TRANSPORT COMMUNITY

ACTION PLANS – FIRST YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

RAIL ACTION PLAN

TRANSPORT FACILITATION ACTION PLAN

ROAD ACTION PLAN

ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN
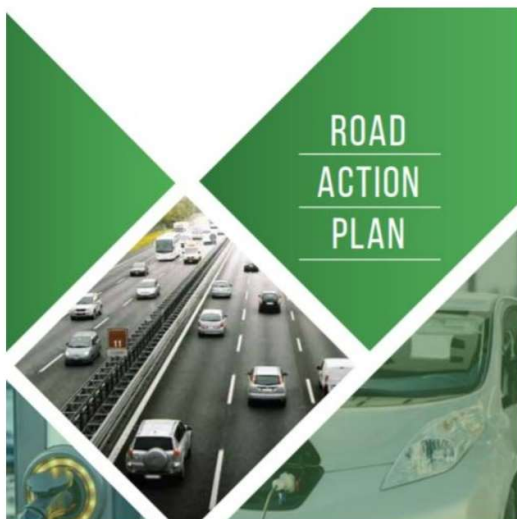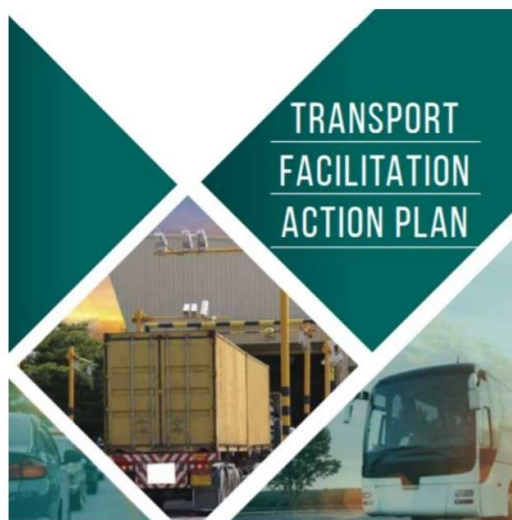
Transport Community
Permanent Secretariat

October 2021

Contents

List of Abbreviations

Annex I	Annex I to the Transport Community Treaty
B2B	Business-to-Business
BCAs	Border Crossing Agreements
BCPs	Border Crossing Points
CADAS	Common Accident Data Set
CARE database	Community database on road accidents resulting in death or injury
CER	the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CONNECTA	the Technical Assistance to Connectivity in the Western Balkans
DG MOVE	Directorate General for Mobility and Transport
DG NEAR	Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
eCMR	digital version of the freight document CMR
ECVVR	European Centralised Virtual Vehicle Register
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIM	European Rail Infrastructure Managers
ERA	European Union Agency for Railways
eTIR	eTIR international system aims to ensure the secure exchange of data between national customs systems related to the international transit of goods, vehicles or containers according to the provisions of the TIR Convention
EU	European Union
EU DEL(s)	European Union Delegation(s)
EU Member State(s)	European Union Member State(s)
EVR	European Register of Vehicle
eQMS	Electronic Queuing Management System
FIA	Federation Internationale de l'Automobile
FIDIC	International Federation of Consulting Engineers, Fédération Internationale Des Ingénieurs-Conseils
G2G	Government-to-Government
HSH	Albanian Railways
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IM(s)	Infrastructure Manager(s)
IPA	the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
JASPERS	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions
JBCPs	Joint Border Crossing Points
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
LCs	Level-crossings
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoT(s)	Ministry(ies) of Transport
NIB	National Investigation Body
NS	Network Statement
NSA	National Safety Authority
NVR	National Vehicle Register
OTIF	Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail
PIU	Project Implementation Units

PSO	Public Service Obligation
RIAMS	Railway Infrastructure Asset Management System
RAP	Rail Action Plan
RINF	European Registers of Infrastructure
RISM	Road Infrastructure Safety Management
ROADPOL	the European Roads Policing Network
RRA	Railway Regulatory Agency
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
ROZ	BIH Regulatory Agency
RSA	Road Safety Audit
RSI	Road Safety Inspection
S2R	Shift2Rail
S2R JU	Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking
SDG(S)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SEE Parties	Southeast European Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*[1], North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
TA	Technical Assistance
TCR	Technical Committee on Railway
TCRS	Technical Committee on Road Safety
TCT Secretariat	Transport Community Permanent Secretariat
TCTF	Transport Facilitation Technical Committee
TEAMS platform	Microsoft Teams business communication platform
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport networks
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSI(s)	Technical Specification(s) of Interoperability
TTF	the World Bank Trade and Transport Facilitation Project
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VIAS Institute	the Virtual Institute of Applied Science
WB CIF	Western Balkans Chamber of Investment Forum
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework
WBRSO	Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory
WHO	World Health Organisation

List of Figures

1. Executive Summary

The main aim of the Transport Community is the integration of transport markets of the Southeast European Parties with the EU. This is achieved through the adoption and implementation of transport-related legislation, the EU acquis communautaire (as stipulated in Annex I to the Transport Community Treaty), and through the support and development of the connectivity projects on indicative extension of the Trans- European Network (TEN-T) that better connect not only the Western Balkans region, but also the region with the EU.

The Action Plans serve as a compendium/roadmap that will help regional partners better plan and prioritise their work in implementing the required legislation and improve overall project planning.

The four Action Plans[2] were endorsed by the Ministerial Council of Transport Community on 26 October 2020 and the Action Plan on Waterborne and Multimodality[3] was endorsed at the Ministerial Council of Transport Community in July 2021. Further on, the Action Plans were welcomed[4] by the leaders of EU and Western Balkans at the EU-Western Balkans summit that took place in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, on 6 October 2021.

The Action Plans aim to guide the region on the path to delivering safer, smart, and sustainable roads, a reliable, modern, and interoperable rail system, and reduced waiting times at borders. These action plans are key documents concerning the region, by the region, for the region.

The purpose of this report is to present the progress made in implementing the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat's four Action Plans. Hence, this report will provide various stakeholders and regional relevant authorities with an objective view on additional efforts and concrete measures that need to be taken, including a timeline. Some of the proposed measures have already resulted in commitments by the relevant authorities of the Southeast European Parties (SEE) parties under the Western Balkan 6 Initiative, which were previously monitored through the Connectivity Reform Measures Management Plan, and broadened in view of recent studies and assessments conducted in the intervening period. Hence, they have a sound basis in established legal and coordination mechanisms.

Despite the challenging period (COVID-19 pandemic), Regional Partners and stakeholders committed time and effort to deliver and show progress in all four sectors covered by the Action Plans: Rail, Transport Facilitation, Road, and Road Safety. In addition to these four action plans, Regional Partners committed to the recently endorsed Action Plan on Waterborne transport and Multimodality[5]. More specifically, infrastructure maintenance, ITS strategic framework, rail market opening, road safety observatory and transport facilitation.

<u>Rail</u>: Overall rail sector progress during this reporting period was <u>slow</u>, however, some Regional Partners did invest effort to progress in different rail sector areas. This year's highlight was the signing of an MoU by all regional railway Infrastructure Managers and the Dedication to Rail signed by all Western Balkans Ministers.

The Rail Action Plan's measures cover necessary legislative amendments to national laws and its implementation to allow non-discriminatory access to rail infrastructure and the opening of the rail market at the regional level. Four out of six Regional Partners have shown <u>moderate/steady</u> <u>progress</u>

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[2] Action Plans - Transport Community (transport-community.org)
[3] Not covered under this reporting period (endorsed in July 2021)

[4] Brdo Declaration: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/52280/brdo-declaration-6-october-2021-en.pdf
[5] Waterborne-and-Multimodality-Action-Plan.pdf (transport-community.org)

with rail market opening measures at the national level. Some Regional Partners have started bilateral discussions on moving towards opening the rail market at the regional level.

Concrete progress identified/reported by the following Regional Partners: **Montenegro** established a National Vehicle Register; **Albania** completed institutional framework by establishing a Safety Authority, Regulatory Authority and a National Investigation Authority; **Serbia** published a Network Statement for inland waterway ports; **North Macedonia** established a Rail Asset Management System; **Kosovo** published several interoperability technical specifications; and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** established a working group for drafting the new Railway Act (pending).

The report notes a lack of progress by all Regional Partners concerning passenger rights and interoperability. This is also the case with multiannual maintenance plans. Furthermore, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **North Macedonia** did not open their domestic rail markets. In North Macedonia legislation for this step is under preparation.

Transport Facilitation: the overall pace of progress has been moderate. That said, there has been significant progress in some cases. The signing of the Agreement for Joint Border and Customs Control between **Albania** and **North Macedonia** and finalising the implementing agreements for joint controls on the rail border crossing between **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia** are landmark achievements in line with the Action Plan.

The main activities in implementing the Action Plan centre around establishing an advanced integrated border management model, which is the one-stop/joint border/common controls. It is a task that has proven highly demanding for administrations for road and rail border crossing/common crossing points. The challenges are even more significant regarding the border crossing points shared between the Western Balkans partners and their neighbouring EU Member States.

However, the good examples above and the existing functional one-stop BCPs in the region should be used as best regional practices. Coupled with the Green Lanes in operation in the Western Balkans and the work to extend the Green Lanes with the EU, transport facilitation is receiving the attention it deserves by all relevant national and regional stakeholders. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that Action Plan progress going forward will depend on continuous and concerted administrative efforts, constant technical upskilling, and financial assistance. But above all, on unequivocal political commitment and an environment conducive to shared confidence and good neighbourly relations.

Road: Overall pace of progress varies from slow to moderate. Moderate progress is reported mainly regarding road maintenance, where almost all Regional Partners have put a three-year maintenance framework in place. A Road Asset Management System is already in place in **North Macedonia,** with progress reported in **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia**. The preparation of a strategic framework for deploying Intelligent Transport System (ITS) and the respective legal transposition acts should have made better progress as one of the key interest areas for the region. **Albania** has already adopted a strategy for ITS deployment across the road network, while **North Macedonia** and **Serbia** have experienced delays in getting the projects off the ground. **Albania and Serbia** are progressing with the adoption of EU ITS standards. Improving transport resilience and deployment of alternative fuels remains a challenge for the region, with limited progress achieved during the year. It is evident that the region will need more significant support from all stakeholders, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, European Commission (EC), and international financial institutions (IFIs) to leapfrog in the race towards more sustainable and resilient road transport development.

Road Safety: Overall progress for this reporting period is slow; however, some Regional Partners have achieved a moderate level of progress. All Regional Partners have embraced the new goals of the Second Decade of Action 2021-2030 with aspirational targets by halving serious injuries and road deaths by 50%. Their vision is aligned with that of the UN and EU for introducing the Safe System approach (Vision 0) in their new Road Safety National Strategies linked to the implementation of their

Action Plan. With UNDP's support, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** has drafted a new Road Safety Strategy at the state level, while **Montenegro** already has a Road Safety programme for 2000 - 2022. Regarding improvements to the level of coordination, new developments are ongoing in **North Macedonia** to establish the Road Safety Agency, and a proposal on the revised structure of the National Coordination Authority has been prepared and is set to be approved in 2021. **Kosovo** has started work on establishing a Road Safety Agency, while **Albania** and **Serbia** have made progress with the transposition of the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive 2008/96 and with establishing the Road Safety Inspection and Audit licencing system. **Serbia** leads the way in terms of Road Safety, and one of the best examples to be followed throughout the region.

Road Safety remains a priority for the region, and collaboration with other road safety stakeholders is a key to success. The highlight of this reporting period is establishing the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory. It brings together Transport, Police and Health sectors in a unified platform aiming to put forward tailored solutions, monitor road safety targets, and improve harmonised road safety data in the region**.**

2.   Update[6] of Annex I and Action Plans

Following the update of the ANNEX I, the respective changes will be reflected within each action plan. Furthermore, due to other technical circumstances, such as unexpected delays (for example by external partners such as international financial institutions) in getting projects off the ground, and with technical assistance expected to materialise soon, there is a need to update the four (4) action plans.

By endorsement of the Action Plan on Waterborne Transport and Multimodality in July 2021, the actions from the Transport Facilitation Action Plan related to multimodality and ports facilitation (sub-chapters 2.3 and 2.4) are superseded and they will no longer form part of the latter.

3.   Monitoring Mechanism

The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat updated the monitoring methodology used for Connectivity Reform Measures since February 2016, following the detailed Connectivity Reform Measures Monitoring Plan. All the parties agreed upon the revised methodology at the Sherpas Meeting in May 2019 and at the 5th Regional Steering Committee meeting held in June 2019.

The revision addressed the lessons learned through the monitoring process, aiming to provide a more realistic view of progress in implementing Connectivity Reform Measures.

The objective of the monitoring mechanism is to track the progress and regress of the implementation and accordingly to provide various stakeholders involved in implementing the Plan with an objective view as to where and by whom further efforts are needed.

The measures will not be compared against each other, but each measure will be appraised using the same scale and weighting.

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[6] The decision regarding the revision of the Annex I of the TCT was adopted by RSC on 20 May 2021 (Article 20 of TCT, new legislation)

3.1. Monitoring Mechanism rating

The monitoring mechanism enables qualitative assessments of the implementation of each measure. There are four basic progress indicators for demonstrating the progress achieved in the implementation of each measure by assessing its sub-actions and one indicator to demonstrate the regress, as Stagnant (Pending). The overview of the indicators is provided in the diagram below, Figure 1.
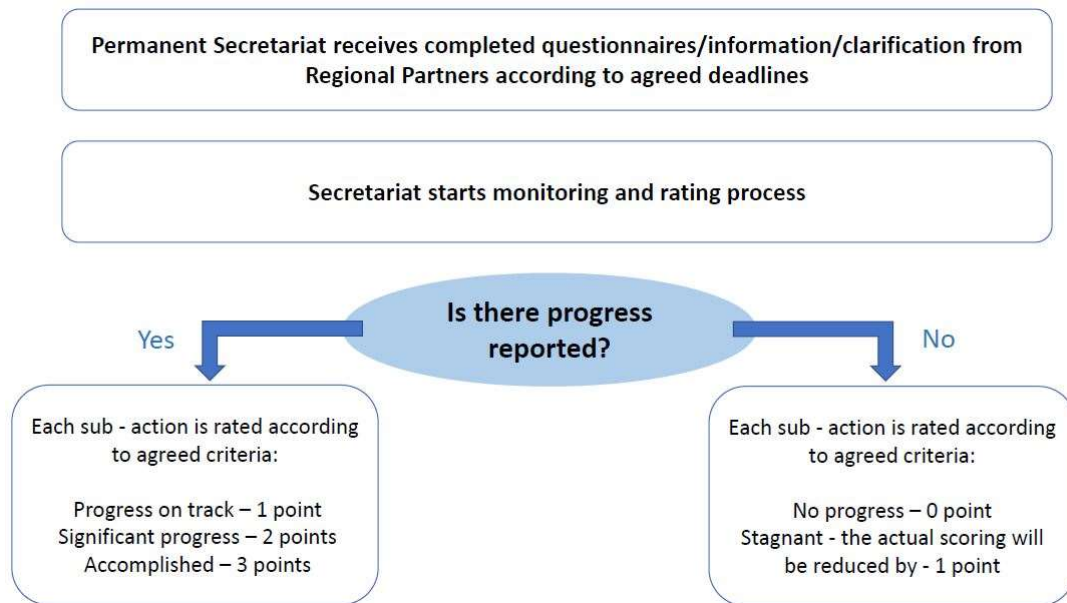
Figure 1 - Monitoring mechanism process

A stagnant indicator will not apply to a *No progress* indicator. For the rest of the indicators, it will mean that the rate of progress will be downgraded to the previous one. In other words, if a sub-action was rated significant progress, but within the stipulated timeline no activities occurred, it will be downgraded to progress on track with its respective scoring. A detailed description of the progress indicators is provided in Annex 1. The overall progress will be ranked based on the average scoring for each group of measures. The diagram below defines the 4 stages of progress in correlation to the scoring.

3.2   Reporting

The progress of each Action Plan will be assessed annually or when requested by the Technical Committee. The flow of information for preparing the progress report is presented in the diagram as per Figure 2.
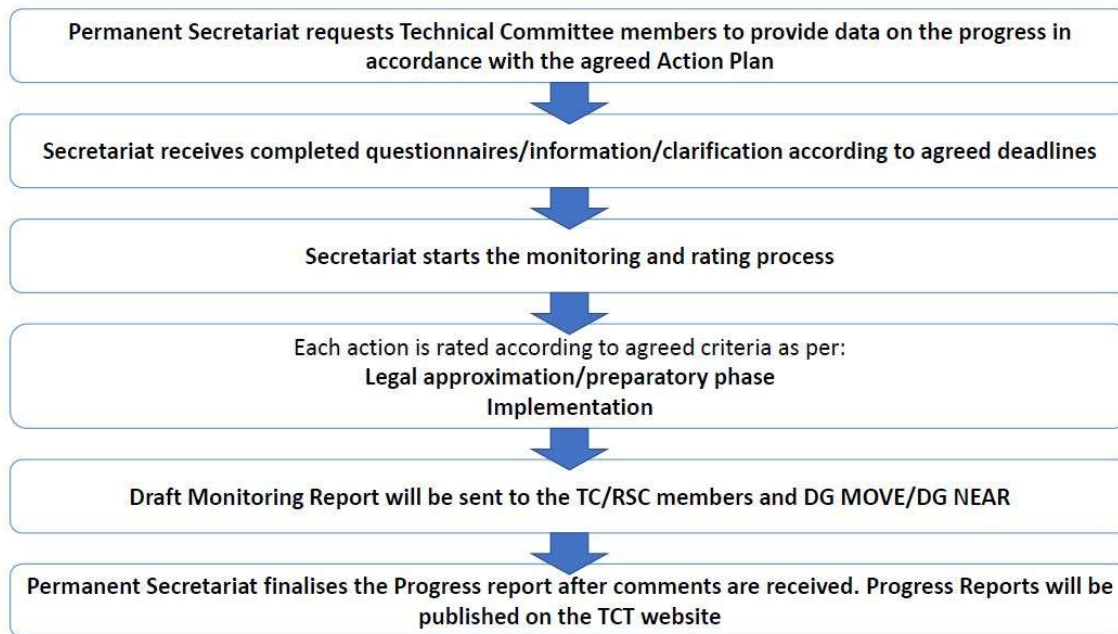
Figure 2 - Reporting flow scheme

4.   Action Plan Road Shows

Following the endorsement of the four Action Plans, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat organised a series of 'Action Plan Road Shows'. The Action Plan Road Show presented an initial event to jumpstart the implementation of Action Plans and raise awareness among the broader transport community on regional (TCT) priorities.

The Action Plan Road Shows were held online (online Microsoft TEAMS platform). However, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat Director visited Tirana, Sarajevo, Pristina, and Podgorica, where together with line Ministers and the EU High representatives (Heads of the EU Delegations), he opened the workshops. Workshops were divided into three different subgroups: a) Road/Road Safety, b) Rail, and c) Transport Facilitation, each one focusing on a specific action plan. Subgroups discussed the state of play, main implementation challenges, and each Regional Partners' Technical Assistance needs to implement the measures identified within each Action Plan. All three subgroup sessions were followed by a concluding plenary session where members of the Transport Community Technical Committees and experts presented a summary of the discussions and steps to be taken going forward to the Minister in charge and the TCT Secretariat Director.

All relevant authorities ensured the participation of a broader stakeholder group, expanding beyond official Transport Community technical committees' members. The purpose of having a broader stakeholder group was to secure more comprehensive stakeholder support and contribution in implementing Action Plans, given their multidisciplinary character.

Such events proved beneficial, as through in-depth discussions with each Regional Partner it was possible to:

- Map the challenges and Technical Assistance needs.
- Identify the areas where Regional Partners will need support by the TCT Secretariat.
- make the Action Plans readily understandable by a wider group of stakeholders.

Road shows:

Cities	Dates	Estimated Number of participants
Tirana	25 November 2020	63
Sarajevo	4 December 2020	79
Skopje	10 December 2020	65
Belgrade	14 December 2020	72
Pristina	11 January 2021	62
Podgorica	19 February 2021	66

Annual Monitoring Report of the

Rail Action Plan

1. Background Information

The Technical Committee on Railway (TCR) was established in 2019, consisting of all regional representatives. TCR's remit is to assist and support the activities of the Regional Steering Committee falling under the scope of the Transport Community Treaty.

For this purpose, the TCR – with the support of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, is mandated to develop a comprehensive document (considering reforms and railway projects) that will be used as a roadmap in the years ahead.

The main activities/actions in the framework of the TCR are related to:

- The lack of competitive rail transport services in the Western Balkans is a major obstacle to achieving sustainable transport of passengers and goods.
- The institutional framework is crucial for ensuring non-discriminatory and transparent access to rail infrastructure for all interested parties. Establishing a regular consultation process at the regional level concerning progress in achieving institutional reforms and restructuring the rail sector will bolster sustainable development efforts. This is the main reason a regional strategy is needed.
- Interoperability and safety issues are key elements in providing a legal basis for regional cooperation. The mutual recognition of operating licenses, train driver licences, safety certificates, vehicle authorisation, is a precondition for rail market opening at the regional level.
- Interoperability measures, in line with EU regulations, represent the backbone of the action to ensure cross border traffic without unnecessary delays (and will be complemented by the activities promoted under the "Transport Facilitation action plan").
- Adoption of a Multiannual maintenance plan with a clear budget structure will also represent a precondition for improved sustainability of the rail infrastructure in the region.

During 2020 and 2021, the TCR held six meetings, one in the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat premises and five in virtual format. Overall, the work of the TCR in previous period was satisfactory, despite all difficulties experienced due to the pandemic, and the inability to hold regular meetings in person. The main achievement was the drafting of the Rail Action Plan. TCR is a main instrument/body/tool for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Rail Action Plan. All members of TCR, including the EU Commission (DG MOVE and DG NEAR), and ERA gave significant contribution in this reporting period.

The TCT Secretariat has started with data collection process on rail legislation in January 2020. This activity aims to have a complete overview of the level of harmonisation of national rail legislation with the EU acquis. A general conclusion is that none of the Regional Partners has completed the full transposition of EU rail legislation as stated in Annex I.2 of the Transport Treaty. Some of the Regional Partners partly provided the tables of concordance on rail legislation.

2. Technical Assistance

2.1. Regional project on Level crossings safety improvement

Chapter VI of the Rail Action Plan dedicates to the modernisation of the railway infrastructure. Safety improvement at the level crossings is recognised as a key priority for all Regional Partners. Based on a previously reached agreement with all Regional Partners, TCT Secretariat prepared a project fiche

supported by Serbia on behalf of all Regional Partners. This project fiche was officially submitted to JASPERS and approved in March 2021, to be completed in February 2022. The first phase of the project aims to map level crossings throughout the network.

The tables below give an overview of the current situation at the level crossing:

Table 1 - Total percentage of "active" and "passive" level crossings

	Albania	**Bosnia and Herzegovina**	**Kosovo**	**Montenegro**	**North Macedonia**	**Serbia**	**EU**
Passive	68,8	88,3	90,2	17,4*	57,3	74,6	45
Active	31,2	11,7	9,8	82,6	42,7	25,4	55

Table 2 - Total numbers of accidents and the number of accidents on LCs in the entire WB region

Western Balkans - total	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**Total**
Total number of accidents	722	831	633	824	786	3796
Accidents on LCs	98	91	114	114	117	534
Percentage of LCS accidents	**13.6**	**11.0**	**18.0**	**13.8**	**14.9**	14.1
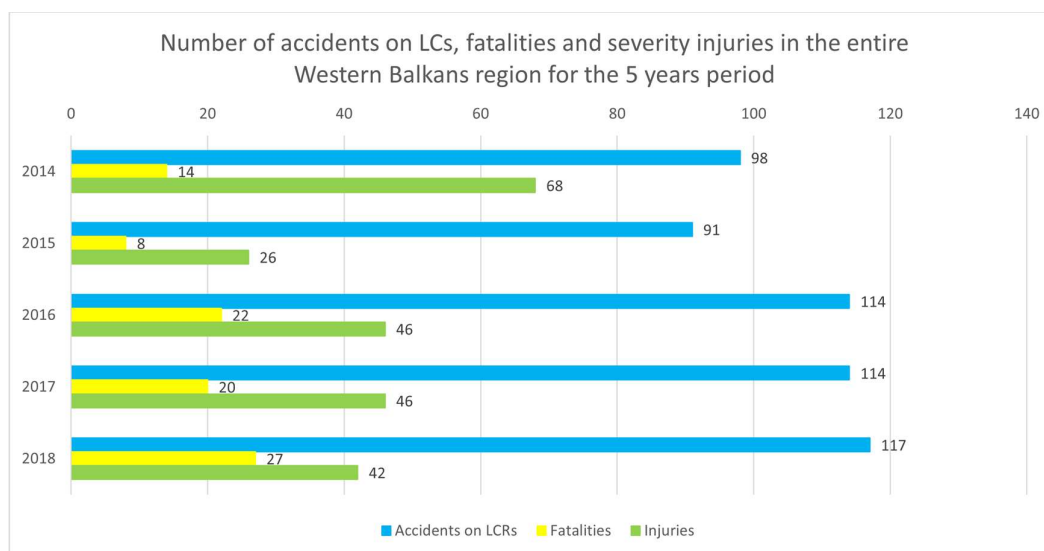
Figure 3 - Number of accidents on LCs, fatalities, and severe injuries in the entire Western Balkans Region for the 5 years period (2013-2018)

3. Progress by measures

3.1. Rail market opening

Rail market opening was among the first connectivity reform measures agreed between all Western Balkans leaders at the High-level meeting held in Vienna in 2015. At that time, the rail market in the entire region was shut. Due to efforts and concrete measures taken in this sector, the situation is improving and continues to do so. The overall rail sector and services offered are in better condition. However, additional efforts are needed to bring up this sector in line with the EU standards.

The rail market and the network of all Regional Partners is relatively small. Therefore, market opening on the domestic level is insufficient to reach its competitiveness and develop further. The lack of competitiveness is a major obstacle to achieving sustainable transport and improved services for passengers and freight. Due to this, all Regional Partners agreed that the priorities should focus on removing the challenges related to the opening of the rail market, aiming to fully implement the EU legislation on Interoperability and improve the overall governance of the railway sector.

Comparative progress on implementation is presented in the following figures:
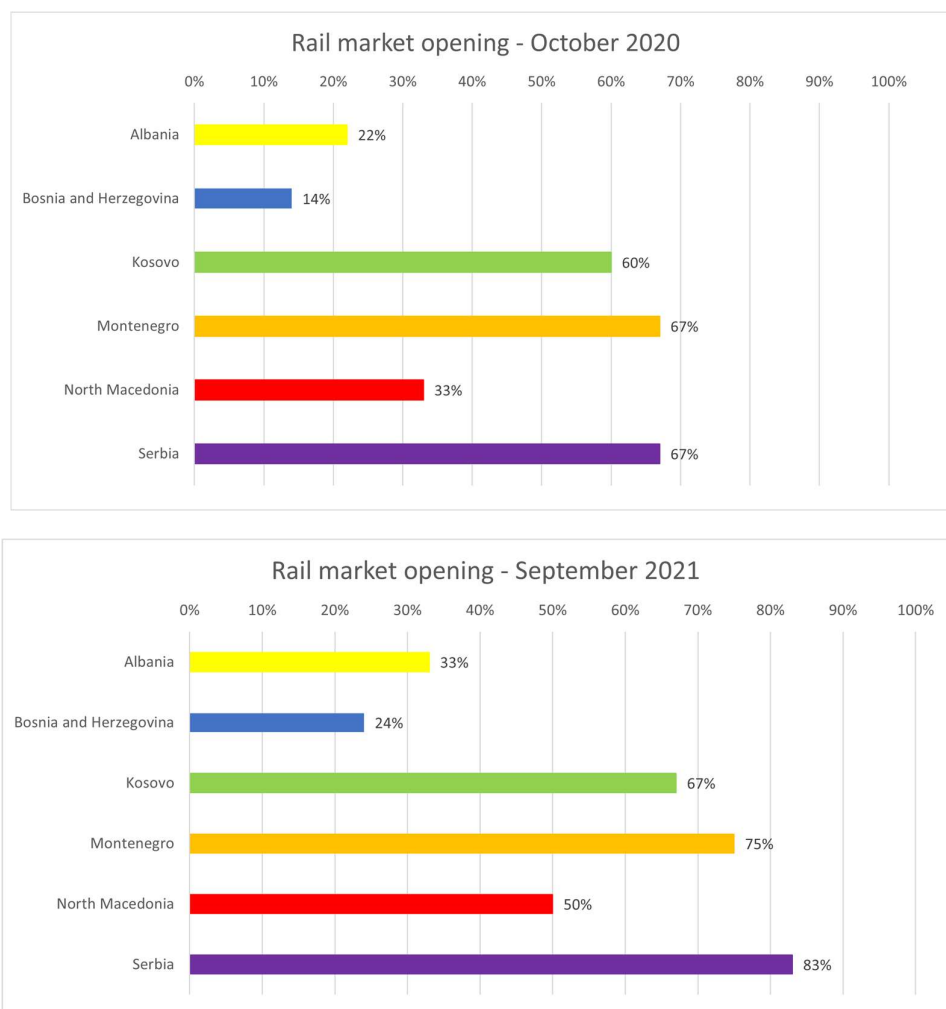
Figure 4 - Rail market opening – October 2020 and September 2021-

Undoubtedly, the most delicate set of measures are related to the rail market opening. Despite all challenges and the overall situation, all Regional Partners managed to report progress.

The major developments, progress, and pending issues during this reporting period are highlighted below:

Albania - has adopted through Parliamentary procedure four Law's (July 2021) related to the completion of institutional framework: (i) the Law for establishing NSA, (ii) for establishing NIB, (iii) for establishing Regulatory Body, (iv) and the Law on separation of national Rail (HSH) company in two companies, on infrastructure and operations. The next phase should be focused on establishing functional and operational bodies and continue its activities that will lead to the separation of the public railway company. Moreover, during this reporting period, the Albanian railways have published the Network Statement. This statement is published only in the native language, the same should also be published in English.

Regarding the maintenance, direct grant contract for the maintenance and operation between the Albanian Railways (HSH) and relevant public authority is finalised.

Pending issues – further efforts are needed to establish functional and operational NSA, NIB and Regulatory Body, finalise the restructuring of the Albanian Railways (HSH), publish the Network statement for the port of Durres and Vlore, as well as to establish contractual relationship between new rail operators and relevant public institution.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - has established the working group for the drafting of the new Railway Law. New Law will provide full transposition of the EU Rail acquis and define competencies of the Railway Regulatory Body and legal base for establishing NIB. There are ongoing activities regarding the restructuring of the railway company "Zeljeznice Republike Srpske". Aiming to establish a Holding company divided into three sectors: infrastructure, passenger, and freight sector. Additionally, there are ongoing activities with the preparation of the Public Service Obligation contract and multiannual contract for the infrastructure.

The rulebook (in line with Regulation 1370/2007) on public service obligation for passengers is published in Republika Srpska. Moreover, the drafting of several by-laws is underway: (i) Rulebook on certification of drivers and centres for the education (Directive 1007/59), (ii) Rulebook on passenger rights and obligation (regulation 1371/2007), (ii) Rulebook on interoperability (Directive 2016/797).

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, between "Zeljeznice FBIH" and entity, there is a one-year direct award contract for Infrastructure (maintenance and operations), as well as a PSO contract (one year) for passenger operations. Current Law on Railways in Federation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of FBIH, 25/12) allows the rail market opening on the domestic level. Pending issues – further efforts are needed to finalise and adopt the new Railway Law, define the competencies of the Regulatory Agency (ROZ), complete the institutional framework, establish the National Investigation Body, and restructure the railway companies in both entities.

Kosovo - has finalised activities related to the Institutional framework, established National Investigation Body, which responds to the Cabinet of the Prime Minister. During this reporting period, the RRA has published several bylaws regarding safety issues. Within the new legislative plan, changes of the Railway Law and the preparation of the new Rail Safety and Interoperability Law is envisaged.

Pending issues. The multiannual contract between infrastructure manager - "Infrakos" and relevant authorities is to be finalised/signed; changes of the Railways Law should also incorporate the market pillar deriving from 4th railway package.

North Macedonia - has established a direct award contract between the infrastructure manager and relevant state authority. Draft of the new Railway System Law is finalized, whereas drafting of the

Railway Safety Law and Interoperability Law is finalised (adoption is expected by the end of 2021). Current Law on Railway recognises the driving licences for the train drivers (the EU Member States and other countries), while the safety certificates and vehicle permits are recognised only for the EU Member States. The Network Statement for the terminal has been drafted and finalised.

Pending issues. Further efforts are needed to remove existing breaches with TCT provisions related to the opening of the rail market; The multiannual contract between IM and the relevant authority should be finalized; The Railway Law should be adopted by the end of the second quarter of 2021; The activities aimed at establishing the National Investigation body should be continued.

Montenegro - the Network Statement for Port of Bar has been published, completed with the drafting of the new Railway law, whereas Law on Safety (including 3rd package and passenger rights) is expected to be adopted.

Pending issues. Further efforts are needed for the adoption of the Railway Law as well as Railway Safety Law.

Serbia - has completed its institutional framework. The directorate of Railways is a self-governing body with three separated functions: (i) NSA, (ii) Regulatory Body, (iii) and Designated body. Railway Directorate.

Moreover, Serbia has completed the PSO contract in line with the EU Regulation 1370/2007 on rules for the procurement of public services. Draft Law on Contracts in Railway Traffic has been adopted. The working group has reviewed the draft Law on Railways for additional modifications and improvements. It is expected to be forwarded for adoption in the coming period. Transposed the Commissions Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/2177 on access to service facilities and rail-related services by publishing.

Pending issues. Further efforts are needed to adopt the Railway Law, Safety Law, and Interoperability Law.

3.2. Passenger rights

Passenger rights are a horizontal measure for all transport modes. All regional partners have taken concrete measures regarding specific parts of the EU Regulation 1371/2007 regulation. The main purpose of this measure is the reinvigoration of the passenger transport in the entire region.

During the reporting period **Serbia** and **North Macedonia** have prepared a draft of the Law on contracts in railway traffic. This draft law includes provisions enabling full harmonisation with the Regulation (EC) 1371/2007 on the rights and obligations of rail passengers.
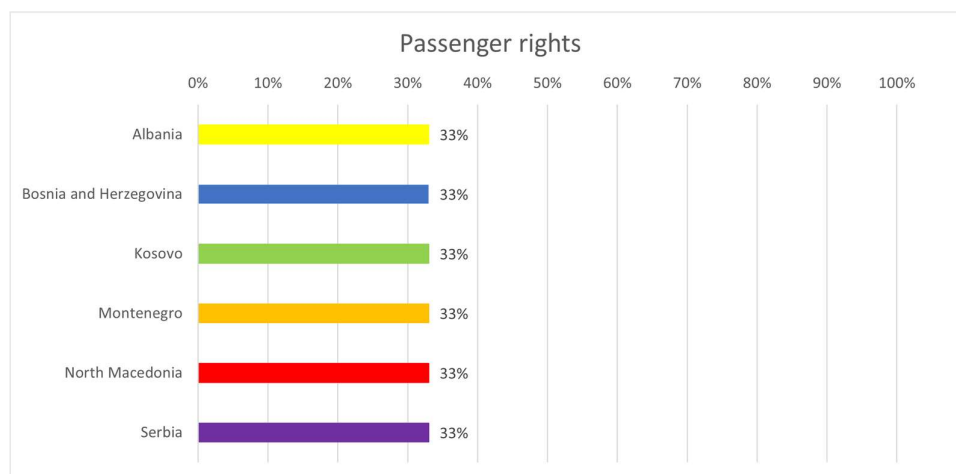
Figure 5 - Passenger rights – October 2020 and September 2021

3.3. Governance

TCT Secretariat is actively engaged in developing further the communication channels between all regional partners from the rail sector. Better coordination and communication among all partners (Infrastructure Managers and Railway undertakings) and other stakeholders will further the overall services in the rail network by exchanging views and learning from different experiences and best practices. Amongst the most significant achievements in this regard is the signing of MoU by all Infrastructure Managers from the Western Balkans region and the signing of dedication to rail by the Ministers. These two important documents will also positively impact governance.

3.4. Interoperability

Alignment with the Interoperability and safety standards are among key elements that will improve further regional cooperation, regional market opening and reduce drastically waiting times at the border/common crossing points.

The mutual recognition of operating licenses, train driver licenses, safety certificates, vehicle authorisation are precondition components for the Rail market opening on the regional level. In this regard, the TCT Secretariat, together with DG MOVE, ERA, continues offering its assistance and support to reach a mutual agreement among all regional partners. During this reporting period, no concrete actions were taken (mutual recognition of licences, certificates) by any regional partners. The necessary legislative changes are crucial to improving the current situation.

 Comparative progress is presented in the following figures:
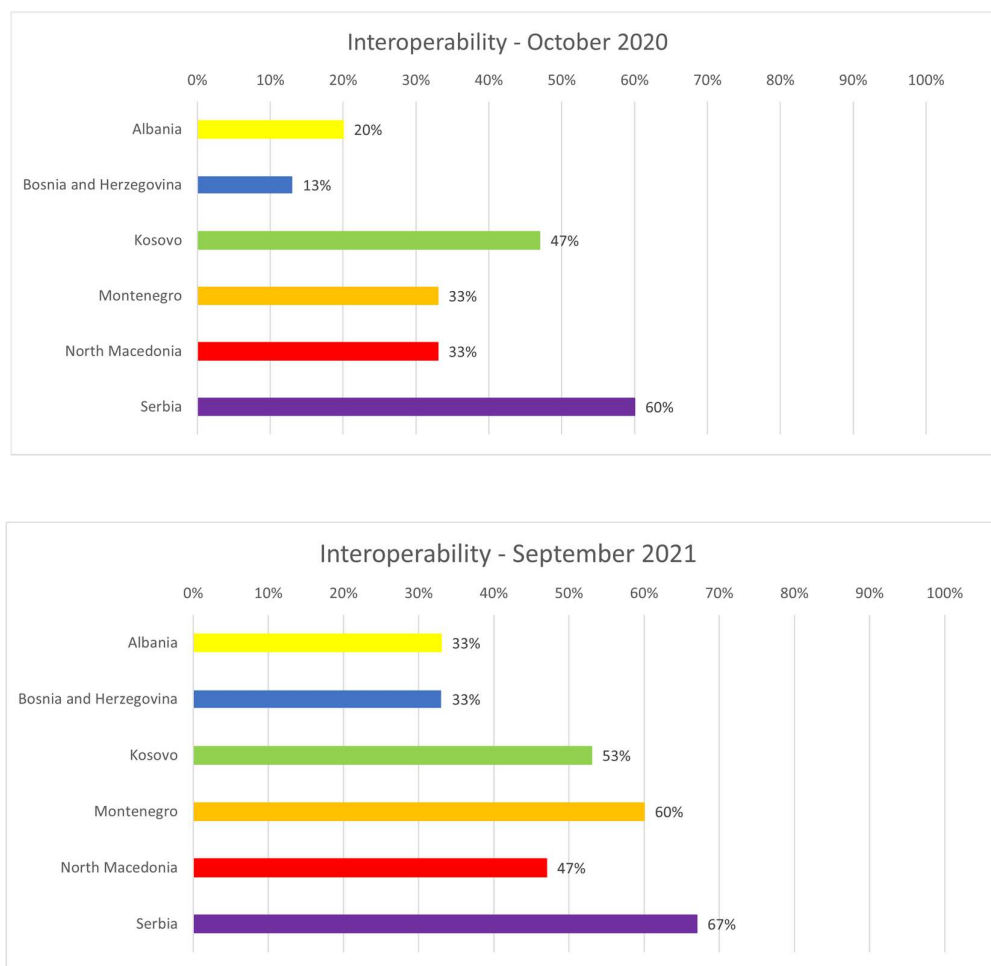
Figure 6 - Interoperability - October 2020 and September 2021

Albania - has prepared a solid base on setting up the Electronic Register of Vehicles. Furthermore, there are ongoing activities related to establishing the Rail Infrastructure Asset Management System (RIAMS).

Pending issues: further efforts are needed to publish the TSIs and continue with the transposition of the 4th Railway Package.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Their ROZ has published several Rulebooks, including:

- Rulebook on the use of the technical file (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 102/12);
- Rulebook on the use of the technical file (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 38/20);
- Rulebook on the application of functional and technical requirements relating to the subsystems of the rail system in Bi Bosnia and Herzegovina H (JTP GEN-B) (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 79/20);
- Rulebook on the application of the essential requirements for the rail system in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 84/20).

The transposition of the Directive 2016/797 has to be continued, and the remaining provisions will be transposed into the regulation concerning the railway system interoperability (under preparation). The publication is planned for 2021. The Rulebook to transpose the Directive 2016/797 is being drafted

in the Republic of Srpska. The existing excel table used by the Railway Enterprise makes a solid base for establishing the Electronic Register of Vehicles.

Pending issues: further efforts are needed to publish the TSIs, adopt the new Railway Safety and Interoperability Law and establish the Vehicle's Inventory list. In addition to that, establishing the National Investigation Body, publishing TSIs, and establishing the Electronic Register of Vehicles should be prioritised.

Kosovo - has established the working group for drafting the new Railway Safety and Interoperability Law. Some actions are taken in regards to establishing RIAMS. However, adequate software is still not in place. Positive developments were reported regarding the Vehicle's Inventory List, a solid base for developing future Electronic Register of Vehicles.

Pending issues: further efforts are needed in the adoption and publishing of the TSIs. In addition to that, the new Railway Safety and Interoperability Law must be adopted.

Montenegro - Five TSIs and two new rulebooks on Interoperability have been published (October 2020). The electronic register of vehicles is operational. Training has been completed, the software has been installed and functional. There is also progress regarding the first phase of the project on developing the asset management system.

Pending issues: further efforts are needed to draft the Safety Law, as well as completion of the institutional framework (NSA, NIB, Regulatory Body, and Designated Body).

North Macedonia- has prepared a draft Safety Law and the Law on Interoperability. Its adoption was expected by the second quarter of 2021. Additionally, progress was made on establishing the working group for the publishing of the TSIs.

Serbia - is continuing with its efforts on preparing amendments to Interoperability Law. Its adoption is expected by the end of the fourth quarter of 2021. The draft of the Law on Railway safety has been finalised, and the TSIs published. Amongst other developments, Serbia, with the support of the World Bank, is continuing with the activities in establishing RIAMS.

Pending issues: further efforts are needed to fully establish the Rail infrastructure and Asset Management System (RIAMS).

3.5. Border crossings agreements

One of the most critical factors that will positively impact improving the rail services is reducing waiting times at the border/common crossing points. Joint work (one-stop-shop) of all relevant authorities (border police, inspection, customs, and rail authorities) in joint stations will reduce the waiting times by half.

In this matter**, Serbia** has initiated new border crossings agreements with Croatia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania. On 22 June 2020, Croatian authorities proposed the continuation of consultations on this matter to define and finalize the agreement. For Bulgaria and Hungary, the proposal for reaching an agreement for establishing a common border station ("one-stop-shop") is not a priority, whereas Romania did not respond yet.

Border Crossing Agreement (BCA) between **Serbia** and **North Macedonia** was signed in 2016. A tender procedure for construction works in Tabanovce station are expected in 2022, its completion expected by second quarter 2023.
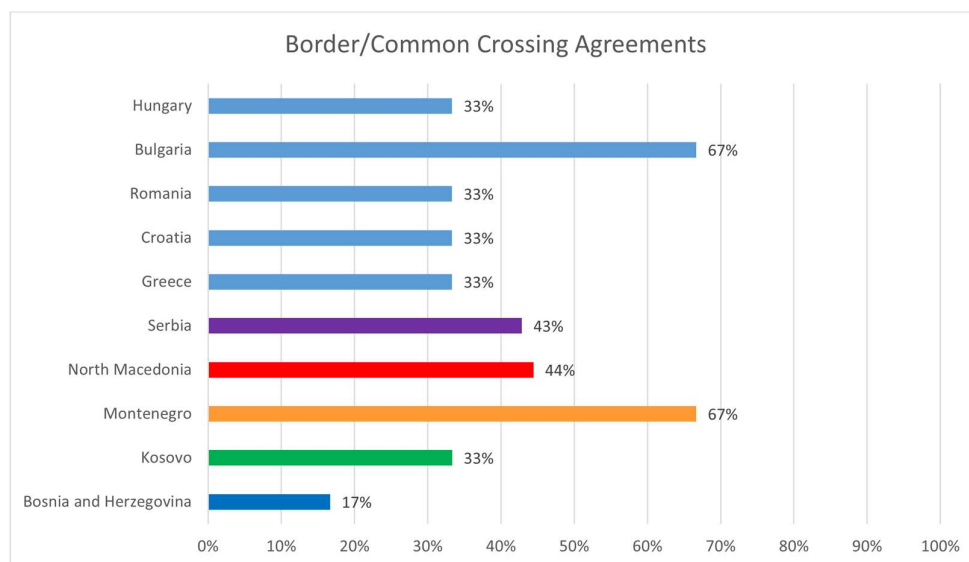
Figure 7 - Improvement border/common crossing operations8

Further information regarding rail border crossing agreements is available under the Transport Facilitation Action Plan Chapter of this report.

3.6. Modernisation of the railway infrastructure

The current average speed and the quality of offered services are not satisfactory; they are slow and unreliable. One of the primary reasons is lack of the proper maintenance (multiannual maintenance plans) in the last three decades. Additional focus on improving the maintenance plans and develop a proper maintenance system is crucial. In this view, adopting a Multiannual maintenance plan with a clear budget structure is a solid base for ensuring better, more reliable, and more sustainable services in the region.

Modernisation of rail network infrastructure - October 2020

Country	Percentage
Albania	33%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	33%
Kosovo	42%
Montenegro	33%
North Macedonia	33%
Serbia	50%

Modernisation of rail network infrastructure - September 2021

Country	Percentage
Albania	50%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	42%
Kosovo	58%
Montenegro	58%
North Macedonia	50%
Serbia	67%
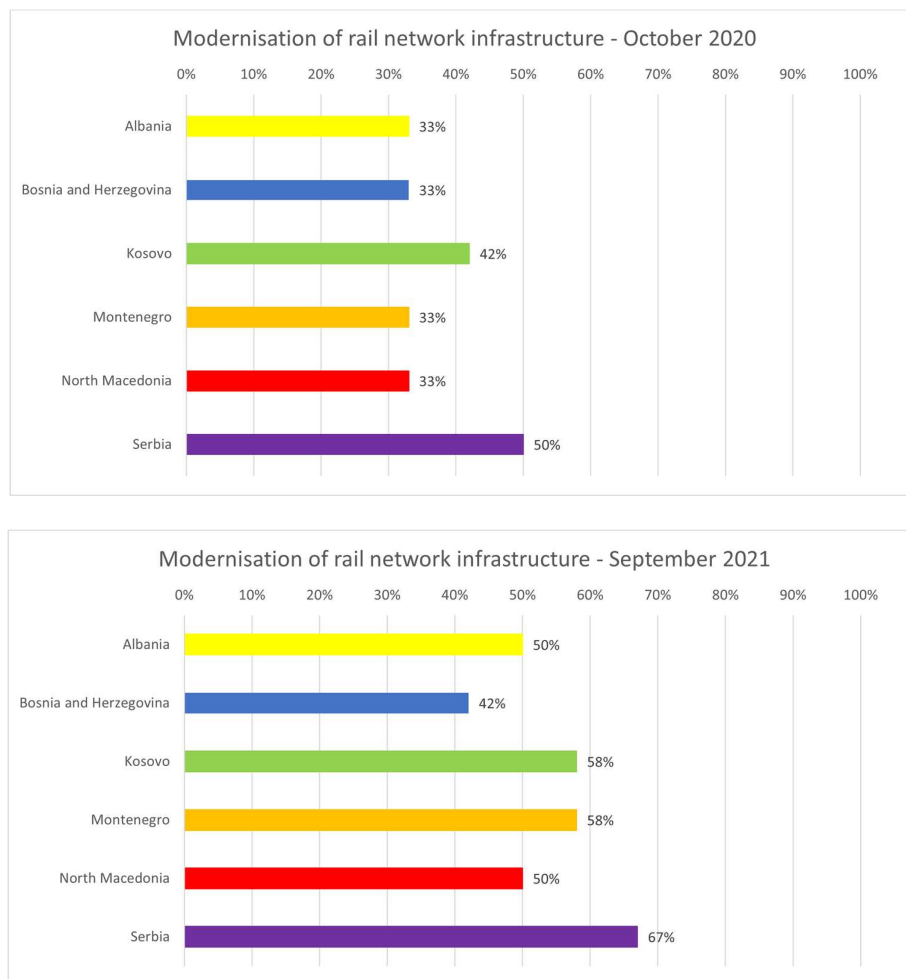
Figure 9 - Modernisation of rail infrastructure network - October 2020 and September 202110

There are currently 11 ongoing rail projects (ANNEX 2.2) related to upgrading, electrification, and reconstruction of new railway lines. The Investments in the rail sector are visible among all regional partners. However, it is recommended that rail investments go hand in hand with reforms.

Two sub-actions of the Rail Action Plan: (i) establishing of the Network of IMs, (ii) and level crossing safety improvements are in direct correlation with the regional connectivity agenda. The success of these actions depends on the joint work of all regional partners.

Recently, TCT Secretariat drafted an Annual Report on the development of the indicative extension of the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network. All regional partners contributed to the data collection process. The Report covers current TEN-T compliance, ongoing/finance secure projects, and forecast for 2027.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

As the first connectivity reform measure agreed back in 2015, the rail market is one of the most important measures of the Rail Action Plan and an integral part of the Transport Community Treaty. With four out of six regional partners having opened their rail marked at the domestic level, the region has progressed, and there are eight private Railway Undertakings in three Regional Partners. Their market share is around 15% in **Serbia**, and 40% in **Albania** and **Kosovo,** whereas **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **Montenegro**, and **North Macedonia,** there are no private rail undertakings

All Regional Partners agreed that the rail market opening is treated with a priority. The aim is full implementation of the EU legislation on Interoperability and improving the overall governance of the railways. Restructuring of national rail companies is an ongoing activity among all regional partners. This process should be finalised before passing into the second transition period (as defined in Annex I of the Transport Treaty).

Further efforts are needed in the area of passenger rights. Most of the regional partners have taken actions to transpose certain parts of the regulation related to passenger rights. However, full implementation is still lagging.

Since there cannot be improvement and integration of the whole regional railway network without safe and interoperable national railway systems, the mutual recognition of operating licenses, train driver licenses, safety certificates, vehicle authorisation is crucial.

There is limited progress in implementing the technical pillar of 4th Rail package by all Regional Partners. Besides the rail reforms, the most visible improvement in the rail transport efficiency can be achieved by cutting the waiting time at the borders/common crossing points by improving and digitalising services. There was some progress made in this regard where **Serbia** has initiated new border crossings agreements with its bordering EU countries.

Considering that the lack of proper maintenance plans is the major reason for slow and unreliable services, all regional partners should increase the focus on putting in place adequate multiannual maintenance plans with sufficient financial resources.
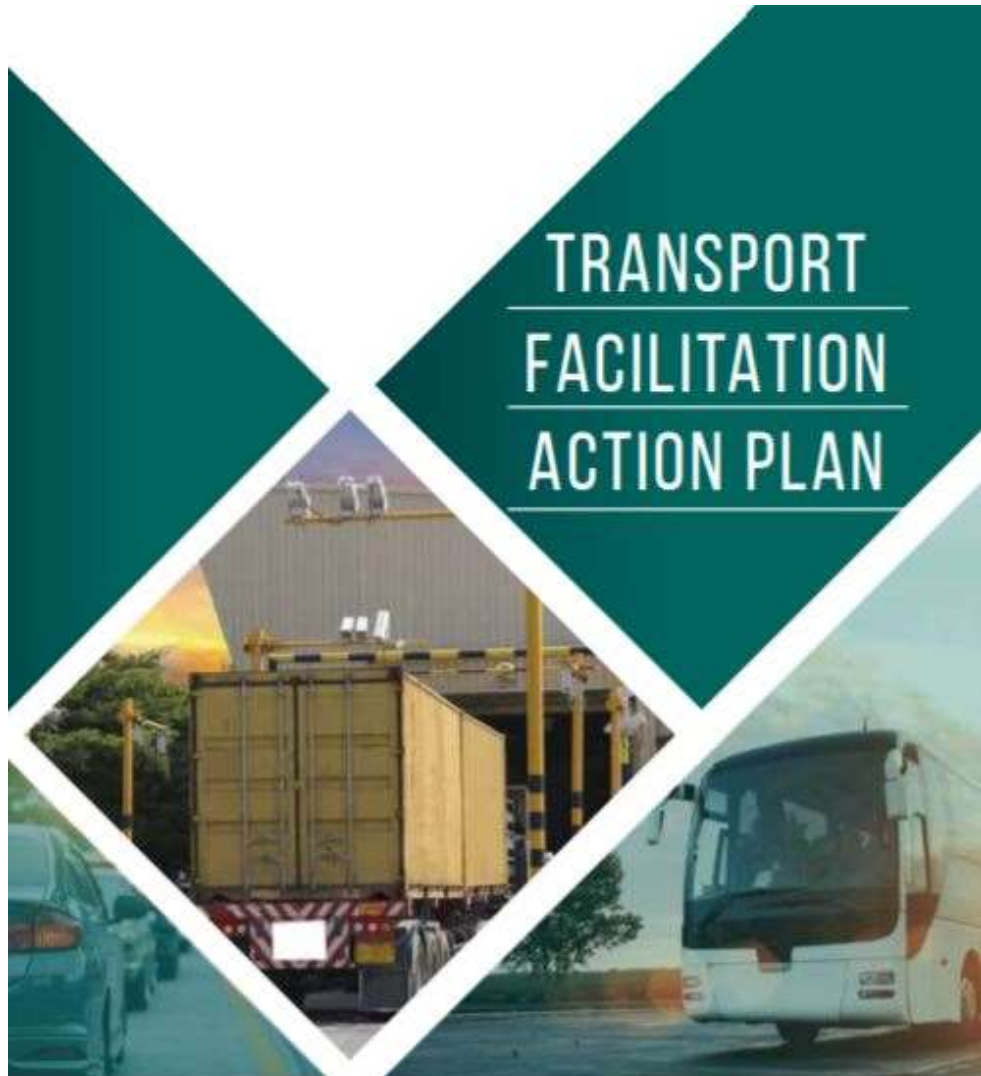
Annual Monitoring Report of the Transport Facilitation Action Plan

1.   Background information

The Transport Facilitation Action Plan envisages actions for road/rail BCPs/CCPs and ports and multimodal facilitation. It is designed to address inefficiencies and delays and improve/modernise/digitalise the operations along the indicative extension of the TEN-T Network in the Western Balkans.

By endorsing the Action Plan on Waterborne Transport and Multimodality in July 2021, the Transport Facilitation Action Plan actions related to multimodality and ports facilitation (Chapter 3) are superseded. They will no longer form part of the latter. Hence, they are not subject to assessment within this Progress Report.

The coordination for implementing the Action Plan on transport facilitation is done through the Transport Facilitation Technical Committee. It was established in 2019, with representatives from the Transport Ministries, Custom Authorities and Border Police from all the Regional Partners and representatives from the European Commission and the neighbouring EU Member States. Other international organisations, such as are CEFTA Secretariat and Western Balkans Chamber of Investment Forum, regularly take part in the work of the Committee. The COVID-19 impact on transport and logistic chains in the region and EU was the most prominent topic on all meetings of the technical committee held in 2020 and 2021, focusing on waiting times at borders and challenges on the implementation of the Transport Facilitation Action Plan.

Stronger coordination within the respective relevant authorities of the Regional Partners and EU Member States and greater devotion to the transport facilitation issues remain a challenge. In the next period, it is expected to empower even more the Technical Committee on Transport Facilitation and fully utilise the cross-sectoral institutional cooperation needed so much for proper implementation of the Action plan and for reaching the objectives of smooth transport operations along the extended TEN-T Network.

2.   Progress by measures during the reporting period

This section will provide an overview of the progress achieved for each of the four groups of measures, describing the overall progress and the quantitative assessment as per the monitoring mechanism described earlier in this Annual Monitoring Report.

2.1   Rail border-crossing/common crossing measures

2.1.1. Signing bilateral rail agreements for joint controls, as well as implementing protocols

The purpose of this measure is to set the necessary legal grounds for operating common rail BCP controls through negotiating a bilateral framework between the concerned parties and agreeing on all legal, procedural, and technical aspects of exercising joint controls at a mutually agreed common rail station.

The Action Plan lists all possible pairs of rail bilateral framework agreements that should be signed and/or become operational, i.e. the ones between Regional Partners as well as the ones between the Western Balkan partners and their neighbouring EU Member States. The latter outnumber the former, and from a perspective of freight transport volume, their implementation might bring more

considerable added value to the overall trade facilitation and the increase of the attractiveness of the rail transport, given that they are located on the main TEN-T rail corridors.

However, signing rail agreements by the Regional Partners and EU Member States is clearly lagging the same measure among the Regional Partners, as no real progress could be reported. In fact, all planned Western Balkans-EU rail border agreements listed in the Action Plan are stagnant, and there will be delays in meeting the agreed deadlines.

With respect to the rail agreements between different pairs of Regional Partners, the situation is better. However, the overall progress is slow, especially considering that some of the bilateral agreements have been part of the previous connectivity reform measures management plan. Even in the cases where framework agreements are in place, like between **Serbia** and **North Macedonia**, **Montenegro** and **Serbia**, and **North Macedonia** and **Kosovo**, the final aim of functional joint controls is still not accomplished. This is due either to missing implementing protocols or missing infrastructure in place (on-going projects for construction of common rail station). That said, the only effective joint rail border crossing point in the region is Tuzi, between **Albania** and **Montenegro**, established and functioning since 2019.

In general, it should be expected that rail authorities will be in a more favourable position to negotiate the bilateral rail agreements, since there is relatively good cooperation on that level between partners. Namely, they usually take the lead, as opposed to the road BCPs/CCPs agreements, where the customs and border police play a major role.

The TCT Secretariat is planning a TAIEX Rail BCP workshop focusing on the improvements of the operations on the rail BCPs aiming at establishing JBCPs.

The specific situation for each rail BCP agreement is summarised below:

- **North Macedonia - Serbia**

No progress[7]. The Agreement from 2015 signed by **Serbia** and **North Macedonia** is ratified and in force, as well as the five Protocols signed in 2016. However, the practical implementation has not started yet. North Macedonia is carrying out the activities related to the construction of the determined common border station Tabanovce, which is supported by the WBIF. However, there are severe delays in the project. It is not expected to have the common station operational before 2024.

It is recommended that the authorities look at the possibilities to start at least joint controls in moving passenger trains once and if the rail passenger transport is re-established between Belgrade and Skopje.

- **North Macedonia - Kosovo**

Substantial progress. During the reporting period, there were many activities by the authorities from the two parties aiming at the finalisation of all implementing agreements (protocols) deriving from the signed and ratified bilateral agreement existing since 2016. A joint meeting between the transport, customs and border police authorities from Kosovo and North Macedonia, as well as TCT Secretariat, was held productively in April 2021, setting roadmap and deadlines for putting the existing rail station in Hani i Elezit in function for joint operations.

While the Border Police protocol was signed earlier, the text of the Customs protocol had been successfully finalised and agreed upon in the recent period, and it was signed at a joint session between Kosovo and North Macedonia held on 16 September 2021.

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[7] refers to the progress during the reporting period, not for the overall state of play

TCT Secretariat continued to support both partners in this process so that the joint operations on the common rail station in Hani i Elezit can start immediately.

- **North Macedonia - Greece**

Stagnant[8]. The draft text of the Cross Border Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia authorities for regulating rail trans-border traffic includes two rail BCPs: Corridor X (rail link Skopje-Thessaloniki) and Corridor Xd (rail link Bitola-Florina). An official letter kindly requesting a bilateral meeting and continuation of the talks had been sent by the Transport Minister of North Macedonia in December 2019, and the reply is still pending.

- **Montenegro - Serbia**

Substantial progress. The Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro on Border Control of Rail traffic and the respective protocols exist and have been in force since 2010. The condition for full implementation of the Agreement is that all border authorities are located in the common border station Bijelo Polje. Montenegro is implementing activities to ensure the functionality of the Bijelo Polje station as a joint border station. Good progress is achieved on the design for adaptation and reconstruction of the railway station Bijelo Polje. The tender procedure for works is expected to be completed by the end of 2021, and the works will start during 2022.

In addition, the Montenegrin authorities initiated a proposal for joint border control in passenger rail traffic (in the moving trains) until the construction of the common station is completed. The Serbian authorities supported the proposal.

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina - Croatia**

No progress. Following a negative reply from Croatia concerning the draft text of the bilateral agreement prepared by Bosnia and Herzegovina, stating that the bilateral rail border issues should be determined based on a separate agreement that will take into account the national legislation of the two countries and the EU acquis Communautaire. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ministry of Communications and Transport, Ministry of Security) have established an inter-sectoral body tasked to prepare a new draft text of the Agreement and proposed to submit a concrete proposal regarding the facilitation of the border procedures on the rail Corridor Vc at the BCPs Samac-Slavnonski Samac and Capljina-Metkovic.

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina - Serbia**

Progress on track. Based on conclusions from the meetings of the Technical Committee and the Action Plan Road Shows held in Sarajevo and Belgrade, Serbia has taken up the initiative concerning a bilateral rail agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Relevant authorities drafted a proposal for a new border crossing agreement. No official reply yet, although some informal contacts have been made.

- **Serbia - Croatia**

Progress on track. Upon positive response by Croatia in June 2020 regarding the initiative by Serbia to negotiate an agreement regulating border control and procedure in railway traffic for the border crossing Sid - Tovarnik, the actual proposal of the draft agreement which includes common border stations, had been communicated.

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[8] This assessment is for the overall state of play, not for the performance of North Macedonia

In had been proposed that negotiations continue at the expert level until defining an acceptable draft agreement for both parties. In that sense, it was agreed to organise a meeting between line Ministries as soon as the conditions are met in terms of the current situation with COVID-19 pandemics. In the meantime, the relevant institutions from Serbia provided their comments and opinion on the Draft Agreement, and in August 2021, Serbia re-initiated the meeting with Croatia. The official reply is pending.

- **Serbia - Bulgaria**

Stagnant[9]. The Agreement from 2005 does not apply since January 1, 2010. Due to these circumstances, the Serbian authorities proposed that the border control of the freight trains be performed in the common station Dimitrovgrad, while the border control of passengers to be performed between the stations Dimitrovgrad and Kalotina. The Bulgarian authorities did not accept this proposal.

- **Serbia - Hungary**

Progress on track – relevant authorities of Serbia prepared amendments to the existing Agreement on Border Control in Road, Railway, and Waterborne Transport and prepared initial and revised Draft Agreement on Cross-border Rail Traffic. Both drafts are acceptable for the Serbian Ministry of the Interior from the perspective of their competence, which means that Serbia is ready to continue the discussions with Hungary. Efforts taken by Serbia in this regard are duly acknowledged and justified, especially in view of the needed harmonisation of the border control mechanism and harmonisation of the agreement on the part of the railway line covered by the Subotica-Szeged railway project.

- **Serbia - Romania**

Stagnant[10]. There have been many official attempts by Serbia to engage in formal discussions on regulating the border control and procedure in the railway traffic for the border crossings Vrsac - Stamora Moravita and Kikinda - Jimbolia, in order to facilitate the border procedures and the development of the technology of railway border traffic between the two countries. Until August 2021, the response from Romanian authorities has not been received.

The overall assessment of the Rail BCP agreements is graphically provided below.

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[9] This assessment is for the overall state of play, not for the performance of Serbia

[10] this assessment is for the overall state of play, not for the performance of Serbia
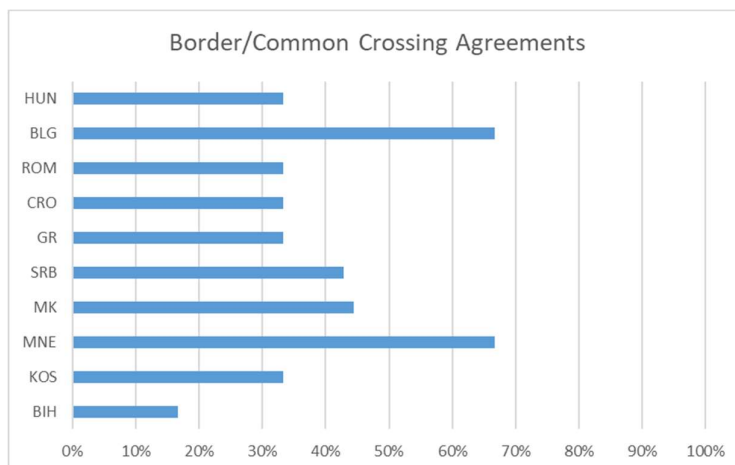
Figure 11 - Regional Partners overall progress – Rail BCP agreements

2.2. Road border crossings/common crossings measures

2.2.1. Improvement/upgrade of the existing ICT infrastructure to foster transport digitalisation, interoperability of communication and data sharing systems

2.2.2. New constructions and/or modernisation of priority BCPs'/CCPs' existing infrastructure aiming to remove physical and technical barriers or to increase the actual capacity

2.2.3. Purchase and installation of equipment for the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness at BCPs/CCPs

These three sub-actions are closely linked, and they are integrally reported below. There are continuous activities for improvement of the road BCPs/CCPs infrastructure, equipment, and information technology (IT), by all Regional Partners, albeit there is uneven progress or at least, there is no systematic way of reporting by the national authorities on the developments of these activities because they fall under the competence of various institutions (state property agencies, custom authorities, road authorities, border police etc.). Nevertheless, continual progress/progress on track can be reported. However, capacity restraints on certain BCPs due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure, equipment, and IT, remain the biggest challenge for certain BCPs/CCPs and the main cause for delays, especially at the Western Balkans - EU Member States BCPs.

One observation linked to the abovementioned is that most of the developments are taking place with regards to/at the border/common-crossing points outside the area of the TEN-T Network. Even though all these BCPs/CCPs are international crossings, and hence, all activities directed to their capacity improvements should have a positive effect on the overall transport flows, still the primary interest of the Transport Community is what lies in its mandate, and that is the TEN-T Comprehensive and Core Network. Therefore, it will be important that in the upcoming period, the Regional Partners also prioritise the BCPs/CCPs located on the TEN-T Network. Some good practices, including opening new joint border-crossing points, even though not on the TEN-T Network are hereby reported, as well, since these practices serve as extremely valuable showcases and have a very positive indication of the good neighbourly cooperation needed for border-crossing operations.

During the reporting period, perhaps the most comprehensive approach in the implementation of the three sub-actions related to the road BCPs, is applied at the BCP **Qafe Thane-Kjafasan** between **Albania** and **North Macedonia,** where the recently signed Framework agreement on joint border

controls (July 2021) is substantiated with investments in the infrastructure on both sides of the border, with an aim to support the future new operating arrangements, as well as with new equipment.

The infrastructure works are supported by the World Bank loan, and the project is implemented through the Project Implementation Units (PIU) for the World Bank Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (TTF) Phase 1, established both in **Albania** and **North Macedonia**. The activities of the Project component related to the improvements of the BCP are being carried out since October 2020, and they include: installation of new booths, extra lanes for trucks, weigh scales, expanded truck facility, a terminal for passenger busses etc.

As for the equipment, both partners benefit from the realisation of the project "Strengthening the efficiency of common border crossings Kjafasan - QafeThane for transport, cross-border cooperation and Investment facilitation", as a grant approved by the USAID Enterprise Economic Development, Management, and Growth Program - EDGE Project, which includes the procurement of specialised control equipment for both sides. Mobile scanners, densitometers and cameras are part of the equipment that had been donated to the customs authorities of **Albania** and **North Macedonia** for the purpose of facilitating trade and transport, improving cross-border cooperation, and establishing joint border controls at Qafe Thane-Kjafasan border-crossing point.

Also, regarding the support in infrastructure and equipment, the CONNECTA mechanism is expected to be deployed. It will focus on the preparation of technical documentation to modernise and improvie infrastructure capacity at selected road border crossing points (BCP) on the extended TEN-T network in the Western Balkans. Three pairs of BCPs are included: between **Albania** and **Montenegro**; **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia**; and **Serbia** and **Croatia**. This TA aims to prepare designs for construction/physical interventions and any needed specifications for equipment and a procurement plan. There are other encouraging examples of investment in core and ancillary infrastructure of the BCPs, but most are not linked to joint border operations. The scant information on these investments is summarised below:

- Starting from mid-2019 and throughout 2020, the Border Police of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** implemented an IPA funded project to install automatic car plate readers at all BCPs, including a definition of the hardware-software platform- reader/camera system/workstation/operating system. Another IPA supported project for the installation of a surveillance system on 46 international BCPs was completed in 2020.
- Following the Agreement between **Montenegro** and the Council of Ministers of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** on Border Crossings for Border Traffic and its Annex, the first joint border crossing point (JBCP) Vracenovici - Deleusa had been constructed, equipped, and went operational on 20 October 2020. In accordance with the Annex of the same Agreement, there are plans to equip the official premises and link the IT systems of the future joint BCP (JBCP) Klobuk-Ilino Brdo (located on the Green Lanes) on the territory of **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.
- There are ongoing activities in **Montenegro** with respect to the shared BCPs with **Serbia**, which are set to operate as joint BCPs (not on the TEN-T Network): equipping the JBCP Vuca-Godovo, and preparation of project documentation for JBCP Cemerno. Regarding the main BCPs between **Montenegro** and **Serbia**, Dobrakovo-Gostun, the construction of the facility at BCP Gostun on the Serbian territory is financed by the national budget from the funds allocated by the Customs Administration. Phase I of the project has been completed and the public procurement for the second phase is ongoing. Phase II includes construction of supporting infrastructure (terminals, other facilities, landscaping, etc.), and its completion is expected by 2023.
- Works to electrify, land expropriation, equip, install IT systems and additional accompanying works at JBCP Zatrijebacka Cijevna-Grabon between **Montenegro** and **Albania** have been carried out, and this JBCP has started its operations in July 2021. Both partners should focus on the agreements and respective investments on the two main shared BCPs: Hani i Hotit-Bozaj and Sukobin-Muriqan.

- On the BCP Vardiste-Kotroman, between **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia**, a reconstruction of the BCP Vardiste on the side of Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed, including reconstructed facilities, canopy, new containers, equipment, and a new reversible traffic lane. Regarding Kotroman on the Serbian territory, the construction phase I supported by IPA is completed, and the works on the construction- phase II, financed by the national budget, are ongoing (without interruption of the traffic) and expected to be completed by end of 2021. On the second BCP Mali Zvornik-Karakaj, Serbia reported that a planning project is underway for Mali Zvornik.
- With regards to the new **BCP Svilaj** between **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Croatia**, the BCP facilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are finished and put in operation as of 30 September g 2021, following the opening of the new Svilaj bridge. The opening of the BCP Svilaj for international passenger traffic is a big step in improving the connectivity on the Corridor Vc. The next step would be the to conclude an agreement on the type/category of BCP, enabling cross –border freight vehicles.
- Regarding **Gradiska BCP**, the works on Gradiska bridge are progressing, so the adjoining road connection and the BCP should become operational in 2023.
- Works started on the extension of the canopy and permanent traffic lights at BCP Tabanovce-Presevo (**North Macedonia**-**Serbia**).
- The planning documentation for **BCP Vatin** (Romania) was prepared in 2020, while the technical documentation for the mentioned BCP is being prepared throughout 2021.
- Concerning the project to extend **BCP Horgos** (with Hungary) on the Serbian side, on 21 September the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure published a public call for submitting a bid for the planned works, for which the deadline is 26 October. After completing the tender procedure, it is expected that works start very soon. The project completion deadline is mid-2023.
- Through the mentioned World Bank's TTF Project, **North Macedonia** will also benefit from an upgrade to BCP Deve Bair (Bulgaria). Works have not started yet, and the following improvements are set to be made to this BCP: improvements to the administrative building, extension of the border passage on exit from North Macedonia.
- The joint border crossing point JBCP Stancic - Belanovce between **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia** (not on the TEN-T Network) had been constructed, equipped, and went operational in early 2020.

The graphs below show the assessment for each sub-action and the overall assessment.
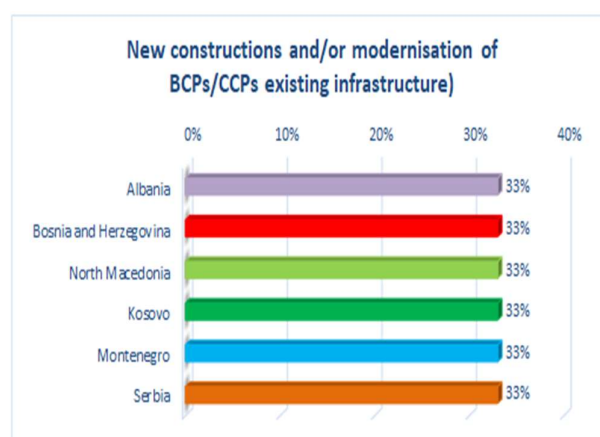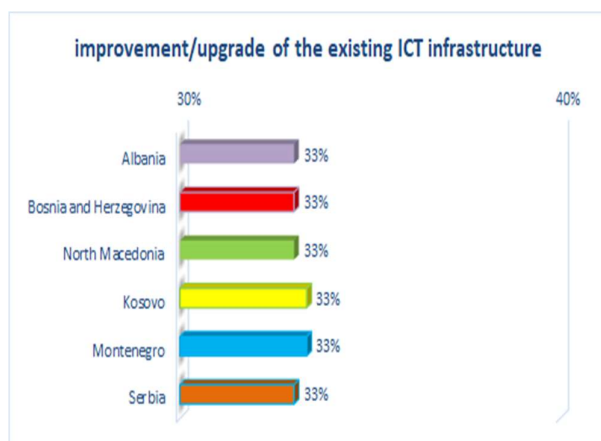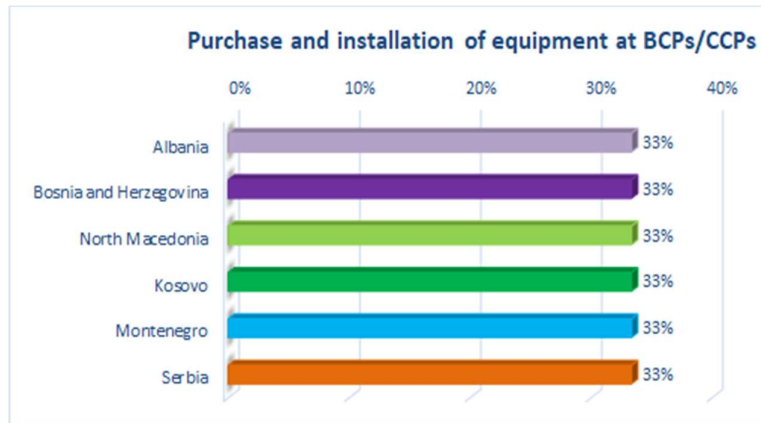
Figure 12 - Assessment for each sub-action

2.24. Signing bilateral agreements for one-stop-shop and effectively commissioning joint border/common crossing controls

Progress on track - this measure has seen steady progress, especially taking into account the fact that these types of road transport agreements are not standard practice across the region and require a firm political commitment. It is a long and arduous road from negotiating bilateral agreements to signing them and then to effectively rolling out joint controls. Hence there are only a few BCPs in the region located on the TEN-T Network, some of which are modelled on the single-stop or joint control: Sukobin-Muriqan (**Albania/Montenegro**), Morine-Vermice (**Albania-Kosovo**), and Tabanovce-Presevo **(North Macedonia-Serbia).** However, there are ongoing talks among all Regional Partners at both the political and expert levels of the Transport Community, so it could be expected to see further progress in this area. In addition, establishing joint customs controls is a priority task from the Common Regional Market plan, so it is high also on the regional agenda of CEFTA, Chamber of Investment Forum and other regional stakeholders, which could speed up the entire process.

On the contrary, there are no functional joint or one-stop controls between the regional partners and the neighbouring EU Member States. Furthermore, there are no concrete initiatives taken by the parties to enter into negotiations for such agreements.

The Ministerial meeting for Cross-Border Connectivity between EU and the Western Balkans held in Slovenia on 6 July 2021 brought the issue to the attention of the Transport Ministers, and the benefits of having simplified procedures for smoother transport flows on the external BCPs were voiced. According to the Presidency conclusions, the Ministers "invite the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and the Secretariat of CEFTA to work with the European Commission, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, such as border police and customs authorities, to address the possibility to implement integrated border crossings and prepare the Action plan and milestones for the realisation of the project, based on a cost-benefit analysis and the current EU legal framework".

The following is a summary of the current state of play with regards to road border-crossing agreements for establishing joint BCPs or one-stop controls.

Albania - North Macedonia: signed bilateral Framework Agreement for establishing Joint Border Crossing Points in July 2021 between the Prime Ministers. Upon ratification of the Agreement by their Parliaments, Albania and North Macedonia will introduce the first JBCP on their largest crossing point sitting on the international Corridor VIII - Qafe Thane-Kjafasan. Furthermore, the Agreement is set to be implemented through specific bilateral protocols and operating manuals, with the support of the World Bank's TTF project and USAID EDGE project.

Albania - Montenegro: the interstate and inter-institutional working group is re-established and will serve to discuss and negotiate the joint BCP agreements. The group met on 21 July 2021 in Tirana and agreed to take further steps in drafting the bilateral agreement for joint controls on the BCP Hani i Hotit/Bozaj and to initiate internal procedures for re-categorisation of the BCP Sukobin-Muriqan.

Kosovo - North Macedonia: the work on bilateral border crossing agreement is at an early stage. The first meeting between the authorities was held in the offices of the road BCP Hani i Elezit in April 2021. The discussions on the future model of one-stop/joint controls at Hani i Elezit/Blace must take place in parallel with the discussions on the investments needed to upgrade this BCP, to match the investments in the motorways linking Pristina and Skopje.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro: by concluding the Agreement on Amendments to the Agreement between the Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina on Border Crossings for Border Traffic, and the Annexes to the Agreement on conducting border checks at joint border crossings. Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina fully regulate international and border traffic and provide easier crossing of the common border.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Serbia: there is no information if any of the BCPs on the TEN-T Network (Vardiste-Kotroman, Mali Zvornik-Karakaj) or on the Green Lanes (Sremska Raca-Raca) are considered for the concept of JBCP. However, two partners signed in July 2021 an Agreement for a smaller BCP Ljubovija-Bratunac to be operated as a JBCP and the ratification is in progress.

Montenegro - Serbia: no specific activities for monitoring the implementation of the Agreement on Border Traffic, with regards to the BCPs Dobrakovo-Gostun and Dracenovac-Spiljani have taken place.

North Macedonia - Serbia: upon successful establishment of Integrated Border Crossing at Presevo-Tabanovce BCP based on the model one-stop control, and as a result of the signed and ratified Agreement on the Establishment of Joint Controls at the Presevo - Tabanovce International Border Crossing, as well as all Protocols, the practice was highly welcomed and praised. However, with the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, the practice was discontinued with **Serbian** border staff returning to the original booths. Proper functioning of the one-stop system on Tabanovce-Presevo is important as it can facilitate the traffic flows, therefore, the authorities of **Serbia** should put all the efforts to bring the situation back to full compliance with the bilateral Agreement.

Serbia - Kosovo: at CCP Merdare, the authorities from both regional partners are housed at the new border facilities.
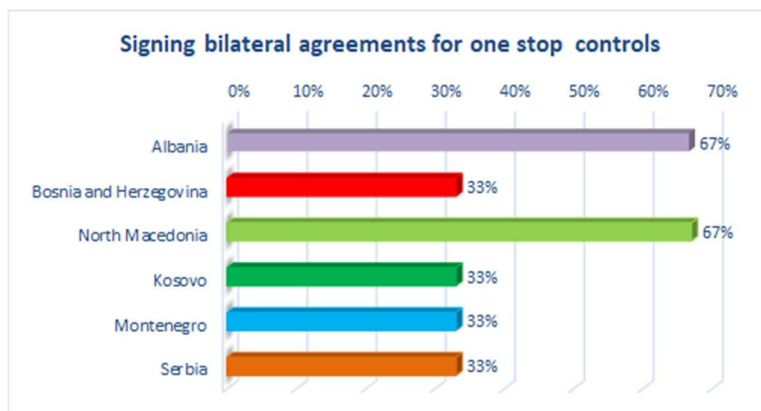

Figure 13 - Signing bilateral agreements for one-stop controls

2.2.5. Implementation of the electronic queuing management system (eQMS), with an option to integrate with SEED+

Stagnant - there are no activities related to this measure. After completion of the CONNECTA Technical assistance for implementation of eQMS, none of the beneficiaries (**Serbia**, **North Macedonia,** and the neighbouring EU Member States) proceeded with the implementation stage.

A Technical Assistance for establishing the electronic queuing management system (e-QMS) at selected road border crossing points (BCP) on the indicative extension of the TEN-T network in the Western Balkans (Corridor X*)* was prepared jointly by the CONNECTA consortium and the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and approved by the European Commission (EC-DG NEAR, as CONNECTA contracting authority) in late 2019. The purpose of this technical assistance was to prepare documentation, including traffic engineering designs and software specifications for an information technology (IT) system for eQMS application, as well as procurement procedures for such a system. It included the following pairs of BCPs: Batrovci-Bajakovo (**Serbia**/Croatia), Presevo-Tabanovce (**Serbia/North Macedonia**), Bogorodica-Evzoni (**North Macedonia**/Greece and Horgos-Roszke (**Serbia**-Hungary). The complete technical documentation is submitted and made available to the beneficiaries to be used once and if they opt to install the eQMS system. However, it remains uncertain as to whether that could take place any time soon.

Other Regional Partners should also make it known whether they have any interest in the eQMS system at any of the other BCPs, based on the feasibility Study on road BCP facilitation carried out by CONNECTA in 2019.

2.2.6. Capacity building: hiring additional/specialised personnel and provding training courses to improve staff performance

Progress on track - the Regional Partners are carrying out their own national capacity building programmes, which are dedicated to the individual implementing agencies - Border Police, Customs authorities, and other border agencies. There is no specific information provided on the type and dynamics of the recruitments and training programmes on the national level. There is also no systematic and comprehensive regional plan for capacity building for most of the border agencies.

The first such attempt is the TA proposal by the TCT Secretariat for capacity building of the management and operations of the border crossing points along the TEN-T Network in the Western Balkans. The beneficiaries shall benefit from support with drafting legislation, and training in the use of transport facilitation instruments and exchange of good practices with their peers from neighbouring partner agencies. The assistance is expected to be arranged by the end of 2021 and rolled out throughout 2022.

In addition, under the CEFTA framework and as part of the Green Lanes initiative, recommendations for aligning the working hours of border agencies have been issued by the CEFTA Secretariat. If implemented properly, it will enable the Regional Partners to organise/allocate/adjust the human and other resources accordingly at the border crossings.
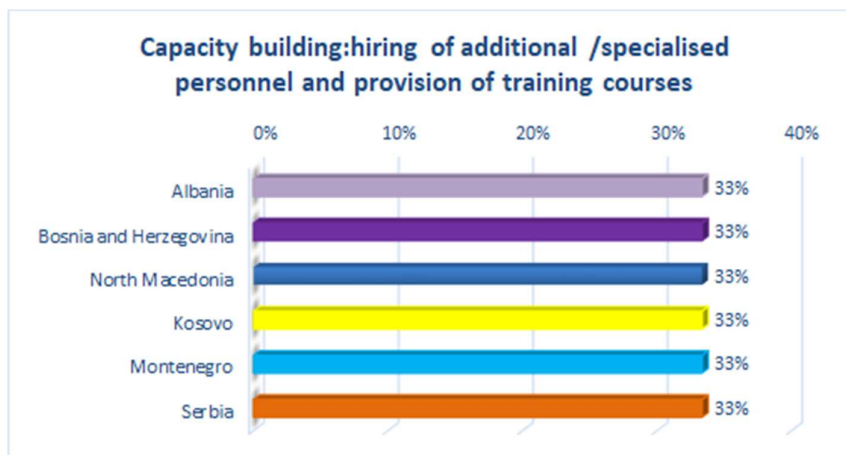
Figure 14 - Capacity building of the Regional Partners

The overall progress for the entire measure Road BCPs/CCPs measures is presented in the following graph.
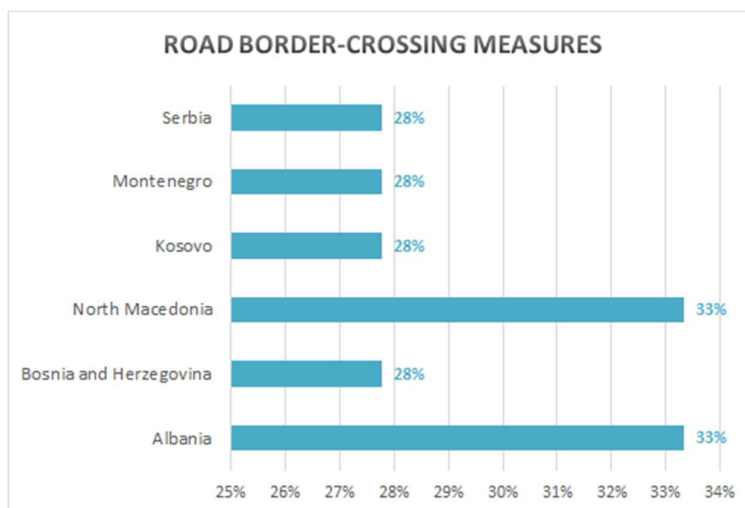
Figure 15 - Overall progress for the entire Road BCPs/CCPs

3. Green Lanes Initiative

3.1. Western Balkans Green Lanes

Fully implemented concept. Essential goods have been moving smoothly through the Green Corridors/Green Lanes in the Western Balkans since 13 April 2020 at the designated crossing points in the Western Balkans, providing all required services 24/7. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, medical supplies, food and animal feed moved across the region more easily, reassuring businesses that the trade will continue uninterrupted. Over the past year, priority passage and simplified procedures have

been used by 600 292 trucks[11]. The Green Lanes have been now extended to all intra-Western Balkans crossing points.

The priority passage operates through a system that electronic exchanges pre-arrival information between the administrations within CEFTA through the System of Electronic Exchange of Data (SEED). The SEED ensures that information about the arrival of priority consignments is sent in advance to all agencies involved in clearing goods, leaving more time for document checks, and thus relieving the burden the agencies often cope with and decreasing the waiting time for the traders. Green Lanes supported the Western Balkans in preserving the trade and economic activities, having a positive impact on disrupted trade flows during the pandemic.

3.2 Western Balkans - EU Green Lanes

The **Western Balkans - EU Green lanes initiative** launched jointly by the Transport Community's and CEFTA's Secretariats is a response to repeated requests from the Western Balkans region to facilitate the flow of essential goods through Green Lanes linking the EU and the Western Balkans.

The main aim is to have uninterrupted flows of medical supplies through the borders with its EU Member States and the region by giving priority passage to those goods at designated border crossing points – focus on priority goods/medical supplies and then hopefully and gradually, other commonly agreed goods.

To that end, TCT and CEFTA's Secretariats had prepared a Joint Proposal to establish Green Corridors/ Lanes between CEFTA/ Western Balkans and the EU Member States. Following intensive communication and discussions with EU Member States and EC services, the proposal was agreed upon by all parties in December 2020. Based on the joint roadmap for linking EU-Western Balkans Green Lanes initiatives which is part of the Joint proposal, and which does not affect in any sense the Schengen rules and the rules of the Customs Union in place, the following can be reported in summary.

Table 4 **-** Green Lanes summary

1	Border-crossing points between the EU and Western Balkans parties where the green lane concept (priority crossing for defined goods) will apply	Agreed
2	Designate contact points from the CEFTA parties and EU Member States to monitor and report on the roll out of Green Lanes	Agreed
3	List of medical supplies and equipment eligible for priority passage	Agreed
4	Harmonisation of working hours of the agencies involved in clearance of goods	Ongoing
5	Introducing a monitoring mechanism to provide real-time data on travel and waiting times	Ongoing
6	Establish electronic exchange of pre-arrival information with neighbouring EU Member States	Ongoing, crucial stage
7	Ensuring that transport restrictions remain lifted	Continuous, few challenges

In the period from December 2020 to February 2021, the Transport Community's and CEFTA's Secretariats organised four horizontal meetings with the contact points from the administrations responsible for transport, customs, internal affairs (border police) of the Western Balkans and the five

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[11] Data generated from SEED system

neighbouring EU Members States: Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece. The meetings were successful in terms of agreeing on the main elements above, as well as the next steps.

The system for the electronic exchange of pre-arrival information to be linked with the EU Member States is under discussion - a technical note was prepared by CEFTA Secretariat with detailed elaborations on all the aspects of the system for the exchange of information, and it was circulated to all 5 EU Member States.

The main aim is to accelerate the process of clearance of essential goods of first necessity given the COVID-19 pandemic by sending pre-arrival information on consignments of essential goods in advance to all agencies (customs, phytosanitary, veterinary and food inspections) involved in the clearance of goods, so that the agencies can prepare and that those consignments can be given priority passage.

Joint technical meetings were held with the Customs authorities from the EU Member States, as well as with Transport Community's and CEFTA's Secretariats, and EC (DG TAXUD, MOVE and NEAR) to discuss modalities on the exchange of information.

After the initial interest:

- Greece - expressed political willingness and is exploring possibilities to pilot the date exchange system.
- Bulgaria – signalled it might wish to proceed with the pilot at a BCP with North Macedonia (Zlatarevo-Novo Selo).
- Croatia - signalled that for the time being, it cannot implement the system.
- Hungary - signalled that a bilateral agreement is needed to implement the system.
- Romania - the consultation process is still ongoing.

Also, **Serbian** and <u>Hungarian</u> authorities started discussions regarding the possibility of implementing the mechanism at BCPs Horgos-Roszke and Kelebija-Tompa. Both authorities welcomed and supported the initiative and concluded that in addition to the institutional and legal preconditions, it is necessary to have infrastructural conditions, i.e., special lanes that would be used for the priority passage of trucks.

In addition, discussions were initiated by the CEFTA Secretariat with the Italian Customs authority, in order the SEED system is used for exchange of information among four () Adriatic Ports: Bar (Montenegro), Durres (Albania), and Bari and Ancona (Italy). The technical and legal arrangements are under negotiations.

3.3. Monitoring border waiting times

Since the adoption of the Green Lanes initiative by all Regional Partners, TCT Secretariat have been continuously monitoring the freight transport waiting times in the selected Border Crossing Points/Common Crossing Points (BCPs/CCPs), including the ones between the Western Balkans and EU Member States. Based on data received by the Regional Partners, and other available data, the TCT Secretariat publishes a weekly monitoring report. The following observations are important:

Firstly, reporting daily consolidated values might be misleading by itself, as the situation in all BCPs/CCPs has proven to be fluid and likely to change significantly in a matter of hours. This makes the task of capturing daily averages rather challenging. Secondly, there is no monitoring system in place ensuring real-time measurement of border waiting times. TCT Secretariat attempted to bridge such gap by setting up an ad-hoc monitoring system based on dedicated reporting from all Regional Partners complemented by additional information sources like official reporting of neighbouring EU Member States (where available), Sixfold (real-time shipments monitoring platform), road hauliers

reporting (Milsped Group), and live BCPs/CCPs cameras tracking. An overall picture of the average waiting times at the BCPs/CCPs under monitoring is provided below. Average figures were calculated based on daily records from 1 April 2020 to 31 July 2021.[12]

Table 5 - Average waiting times (April 2020 – July 2021)

Border Crossing Point	Average waiting time (minutes)	
	Outbound	Inbound
Vatin/Stamora Moravita	26.19	22.92
Gradiska/Stara Gradiska	42.88	35.71
Bosanki Samac/ Slavonski Samac	27.89	25.67
Bijaca/Nova Sela	20.05	19.95
Gradina/Kalotina	57.28	60.28
Horgos/Roszke	146.26	66.67
Kakavija/Ktismata	53.70	32.84
Batrovci/Bajakovo	122.69	98.25
Deve Bair/Gyuesevo	18.25	24.85
Bogorodica/Evzoni*	12.99	12.05
Presevo/Tabanovce	39.13	40.19
Dobrakovo/Gostun	50.38	65.50
Merdare/Merdare	8.73	34.40
Port of Bar	20.00	20.00
Kulina/Kula	25.13	29.86
Klobuk/Ilion Brdo	72.21	41.71
Sremska Raca/Raca	62.71	55.64
Port of Durres	20.00	10.00
Morine/Vernice	32.40	46.66
Blace/Hani i Elezit	58.33	30.86
Hani i Hotit/Bozaj	39.93	25.13
Kjafasan/Qafe Thane	43.60	56.67

Queuing time not included

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[12] Full report available at: https://www.transport-community.org/2021/08/31/freight-border-waiting-times-monitoring-in-western-balkans-yearly-overview-2020-2021/
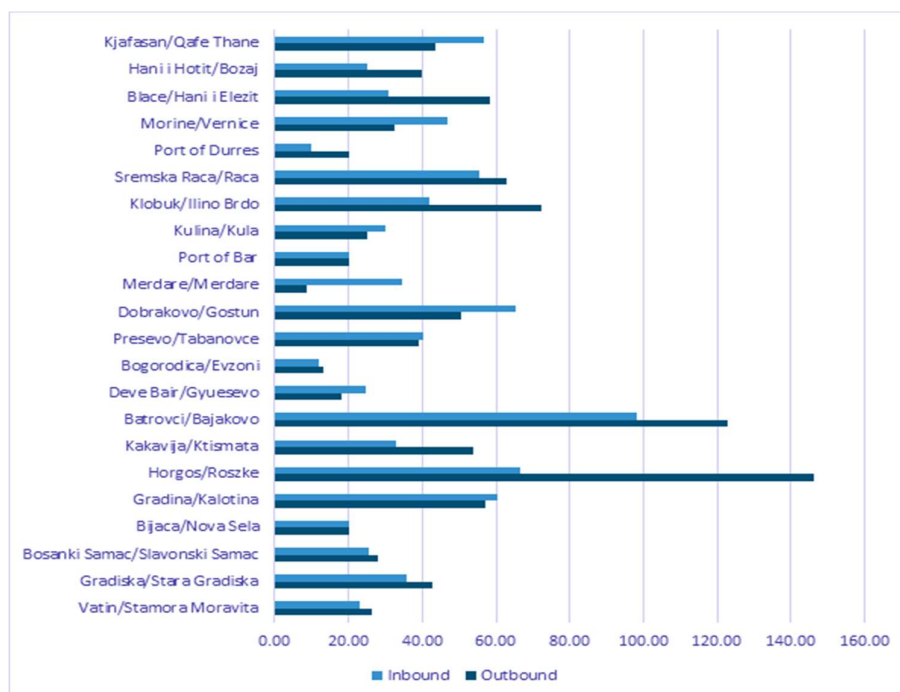
Figure 16 - Average waiting times (April 2020 – July 2021)

Horgos/Roszke and Batrovci/Bajakovo are the busiest BCPs in the region, with waiting times regularly exceeding 120 minutes. **Serbia** – <u>Hungary</u> direction in Horgos/Roszke experiences the longest waiting times, while Batrovci/Bajakovo (**Serbia** – <u>Croatia</u>) is the busiest route from the EU towards Western Balkans.

4.   Conclusions and recommendations

The overall pace of progress in the implementation of the Transport Facilitation Action Plan has been **moderate**.However, there is a **significant progress** in some measures. <u>The signing of the Agreement for Joint Border and Customs Control between **Albania** and **North Macedonia**, as well as completing the implementing agreements for joint rail border crossing between **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia**,</u> are landmark achievements in line with the Action Plan.

The core of the Action Plan, and consecutively all its listed activities, are centred around the establishment of an advanced model of integrated border management, by functionally integrating the operations of the border agencies to be able to complete all exit and entry border formalities upon one-stop at the border (called joint border crossing points JBCP), both in the road and rail transport.

To effectively put the JBCP concept into practice, the Regional Partners need to implement an array of complex trade facilitation measures, including the organisation of the preferred mode of operation of the joint controls, harmonisation of working hours of the border agencies, redesign/simplification of border procedures, equipment-sharing arrangements, and necessary infrastructure investments. In addition, successful JBCP implementation and operation require a comprehensive legal framework, sound institutional structure enabling regular cooperation and coordination at all levels, efficient capacity building, and an effective system for monitoring and evaluating progress.

Most of these elements are identified as separate actions within the Action Plan, but their implementation is really interconnected as they are elements of the same process, so the fulfilment

of the overarching aim and the benefits from introducing the new concept of border management will fall short if implementing just one or few from the set of actions.

Connection all these pieces, be it of the road or rail JBCP puzzle, proved to be an extremely demanding task in the past period and entail active involvement, pragmatic approach, strong operative capacity and concurrent efforts of multiple border authorities and the private sector in all parties. It is already certain that further progress in the Action Plan implementation will depend on continuous and concentrated administrative efforts, constant improvement of the technical knowledge and expertise, financial support, but above all, unequivocal political commitment, and environment conducive to mutual confidence and good neighbourly relations.

In setting the legal background for the intra-Western Balkans JBCPs, the Regional Partners are advancing at a moderate pace. TCT Secretariat is supporting relevant authorities in providing guidance, agreement templates and offering technical assistance

Activities are at a complete standstill with regard to external BCPs. The proposed solution is to obtain a firm political commitment by all concerned partners based on clear guidelines to be set by the European Commission on the non-derogation of the EU Customs and Schengen rules in cases of establishment and operation of joint rail/road border controls between EU and non-EU member states. Another helpful tool might be the organisation of joint working meetings and training events for the road and rail border authorities between the EU and Western Balkans, to get a better understanding of the benefits and requirements for operating joint rail/road border controls and to serve as confidence-building exercises. The TCT Secretariat envisaged such training workshops within the mentioned technical assistance for capacity building.

The efficiency and facilitating effects of the JBCP operation depend to a large extent on the appropriate infrastructure setting at the BCPs, available modern equipment and unimpeded functioning of all ICT applications, including new digital instruments. The corresponding actions in the Action Plan are supported by the EC through CONNECTA mechanism, as well as the World Bank's Trade and Transport Facilitation Project in some Regional Partners. The TCT Secretariat will continue to coordinate the assistance provided by CONNECTA, while the investments could be then followed up by WBIF. This assistance is usually conditioned reasonably by having certain track records in legal arrangements for one-stop/joint controls.

The JBCP concept encompasses radical changes in organising and performing border operations that significantly differ from the traditional two-stop border crossings. Hence, its implementation will require some fundamental changes, not only in the mode of operation but also in the mindset of the national administrations and border staff members. To effectively manage the upcoming changes, the Regional Partners must design and implement a targeted training program aimed at strengthening the capacity of the personnel involved in all stages of operation and at all levels. The training activities must start early in the process and continue on a permanent basis to address the ongoing modifications and improvements of the JBCP model. TCT assistance in cooperation with CEFTA and EC would remain crucial in this respect.

Finally, to measure the JBCP impact, it is vital to put in place an appropriate system for monitoring and evaluating the performance results. The current system for monitoring waiting times at BCPs is not sustainable, and the TCT Secretariat aims to introduce real-time monitoring. The TCT Transport Observatory and its underlying data collection procedures should be fully operational in 2022 as well as the deployment of dedicated tools for tracking border waiting times as the Galileo initiative developed by the European GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) Agency are expected to address such challenges in the near future.
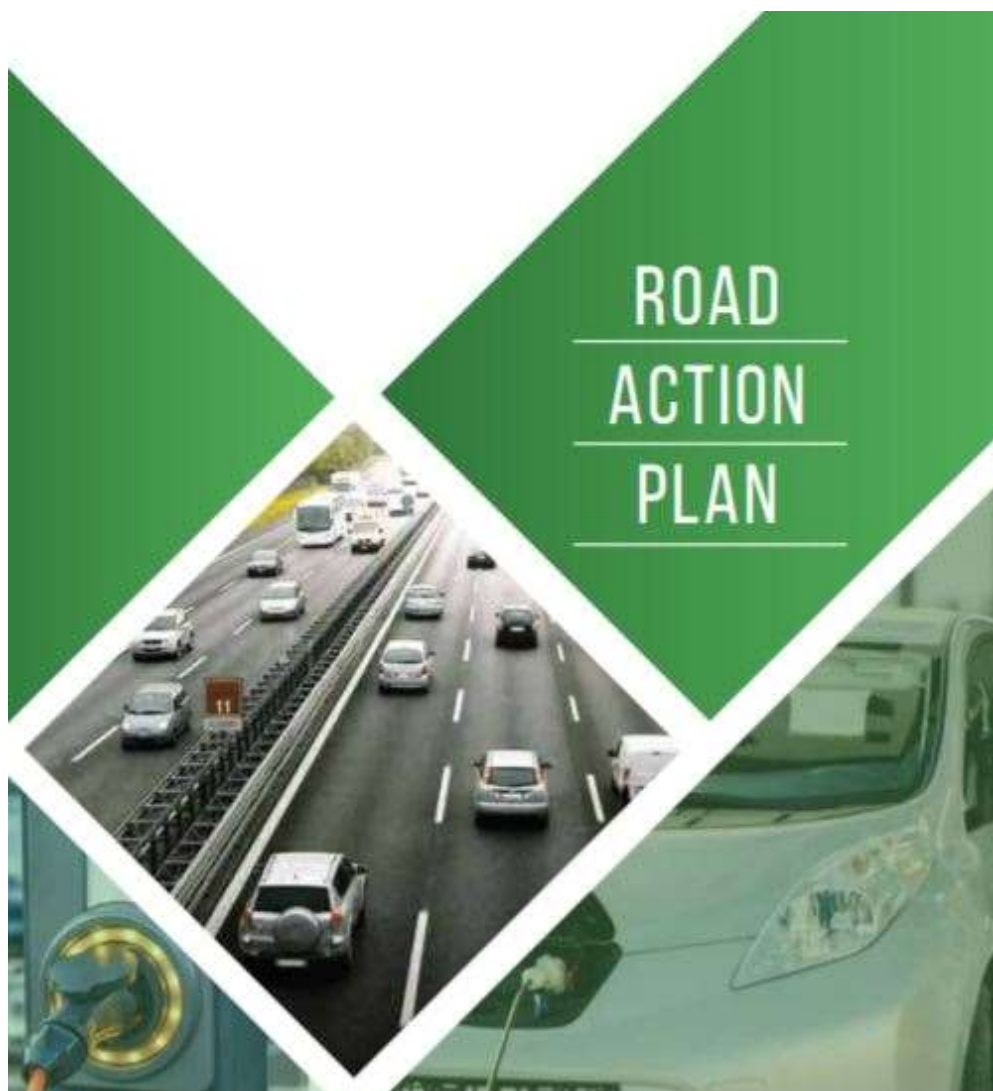
Annual Monitoring Report of the Road Action Plan

1. Background information

The aim of the Road Action Plan is to develop a climate-resilient, intelligent, and resource-efficient TEN-T road network in the Western Balkans by incorporating green and smart elements in road investments. The final aim is to stimulate innovative, low emission and fit for digital age road transport operations.

The measures encompass the establishment of an efficient maintenance system coupled with the exploration of possibilities for road financing mechanism (tolling, including e-tolling), deployment of ITS in accordance with EU Directives and interoperability standards and decarbonisation of road transport, including resilience aspects and smart mobility. Some of these measures were already taken commitments by the relevant authorities of the SEE parties under the Western Balkans Six process, monitored earlier through the Connectivity Reform Measures Management Plan, and broadened in view of recent studies and assessments conducted in the meantime. Hence, they have a sound basis in established legal and coordination mechanisms.

Implementation of the Road Action Plan Road Technical is coordinated thorough the Road Technical Committee (RTC), which was established in 2020, with representatives from all the Regional Partners. Furthermore, the Road Technical Committee will assist the Regional Steering Committee in all aspects related to road transport falling under the scope of the Transport Community Treaty.

Following the round of roadshows and the Technical Assistance need assessment carried out in this framework, TCT Secretariat adopted a proactive approach, finding the most suitable mechanism to support the implementation of the Road Action Plan.

These efforts resulted that after extensive discussion with DG NEAR on the potential to use EU CONNECTA services, 2 (two) Technical Assistance assignments were approved, in addition to TCT Secretariat support for implementation of the Road Action Plan. Detailed information is provided later in the report, as per each area of support.

2. Progress by measure during the reporting period

This section will provide an overview of the progress achieved for each of the four groups of measures, offering a description of the overall progress and the quantitative assessment as per the monitoring mechanism described earlier in this Annual Report.

The information included in the Annual Monitoring Report has been provided by the members of the Road Technical Committee during the roadshows, periodic communications, and regular meetings.

2.1. Establishing functioning and efficient road maintenance system

This measure includes the following actions:
- Adopt a multiannual maintenance plan
- Establishing Road Asset Management System (RAMS)
- The signing of Service Level Agreement between Ministry of Transport and Road Authorities/Public Enterprises
- Adopt an efficient strategy on the funding sustainability for road maintenance

Improving road maintenance systems and practices in the region has been a long-lasting challenge. The actions included in the Action Plan build upon previous measures included in the Connectivity Reform Measures as well as in the 5-year Road Maintenance Plan 2019-2023 prepared in the framework of EU CONNECTA's Assistance.

Adoption of the 5-year maintenance plan prepared in the course of the above-mentioned projects was hindered by the fact that the planning period of 5-year span proved to be an issue for some of the Regional Partners due to their 3-year budget planning. Due to such circumstances, 3-year adopted road maintenance plan will be considered as compliant with the measure of 'Adopt multiannual maintenance plan'.

Overall, all Regional Partners have set in place multiannual road maintenance frameworks. Nevertheless, the duration of road maintenance contracts varies mainly to one-year long duration. Following a request to provide information and details of the Regional Partners compliance with EU CONNECTA's project, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted their detailed maintenance plan.

Even though the Road Asset Management System (RAMS) has already been set up in **North Macedonia**, efforts are still needed to hire qualified staff. During the reporting period, the contract to set up RAMS in **Albania** was signed in May 2021, and **Serbia** is expected to have set RAMS in place by the end of 2021. Respective RAMS units were created within the above-mentioned road maintenance authorities. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** reported to have RAMS set up in most of the public road enterprises responsible for the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network. **Kosovo** and **Montenegro** will need further support from IFIs to start preparing and setting up RAMS and keep up the pace with the rest of Regional Partners.

Albania and Serbia, with the support provided through technical assistance from international financial institutions (IFIs), have prepared the respective Service Level Agreement (SLA). Nevertheless, signature by the ministries in charge of transport is still pending. Due to their confidentiality, SLAs will be shared with the TCT Secretariat once signed.

EBRD, through loan agreements, is supporting **Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo** in preparing sustainable funding strategies for road maintenance. The strategy is prepared for Bosnia and Herzegovina and remains to be adopted by the authorities. In Kosovo, it is still in the tendering phase. Efforts are made in the rest of the Regional Partners but there is still a need for a common/unified regional approach on the sustainability of funding mechanisms for road maintenance.

It is worth pointing out that the progress achieved during the reporting report after the endorsement of the Action Plan reflects the efforts/activities that occurred in previous periods as well. The assessment for each action and the overall assessment for establishing functioning and efficient road maintenance systems is provided in the graphs in Figures 15 and 16.

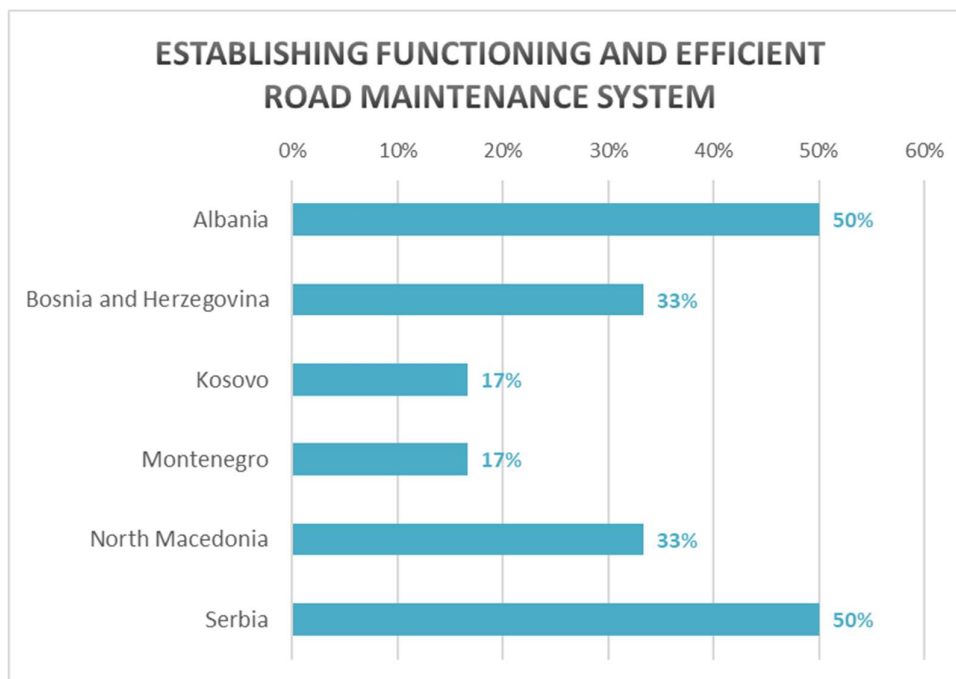*Figure 17 - Regional Partners progress per action - Maintenance measure*

Figure 18 - Regional Partners overall progress – Maintenance measure

The overall assessment clearly shows that **Albania and Serbia are steadily progressing**, **North Macedonia is showing moderate progress,** and the **rest of the Regional Partners should invest more efforts and resources** to achieve the targets of the Road Action Plan.

2.2. ITS Deployment on Core/Comprehensive Road Network

This measure includes the following actions:
- Adopt ITS Strategy and Action Plans aligned with regional ITS Vision and strategic objectives
- Transposition of Directive 2010/40/EU
- Transposition of Directive 2004/52/EC - Interoperability of electronic road toll systems (amended)
- Adopt and implement EU ITS standards for roads to ensure European standards and specifications for all new projects and for the upgrading of existing ones
- Adopt and implement EU ITS Framework Architecture for roads to ensure compatibility of system and equipment
- Adopt a regional interoperability framework aimed to establish a mechanism for the exchange of ITS data at the regional level through TCT Information System

Regional Partners expressed strong interest in the deployment of ITS. The trend in the region is for ITS to be deployed, mainly through IFI funded projects, as part of a newly opened road section and incorporated into most of the ongoing road designs. Nevertheless, the setting up of the strategic and legal framework is still lacking behind despite the deployment of ITS on the road network.

Preparation of ITS Strategy and Action Plan is progressing at a different pace across the region. Progress has been achieved in **Albania,** and the ITS strategy for the road sector has already been approved by order of the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy on 18 June 2020.

North Macedonia and Serbia, with World Bank assistance, are in the process of selecting a consultant and set to finalise the respective strategies by end of 2022.

Montenegro, as part of EU Technical Assistance on legal approximation, expects to finalise the strategy by the end of 2021.

In order to ensure that all Regional Partners have the strategic framework in place for the deployment of ITS, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat engaged in discussion with DG NEAR on the engagement of CONNECTA to prepare the ITS Strategies for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, with work expected to commence by the end of 2021.

ITS Directive 2010/40/EU has been partially transposed in **Albania**, by the Minister's Guidelines No. 3616/3 dated 20 July 2017. Kosovo has drafted an Administrative Instruction on ITS deployment and expected transposition by the end of 2021. **Serbia** partially transposed this Directive into Law on Roads, defining the intelligent transport systems-ITS, as well as interoperability, introduces priority areas and priority activities for the implementation of ITS. The transposition of the other articles is still missing. **Montenegro**, as part of the above-mentioned EU funded project, expects to have a draft prepared by the end of 2021. **Albania and Serbia** have reported progress with the adoption of CEN TC278 ITS standards.

The EU Directive 2004/52/EC on Interoperability of electronic road toll systems has been amended with the Directive 2019/520/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19th of March 2019 on the interoperability of electronic toll systems and facilitating the cross-border exchange of toll non-payment information in the Union. None of the Regional Partners has transposed the new directive as it will enter into force in October 2021. Directive 2004/52/EC has been partially transposed in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **North Macedonia and Serbia** that already have electronic tolling schemes in place.

The assessment for each action and the overall assessment is provided in the graphs in Figures 17 and 18.
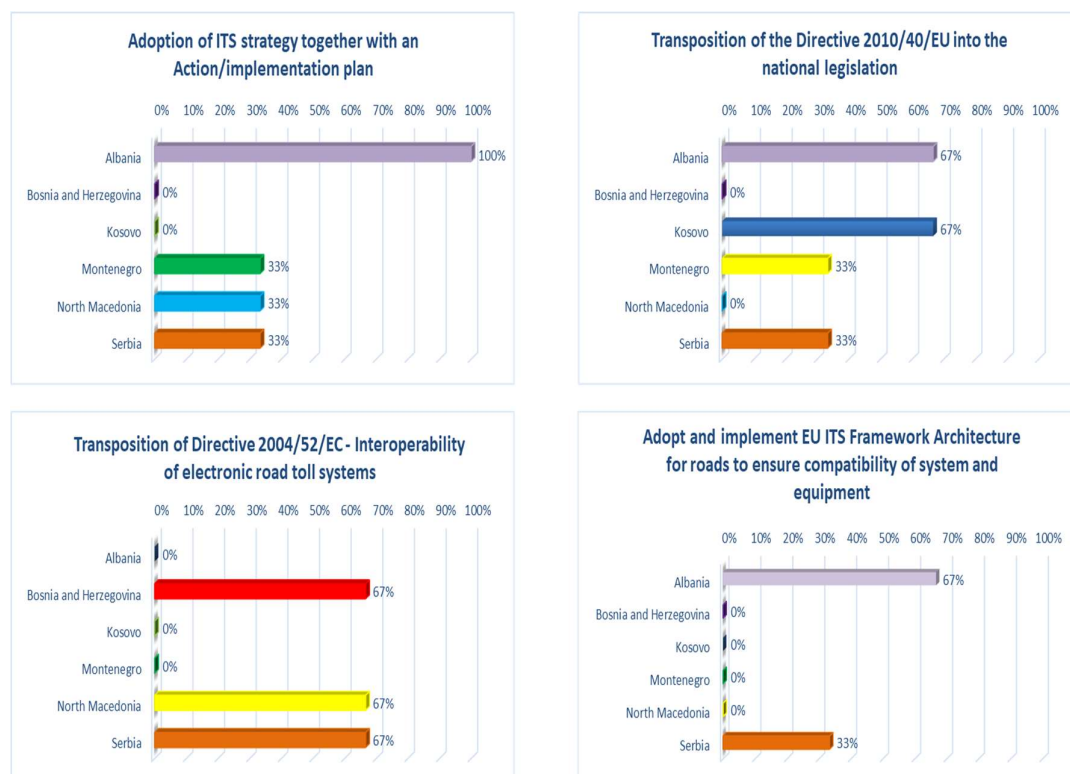
Figure 19 - Regional Partners progress per action - ITS Deployment measure
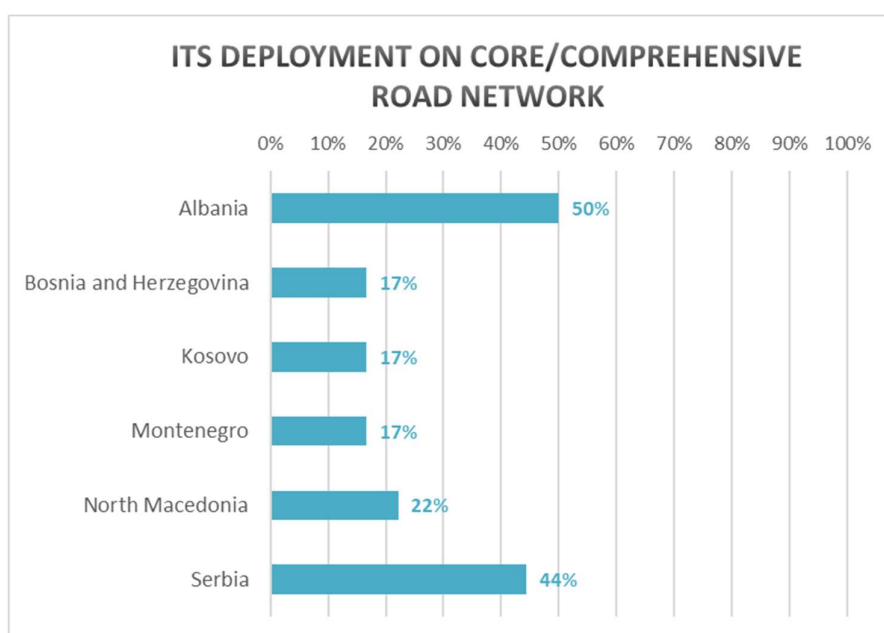
Figure 20 - Regional Partners overall progress - ITS Deployment measure

Overall, the **progress reported is slow to moderate**. The preparation of the strategic framework and the legal approximation across the region is progressing at different paces. **More efforts are needed by all Regional Partners to transpose the EU legislation**. **Technical Assistance support is needed across the region**.

Following the round of roadshows and the Technical Assistance need assessment carried out in this framework, TCT Secretariat adopted a proactive approach, finding the most suitable mechanism to support the implementation of the Road Action Plan.

Extensive discussion took place with DG NEAR on the potential to use CONNECTA services. As a result, it was approved 'Preparation of ITS Strategy/Policy for **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (all modes), **Kosovo** (all modes), **Albania** (rail and maritime transport), pending approval for **Montenegro** for rail transport. The expected deliverables/results are as follows:

Component 1
- Assessment of the current situation in terms of policy framework, legal approximation as per Annex I of Transport Community Treaty, institutional and technological framework

- Preparation of the vision and strategic objectives. The strategic objectives shall be grouped related to (1) operation, (2) maintenance and (3) planning of new infrastructure
- Development of Measures for achieving the strategic objectives, preparation of the implementation roadmap for each Regional Partner and definition of the monitoring indicators

Component 2
- Development of Operational Concept for Road Traffic Management Centers for **Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo**. It will include:

  o Carry out a need assessment as per the current and planned developments per each Regional Partner
  o Prepare the functional requirements and system concept design per each Regional Partner
  o Prepare a cost breakdown including operation and maintenance per each Regional Partner

Furthermore, in 2020, electronic tolling interoperability was included in two important Action Plans respectively Road Action Plan endorsed by the Transport Community Ministerial Council on 26 October 2020 and on the Regional Cooperation Council led Common Regional Market 2021-2024 (CRM) Action Plan endorsed by the Western Balkan Leaders on 10 November at the Sofia Summit.

TCT Secretariat and Regional Cooperation Council have identified the opportunity for the region to act together on addressing the interoperability issues. The first meeting on regional interoperability of toll services held online on 28 April 2021 gathered representatives from Western Balkan (WB) economies/Regional Partners coming from ICT ministries, ministries responsible for road transport policies, road authorities/public enterprises, as well as representatives of the Regional Cooperation Council, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and Western Balkans Chambers Investment Forum. This meeting aimed to kick start the regional dialogue on interoperability of toll services and agree on the way forward and next steps.

In order to support the process of e-tolling interoperability in the region, TCT Secretariat will start by the end of 2021 the Technical Assistance '*Baseline assessment and financial implication to e-tolling interoperability in the Western Balkans'*. The specific objective of this assignment is to allow for an impact assessment of e-tolling interoperability in the region in a way that a road user can travel seamlessly in the whole region. Special provision shall be made to make this expandable to neighbouring EU Member States. The expected deliverables/results are as follows:

- Assessment of the current toll systems. GAP Analysis to be conducted for each Regional Partner covering legal, technical, and operational areas (including enforcement frameworks that already exist in the region)
- SWOT analysis of e-tolling interoperability in Western Balkans and best practice from EU countries.
- Impact assessment of deployment of e-tolling interoperability. The Consultant will perform an impact assessment of e-tolling interoperability in the Western Balkans as per Regional Partners/Economies readiness. In practice, this task will propose a common e-tolling framework for the region, in a way that part of it to be adopted/deployed in the short term (5 years) and part of it in the long term, considering recent and coming changes in mobility and technology in the EU and its future expandability to neighbouring countries (10 years).

2.3. Enhancing road transport climate resilience and use of alternative fuels

This measure includes the following actions:
- Adopt guidelines and methodologies for climate change and natural hazard road network vulnerability assessment
- Development of Resilience Action Plan for Road Core/Comprehensive Network
- Undertake risk-based vulnerability interventions for the most vulnerable sections of the indicative extension of Core/Comprehensive TEN-T Networks in Western Balkans
- Enhance the use of alternative fuels (e-charging stations etc.)

These measures aim to ensure a smooth transition towards greener and sustainable road development. Due to their novelties, the progress is slow and additional support is needed. **Albania and Serbia**, with support from the World Bank have prepared an initial assessment of the vulnerability of road networks and intervention options but no other progress is reported. Furthermore, Serbia has issued a green bond. The funds raised will be used exclusively to finance or refinance new and existing green projects through investments in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, transport, sustainable water management and pollution prevention and control. In the field of transport, one eligible subcategory is expenditure related to the acquisition of hybrid and/or zero-emission vehicles and related charging infrastructure.

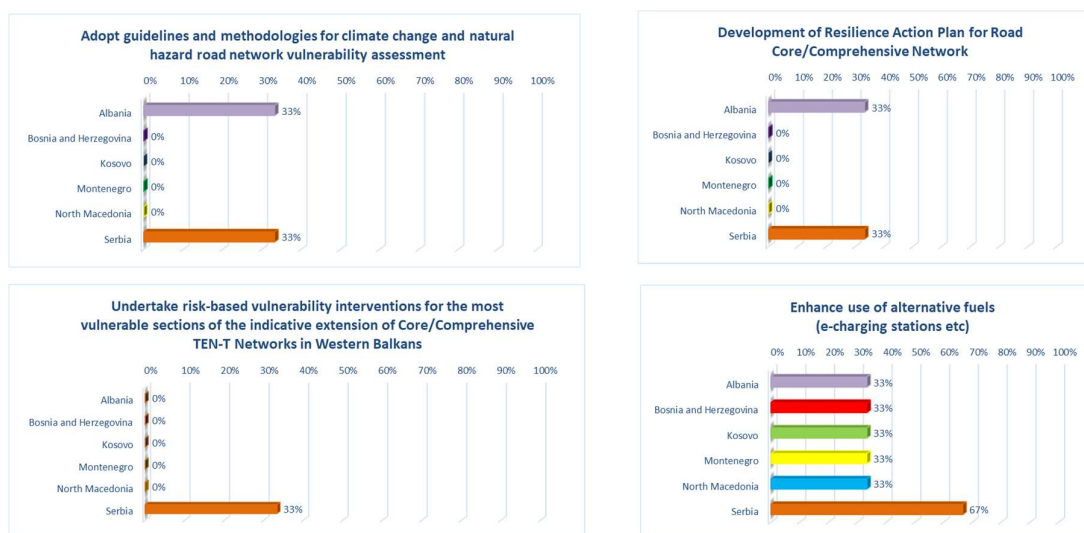The assessment for each action and the overall assessment is provided in the graphs in Figures 19 and 20.

Figure 21 - Regional Partners progress per actions - Climate resilience and alternative fuels
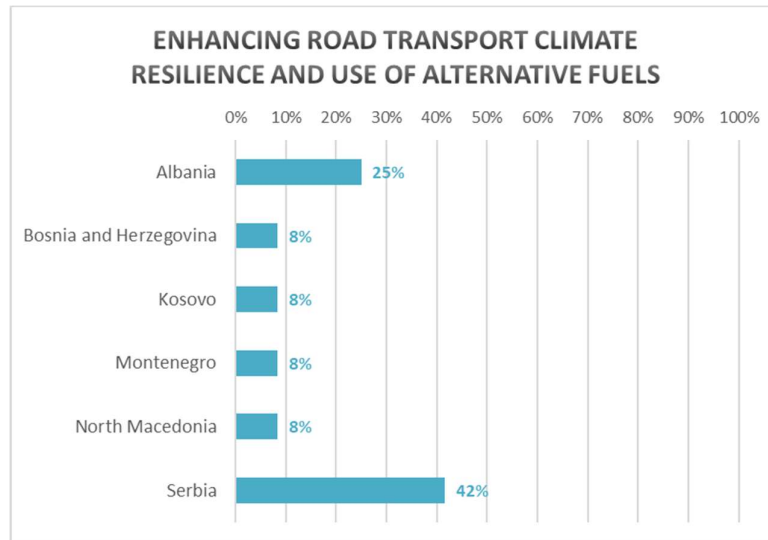
ENHANCING ROAD TRANSPORT CLIMATE
RESILIENCE AND USE OF ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Albania	25%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8%
Kosovo	8%
Montenegro	8%
North Macedonia	8%
Serbia	42%

Figure 22 - Regional Partners overall progress - Climate resilience and alternative fuels

Despite a **few sporadic efforts**, **progress has been slow**. Additional efforts by Regional Partners and support from IFIs and the TCT Secretariat remain crucial to achieving progress in the near future.

We are still lacking a regional approach, and the TCT Secretariat will steer and support the Regional Partners. As already mentioned, EU CONNECTA's support to start by the end of 2021 that will tackle greening of transport in the project *'Impact assessment and financial analysis for the deployment of smart and sustainable mobility in the Western Balkans'*. This assignment is constituted by two components *Component 1* - Cost-effectiveness analysis of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans and *Component 2* - Strategic framework for the deployment of e-charging stations in the Western Balkans

The expected deliverable of Component 2 is supporting implementation of the Road Action Plan and will include:

- Assessment of the current status of play/plans of deployment of e-charging stations along the extension of the TEN-T network to the Western Balkans
- Proposal on e-charging infrastructure on the TEN-T network to the Western Balkans needed to boost the electric vehicle demand up to 2030, 2040, 2050
- Identify the potential contractual/business models (public, private, public-private partnership) for each Regional Partner for the deployment of e-charging infrastructure
- Preparation of a Roadmap, for each Regional Partner on extending the e-charging stations on the TEN-T Road Core/Comprehensive network in the Western Balkans.

2.4. Enhancing regional cooperation and experience exchange

This measure includes the following actions:

- Establishing a regional network of road authorities/public enterprises for regular consultation and coordination at the regional level before adoption maintenance plans, deployment of ITS etc
- Identify the areas of capacity building needs/experience exchange/organise stakeholders' workshops to accommodate the broad range of technical experiences

Transport Community Permanent Secretariat prepared the Draft of Memorandum of Understanding between Road Authorities/Public Enterprises on cooperation for sustainable development of TEN-T Road Network in Western Balkans. The scope of this Memorandum of Understanding is to create the network of General Directors of Road Authorities/Public enterprises to facilitate continued, deepened, and strengthened cooperation between the parties to support the sustainable development of the indicative extension of Road TEN-T Core/Comprehensive Network to Western Balkans.

Draft Memorandum of Understanding was distributed to members of the Road Technical Committee on 6 May 2021 and discussed during the 5th RTC meeting on 11 May 2021. It is expected that information on this Memorandum of Understanding will be discussed in the upcoming Regional Steering Committee planned to take place in October 2021.

Preliminary comments were received from Montenegro's Ministry of Capital Investments. Further comments are expected by all the stakeholders involved. A Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be signed during the Road Summit taking place in May 2022.

Due to the nature of this measure, the best approach will be to carry out only a qualitative assessment instead of a quantitative assessment for the monitoring exercise of its implementation.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the one-year-long reporting period, the overall pace of progress ranges from slow to moderate. Albeit in general, there is progress reported mainly in the road maintenance and preparation of a strategic framework for the deployment of ITS, as clearly visible in the chart provided in Figure 21, the progress is slow in the other areas covered by the Road Action Plan, and delays have been accumulated to achieve the Road Action Plan deadlines.
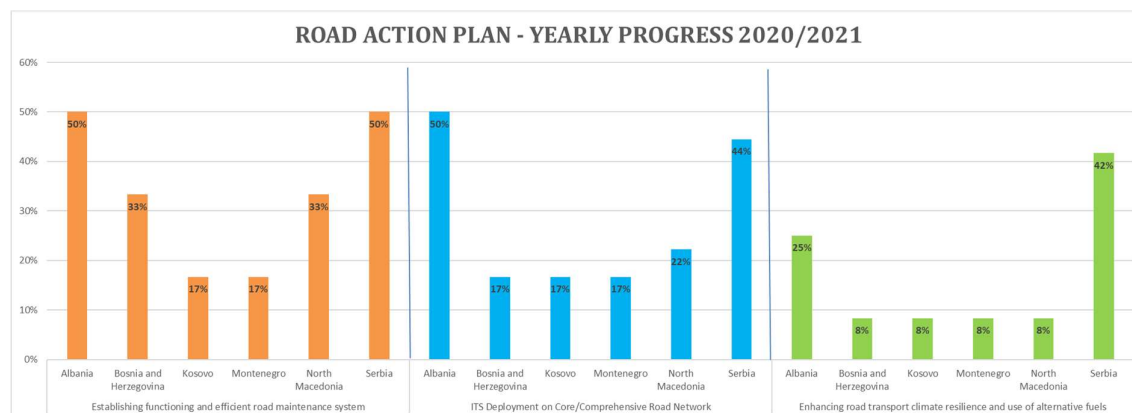
Figure 23 - Overall progress – Road Action Plan measures

Road maintenance has been put high on the political agenda across the region, and IFIs support has been continuously forthcoming. As such, the overall progress of road maintenance related measures has been progressing steadily, yet considerable differences exist between Regional Partners.

The digital transition requires that the Regional Partners step up their efforts to set up firstly the strategic and legal framework before deployment of ITS, which is currently the trend set in the region. Due to delays that occurred in starting off the ground some of the technical assistance schemes already in the pipeline, it is expected that by the end of 2022 all the Regional Partners to have prepared ITS Strategies.

Improving road transport climate resilience and the use of alternative fuels is proving to be challenging, reflected in the lack of progress on measures related to improving the resilience and creating the infrastructure needed for the shift towards less polluting vehicles. There are several reasons that can be summarised as mainly due to the lack of appropriate level of awareness on the importance of actions to be taken now from different stakeholders coupled with lack of capacities. The Western Balkans authorities will need bigger support from all the stakeholders, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, European Commission, and IFIs in order to leapfrog in the race towards more sustainable and resilient road transport development.

Following the Strategy for Sustainable and Smart mobility in the Western Balkans, in July 2021, it is evident that road transport is the biggest polluter and as such additional efforts and resources are needed from all stakeholders to ensure the green transition. Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, together with the Regional Partners, is planning to dedicate 2022 to roads – how to develop smart, sustainable, and safe roads will be the main theme of the activities planned during 2022 starting with the Road Summit, Social Forum, and the good tradition of Summer School set in 2021. Within this framework, it would be within its natural habitat, that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, originally planned for 2021, to take place during the Road Summit in May 2022, which allows sufficient time for the involved authorities to complete the approval procedures.

These circumstances call for a revision of those deadlines in the Road Action Plan impacted by the unexpected delays in the start of the projects, technical assistance in the pipeline expected to become effective in the coming period, as well as with the planned activities for 2022. The revision proposed affects the following actions as presented in Table 1.

Table 1- Revised Deadlines of Road Action Plan

Actions concerned	Revised Deadline
Adopt ITS Strategy and Action Plans aligned with regional ITS Vision and strategic objectives	Deadline will be Q1 2023 to accommodate the completion of the Technical Assistances supporting the Regional Partners.
Adopt a regional interoperability framework for the exchange of ITS data	Deadline will be Q4 2022 to accommodate the completion of the Technical Assistances supporting the Regional Partners
Establishing a regional network of road authorities/public enterprises for regular consultation and coordination at the regional level before adoption maintenance plans, deployment of ITS etc	Deadline will be Q2 2022 for the signature of this document, in the framework of 2022 'Year of Roads of the Future' activities

Annual Monitoring Report of the

Road Safety Action Plan

1.   Background information

The Road Safety Action Plan promotes safety management, safer infrastructure, and road user safety. It supports the "zero deaths" objective and encourages the exchange of regional best practices.

The Road Safety Action Plan is a rolling plan, and it will assist the members of the Technical Committee on Road Safety (TCRS) in their efforts to align the Regional Partners' agendas with the Transport Community priorities for the road safety sector. Actions are set in four groups that correspond to the agreed measures listed in the Road Safety Declaration of 25 April 2018. They are in line with the objectives of the Transport Community Treaty.

Some of the proposed measures are commitments assumed earlier by the relevant authorities of the SEE parties under the Western Balkans Six process. Hence, they have their sound basis in the already established legal and coordination mechanisms.

The aim of the activities performed by the Technical Committee on Road Safety was to elaborate, under the guidance of the TCT Secretariat, a coherent set of concrete actions to be implemented by the Regional Partners in a coordinated and timely manner. This section will provide an overview of the activities of the Technical Committee on Road Safety during the period 2020 – 2021. It will also highlight the Technical Assistance needs and the support necessary for our Regional Partners related to implementation of the Road Safety Action Plan.

The Technical Committee on Road Safety is a working group established in 2019. TCRS aims to assist the Regional Steering Committee in all aspects related to road safety in the scope of the Transport Community Treaty.

For this purpose, the TCRS – with the support of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat was mandated to elaborate a coherent set of specific measures aimed at establishing a safe system for the Western Balkans. The Road Safety Action Plan was thus conceived to address issues related to infrastructure safety, road user behaviour, measures to enhance road safety management and to encourage the exchange of best practices. The TCRS members approved the Scope of Work and Rules of Procedure and appointed a chairperson with a one-year tenure. TCRS was chaired as follows: Serbia - 2019, North Macedonia - 2020 and Kosovo - 2021.

During 2019 TCRS held two meetings, one in Podgorica and one in Brussels. Due to the COVID pandemic, three meetings sessions were held online in 2020. TCRS continued its work successfully despite all the difficulties experienced due to the pandemic and the unfeasibility of holding in-person meetings. The main achievement was the adoption of the Road Safety Action Plan, which was then approved by the Regional Steering Committee, and endorsed by the Transport Community Ministerial Council on 26 October 2020.

In 2021, TCRS held two virtual meetings, one in January and one in May. Activities focused on the implementation of the Road Safety Action Plan, i.e., challenges faced by Regional Partners and sharing of best practices.

Following the round of ROADSHOWS and the Technical Assistance assessment carried out in this framework, TCT Secretariat adopted a proactive approach, finding the most suitable mechanism to support the implementation of the Road Safety Action Plan.

## 2.	Progress by measure during the reporting period

This section will provide an overview of the progress achieved for each of the groups of measures, offering a description of the overall progress and the quantitative assessment per monitoring mechanism described earlier in this report. This is the first report on the measures defined in the Road Safety Action Plan.

<u>Overview of the First Road Safety Decade of Action 2011 - 2020</u>

In 2020, Western Balkans Regional Partners reported 1,171[13] fatalities which means that 625 lives were saved in comparison with the situation in the region 10 years ago. Every year, there was a slight reduction in fatalities. Using the Regional Partners' reports, Western Balkans' rate for the year 2020 is 64 people killed on roads per 1 million inhabitants which is very high in comparison to the EU's rate of 42 people killed on roads per 1 million inhabitants. The decrease in the percentage of deaths per million inhabitants is 34% for the period 2010 - 2020. However, WHO estimations of road deaths indicate higher fatality figures and rates for both periods and a lower percentage reduction in this period.
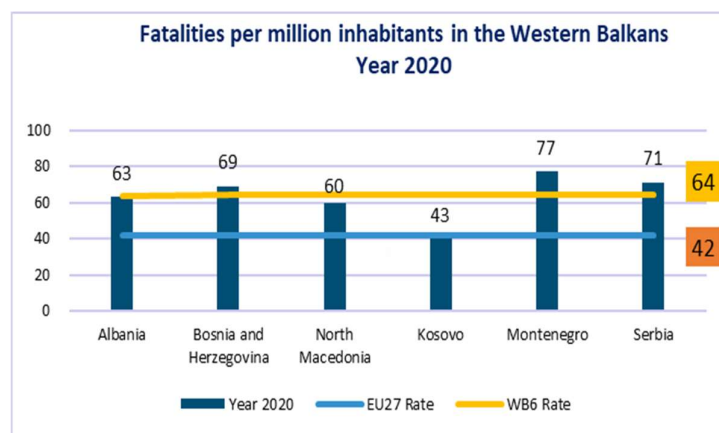

Figure 24 - Fatalities per million inhabitants in the Western Balkans 2020

2.1. Enhancing Road Safety Management

2.1.1. Sub Action - Improve the capacity of the coordination body for Road Safety and ensure its proper functioning - Road safety is a shared responsibility of several administration departments - Transport, Health, Police, Justice, Education, Finance. Unless special institutional structures are put in place, it is difficult to achieve the appropriate coordination and fulfil the full potential of individual sectoral responsibilities.

Regional Partners have established high-level structures to coordinate between different policy areas. **Albania** has established Inter-Ministerial Road Safety Committee and an expert group. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** established its Council for Road Traffic Safety in 2020 that held its first meeting in June 2021. **North Macedonia,** a proposal for a revised, improved structure for the National Coordination

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[13] Fatality counts reported from Police. There is still a discrepancy between the total reported data by Regional Participants and the WHO estimates: https://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.51310?lang=en

Authority for Road Safety is currently being prepared and is expected to be approved in 2021. **Kosovo** established its Road safety Council in 2018, and it is led by the Minister of Infrastructure. In **Montenegro** the Coordination Body is led by the Minister of Interior. In **Serbia** the Road Traffic Safety Coordination Body is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure. This high-level coordination body brings together Ministers competent for all areas of law relevant to its remit and is backed up at the technical level by the Road Safety Expert group. Its last meeting was held in April 2021.

Serbia, **Albania,** and **North Macedonia** have established a high-level coordination body led by their respective Prime Ministers. Only in **Serbia** does the Road Traffic Safety Coordination Authority take a proactive approach and holds regular yearly meetings. Regional Partners will need to revise further, improve, and strengthen the structure of the High-level coordination authority.

2.1.2 Sub Action - Set up a coordination mechanism between police and judiciary to ensure the full implementation and strict enforcement of road safety legislation, including offences by non-resident drivers - Collaboration between the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Justice is very important. This can lead to improvement of the road user behaviour, increase in efficiency of enforcement measures, better speed management, and increased safety of road users.

Currently, none of the regional partners have established a coordination mechanism between the police and the judiciary to enforce road safety legislation. In that respect, the TCT Secretariat has invited the Ministries of Interior to participate actively and contribute to TCRS's activities.

2.1.3 Sub Action - Develop a plan to establish/ strengthen the lead Road Safety Agency - The coordination arrangements and structures are essential in developing successful road safety policies. The lead Road Safety agency that manages this area at the national level and is used as a platform for agreeing and reviewing national road safety targets also plays a key role in mobilising resources; coordinating multi-sectoral partnerships in pursuit of agreed targets, and consulting with a wider group of stakeholders.[14]

There are two Road Traffic Safety Agencies in the region: one in **Serbia** and the other one is in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (at the entity level in Republika Srpska[15]).

North Macedonia has shown significant progress by adopting (June 2020) a decision to draft the proposals for amending the relevant Laws that will enable the establishing the New Road Safety Agency. The proposal is expected to be adopted in October 2021. Other regional partners have not taken any actions for reviewing their institutional structure and legislation in this respect.

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[14]https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/knowledge/rsm/the_road_safety_management_system/multi_sectoral_co_ordination_en
[15] https://www.absrs.org/index.php?id_jezik=2&pismo=en

Figure 25 - Develop a plan for the establishment of the lead road safety agency

2.1.4. Sub Action - Establishing a tool for monitoring Road Safety performance under TCS umbrella - Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory[16] - Evidence-based approaches lie at the heart of the most successful road safety policies. Improved knowledge on road safety performance is a crucial element for the design of road safety strategies and measuring progress towards reducing road casualties.

In February 2021, the TCT Secretariat, with FIA support and assistance, initiated procedures for establishing the WBRSO. This initiative led to the integration of the Western Balkans regional initiative into the larger regional road safety observatories. This collaboration led to the preparation of the first deliverables: (i) three-year Work Plan of the Road Safety Observatory, (ii) and the Regional Partners' profiles. Inauguration of the First phase of the Road Safety Observatory took place at the Ministerial Conference of TCT Secretariat in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia. The WBRSO kick-off meeting was held on 8 July 2021.

Overall progress for this measure is significant. The first phase of the WBRSO has been completed, and the Regional Partners assisted with and contributed to completing the regional Participants profiles for 2020.

2.1.5. Sub Action - Improve the quality of systematic and consolidated data collection on road traffic deaths and serious road injuries in line with existing EU standards and definitions (CARE data model) -
Albanian authorities are at the final stage of drafting the Terms of Reference for establishing the road crash data system.

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed a contract with EBRD for developing a harmonised database system at the state level. As of 1 January 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina (at the entity level, in Republika Srpska) started to collect and record road traffic crash data in line with the CADAS.

Montenegro has developed terms of reference for building a new database system and has trained the police officers for collecting road safety data.

North Macedonia has defined a unified form of the report for inspection of the traffic crash data where key indicators from the CADAS protocol (high important variables) are incorporated.

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[16] https://www.transport-community.org/wbrso/

Serbia has completed this measure by developing a road crash data system. The system is fully operational. Currently, Serbia is engaged on establishing communication channels that will enable better data collection and sharing between Health and the Police sector.
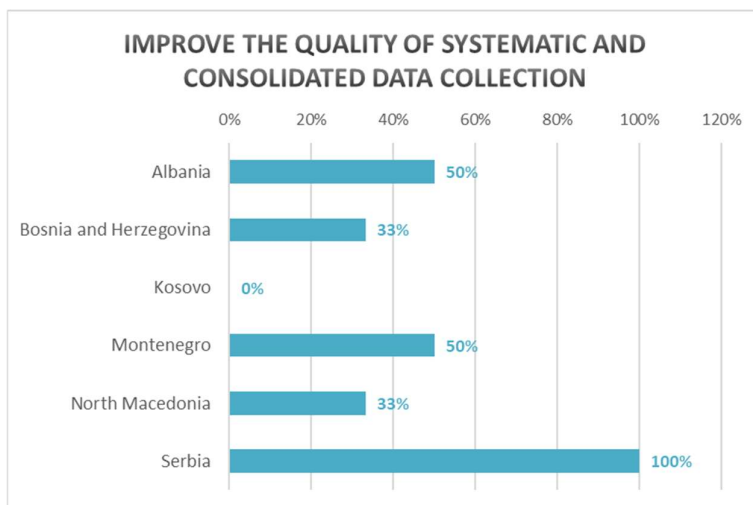

Figure 26 - Improve the quality of systematic and consolidated data collection

2.1.6. Sub Action-Develop key performance indicators including unique and harmonised methodology for monitoring and their evaluation - **Serbia** and **Bosnia Herzegovina** (entity level, in Republika Srpska) are the only two partners who have developed KPIs.

While **Montenegro** has finalised a study on measuring the Key Performance Indicators, other remaining partners have not taken any initiatives in this regard.

All other Regional Partners are advised to develop the Key Performance Indicators and align them with the new EU methodology.
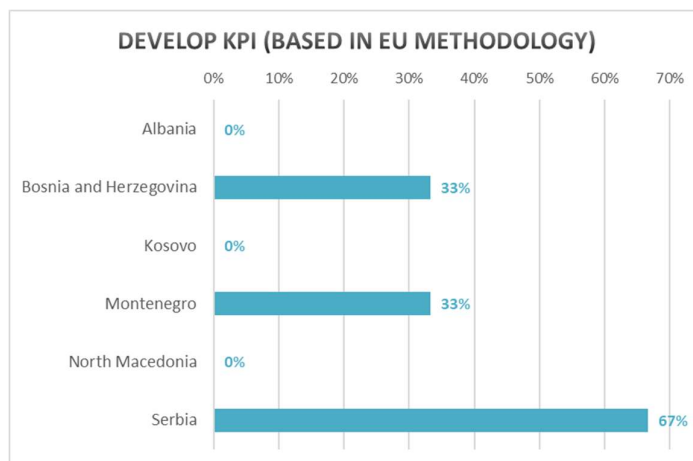

Figure 27 - Developed KPIs (EU methodology)

2.1.7. Sub Action - Develop the Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan with the aspirational targets for halving the number of fatal and serious road traffic injuries from 2021 to 2030, in line with the fatality and injury targets applied at the EU and UN level - Regional Partners are in the process of developing a new Road Safety Strategy for the period 2021-2030. The Strategy will be developed in line with the fatality and injury targets applied at EU and UN level.

The new strategy is recommended to be based on the Safe System approach to improving road safety. This involves a holistic view of the road transport system and the interactions among roads and roadsides, travel speeds, vehicles, and road users.

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). UNDP has provided assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina through technical expertise and knowledge on the elaboration of the Road Safety Framework Strategy and Action Plan in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG3 and 11). The draft Road Safety framework Strategy and Action Plan for 2021-2025 is prepared and submitted to Road Safety Council for opinion.

Montenegro has developed a Road Safety Improvement Programme and Road Action Plan the period 2020-2022.

Serbia has established an expert group tasked with drafting the new Road Safety Strategy.
Overall progress for this measure is slow. The slow rate of progress is owing to the need for technical assistance with developing the Strategy and the Action Plan.
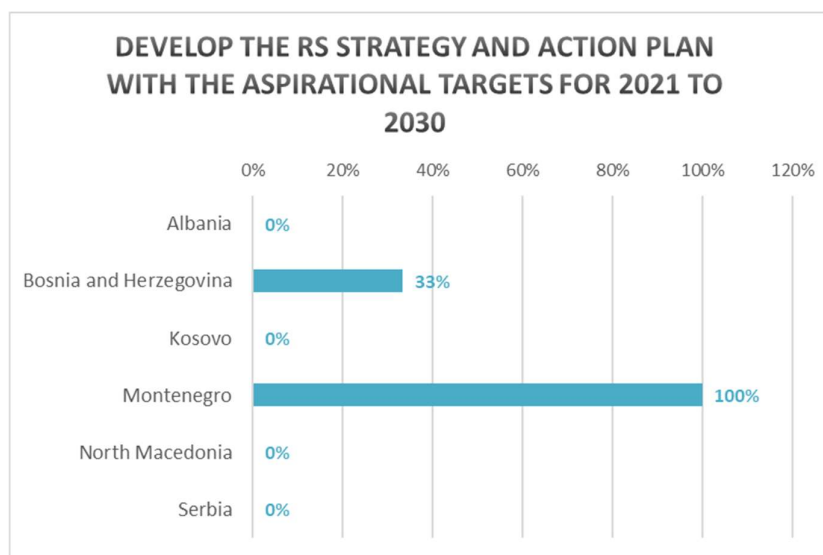
Figure 28 - Develop the RS Strategy and Action Plan with the aspirational targets for 2021 to 2030

2.2. Promote safe infrastructure

2.2.1. Sub Action - Identify the most dangerous sections of the extended Trans- European Road network to the Western Balkans, where most fatal and serious accidents happen - Improving infrastructure is a cornerstone of road safety. Improvement/Upgrading of road infrastructure will play an important role in achieving the EU's new road safety targets for the year 2030.

In February 2021, 10 Detail Designs (DD) for identified high-risk road sections with a total length of 300 km have been finalised. The projects have reached its maturity level and are ready for investment.

In this respect, TCT Secretariat held several meetings with DG NEAR on finding the most practical financial modalities for implementing finalised DD studies.

Progress in improving the policy and level of road infrastructure in the region is as follows:

Albanian authorities have adopted the guidelines, drafted curricula, and completed the training for Road Safety Inspections (RSI) and Road Safety Audits (RSA) in line with the EU Directive 2008/96/EC on Road Infrastructure Safety Management.

Serbia has set the curricula and finalised training for road safety inspectors and auditors in 2021. The Road Traffic Safety Agency is the authority responsible for issuing the licences for RSI and RSA.

Montenegro, and Serbia adopted the new Law on Road. **Serbia** has adopted by-laws on RSI and RSA while **Montenegro** is planning to draft them by the end of 2021. Completion of these activities will ensure full transposition of the Directive 2008/96/EC.

Other regional partners are in process of proposing the necessary changes in the Law.

Overall progress is slow. The region is lacking proper financial planning to improve current road infrastructure conditions in those sections identified as high-risk. Regional Partners should continue their efforts to fully transpose and implement Directive 2008/96 on Road Infrastructure Safety Management.

2.3. Promote protection of Vulnerable Road Users

2.3.1 Sub Action - Develop specific (regional/national) programmes for the safety of vulnerable road users and in particular for motorised two-wheel vehicles - In the Western Balkans region, only **Serbia** has developed a specific vulnerable road user safety programme. The Traffic Safety Agency is the authority in charge of this programme.

Montenegro has finalised a vulnerable road user safety study. The activities on to establishing and develop the implementation programme is ongoing.

Overall progress is slow. All other Regional Partners have not made any progress on this matter. More attention must be given to vulnerable road users as they are most affected by road crashes.
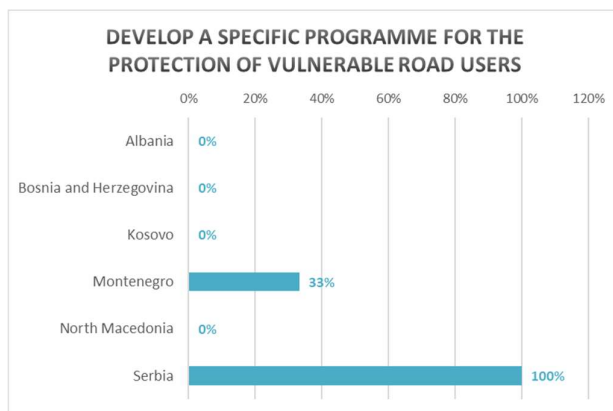

Figure 29 - Develop a specific programme for vulnerable road user safety

> **2.4.** Enhance cooperation and exchange of experience

In view of best practice examples and the exchange of know-how, the TCT Secretariat has invited several key speakers in the Technical Committee meetings to present topics related to cooperation and exchange of experience, topics that were presented are: Structure, model, and activities of the Leading Road Safety Agency – example of **Serbia** and **Slovenia**.

- Key Performance Indicators – VIAS Institute
- Road Safety strategy 2021-2030 and Action plan – case study: Bulgaria

With the establishment of the WBRSO, the TCT Secretariat is planning to organise a Road Safety workshop for WBRSO members. The event aims to enhance and develop further relevant stakeholders understanding of the topic and to improve data collection and fatality counts. The workshop will narrow the gap on existing data discrepancies between the RPs' reports and WHO calculations (data).

3.   Conclusions and recommendations

All Regional Partners have embraced the new goals of the Second Decade of Action 2021-2030 with aspirational targets by halving serious injuries and road deaths by 50%. Their vision is in line with that of the UN and EU for introducing the Safe System approach (Vision 0) in their new Road Safety National Strategies linked to the implementation of the National Action Plan. However, there have been no developments vis-à-vis drafting the new Road Safety strategies.

Road Safety is a shared responsibility among all road safety actors. The collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior is highlighted as crucial. It has been recognised that furthering cooperation with other road safety stakeholders, in particular with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Science, will pave the path towards implementation of the safe system principles.

All road safety experts acknowledged the importance of further collaboration with WHO and ROADPOL in lowering the level of road trauma and improving Road Policing.

TCT Secretariat will continue to organise a dedicated Session under the Technical Committee agenda and place a greater emphasis on discussions around parts of the safe system such as enforcement, speed management, road policing and road trauma.

Improving road safety infrastructure is proving to be a challenging process mainly due to the lack of financing and poor planning. Western Balkans authorities will need further support from all stakeholders, the EU Commission, and IFIs to improve the road conditions and ensure safe roads for all users.

Aligning legislation with EU Directive 2008/96/EC on Road Infrastructure Safety Management is still an ongoing process for most of the Regional Partners. Furthermore, the relevant authorities need to continue identifying the high-risk road sections (dangerous roads and road sections), as well as adopt and start implementing the three-year Road Safety Inspections and Road Safety Audits Plans.

Capacity building remains a challenge throughout the region. In that respect, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat is planning to dedicate 2022 to Roads. Several events are planned for 2022. These events will include the Road Summit, which will include Road Safety pillar as its component, followed by a Social Forum, and Summer School. All these events will further promote and enhance the development of smart, sustainable, and safe roads; moreover, it will further strengthen human capacities.

Annexes

Annex 1: Definition and description of progress indicators

Indicator	Definition
No progress (Scoring 0 point)	No steps have been taken by the respective authorities in relation to: • Preparation of laws, bye-laws, maintenance plan, strategies, TORs, tender documents etc.; providing information, data as per request.
Progress on track (scoring 1 point)	Clearly demonstrated steps have been taken by the respective authorities, as per the timeline agreed in the Action Plan, in relation to: • Laws, bye-laws, maintenance plans, strategies, Guidelines etc., are drafted; all the necessary data are submitted to interested parties;
Significant progress (scoring 2 points)	Clearly demonstrated steps have been taken by the respective authorities, as per or in advance of the timeline agreed in the Action Plan, in relation to: • Laws, bye-laws, are in Governmental/Parliamentary procedure; Guidelines, Maintenance Plans, studies recommendations by relevant stakeholders formally adopted; Project documentation/studies completed.
Accomplished (Scoring 3 points)	Clearly demonstrated steps have been taken by the respective authorities in relation to: • Laws, bye-laws being approved by the parliaments and entered into force; Maintenance Plans, strategies being implemented;
Stagnant (Scoring -1 point)	It has been clearly demonstrated by the respective authorities that the process is stagnant, that there have been no further developments, or that implementation has stopped, as per timelines agreed in the Action Plan.

Annex 2: Rail - Monitoring mechanism – Implementation Scoring

1. Rail market opening

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners						Deadline for implementation
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SER	
1. Rail market opening	SA. 1 Amend national law to remove potential breaches of TCT provisions in regard to opening up the market at national level (phase 1)	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	Q4 2021 – MK Q4 2022 -BIH
	SA. 2. Establish functioning institutions (regulatory body, licensing body, national safety authority, national investigation body, designated body) – including legal, administrative, and budgetary actions	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies and TCT Secretariat	1	1	3	2	2	3	Q4 2022
	SA. 3. Publish Network Statement for railway infrastructure	Infrastructure managers supported by the TCT Secretariat	2	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q2 2021 – ALB Q4 2021 - BIH
	SA. 4. Publish Network Statement for service facilities (sea and river ports, terminals)		0	0	3	3	2	2	Q1 2021
	SA. 5. Take legislative and/or regulatory measures to achieve mutual recognition at the regional level in respect of: operating licenses, train driver licenses, safety certificates, vehicle authorisation	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies and TCT Secretariat	1	1	2	2	1	2	Q1 2022
	SA. 6. Modernise rules on public procurement in the rail sector, including through transposition and implementation of Regulation 1370/2007	Ministries of Transport supported by the Ministries of Finance and TCT Secretariat	1	1	2	2	2	3	Q1 2022

	concerning public transport services by rail								
	SA 7. Establishing of Contractual relation between IM and state for the maintenance and operation on public infrastructure	Infrastructure managers, Ministries of Transport and Ministries of Finance	1	1	0	n/a	1	n/a	Q2 2021 – KOS, Q2 2021 - ALB, MK Q2 2022 - BIH
Total score			33%	24%	67%	75%	50%	83%	

2. Passenger rights

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional partners						Deadline for implementation
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SER	
2. Passenger rights	SA. 1 Transpose and implement Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies	1	1	1	1	1	1	Q1 2022
Total score			33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	

3. Interoperability

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional partners						Deadline for implementation
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SER	
3. Interoperability	SA. 1 Transpose and implement the Interoperability Directive 2008/57/EC (valid	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway	2	1	2	2	2	2	Q2 2021

	until June 2020) and its new version Directive (EU) 2016/797 (4th railway package)	Regulatory bodies and TCT Secretariat							
	SA. 2 Transpose and implement all EU Technical Specifications for Interoperability	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies and TCT Secretariat	0	1	2	2	1	3	Q4 2021
	SA. 3 Prepare a detailed plan for the review and cleaning up of national rail technical and safety rules in line with the EU rail acquis and the prerogatives of ERA	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies and ERA	1	1	1	1	1	1	Q4 2022
	SA. 4: Establish an electronic register of vehicles, taking into account the OTIF National Vehicle Registers specifications 'NVR 2015' and the European Centralised Virtual Vehicle Register (ECVVR)	Railway Regulatory bodies supported by ERA and OTIF	1	1	1	3	1	3	Q1 2022
	SA. 5 Establish an electronic register and management system of railway infrastructure, taking into account the existence of the European Registers of Infrastructure (RINF)	Infrastructure Managers supported by the ERA and DG Move	1	1	2	1	2	1	Q2 2022
Total score			33%	33%	53%	60%	47%	67%	

4. Governance

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional partners						Deadline
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SER	
4. Governance	SA. 1 Create a network of EU DEL rail correspondents in the region to assist in the implementation and monitoring of the TCT Rail Action Plan.	DG NEAR/ TCT Secretariat to set up and maintain the EU DEL network	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q2 2021
	SA. 2 Organise stakeholder workshop on the streamlining of technical assistance and financing of the reform of the rail sector and rail infrastructure projects in the Western Balkans	TCT Secretariat to organise the event, in liaison with DG NEAR and DG MOVE	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q2 2021
Total score									

5. Improving rail border crossing operations

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional/EU partners											Deadline	
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SRB	GRE	CRO	ROM	BLG	HUN	Signing	Implementation
5. improving rail border crossing operations	Serbia – North Macedonia	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and NMKD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Done	Q4 2023
	North Macedonia - Kosovo	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from KOS and NMKD	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q2 2021	Q4 2023
	Bosnia and Herzegovina - Croatia	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from BIH and CRO	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q1 2021	Q3 2021
	North Macedonia – Greece	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from GRE and NMKD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q4 2021	Q4 2023
	Serbia - Bulgaria	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and BLG	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	Q1 2021	Q3 2021
	Serbia - Montenegro	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and MNE	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Done	Q1 2022
	Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and BIH	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q4 2021	Q4 2022

	Serbia – Hungary	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and HUN	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	Q1 2021	Q4 2023
	Serbia - Romania	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and ROM	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
	Serbia - Croatia	MoTs supported by the customs, border police and inspection from SRB and CRO	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	Q1 2021	Q4 2021
Total score			n/a	17%	33%	66%	44%	43%							

6. Modernisation of rail network infrastructure

MEASURE 2019/2020	SUB-ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional partners						Deadline
			ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	SER	
6. Modernisation of rail network infrastructure	SA. 1. Establishing a regional network of infrastructure managers for regular consultation and coordination at regional level before adoption maintenance plans for railway infrastructure and for the schedule of work, and other relevant activities.	Infrastructure managers supported by Ministries of Transport and TCT Secretariat	2	2	2	2	2	2	Q3 2021
	SA. 2. Identification of priority projects of regional interests for the upgrading / reconstruction / construction of specific railway sections;	Ministries of Transport supported by the infrastructure managers and TCT Secretariat	2	1	2	2	2	2	permanent task

	SA. 3. Level-crossings Safety Improvement (mapping the most critical LCRs within WB region)	Ministries of Transport supported by the Railway Regulatory bodies, ERA and TCT Secretariat	1	1	1	1	1	1	Q1 2022
	SA. 4. Adoption of five-year Maintenance Plan	Infrastructure Managers supported by the ERA, DG Move and TCT Secretariat	1	1	2	2	1	3	Q1 2022
Total score			50%	42%	58%	58%	50%	67%	

Annex 2.1: The EU year of rail and TCT events

ERA and TCT activities

During October and November 2020, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) organised six rail-related workshops in each of the six Western Balkans Regional Partners. Based on the administrative agreement between our two organisations, workshops brought together rail stakeholders from the region and European Commission experts to identify needs and challenges in the areas of safety and interoperability. Furthermore, technical assistance was offered to all partners based on needs expressed.

These rail workshops, which brought together hundreds of regional stakeholders, are the first tangible results of the Memorandum of Understanding between the TCT Secretariat and ERA, which aims to develop a rail system that is safe, environmentally and socially sustainable, and inter-connected with the EU. The main goal of the workshops was the identification of any obstacles and implementation challenges.

Key conclusions from all six workshops are available from the workshop report already shared with the Rail Technical Committee, ERA and the EU Commission (DG MOVE).

2021 TCT Capacity Building Summer School

25 participants, mostly coming from Public Sector Institutions from all six South East European Parties, were hosted during the 2021 TCT Capacity Building Summer School in Belgrade. 58% of the speakers, who hailed from all around Europe, delivered their presentations online and 42% in person. All the moderators were physically present in the conference room. In terms of speakers' presentation time, 855 minutes (64%) were in person and 480 minutes (36%) online.

Related to the acquired language, the EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, the night trains to traverse the region, and the FIDIC Contracts provisions are topics the participants are less familiar with, and plans must be made for further capacity building exercises. The same shall be done for the digitalisation in the rail industry and state-of-the-art technologies, steps needed to be performed from idea to visible result or investment.

The general conclusion based on all formal and informal feedback is that it was a successful capacity building event that achieved its goals. Given the high-paced world we live in, we will lead the charge for change and take our efforts to another level so as to become trendsetters instead of trend followers by setting the bar high and going above and beyond it.

Western Balkan Rail Summit

First time one Western Balkan Rail Summit is organised under the umbrella of the TCT Secretariat. The main purpose of this Summit was to bring all Ministers from the region, Commissioners, senior officials from EC bodies, railway company directors, as well as railway industry leaders and academics to address key rail policy issues and examine regional rail projects.

The Western Balkan Summit culminated with two documents that were prepared in conjunction with DG Move and all Regional Partners. The first is the Dedication to Rail, which was signed by all Western Balkans Ministers, with the second being the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the railway infrastructure managers.

The first document was a follow-up to the earlier Rail Declaration signed in Brussels in 2018. All changes introduced under the following key documents were included in the Dedication to Rail document: EC Economic and Investment Plan from October 2020, Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy from December 2020, as well as Rail Action Plan endorsed by all Western Balkans Ministers in November last year.

The second document has a more practical role. The aim is to establish a network of infrastructure managers within the region. This network will provide strong support for closer cooperation, exchanging information, better planning of maintenance and timetables, as well as joint efforts towards opening the rail market at the regional level.

Annex 2.2: Railway projects per Regional Partner

Regional Partners	Name of the project	Core/ Comprehensive Network	Foreseen intervention	Total length (km)	Total Cost (M€)	Estimated completion deadline
Railway projects						
Albania	Rehabilitation of the railway Durres-Tirana Public transport terminal PTT and construction of the new railway Tirana-Rinas branch	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	41	90.45	2024
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Corridor Vc-Overhaul and modernisation of the railway section Šamac – Doboj – Rječica	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	85	162.5	2025
North Macedonia	Rehabilitaton of Eastern Part of Rail Corridor VIII-PHASE 1-Section Kumanovo-Beljakovce	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	30.8	48.9	2022

North Macedonia	Rail Corridor VIII-PHASE 2-Section Beljakovce-Kriva Palanka	Core	New infrastructure, Reconstruction/rehabilitation,	34	145	2024
North Macedonia	Rail Corridor VIII-PHASE 3-Section Kriva Palanka -Deve Bair	Core	New infrastructure	34	420	2026
North Macedonia	Project for track renewal works on the section Nogaevci - Negotino	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	31	9.6	2022
Kosovo	Railway Rehabilitation Route 10	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	149	245	2025
Montenegro	Rehabilitation railway line "Vrbnica-Bar" (rail Route 4)	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	159	244	2025
Serbia	Reconstruction and modernisation of (Nis) Brestovac - Presevo	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	159	219.9	2023
Serbia	Reconstruction and modernisation of Belgrade - Novi Sad - Subotica - border with Hungary railway line	Core	Reconstruction/rehabilitation	183	1994	2024
Serbia	Reconstruction and modernisation of Nis - Dimitrovgrad railway line	Core	New infrastructure, Reconstruction/rehabilitation,	108	268	2024

Annex 3: Transport Facilitation - Monitoring mechanism – Implementation Scoring

MEASURE	SUBACTION	PREPARATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners					
					Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	North Macedonia	Kosovo	Montenegro	Serbia
Road border-crossing/common crossing measures	improvement/upgrade of the existing ICT infrastructure to foster transport digitalisation, interoperability of communication and data sharing system	All RPs Q42021	All RPs Q2 2022	MoT, MoI, Customs	1	1	1	1	1	1
	New constructions and/or modernisation of priority BCPs/CCPs existing infrastructure aiming to remove physical and technical barriers or to increase actual capacity	All RPs Q42023	All RPs Q4 2023	MoT, MoI, Customs	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Signing bilateral agreements for one stop shop and effectively putting into operation joint border/common crossing controls	All RPs Q4 2022	All RPs Q4 2022	MoT, MoI, Customs	2	1	2	1	1	1
	Implementation of electronic queuing management system (eQMS) with a possibility to integrate with SEED+	All RPs Q4 2022	All RPs Q2 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Purchase and installation of equipment for the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness at BCPs/CCPs	All RPs Q2 2022	All RPs Q1 2023	MoT, MoI, Customs	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Capacity building:hiring of additional /specialised personnel and provision of training courses to increase the quality of the working staff performance	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q4 2023	MoT, MoI, Customs	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total scoring					33%	28%	33%	28%	28%	28%

Annex 4: Road - Monitoring mechanism – Implementation Scoring

MEASURE	SUBACTION	PREPARATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners					
					Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Establishing functioning and efficient road maintenance system	Adopt multiannual maintenance plan	All RPs Q3 2020	All RPs Q1 2021	Road Authorities/Public Road Enterprises	2	1	1	1	1	2
	Establishing Road Asset Management System (RAMS)	ALB, BIH, SRB Q2 2021 KOS*, MNE Q4 2021 MKD Completed	ALB, BIH, SRB Q3 2021 KOS, MNE Q1 2022 MKD Completed	Road Authorities/Public Road Enterprises	2	1	0	0	3	2
	Signing of Service Level Agreement between Ministry of Transport and Road Authorities/Public Enterprises	ALB, BIH, SRB Q1 2021 KOS, MKD, MNE Q4 2021	ALB, BIH, SRB Q2 2021 KOS, MKD, MNE Q1 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Adopt an efficient strategy on the funding sustainability for road maintenance	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q2 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	1	1	1	1	0	0
Total scoring					58%	25%	17%	17%	33%	50%

MEASURE	SUBACTION	PREPARATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners					
					Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
ITS Deployment on Core/Comprehensive Road Network	Adoption of ITS strategy together with an Action/implementation plan	ALB completed MKD – Q4 2021 SRB- Q1 2022 BiH, KOS, MNE Q4 2021	ALB – Q4 2020 MKD – Q1 2022 SRB - Q2 2022 BiH, KOS, MNE Q1 2022	MoT	3	0	0	1	1	1
	Transposition of the Directive 2010/40/EU into the national legislation	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q1 2022	MoT	2	0	2	1	0	1
	Transposition of Directive 2004/52/EC - Interoperability of electronic road toll systems (amended)	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q1 2023	MoT	0	2	0	0	2	2
	Adopt and implement EU ITS Framework Architecture for roads to ensure compatibility of system and equipment	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q1 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	2	0	0	0	0	1
	Adopt and implement EU ITS standards for roads to ensure European standards and specifications for all new projects and for the upgrading of existing ones	ALB, MKD, SRB Q4 2021 BiH, KOS, MNE Q2 2022	ALB, MKD, SRB Q1 2022 BiH, KOS, MNE Q3 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Adopt a regional interoperability framework aimed to establish a mechanism for the exchange of ITS data	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q4 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total scoring					50%	17%	17%	17%	22%	44%

MEASURE	SUBACTION	PREPARATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners					
					Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Enhancing road transport climate resilience and use of alternative fuels	change and natural hazard road network vulnerability assessment	All RPs Q3 2021	All RPs Q1 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Development of Resilience Action Plan for Road Core/Comprehensive Network	All RPs Q4 2021	All RPs Q4 2022	MoT, Road Authorities,	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Undertake risk-based vulnerability interventions for the most vulnerable sections of the indicative extension of Core/Comprehensive TEN-T Networks in Western Balkans	All RPs Q1 2022	All RPs Q1 2024	MoT, Road Authorities,	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Enhance use of alternative fuels (e-charging stations etc)	All RPs Q2 2021	All RPs Q2 2023	MoT, Road Authorities, TCT, RCC	1	1	1	1	1	2
Total scoring					25%	8%	8%	8%	8%	42%

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Annex 5: Road Safety - Monitoring mechanism – Implementation Scoring

MEASURE	SUBACTION	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE	IMPLEMENTING BODY (Stakeholders)	Regional Partners					
				Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Improve functionality of the coordination body under the supervision of the Competent Authorities and ensure the functionality of it	Screening of the current structure; -Best practice examples	Q4 2021	1.TCT Permanent Secretariat 2.All RPs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Improve/Ensure functionality of the coordination body based on the recommendations and best practice examples (provided under 1.)			1	2	1	1	1	2
Total scoring				**33%**	**67%**	**33%**	**33%**	**33%**	**67%**
Set up in parallel a coordination mechanism between police and justice ensuring the full implementation and strict enforcement of road safety legislation at in each of the South East European Parties, including offences committed by non-resident drivers;	Screening of the current channels of communications; best practice examples	Q2 2021	TCT Permanent Secretariat	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Setting up a coordination mechanism	Q4 2021	All Regional Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total scoring				**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**
Develop a plan for the establishing/ strengthening the lead Road Safety Agency	Assistance and recommendation for each Regional Participant	Q1 2021	TA needs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Plan for establishing/ strengthening of a Road Safety Agency -best examples in the region or in EU Member States	Q4 2021	Serbia - Completed RPs	0	2	0	0	1	3
Total scoring				**0%**	**67%**	**0%**	**0%**	**33%**	**100%**

Improve the quality of systematic and consolidated data collection on road traffic deaths and serious road injuries in line with existing EU standards and definitions (CARE data model)	Draft a ToR for developing a data collection system	By 2021	All RPs	3	2	0	3	2	3
	Implementation	By 2022	All RPs	0	0	0	0	0	3
Total scoring				**50%**	**33%**	**0%**	**50%**	**33%**	**100%**
Develop KPIs including unique and harmonized methodology for monitoring and evaluation of safety performance (at regional level)	Develop KPIs with a methodology for monitoring and evaluation of them (regional one)	Q3 2021	EC	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Develop KPIs in national level based in the methodology under	Q4 2022	All RPs	0	1	0	1	0	2
Total scoring				**0%**	**33%**	**0%**	**33%**	**0%**	**67%**
Develop the RS Strategy and Action Plan with the aspirational targets for halving the number of fatal and serious road traffic injuries from 2021 to 2030, in line with the fatality and injury targets applied at the EU and UN level.	Screening based on the previous strategy and Action plans.Define the needs for renewing the strategy (capacity and financial needs)	Q4 2021	TCT Permanent Secretariat	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Drafting a new strategy and Action Plan in compliance with the new goals set for the 2021-2030 (based on Safe System Approach and introduce KPIs) Adopt the RS Strategy for 2021-2030 and Action Plan		All RPs	0	1	0	3	0	0
Total scoring				**0%**	**33%**	**0%**	**100%**	**0%**	**0%**

Actions to promote the protection of the road users									
Develop specific (regional/national) programme for the protection of vulnerable road users and in particular for powered-two-wheelers.	Current state/ screening of the programme for the protection of vulnerable road users and for powered-two-wheelers.	Q4 2021	TCT Permanent Secretariat through Techncial Committee Meetings	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Draft/Develop a programme for the protection of vulnerable road users and for powered-two-wheelers.		RPs	0	0	0	1	0	3
Total scoring				**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**33%**	**0%**	**100%**
Actions to enhance cooperation and exchange of experience									
Mobilise all partners at national, regional and local levels to strengthen the focus on road safety and support the exchange of experience and best practices; **- Capacity building, training, twinning, sharing best practice examples**	Identify the main key issues in a road safety system and bring at least one as a priority on which the exchange of the best practice is needed (refer to the principle of EU Road Safety Exchange project)			3	3	3	3	3	3
	Mapping with another Country/Member State on the same issue – Proposal for Twinning/ Exchange of the Best practice			0	0	0	0	0	0
Total scoring				**50%**	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**