



### 20<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Committee meeting

27 June 2023, TCT Secretariat's premises, Masarikova 5/9, Belgrade

### Minutes and Conclusions

1. The 20th Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting was held on 27 June 2023 in Belgrade in a hybrid form (physical participation and online).
2. Regional Steering Committee was attended by all RSC members (with the exception of the representative from the Republic of North Macedonia), European Commission representatives, observers of the European Union Member States and all Observing participants of the Transport Community.
3. The meeting was chaired by the Chair of the Regional Steering Committee, Ms Emina Mujevic Kara and Co-Chair, Ms Mona Bjorklund.
4. The Chair welcomed the meeting participants and recalled the success of the Summit in Budva and the visibility event in Bijelo Polje.
5. The Co-Chair extended her welcome note and touched upon a recent speech by EC President Ursula von der Leyen, who presented a new growth plan for the Western Balkans, aimed at boosting the integration of the Region with the EU. She also congratulated on the success of the Budva Summit in terms of expressed commitment to extend the Green lanes to the borders with the EU and the working lunch discussion on the Solidarity lanes with the observing participants.
6. In agreement with the Chair of the Regional Steering Committee, Co-Chair proposed an AOB point on overview of the geographical equilibrium within the TC Permanent Secretariat.
7. TCT Secretariat proposed another point under AOB on presenting information regarding the activities planned in the Western Balkans during the EU Mobility week.
8. The agenda of the 20th RSC meeting was adopted with proposed agenda points under AOB.

### POLICY

9.	<p><b>Information on the Connectivity Summit (held 15-16 May 2023, Budva) and follow-ups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat (TCT Secretariat) reported that the Connectivity Summit, which was co-organised by the CEFTA Secretariat on 15-16 May 2023 in Budva and supported by the Ministry of capital investments of Montenegro, gathered over 200 participants from the EU institutions and various authorities from the WB region. Key deliverables of the Summit were the signing of the High-Level understanding between the EU and South East European Parties, as well as the Declaration "Taking forward the Green Lanes". Following the Summit, the TCT Secretariat will develop a comprehensive Action Plan (roadmap) outlining the next steps to further deliver on the EU-Western Balkans/CEFTA Green Lanes. Moreover, it will continue to ensure that the System for Electronic Exchange of Data (SEED+) is practically applied at the main BCPs between EU Member States and their neighboring Western Balkans/CEFTA parties and explore the possibilities to extend the SEED+ system to Georgia and Ukraine.</li><li>• The European Commission thanked the TCT Secretariat for the organisation, together with the CEFTA Secretariat and the Montenegrin hosts, of the successful Connectivity Summit.</li></ul> <p><b>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the information on the presented outcomes of the Connectivity Summit.</b></p>
10.	<p><b>Information on the new generation of Action Plans on Road, Road Safety, Rail, Transport Facilitation, and Waterborne Transport and Multimodality for the period 2024-2027</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCT Secretariat presented the main features of the new generation of Action Plans for 2024-2027. The revised structure of the action plans is needed to align with new or amended legislation reflected in the updated Annex I of the Treaty. The revised Action Plans will incorporate new priority areas that have emerged since 2020, focusing on specific legislation for each mode of transport. The estimated timeline for the Action Plans revision was presented.</li> <li>• The Chair stated that, in view of the current progress, which is moderate, realistic measures need to be set in order to comply with the Transport Community Treaty.</li> <li>• The European Commission acknowledged the information presented by the TCT Secretariat. It underlined the importance of fulfilling the commitments contained in annex I TCT. It also invited the TCT Secretariat to come back with a more detailed proposal for the new generation action plans for the subsequent RSC meeting.</li> <li>• RSC members underlined that it is important that Action plans are supported by sufficient human and financial resources, that the deadlines for implementation of the measures should be realistic, TCT Secretariat should continue providing targeted support to facilitate the achievement of the Action plan objectives and that it should be strongly linked with the EU negotiations Chapters 14 and 21 and EC progress reports.</li> </ul> <p>In order to put stronger focus on implementation, the progress report on the Action plans might be further presented at the Ministerial Council.</p> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the first information on the new generation of Action Plans on Road, Road Safety, Rail, Transport Facilitation, and Waterborne Transport and Multimodality for 2024-2027.</i></b></p>
11.	<p><b>Information on the preparation of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Annual Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat presented the timeline for preparation of the TEN-T Annual Report, which is envisaged to be endorsed by the RSC in October 2023. Data collection will be managed entirely through TODIS for the first time this year.</li> <li>• The Chair welcomed TODIS as a major source of data as regional partners will, through such an important database, obtain information on status on projects implementation and will have important tool that could support the strategic planning.</li> <li>• The European Commission took note of the information shared by the TCT Secretariat and underlined that the annual TEN-T report is an important deliverable for the development of the indicative TEN-T extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans. It invited the TCT Secretariat to address earlier comments from the 2022 edition of the report and address synergies with the EU existing micro regional strategies, such as the Danube and the Ionian-Adriatic strategies. It also underlined the significance of the new Western Balkan- Eastern Mediterranean Corridor.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC acknowledged presented information on preparing the TEN-T Annual Report.</i></b></p>
12.	<p><b>Demonstration of the Transport Observatory Data Information System (TODIS) - live functionality by the TCT Permanent Secretariat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat informed that the final testing and finetuning round of TODIS took place between 20 and 22 June 2023. A short practical demonstration of the main system's features was run.</li> </ul> <p>TODIS will enter its operational stage, with the first round of TEN-T data collection to be managed through the system being scheduled for July 2023, immediately after the users' training. In</p>

	<p>parallel, TCT Secretariat will prepare the general regulatory framework for TODIS operation, to be further endorsed by the RSC during the next meeting.</p> <p>Regional coordinators in charge for data input will receive training in Belgrade on the system use and follow-up trainings will also be organized for regional users.</p> <p>TCT Secretariat shall present to the RSC members in the upcoming meeting, a proposal on governing and operation structure of the TODIS system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair stated that TODIS is a highly valuable tool that is yet to bring benefits, stressing that it should be regularly updated, and that staff need to be trained to use it.</li> <li>• The European Commission underlined the significance of the Transport Observatory for important TCT deliverables, such as the annual TEN-T report and the bi-annual update of the five-year rolling work plan. It underlined that EU Member States are also interested in using TODIS.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the establishment of TODIS information system and system functionality for future data collection in the Western Balkan region</i></b></p>
13.	<p><b>Information from the European Commission on Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme (post Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF) / Grant Application Form (GAF))</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The European Commission presented information on the Safe and Sustainable Transport Program in relation to post-WBIF and Grant Application Form for Regional Partners. The PowerPoint Presentation will be shared with all regional partners.</li> <li>• The programme will follow a phased approach with phase 1 kicking off already in the autumn. The programme management, including selection of the projects is entrusted to the World Bank. Projects will be selected based on their maturity and follow the timeline to prepare the lending to the World Bank's host project. As regards allocation of funding a balanced approach will be followed among the regional partners. EU Grants shall be blended with World Bank loans and the grant amount could be up to 15 mil EUR per project. The plan is that the programme will be implemented between 2023-2028, which includes project selection and implementation..</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC acknowledged the presented information on the Safe and Sustainable Transport Program.</i></b></p>
14.	<p><b>A Draft Report on the Progress of the Study "Assessment of the Rail Market in the Western Balkans in Terms of Capacities, Policies, Economic and Technical Level of Development of Freight and Passenger Transport Segments"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat presented a draft report on the study "Assessment of the Rail Market in the Western Balkans in Terms of Capacities, Policies, Economic and Technical Level of Development of Freight and Passenger Transport Segments". The main outputs and deliverables, including the next steps and expected outcomes with estimated timelines, were presented.</li> <li>• The Chair stated that the study will allow to identify relevant stakeholders in the region, and to identify the need to meet EU standards in rail market development.</li> <li>• The European Commission acknowledged the presented information and underlined the importance of the study which identifies all challenges related to rail market development in the Western Balkans.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the presented Report of the Study on "Assessment of the Rail Market in the Western Balkans in Terms of Capacities, Policies, Economic and Technical Level of Development of Freight and Passenger Transport Segments".</i></b></p>

15.	<p><b>Information on Cooperation with Observing Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat reported that since November 2022, Observing Participants have been invited to attend all technical meetings, workshops, and other events organized by the TCT Secretariat and/or other EU agencies/institutions. The overall engagement of the three Observing Participants has been satisfactory (having in mind the specific circumstances for Ukraine).</li> <li>• The European Commission thanked the TCT Secretariat for its efforts to deliver on the closer involvement of the observing participants in the work of the Transport Community. The European Commission acknowledged the high involvement of the Observing Participants at all levels, including Technical Committees and welcomed the draft Action Plans as firsthand deliverables that will guide further the cooperation with the Observing Participants. Following these very positive developments, the European Commission underlined the importance of discussing the next steps towards full membership in the TCT for the observing participants, a topic that needs to be discussed with EU member states in the coming months. In the meantime, the European Commission encouraged the observing participants to make full use of the opportunities for closer cooperation with the Transport Community currently available.</li> <li>• The Chair encouraged the Observing Participants to continue participating in the Transport Community activities.</li> <li>• Representatives from the Observing participants, Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova expressed appreciation and high content from their involvement in the activities of the Transport Community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the engagement of the Observing Participants in the TCT Secretariat's work and further cooperation on drafting the Action Plans for Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine reflecting the Action Plans for the Western Balkan region.</b></p>
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#### ADMINISTRATION

16.	<p><b>Discussion on the detailed drafting of proposed changes to the Rules on Reimbursement of Expenses to Participants at the meetings organised by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat presented the detailed outline of the proposal to amend the reimbursement rules for the representatives of Regional Partners and experts who participate at the meetings organised by the TCT Secretariat.</li> <li>• The European Commission stressed that 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 stated support in principle for the proposed changes to the TCT reimbursement rules, which would allow to overcome difficulties in participating in TCT events and official meetings.</li> <li>• RSC member from Bosnia and Herzegovina called for optimizing of the procedures for reimbursement in order to reduce administrative burden and asked for more clear definition in the proposed rules, of the point 3.5.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: The RSC supported in principle the proposed changes to the Rules on Reimbursement of Expenses to Participants at meetings organised by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat.</b></p>
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17.	<p><b>Report from 6th Budget Committee meeting of Transport Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair of the Budget Committee, Ms Cristina Cuadra Garcia, reported that the Budget Committee held its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting on 19 April 2023 in Belgrade. All the members were physically present at the meeting for the first time, including high-level representatives from the EU institutions.</li> <li>• The discussed topics included the 2022 financial statements, the Budget 2024 outline, and the proposed modifications to the rules on reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs for event and meeting participants. The Budget Committee endorsed its 2022 Annual Report.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the information presented by the Budget Committee Chair on the outcomes of the 6<sup>th</sup> Budget Committee meeting.</i></b></p>
18.	<p><b>The Mid-Year Report on the Transport Community Annual Work Program 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat presented the Mid-Year Report on the Transport Community Annual Work Program 2023. The report shows TCT's activities during the first half of 2023 in railway, road safety, transport facilitation, waterborne transport and multimodality, transport of dangerous goods and social acquis and passengers rights.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC acknowledged the achievements and activities during the first half of 2023 and endorsed the TCT Secretariat's Mid-Year Report.</i></b></p>
19.	<p><b>Presentation of the Transport Community Audit Report for 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat informed that the Audit of the 2022 accounts has been completed in June 2023.</li> <li>• Based on the Auditor opinion: "the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Permanent Secretariat of The Transport Community (hereinafter the "Organisation") as at 31 December 2022, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended on 31 December 2022 in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)"</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC acknowledged the Audit Report for 2022 and congratulated the Secretariat for the unqualified opinion of the auditors.</i></b></p>
20.	<p><b>Transport Community 2024 Draft Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TCT Secretariat presented first outline of the Budget for 2024. The proposed 2024 Budget includes a modest 2% increase to account for inflation and potential modifications to the reimbursement rules for attendees of Transport Community meetings and events. In view of the level of implementation of the budget line for meetings of the official bodies of the TCT, the Secretariat proposed to shift some resources towards different budget lines.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Conclusion: The RSC welcomed the presented Draft Budget for 2024, noting that Regional Steering Committee meetings might be organized in different locations in line with the TC Secretariat's rules.</i></b></p>
21.	<p><b>The Decision on the renewal of the mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the TCT Permanent Secretariat</b></p>



- Following the completion of the procedure envisaged in the applicable rules, and having consulted the TCT Ministerial Council, the RSC Members unanimously voted in favour of the renewal of mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the TCT Secretariat.

***Conclusion: The RSC adopted the Decision to renew the mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community.***

***The term of office of Mr Matej Zakonjsek as Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community is renewed for another three years, as of 1 August 2023.***

***The term of office of Ms Ljuba Siljanoska as Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community is renewed for another three years, as of 1 September 2023.***

## 22. AOB

### 1. TC Permanent Secretariat Human Resources and Geographical Equilibrium

- The TCT Secretariat presented information on human resources and geographic equilibrium according to the adopted organigram of the TC Secretariat as well as geographic representation of the applicants in 2022 and 2023.
- The Chair pointed out that human capacities of the TCT Secretariat need to be observed regarding the workload when it comes to implementation of activities in relation to the Observing participants.
- All agreed that Secondment rules could be a useful tool to support geographical representation in the TCT Secretariat and after one year of implementation, to reflect if any improvements or modifications to the rules are needed.

### 2. Information on the EU Mobility Week

- The TCT Secretariat presented an outline of activities for Mobility Week 2023 in North Macedonia and Serbia dedicated to cycling. During Mobility Week, a draft declaration focusing on key cooperation points such as National Cycling Policies, Cycling Infrastructure, Integrated Planning and Multimodality, Improved Safety, Education and Raising Awareness will be presented.
- All Regional Partners were urged to nominate contact points from their respective Ministries.

Chair of the Regional Steering Committee  
Ms Emina Mujevic Kara



Co-Chair of the Regional Steering Committee  
Ms Mona Bjorklund