



Brussels, 1 April 2022  
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**'I/A' ITEM NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. prev. doc.:	ST 7402/22
Subject:	Coordination of the EU position for the meeting of the Ministerial Council (EU-Western Balkans Transport Community) (Priština, 27 April 2022) - <i>Approval</i>

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1. On 21 March 2022, the Commission presented to the Working Party on Transport – Intermodal Questions and Networks a working document<sup>1</sup> regarding the next meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Transport Community, to be held in Priština on 27 April 2022, with a view to preparing the EU position to be taken at that meeting.
2. The Ministerial Council of the Transport Community provides general policy guidelines and reviews progress on the implementation of the Treaty establishing the Transport Community. The work of the Ministerial Council is prepared by the Regional Steering Committee. For the latest meeting of that Committee, which took place on 15 March 2022, the Permanent Representatives Committee approved the EU position on 23 February 2022, including in respect of the agenda for the Ministerial Council meeting<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> ST 7177/22.

<sup>2</sup> ST 6219/22.

3. The main items on the agenda for the Ministerial Council meeting are:
  - extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T): presentation by the Commission on its communication on the indicative extensions to third countries and interventions from partners in respect of the revision of the indicative extension to the Western Balkans;
  - endorsement of the first five-year work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension and identification of priority projects of regional interest<sup>3</sup>.
4. The Working Party discussed the draft position on 21 March 2022 and, on the basis of a working document updated by the Presidency after the Regional Steering Committee meeting, approved it on 28 March 2022.
5. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to:
  - confirm the agreement reached by the Working Party, and
  - recommend that the Council approve the European Union position for the next meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Transport Community as set out in the Annex to this note.

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the draft five-year plan has yet to be submitted to the Regional Steering Committee for prior approval (written procedure).

**WORKING PAPER**

**on European Union positions for the Ministerial Council of the Transport Community on  
27 April 2022<sup>4</sup>**

This working paper is based on the Commission's document (ST 7177/22) providing information or establishing EU positions for the matters on the draft agenda of the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting of the Transport Community on 27 April 2022 (see annex).

**The Ministerial Council will cover the following matters:**

- Presentation by the European Commission on its Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries<sup>5</sup>;
- Discussion on the Commission Proposal for Revision of Trans European Transport Network Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation) as regards the indicative extension of the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T) to the Western Balkans<sup>6</sup>;
- Endorsement of the five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest;
- Presentation by the World Health Organization on its Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030.

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<sup>4</sup> Pristina, timing and venue tbc. The possibility of remote participation will be provided (online connection).

<sup>5</sup> COM/2021/820 final.

<sup>6</sup> COM/2021/812 final

## PART I – GENERAL

In accordance with Article 21 of the Transport Community Treaty<sup>7</sup>, the Ministerial Council provides general policy guidelines and reviews progress on the implementation of the Transport Community Treaty, including follow-up of the proposals put forward by the Social Forum.

In view of the preparation of the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community (15 March 2022), the Union position on the documents set out below has been established<sup>8</sup>. Following the Regional Steering Committee meeting, only minor modifications have been made to the documents.

The only additional point that is presented in further detail is the proposal to endorse the five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest<sup>9</sup>. The present working paper therefore builds upon the initial analysis and positions, as presented for the Intermodal Working Party of the Council meetings on 7 and 14 February 2022.

## PART II - DETAILS

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Presentation by the European Commission on its Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries**

This is an information point by the European Commission.

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<sup>7</sup> OJ L 278, 27.10.2017, p. 3

<sup>8</sup> See ST 6219/22.

<sup>9</sup> See WK 2681/22 REV 1.

On 14 December 2021, the Commission published its Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries (together with its proposal for revision of the TEN-T regulation<sup>10</sup> – see next agenda item). The Communication takes stock of the implementation of the indicative TEN-T extension to the Western Balkans. It addresses the common challenges and explores how the Union in the future can work together with the Western Balkans partners in the TEN-T policy area and to deliver on the goals set out in the European Green Deal.

During the Ministerial Council meeting on 27 April, the Commission will present in detail its communication on the TEN-T extension to neighbouring third countries.

### **Union position**

- To take note of any Regional Partners' interventions following the presentation of the Commission communication on the TEN-T extension to neighbouring third countries;
- To support the Ministerial Council conclusions referring to the communication on the TEN-T extension to neighbouring third countries.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Discussion on the Commission Proposal for Revision of Trans European Transport Network Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation) indicative extension of the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T) to the Western Balkans**

On 14 December 2021, the Commission adopted its Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) 1315/2013.

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<sup>10</sup> Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) 1315/2013

In the context of the preparation of the proposal for revision of the TEN-T Regulation, the Commission held a round of meetings with the Western Balkans partners in order to carry out a review of the state of realisation of the relevant parts of the indicative TEN-T network. In particular, the objective of the meetings was to ascertain whether all sections of the core network to be included in the Western Balkans corridor are on track to be realised or upgraded by the deadline of 2030 foreseen in the current TEN-T Regulation.

At that occasion, the Western Balkans partners shared their wish to review the current indicative maps of the extended network (core and comprehensive network) on their territory as well as the list of transport nodes (airports and ports). The Commission took note of the position of all Western Balkans Partners.

On 1 February 2022, the Commission informed the Council of its intention to negotiate a High-Level agreement between the EU and the Western Balkans partners on the adaptation of the indicative maps of neighbouring countries within the meaning of Article 49(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation). On 21 February 2022 the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate such an agreement<sup>11</sup>.

On 10-11 March 2022, the Commission held the first formal bilateral meetings with each Regional Partner in order to review in details their proposals to revise the TEN-T network. The Ministerial Council meeting of 27 April 2022 will provide an opportunity to take stock of the discussions and delineate the next steps in the process.

The Ministerial Council of 27 April 2022 will hold an exchange of views on the Commission proposal for revision of the TEN-T Regulation, in particular on the proposed creation of a European Transport Corridor linking the region with the Union. To support the exchange of views between Ministers on the TEN-T revision, the TC Secretariat has produced a discussion paper, which has already been presented to the Intermodal Working Party of the Council in preparation for the Regional Steering Committee meeting of 15 March 2022<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> See ST 6051/22 + COR 1.

<sup>12</sup> See WK 1507/22, p. 107-109.

The Regional Partners will be informed of the next steps in the process leading to the review of the existing indicative maps of the Western Balkans network, based on a high-level agreement within the meaning of Article 49 (6) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 to be signed between the Union and the Western Balkans partners

### **Union position**

- To take note of the Western Balkans Ministers' interventions;
- To support the Ministerial Council conclusions referring to the revision of the TEN-T indicative extension to the Western Balkans.

### **Agenda item 4**

#### **Endorsement of the five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest**

Article 9 of the TCT requires the Transport Community to develop every two years a five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans. The work plan should also identify priority projects of regional interest in line with the best Union practice, which shall contribute to balanced sustainable development in terms of economics, spatial integration, environmental and social impact as well as social cohesion.

This five-year rolling work plan needs to comply with the relevant EU legislation as set out in Annex I TCT (in particular when EU funding is envisaged) and demonstrate best-value-for-money and broader socio-economic impacts, in accordance with donors' funding rules and best international standards and practices. The five-year rolling work plan should further give a special attention to global climate change and environmental sustainability at the stage of project definition and analysis, as well as include the funding opportunities from donors and international financial institutions, in particular through the Western Balkans Investment Framework.

The preparation of this first iteration of the five-year rolling work plan has been based on the work already undertaken in the framework of the TEN-T Annual Report and its main findings and conclusions, as well as the TEN-T compliance conditions and deadlines. The Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and its transport-related Flagship Projects,<sup>13</sup> as well as the Commission communication on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries<sup>14</sup>, have also been taken into account. The priority TEN-T projects currently considered by each Regional Participant take into account the latest versions of their Single Project Pipelines.

The Commission services have examined the draft five-year rolling work plan and are of the opinion that it covers all the necessary information described in article 9 TCT. Where certain limitations are present in the available toolset of the TC Secretariat in delivering on the first iteration of the work plan, these are clearly recorded and future mitigating actions are established. In particular, the completion of the Transport Observatory's analytical tools should support the overcoming of present methodological shortcomings and allow for a more consistent project planning exercise at the time of the first revision of the work plan.

It is to be noted that in some parts, project information and project advancement action is still to be delivered by some Regional Partners, but these are very limited instances, which do not reflect on the overall comprehensiveness of the five-year rolling work plan. Data collection issues are also addressed in the Ministerial Council conclusions.

Following the Regional Steering Committee meeting of 15 March 2022, the work plan has been finalised<sup>15</sup> and will be re-submitted to the Regional Steering Committee ahead of the Ministerial Council meeting of 27 April 2022. The Union position proposed below should therefore also cover the additional Regional Steering Committee discussions on the work plan.

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<sup>13</sup> COM(2020) 641 final

<sup>14</sup> COM (2021) 820 final

<sup>15</sup> See WK 2681/22 REV 1.

## **Union position**

- To underline that the rolling work plan represents a key milestone for the implementation of the Transport Community Treaty;
- To reiterate its call for support of the data collection efforts of the TC Secretariat;
- To support the Ministerial Council conclusions referring to the five-year rolling work plan;
- To support the Ministerial Council's endorsement of the five-year rolling work plan.

## **Agenda item 5**

### **Presentation by the World Health Organization on its Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030**

In 2021, the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory was set up with the support of the European Commission, of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and of the World Bank. In 2022, the TCT Secretariat plans to hold a dedicated workshop on road safety jointly with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other partners. In this context, the World Health Organization (WHO) will present its Global Plan for road safety during the 27 April 2022 Ministerial Council meeting.

The Global Plan has been developed by the WHO and the United Nations Regional Commissions, in cooperation with partners in the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration and other stakeholders, as a guiding document to support the implementation of the Decade of Action 2021–2030 and its objectives.

## **Union position**

- To underline the importance of improving road safety in view of achieving Vision Zero – the reduction of road deaths to zero by 2050;
- To support the Ministerial Council conclusions referring to 'Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030'.

## **Agenda item 6**

### **Adoption of Conclusions**

As during previous meetings, agreed conclusions from the Presidency should close the Ministerial Council meeting. A draft was submitted to the Regional Steering Committee's meeting on 15 March,<sup>16</sup> which the Union supported.

#### Union position

- To support the conclusions along the lines of the draft

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<sup>16</sup> See WK 1507/22, p. 147-149.



**TRANSPORT COMMUNITY MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**  
**THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2022 | PRISTINA | TIME TBC | approx. 2h |**

## AGENDA

1	<p><b>OPENING</b> Opening remarks</p>
2	<p><b>PRESENTATION</b> by the European Commission</p> <p>Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the extension of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) to neighbouring third countries</p>
3	<p><b>DISCUSSION</b></p> <p>Revision of Trans European Transport Network Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation) indicative extension of the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T) to the Western Balkans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interventions by the Southeast European Parties</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>ENDORSEMENT</b></p> <p>Five-year rolling work plan for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans and the identification of priority projects of regional interest</p>
5	<p><b>PRESENTATION</b> by the World Health Organization Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030</p> <p><i>(Based on the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/74/299 "Improving global road safety", proclaiming the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030)</i></p>
6	<p><b>CLOSING</b></p> <p>Adoption of Conclusions</p>