
**Ninth Annual Meeting of Ministers on the
Development of the SEETO Comprehensive Network
“Common problems – Shared solutions”**

**December 3rd, 2013
Brussels**

Concept note

Aim of the Meeting:

The Ninth SEETO Annual Ministerial Meeting is going to focus on the *overall transport strategy* as an appropriate response to the dynamic and challenging environment of the SEE region that remains fully encircled by the EU Member States and yet in an enormous need for sustainable growth.

The Meeting shall take place following the entry of Croatia to the European Union and in the view of some forthcoming strategic steps, such as the update of the *Regional Transport Study (REBIS)* and the *Flagship Axes Initiative*.

This strategic approach for transport is going to provide an excellent platform for Ministers to take up commitments for genuine cross-border transport initiatives and projects. The new transport strategic guidelines for the region should look at enhancing the efficiency of the SEETO Comprehensive Network, not only by physical improvements, but also through regulatory, institutional and managerial changes that would reduce the barriers impeding the performance of the Network.

Having the most important international stakeholders on board, it would hopefully bring some concrete conference conclusions with regards to the coordination of transport investments and policy, given the financial perspective 2014-2020 is already knocking on the door.

Concept of the meeting:

The meeting is going to be divided in the following two panels:

Panel 1: Integrated transport policy- challenges and opportunities

- Regional Transport Strategy: Smart ones transport faster, safer and cheaper
- Investing in connectivity: How can inter-modal transport drive economic growth?
- SEETO in action- *Multimodal Flagship axes initiative*: Bypass the transport barriers, Stop bypassing the regional transport axes
- Danube and Sava rivers: unprecedented and underused green potential

Panel 2 – Funding challenges and opportunities

- Infrastructure Investments vs. Limited Financial Resources: balancing the needs
- Innovative funding and exploring private finances for SEETO Comprehensive Network Project priorities
- Linking networks for sustainable transport: Funding cross-border projects
- Pipeline of Projects: How to address project preparation insufficiencies and strengthen projects' implementation capacities?

Tentative agenda:

- Registration & Networking coffee
- Opening remarks- by *Mr. Siim Kallas*, Vice President of the European Commission in charge of Transport (20 min)
- Panel 1- Integrated transport policy- challenges and opportunities (30-40 min)
- Panel 2- Funding challenges and opportunities (30-40 min)
- Presentation by the *Steering Committee Chairperson* (10 min)
- Conclusions (10 min)
- NETWorking Lunch

Participants to the Panels: Ministers in charge for Transport from the SEETO Regional Participants, including Croatia

Attendants:

- High level delegations from the SEETO Regional Participants
- European Commission (DG Mobility and Transport, DG Enlargement)
- International Financial Institutions
- Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF)
- Regional and international organisations