



Activity Report 2017-2018

May 2018

CPMR BALKAN & BLACK
SEA COMMISSION

2018 BBSC General Assembly

BBSC Meetings

The [2017 General Assembly of the Balkan & Black Sea Commission \(BBSC\)](#) was held in Serres (Central Macedonia – Greece) and preceded the [1st Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum](#), in which the CPMR and its BBSC took part and presented the challenges and opportunities viewed from regional authorities, regarding Maritime Transport in the Black Sea.

During these meetings, the members had the opportunity to exchange views with representatives of the States of the wider Black Sea region and a wide range of stakeholders that also took part.

At the [2017 BBSC Pre-Assembly meeting](#), held within the framework of the 45th CPMR General Assembly in Helsinki (Helsinki- Uusimaa, Finland) on 19 October 2017, the Members had the opportunity to discuss with a Balkan & Black Sea focus the latest developments on EU transport policy, EU policies for youth, the maritime priorities of regional policy and tourism good practices, and ideas for collaboration with CPMR Members throughout Europe, with the CPMR General Secretariat's staff in charge of these portfolios.

On 11 July 2017, in Brussels, the BBSC co-organised with Euractiv Greece a conference on [Investment Opportunities in the Balkans and Black Sea area](#) aiming to present the state of play of both public and private investments in the region, explore the functioning of financial tools and present the role of development banks active in the area.

European Commission

The CPMR is fully associated with the Steering Group on the “Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea” and takes part in the meetings for developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea, set up by the European Commission (DG MARE — Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and DG RTD — Directorate-General for Research and Innovation).

The CPMR is coordinating the Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities (AI-NURECC Initiative), an initiative financed by DG REGIO — Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, to support the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR). (please see further details below)

The CPMR remains also in contact with DG NEAR – Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations regarding the idea of a potential Black Sea Regional & Local Authorities Forum.

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

The CPMR and BSEC, sectoral dialogue partners since 2009, signed a Memorandum of Understanding ([MoU](#)) on 20 April 2017. Further to this MoU, the CPMR was actively involved in the [International Conference on Fisheries & Blue Growth](#), held in Istanbul on 31 October - 1 November, where it was represented by Attica Region and the Policy Officer in charge of the BBSC.

Furthermore, on 28 March 2018, the CPMR, its Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC) and the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), organised a joint [Workshop on Project Promotion](#) at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul. This workshop was addressed to Regional and Local Authorities as well as other stakeholders from the wider Black Sea region. Its aim was to present the significant role of Regional Authorities in policy-making, the available funding instruments and sustainability of actions, and a number of successful regional cooperation examples in various parts of Europe and the Black Sea area.

Black Sea meetings

[*Sustainable Fisheries in the Black Sea, 7 June 2017, Brussels, European Committee of the Regions*](#)

The BBSC attended this event aiming at a constructive discussion with all stakeholders in the Black Sea region, touching upon Common Fisheries Policy, fisheries management tools and relations with third countries. The objective of this stakeholder event was to provide an overview of the situation on the ground for decision-makers and provide a voice for coastal communities and fishermen on a European level.

[*4th Black Sea Stakeholder Conference on Blue Economy, 15 September 2017 in Batumi, Georgia*](#)

The CPMR took part, for the fourth consecutive year, in the Black Sea Stakeholder Conference in Batumi, organised by the European Commission and the Ministries of Economy & Sustainable Development and of Environment & Natural Resources Protection of Georgia.

Ms Christiana Kalogirou, President of the CPMR Balkan and Black Sea Commission, Regional Governor of North Aegean, Greece, represented the CPMR at this high-level event as a speaker at the session entitled "Sustainable blue growth: Leadership exchange". Given her presence in Batumi, President Kalogirou also met with Ambassador Zurab Pataradze, Chairman of Adjara Autonomous Republic Government regarding a potential CPMR BBSC membership.

[*20th International Conference on Transport & Logistics, 27-29 September 2017, Odesa, Ukraine*](#)

The CPMR participated in this high-level conference, focused on "Transport System of Ukraine in the system of Trans-Continental Transport Routes", where Mr Patrick Anvroin, Director for Transport, presented the "EU Transport Policy in the wider Black Sea area: expected opportunities for Regional Authorities during the Bulgarian and Romanian EU presidencies".

[*9th International Black Sea Symposium on "Blue Growth as a driver for regional development", 20-21 March 2018 in Athens, Greece*](#)

Mr Stavros Kalognomos, Policy Officer in charge of the CPMR Balkan & Black Sea Commission, in his [presentation](#) on "Sea basins as relevant areas for territorial cooperation on Blue Growth - Experiences from the CPMR's initiatives" referred to the CPMR expertise throughout Europe and moderated the session on Investing in people, skills & services.

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies ([ICBSS](#)), BSEC's related body and acknowledged think-tank, launched the International Black Sea Symposium project in the context of a need for transnational cooperation in the wider Black Sea region. In its ninth year, the International Black Sea Symposium (IBSS) built on the success and positive impact of its previous editions to bring together the next generation of

stakeholders with an interest in the Black Sea area, focusing on blue growth, a long term strategy for sustainable development in the marine and maritime sectors.

Adriatic and Ionian Region meetings

[Joint meeting of EUSAIR Friends and CPMR Adriatic-Ionian Task Force, 17 May 2018 at the European Parliament in Brussels](#)

The CPMR organised this meeting at the European Parliament, attended by several MEPs from the Adriatic-Ionian region, led by Croatian MEP, Mr Ivan Jakovčić. At the meeting, the CPMR Secretary General, Ms Eleni Marianou, presented the AI-NURECC Initiative, which aims to implement the EUSAIR Action Plan. Other discussions focused on the need for the European Commission to pay greater attention to the Adriatic-Ionian region, and concerns regarding potential cuts to the post 2020 EU Cohesion Policy.

[3rd Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region \(EUSAIR\), 24-25 May 2018 in Catania, Italy](#)

The 3rd EUSAIR Forum will focus on Connectivity issues, especially challenges and opportunities for Transport and Energy networks in the EUSAIR Region. Funding mechanisms for all four of the Strategy's Pillars – Blue Growth, Connecting the Region, Environmental Quality, and Sustainable Tourism – will be discussed, while considering the EUSAIR's cross-cutting issues. The purpose of this year's event is to reinforce collaboration and partnerships among all stakeholders active in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

The CPMR Secretary General, Ms Eleni Marianou, will be among the plenary session speakers at the Forum.

Other meetings

[Conference on "Health, social and tourism policies: which synergies are possible?", 29 September 2017 in Jesolo \(Veneto Region\), Italy](#)

The CPMR BBSC was represented by Mr Georgios Aspasidis, Regional Councillor in charge of Tourism, Regional Unit of Thessaloniki / Region of Central Macedonia, Greece. The Region of Central Macedonia is the Coordinator of the BBSC Working Group on Tourism, and Mr Aspasidis **presented** the good practices from Central Macedonia as an ideal destination for medical tourism. The event was organised by the Programma Mattone Internazionale Salute-ProMIS, the network which involves all Italian Regions and the Ministry of Health, and whose purpose is the internationalisation of the Italian Regional Healthcare Systems. This first conference meeting aimed to analyse the concept of "Medical Tourism" by bringing to light good practices and positive experiences in different EU Member States.

Cooperation projects

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

[ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020](#)

The BBSC secretariat helped to set up and facilitate the consortium in charge of the project proposal entitled "DACIAT - Improving the existing competences and developing new ones in the aquaculture and fish products trade sector" that was approved for funding. The CPMR BBSC Members involved in the DACIAT project are Galati and Tulcea County Councils and Odesa Regional State Administration (through the Association of Cross border Cooperation "Lower Danube Euroregion") and the Eastern Macedonia-Thrace Region (directly involved).

Erasmus+ Programme

The CPMR is a full partner in the following project proposals submitted for evaluation:

“PESCAVET - Professionals’ innovation training for pesca-tourism activities” submitted to the Romanian Agency by the Association Grupul de Dezvoltare Durabila. The PESCAVET project proposal, submitted under Key Action (KA2) – Strategic Partnerships for VET of the programme, aims to develop e-courses for young professionals to be able to support themselves in establishing new enterprises in the maritime sectors, supporting fishermen for diversification, and preserving coastal cultural heritage and know-how.

“MARAW-BS – Developing educational programmes to raise awareness on emerging maritime issues in the Black Sea Basin” submitted to the Bulgarian Agency by Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy. The MARAW-BS, submitted under Key Action (KA2) – Strategic Partnerships for higher education, follows on from the Vasco Da Gama -Training for Greener and Safer Maritime Transport ([VDG-TGSMT](#)) Project.

AI-NURECC Initiative, a project financed by the European Commission

The Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities (AI-NURECC Initiative) is an initiative of the key stakeholders of the Adriatic Ionian Regions, which have decided to join their efforts to support implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Sea Region ([EUSAIR](#)), ensuring deep and broad territorial coverage, at regional and local level.

The AI-NURECC initiative is coordinated by the CPMR with the support of four partners from the area: Adriatic Ionian Euroregion ([AIE](#)), Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities ([FAIC](#)), Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce ([Forum AIC](#)), and [UniAdrion](#).

The Initiative will last 18 months with the aim of helping to achieve the EUSAIR’s political objectives and to foster the sound implementation of its Action Plan. The final goal will be to promote a structured dialogue and a stronger, more effective cooperation among Regional & Local Authorities, Universities, Chambers of Commerce, youth associations and networks, entrepreneurs and civil society. AI-NURECC actions will integrate and follow the relevant work prepared by the Presidency of the EUSAIR/All (programme of the Presidency).

Four preparatory actions will be set up:

1. the AI-NURECC Youth Action;
2. the AI-NURECC Creative and Cultural Industries Action;
3. the AI-NURECC Task Force on Tourism and Cultural Heritage; and
4. the AI-NURECC Skills Development & Training Action.

These actions will be accompanied by two specific actions, to be developed in cooperation and synergy with the AI Stakeholder platform, aimed at fixing the conditions to operate across the whole macro-region:

1. the AI-NURECC-focused Communication Campaign; and
2. the AI-NURECC Observatory on Multilevel Governance.