X	X		X	No reply	X	X	X	X	X	No reply		
transport		X				X						X	X		X	
trade	X	X				X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X
investment		X				X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X
other											X	X				

Figures 15 and 16 refer to the involvement of those interviewed in initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council and their level of satisfaction. 21% of those interviewed were involved in initiatives taken by RCC and were satisfied with the performance.

Figure 17 All those interviewed find Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region. The reasons are following:

- “It is very important signal of regional cooperation and integration.”
- “In the first phase, roaming charges are lower by 27 percent, and from 1 July 2021, roaming should be abolished in the economies of the Western Balkans.”
- “Better communication and exchange of information between the citizens of the region is achieved.”
- “Because it enables faster development and economic prosperity through dialogue and agreements, as well as through faster implementation of membership in the European Union. The connection via the telecommunication system and the reduction of roaming prices, in addition to faster implementation in the system, would enable easier and more favourable rates and economic security, faster and easier communication between businesses and citizens and would contribute not only to stability and more open cooperation, but also to the possibility for citizens to travel to member states, and to better multilateral cooperation.”

- “Contribution to economy, strengthening communication...”
- “Reducing costs always benefits citizens and the Regional Roaming Agreement provides that.”
- “Lower prices of mobile traffic by the end of 2020, whereas by the middle of 2021, prices will be equal to prices in the national mobile traffic.”

Figure 18 Nearly all survey participants support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region.

Figure 19 All interviewed find regional initiatives beneficial for their economy (one answer was not provided) for the following reasons:

- “Companies from the region would gain a larger common market with almost 20 million consumers. Without barriers and restrains for more mutual trade and investment, it would allow them to be more productive, more competitive, produce more, export, invest more themselves and attract more foreign investment. This means arranging our common space as a common market and a single investment destination, harmonising regulations within the region and with European standards, simplifying procedures, harmonising veterinary and phytosanitary certificates, recognising cross-border documentation and harmonising the working hours of border services, so that goods, people and capital could move unhindered throughout the region.”
- “With the agreements on cooperation and accessibility of funds for investment in infrastructure and economic development, I believe that it is extremely important for us to recognise a partner who can contribute to peace, stability and development in the Western Balkans through strengthening their economic capacities and strong economy.”
- “By exchanging experiences through regional initiatives, it is easier to solve problems. Regional initiatives can foster mutual cooperation, so that, for example, projects within the Cross-Border and Transnational Cooperation Programme can be developed and implemented, contributing to the creation of better living conditions for citizens.”
- “Regional cooperation is crucial for the efficient flow of goods and people, which is also important for the socio-economic development of the region. The strength of the EU lies, among other things, in successful regional cooperation.”
- “They raise the level of competitiveness and create a chance for new markets.”

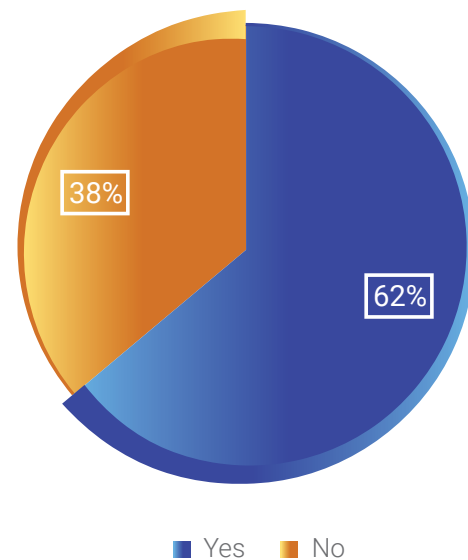
Figure 20 All interviewed consider initiatives taken within Berlin Process to contribute to reconciliation.

Figure 21 Not a single participant of the survey sees regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU.

Blok figures 22 and 26 relate to the role of the national parliament in the Berlin Process. 93% of those interviewed see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process and would support the proposal to organise annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits. As the most important areas of cooperation representatives of Serbia indicated: economic cooperation, connectivity, and reconciliation. All interviewed also agree that Members of Parliament should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process. All respondents consider that such an initiative among parliaments should be supported by a Technical Secretariat.

Priority areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority is marked with 1)

	Ans 1	Ans 2	Ans 3	Ans 4	Ans 5	Ans 6	Ans 7	Ans 8	Ans 9	Ans 10	Ans 11	Ans 12	Ans 13	Ans 14
Science	9	11	7	9	10	7	12	4	11	7	6	3	11	4
Reconciliation	2	1	1	6	6	9	10	12	7	1	5	1	2	1
COVID 19	12	5	2	1	1	12	3	3	2		9	11	1	2
Economic cooperation	7	2	6	2	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	8
Climate	8	8	8	7	12	8	7	10	12		12	12	12	10
Youth	4	6	11	8	7	6	6	9	5	4	3	5	7	11
Culture	11	9	10	10	7	4	11	8	10	6	10	7	9	6
Education	3	7	9	5	8	5	9	6	9		7	4	8	3
Fight against organised crime	10	4	3	4	5	10	5	11	6	3	8	8	6	5
Migration	6	10	12	11	11	11	8	7	8		11	10	4	7
Connectivity	5	3	4	3	2	2	4	5	4	5	4	6	5	12
Enlargement	1	12	5	12	4	1	2	2	3		2	9	10	9

Figure 27: 62% of respondents already noticed potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6.**Figure 28** 57% of those interviewed faced difficulties in finding relevant information on different regional initiatives.**Figure 29** 93% of those interviewed agreed that transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available.**Figure 30** gives an overview of additional comments, concerns or proposals made by those interviewed in Serbia:

- “Reasons for concern – the least progress has been made regarding regional reconciliation. The issue of the past is only open within RECOM, a regional, intergovernmental fact-finding commission on victims. The transparency of the Berlin Process should be improved and the role of the region in the field of EU security should be included.”

V Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the research and the analysis of responses to the questionnaire the following conclusions can be made:

- Participants of the survey provide full support to the strengthening of the parliamentary cooperation between WB 6 economies and are also ready to take an active role in the implementation of different meetings/summits/other events that might be organised in the framework of Berlin Process. Active engagement of the Parliaments in the process will contribute to further encouraging local ownership of the process by bringing it closer to the citizens and at the same time contribute to an increased visibility amongst the wider public.
- As the most important areas of future cooperation participants identified the topics from the economic sphere. Based on the inputs provided it can be concluded that MPs are ready to support the initiatives which bring concrete benefits to the citizens/business communities in the region such as implementation of roaming agreement or travelling with ID cards. Huge support is also given to the implementation of regional economic integration agendas and improvement of connectivity amongst WB economies.
- Another important area of future cooperation might be reconciliation. Several participants of the survey underline the importance of reconciliation in the region and MPs might give a significant contribution to making progress in this area.
- RCC as an umbrella regional organisation is well equipped to play an important role in assisting the establishment of an institutionalised parliamentary dialogue in line with the Chair’s conclusions of the Western Balkans Summit in Poznań which will allow for a higher level and better quality of involvement of the parliaments in the Berlin Process.
- Much greater outreach toward MPs is necessary to encourage their increased awareness on the regional agenda. Enhancement of the familiarity and awareness of MPs will improve the scrutiny from the respective parliamentary committees of the national parliaments, of the measures linked to the regional economic agenda and support its inclusion in the priority agendas of the region’s parliaments.
- It is recommendable to involve more MPs and parliament’s technical staff in activities and capacity building exercises related to regional economic integration, especially as regards approximation of the legislation and EU standards in order to achieve a better level of awareness and strengthened role of the region’s parliaments in supporting this agenda.
- Further support the work of the Parliamentary Committees on European Integration/Affairs of the States Participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process in South East Europe (COSAP) and inform them regularly on the measures linked with regional integration agenda. This will contribute to a better level of information sharing with the Parliaments and also raise awareness among MPs on the regional agenda.
- In cooperation with the chair of the next Berlin Process summit support an institutionalised parliamentary cooperation and dialogue amongst WB parliaments and EU Parliament on regional agenda and Berlin Process.

Annex I

QUESTIONNAIRE

This Questionnaire was developed by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) with the aim to collect information on the current level of familiarity of the parliaments with regional integration agenda. Information gathered shall be used to assist in strengthening the role of Parliaments of the Western Balkans region in the Berlin Process.

1. Please rate your familiarity with the Berlin Process:
 - Very good
 - Good
 - Poor
 - Very poor

2. Do you see Berlin Process as a successful initiative to boost regional cooperation among the Western Balkan economies and support their European integration efforts?
 - Yes No

3. Please explain how Berlin Process contributes to the economic growth of Western Balkans and regional cooperation?

4. Do you find current format of Berlin Process appropriate to address the problems of WB 6 economies?
 - Yes No

5. The Berlin Process refers to linking (please tick the where appropriate):
 - people (social dimension)
 - economies (economic dimension)
 - governments (political dimension)
 - other

6. Intergovernmental cooperation is functioning through: the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum (WBCIF) and the Western Balkans Fund (WBF).
 - True False

7. Are you aware of 2015 Connectivity Agenda which sets aside one billion Euro in EU grants until 2020 to support connectivity projects?
 - Yes No

8. If yes, please tick the areas which are financed through Connectivity Agenda:
 - energy
 - transport
 - SMEs
 - other

9. Through Connectivity Agenda EU, WB 6 and other donors are financing projects in the following areas:
 - technical assistance
 - works (investment projects)
 - both

10. Would you agree with following statement "Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is an independently functioning institutional mechanism aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programmes"?
 - True False

11. Are you aware of RISE project?
 - Yes No

If yes, please give a few details about the RISE project.

12. Are you familiar with Multi-Annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans?
 - Yes No

13. Do you agree with following statement "MAP REA aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour"?
 - True False

14. MAP REA is focusing on following areas (please tick where appropriate)
 - digital integration
 - transport
 - trade
 - investment
 - other

15. Have you ever been involved in any of initiatives taken by Regional Cooperation Council?

- Yes No

16. If yes, please explain the level of your satisfaction.

- very satisfied
 satisfied
 moderately satisfied
 not satisfied

17. Do you find the new Regional Roaming Agreement beneficial for the citizens of the region?

- Yes No

If yes, please explain.

18. Would you support the idea of creating a regional framework within the WB so that all citizens can travel freely with their ID cards within the region?

- Yes No

19. Do you find regional initiatives beneficial for your economy?

- Yes No

If yes, please explain.

20. Do you agree with following statement "Initiatives taken within Berlin Process contribute to reconciliation"?

- Yes No

21. Do you see regional initiatives as replacement for the membership in the EU?

- Yes No

22. Do you see the need for strengthening parliamentary cooperation within Berlin Process?

- Yes No

23. If yes, would you support organisation of annual summit of parliamentarians on the margins of the Berlin Process summits?

- Yes No

24. If you replied yes to Question 24, please prioritise the areas of possible future parliamentary cooperation in the region (first priority to be marked with 1)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Science | <input type="radio"/> Culture |
| <input type="radio"/> Reconciliation | <input type="radio"/> Education |
| <input type="radio"/> COVID 19 | <input type="radio"/> Fight against organised crime |
| <input type="radio"/> Economic cooperation | <input type="radio"/> Migration |
| <input type="radio"/> Climate | <input type="radio"/> Connectivity |
| <input type="radio"/> Youth | <input type="radio"/> Enlargement |

Other area(s):

25. Do you agree that MPs should have an active role in different initiatives and forums organised in the framework of Berlin Process?

- Yes No

26. Should such initiative be supported by a Technical Secretariat?

- Yes No

27. Do you notice potential overlap between different regional initiatives in WB 6?

- Yes No

28. Do you find it difficult to find relevant information on different regional initiatives in the region?

- Yes No

29. Would you agree with following statement: "Transparency of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region should be further improved by making all relevant documents publicly available"?

- Yes No

30. Any additional comments, concerns or proposals you would like to share?

THANK YOU

Annex II

SUMMARY OF THE WESTERN BALKAN SUMMITS WITHIN BERLIN PROCESS

Regional and European decision- and opinion-makers gather at annual Western Balkans Summits. In the period from 2014 to 2020 seven annual summits were implemented:

Chart: Western Balkan Summits within Berlin Process



THE 2014 BERLIN SUMMIT

The founding summit of Berlin Process was held in August 2014 in Berlin. The Berlin agenda had a three-pillar structure with 'diplomatic, economic and soft' dimensions. The three pillars tackle issues related to bilateral disputes, economic governance and connectivity, cooperation with civil society, and youth. Due to the prolonged economic crisis economic governance and connectivity topped the agenda and received the largest allocation of funds.

The Final Declaration of Berlin Summit established the agenda and the format of annual summits. The outlined goals included: stepping up regional cooperation as an essential basis, resolving outstanding bilateral questions in the interest of good neighbourly relations and stability, strengthening good governance (by tackling corruption and organised crime, carrying out further reforms for increased legal certainty, reinforced independence of the judiciary, and others) and increasing prosperity via sustainable economic growth (open markets, positive investment climate, increased competitiveness, developing further the Energy Community for southeast Europe, cooperation in the area of transport), as well as academic and vocational training. Infrastructure and energy interconnectivity, a more visible civil society and enhanced youth exchange were the key areas where the WB6 were to engage in specific projects.

THE 2015 VIENNA SUMMIT

Vienna Summit in 2015 outlined rule of law and good governance, regional cooperation in the area of infrastructure and connectivity, and youth as the main topics. The three annexes in the Addendum indicate the most prominent topics: connectivity at the top, followed by youth cooperation and resolution of bilateral disputes. The Summit participants agreed on a list of specific regional transport and energy priority projects to be launched, as well as on 'soft' transport and energy-related measures with specific timelines. Issues such as the fight against extremism and radicalisation, as well as the refugee challenge, were included in the agenda creating a precedent for the inclusion of other topics in the course of future summits. Vienna hosted a special civil society forum in parallel to the Summit, which was a novelty. Its aim was to increase inclusion of civil society and give it an opportunity to provide an input to the summit. Another important Summit achievement was the adoption

of a declaration on resolution of bilateral disputes. The leaders also discussed education in the context of its direct linkage to competitiveness, and agreed on the need for a new vocational training system to fill existing gaps and better respond to labour market realities. A joint declaration for establishing RYCO in the Western Balkans was also signed.

THE 2016 PARIS SUMMIT

The economy, youth, and connectivity were once again in the spotlight and bilateral disputes, migration crisis, and environment/climate change were also on the agenda. As regards connectivity, the Summit offered an opportunity to review the 10 agreed infrastructure projects, launched new ones and addressed funding issues. The Paris Summit also opened new opportunities for youth, especially in terms of cooperation among universities and mutual recognition of diplomas. RYCO was officially launched and different youth events took place in parallel to the Summit. A joint statement from the May 2016 conference entitled 'Building a Western Balkans alliance for work-based learning' was presented at the Summit. It called for reducing youth unemployment through high-quality vocational education and training systems and developing concrete initiatives to facilitate stronger regional partnership mechanisms between the private sector, governments, vocational education and training institutions and civil society. As regards bilateral issues a high-level conference 'Western Balkans: Energising the Enlargement Process by Solving Bilateral Disputes' was held in Vienna. A complementary event dedicated to civil society was implemented to build on already successful cases of civil society participation.

THE 2017 TRIESTE SUMMIT

The main accent of the Trieste Summit was on connectivity, economic integration and the positive agenda for youth while specific initiatives were presented aimed at supporting SMEs, promoting economic growth, improving the business climate and countering corruption, and ultimately boosting economic activity and employment. The EU allocated up to 1 billion EUR for connectivity investment projects and technical assistance for 2014–2020, with a special focus on transport networks, energy efficiency and green growth. Another substantial package of funding for specific projects was announced in Trieste and pooled with funds from international financial institutions. A Transport Community Treaty was announced with an aim to improve interconnections both between the WB6 and with the EU.

With the aim of further integration of regional market that would boost region's investment attractiveness the Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) was adopted. Development of MAP REA was coordinated by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). Regional economic area was seen as a first step towards integration into the EU single market and aimed to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour. Youth cooperation was addressed during an EU-WB youth forum on 'Connecting Youth – Moving Forward', which touched upon topics such as mobility, social inclusion, entrepreneurship and youth participation. The young civil servants scheme, launched in Paris to encourage young professionals' mobility, was discussed in detail. Other topics on the agenda included migration, fight against terrorism and radicalisation and anti-corruption measures.

THE 2018 LONDON SUMMIT

London Summit confirmed that connectivity agenda should remain a core element of the Berlin Process and the transformative potential of the REA. WB6 committed to tackle

corruption and address organised crime. They agreed on the need to address the digital skills gap so as to better equip the labour forces to take part in digital transformation and foster entrepreneurship. The Fourth Joint Science Conference was welcomed and the progress was made towards the establishment of the WB Research Foundation.

Positive progress in resolving bilateral issues was welcomed. The Joint Declaration on Regional Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations in the Framework of the Berlin Process, the Joint Declaration on Missing Persons in the Framework of Berlin Process and the Joint Declaration on War Crimes in the Framework of Berlin Process were signed by the Berlin Process participants.

A number of security threats, including serious and organised crime; violent extremism and terrorism and its financing; corruption; money laundering and financial crime; trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants; trafficking of weapons and drugs; and cybercrime and threats to cyber security were recognised and commitment to deepen regional cooperation reaffirmed. Joint Declaration on the Principles of Information-Exchange in the Field of Law Enforcement to enhance regional cooperation was signed.

The Roadmap for sustainable solution to illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans was endorsed. The agreement by the WB6 on the Terms of Reference for a Berlin Process Security Commitments Steering Group was reached. It was also agreed that capacities for border protection and for the improvement of return and readmission procedures needed to be enhanced.

Important work of the RYCO and civil society was recognised and reaffirmed.

THE 2019 POZNAN SUMMIT

Poznan Summit welcomed the achievements in implementing the MAP REA and recognised certain trade-related difficulties in each of the four pillars to be channelled through RCC and CEFTA Secretariat.

The Declaration on Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, which sets forward an automatic recognition model for higher education qualifications and study periods spent abroad, was endorsed. It was agreed to launch the regional research cooperation hub to enable networking between researchers. The Memorandum of Cooperation Framework on the South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies was signed at the Summit.

Individual Reform Action Plans in line with the Regional Investment Reform Agenda were adopted as well as ministerial Joint Policy Statement towards developing regionally acceptable standards for negotiating International Investment Agreements, in line with the investment policy framework and standards of the EU. The commitment to intensify regional cooperation efforts in the area of financial markets diversification was taken as well as initiative of the World Bank to draft the diagnostics of the Western Balkans financial markets.

The second Western Balkans Digital Summit and the entry into force of the new Regional Roaming Agreement, which brought lower prices for roaming among the six Western Balkan economies thus representing the most tangible example of benefits of regional cooperation, were welcomed. Several improvements reached within CEFTA were also welcomed. The joint Statement on Clean Energy Transition in the Western Balkans with the intention to launch Green Agenda was confirmed.

Eight new connectivity investment projects were confirmed on the top of 31 already approved. The Agreement on Transport Community Permanent Secretariat was welcomed by the participants as well as Transport and Trade Facilitation project. It was also agreed to

urgently complete Connectivity Reform Measures to establish the organised and coupled electricity markets in the region with the objective of their integration into the EU internal electricity market. The Western Balkans Leaders also endorsed the principles of the Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment and welcomed the EU's invitation to join a number of European digital initiatives such as the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the Broadband Competence Offices Network.

Specific emphasis was placed on youth, civil society organisations, security and reconciliation. Leaders also endorsed the Declaration on Roma Integration.

Chair's conclusions for the first time called for the organisation of a parliamentary dialogue covering the fields of political, economic, social, cultural and security relations. Inclusion of a parliamentary dimension in the Berlin Process as an old request of COSAP was officially initiated in October 2015 under the Albanian Presidency.

THE 2020 SOFIA SUMMIT

Sofia Summit was organised under the Joint Chairmanship by Bulgaria and North Macedonia. It built on the previous Summits (Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Trieste, London and Poznan) in reaffirming the Berlin Process importance as a catalyst for high-level cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU member states participating in Berlin Process, in the light of their European integration prospects.

The main achievement of the Sofia Summit is the endorsement by the leaders of the Western Balkans of the Common Regional Market (CRM) which will lead to a deeper regional economic integration and serve as a stepping stone towards EU Single Market. Action Plan for the period 2021-2024, which is based on the EU four freedoms and reinforced with digital, investment, innovation, and industry areas, was adopted. Emphasising the role of the Regional Cooperation Council and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) in its development and future monitoring, it was agreed that the implementation of the Action Plan will contribute to speeding up the economic convergence with the EU, while leading to a more attractive and competitive region.

In this context, the leaders supported the initiative for signing a Regional Agreement for free movement with ID cards, as an important dimension of the Common Regional Market as well as an opportunity for a closer and better-connected region. The role of the RCC as a facilitator of this process was also acknowledged.

The WB leaders also endorsed the Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and confirmed their determination to work towards improving the well-being of WB citizens through joining the EU's efforts in fighting climate change.

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