

4th Technical Committee meeting on Transport Facilitation

27.04.2020, Video conference

“Green” corridors initiative

Context:

- Developed by Transport Community and CEFTA Secretariats as an answer to the sanitary measures taken by all governments in the region and EU with potentially adverse effects on local and international transport and trade;
- Aim : to **secure the supply of essential goods through coordinated and accelerated border crossing / sanitary procedures** in the time of COVID-19 crisis and prevent shortage of essential goods.

Main elements:

- Definition of priority “green” lanes and priority BCPs on the green corridors (see map) - ensuring priority is given to the goods of primary importance and guaranteed through 24/24 hours operations at the key BCPs/CCP , one per each pair of SEE parties +2 Ports (see map)
- Creation of a single list of essential goods; pre-arrival information exchanged electronically intra-region through SEED
- suspension of driving restrictions and travel restrictions (mandatory quarantine for truck drivers etc.)

“Green” corridors initiative

Results/findings

- Green corridors are functional across the region, there are no major interruptions on traffic flows, all BCPs on the green corridors are operating 24/7 (some services on call), non-stop working gas stations are identified along the corridors;
- Green lanes reported to be functional in almost of the SEE parties. Wherever they could not be physically marked, the BCP authorities are instructed to give priority
- The custom and inspection procedures are applied regularly and there are no new import/export documentation required;
- There is no derogation in place regarding driving hours, breaks and rest periods
- All regional partners confirmed the situation has improved ;
- the convoy regimes which affected the accessibility and the travel time had been lifted;
- SEED and other electronic solutions are welcomed by the SEE Parties and they see benefits of expanding SEED to the neighbouring EU MS;

Map of the green corridors and BCPs/CCP



Border Crossing Points monitoring

General purpose:

- Providing consolidated real-time data in respect of regional cross-border freight flows on a daily basis;
- Ensure quick and coordinated reaction whenever a problem is being identified in order to prevent traffic disruptions.

Methodology:

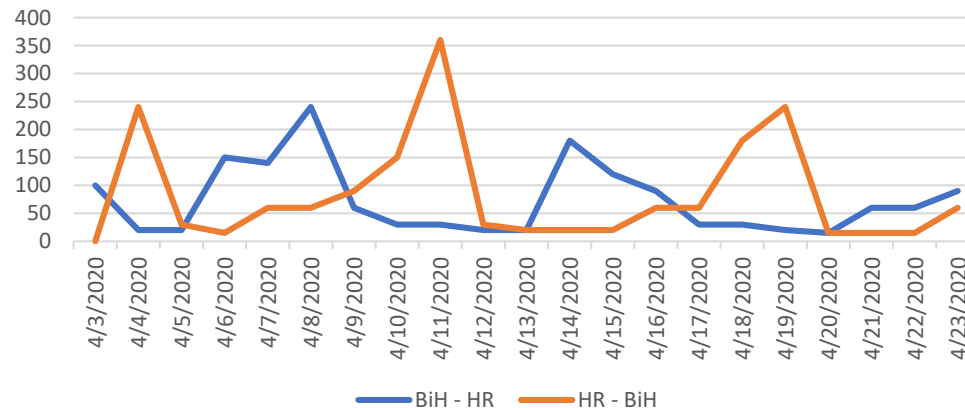
- Daily collection of waiting time figures from the SEE Parties for all BCPs located on the Green Corridors (both WB6 internal and WB6/EU Member States borders);
- Data cross-checking and verification (EU MS official and road hauliers reporting, live cameras monitoring, etc.)

Border Crossing Points monitoring (WB6 – EU borders)

Overall conclusions:

- The most problematic BCPs are Gradiska/Stara Gradiska, Batrovci/Bajakovo and Horgos/Roszke;
- The traffic jams might not be necessarily linked to the sanitary crisis measures but rather with **BCPs physical capacity, overall traffic and peak hours trends.**

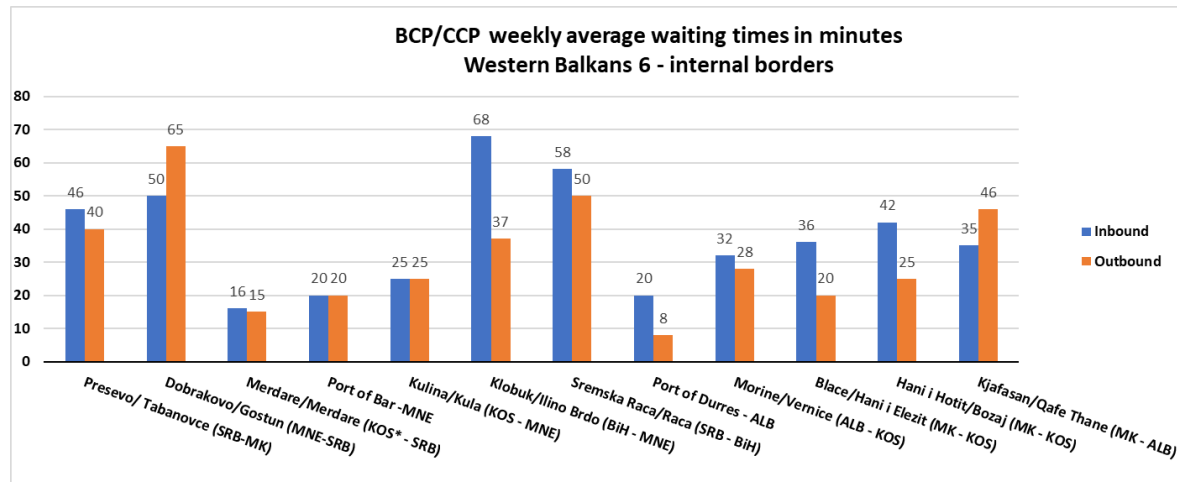
Gradiska/Stara Gradiska - reported waiting time trends



Border Crossing/Common Crossing Points monitoring (WB6 internal borders)

Overall conclusions:

- The situation is reported as being stable across all intra BW6 borders;
- All borders are operating 24/7 (some services on call);
- Longer waiting hours are experienced occasionally in few BCPs and might be due to **BCP/CCPs physical capacity, peak hours traffic, not operating at full staff.**



Next steps

Preparing Phase 2 of the initiative:

- aiming at anticipating and possibly solving problems which may occur with the increase of traffic linked to the re-opening of the industries and with the decontainment of passenger traffic (cars).
- Proposing short and medium term actions complementing the Transport Facilitation Action Plan
- Concentrated efforts in coordination between the border authorities for efficient management of the expected increase of traffic and re-opening of some BCPs
- planning of and securing investments in road/rail BCP infrastructure, equipment , digital/electronic solutions and human capacity

Rail freight transport: the impact of COVID-19

- International passenger traffic is suspended in the all WB6 due to the closure of borders. At national level, passenger traffic is significantly reduced due to the national measures taken by national authorities.
- At the same time rail freight operations are performed at almost the same level as before Covid19 crises.
- RUs and IMs are able to offer safe cross-border cargo connections for large volumes of goods using minimal human resources. However, in order to fulfil this vital function, it would be essential that train drivers are excluded from the imposed measures/restrictions and allowed to cross borders in order to pick up and deliver freight trains smoothly.
- For all services, specific protocols have also been activated for the sanitisation of facilities, workplaces and spaces dedicated to customer service, always in compliance with the indications of the competent authorities.
- Second important thing for the sustainability of the freight transport, in the current conditions, is availability of the border crossings.
- In Western Balkans (WB6) there are seven BCPs with EU MS (open 24 hours) and five BCPs intra-WB6.

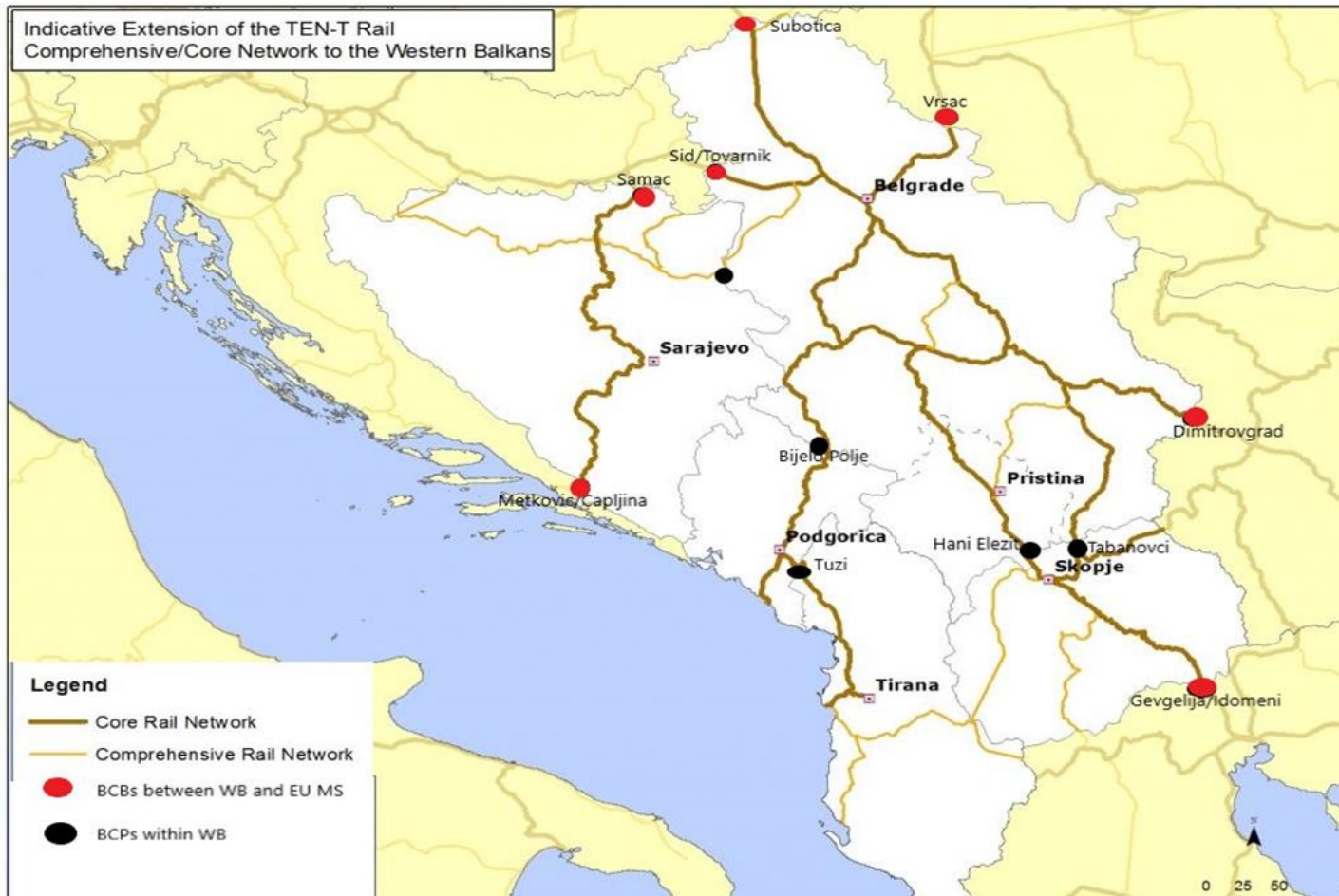


Figure 1. border crossings, 24 hours open, for the rail freight operation

Freight transport in the WB region in tons and NTKM in period January-March 2019 and 2020

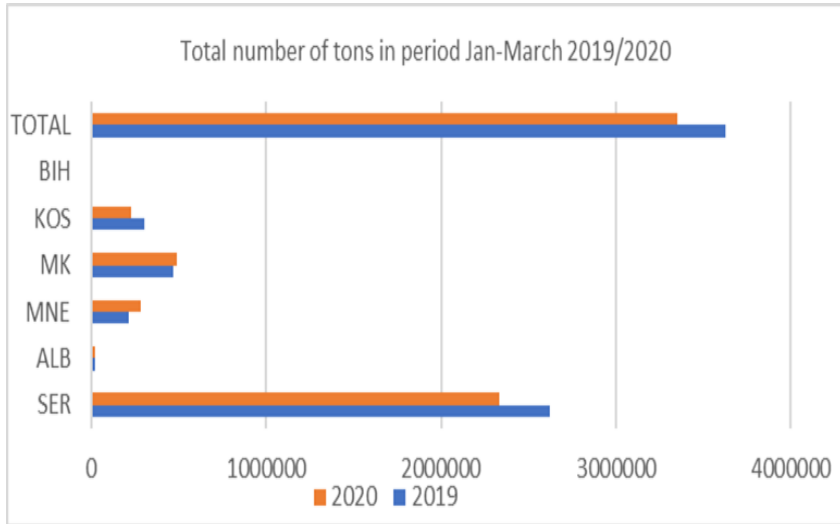


Figure 2. Freight transport in the WB region in tons in 2019 and 2020

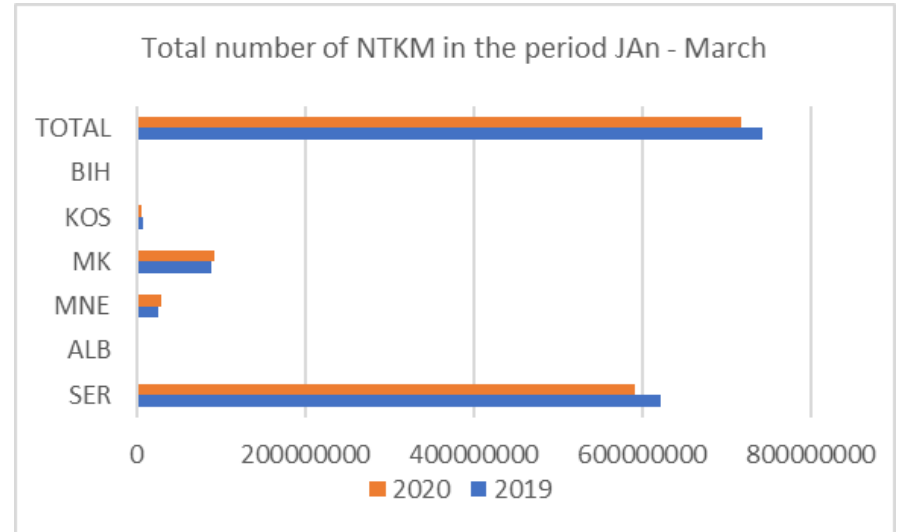


Figure 3. Freight transport in the WB region in Net ton-kilometres (NTKM) in 2019 and 2020