

Terms of reference and mandate of a Technical Committee on Railways

Scope and achievements expected

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) sets up a technical committee on railways, in the form of an ad hoc Working Group (WG).

The WG shall assist the RSC in all aspects related to rail transport falling under the scope of the Transport Community Treaty (TCT), including the implementation of the applicable rules to rail transport and the relevant transitional arrangements, the opening and integration of rail transport markets, and the implementation of Core and Comprehensive the trans-European (rail) transport network in the Western Balkans.

In line with the Joint declaration endorsed by transport ministers and representatives of the Western Balkans parties on 10.12.2018 at the occasion of the 2nd Ministerial Council of the Transport Community, the WG is mandated with the specific task to develop a targeted action plan for a new regional rail strategy in the Western Balkans. For this purpose, the WG will elaborate a coherent set of concrete actions and measures, supportive of the objectives of the declaration, to be implemented by the South East European Parties in a coordinated and timely manner.

The action plan may be structured in several phases. It should aim in particular at the modernisation of rail operations and infrastructures, and focus on operational and interoperability issues, especially at borders, taking into account analyses of current and potential traffic volumes.

Method of work

The WG is established on the basis of Article 26 of the Transport Community Treaty. It shall consist of representatives of the TCT Contracting Parties and shall be chaired in turn over by a South East European Party in accordance with the arrangements to be laid down in its rules of procedures. The Permanent Secretariat of the TCT shall provide the necessary administrative support. The European Commission, represented by the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, is entitled to participate in the WG.

On a case by case basis, the WG may invite external experts and stakeholders to participate and/or contribute to its discussions and activities, including European and international financial institutions (IFIs) active in the Western Balkans.

At its first meeting, the WG will adopt its rules of procedure, elect its chair, and adopt a work plan, clearly defining its objectives, activities and expected deliverables, including a time schedule for their implementation.

The WG is expected to meet at least three times per year and to report to the RSC on a regular basis. The WG shall draw up a report on the regional rail strategy's action plan and submit it to the RSC during the first quarter of 2020 at the time of the first RSC of the year. The report shall contain monitoring procedures and follow-up activities. The WG will coordinate its activities with those of the RSC and other technical committees.