

16th Meeting of the Thematic Steering Group for Pillar 2 (TSG2) “Connecting the Region” Transport Sub-Group

Gotomeeting, March 18th 2022

MINUTES AND OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS



Chairs: Transport Coordinators: Mr Pierluigi Coppola (Italy, Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport), Mrs Tamara Delić (Republic of Serbia, Ministry for Construction, Transport and Infrastructure), Mrs Jasminka Kirkova (North Macedonia, Ministry of Transport and Communications)

Participants: EUSAIR Thematic Steering Group 2 (TSG2) Members (Transport Sub-Groups), Representatives of the European Commission (DG REGIO and DG MOVE), Italian Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility, TSG2 Technical Support Unit (Friuli Venezia Giulia Region), representatives of EUSAIR Facility Point Project Lead Partner, representative of CEI (Central Europe Initiative, Transport Community Treaty, Coordinator's Transport Technical Assistants. *(see the complete list of participants attached)*

MINUTES

The 16th TSG2 meeting was convened to be held online on the Facility Point Stakeholder platform.

Representatives of **nine** (out of 10) EUSAIR Countries attended the **Transport Sub-Group Meeting**. (Albania, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, San Marino).

The list of participants is attached to the minutes.

1. Welcome and Introduction

Transport Pillar Coordinators welcome the attendants and in particular San Marino representative, Ms. Sara Giusti, who has recently joined the TSG2 transport sub-group.

Transport Pillar Coordinators points out the absence of the Croatian representative and asks Mr. Di Paola (DG REGIO) to report it to the Governing Board, as it is the fourth consecutive meeting in which Croatia does not take part.

The draft Agenda is formally adopted by TSG2 transport sub-group.

2. Communications

a) DG REGIO: update from the 17th EUSAIR Governing Board meeting (2-3 March 2022); revision of EUSAIR Action Plan

Mr Giuseppe Di Paola (DG REGIO) reports on the main outcomes of the GB meeting held online on March 2nd and 3rd where also San Marino was attending for the first time. The revision of the EUSAIR action plan and the new governance were discussed. The minutes of the meeting has not yet been circulated.

Mr Di Paola informs that the agenda of the 7th EUSAIR Annual Forum, to be held in Tirana on 16-17 May will be shared soon. The forum will be held in “blended” format (in person and online). The focus will be on tourisms and enlargement strategies. There will be a panel with ministries discussing about Green Deal. A number of side events will be held in order to engage with other initiative and with the municipality of Tirana as well.

During the Governing Board, it was discussed the embedding process with the necessity to establish a network with Interreg Managing Authorities (MA) and the need to work with other mainstream programs. Governance support is considered relevant but unfortunately there were no progresses as the visions are very different; however, the role of IPA countries will be much more relevant. Regarding youth: the Commission will establish a youth council per region, including EUSAIR in order for young people to be more involved in decisional processes and make proposals.

Pillar Coordinators inform about the meeting of Pillar coordinators held before the Governing Board. The meeting recorded a lack of interest, and the cooperation was missing, hopefully next meeting in presence could revitalize the dialogue among Pillars and renew interest in the Strategy. In this respect they hope that the Facility Point will appoint an expert to improve the collaboration among EUSAIR members. Stasa Mesec (FP LP), communicates that the FP LP is also planning a meeting with Pillar coordinators to discuss how to move on in revising the Strategy and considering how to include TSG members.

b) EUSAIR Facility Point Lead PP: state of play and FP+ project ideas

Mrs Mesec informs that the Facility Point project duration has been prolonged until August 2023. Facility Point Plus was not extended and ideas for projects will be split by EUSAIR members, updates will come in the future. The 2 projects selected many years ago where Pillar 2 is involved are STETAI and ADRIONCycleTour. There is no time to make a selection process and to fund studies.

The Slovenian representative, Mr Zepic points out that the weakest link in the chain of implementing the strategy is the difficulty to properly reach external stakeholders (railway undertakings, ports, infrastructure managers, etc.) in order to get support and be more effective in achieving results. The Pillar Coordinator recognizes that the involvement of stakeholders is one of main tasks to be undertaken. In this respect, technical meetings could be held with TSG members before the Governing Board. Federica Polce from Italian ministry considers that it is

important to have new targets; initially there were effort in labelling projects, then focusing on masterplans but, maybe also because of the pandemic, targets to reach were a bit lost. Now the revision of Action Plan gives an opportunity to revise targets and trying to understand which is the future of projects.

c) Embedding: state of play

Mrs Battistina Cugusi from Italian department of Policy and Cohesion describes the status of the Action Lab. Experimental path, dedicated to embedding the EUSAIR flagship into the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC). The process was experimental and was made possible thanks to the support of the Marche Region, the Italian national coordinators and INTERACT. It was possible to coordinate 12 programs and identify common strengths and good cooperation practices. The purpose of the meetings was to identify possible complementarities between the programs and synergies to be built during the implementation process, especially with regard to the digitization of ports and the circular economy in ports. Action Labs must be the beginning of a process that creates permanent working groups and gives the opportunity to work on specific flagships and define specific Terms of Reference. Next event will be on April 7th in Ancona and will be open to the public (in hybrid mode, also online), on the website it is possible to find booklets and a database related to projects as well as the registration form for the event.

Mr Di Paola points out that the work has been very useful and that it ought to be extended also to mainstream programs. Mrs Cugusi replies that work is underway to launch, in addition to the networks, also the technical working groups on the more mature flagships at the development level. As for the mainstream, the pilot flagship identified was ADRIONCycleTour.

d) EUSAIR Annual Forum: topic of the transport thematic session

The sessions will be held involving experts and institutional stakeholders in which the European Commission and representatives of the competent ministries will be involved, as well as other stakeholders in the Macro-region who can contribute with their expertise for development. of the masterplan. There is the interest of Albanian presidency to include the youth and to get the contribution of stakeholders during the Forum that could be useful for EUSAIR action plan revision. The Pillar Coordinators propose to organise the Pillar 2 (Transport) session on the undergoing revision of the TEN-T network, with a first introductory part to present the EUSAIR Transport masterplan and the results of the simulated TEN-T scenario and a second part with a panel of discussants including transport experts, institutional representatives, associations, and other stakeholders in the AI Region.

The proposal is in line with the indication of the EUSAIR Presidency because it can contribute to the revision of the Strategy. Ms Polce (Italian Ministry of Transport) highlights that this is a useful opportunity for the regions to identify each step in the evolution of the area and thanks for the proposal.

Mr Di Paola agrees with the topic proposed and will facilitate the participation of the Commission in the discussion on the TEN-T extension.

Cesare Bernabei, representative of DG MOVE, reminds everyone that navigation in inland waters is extremely important in the EUSAIR area, also from a tourism development perspective, and must be taken into consideration by the works of the TSG and in the inclusion of the masterplan. Pillar Coordinators recall that a specific chapter of the masterplan is dedicated to this mode of transport.

3. Presentation of the “Green and Smart port concept”

The “Green and Smart port concept” is one of the two flagship project identified by the TSG2 (Transport sub-group). Facility Point IT partner informs that the public procurement to engage an expert to further develop this concept has been completed. The procedure has involved two steps: the first was a call for interest that started on December 1st (7 companies responded), the second was a restricted procedure involving three companies and launched on January 21st.

The consortium of three consultancies (PTSClas, TPS-Pro and Systematica) has been selected. Mr Giuseppe Siciliano (PTSClas), representing the consortium, illustrates the roadmap for the development of the project.

Facility Point LP illustrates the template required by ADRION JS for approving the project ideas to be further developed within the FP Work Packages T2. The form related to the “Green and Smart port concept” has been shared with TSG2 members prior to the meeting. After the presentation of the Pillar coordinators and the FP IT partner this is approved unanimously by TSG2 (Transport sub-group).

4. EUSAIR Transport Masterplan: state of play and next steps

a) First chapters of the volumes of the Masterplan on the analysis of the current transport system in the A-I Region

Pillar coordinators reminds that the first chapters of the volumes of the masterplan, sent to all TSG members, consisting in a state of the art of infrastructure and services in each country and the identification of criticalities. The chapter was also completed thanks to a series of interviews made from June to September 2021, for which he thanks the members of the TSG for the work done and for the amount of documentation and information shared. Comments were received so far by Italian regions, which were also transferred to technical assistance, and which will lead to meetings also at ministerial level, and from Greece, requiring involvement of several experts. He asks the other TSG members to do the same: this is crucial to improve the credibility of the masterplan and makes an effective analysis of the status quo. It is agreed that comments must be received within the next two-three weeks.

b) Presentation of the first hypotheses of future scenario (to be assessed)

Mr Giuseppe Siciliano (PTSCLAS), reports on the baseline scenario for the 2030 and 2040 time-horizon. An analysis of the current situation and existing plans at both European and national level was carried out, supported by interviews with TSG members. The baseline scenario was defined according to the plans and programs existing in the Macro-region, while the infrastructures under construction and under development will instead be included in the alternative scenario. On the other hand, projects not yet designed but necessary according to the guidelines of the TEN-T model are instead included in the theoretical target scenario. In the process of reviewing the strategic documents, a map of strategic corridors that do not coincide with each other has been identified that can be used in a neutral way to outline an infrastructural network and understand what is effective and what is not.

The alternative scenarios have different characteristics, it was chosen to define three, on the basis of two variables: modal and geographical criteria. The axes analysed are north-south and west-east in terms of intra-regional connection. By crossing the two variables, three scenarios were identified:

- scenarios A1 and A2, which increases the possibilities of providing north-south connections and focus on improving the road (A1) and rail (A2) network,

- scenario B, which focuses on east-west and their strengthening in terms of railway connections with ports and with river connections.

At the moment the scenarios are kept separate to carry out simulations and to distinguish the effect, but the final aim is to reach a more comprehensive scenario that combines elements of all the scenarios discussed.

Mr Giuseppe Siciliano reports that at this stage no considerations about demand are formulated. Pilot areas are then shown and described in detail together with related projects.

Next steps will be:

- extension of the infrastructure design from the pilot area to the entire EUSAIR area,
- validation of TSG members,
- scenario simulation,
- simulation of a further theoretical scenario
- comparison of scenarios in terms of costs and strategic objectives.

c) Presentation of the scenarios assessment framework and KPIs

Mr Bernardis (Tplan), WP T1 technical assistance to the Pillar Coordinators illustrates the assessment methodology for scenario assessment and the proposed KPIs. The network model was updated based on the existing connections and projects, as well as the demand was updated taking into account socio-economic parameters and their changes assumed for the future. Strong economic growth is expected for all EUSAIR countries, with the exception of Italy which already has the strongest economy in the entire Strategy. Car ownership is also expected to increase in each country. Preliminary Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were identified for the model and extrapolated, grouped into three macro-categories: supply / demand, multi-modality and intensity. Further details, together with key findings, are shown in the presentation that will be made available after the meeting.

Mr Coppola proposes to have a technical meeting to analyze in detail the results achieved.

5. Capitalization of the interreg Adrion projects ADRI PASS and ADRI PASS Plus

Following the indication of the European Commission to involve the completed or ongoing projects financed by Interreg ADRIION in the TSG, Mr. Paolo Dileo (Central Europe Initiative – Executive Secretariat CEI-ES) has been invited to present Adrion projects ADRI PASS and ADRI PASS Plus projects, aiming at identifying and streamlining measures to improve multimodal transport, with a focus on maritime-hinterland connectivity.

The ADRI PASS project involved 11 partners and 8 countries and was labeled by EUSAIR. The main activity of the ADRI PASS project was to improve multimodal accessibility in the Adrion Region, starting by analysing existing bottlenecks, testing of the potential of ICT solutions in ports and launching an institutional dialogue with the key stakeholders in the ADRIION region posing the basis for the definition of a common vision. Physical and non-physical barriers were analysed with the aim of obtaining potential improvements as well as identifying soft measures to solve them. There is large margin for improvement in port operations and measures clustered per categories were identified. If serious and concrete measures are not taken in the short to medium term, there is a strong and tangible risk of overloading operations at BCPs. The importance of ICT has clearly emerged, which is why more than 170 measures have focused on them. Four pilot actions were supported in the ports of Koper, Bar, Ploče, Igoumenitsa and one pre-investment study in Durres. The aim was to test specific ICT tools and transmit them in the ports. Thanks to these pilots, it was possible to reduce the bottlenecks

in the ports and the performance time in the logistic ports was reduced. An ICT action plan was developed to promote the transfer of the pilot actions and the other ports of the Macro-region. Finally, a transnational strategy was established to improve multimodal transport solutions, which is being updated in the framework of the ADRIPASS Plus project. This last project has given the possibility to continue working on a concrete implementation of ICT in ports (especially Bar and Koper) and to focus on updating the transnational strategy and to implement further ICT improvement actions in the areas identified by ADRIPASS.

6. EUSAIR monitoring and evaluation

a) Progresses regarding the TSG2 Sub-Group on Transport

The issue was also briefly discussed in the Governing Board. Pillar Coordinators sent a proposal aimed to complement the proposal that had already been submitted by the Greek partner of the Facility Point project. The proposed framework is based on the following five items:

- Capacity to produce long-term impact
- Capacity to foster cross-pillar cooperation
- Capacity to contribute to EUSAIR multi-level governance
- Capacity to ensure alignment with other EU-funded programmes
- Capacity to contribute to the achievement of the EUSAIR Action plan's objectives

No reaction has been received so far. DG REGIO, FP Lead and Italian partners, suggested to have an additional meeting with the TSG on monitoring.

7. EUSAIR Labelling

a) Update on EUSAIR-labelled projects on Transport

Pillar coordinators communicated that no further project labelling requests have been received. Roberto Mencarelli (on behalf of Italian Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility) illustrated the recent updates of the following labelled projects:

- INTESA
 - WP3 was finalized by identifying the needs and bottlenecks of the Adriatic ports. Moreover, RAM performed a detailed analysis of the main ICT technologies such as block chain, digital twin, truck appointment systems and drones in order to verify their suitability for the Adriatic Sea ports.
 - WP4: out of the 8 pilot actions foreseen in the project in order to solve the need and bottlenecks identified in WP3, 6 have been completed. The results will feed the CB action Plan on deep-sea, seaside and land side ports' logistics optimization of data management systems, which will be presented during the final event next 9th June in Venice.
 - The project physical event "Information Technology for Safety: synergies on National Single Windows integration for the Adriatic and Ionian Sea" was held on the 16th December 2021 jointly with the Eureka project. It was an opportunity to analyze the importance of systematic cooperation and coordination among Maritime Administrations and to report on the contribution of the 2 projects to the EUSAIR strategy in developing a safe, secure and competitive intermodal port system in the AI region with the participation of Pillar 2 co-coordinator Prof Pierluigi Coppola.
- PROMARES: The project will end in June 2022 and almost all the activities have been completed: the most relevant intermodal logistics nodes in the programme area have been identified along with their challenges and the actions undertaken by the main

actors to overcome them. The pilot actions in the port of Venice (re-engineering of the existing Integrated System for the Management of the Railway Shunting SIMA) and in the port of Trieste (inbound/outbound transportation flows management in the FreeESTE area) have been completed. The project final event will be held on the 8th of June online.

Moreover, the DIG-SEA project was presented. This Initiative, born in the framework of the IT-HR programme, intends to capitalize the results of many EUSAIR labelled projects, such as INTESA and PROMARES focusing on ICT applied to maritime and multimodal transport, from different perspectives. The project Lead Partner (AdSPMAO) will present the request for the labelling procedure in November.

Updates on Comobilion and CB-railway project has been sent and shared prior to the meeting by the TSG Greek member. This information is attached to the minute.

8. Any other subject of interest

n.a.

OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

In consideration of the discussion developed during the meeting the main operational conclusions and steps to be taken are as in the following.

- EC will take action to renew a pro-active participation of **Croatia** in TSG2 (Transport) meetings, given the absence to the last four TSG meetings;
- TSG2 members agree that a discussion on the on-going **TEN-T revision** is in line with the scope of the 7th EUSAIR Annual Forum and can contribute to the EUSAIR Action Plan revision; this topic will be proposed for the thematic session on Transport at the Forum;
- The Annex related to the “**Green and Smart port concept**” prepared using the template by the Facility Point LP, as required by the ADRION JS in order to engage an expert to further develop the project idea within the FP WP T2 is approved;
- TSG2 members commit themselves to send comments on the first chapters of the volumes of the **Masterplan** on the analysis of the current transport system in the A-I Region;
- TSG2 agrees to organise a technical meeting on to analyse in detail the results of the **scenarios simulation** achieved so far within the EUSAIR Masterplan.

ANNEXES

1. List of participants to the 16th TSG2 Virtual Meeting;
2. 16th TSG2 Agenda
3. Presentation on EUSAIR ACTION LAB_SYNTESIS OF THE RESULTS
4. ANNEX on Green and Smart Ports Study Project
5. Presentation on the development of the Masterplan
6. Presentation on EMTM – Baseline Scenario: Assumptions and Results
7. Presentation on Capitalization of the Interreg ADRION projects
8. Update on COMOBILION and cp-railway EUSAIR-labelled projects by TSG2 (Transport) GR member

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