



## Political Committee of the Network CIVINET SLOVENIA-CROATIA- SOUTHEAST EUROPE POLITICAL STATEMENT FOR 2017

The Political Committee expresses its satisfaction with the work of the Network during the 2016 and after renaming the Network, through which has opened also for members from the region of Southeast Europe. Due to the continuous building of the recognisability of the Network, in the last year the Network grew from 75 to almost 120 members, with the further tendency of growth and with this it kept the leading position among eleven European CIVINET networks.

The Committee welcomes new members of the Network, and sees its enlargement as a further challenge in terms of transfer of knowledge, experience and good practice examples in solving problems in the area of sustainable mobility and environmental protection. Related to that, the Committee emphasizes the need for constant *strengthening of expertise and governing capacities of local self-governments*, since they are expected to recognize the need of all space users and solving of recognised problems, but also capacities of those Network members who put their knowledge and expertise in solving tasks at disposal of local self-government. Thus, in the further work of the Network the development of synergistic approach in problem solving of our cities and settlements will be needed, in the interest of improvement of the quality of life of citizens, as well as environmental protection. In that sense, the Political Committee welcomes increase in number of members of the Governing Board of the Network and its composition which now better reflects the structure of membership.

The Political Committee emphasizes that in the solving of tasks, it is necessary to acknowledge the directives, guidelines and initiatives of the European Commission, which are related to higher quality of mobility of people in urban areas, application of IT solutions in the management of all types of traffic, energy efficiency and climate change mitigation, and thereby also improvement of the quality of air, water and soil in our cities and settlements.



It is also necessary to take the above into account in the light of the difficultly reached Paris climate agreement, which came into effect in November 2016, and the application of which should avert the worst scenario of the consequences of global warming. The Political Committee further emphasizes the importance of achieving of UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development until 2030, which are universal and for the attainment of which are responsible states, but also cities and other stakeholders. Traffic and mobility, quality of living and environment are incorporated into several goals.

The thematic focus of the Network in the year 2017 stays on the track of its former activities. It is planned to continue to deal with the topic of developing of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)**, not as isolated, but as topic which is integral part of the Integrated planning i.e. approach which links sustainable urban planning with sustainable urban mobility, as well as **advocating and promoting of alternative means of personal transport and improvement of public transport** through acquaintance with good practice examples, promotion and application of use of buses fuelled by gas and electricity, increase in bicycle traffic in cities, implementation of the public bicycle systems, increase in use of electric cars, widening of pedestrian zones in cities, application of the Shared Space approach in designing and planning of public spaces and areas, etc.

In order for the Network to work efficiently, the Political Committee wishes to emphasize the importance of the **internal communication of members**, i.e. exchange of information about the accomplishments of members of the Network, about conferences they plan to organize, about concrete issues which are opened when dealing with certain topics and similar. The exchange of information helps in choosing topics and interlocutors, in sizing of events organized by the Network, but also in providing expert, organizational and other kinds of support to the members of the Network in organizing of their own events. Visibility and presence of the Network are important in its further outreach to the region, as well as for the recognisability and the fulfilment of the tasks for which it exists.

Network CIVINET Slovenia - Croatia - SEE supports joint project of four national cycling organizations: European long-distance cycling routes: EuroVelo Sava Route and calls on towns and municipalities which are located along the Sava River to support the development of the Sava route as EuroVelo route. We call on government institutions to immediately start solving the problem of the establishment of cycling infrastructure at international border crossings in the region.

*In Maribor, 17th February 2017*

