

8th Regional Steering Committee Meeting

Via Webex

30th June 2020



Content:

- Agenda
- Implementation of the Permanent Secretariat (state of play)
- Monitoring of the BCPs
- State of play of the TCT proposals for the Post Covid-19 phase
- Implementation of the Galileo initiative
- Debriefing on the work of the **Technical Committees**
- Financing and Contribution
- Procurement of goods and services

Agenda

Regional Steering Committee Meeting

Video Conference Call

30 June 2020

Draft Agenda

10.00-10.10 **Introductory remarks** – Interim Director, *Mr. Alain Baron, TC Permanent Secretariat / Chair, Mr. Zoran Andric / Co-chair* – following an official information of the DG MOVE, Mr. Harvey Rouse, HoU DG MOVE A2 will be Co-chairing instead of *Mrs. Maja Bakran Marcic, Deputy Director-General*

10.10-10.15 **Adoption of the agenda**

10.15-10.45 **Report by the interim Director of the Permanent Secretariat**

- Implementation of the Permanent Secretariat (state of play) by the interim Director
- Monitoring of the BCPs (WB internal and with MS);
- State of play of the TCT proposals for the Post Covid-19 phase;
- Implementation of the Galileo initiative;
- Other priorities.

10.45-11.15 **Technical Committees' reporting**

- Debriefing on the work of the Technical Committees and follow-up of the Action Plans

11.15-12.15 **Financial and Administrative Decisions**

- Adoption of the TCT Financial Rules
- Budget Report by the Secretariat
- Follow up of on-going recruitment
- Appointment of the new management
 - Director and Deputy Director of the TCT Secretariat – date to start
 - Steps to be taken in signing the appointment acts
 - Steps to be taken for administrative and operational transitions

12.15-12.30 **AOB and Agreed Conclusions**

State of play of the Permanent Secretariat and TCT priorities

- **Alain Baron**

Interim Director

- **Mate Gjorgjievski**

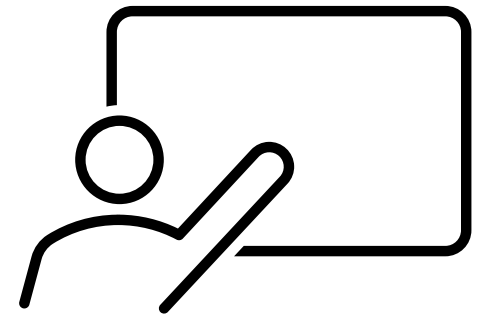
Desk officer for Transport Facilitation

- **Mircea Tenovici**

Road Project Officer

- **Nerejda Hoxha**

Desk Officer for Road Infrastructure and
Policies



State of play and short term priorities of TCT Secretariat

Alain Baron

Interim Director

Achievements Jan 2019 – June 2020

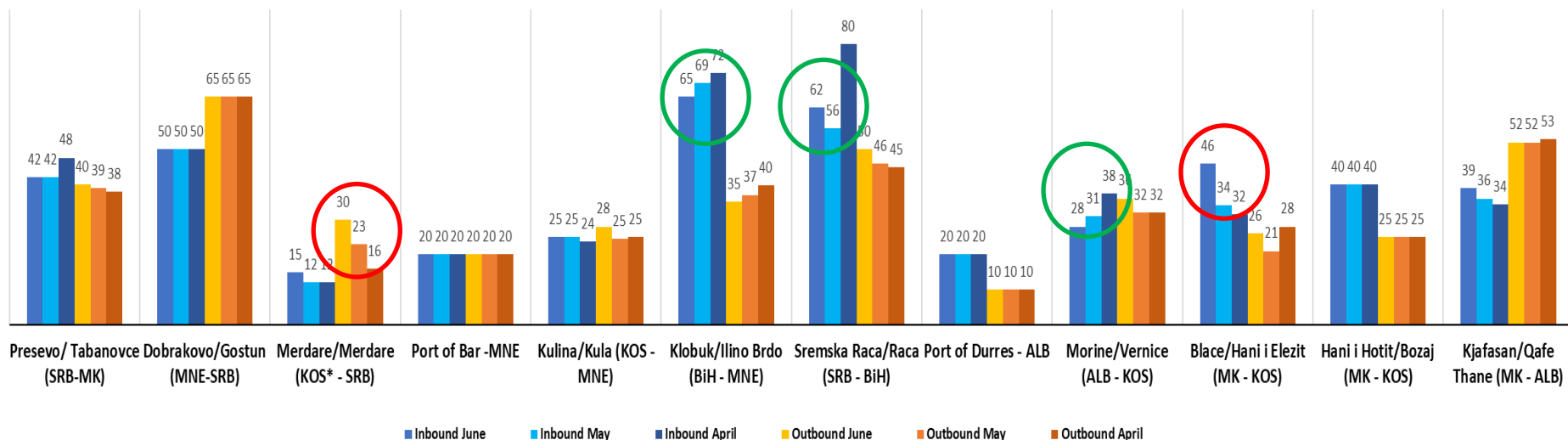
- **HQ agreement in place and fully applied.**
- **Staff recruited : 14 + 4 (under recruitment) : 18 persons as from 1/9.**
- **Management (permanent) soon in place.**
- **TCT Secretariat has become a recognized actor in the region...but also a « facilitator » between MS and WB.**
- **Important achievements in transport policy.**
- **Strengthened sectorial cooperation : administrative arrangements signed with ERA, soon with S2R.**

Short Term Priorities

- **Monitoring Traffic** and Internal and External WB borders -> implementing Galileo app.
- **Consolidating the « Green Lane » initiative** within Western Balkans together with CEFTA (as a contribution to REA) -> lifting all unnecessary obstacles by end 2022.
- **Developing « Green Lanes » with EU MS:** EU represents 70 % of external trade of WB. Highly interpendant economies penalized by long waiting times at borders -> upgrading infrastructure and lifting all unnecessary obstacles by end 2023.
- Ensuring the implementation of **the Action plans**, within the time frame defined and agreed.
- Develop a **timeline for the implementation of the key EU « acquis »**.
- **Setting an overall infrastructure plan** to (1) better prioritize transport infrastructure projects (2) ensure better connections with EU MS (3) Comply with the objectives of the EU « Green » Agenda.

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

BCP/CCP Western Balkans 6 - internal borders
Average Monthly Waiting Times (min) - Quarter II, 2020



Overall conclusions:

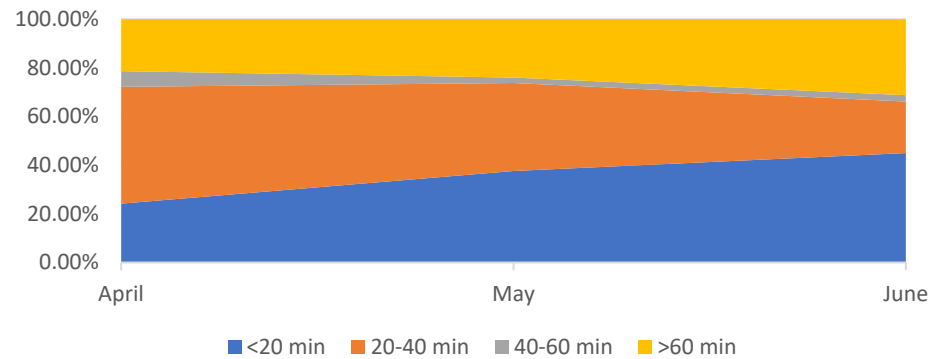
- The situation is reported as being stable during the whole period and across all BCP/CCPs considered
- Traffic is now at about 50 - 60% of the level of last year. Cars are only back from the beginning of June, and almost 50% of the existing internal BCPs were open to traffic

Border Crossing Points monitoring (EU/WB6 borders)

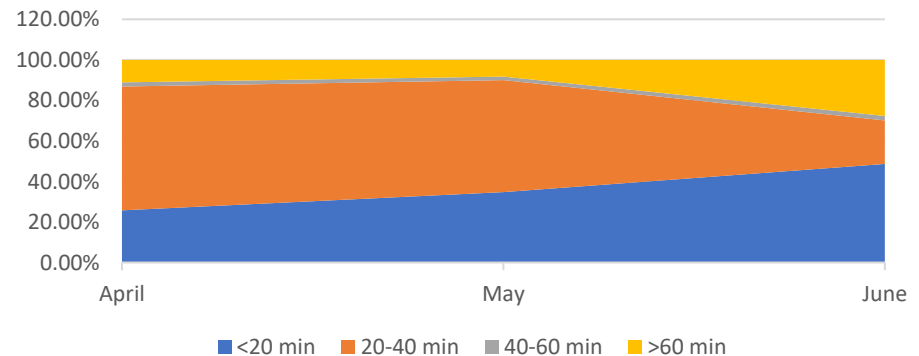
June update:

- During the month of June the trends that were already visible in May have been confirmed
- With some exceptions, the good-performing BCPs performed better while the problematic ones performed worse
- The share of waiting times extreme values (under 20 m and more than 60 m) kept increasing

Waiting times ranges share (outbound)



Waiting time ranges share (inbound)

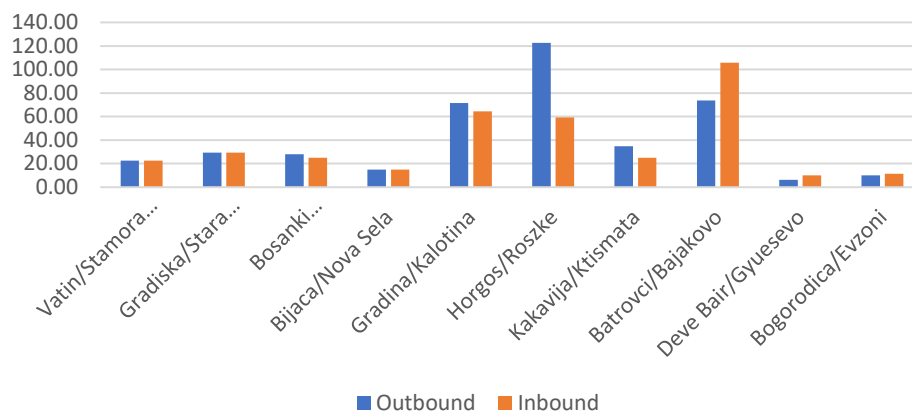


Border Crossing Points monitoring (EU/WB6 borders)

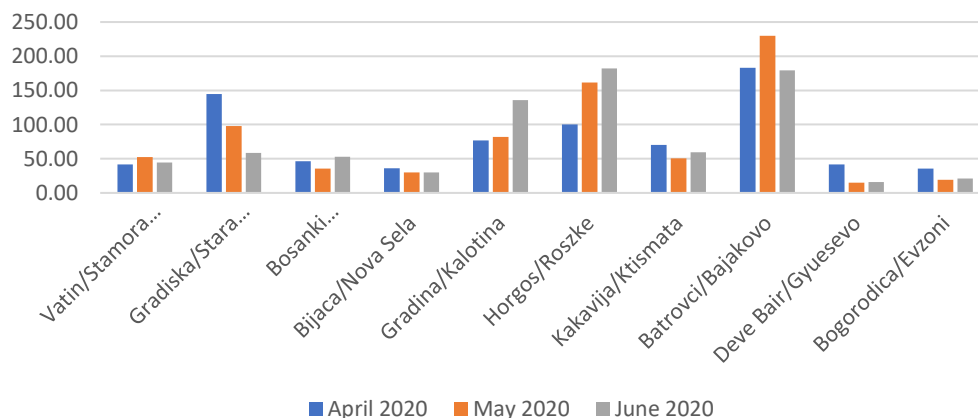
Overall conclusions:

- **Gradiska/Stara Gradiska** is the only BCP that has experienced significantly lower waiting times after the lifting of the Covid-19 related restrictions.
- **Batrovci/Bajakovo, Horgos/Roszke** and **Gradina/Kalotina** are by far the most problematic BCPs, while **Bosanski Samac/Slavonski Samac** might also experience sudden increases in waiting times.

WB6/EU BCPs - average monthly waiting times (min) -
June 2020



Average waiting time (April to June 2020)





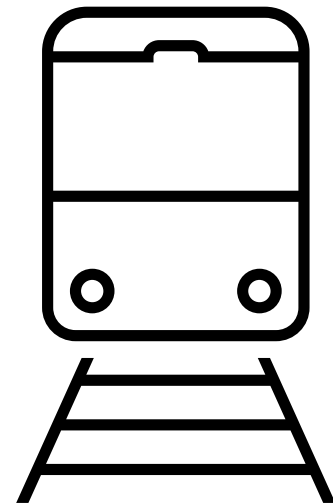
• Border Crossing Points monitoring (EU/WB6 borders)

Overall conclusion:

- In the current international context, the **summer peak** might bring additional challenges for connectivity between Western Balkans region and the EU

Rail transport in COVID-19 and post COVID-19 time

- **International passenger traffic** is still suspended in WB6 and it is planned to be resumed on 1st July.
- At **national level**, passenger traffic slightly recovered due to the lifting of imposed measures taken by national authorities, but far from full capacity.
- At the same time **rail freight operations** are performed without major problems despite all specific protocols issued by health institutions.
- Freight in May is around **25% less** than in same month last year, while in April it was at almost the same level.
- Challenges for passenger railway undertakings (PSO contracts).
- Border crossings operations.
- Rail connections between capitals in the region.



Freight transport in the WB region in tons and NTKM in period January – May 2019 and 2020

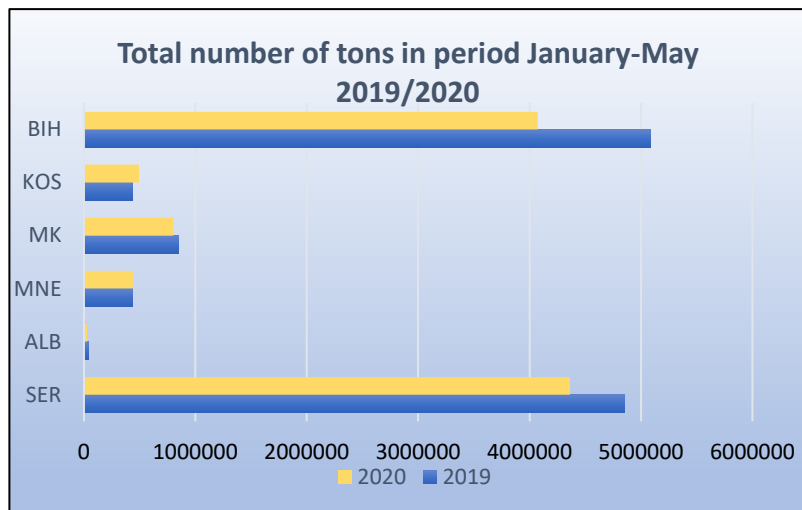


Figure 1. Freight transport in the WB region in tons in 2019 and 2020

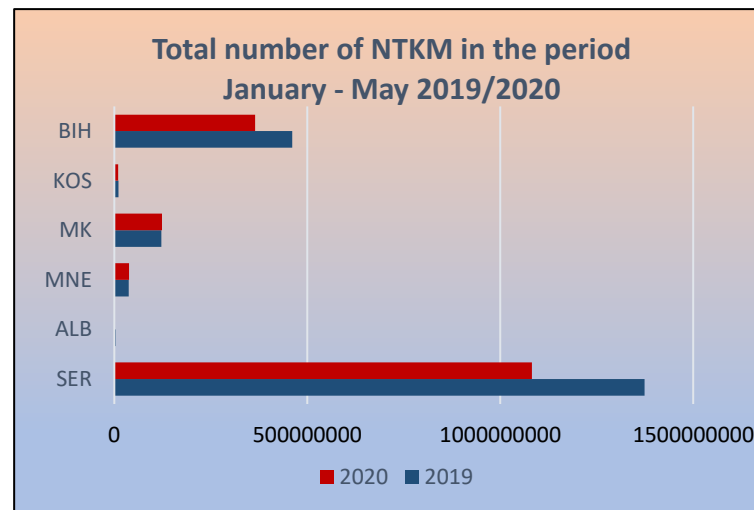


Figure 2. Freight transport in the WB region in Net ton - kilometres (NTKM) in 2019 and 2020

Train connections between capitals in the Western Balkan region and Croatia



Train connections between capitals in the Western Balkan region

Route	Distance (km)		Travel time (hrs)	
	Rail	Road	train	bus
Belgrade – Skopje	400	435	11	6 – 7,5
Belgrade – Zagreb	423	395	6,5 - 8	5 - 6
Belgrade – Bar	476	485	11	9,5 – 11,5
Skopje – Pristina	93	96	3	2 – 2,5
Tirana – Podgorica	166	180	n/a	4
Sarajevo - Zagreb	450	390	10 (2007)	6,5 – 8
Belgrade - Sarajevo	400	310/380	8 – 9,5 (2011)	6,5 – 7,5
Belgrade - Priština	388	350	n/a	5,5 – 6,5
Belgrade - Kosovo Polje - Peć	388	350	10 (1999)	5,5 – 6,5

State of play of the TCT proposals for the Post Covid-19 phase

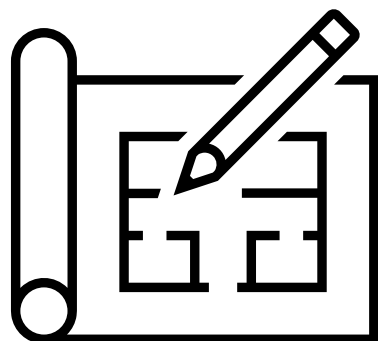
- **Aim:** to shift from a response to the emergency situation to the focus on a **longer term plan *through addressing long lasting issues affecting border crossing operations***
- Proposals for facilitating freight and passengers traffic - communicated to RPs; presented to the Council of EU and to RSC and Sherpa (Informative session on 10th June)
- Current status:
 - **Ensuring transit restrictions are no longer applied** - TCT Secretariat reacts if restrictions are introduced
 - **Capitalizing the good results of the Green lanes for intra-WB6** - operational plan for intra-WB6 BCPs facilitation drafted; MAP REA (Multiannual Plan for Regional Economic Area) coordinated by CEFTA under preparation
 - **Setting a joint EU-WB action plan to remove all unnecessary obstacles** – drafted and shall be circulated for inputs by WB6 authorities and EUMS
 - **Identifying projects on BCP (soft) infrastructure** beyond those already submitted at the last WB6 summit, as well as **longer-term investments improving the road and rail connectivity between EU and WB6** - ongoing planning exercise, inputs shall be required from national authorities, EC and IFI partners

Galileo Green Lane mobile application

- **What is Galileo mobile app?**

- Technological solution to support the EU Green lane border crossings implementation monitoring
 - The objective is to offload borders and manage more efficiently the transit of goods
 - Reporting tool on the situation at the borders (waiting times)
 - Two interfaces- for border authorities and for truck drivers
- TCT Secretariat ensured this initiative is available to WB6 parties - **pilots possible at the EU/WB6 BCPs**
 - **Albania and North Macedonia** expressed interest to test the pilots on their respective BCPs shared with Greece;
 - Others are expected/encouraged to join given the positive benefits for monitoring the BCP waiting times, and relatively easy and cost-free implementation (smart android application)
 - Ongoing discussions with European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency to **extend the application on the intra WB6 BCPs**

Technical Committees debriefing



- **Mate Gjorgjevski**

Desk officer for Transport Facilitation

- **Dejan Lasica**

Railway Coordinator

- **Nerejda Hoxha**

Desk Officer for Road Infrastructure and Policies

- **Liljana Cela**

Desk Officer for Road Safety

Technical Committee on Transport Facilitation

- **5th meeting** took place on 10 June (video meeting)
- **Achievements of last meeting**
 - Debriefing and monitoring the implementation of green lanes initiative
 - Sharing views on the TCT proposals on facilitation of transport of goods and passengers
 - Galileo app presented in detail
- **Pending issues:**
 - **Little/no progress in concluding joint rail agreements/protocols**
 - **No progress in negotiating joint one stop controls in road BCPs – KOS/MKD and MNE/SRB; little progress by ALB/ MKD and ALB/MNE**
 - Clarification needed by EC on the possibility to establish joint BCPs between WB6 and EUMS
 - CONECTA TA for **eQMS** on Corridor X – project activities depend on the cooperation and engagement of the national authorities- no reply from MKD yet
- **Next steps**
 - Participation and engagement of **EU MS needs to be reinforced**
 - **Increasing added value of the Committee:** members more engaged in the implementation of the transport facilitation measures; more active communication between meetings / more “home work”.

Technical Committee on Railway

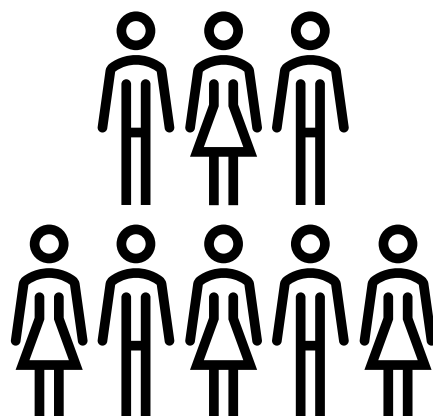
- **6th meeting** took place on 16 June
- **Achievements of the last meeting:**
 - **Cooperation** with ERA established – support for the interoperability measures
 - **Draft of the Cooperation Agreement** between TC Secretariat and “Shift 2 Rail”
 - **Monitoring** of the situation in rail freight transport in the region
- **Pending issues:**
 - **Translation** of national rail legislation – process is ongoing but slow
 - **Tables of Concordances**, precondition for the assessment by the TC
 - **Monitoring Progress Report** on Implementation RAP – April update
 - **Border** crossings agreements
- **Next topics:**
 - Rail in post Covid-19 time
 - Passenger transport – connection between capitals
- RPs and TC Secretariat need more **contribution from the EU neighbouring countries**. Croatia contributed, but not Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.
- Next meeting - August 2020

Technical Committee on Road

- **2nd meeting** took place virtually on 17 June
- **COVID-19 Impact.** Construction activities continued to a faster pace; revenues from tolls were heavily impacted leading to a substantial reduction on the planned budget for 2020
- **Maintenance Plans.** Submission of Maintenance Plans for 2021 onwards once they are finalized, RPs are urged again to use CONNECTA's deliverables.
- **ITS/Road User Charging.** As follow up from last meeting members agreed to establish a working group under the umbrella of Road Technical Committee to specifically focus on ITS deployment and e-tolling interoperability (legal and technical issues)
- **Case studies.** Members emphasized the need for experience sharing from EU MS on e-tolling interoperability and presentations on case studies
- **Road Action Plan.** Only three RPs, submitted comments. Members supported the need to revise some of the deadlines to reflect the timelines of ongoing projects as well as the COVID-19 situation

Technical Committee on Road Safety

- **4th Road Safety Technical Committee** took place on 17 June
- Concept of the agenda – Exchange of best practice examples in defining and collecting Safety/Key Performance Indicators.
 - International developments concerning the KPIs
 - Best practice examples from Member States (Slovenia) and within the region (Serbia)
- Both examples showed that **Traffic Safety Agency is a central governmental institution for road safety**. They carry out several tasks related to the national road safety programme, collecting Key Performance Indicators, preventive and educational programmes, having research work etc.
- A study for **establishing a model of an executive body for Road Safety** is currently ongoing in North Macedonia and one of the outcomes will be the proposal for having a unified road safety database within the structure itself. In addition, RSA and RSI training courses and licensing of min 10 road safety experts will be delivered.
- **CONNECTA** - Detailed design studies for Improvement of safety measures in road sections for eliminating black spots. Inception Report is finalized and the work for D2:Draft Design documentations has started.
- First assessment of the Action Plan – in the next meeting – September/October 2020.

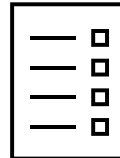


Finance and HR

- **Alain Baron**
Director Interim
- **Maria Dimitrova**
DG MOVE
- **Jordana Ficovic**
HR and Administration Officer
- **Petrit Ibrahimi**
Financial Officer

Adoption of the Financial Rules

TCT Financial Rules - document



Financing and Contribution

Update since the 7th RSC Meeting held on 18th of May 2020

Regional Partners Contribution for 2019



Regional Participants	WB6 Balance to be paid for 2019 Budget (EUR)	Paid Contribution	Balance
Albania	40,452.00	40,432.00	20.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	44,826.20	44,826.20	
North Macedonia	35,762.60	35,762.60	
Kosovo*	31,915.80	-	31,915.80
Montenegro	29,151.80	29,151.80	
Serbia	69,801.60	69,801.60	
TOTAL WB6:	252,000.00		

Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina
North Macedonia	Montenegro
Kosovo	Serbia

On Friday, 26/06/2020 Kosovo initiated procedure for transfer

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Financing and Contribution in 2020

Update since the 7th RSC Meeting:

- **Total funds transferred – 15.37%**
 - EU funds transferred – 10.00%
 - WB6 funds transferred – 36.84%

Parties	WB6 Contribution for 2020 TCT Budget (EUR)	Paid Contribution	Balance
EU 80.0%	2,400,000.00	240,000.00	2,160,000.00
Albania 3.2%	96,000.00		96,000.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina 3.6%	106,500.00	61,300.00	45,200.00
North Macedonia 2.9%	86,400.00		86,400.00
Kosovo 2.6%	77,100.00		77,100.00
Montenegro 2.4%	71,400.00	71,400.00	-
Serbia 5.4%	162,600.00	88,346.00	74,254.00
TOTAL (100%):	3,000,000.00	461,046.00	2,538,954.00

Overview of expenditure January – May 2020

Budget Heading / Sub Heading	Expenditure in EUR
Staff costs	196,408.76
Health Insurance	2,520.00
Pension Contribution	7,959.55
Social and pens. Contributions	8,938.65
Staff salaries	176,990.56
Information and Comm. Technology	4,393.84
Website maintenance	316.06
Microsoft Licenses - WIN10 & O365	3,603.47
Internet and Fixed Phones	474.31
Financial costs	937.83
Bank charges	772.35
Exchange Differences Loss/Gain	165.48
Grand Total	201,740.42

Procurement of goods and services

Ongoing calls for tenders

Title	Purpose	Estimated Value	Estimated evaluation of the offers and proposing the awards for contract signing
Microsoft 365 Licenses, SharePoint, User Training	Necessary for using standard Microsoft Office applications, online collaboration	EUR14,500	Mid-July
ICT Solution	Network infrastructure including servers, firewall, anti-virus, WiFi	EUR14,000	Mid-July
Internet connection	Standard internet connection	EUR5,600	Mid-July

The tendering documentation contain a caveat that the decision for the award and signing the contracts shall be done by the incoming Director.

Procurement of goods and services

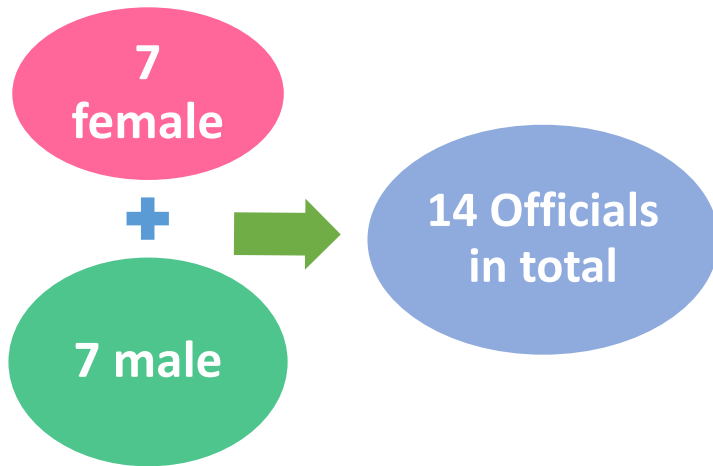
Calls for tenders to be launched shortly

Title	Purpose	Estimated Value	Estimated evaluation of the offers and proposing the awards for contract signing
External Audit for 2019	Certifying the annual accounts for 2019 as per Financial Regulation	EUR10,000	End of July
Video Conferencing	To enable distant participation to the meetings taking place at the Secretariat	EUR60,000	End of August
Office equipment & printing services	Equipment for printing/copying/scanning	EUR9,000	End of August
Accounting & HR Software	Necessary for proper financial management and to comply with provisions of the Financial Rules	EUR15,000	End of August
Corporate Travel Services	Travel and accommodation services for conference invitees and TCT staff on official travel	EUR60,000	End of September

The tendering documentation contain a caveat that the decision for the award and signing the contracts shall be done by the incoming Director. Whereas for the external audit, a prior endorsement is required from the RSC as per Financial Regulation, before the contract is signed.

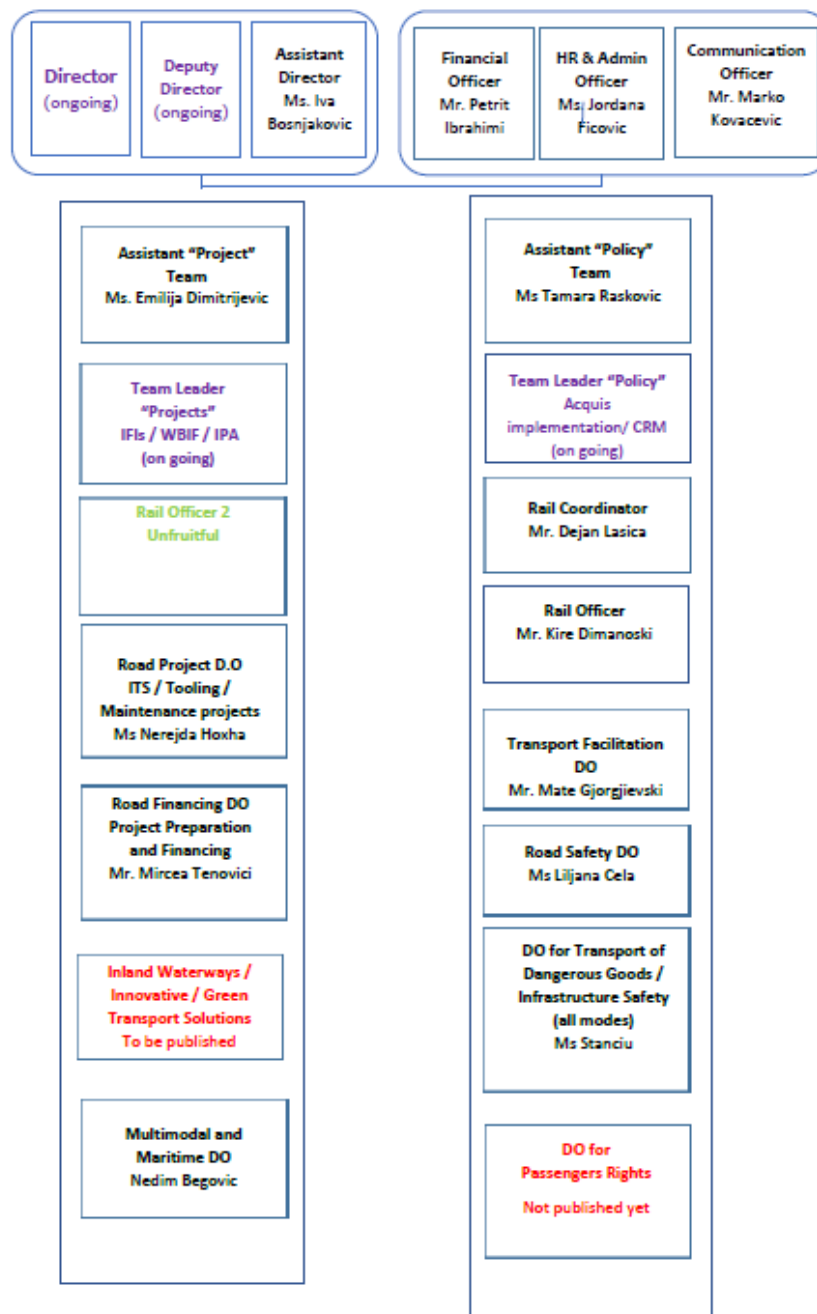
TCT Secretariat Recruitment

- As of 10th February, the TCT Secretariat employs Officials only
- The recruitment process is still ongoing
- **14 contracts** has been signed – team consists of equal number of male and female Officials while, when speaking about proportion between EU and WB6, numbers are in favor of WB6 Regional Partners



- Appointment of the **new management** is to be finalized
- Selection process of **2 Head positions** is ongoing

Transport Community's Permanent Secretariat





TRANSPORT COMMUNITY
The Permanent Secretariat

Thank You