

**19<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Committee meeting**  
28 March 2023, TCT Secretariat's premises, Masarikova 5/9, Belgrade  
**Minutes and Conclusions**

1. **The 19<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting was held on 28 March 2023 in a hybrid form (physical participation and online), starting at 09.30h**
2. All RSC members and some observers of the European Union Member States were present during the meeting. The observing participants from Georgia attended the meeting.
3. The meeting was chaired by the Chair of the Regional Steering Committee, Ms Ljubinka Ivanovic and Co-Chair, Ms Mona Bjorklund.
4. On a proposal from the TCT Secretariat, the Agenda of the 19<sup>th</sup> RSC meeting was complemented with additional AOB points on *Activities related to the EU Mobility week in the Western Balkans*. On a proposal from the European Commission, an AOB point on the expiring mandates of the TCPS Director and Deputy Director was added. Agenda was adopted with proposed additions to AOB points.

**POLICY**

5.	<p><b>Information by the Permanent Secretariat on the completed studies and the Technical Assistance in 2022- outcomes and follow-ups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport Community Permanent Secretariat (TCT Secretariat) presented activities carried out from the 2021 Budget and completed in the course of 2022 related to consultancy services for four actions: Technical assistance for baseline assessment and financial implications to e-tolling interoperability across the Western Balkans, Technical assistance for capacity building in management and operations of the border crossing points along the indicative TEN-T Network in the Western Balkans, Technical assistance for the deployment of e - freight in Western Balkans and implementation of the Regulation (EU) 2020/1056 on electronic freight transport information and Assessment of the rail market in the Western Balkans in terms of capacities, policies, the economic and technical level of development of freight and passenger transport segments.</li> <li>• The European Commission acknowledged the information presented by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat. It underlined the importance of technical assistance to the Regional Partners to help them deliver on the commitments contained in the Transport Community Treaty.</li> <li>• All RSC members intervened, welcomed studies and technical assistance and gave the state of play in the Regional Partner they represent.</li> <li>• RSC member from Serbia called for follow-up actions to provide sustainability of the studies' results.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: RSC welcomed the outcomes of the completed studies in 2022 and invited the Regional Partners to commit to implementing all recommendations deriving from named studies more precisely: continue in taking concrete steps/measures that will pave the way towards regional e-tolling interoperability in line with the EU standards and requirements; engage in bilateral negotiations to conclude the agreements and agency protocols for joint controls continue building the institutional capacities for implementation of transport facilitation instruments and solutions between WB6 and EU Member States</i></b></p>
6.	<p><b>Endorsement of Action Plan (Roadmap) on implementation of the Social Acquis.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the conclusion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Social Forum held in Sarajevo (May 2022) and the request made by Regional Partners, the TCT Secretariat drafted an Action Plan related to social acquis of ANNEX I of the TCT and its implementation. The action plan was welcomed by all Regional Partners and the EU Commission representative at the 4<sup>th</sup> Social Forum held in Pristina on 8 March 2023. The main focus of the Action Plan is the transposition and implementation of Annex I.2 and 3 of the Transport Community Treaty legislation in the field of social issues and passenger rights. The document provides a list of the short and medium-term (2023 -2025) measures divided into four groups: (i) workers' fundamental rights, (ii) equal opportunities, (iii) transition for transport workers, and (iv) passenger rights.</li> <li>• The European Commission underlined the importance of achieving more progress on social and passenger rights, in view with the commitments contained in Annex I TCT and endorsed the proposed Action Plan on social and passenger rights.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RSC member from Albania called for support measures that will contribute to the implementation new generation of smart tachographs.</li> <li>RSC member from Bosnia and Herzegovina suggested including an additional regional component in the Smart and Sustainable Transport Program that will support the implementation of the Action Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed and endorsed the presented Action Plan for implementing EU acquis in social issues and passenger rights in transport. Moreover, the Regional Partners committed to taking concrete measures to implement proposed measures deriving from this action plan in close cooperation and coordination with civil society.</b></p>
7.	<p><b>Presentation by the Permanent Secretariat of results of the communication and visibility campaign on level crossings safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented Communication and visibility report on the public awareness campaign “It’s a Thin Line” as a wrap-up activity of the mentioned campaign. The report presents the main campaign messages, deliverables and lessons learnt, as well as the campaign implementation per each Regional Partner was presented. The campaign was based on simple video messages aiming to raise awareness among the public on the precautionary measures needed when passing across level crossings.</li> <li>The European Commission acknowledged the information presented, thanked the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat for its support, and invited Regional Partners to continue with efforts to improve road safety in the region.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC acknowledged the results of the Public Awareness Campaign “It’s a Thin Line” and the Regional Partners committed to taking concrete measures to increase public awareness and improve the overall situation of the level crossings.</b></p>
8.	<p><b>Information by the Permanent Secretariat on Transport Observatory Data Information System (TODIS) phase III follow-up actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented the latest information on TODIS phase III follow-up actions. TCT Secretariat prepared the revised TODIS III concept analysis, discussed it at a technical level with the EC services and shared it with the RSC Members before today’s meeting. Based on the conclusions of the analysis, it was proposed to endorse the new concept and implementation schedule of Transport Observatory Phase III. TODIS Phase III implementation schedule 2023-2026 and the impact on the upcoming 5-year rolling work plan versions were presented. Upon endorsement by the Regional Steering Committee, TCT will start effectively implementing the agreed list of actions, assessing financial needs and sources and providing technical consultations with all relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>The European Commission supported the proposed approach on developing phase III of the Transport Observatory.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC endorsed the revised TODIS phase III concept and encouraged TCT Secretariat to commence consultations on the related activities</b></p>
9.	<p><b>Information from the European Commission on the revision of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) indicative extension to the Western Balkans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European Commission presented information on the revision of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) indicative extension in the Western Balkans and the time frame for adopting the revised TEN-T maps formally after signing the High-Level Memorandum of Understanding in May 2023: in the course of June 2023 to adopt the Commission delegated act with the revised maps and shared expectations that the EU co-legislators will reach an agreement on the proposal for TEN-T revision ( including the Western Balkan Corridor) by the end of 2023</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed information from the European Commission on revising the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) indicative extension to the Western Balkans.</b></p>
10.	<p><b>Information on preparations for Connectivity Summit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Info note with draft agenda</b></li> <li>- <b>Signature of High-Level Understanding between EU and Western Balkans Contracting Parties on the revision of the TEN-T</b></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented draft agenda of the Connectivity Summit “Sustainable links-stronger economy,” which will be co-organised by CEFTA and the TCT Secretariat. The Summit will take place 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 in Montenegro. Key deliverables of the Summit will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The signing of the High-Level understanding of indicative maps of the TEN-T in the Western Balkans</li> <li>o Endorsement of the joint TCT-CEFTA Declaration “Taking forward the Green Lanes.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The European Commission welcomed plans for the Connectivity Summit in Montenegro and invited the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat to provide more details about the planned event as they become available.</p>

	<p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed the update on the organisation of the Connectivity Summit and the envisaged deliverables.</b></p>
11.	<p><b>Presentation by Permanent Secretariat of the Final Report on Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCT Secretariat presented the Final Report on the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory information system. The system is accessible online to all members of the Technical Committee on Road Safety and WBRSO to input data and verify the three-year dataset 2019-2021.</li> <li>• The European Commission acknowledged the information presented by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and called on the Regional Partners to make full use of the tool to propose targeted measures for improvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed the Final Report on the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory information system and invited the Regional Partners to commit to regularly updating the system with data yearly. Moreover, system analytics will identify necessary measures, draft policies on evidence-based data, and take concrete measures.</b></p>
12.	<p><b>Information from the European Commission on Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The European Commission presented the latest state of play of the Safe and Sustainable Transport Program and future actions.</li> <li>• 5 Mil.EUR from the overall available funding will be available for technical assistance and maturing projects for implementation. This is, however limited to the immediate needs for the last steps in maturing existing project concepts.</li> <li>• RSC member from Bosnia and Herzegovina asked to consider making a regional component in the program available to support projects of common interest to all regional partners. They will share information on a similar instrument available through the Sava Commission initiative.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC acknowledged information on the Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme presented by the European Commission and supported further development and implementation of proposed projects eligible for financing.</b></p>
13.	<p><b>Outline of cooperation between Transport Community and observing participants.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In accordance with the Conclusions from Ministerial Council Meeting held on 15 November 2022, the TCT Secretariat kicked-off cooperation with the three Observing Participants: Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. During January and February 2023, TCT Secretariat organised a series of meetings on the technical level per each transport mode for each Observing Participant and shared all information related to TCT strategic documents. Observing Participants are also already participating in TCT meetings and events in 2023.</li> <li>• The Representative of Georgia thanked Transport Community for excellent cooperation in the last four months and expressed readiness to strengthen cooperation with TCT in line with the presented activities document.</li> <li>• The European Commission thanked the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat for the presented outline of engagement activities with the observing participants, supported the plans for the closer involvement, as outlined in the presented work plan, and invited the Secretariat to report on progress achieved during the RSC meeting following the one in March 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed information on cooperation established with the new Observing Participants and their efforts to integrate into Transport Community activities. RSC tasked TCT Secretariat to report during the following Regional Steering Committee meeting on the progress to date on the results of the cooperation with the observing participants.</b></p>

ADMINISTRATION

14.	<p><b>Presentation by the Permanent Secretariat of the draft report on the Budget 2022 accounts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCT Secretariat presented a draft report on the Budget 2022 accounts. According to the preliminary figures, the 2022 budget execution rate is 87.43% or 83.26% considering the reserve. All parties to the Treaty have fulfilled their financial obligations towards the TCT Secretariat. Contribution payments were received in full by the European Union, whereas the allocated surplus from previous financial years adjusted the contributions by the South East European Parties.</li> <li>• The European Commission acknowledged the information and thanked the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat for its efforts to implement the TCT during 2022, as suggested by the 2022 budgetary execution rate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC took note of the presented information on Budget 2022 execution and noted the increased Budget implementation rate for 2022. The RSC expects the financial statements for 2022 with the final data to be presented at the next meeting of the Regional Steering Committee.</b></p>
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15.	<p><b>Review of the interim audit report (January- June 2022)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented an interim audit report for January- June 2022. To the work plan, the external Auditor reviewed interim financial statements from January to June 2022 in the second half of 2022. Being an interim review, the Auditor did not express an opinion but concluded that the financial statements are prepared in all material aspects by relevant financial reporting standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed the presented outcomes of the interim report for January- June 2022.</b></p>
16.	<p><b>Endorsement of the Annual Operational Report 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented Annual Operational Report 2022. The report outlines the main activities in 2022 focused on green, digital, and sustainable roads of the future, structured around three pillar events - Road Summit, Summer School and Social Forum. Other activities are presented per each mode of transport, such as meetings of TCT bodies, capacity-building activities, initiated and completed studies, and the main aspects of the organisation's financial management, administration and communication.</li> <li>The European Commission took note of the presentation by the TCT Secretariat of the 2022 Annual Operations Report and thanked the Secretariat for its efforts and the progress achieved in fulfilling the TCT objectives and goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC welcomed TCT Secretariat's Annual Operational Report for 2022.</b></p>
17.	<p><b>Discussion on the possible changes to the Rules on reimbursement of expenses to participants at the meetings organised by the TCT Secretariat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented options for introducing changes to Rules on reimbursement of expenses to participants at the meetings organised by the TCT Secretariat with a financial assessment of the possible application of two different scenarios: increasing the number of participants at the cost of the TCT from 1 to 2 participants per delegating institution, as discussed at the 16<sup>th</sup> RSC meeting, and of covering the travel costs up to current reimbursement limit and payment of DSA as per DSA rates applicable to TCT Staff, for covering hotel costs and auxiliary expenses.</li> <li>The European Commission underlined that a potential increase in reimbursement costs stemming from the increase in the number of maximum participants should be subject to funds availability within the already agreed budgetary framework. It supported in principle the proposed approach on revising the TCT reimbursement rules and invited the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat to present a concrete drafting proposal on the revision of TCT reimbursement rules.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: RSC supported in principle the initiative to introduce changes to Rules on reimbursement of expenses to participants at the meetings organised by the TCT Secretariat as presented. The discussion paper will be presented and discussed with the Budget Committee members at the upcoming Budget Committee meeting in April 2023. TCT Secretariat is asked to develop a detailed proposal on the rules changes and present it at the next Regional Steering Committee meeting.</b></p>
18.	<p><b>The decision of the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community on:</b></p> <p>a) the rules on education allowance for the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat. b) the rules on secondment and locally contracted experts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TCT Secretariat presented the rules on education allowance for the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and the rules on secondment and locally contracted experts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Decisions a) and b) were adopted as presented. TCT Secretariat is invited to initiate the necessary technical adjustments to the TCT staff rules as soon as possible to put the adopted education allowance rules in practice.</b></p>
19.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>a) TCT Secretariat informed RSC members of the planned activities on Mobility week 2023, focusing on cycling, which the RSC members welcomed.</p> <p>b) The Commission informed the Regional Steering Committee of the expiring mandates of the TCT Director and Deputy Director. The Commission noted it will share a concrete proposal in writing with the RSC very soon and outlined the procedure to be followed.</p>

  
 Chair of the Regional Steering Committee  
 Ms Ljubinka Ivanovic

  
 Co-Chair of the Regional Steering Committee  
 Ms Mona Bjorklund