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NOTE POINT "I"

Origine:	Secrétariat général du Conseil
Destinataire:	Comité des représentants permanents (1 ^{re} partie)
N° doc. Cion:	ST 5832/22 (note d'information)
Objet:	Coordination de l'UE en vue de la réunion du comité de direction régional de la Communauté des transports (UE - Balkans occidentaux) (Belgrade, 15 mars 2022) - Approbation

1. Le 2 février 2022, les services de la Commission ont transmis, au groupe "Transports - Questions intermodales et réseaux", une note d'information¹ au sujet de la prochaine réunion du comité de direction régional de la Communauté des transports (UE - Balkans occidentaux) qui se tiendra à Belgrade, le 15 mars 2022; les points détaillés, y compris la position proposée de l'Union européenne, sont repris à l'annexe de cette note.
2. Le groupe a examiné la note de la Commission le 7 et le 14 février 2022. Les délégations qui sont intervenues ont salué la préparation en temps utile et l'approche de la Commission en général. Elles ont souligné leur intérêt pour le processus de révision des cartes en vue de l'extension du réseau transeuropéen de transport (RTE-T), qui est actuellement entrepris par le Conseil au moyen d'un mandat de négociation², l'importance qu'il y a à ce que les partenaires se rapprochent réellement de l'acquis communautaire dans le domaine, et le retard dans la préparation du plan de travail quinquennal lié aux travaux pour le RTE-T, en raison d'une collecte de données encore insuffisante chez certains partenaires.

¹ Doc. ST 5832/22.

² Voir doc. ST 6051/22 + COR 1.

3. En ce qui concerne, en particulier, le projet de conclusions du conseil ministériel prévu pour avril 2022 et le plan de travail quinquennal, le représentant de la Commission a proposé d'échanger à nouveau avec le groupe lorsque les discussions préparatoires pour le conseil ministériel auront avancé et qu'un projet de plan aura été finalisé.
4. Compte tenu de ce qui précède, le Comité des représentants permanents est invité à approuver le texte de la note d'information sur la coordination de l'Union en vue de la prochaine réunion du comité de direction régional, tel qu'il figure à l'annexe de cette note.

**Coordination in preparation for the Regional Steering Committee of the
Transport Community on 15 March 2022^{1 2}**

This information note is presented by the Commission's services on the basis of the agreed agenda (see annex) in view of providing information or coordinating EU positions for the upcoming Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community.

Agenda item 1

Information by the European Commission on the revision of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network ('TEN-T Regulation') and on the Communication from the European Commission on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries

This is an information point by the European Commission. On 14 December 2021, the Commission adopted its Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) 1315/2013. On the same date, the Commission also published its Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries.

In the context of the preparation of the revision of the TEN-T Regulation, the Commission held a round of meetings with the Western Balkan partners in order to carry out a review of the state of realisation of the relevant parts of the indicative TEN-T network. In particular, the objective of the meetings was to ascertain whether all sections of the core network to be included in the Western Balkans corridor are on track to be realised or upgraded by the deadline of 2030 foreseen in the current TEN-T Regulation.

¹ 13:30-16:00, Belgrade, Serbia, venue tbc. As in previous Regional Steering Committee meetings, the possibility of remote participation will be provided (online connection).

² Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Regional Steering Committee will be organised with strict adherence to the official pandemic measures in place in Serbia. All logistical information will be shared in due time.

At that occasion, the Western Balkans partners shared their wish to review the current indicative maps of the extended network (core and comprehensive network) on their territory as well as the list of transport nodes (airports and ports). The Commission took note of this position of all Western Balkans partners.

During the Regional Steering Committee to be held on 15 March, the Commission will present in detail its proposal for TEN-T review and the accompanying communication on the TEN-T extension to neighbouring third countries.

Union position

- To take note of the Regional Partners' interventions;
- To inform the Regional Partners of the next steps in the process leading to the review of the existing indicative maps of the Western Balkans network, to be based on one high-level agreement within the meaning of Article 49 (6) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013.

Agenda item 2

Information by the Permanent Secretariat on the five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest (Article 9 of the Transport Community Treaty ('TCT'))

This is an information point by the Secretariat, which will update the Regional Steering Committee members on the state of preparation of the five-year rolling work plan. Article 9 of the TCT requires the Transport Community to develop every two years a five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans. The work plan should also identify priority projects of regional interest in line with the best Union practice, which shall contribute to balanced sustainable development in terms of economics, spatial integration, environmental and social impact as well as social cohesion.

This five-year rolling work plan needs to comply with the relevant EU legislation as set out in Annex I TCT (in particular when EU funding is envisaged) and demonstrate best-value-for-money and broader socio-economic impacts, in accordance with donors' funding rules and best international standards and practices. The five-year rolling work plan should further give a special attention to global climate change and environmental sustainability at the stage of project definition

and analysis, as well as include the funding opportunities from donors and international financial institutions, in particular through the Western Balkans Investment Framework.

Union position

- To thank the Secretariat for its ongoing work on the five-year rolling plan, which, once finalised, would represent a key milestone for the implementation of the TCT;
- To stress the urgency and invite the Regional Partners to continue supporting the data collection efforts of the Secretariat with a view to finalising the work-plan.

Agenda item 3

Presentation by the Transport Community Secretariat of its Annual Operational Report for the year 2021

In line with Article 59(3) of the Financial Rules and Auditing Procedures applicable to the Transport Community¹, the Secretariat must prepare an Annual Report by 30 March of each year. The Annual Report includes an operational report explaining the work carried out by the Secretariat and the results achieved, giving an overview of the progress towards the objectives set in the annual Work Programme of the Secretariat, and also a financial report on the budget implementation.

The Commission services have examined the 2021 Annual Operations Report and are of the opinion that it covers all necessary information, in view of Article 59 of the Financial Rules and Auditing Procedures applicable to the Transport Community. The report presents activities undertaken by the Secretariat, relevant developments concerning the Social Forum and the Transport Observatory, other Secretariat reports and strategies, as well as an overview of administrative and human capital developments and financial management aspects during 2021, among other information. As EU acquis transposition progresses, future Annual Operations Reports could look into further detail at the progress on the implementation of the European Union acts referred to in Annex I of the TCT.

Union position

- To take note of the presentation by the Secretariat of the 2021 Annual Operations Report;
- To thank the Secretariat for its efforts and the progress achieved in fulfilling the TCT objectives and goals;

¹ Decision No 2020/06 of the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community.

- To underline the importance of the adoption and implementation of transport-related EU acquis (as stipulated in Annex I of the TCT) as a key deliverable of the Transport Community. As EU acquis transposition progresses, future Annual Operations Reports should look into further detail at the progress on the implementation of the European Union acts referred to in Annex I of the TCT.

Agenda item 4

Information from the Transport Community Secretariat on the upcoming Ministerial Council, to be held on 27 April 2022 in Pristina

During the 22 November 2021 Intermodal Working Party meeting, the European Commission presented the agenda for the 27 April 2022 Transport Community Ministerial Council meeting in Pristina. The adopted Union position supported the agenda points foreseen for the Ministerial Council meeting.

The agenda includes an exchange of views on the revision of the Trans-European Transport Network Regulation (Commission's proposal for a new Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on TEN-T, adopted on 14 December 2021), in particular on the proposed creation of a European Transport Corridor linking the region with the Union. The Commission will also present its Communication on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries. To support the exchange of views between Ministers on the TEN-T revision, the Secretariat has also produced a discussion paper, which sets the frame and poses specific questions to Ministers to steer the discussion.

The Ministerial Council meeting of 27 April 2022 is also expected to endorse the "Five-year rolling work plan" for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest (see agenda item 2 in this non-paper for more information).

The Secretariat has produced draft conclusions for the 27 April 2022 Ministerial Council meeting, which it has shared with the Regional Steering Committee members. With the formal exchanges with Regional Partners on the potential revision of the indicative maps of the trans-European transport network extended to the Western Balkans yet to start (for the necessary Council mandate see note ST 6051/22 + COR 1), the discussion on the draft conclusions is likely to evolve in subsequent weeks/months.

In 2021, the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory was set up with the support of the European Commission, of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and of the World Bank. In 2022, the Secretariat plans to hold a dedicated workshop on road safety jointly with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other partners. In this context, the World Health Organization (WHO) will present its Global Plan for road safety during the April 2022 Ministerial Council meeting.

The Global Plan has been developed by the WHO and the United Nations Regional Commissions, in cooperation with partners in the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration and other stakeholders, as a guiding document to support the implementation of the Decade of Action 2021–2030 and its objectives.

Union position

- To reiterate its support for the 27 April 2022 Ministerial Council meeting agenda points, as already indicated during the Regional Steering Committee meeting of 16 December 2021;
- To thank the Secretariat for its efforts in preparing the Ministerial Council meeting to be held in April;
- To support the envisaged approach in the draft Ministerial Council discussion paper and accompanying conclusions. To propose that, if necessary, the Regional Steering Committee comes back to these two documents closer to the date of the Ministerial Council meeting;
- To thank the WHO for its presentation on the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. To underline the importance of improving road safety in view of achieving Vision Zero – the reduction of road deaths to zero by 2050.

Agenda item 5

Information on preparation for the Roads of the Future Summit, to be held in May 2022 in Tirana

This is an information point from the Secretariat on the preparation for the Roads of the Future Summit, to be held in May 2022 in Tirana, Albania.

a) A concept note of the Summit

The Secretariat has shared with the members of the Regional Steering Committee a concept note on the organisation of the Summit.

The Roads of the Future Summit will aim to discuss, exchange knowledge, and raise awareness on the development of safer, efficient, interoperable, digitalised, sustainable, and green road infrastructures and operations in the Western Balkans.

The Roads of the Future Summit will build on a series of documents prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Regional Partners. These include:

- the Road Action Plan and Road Safety Action Plan, aiming towards the development of a climate resilient, intelligent, and resource-efficient TEN-T road network in Western Balkans by incorporating green and smart elements in road investments, while at the same time promoting safety management, safer infrastructure, and protection of road users.
- The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for Western Balkans welcomed by the TC's Ministerial Council in July 2021. Road transport is considered the main transport polluter, which necessitates greening and digitalisation of the infrastructure and operations without jeopardising road safety.

The Summit agenda will be organised around a plenary session (at political level) and a series of technical sessions around safer, smart and sustainable and resilient roads.

Union position

- To support the concept for the Roads of the Future Summit, as proposed by the Secretariat;
- To stress its significance for delivering on the aspirations in the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans.

b) Dedication to Sustainable, Smart and Safe Roads of the Western Balkans

One of the main deliverables of the Roads of the Future Summit will be the signing of the Declaration on Roads of the future by the six Western Balkans Ministers in charge of transport. It is worth noting that the Union is not listed among the signatories of the dedication.

The declaration will ensure the Ministers' commitment, among others, on:

- Embracing Vision Zero;
- Deployment of ITS as per European standards;
- Ensuring E-tolling interoperability;
- Building a regional network of e-charging stations;
- Building Back better with improved climate resilience;
- Embracing European innovations in the road transport.

Union position

- To welcome the intention of the Western Balkans Partners to sign the dedication to Smart, Sustainable and Safe Roads.

c) Memorandum of Understanding between Road Authorities of the South East European Parties of the Transport Community

Another deliverable of the Roads of the Future Summit in Tirana will be the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to be signed between the General Directors of the Road Authorities/Public Enterprises of the Western Balkans Partners.

The main objective of this MoU, in line with the objectives of the TCT and with the acquis in its Annex I, is to establish a Network of Road Authorities/Public Enterprises of each Regional Partner for regular consultation, coordination, and experience sharing of all road related activities at the regional level. The signing of the Memorandum is expected to foster enhanced cooperation in the fields of road safety, road maintenance, e-tolling, ITS deployment and network resilience.

Stakeholders outside the region, the European Commission, relevant EU agencies and Road Federations/Associations and International Financing Institutions (IFIs) can participate as observers.

Union position

- To welcome the intention of the General Directors of the Road Authorities/Public Enterprises of the Western Balkans Partners to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.
- To note that the Memorandum would contribute to improved cooperation among the Regional Partners on safe, smart and sustainable development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the road network in the region.

Agenda item 6

A.O.B.

a) Information from Secretariat on the Annual TEN-T Compliance Report

Under this information point, the Secretariat has prepared a short written input and will update the Members of the Regional Steering Committee on the intended approach for the 2022 Annual TEN-T Compliance Report, with data collection from the Regional participants scheduled to begin in June 2022.

Under Article 8 of the Treaty establishing the Transport Community, the Regional Steering Committee must report every year to the Ministerial Council on the implementation of the TEN-T. The first edition of the TEN-T Annual Report was approved by the Regional Steering Committee on 20 May 2021, and endorsed by the Ministerial Council on 5 July 2021.

Union position

- To take note of the short written input and of the information shared by the Secretariat;
- To underline that the annual TEN-T compliance report is an important deliverable for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans.

b) Information from the Secretariat on the Second TCT Action Plans Progress Report

Under this information point, the Secretariat has prepared a short written input and will update the Regional Steering Committee on the intended timeline for the Second TCT Action Plans Report. The purpose of the Report is to present the progress made in implementing the Secretariat's five Action Plans.

Four Action Plans were endorsed by the Ministerial Council of the Transport Community on 26 October 2020, and the fifth Action Plan on Waterborne and Multimodality was endorsed at the Ministerial Council of the Transport Community in July 2021. They aim to guide the Region on the path to delivering safer, smart and sustainable roads, a reliable, modern, and interoperable rail system, and reduced waiting times at borders. The Action Plan for Waterborne and Multimodality covers the important sections of maritime transport and ports, inland waterways and multimodality, and sets out priorities in both policy and infrastructure, by dividing actions according to legislation, on one hand, and infrastructure, digital, and green elements on the other hand.

Union position

- To take note of the short written input and of the information presented by the Secretariat;
- To underline that the adoption and implementation of transport-related EU acquis (as listed in Annex I of the TCT) is a key deliverable of the Transport Community.

c) Information from the Secretariat about the public procurement procedures followed

This is an oral information point from the Secretariat on the procedure for conducting public procurements followed by the Secretariat. This information point follows a commitment to this effect as a result of the previous Regional Steering Committee meeting of 16 December 2021.

Union position

- To take note of the oral information provided by the Secretariat.

DRAFT AGENDA

Meeting of the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community

15 March 2022 | 13:30 to 16:00 | Belgrade, Serbia

0	Welcome address by the Chair of Regional Steering Committee Mr Gjynejt Mustafa and Co-Chair Ms Mona Bjorklund
1	Information by the European Commission on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) revision of the Trans European Transport Network Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation) and B) Communication from the European Commission on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries
2	Information by the TCT Secretariat on the five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest (Article 9 of TCT)
3	Presentation by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat of Annual Operational Report for the year 2021
4	Information from Transport Community Permanent Secretariat on Ministerial Council of Transport Community, 27 April 2022 in Pristina
5	Information on preparation for the Roads of the Future Summit, May 2022 in Tirana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A concept note of the Summit b) Information regarding Dedication to Sustainable, Smart and Safe Roads of the Western Balkans c) Information regarding Memorandum of Understanding between Road Authorities of Southeast European Parties of Transport Community
6	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Information from TCT Secretariat on Annual TEN-T Compliance Report B. Information from TCT Secretariat on Second TCT Action Plans Progress Report C. Information from Transport Community Permanent Secretariat about the public procurement procedures followed by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat