

The final conference of the ACROSSEE project (Accessibility improved at border CROSSings for the integration of South East Europe) took place in Vienna on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The event aimed at disseminating the main projects results and involving key stakeholders on the future perspectives of transport in the South East Europe Area for the next programming period 2014-2020.

The conference was opened by Mr. Thomas Spiegel, representative of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Transport and by Amb. Margit Westfelt, Alternate Secretary General of the Central European Initiative (CEI), Lead partner organization of the project. Furthermore, Mrs Roberta Calcina, project manager of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme, gave an overview and future perspectives on territorial cooperation.

The first session of the final conference was devoted to the presentation of some of the main findings and accomplishments of the ACROSSEE project. In particular, the Polytechnic of Bucharest and the Austrian Ministry of Transport introduced the recommendations on EU financial perspective 2014-2020 and the working paper for the Optimisation of the proposed Ten T comprehensive and core-network respectively.

Then, the Central European Initiative illustrated the elaborated transport model that analyses in detail the South East Europe multimodal transport network, thus allowing to assess criticalities along with untapped potentials. In particular, apart from reproducing the current situation, it includes different scenario evaluations referred both to the 2020 and the 2030 time horizons.

Furthermore, AustriaTech presented the Data Management Centre, a web-based platform to facilitate and ease the exchange of the ACROSSEE project results and other (cross border) transport related (meta-) data in South East Europe. The main objective of the prototype was to demonstrate the benefits and challenges of such a central access point. The platform is accessible via the URL: [www.transportmodelling.eu](http://www.transportmodelling.eu).

Finally, the results of the analysis on the border crossing points was outlined, as well as the preliminary recommendations for the harmonization of customs procedures. In this purpose, the relevant impacts of such issues in the analysed context were underlined, along with the complex regulatory framework that is currently being affected by a remarkable harmonisation process, closely interrelated with the overall EU integration and extension to the Western Balkans.

The second session was devoted to a panel discussion among some key stakeholders: Mr. Thomas Spiegel, from the Ministry of Transport of Austria, Mr. Franc Žepič (priority coordinator of the EUSDR), Mr. Nemim Begovic (SEETO) and UNECE TER (Mr. Andreas Zimmer). There was general consensus over the acknowledgement that administrative measures are far more efficient than infrastructural ones: “Improving infrastructure (expensive!) saves minutes; improving border crossing (low investments) hours!”. They all agreed – as it was also the case during the Workshop held at the European Parliament on November 11th 2014 – on the need to have pilot implementations in the West Balkans in order to cut travel times at Border Crossing Points, which might be the focus on a new EU project.

The conference was closed by Mr. Herbert Kasser, Secretary Central of the Austrian Ministry of Transport, who underlined the importance of ACROSSEE as a first step towards concrete implementations in the South East Europe Region towards faster mobility and more efficient logistics.

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ACCROSSEE is the first project working in line with the new EU TEN-T Guidelines and aiming at improving cross-border accessibility in the South East Europe Area, promoting the rationalization and the optimization of the existing network and extending the EU transport network to the Western Balkans.

For further information visit [www.acrossee.eu](http://www.acrossee.eu)