"Young People from South-Eastern Europe for the Prosperity of the Region"
Essay competition

organized by
South East European Cooperation Process Parliamentary Assembly

(SEECP PA)

Terms and Conditions

1. General information

The leading role of Parliaments of SEECP PA in organizing the competition corresponds to one of their basic functions, i.e. to be the voice of their voters in the process of shaping major policies such as regional cooperation and European integration, which guarantee the stability, security, economic prosperity and social progress of South-East Europe.
The competition is managed by The Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South-East Europe (RSPC SEE).

2. Essay topic

Under the overarching theme of the contest – "Young People from South-Eastern Europe for the Prosperity of the Region" the participants could share their views and opinions on the following aspects:

- Regional cooperation and good neighborly relations- key to political, economic and social development of SEE
- The economic prosperity of SEE region – a guarantee for personal success and development of the young people
- The European Union's accession process – benefits and opportunities for the youth
- Active citizenship and freedom of expression – the choice of young people from South-East Europe

- The common history and traditions in the region - opportunity for future partnerships and development

3. Eligibility

The contest is aiming to bring together young people's views on the future development of the region seen through the prism of the ongoing processes of EU-integration and cooperation among the SEE countries. Eligible to participate in the contest are young people aged up to 29 from all South-East European Cooperation Process participants - Albania, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Turkey and Kosovo*.

4. Entry format

Entries to the competition must be submitted online by using the appropriate submission forms after registration in the website of the competition. Each competitor may submit only one essay.

5. Essay format requirements

- The essay must be written in English language.

- The essay must include a title.

- The essay must reflect the competitor's own writing and original thinking.

- Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be identified properly.

- The essay must contain a maximum of 1200 words.

- The font must be Times New Roman with font size 12 points.

- The essay must be uploaded in Word document format.

6. Evaluation

Evaluation will be carried out by a group of judges, following the closing date in March 2016. The maximum amount of points per essay per a member of the Jury will be 50.

7. Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrating knowledge of political processes and cooperation in South-East Europe - 0-10 points
- Understanding the European Union policies and their implementation in the region - 0-10 points
- Demonstrating tolerance towards cultural diversity, history and traditions of the countries in South-East Europe - 0-10 points

- Strong argumentation and active civil position - 0-10 points
- Initiation of creative and innovative ideas with regional significance - 0-10 points

8. Jury

International Jury will be composed of parliamentarians involved in the field of youth activities, education and culture, high-profile public figures, opinion leaders, university professors, journalists, representatives of non-governmental organizations. All members of the Jury will review essays and give their votes on-line through the contest web-site on an anonymous basis. If there are more than one nominee for the first, second or third place the Jury will make a second voting.

9. Competition schedule

- **STAGE ONE** – Launching of the website and announcing of the competition – **1 December 2015**

- **STAGE TWO** - Registration of participants on the contest website and uploading of the essays – **December 2015 – end of March 2016**

- **STAGE THREE** - Evaluation by the Jury – **April-May 2016**

- **STAGE FOUR** – Announcement of the winners - **9 May 2016**

- **STAGE FIVE** – Prize Awarding at a special ceremony during the Annual session of SEECP PA - **June 2016**

10. Winners and prizes

The winning participants will be invited to attend award ceremony during the Annual session of SEECP PA in June 2016.

The Jury will define up to two winners for the 1st, for the 2nd and for the 3rd place.

The winner will be awarded with a trip to Brussels including visit to European Parliament and meetings with MEPs and representatives of EU institutions involved in youth policies.

Participant ranked at the 2nd place will win a laptop and the one ranked at the 3rd place will win a tablet.

All the winners will receive gold, silver and bronze plaques of SEECP PA and award certificates.

11. Legal and ethical issues

The SEECP PA reserves the right to adapt the rules and awards at any time. Any notifications on possible changes will be published on the competition website and will apply from the publication date.

All participants must comply with European copyright laws. Entries may not contain statements, facts, information or quotations that may denigrate or harm any person or group of people.

Entries may not contain statements, facts, information or quotations that may encourage persecution of people on the grounds of race, opinion, nationality, sex, profession or other persuasion, nor may entries encourage crime or the breaking of laws.

12. Disqualification of entries

The SEECP PA may decide to disqualify an entry if it has not been submitted in time, partly or as a whole; or if the entry breaks any of the rules under "Legal and ethical issues".

13. Clarifications

Should there be any questions about the competition or need for additional clarifications, please contact us at the e-mail address **rspcsee@parliament.bg**

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