

SEETO - Annual Activity Report 2015

Common problems – Shared solutions



Activity Report on implementation of the Action Plan 2015

-Annual Report 2015-

1. Introduction

The year 2015 was marked by several major milestones which had or will have positive effect and influence the future transport cooperation in the region of Western Balkans and EU.

As the highlight of events during 2015 was the continuation of the Berlin Summit meetings which have taken place in Pristina, Belgrade and Brussels followed with Vienna Summit, which has resulted with positive outcome and new tasks to be accomplished by WB-Western Balkan partners.

One of the biggest achievement for the WB6 partners was the acceptance/agreement upon the extension of Core TEN-T network in Western Balkans and modification of the Comprehensive Network during the WB 6 Summit in Vienna.

During TENT days, Core Network with maps were presented in Riga meeting which took place on 22-23 of June, the agreed Core Network is expected to be signed and officially approved, majority of Regional Ministers, deputies SEETO SC members as well as SEETO Secretariat members have attended the Riga meeting.

In Riga World Bank has presented its final REBIS report and its findings, report was approved by all Regional Participants in SC meeting and was also one of the conclusions during the 11th AMM meeting in Tirana.

In comparison to previous years, SEETO has increased its attendance, participation and has being actively engaged/involved in various regional and international events, conferences and forums, among many topics discussed and presented was the future regional challenges and progress made so far.

Many new challenges have derived during 2015, one of major regional challenge, is the implementation of soft measures (Horizontal Measures), out of which regional Ministers ones again expressed their willingness upon the full implementation of the identified and agreed soft measure objectives by 2020.

SEETO Secretariat with coordination and cooperation with EC has prepared activity plan that will be used as a reporting matrix on the implementation of SM activities, this activity plan matrix will help Regional TFWG on the deliverables to be achieved coming years.

2015 challenges, were tackled immediately, all necessary measures were taken by SEETO Secretariat, EC representative as well as regional representative on ensuring the smooth accomplishment of each sub action which are closely interconnected with

the implementation of soft measures, This has required the establishment of TFWG (transport facilitation working group), which responsibility will be to ensure the implementation, monitor and report upon results achieved for each soft measure derived from Vienna Summit, and agreed from regional Ministers at AMM meeting.

The TFWG will be working closely with SEETO secretariat who will offer support tools and expertise to ensure smooth implementation and foster further development through continuous reporting and monitoring activities upon the progress achieved by each regional country.

Due to new role and responsibilities given to SEETO secretariat, during 2015, SEETO secretariat has requested for its internal systematisation and approval from Steering Committee which was granted on SC meeting held in Sutomore, Montenegro July 2015. The new systematisation has required two new positions, which were announced and appointed with two new members (1. Administrative Assistant 2. Coordinator and Project Information Officer), the systematisation will have an effect within SEETO secretariat which is ongoing process towards its finalisation.

During 2015 SEETO Secretariat has finalised its work program, Multi annual Plan and has also published many reports and analyses on SEE core and comprehensive network, data collection statistics were regularly collected from Regional key users, noting, that there is still room for improvement on data collection from regional participants.

As previous years, in 2015 SEETO has organised and successfully visited all regional participants where they have meet high institutional officials as well as major stakeholders from other institutions and EU Regional offices throughout the region, the aim of regional meetings is to strengthen the cooperation between SEETO Secretariat, Line Ministries and other Regional institutions and increasing the communication and cooperation levels.

2. Description of realised main activities

This part of the report underlines/highlights some of the most significant/key activities that have been realised in the period January-December 2015:

11th Annual Meeting of Ministers

11th Annual Meeting of Ministers, which is organized by SEETO Secretariat, and hosted by the Albanian Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, has taken place on December 3rd, 2015 in Tirana.

The SEETO Annual Meeting of Ministers is the highest transport policy and infrastructure forum in the region, which will gather Ministers in charge for transport of the SEETO Regional Participants and of EU Member States neighbouring the region of South East Europe as well as the high level representatives from the European Commission, International Financial

Institutions, relevant regional and international organizations, and prominent experts in the field.

One of the aims of the Meeting is to further express the commitment to the Western Balkans 6 process and the connectivity agenda as well as to further adopt the modification proposals for the Comprehensive Network. The Ministers, European Commission and the European Core Corridor Coordinators exchanged views and agreed on next steps for practical enforcement of the TEN-T Core Corridors management process and on the future development of both infrastructure and related policy on the new TEN-T Core Network for South East Europe.

Infrastructure investments and non-physical improvements were discussed, including regulatory, institutional and managerial changes to reduce barriers to transport and trade, in the light of the Conclusions from the recent WB 6 Vienna Summit

All six Transport Ministers from SEETO Regional Participants during their speeches have shown and expressed their willpower and willingness in supporting and implementing activities derived from Vienna summit as well as all upcoming regional projects. European Commissioner for Transport addressed to the participants via video conference, where she highlighted and expressed her interest and continues support to the SEE region towards reaching set targets, goals and objectives.

<http://www.seetoint.org/11th-annual-meeting-of-ministers-on-the-development-of-the-seeto-comprehensive-network/>

The *SEETO Comprehensive Network development plan (MAP 2016)*

Year 2015 brought new strategic objectives and guidelines for the development of the Western Balkan transport system, revitalizing the objectives set by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), as objectives relevant not just for the transport development of the region, but also necessary for economic and social regional development. MAP 2016 on itself includes and elaborates key strategic documents such as REBIS, TEN-T core and comprehensive network extension, soft measures, Flagship initiative, SEE 2020 strategy, macro regional strategies. MAP 2016 has been published, it presents the latest achievements in the Western Balkan transport system and highlighting the key investment infrastructure projects.

It showcases a set of regionally important infrastructure and policy information to the transport planning authorities and potential investors. The MAP 2016 portrays an assessment done on the SEETO Comprehensive Network, list of priority projects evaluated according to the Rating Methodology, priority project fiches and latest developments in the transport sector in the region. MAP 2016 includes the activities

The *SEETO Comprehensive Network Investment Report 2004-2015*

Following the results of Technical assistance, part under project task a: Improved data collection and analysis mechanism, new structured Investment Report was published in July 2015. This report is dedicated to the evaluation of main

economic trends in the region as well as to detailed analysis of the disbursed and committed investments in the region from the 2004 until now, evaluated by source of funding and mode of transport.

<http://www.seetoint.org/library/multi-annual-plans/>

Coordination and preparation activities for the Vienna Summit- list of core network infrastructure projects and soft measures

During the Vienna Summit, next to the presentation of the core network, list of core network pre-identified transport infrastructure projects and soft measures was presented. SEETO Cooperation (Ministries and the Secretariat) were leading the process of identification of the Western Balkans transport infrastructure and soft projects.

Modification of SEETO Road/Rail Comprehensive Network

At the beginning of 2015, Regional Participants submitted proposals for modification of SEETO Road and Rail Comprehensive Network. During 44th SC Meeting in Brussels, 10 March 2015 and 45th SC Meeting in Belgrade, 04 June 2015 Regional Participants presented their proposals and respective supporting documents. In order to be able to assess the proposals SEETO Secretariat prepared the Guidelines for Modification of SEETO Comprehensive network based on the same principles as per modification of TEN-T Network Modifications. The proposals that fulfilled the criteria as per adopted guideline were approved during WB6 Ministerial Meeting in Riga June 2015 and in Tirana December 2015.

There are still proposals that further supporting documents as per Guideline are needed that will be elaborated further in the coming period. List of modifications is attached to the Ministerial Conclusions of AMM in Tirana, December 2015.

Western Balkans Intermodal study

The SEE 2020 Strategy, developed under the auspices of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), highlights transport as one of the key sectors where greater regional cooperation can contribute to the socio-economic growth of the region and its greater integration with the EU. Under the umbrella of SEE 2020, SEETO and the RCC initiated Regional Study on Intermodality intend to optimize the use of existing infrastructure and evaluate the possibilities for efficient combination of all modes of transport in the region. The scope of the study included:

- Development of a transport demand and supply assessment model
- Assessment of the main logistic corridors/routes on the SEETO Comprehensive Network
- Gap assessment analysis of the main logistic corridors of the SEETO Comprehensive Network
- Identification of potential efficiency-enhancing measures as well as certain infrastructure measures (e.g. terminals)

Study was contracted by RCC and conducted during 2015. After dissemination of the draft final version to the Steering Committee members and inclusion of all comments it was finalized in January 2016.

Meetings organised from/within SEETO umbrella and participating meeting activities throughout 2015.

During this reporting period SEETO secretariat has organised and attended/participated in various meetings with various stake holders and groups of interests. In 2015 there were, four SC meetings one Ministerial annual meeting, **TFWG** (transport facilitation working group), **RWWG** (railway working group), **RSWG** (road safety working group), **NC** (National coordinators) and **KY** (Key user) meeting. SEETO secretariat has participated and closely been involved in various Regional and International events/meetings/conferences, such as: Danube Strategy, SEE 2020 Board Coordination, WB6 in (Brussels), CEFTA, IRF, ITF, CEI DG NEAR conference, CECE (connect to Europe to connect to Europe)

TFWG (transport facilitation working group)

Following the Western Balkan 6 summit in Vienna on 27 August 2015, where the Prime Ministers of the Western Balkans partners and the European Commission committed to improve the connectivity within the Western Balkans, as well as between the Western Balkans and the European Union as a key factor for growth and jobs, SEETO established an inter-institutional Working Group on Transport Facilitation (TFWG). The first, inauguration meeting of the TFWG was held on December 10th, 2015 in Brussels. Which gathered representatives from the Ministries in charge for Transport, Trade, Custom Authorities, Border police and transport industry represented by the Chamber of Commerce, as well as representatives from the European Commission, CEFTA Secretariat and various international organizations dealing with transport and trade facilitation.

Discussion among the members of the TFWG was how to enable better use of the transport infrastructure which are embedded in the list of soft measures, adopted at the WB 6 summit. It is SEETO-s role to regularly follow the progress of the implementation on these measures, followed with accordingly report to the European Commission.

<http://www.seetoint.org/transport-facilitation-working-group-has-been-set-up/>

RWWG (railway working group)

SEETO Railway and Intermodal Policy Working Group held its 22nd to 24th meeting during 2015 in Podgorica, Tirana and Zagreb. RWWG continued with the practice of separated topical session. In the first part of the meeting, session on Regulatory and Competition aspects are taking place, while the second session involves topics of interest for the Ministries of Transport and operators. Meetings were attended by all six SEETO Regional Participants either on the ministerial level, or at the level of railway authorities, among the participants attending the meeting was a Croatian representative as well.

<http://www.seetoint.org/24th-railway-working-group-meeting/>

RSWG (road safety working group)

During 2015 year two meetings of Road safety working group (RSWG) has been organised.

The 5th RSWG meeting was organized in June 3-4, 2015 in Brussels and was chaired from Mr. Said Dahdah, Senior Transport Specialist, Transport and ICT Global Practice in World Bank.

The European Commission representatives gave an overview of the latest development emphasizing and recommending to the region that the focus will be in the two main papers: 1) **White Paper 2011**: Towards a “zerovision” on road safety and 2) **Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020**. Apart of the working group members from all the region the meeting was attended from diverse regional and International institutions like UNECE, ETSC, IFIs (EIB, EBRD and World Bank), Belgium Road Safety Institute (BRSI), EURORAP etc. UNECE informed that currently UN is preparing the mid-term review of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.

The 6th meeting of the Road Safety Working Group (RSWG) was held in Zagreb, and was welcomed and hosted by the representatives of the Ministry of Transport of Croatia which in addition to the support and active participation in this working group organized and offered an interesting site visit to the Traffic Control Centre of Krapina, for the Zagreb-Macelj road section.

Conclusions of the previous meeting held in June, 2015 in Brussels were presented and adopted during the 45th Steering Committee (SC) Meeting in Sutomore, Montenegro. Two observers (IRF and EuroRAP) attended the 6th RSWG meeting.

<http://www.seetoint.org/5th-road-safety-working-group-meeting/>

National Coordinator and key users Meeting (Kolasin)

Meeting was held in Kolasin Montenegro 23rd - 24th of March 2015. This was 14th meeting of NC and 2nd of Key users. Meeting was organized by SEETO supported by RCC (regional cooperation council). The main objective of the NC and KY meetings is to assist in data collection process on SEETO as well as improving and increasing the quality of processed and submitted data. NC and Key Users during meetings of such format have an opportunity to share and learn about the best practices and experiences used in regional data collection, which will result in sustainability, quality and reliability of data received in SEETO Secretariat.

<http://www.seetoint.org/library/meetings/nc/>

SEETO Cooperation with RCC

During 2015 SEETO has participated and actively been involved in RCC meetings held in: **Sarajevo, 15 October 2015** – The 27th meeting of the RCC Board took place in Sarajevo today. RCC Secretary General, Goran Svilanovic, presented the activities of the RCC Secretariat between April and October 2015 and the Board accepted them. Particular attention was given to RCC’s engagement in those aspects of the Berlin Process which are in line with RCC’s mission and goals. RCC’s next strategy will have a strong continuity, but with an improved and integrated approach on implementation structured around flagship themes like Connectivity; Competitiveness; Skills and mobility and will continue to also work on Good governance, security and the rule of law.

SEETO was represented by the General Manager and the SEETO role in the flagship on connectivity was highlighted, as SEETO is recognized as the main organization for monitoring the conclusions from the Vienna Summit in the frame of the transport connectivity agenda.

Tirana, 22.05.2015- Annual RCC meeting - The ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted the Annual Report of the RCC Secretary General on regional cooperation in South East Europe (SEE). The RCC's Annual Meeting heard a strong endorsement of the organization's efforts in fostering economic recovery and speeding up the European integration process of the region. SEETO's General Manager contributed to the discussions related to transport integration as a support to the economic development.

SEETO also contributed to the SEE 2020 scoreboard which is integrated into the South East Europe Development Scoreboard, a monitoring mechanism for following the region's progress – or lack of it – in the economic sphere. The SEEDS, www.rcc.int/seeds is a comprehensive web platform which enables any user to monitor the implementation of the region's development strategy – South East Europe (SEE) 2020 and allows them to compare how their economy is doing in comparison with others.

SEETO in ITF (International Transport Forum)

International Transport Forum was held in Leipzig, Germany 27th-29th of May 2015. ITF gathers highly ranked officials from various transport Institution and Industries from all over the world, among many highly ranked officials and speakers was Ms. Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Transport.

SEETO General Manager Mr. Dejan Lasica has participated the event, Mr. Lasica has presented and addressed the participants on ongoing SEETO activities and regional projects as well as regional progress and future challenges.

Danube Region Intermodal Strategy, WP leaders meeting

Preparatory meeting of the Danube Region Intermodal Strategy Project was held in Belgrade under the organization of Faculty of Transport and Traffic Engineering. The meeting was attended by the relevant Universities and the private sector partners from the Danube region as well as SEETO, as project partners.

The project, which was nominated under the Danube Strategy as one of the key transport priorities, is focused on setting the strategic objectives for the development of the intermodality in the Danube region and aims to develop concrete infrastructural, administrative and technological solutions for the introduction of the efficient intermodal system in the Danube region. During the meeting, the working package leaders discussed the further improvement of the working programs and the project activities in detail as well as the potential funding possibilities under the macro regional programs.

<http://www.seetoint.org/danube-region-intermodal-strategy-wp-leaders-meeting/>

SEE 2020 Coordination Board

The sixth meeting of the SEE2020 coordination board under the organizations of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was held in Brussels on 5th of May. The aim of the meeting was to update the regional organizations- dimension coordinators, including SEETO, on the monitoring process, monitoring guidelines and the Monitoring Committee to be established during 2015, as well as to discuss the status of the SEE 2020 Competitiveness Outlook and 2015 Annual Implementation Report.

One session was dedicated to the programming process, presenting the programming guidelines and the concept of three wider Flagship programs, one of which is the Flagship on Connectivity where transport naturally belongs, together with related dimensions such as Trade, Energy, and Environment.

The meeting was followed by High Level Conference on cooperation and enlargement in the Western Balkans held on 6th of May, with participation of the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Western Balkans states and the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, under organization of the State of Baden-Württemberg, RCC and European Fund for the Balkans. The two panel discussions of the conference dealt with enlargement, economic growth and governance as well as enlargement and connectivity and links to the Berlin Process and the Vienna summit in August 2015.

<http://www.seetoint.org/sixth-meeting-of-the-see2020-coordination-board/>

SEETO in CEFTA Week – Chisinau

2015 CEFTA week, series of events in a day and a half, leading up to the CEFTA Joint Committee, which was held in Chisinau under the Chairmanship of Republic of Moldova. Its main objective was to provide a platform not only for official representatives of CEFTA signatory parties, but also the representatives of private sector, academia, and all relevant international organizations.

SEETO participated to the panel session III- Trade and Transport, along with the transport authorities from some of the Western Balkans partners, IFC, EBRD and RCC. During the panel, they discussed the role of trade policy in the economic growth and how the investment in transport should be planned in a way to take into account regional and international trade, and how such investment in transport networks together with trade could be instrumental for developing/strengthening economic corridors to integrate the region to the EU and to the global economy.

Mr. Dejan Lasica, General Manager of SEETO presented the planned soft measures along the TEN-T Core Network for the Western Balkans, explaining the SEETO role in transport facilitation in the context of connectivity agenda in SEE as it has been once more emphasized by the Vienna Summit, and emphasizing the cooperation with CEFTA in that process.

<http://www.seetoint.org/seeto-participation-at-cefta-week/>

SEETO on Upgrading Railway as Growth for SEE

The railway conference “**Upgrading railway as growth engine for SEE**” under the umbrella of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) and RCC was held on 7th February, 2015 in Tirana. The Conference gathered representatives of national authorities from South East Europe responsible for railway traffic, operators and representatives of international organisations, European Commission, International Financial Institutions, project managers from respective projects and initiatives, and experts. It was organized by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in cooperation with the Albanian Chairmanship in Office of the SEEC and the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Albania.

The conference was opened by the Albanian Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr. Edmond Haxhinasto and Mrs. Odeta Barbullushi, Albanian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs who emphasized the role of railways as a

catalyst of economic development in the South East Europe and the need for enhanced regional cooperation.

The conference continued with the session on railway reforms as an anchor for future multimodal and economic development of South-East Europe and enhanced cross-border cooperation. The session was opened by Mr. Frank Jost, from DG MOVE, on the market opening in WB.

Then followed presentations on the railway corridors, Mr. Nedim Begovic, (SEETO presented the SEETO Flagship initiative, while Mr. Zeljko Janjos presented the SEE 2020 Study on Intermodality for the Western Balkan region. Mr. Alberto Cozzi, project manager at the ACROSSEE project presented main problems at the border crossings in South East Europe.

<http://www.seetoint.org/upgrading-railway-as-growth-engine-for-see/>

SEETO in IRF (International Road Federation), Regional congress

The South East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) participated to a roundtable dedicated to the future of transport corridors in South East Europe on 16 September 2015 in Istanbul, Turkey as part of the 1st IRF Europe & Central Asia Regional Congress in Istanbul. The main focal theme of the event "Corridors for Shared Prosperity" which was a reflection of growing cross-border trade and renewed interest for coordinated investment programs in the highway sector. Overall, the Congress featured more than 50 plenaries, executive, partner and technical sessions covering key aspects of surface transportation in Europe & Central Asia – from innovations in asphalt applications to financing, and from resilient roads to complex project delivery.

<http://www.seetoint.org/seeto-corridors-at-the-focus-on-the-international-road-federations-regional-congress/>

SEETO in CEI & DG NEAR conference "Role of EU in Western Balkans"

The current efforts in the region aimed at reinforcing connectivity and the transport system within the overall EU enlargement strategy were the focus of an international conference jointly organized by the CEI and the European Commission – Directorate General European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). The event, held in Trieste on 21 April, also focused on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which provides financial and technical support to the candidate countries and potential candidates in the Western Balkans. The first session was dedicated to the EU-funded project ADRIA A (Accessibility and Development for the Re-launch of the Inner Adriatic Area) as a best practice of cross-border cooperation in the framework of the EU Macro-regional Strategies and ETC Programmes.

<http://www.seetoint.org/cei-dg-near-conference-on-the-role-of-the-eu-in-the-western-balkans/>

SEETO in CECE (connect to Europe to connect to Europe)

The railway conference "Upgrading railway as growth engine for SEE" under the umbrella of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) and RCC was held on 7th February, 2015 in Tirana.

The event focused on the main fields that have been in the center of attention during the last years, in particular, railway reforms, border crossing issues and investments. The participants discussed railway reforms as an anchor for future

multimodal and economic development of South-East Europe and enhanced cross-border cooperation as well as railway regional priorities, infrastructure needs versus available financing mechanisms.

The Conference on “Upgrading RAILWAY as growth engine for SEE” has gathered representatives of the national authorities from South East Europe, railway operators and infrastructure managers along with representatives from the international organizations, European Commission, International Financial Institutions, project managers from projects and initiatives and experts etc.

The Joint Statement was agreed at expert level and further proposed and possibly endorsed by SEECF Summit. Furthermore, this expert-level event would give a boost to the faster implementation of the key transport actions of the Sustainable Growth Pillar of the SEE2020 Strategy as well as the SEETO Comprehensive Network Development Plan and to the main objectives of a coordinated transport policy identified.

<http://www.seetoint.org/connect-to-europe-to-connect-europe-cece/>

WB6 in (Brussels)

The meeting attended the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Mr. Johannes Han, EU Commissioner for Mobility and Transport Ms. Violeta Bulc, Prime ministers from Western Balkan partners, as well as other Officials from EU institutions. Mr. Han announced that this meeting is a follow-up of Conference in Pristina which was under WB6 Initiative that started in Berlin 2014. Main objective of the meetings of this format, is to link all the regional and economic capitals, and ports through the Connectivity Agenda. Network to be complete by a target date of 2030 there is a need for common implementation of transport policies Ms. Bulc announced that beside the economic development, social elements are important too. There is a need to make conditions so people can afford to travel and use Core Network. The same terms apply to economic subjects and traffic of goods. Traffic connectivity in EU is recognized as an important factor in the development and one of the aims is completely multimodality in Western Balkans. It should construct connections that are missing and remove barriers, such as waiting on border-crossings. Core Network should be multimodal and interoperable which should connect regional and economic capitals and ports.

Establishment of the Transport Community is another mayor goal that should be pushed forward, which will enhance and ease the implementation of this program, but also it will support the regional participants in the process of integration in the EU. All Prime regional ministers supported this initiative and they announced that the initiative will contribute to economic and political stability in Western Balkan region. During TENT days, Core Network with maps was presented in Riga on 22-23 of June. Agreement of Core Network was expected to be signed.

<http://www.seetoint.org/western-balkans-6-meeting-in-brussels/>

Regional Visits

In the reporting period, SEETO concluded six Regional visits which involved higher number of participating institutions and professionals compared to the previous years, as well as meetings with EU Delegations and field visits to completed or

ongoing construction/modernisation sites. Around 150 representatives from a broad range of targeted institutions took active part at the meetings, therefore enabling the SEETO network of institutions and transport specialists to get wider and more visible. The Regional visits 2014 are deemed successful in terms of exchanging latest information and strengthening the future channels of communication which enables SEETO to closely follow the transport developments in the region and to act as a genuine regional transport organisation.

During its work in 2015, SEETO was guided by the Action Plan for 2015 adopted by the Steering Committee laying on the grounds of the SEETO Strategic Work Programme 2012-2014. Below is a detailed report on the activities carried out in this period and achieved results according to the Action Plan.

<http://www.seetoint.org/fifth-round-of-seeto-regional-visits-successfully-completed>