



2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY CPMR BALKAN & BLACK SEA COMMISSION

31 May 2016, Istanbul (TR)

Balkan & Black Sea Commission on the move

MINUTES

Mr Nicholas Emirzas, Executive Manager, Permanent International Secretariat of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), welcomed all participants to the BSEC premises and gave the floor to the Mayor of Sariyer, where the BSEC premises are situated, for the opening speech.

Civil Engineer Şükrü Genç, Mayor of Sariyer, in his [speech](#) underlined the geographical position of the Sariyer Municipality and the maritime priorities as fishing, maritime transport, shipping, maritime safety and environmental factors, and conservation issues that derive from this important crossroads which is one of the world's most strategic seaways. The Mayor of Sariyer stressed the importance of cooperation at local, regional and international levels to deal with common challenges and promote development in the area. Mr Genç closed his speech by welcoming all participants to Sariyer and wishing everyone a successful meeting.

Mr Emirzas thanked Mayor Genç for his participation and welcoming speech, and introduced the Policies and Cooperation Programmes in the Balkan & Black Sea area session.

Ms Christiana Kalogirou, Regional Governor of North Aegean, Greece, and 1st Vice-President of the CPMR Balkan and Black Sea Commission, in her [speech](#) outlined the EU's strategy in the wider Black Sea area. She invited regional politicians to find solutions on common problems, create new opportunities for collaboration, and cooperate on the ground, while respecting international law and European values.

The Regional Governor of North Aegean stressed the need for a concrete strategic plan to bring all countries closer to Europe, encourage dialogue and cooperation, and use the expertise of the CPMR



to stimulate collaboration and prepare regions for the new era. Ms Kalogirou said that financial tools are always available to support cooperation projects and initiatives if regions are clear in their needs and aims. In closing, the BBSC 1st Vice-President invited regions to profit from the advantages they have, be effective and result oriented, and lobby for their area and people's future.

Following this, **Ms Oana Napotnik's**, EU Affairs Department, EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, asked on how governmental organisations can help cooperation in tourism, a mostly private activity in the Black Sea area.

Ms Kalogirou responded that the main way to support tourism is through more private initiatives. However, she said administrations can contribute by supporting the promotion of tourism.

The 1st Vice-president of the BBSC said that the branding of the whole area, exhibitions and roadshows, are expensive for private partners and need coordination. She pointed to the example of branding for each island in the North Aegean Region which it is hoped will help reverse the image that has been created due to the immigration crisis in recent years. She also highlighted existing mechanisms and financial tools, such as structural funds which are managed by the region and enable support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the tourism sector. She stressed that it is important that the public sector supports the private sector in any way possible, particularly in times of economic crisis.

Mr Emirzas thanked the Regional Governor of North Aegean and said that the problems faced at regional level could perhaps be tackled more easily at intergovernmental level, and the priorities set out at intergovernmental level could only be achieved through good cooperation at regional level.

Mr Massimo D'Eufemia, European Investment Bank (EIB) Representative in Turkey, in his [presentation](#) outlined the main purpose of the EIB within the EU and beyond, and introduced some specific initiatives aiming to support innovation and research for SMEs. Mr D'Eufemia explained that the EIB is reinforcing its support in the context of the 'Juncker plan,' a major investment plan that has been launched by the President of the European Commission, mobilising more than 300 billion euros around Europe to boost economic growth and development. He also explained how the system supports SMEs through international, national and local banks.

Mr Berkol Alevli, North Anatolian Development Agency, Coordinator Investment Support Office – Sinop, and Advisor to the Secretary General of the CPMR on the Turkish Maritime Provinces and Metropolitan Municipalities, asked Mr D'Eufemia, about the possibility of the EIB also cooperating with Regional Development Agencies, as they are working with both SMEs and public institutions.

Ms Oana Napotnik, EU Affairs Department, EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also asked Mr D'Eufemia how the EIB gets to the start-ups.

Regarding the Turkish Regional Development Agencies, **Mr D'Eufemia** outlined the idea to combine national and EU (e.g. IPA programmes) grant funds available with loans or capital from institutions like the EIB. He explained that putting together these funds could create leverage for the Turkish RDAs



activities. Coordination with the Turkish Ministry of Development and some pioneer RDAs may pave the way for other RDAs to follow.

Concerning the approach to the start-ups, Mr D'Eufemia said that this kind of companies do not essentially need credit, they need capital. He said mentioned the concept of *angel investor* that detects good ideas and good businesses and starts putting money into them. He said that once the start-up progresses there is a need to develop the business. Mr D'Eufemia explained that this is venture capital activity which the EIB tries to support, through initiatives such as the recently launched Turkish Growth and Innovation Fund (TGIF), which is dedicated to innovation, research, links between universities and production, and universities and big companies that have capital to invest and support young researchers and entrepreneurs.

Mr Emirzas thanked Mr D'Eufemia for the very interesting presentation and gave the floor to Mr Andreas Kiefer.

Mr Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the [Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#) of the Council of Europe, presented the role and work of the Congress. He explained that the Council of Europe is comprised of 47 countries, including all the countries around the Black Sea. The Congress, as an institutional part of the Council of Europe ([CoE](#)), is the third political body besides the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers.

Mr Kiefer said the work of the national and major European associations of local and regional authorities is very important to the Congress. He explained that as an institutional partner, the Congress tries to introduce different policies and needs that are voiced by regional associations, such as the CPMR, into European policy making.

Mr Kiefer said the Congress has regular meetings with the General Secretaries of European associations once a year where they provide updates on their work programmes and priorities, identify synergies and areas to avoid duplicating work.

He explained that the Congress works on the local and regional dimensions of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the areas that the Council of Europe works on. He said that the Congress is also consulted by the Committee of Ministers of the CoE Member States when they develop policies and conventions, such as the [European Charter of Local Self-Government](#).

Furthermore, Mr Kiefer explained that the Congress, as a monitoring body of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, visits all 47 Member States every five years to assess their compliance with this international treaty. Within this framework, he said the Congress would be in Bulgaria and Turkey in 2016, and in Serbia, Romania and Azerbaijan in 2017. He said the results of the monitoring reports forms recommendations to the CoE Member States and nourish a political dialogue with governments, helping to develop action plans that are implemented in cooperation activities.

Mr Kiefer also explained that the Congress promotes the activities of the Council of Europe Development Bank ([CEB](#)), as there is a local and regional dimension for loans from the CEB, especially



in the areas of strengthening social integration, aid to refugees, migrants and displaced persons, improving living conditions in urban areas, housing for low income, managing the environment, improving the situation of health. Eligible borrowers are national states, regional authorities, local authorities but also private entities.

In the framework of the EU Neighbourhood Policy, he said the Congress works closely with the European Committee of the Regions ([CoR](#)) which has, as requested by the European Commission, set up the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership ([CORLEAP](#)) and the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly ([ARLEM](#)). Using its findings about the situation in different CoE Member States, the Congress also feeds into the work of the Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission.

Mr Kiefer said that before projects and other policies can be implemented, a solid democratic and administrative basis has to be put in place in order to have the trust of donors and citizens. He explained that the EU and the CoE have agreed a cooperation framework for the Eastern Partnership countries between 2015 and 2017, and together with other partners are implementing a series of seminars for local and regional politicians. One of the highlights of this three-year programme is funding.

Summing up, Mr Kiefer said the Congress works to create societies that benefit from policies aimed at improving the situation of citizens, economies, wellbeing, and all that makes life positive.

Mr Emirzas thanked Mr Kiefer for the interesting presentation and opening up the discussion to new issues good governance, and institutional renewal. He said that good governance is a prerequisite for everything else that local and regional authorities want to do. He stated that it is important for international donors, it is important for international financing institutions and of course it is very important for the citizen himself.

Mr Patrick Anvoin, Director at the CPMR responsible for the Balkan & Black Sea Commission, said that the first panel has set the scene from a political and economic point of view and the second panel will focus on cooperation and thanked all panelists for their participation. By introducing Mr Stoyanov, Mr Anvoin briefly introduced the Integrated Maritime Policy, launched under the responsibility of Dr Joe Borg, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (2004-2010) and the role of the CPMR that has always advocated in favour of sea basins as a scale for preparing and implementing maritime policies, an idea that has been taken on board by the European Commission.

Mr Svetoslav Stoyanov, Policy Officer – Maritime Policy in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, Directorate D – Mediterranean and Black Sea, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission, thanked the CPMR and the hosts for the organisation. Mr Stoyanov described in his [presentation](#) the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and Blue Growth in the Black Sea. Blue Growth is the European Commission's initiative to further harness the potential of Europe's seas



and coasts for jobs, value and sustainability, through five modern sectors. However, more traditional sectors of the blue economy are always crucial for value and jobs in the Black Sea.

Among the actions in the Black Sea are the Black Sea Stakeholder Conferences on the blue economy ([2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#)), and the Black Sea [Advisory Council](#) for fisheries – interesting for stakeholders as local fishermen, fishermen associations, environmental organisations, local and regional authorities. The IMP contact points' meeting, for public administrations of the coastal countries, is to be held in Brussels, in October 2016.

As regards the role of the regional organisations, Mr Stoyanov mentioned that the CPMR could inform and shape the European Commission's policies, craft partnerships at regional and local level, prepare good projects proposals, and drive cultural and societal change (project management capacity for instance) in the different countries.

When referred to the funding opportunities under the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, Mr Stoyanov, reminded that the European Commission offers a wide range of funding opportunities through its different DGs and programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020).

For further inspiration stakeholders may visit the DG MARE's website where, among others, there is a guide of examples of successful projects related to [coastal and maritime tourism](#).

To the question of **Dr Apostolos Papafotiou**, Regional Councillor of Peloponnese in charge of International Affairs and European Programmes, for further information regarding Maritime Spatial Planning which is implemented at regional level in Greece, **Mr Stoyanov**, explained the concept of [Maritime Spatial Planning](#) which is to be applicable in all EU Member States by 2020.

Ms Andreea Gavrilă, Public Manager, Joint Managing Authority of the ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, Romania, in her [presentation](#) described the programme's objectives and priorities and invited all participants to the [Launching Conference & Partnership Forum](#) on 14 July 2016, in Constanta¹. Ms Gavrilă mentioned the Black Sea Tradenet ([BST](#)) as a good project example from the previous period.

Mr Ivan Delchev, Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) of Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Turkey Programme 2014-2020, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria, [presented](#) the programme 2014-2020 and the results until now 2016. Mr Delchev mentioned some good project examples where the cooperation between partners from different backgrounds (public and private sectors, different levels of administration) was successful.

¹ According to the latest information provided in Constanta, please be advised to pay attention to the eligibility criteria for partners and project partners as well as to the composition of the consortia. The lifetime of each project may be between 18 and 30 months. Each project should contribute to at least one EU Macro-Regional Strategy/Initiative. All stakeholders are kindly invited to duly consider the national legislation applicable. (Please read thoroughly the [BSB Programme 2014-2020 Guidelines for Grant Applicants](#) and the reference documents on the [BSB website](#)).



The development of alternative tourism, including coastal tourism, is a stress point for the new programming period of the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Turkey Programme. By closing, Mr Delchev stressed that even small local authorities can succeed and benefit from this kind of programmes, if they are highly motivated, have the administrative capacity and make the relevant effort.

To **Mr Emirzas'** question about the participation of entities outside the eligible area in project proposals of the Bulgaria-Turkey Programme, **Mr Delchev** answered that non-governmental organisations have to be registered in the eligible region and only governmental institutions situated in Bulgaria or Turkey may participate regardless of where they are located.

To **Ms Budescu's** remark that the change of eligibility criteria of some partners between the different periods 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 impedes sustainability because partners of the previous period that invested in this cooperation programmes cannot carry on in the new period, **Mr Delchev** explained that the only reason for doing that is to keep a sort of administrative capacity with the eligible region. However, no organisation is forbidden to register within the eligible area.

Ms Şenay Çekiç, Coordinator Kırklareli Investment Support Office, Trakya Development Agency, Turkey (TRAKYAKA), [presented](#) Trakya Development Agency, one of the 26 Regional Development Agencies in Turkey, and a new CPMR member which comprises three provinces (Edirne, Kırklareli, Tekirdag).

The mission of Regional Development Agencies is to coordinate the process of bringing regions to the high competitive and attractive region based on their local potentials, and sufficient use of all resources provided for regional cooperation. TRAKYAKA believes that one of the main successful regional cooperation at European level as agency is to orient resources and efforts to the establishment of work connected to European institutions and officials.

TRAKYAKA has established an EU Affairs Working Group and believes that through its participation in the CPMR it could achieve very good results in regional cooperation and promotion of its interests through the extensive network of the CPMR and cooperation and development of joint projects with its members.

Ms Çekiç suggested that, being active in the field of maritime transport, the CPMR may lobby towards the extension of the Trans-European Transport Network ([TEN-T](#)) and the integration of TRAKYAKA region's ports, where Asyaport, the second biggest port in Turkey and six biggest in Europe, is located in Tekirdag, to this network.

Ms Çekiç expressed the hope that TRAKYAKA's membership in the CPMR will lead it to carry out the role of social and economic regional development more effectively, and wished success to all potential cooperation initiatives.



**Exchange of views on the CPMR Priorities with the wider Black Sea region's
Regional and Local Authorities and Stakeholders**

Mr Patrick Anvroin, Director at the CPMR responsible for the Balkan and Black Sea Commission, thanked the BSEC PERMIS for warmly hosting these meetings. Being a sectoral dialogue partner of the BSEC, the CPMR is trying to further strengthen their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding. Mr Anvroin said that during the last years, the CPMR had the honour to welcome BSEC representatives to its BBSC General Assembly meetings and the chance to collaborate with the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), related body of the BSEC, on a project proposal, and expressed the hope that there are many other opportunities for collaboration to come.

Dr Apostolos Papafotiou, Regional Councillor of Peloponnese in charge of International Affairs and European Programmes, and alternate Greek member of the CPMR Political Bureau, thanked the BSEC for hosting this interesting conference and expressed the wish to see more initiative of this kind. Dr Papafotiou reminded that right solutions and results is the aim for all actors and stakeholders.

Ambassador Michael B. Christides, Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), referred to BSEC as a family of organisations which is promoting the economic cooperation among its Member States and beyond. He welcomed all participants and thanked them for holding their meeting in the BSEC's premises, and the organisers and the Executive Manager Mr Emirzas, who invested a lot of effort and time in helping to realise this event.

BSEC is a 25-year-old organisation and the results of wish of the States in the region immediately after the fall of the division between Europe, to come together in regional organisation and try to promote cooperation, trade, exchanges, in one word synergies between the member countries.

In the effort to render this organisation more efficient, effective and project oriented, the cooperation with other organisations is of paramount importance. The adoption and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between BSEC and the CPMR will enable them to upgrade their cooperation. Ambassador Christides said that BSEC has great expectations from this cooperation due to the CPMR's experience, also in participating and implementing projects.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General welcomed the possibility to host again a CPMR meeting, called for joint work to make the Black Sea region a happier place to live for its citizens, and wished a successful conclusion to the works of the BBSC General Assembly.

Mr Anvroin, presented the CPMR, an extensive network of about 160 regions from EU Members States and beyond, and an official interlocutor of the European institutions, as the European Parliament and the European Commission's Directorates-General (DG REGIO, DG MARE, DG MOVE).

He, then, referred to the CPMR's added value and experience on the main axes of work: maritime issues, territorial cohesion, accessibility, tourism, environment & renewable energy. The CPMR's



expertise can promote development in the Black Sea region and called the CPMR members to be actively involved in its works and spread the good word. ([CPMR Activity Report 2014-2015](#))

As regards the “Motorways of the Sea” (MoS), Mr Anvroin reminded the CPMR’s cooperation with the European Coordinator for the Motorways of the Sea, Mr Brian Simpson, mentioned that the European Commission is not aware of the work of the BSEC on the topic and proposed to promote cooperation between the European Commission (DG MOVE) and BSEC through the BSEC-CPMR MoU.

Mr Nicholas Emirzas, Executive Manager, Permanent International Secretariat of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), explained that the BSEC MoS is a format of cooperation between the BSEC Member States. The EU and BSEC MoS are parallel concepts with a different procedures and instruments. Therefore, Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian ports are at the same time within the EU format and the BSEC one.

Ms Natalia Budescu, President of the NGDO Platform – FOND, Black Sea NGO Forum, and Director of the Association for Cross Border Cooperation “Lower Danube Euroregion”, Romania, [presented](#) the project idea titled Black Sea Local & Regional Authorities Forum (Black SeaL Forum²) to be submitted to the 1st Call of the ENI CBC BSB Programme 2014-2020. The overall objective of this project proposal is to improve the welfare of the people in the Black Sea basin regions by enabling an effective partnership between the public and private sector. What we should ensure through this project proposal is that despite the restricted number of partners the information is reaching the maximum number of recipients and having an impact on our work. This may result from a good coordination between the different stakeholders involved.

Dr Papafotiou expressed his concerns about the absence of the private sector from the meeting and called for a better coordination between the different actors and stakeholders since the results are lower of the expectations of the money invested.

Ms Budescu underlined that what should be done is to translate the notion of sustainable development and what it means to public administration in terms of the private sector, market the Black Sea region for the private sector and explain to them that all types of growth (e.g. smart, blue,...) is translated into sustainable development in the region.

² Please be advised that further to the BBSC General Assembly and the [Launching Conference & Partnership Forum](#) on 14 July 2016, in Constanta, the CPMR Secretariat and Ms Budescu decided to reorient the proposal to the Priority 1.2 (Increase cross-border trade opportunities and modernisation in the agricultural and connected sectors). The CPMR Secretariat will get back to you with further details in due course.



Mr Alevli welcomed the fact that the CPMR is working more closely with the BSEC and its related bodies, as it will increase its visibility and involvement in the region.

Mr Anvroin summed up the conclusions of all sessions and invited participants to contact the CPMR Secretariat General regarding the project proposals consortia and to the CPMR [44th General Assembly on 2-4 November 2016 in Ponta Delgada \(Azores, Portugal\)](#).

Ambassador Michael B. Christides, expressed the hope that all ideas and proposals discussed will be food for thought and action, and that this meeting was the first of a number of similar meetings to follow in the near and medium future. The more and better we cooperate at regional level, the greater the understanding and cooperation will be on the intergovernmental level which the BSEC is promoting, he stated, and expressed the hope to meet altogether again, in order to continue the important work in the near future.