



CPMR **BALKAN & BLACK
SEA COMMISSION**

Activity Report 2016-2017

May 2017

Wednesday, 24 May 2017

2017 BBSC General Assembly

BBSC Meetings

The [last General Assembly of the Balkan & Black Sea Commission \(BBSC\)](#) kindly hosted by the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in Istanbul (Turkey), on 30-31 May 2016, was preceded by the meetings of the Working Groups on Tourism (Central Macedonia, Greece) and Business Cooperation (Sinop, Turkey).

During the General Assembly meetings, the members had the opportunity to exchange views with European Institutions (European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) and European Investment Bank), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Managing Authority of the Black Sea Basin ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020, and network with various stakeholders from the wider Black Sea area.

At the [last BBSC Pre-Assembly meeting](#), held within the framework of the CPMR General Assembly in the Azores (Portugal) on 3 November 2016, the [BBSC Business Plan for the 2017-2019 period](#) was presented. In addition, given the important role of agriculture in the Balkan and Black Sea area, it was proposed that our Commission will also act as a facilitator for agriculture-focused project proposal consortia.

European Commission

On 6 December 2016, the BBSC secretariat and a representative of the BBSC Presidency met with Mr Patrick Vankerckhoven, Senior Expert for the [Orient-East Med corridor](#) in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE).

Mr Vankerckhoven informed us of the recent developments in this corridor and prospects for the near future. He also provided the Regions situated on the alignment of this corridor – in particular the Romanian, Bulgarian and Greek BBSC Members – with more details. The CPMR General Secretariat has been following the developments and will update the BBSC Members accordingly.

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

The CPMR and BSEC, sectoral dialogue partners since 2009, on 20 April 2017 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). According to this MoU, our collaboration will focus on a number of substantive areas, consistent with their policies and procedures, which will include, but not be limited to:

- i. Transport, including Maritime Transport, & Accessibility;
- ii. Social & Economic Cohesion;
- iii. Environment & Energy;
- iv. Tourism;
- v. Trade, Economic Development and SMEs;
- vi. Science and Technology;
- vii. Information & Communication Technologies;

This very positive step will mean the two organisations can work closely together to boost prosperity in the Black Sea area.

Black Sea meetings

[3rd Black Sea Stakeholder Conference, 14-15 June 2016 in Odessa, Ukraine](#)

The CPMR took part, for the third consecutive year, in the Black Sea Stakeholder Conference in Odessa, organised by the European Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Mr Patrick Anvrouin, CPMR Director for Transport, presented the Vasco Da Gama project as an example of 'Investing in Blue Growth'.

The CPMR will be involved in the 4th Stakeholder Conference on the blue economy in the Black Sea, on 15 September in Batumi, Georgia.

This event will discuss the challenges and opportunities for the blue economy in the Black Sea region, including the 2016 [Bucharest declaration on sustainable fisheries](#). It will also bring together successful entrepreneurs and policy makers to debate how to:

- support blue growth,
- support integration,
- share innovative business practices,
- improve marine knowledge and enhance marine environment
- promote maritime careers,
- identify sources of funding for maritime projects and
- seek partners to fulfil them.

International Black Sea Transport Forum, 19-21 October 2016, Odessa, Ukraine

During the Forum, organised with the official support of the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine and supported by BSEC, Mr Patrick Anvrouin, CPMR Director for Transport, in his intervention 'EU transport policy and the wider Black Sea: views from regional authorities', presented the priorities and challenges as well as the opportunities for regional authorities in the wider Black Sea region regarding transport.

The 2017 International Black Sea Transport Forum, in Odessa, will be held on 18-20 October.

[Black Sea NGO Forum, IXth edition, 31 October - 2 November 2016, Varna, Bulgaria](#)

The event was organised with the financial support of the European Commission, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme – Regional Centre for Europe and Central Asia and the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness – CPDE, with support from the local partner, the Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN).

Mr Stavros Kalognomos, Policy Officer at the CPMR BBSC, presented the CPMR's perspective on connecting the Black Sea NGO Forum with other regional initiatives. He also exchanged views with different Black Sea and Eastern Partnership actors and stakeholders.

[PLATFORMA's Eastern Neighbourhood Coordination Seminar, 15-16 December 2016, Tbilisi, Georgia](#)

The seminar, organised as part of the PLATFORMA Eastern Neighbourhood Programme run in Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, focused on the status of public administration reforms and decentralisation in these countries, as well as EU programmes and how to provide tangible results to citizens.

The CPMR is an active PLATFORMA partner, with members in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and a particular interest in the Eastern Neighbourhood, thanks to Mr Horia Teodorescu, President of Tulcea County Council (Romania) and CPMR Vice-President in charge of Neighbourhood Policy.

During the meeting, Mr Stavros Kalognomos, Policy Officer at the CPMR BBSC, presented the CPMR's actions to help develop the work of the Eastern Partnership.

[Black Sea Horizon International Conference, 8 May 2017, Athens, Greece](#)

The BBSC secretariat took part in this conference regarding Science, Technology and Innovation, highlighting the added value of cooperation with Regional and Local Authorities to ensure the sustainability of relevant actions. The EU-Black Sea Joint Call, expected to be launched around January 2018, was presented, along with FP7 and Horizon 2020 funded projects and good practices for marine and maritime sectors.

['Thinking Together Varna-2 Forum – The Black Sea: Confrontation or Cooperation?', 12-14 May 2017, Varna, Bulgaria](#)

The aim of the Thinking Together Varna-2 discussions was to examine the potential for synergies between existing sectoral programs via a Black Sea Macro-Region for sustainable development. The meeting also aimed to bring the idea to the attention of European institutions and the public in the Black Sea countries.

Mr Stavros Kalognomos, Policy Officer at the CPMR BBSC, presented the CPMR's expertise regarding Macro-Regional Strategies at the session entitled 'The Black Sea – a European Backwater or a European Macro-Region?' and underlined the CPMR's willingness to support the European Institutions' endeavours in this objective.

Adriatic and Ionian Region meetings

[2nd Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region \(EUSAIR\), 11-12 May in Ioannina, Greece](#)

The 2nd EUSAIR forum was held in Ioannina, gathering participants from all eight countries involved in the Strategy. The Forum started with the EUSAIR Ministerial meeting, which adopted the [Ioannina Declaration](#). The declaration reaffirms the strong political commitment of the participating countries to the Strategy and calls for closer cooperation at all levels, in line with the principles of the multilevel governance.

Special focus is given to the implementation of the Facility Point and the Stakeholders Platform. The Declaration recognises also the need to further invest in blue growth and transport and underlines the need for solidarity and concrete actions to respond to the migration crisis that affects the area.

During the Forum, a series of presentations were made on Transport, Tourism and Blue Growth, but also in relation to the challenges and aspirations of the Strategy and its importance for the development of the region and the future of Europe.

The CPMR Secretary General, Eleni Marianou, was among the keynote speakers at the Forum, underlining the importance of engaging the Regions in the governance of the Strategy.

Cooperation projects

The BBSC secretariat continues to encourage cooperation between the CPMR's members and has been acting as a facilitator for various consortia at pan-European and regional level.

At pan-European level, the CPMR helped Black Sea area partners get involved in the Opportunities for Sustainable Coastal Areas (OSCAR) Project proposal for the [H2020-RUR-2016-2017 Call \(Rural Renaissance - Fostering Innovation and Business Opportunities\)](#). Evaluation results are expected to be communicated in June 2017.

The CPMR also took part in the consortium of the Mediterranean and Black Sea Nautical Route, inspired by the Venetian and Genoan Trade Routes (the MED-BLACK Nautical Route) led by Dafni Network of Sustainable Greek Islands. The MED-Black Nautical Route Project proposal has been submitted to the EASME Call 'Nautical Routes for Europe' ([EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.12](#)) and information to applicants is expected during September 2017. The Region of Central Macedonia, coordinator of the BBSC WG on Tourism, is among the partners.

Regarding the Erasmus+ (Call 2017, Key Action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices / Strategic Partnerships for higher education), the CPMR was an associate partner in the preparation of the Vasco Da Gama for the Black Sea Project proposal submitted by Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy (Varna, Bulgaria). This project proposal follows on from the Vasco Da Gama -Training for Greener and Safer Maritime Transport ([VDG-TGSMT](#)) Project, led by the CPMR, in which Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy was a partner. The Vasco Da Gama for the Black Sea Project proposal aims to further lessons learnt at European level in the Black Sea area. The proposal was submitted in Bulgaria and is under evaluation.

Given that the CPMR is not eligible for the [ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020](#), the BBSC secretariat has used its expertise to help develop the Wetlands and Estuaries in the Black Sea Area-Entrepreneurship (WEBLA-e – led by the Region of Eastern Macedonia-Thrace) and the Black Sea Sustainable Coastal Tourism (BlaSSCOT – led by the Region of Central Macedonia) consortia. Additionally, the BBSC is eager to provide expertise to the Developing of Actual Competences and Improvement in Aquaculture Trade (DACIAT – led by Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development (DDNI) with direct and indirect BBSC members' participation) Project proposal.

The BBSC has also helped CPMR members to identify potential partners from the eligible area in several other project proposals.

Furthermore, the CPMR is taking part in a consortium for the [Call for tenders 'Facility for blue growth in the Black Sea', which](#) aims to promote regional dialogue on blue growth and foster blue economy development in the Black Sea region, as well as contributing to the formulation of common maritime and research strategic priorities for the sea basin.