

**CONFERENCE ON ACCESSION
TO THE EUROPEAN UNION
– MONTENEGRO –**

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AD 8/26

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ACCESSION DOCUMENT

Subject: EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION
- Chapter 21: Trans-European Networks

EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION

Negotiating Chapter 21: Trans-European networks

This position of the European Union is based on its general position for the Accession Conference with Montenegro (AD 23/12 CONF-ME 2) and is subject to the negotiating principles endorsed therein, in particular:

- any view expressed by either party on a chapter of the negotiations will in no way prejudice the position which may be taken on other chapters;
- agreements - even partial agreements - reached during the course of the negotiations on chapters to be examined successively may not be considered as final until an overall agreement has been established;
- as well as the requirements set out in points 24, 28, 41 and 44 of the Negotiating Framework.

The EU encourages Montenegro to continue the process of alignment with the EU *acquis*, noting that additional *acquis* may enter into force before accession, to ensure its effective implementation and enforcement, and develop already before accession, policies and instruments as close as possible to those of the EU. The EU expects that all infrastructure projects, which are being developed within the framework of Government-to-Government Agreements, do not contravene the EU public procurement *acquis*. The manner in which the Agreement will be interpreted, applied and implemented will need to be managed carefully. The EU will closely monitor this implementation.

The EU notes that Montenegro's national infrastructure planning is in line with the objectives of the Union's trans-European transport network (TEN-T) policy. In line with this approach, Montenegro's planning reflects the strategic importance of enhancing regional connectivity, both within the Western Balkans and with the European Union.

The EU welcomes Montenegro's active participation in the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, by contributing to the development and implementation of regional projects that enhance connectivity, sustainable mobility and integration with the trans-European transport and energy networks.

The EU notes that Montenegro, in its negotiating positions AD 26/14 CONF-ME 20 and AD 04/26 CONF-ME 4, accepts the *acquis* under chapter 21 as in force on 25 December 2025, and declares that it will be ready to implement it by the date of its accession to the European Union.

Transport networks

The EU notes that Montenegro has aligned its strategic transport planning with the objectives of the *acquis* in the area of trans-European transport networks (TEN-T). The EU notes that Montenegro states that it will make sufficient progress on the TEN-T objectives by the date of accession.

The EU invites Montenegro to complete the revision of its Transport Development Strategy, which, among others, identifies priority infrastructure projects in the field of road transport and railways and will ensure alignment with the objectives of the new TEN-T Regulation 2024/1679. Following the adoption of the revised strategy, the EU encourages Montenegro to ensure its effective implementation.

The EU welcomes Montenegro's cooperation in the framework of the South-East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) Regional Comprehensive Transport Network in identifying priority infrastructure projects in Montenegro. This cooperation has continued since 2019 in the framework of the Transport Community, in which Montenegro has been an active participant, including in efforts to promote regional cooperation for the implementation of the TEN-T extension in the region.

The EU notes that Montenegro has taken measures to better consider the fiscal implications of loans taken to finance infrastructure projects, through improved budgetary planning and following the requirements of the EBRD and the EIB. For future planned investments, the EU encourages Montenegro to ensure careful planning and sequencing of projects. Montenegro will need to combine resources from its national budget and international lenders, while taking into account Montenegro's fiscal space.

The EU notes that Montenegro has agreed with the European Commission on the future TEN-T network concerning Montenegro (see maps in Annex 1) and on a list of priority projects in the transport sector. These agreements satisfy the requirements of the first and second closing benchmarks set in document AD 6/15 CONF-ME 5.

The EU expects Montenegro to further strengthen the administrative capacity needed to undertake the responsibilities under the Connecting Europe Facility already in place for both transport and energy networks and calls on Montenegro to fill remaining positions. In this context, the EU takes note that Montenegro's government has adopted a Roadmap for Participation in the Connecting Europe Facility 2025-2027, which sets out actions to further strengthen Montenegro's institutional and administrative capacity by the day of accession to the EU. These activities satisfy the requirements of the third closing benchmark set in document AD 6/15 CONF-ME 5.

The EU expects Montenegro to fully implement the mentioned Roadmap, including the recruitment and training of relevant staff and establishment of appropriate administrative structures. The EU will closely monitor the process until accession.

Energy networks

The EU takes note of the information provided by Montenegro on the on-going developments as regards the interconnections of Montenegro's electricity network with other Western Balkans countries and Italy.

The EU takes note of the information Montenegro provided on its participation in the development of a regional gas pipeline, the Ionian Adriatic Pipeline. In order to reach the EU climate neutrality objectives, the EU encourages Montenegro to achieve energy security, to the best extent possible, by shifting towards decarbonisation of its energy system that uses local resources, decreases exposure to external supply risks, and supports a resilient, modern energy sector. This approach enhances long-term independence far more effectively than expanding fossil-fuel infrastructure. The EU encourages Montenegro to explore options for further diversification and decarbonisation, to complete key electricity infrastructure.

The EU welcomes Montenegro's adoption of the Law on Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure Projects aligning with the TEN-E Regulation. The EU expects Montenegro to fully and timely align with the remaining elements of the TEN-E Regulation especially on the provisions related to the permit-granting process, manual of procedures, public participation and transparency and ensure full implementation of the legislation aligning with the TEN-E Regulation as required by the Energy Community Treaty. This will support Montenegro in further integrating its networks with the neighbouring countries, accelerating permitting procedures and supporting further alignment with the Union's climate neutrality objectives.

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In view of the above considerations, the EU notes that, at this stage, this chapter does not require further negotiations.

Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the EU *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The EU underlines that it will devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned above with a view to ensuring Montenegro's administrative capacity, its ability to implement and enforce the *acquis* in this chapter and the completion of the legislative alignment. Particular consideration needs to be given to the links between the present chapter and other negotiation chapters. A final assessment of the conformity of Montenegro's legislation with the EU *acquis* and of its implementation capacity can only be made at a later stage of the negotiations. In addition to all the information the EU may require for the negotiations in this chapter, and which is to be provided to the Conference, the EU invites Montenegro to provide regularly detailed written information to the Stabilisation and Association Council on progress in the implementation of the *acquis* and in the strengthening of its administrative capacity.

In view of all the above considerations, the EU will, if necessary, return to this chapter at an appropriate moment.

The EU notes that Montenegro, in its negotiating positions AD 26/14 CONF-ME 20 and AD 04/26 CONF-ME 4, accepts the *acquis* under chapter 21 as in force on 25 December 2025. The EU furthermore notes that Montenegro declares that it will continue the alignment process with the *acquis* and that it will be ready to implement it by the time of its accession to the European Union.

Furthermore, the EU recalls that there may be new *acquis* between 25 December 2025 and the conclusion of the negotiations.

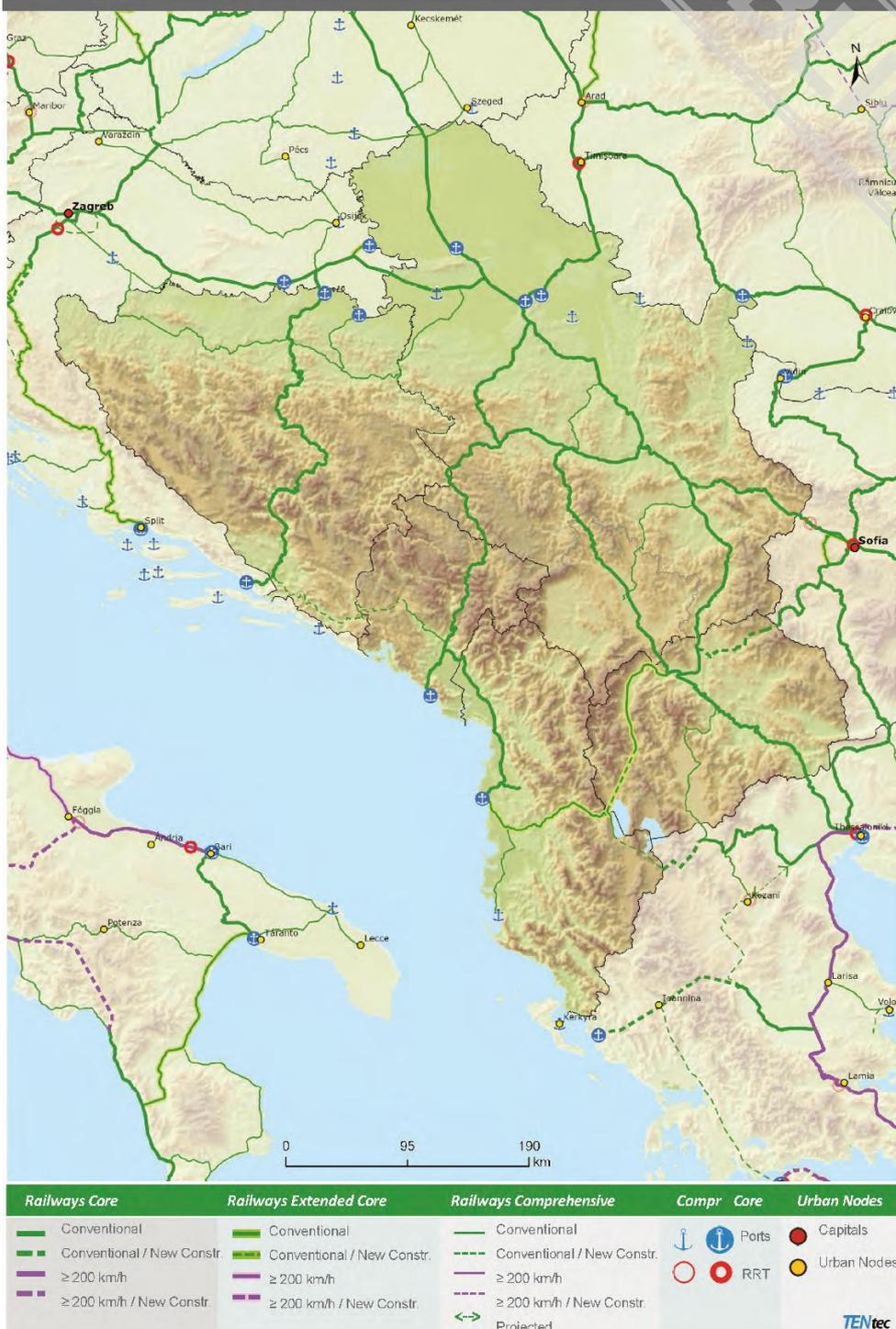
INDICATIVE MAPS OF THE TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK
EXTENDED TO MONTENEGRO¹



¹ As incorporated in Annex IV of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679



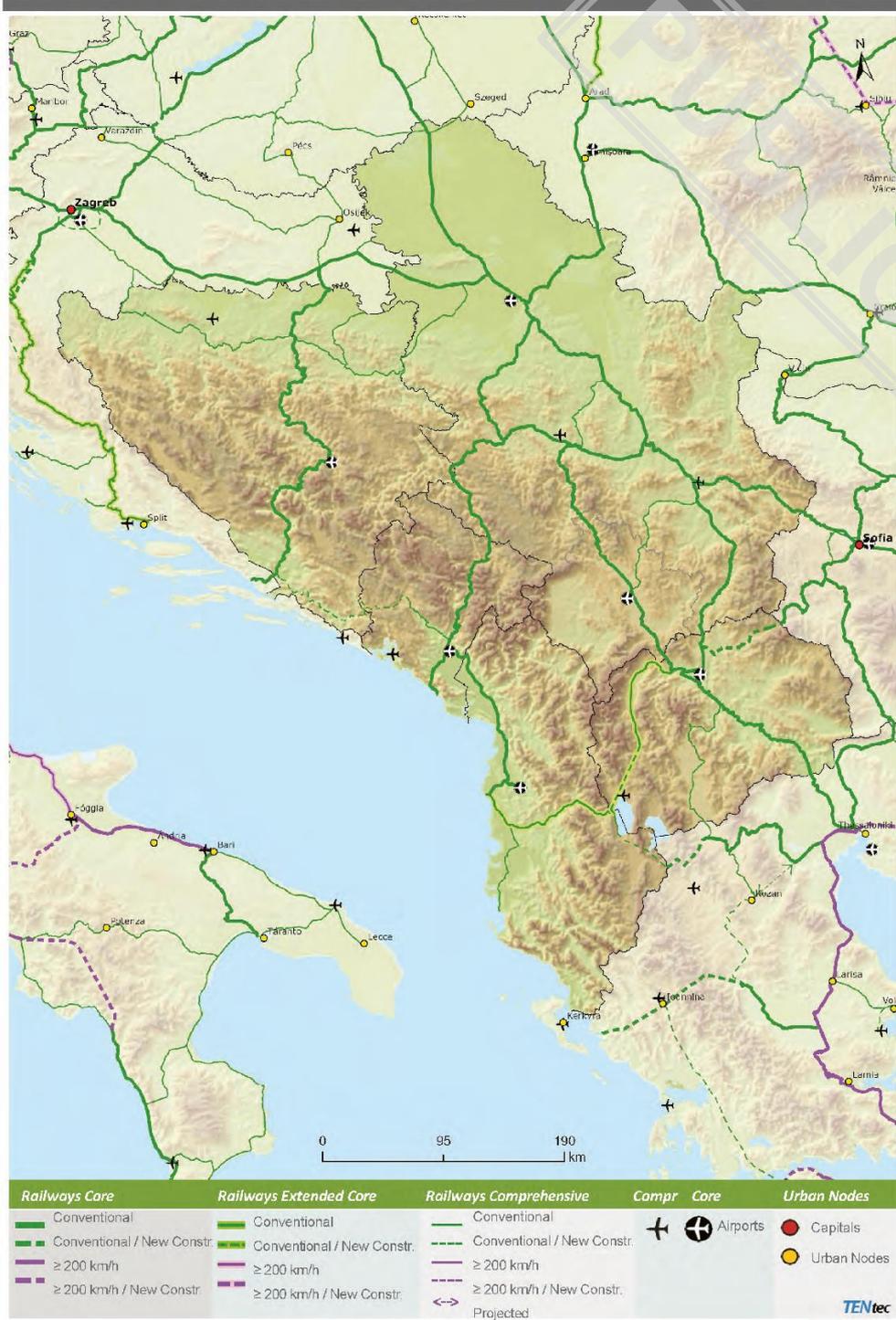
Indicative Extension to Neighbouring Countries
 Core & Comprehensive Networks: Rail freight, ports and rail-road terminals
 (RRT) Western Balkans Region





Indicative Extension to Neighbouring Countries Core & Comprehensive Networks: Rail passengers and airports
Western Balkans Region

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Indicative Extension to Neighbouring Countries
Core & Comprehensive Networks: Roads, ports, rail-road terminals and
airports **Western Balkans Region**

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