



7th Transport Facilitation Technical Committee meeting
Videoconference meeting, 25.01.2021.

Summary

Introduction

- The 7th TCTF videoconference meeting is held in aim to reiterate the milestones set out in TC Permanent Secretariat's work since September 2020 – the endorsement of Action Plan on Transport Facilitation at Ministerial Council, as the main blueprint for the future work of TCTF, initiation of Green Lanes concept, as well as European Commission's release of Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans.
- TC Secretariat welcomed the participation of the European Commission, EU member state representatives (Croatia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia), CEFTA, World Bank, UNECE, WB Chamber of Investment Forum as well as CEI and all regional participants.
- The Director of the TC Secretariat highlighted the importance of 5 completed Road Shows in the WB, as a follow-up of the endorsed Action Plans. He announced the first review of success of implementation of these documents in June, as well as its yearly review by the end of 2021 (October).

Summary and follow-up of the sessions on transport facilitation within the Action Plans Road shows

TC Secretariat presented summary of the 5 sessions on transport facilitation and emphasized the main conclusions, in order to highlight the key notes and reiterate some of its most important aspects. There are still challenges faced within national administrations, and in their cooperation both on national level and bilaterally. Further assistance by the TC Secretariat is recognised as needed in formulation of project proposals and coordination of various bilateral working groups.

Current state of play

RAIL BCPs – no developments since the road shows in most RPs.

- Croatia- awaits a new proposal from BIH in order to re-initiate the bilateral talks on joint rail agreement
- Greece is waiting for invitation from MKD in order to continue discussions for the bilateral agreement on joint rail BCPs.
- Serbia: regarding the beginning of negotiation in order to conclude bilateral agreement, an official letter and draft agreement were sent to Romania. Contacts were made with Croatia- to organise



meeting to discuss draft agreement on technical level. In Bulgaria- new parliamentary elections are expected, planned to initiate discussions for a bilateral agreement upon new Government is formed.

- KOS and MKD are expected to immediately sign the remaining Customs protocol from the Agreement on the joint rail BCP

ROAD BCPs

- ALB expects to sign the contract for feasibility study with consultant in the beginning of February for BCP QafeThane, duration 6 months, MKD is finalizing tender for preparation of design of BCP Kjafasan, soon it will be published and TC Secretariat will be notified accordingly.
- On Albania-Greece BCP: only goods coming from Greece, no passengers and no goods from Albania to Greece allowed.
- MNE – to continue its participation to the inter-institutional working group with ALB in order to continue and finalize the talks on establishing one stop controls; new members to the group to be appointed and immediately to schedule a meeting with ALB
- KOS and MKD to initiate talks on establishing joint road BCP in Blace/Hani i Elezit, and to decide on the type of the infrastructure works
- SRB- to inform on the current setbacks in the implementation of the bilateral agreement for one stop controls at the BCP Presevo-Tabanovce

Following the expressed needs at the road shows, the TCT Secretariat informed on the possible TA for legal and institutional support in implementation of bilateral BCP agreements, including capacity building in effective border management, inter-agency cooperation and digitalization.

The conclusions from the individual transport facilitation sessions within the five completed action plans road shows are also considered as conclusions from the Technical committee on Transport facilitation and the members shall act upon them and inform the Secretariat on any future development.

A summary monitoring report on the overall implementation of the Action Plan on Transport Facilitation will be prepared by June, in order to report to the Regional Steering Committee and the Ministerial Council.

Debriefing on the state of play with regards to the situation at the borders, including Green Lanes

The Director of the TC Secretariat stressed the importance of adopted Green Lanes initiative, its future expenditure to new products in the WB6, as well as intention to expand it to neighbouring EU Member states. 3 successful meetings with CEFTA have been organised in this regard- list of agreed BCPs is completed, list of priority medical supplies – in preparation, the system of exchanging the information between the relevant stakeholders is being developed in order to be operational. He also stressed that



the TC Secretariat's concept of joint border controls at WB is fully in line with priorities set out in EC's Economical and Investment Plan.

CEFTA – mutual recognition application received from North Macedonia, Serbia and Moldova, process of mutual recognition is taking place online, it is expected to have all 3 processes finalised by April (depending on the economic operators from the region).

Regional and international environment for transport and trade facilitation

- WB6 Chamber of Investment Forum

Western Balkan Chamber of Investment Forum representative updated the participants on the latest activities: Business Council was established, gathering micro, small, medium and large companies from various industries in the region (so far 16 companies and an initial meeting took place). Aim: to monitor independently Common Regional Market Action Plan and its progress, document in this regard is in the final stage of preparation, to be adopted soon, once adopted will be presented to the region, EC, CEFTA and TC Secretariat.

Key performance indicators: reduction of formalities at BCPs and border controls, harmonisation of rules, enabling to provide services on equal terms, making easier for individuals to move, stay and work through the region etc. Regulatory framework should be turned to implementation framework, translating indicators into action points.

- IFC Trade Facilitation Support Program

All RPs acknowledged presentation by IFC on Trade Facilitation Support Programme, related to the national single windows, which aim is to facilitate trade by enhanced access to information and exchange of data among various national bodies, as well as enabling more efficient coordination of the controls, simplification and automation of the procedures and the documentary requirements.

Smart and Sustainable Mobility, Multimodality & logistics

RPs welcomed presentation by DG MOVE on EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, setting ambitious objectives and milestones for 2030 and 2050.

- EU Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy, where does Western Balkans stand?

- ALB- prepared reply in written in this regard, that will be sent to TC Permanent Secretariat, currently no strategy in place, since it expired in 2020, in process of financing consultant to draft the new strategy that will be in line with EC's Strategy.
- BiH – obstacle: laws being slowly implemented at the state level.



- KOS- Multimodal strategy 2015-2025 exists, Action Plan was prepared for 2015-2018 (expired). Freight: hope to create multimodality at Hani i Elezit through road line rail 10 modernisation- install new equipment, problem: currently no legal basis, administrative instruction is being drafted in this regard (it would only tackle road not rail but could create interface for rail in the future).
- MNE – regarding point 59 selling tickets electronically: due to control passenger still must have ticket in paper, database and register: priority development of information system for road traffic, project preparation of development of infrastructure system for needs of road prepared, point 61- Strategy for 2019 -2035 in place, implementation delayed no dedicated body on implementation so far, on point 57 and 58- Montenegro completed road safety assessment project.
- MKD- National Strategy 2018-2030 is in place. There is an ongoing project to establish intermodal terminal Trubarevo by 2030. Ministry of Transport and communications will prepare the draft law harmonised with acquis for combined transport and intelligent transport systems. Under the WBTTFP project an expert will draft ITS strategy and propose legislation in line with EU acquis.
- SRB – waiting for new Transport Strategy to be developed and adopted, ITS strategy will be integral part of it. Ongoing activities: General transport master plan and national programme for railway infrastructure in place. Existing pilot project of electronic tickets on line Belgrade-Vrsac (by Srbija voz), planned to be expanded to other lines as well. As part of EBRD loan relating to the technical-passenger station Zemun- one segment is related to the procurement of ticket vending machines for which is planned to be installed at certain number of stations.

All above-mentioned information shall be sent to TC Permanent Secretariat by RPs in writing.

All participants welcomed the UNECE presentation on the activities of its Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics, namely:

- European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC Agreement)
- ECE Handbook for national master plans for freight transport and logistics
- IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)

They will cooperate with UNECE on further implementation of AGTC agreement and will take into account the Handbook for national master plans for freight transport and logistics during national planning.

All participants acknowledged the presentation on ADRIPASS project by the Central European Initiative (CEI) and welcomed the results of the final study. The Final study provides concrete measures and actions to solve several regional multimodal and BCP problems and presents a good knowledge- base to the regional parties.