



Regional Stakeholders Conference

Black Sea Synergy: the way forward

Thursday, 7 November 2019

Athens, Greece

Working Group 2: Transport

Concept paper

A. Background information

For addressing common challenges faced, 4 EU macro-regional strategies have been adopted since 2009, aiming to strengthen cooperation and contribute towards achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion. Introduced in 2010, the [EU Strategy for the Danube Region \(EUSDR\)](#) aims to open the Danube region up to the Black Sea region addressing a large variety of topics structured around 4 pillars and 12 priority areas. Among them, ‘mobility and multi-modality’ plays a key role, addressing both inland waterways as well as road, rail and air transport. More specifically, the following targets were set in the strategy: (a) increase cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared to 2010, (b) remove existing navigability bottlenecks on the river, (c) improve travel times for competitive railway passenger connections between major cities, (d) implement 4 rail freight corridors crossing the Danube region, (e) develop efficient multi-modal terminals at Danube river ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020, and (f) achieve national targets based on Europe 2020 climate and energy targets.

For addressing the above, a number of targeted events (41 in total) and research projects have been undertaken, with the most recent projects (i.e. 2015-2018) that are relevant for the Black Sea region focusing on water management and monitoring (e.g. flood forecasting, dredging), port infrastructure upgrades (e.g. waste collection), environmental risks (e.g. sediment balance), etc. A more thorough review on the transport-related advancements can be found [here](#), while the recent [Transport Study for the Danube Macro-Region](#) identified relevant regional projects that are relevant at country level and are being considered of high



importance for the Danube macro-region. More recently (2018), the [needs of intermodal transport users](#) were also analysed and guidelines and recommendations were provided for setting a decision-making system supporting intermodal transport development in the region (e.g. location and number of intermodal terminals needed, considering also issues of sustainability, digitalization and new business models).

The recent (2018) blocks proposed by the European Commission for building [EU Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia](#) include concrete policy proposals and initiatives to improve connections between Europe and Asia through interoperable transport, energy and digital networks. With regard to transport connectivity, specific attention is being placed on (a) the efficient connection of the TEN-T network with networks in Asia, (b) supporting further EU aviation and maritime transport agreements with several countries in Asia considering also the long-term decarbonisation target of both sectors, (c) the further development of North-South and East-West rail connections supported also by the Unified Rail Law Initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and (d) promoting road safety by sharing best practices. With regard to the Black Sea region, particular references are being made with regard to the extension of the TEN-T network to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the further promotion of digitalisation and administrative simplification of maritime transport, which can be considered in combination with new corridor initiatives proposed within the framework of the EUSDR.

Naturally, maritime-transport related issues in the Black Sea region have attracted increased attention, with the aim to support the impact imposed on surrounding communities and their local economies. The [EU Maritime Security Strategy](#) (EUMSS) in particular which aims to improve cooperation across borders for efficiently tackling global maritime related strategies, has included in its [2018 Revised Action Plan](#) four actions that are specifically devoted to the Black Sea, which include among others¹, the promotion of regional cooperation activities on *maritime training and education, coast guard training, exchange of maritime information* for increasing maritime awareness at regional level, and *critical infrastructure protection*, as well as the prioritization of *maritime surveillance* when developing a common maritime agenda for the region.



¹ There are of course several links / overlaps with Blue Growth, as a field of cooperation



B. Priorities of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

As defined in the [BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership](#), the “establishment of an efficient transport network” serves as the main goal of the BSEC in the field of transport. More specifically, within the framework of this goal, different lines of action are being specified including (a) the promotion of sustainable transport systems meeting economic, social and environmental needs of the region, (b) accelerating efforts to implement BSEC projects mostly related to the Black Sea Ring Highway and the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the region, (c) implementing targeted solutions for enhancing transport efficiency, harmonizing information support systems and applying legal mechanisms in passenger and freight carriages, (d) elaborate projects of regional impact with the participation of all relevant stakeholders (e.g. integrated maritime policy, modern shipping services, etc.), and (e) permanently integrate the environmental dimension into transport policies and enhance road safety in the region in the framework of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. Advancements on the relative progress on these lines of actions are being documented in relevant [reports](#) of the BSEC Working Group of Transport.

C. Questions

- 1) Efficient expansion of the TEN-T network and corridors, including Motorways of the Sea and the Black Sea Ring Highway
- 2) Digitalization and simplification of administrative procedures in Black Sea ports and infrastructure upgrades, for also enhancing environmental and energy performance
- 3) Development of North-South and West-East rail connections and advancement of the Unified Rail Law for supporting integration in Eurasian corridors
- 4) Further exploitation of inland waterways for accommodating freight volumes (change current modal split)
- 5) Enhance road safety and support the common categorization of motorways
- 6) Development of intermodal terminals: Identifying appropriate number and location for supporting transport network development and further enhancing the attractiveness of surrounding ports (considering also issues of sustainability, digitalization and new business models such as circular economy for example)
- 7) Promotion of air and maritime transport agreements between Black Sea and Asian countries supporting also the long-term target of decarbonisation
- 8) Enhancing maritime and logistics training and education, considering emerging business trends and practices impacting the sector, and the effects of these on skills and competences of relevant occupational profiles. New forms of education and training need to be taken into consideration (e.g. use of simulators, VR technology, digital twins, etc.)



- 9) Support maritime surveillance also with regard to the environmental performance of shipping operations

The outcomes of this session will be shared with the other three working groups on **culture & tourism, energy and education**. The results of each working group will be presented in a policy paper by ICBSS in cooperation with the moderators, to be sent to the EU as a key deliverable from the Conference.

Moderator:

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Organisation:

The ***Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT)*** of the ***Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH)***

The [Centre for Research and Technology Hellas \(CERTH\)](#) is a leading research centre in Greece as well as in Europe (listed among the top 20 EU institutions with the highest participation in competitive research grants) conducting specialized basic and applied research and offering high quality services in several fields. It is a non-profit private status legal entity supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT).

The [Hellenic Institute of Transport \(HIT\)](#) is one of CERTH's five Institutes, devoted to the promotion and execution of transport research in Greece and beyond. Its main mission is to provide state-of-the-art research and create innovation in the field of transport at a national, European and international level covering issues relating to the operation, planning and development of infrastructure; standardization; economic analysis; vehicle technology; impact assessment of land, maritime, air, and multimodal transport services; training and education activities in related fields; dissemination of research activities; and representation of Greece in relevant scientific bodies.