



On 7 June, Transport Community delegation met the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, H.E. Stevo Pendarovski. On this occasion, regional cooperation and parallel work on infrastructure flagship projects and policy reforms were highlighted as essential elements for economic development of the Western Balkans. During the visit to North Macedonia, a meeting with the Minister of Transport and Communications, Blagoj Bochvarski, also took place. The interlocutors discussed the implementation of the key flagship projects from the European Commission's Economic and

Investment plan for the Western Balkans on road and rail (Corridors X and VIII) as well as undertaken activities related to road safety. Reduction of road fatalities and working towards Vision Zero, and management of border crossings were the main topics discussed with the Director of the Public Security Bureau, Saso Tasevski. Finally, Green Lanes and their extension from Western Balkans to EU Member States were the focus of the meeting with the Director of Customs, Goran Sugareski and for the site visit to the border crossing Bogorodica/Evzoni.

A visit to Greece ensued. Director Zakonjšek met in Athens with the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Kostas Karamanlis and Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Yiannis Kefaloyiannis. The focus of the discussion was improvement of rail and multimodal transport in the region with an aim to increase trade exchange with Greece as one of region's main trade partners. A fruitful discussion was also led with the Secretary General for International Economic Affairs, Yannis Smyrliis, on the regional connectivity.

After Greece, another visit to a regional partner – Kosovo*. With Director of RailTran Mr Aslani discussion was focused on how to improve conditions on regional rail market and improve infrastructure maintenance. Minister of Finance, Labour and Transfers Hekun Murati met with Director Zakonjšek on 14 June for discussion on how to increase capacity and decrease waiting times at borders. Working towards integrated rail border crossing with North Macedonia was highlighted as priority, as well as modernisation of rail network. As part of visits to railway operators in Western Balkans, on 15 June Transport Community delegation met with representatives of network operator InfraKOS. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss rail infrastructure projects and safety improvements of level crossings.



*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.



On 15 June, Director Zakonjšek visited Brčko, Gradiška and Svilaj bridge in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), together with Ministers Butković (Croatia) and Mitrović (BiH). It was highlighted that the construction of Gradiška bridge is progressing well and that this important cross-border investment would benefit from an integrated border crossing. Passengers and freight carrying capacity significantly improved, along with reduced travel time, which is a positive sign. Transport Community Permanent Secretariat continues to support the two parties to conclude an agreement on the

type and category of border crossing point and stands ready to assist them in any way if needed.

Director Zakonjšek and the EU's Transport Commissioner, Adina Vălean had a productive meeting in preparation for Transport Community Ministerial Council planned to be held in July in Slovenia. During the encounter, it was underlined that Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for Western Balkans, prepared by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat is an important step for greener and more digital transport in the region of Western Balkans. Director Zakonjšek also met with the Director-General of DG MOVE Henrik Hololei to present Transport Community's current work and priorities for the upcoming period. During the discussion, it was agreed that regional cooperation in the Western Balkans is the most important pre-condition for economic development.



On 11 June, leaders of Western Balkans Six and representatives of regional organisations Transport Community, RCC and CEFTA participated in the Western Balkans Summit hosted by the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama. On the sidelines of the Tirana Summit, the heads of government of Albania and North Macedonia signed the Agreement on the Establishing of Joint Border and Customs Controls.

Transport Community's Rail Summer School 2021 began on 29 June. Professionals from governmental institutions (ministries, authorities and agencies), private sector, think tank and NGOs gathered in Belgrade for four days of discussions on rail development aimed at building the capacities of the regional partners. Transport Community organised this event together with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and with the support of the City of Belgrade.



Transport Community's commitment to improve road safety was reaffirmed on 3 June (World Bicycle Day) and June 10, (International Level Crossing Awareness Day). On the occasion of latter, Transport Community and partners produced a information material in all languages of the regional partners with safety tips for drivers and passengers.

Finally, in the month of June TCT Secretariat continued to maintain close contact with the EU Delegations in the region. At the meeting with Heads of Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Director Zakonjšek highlighted significance of investments in Corridor V, a major project in the country, for which the EU has provided over €200 million in grants.