

18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Technical Committee on Railway

**Athens, Greece**  
**05-06 December 2023**

### Conclusions

1. The Agenda of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee on Railway was adopted unanimously.

#### Administrative matters:

2. Considering that it was the last TC on Railway in 2023, all regional partners agreed that the Chairperson for 2024 will be from Kosovo\*.
3. The meeting was attended by the representatives of DG MOVE, ERA, all six Western Balkan parties, and Georgia (observer).
4. Reimbursement rules for next year will be changed based on the decision by Regional Steering Committee from 11. December 2023. Instead of one representative per institution, TCT can cover costs for two people per institution, but not more than four people per regional partner. The increase in the number of participants from 1 to 2 applies only to **capacity-building events**, subject to budgetary availability.
5. Instead of reimbursement for accommodation representatives will get per diems after the meeting. TCT will explore options for this period to be minimised or possibly to happen at the event start date.
6. All Regional Partners expressed dissatisfaction with the new system introduced for registering participation. RPs consider it inefficient because of the unavailability of superiors who should confirm it through the system. However, moving to a digital system was done in response to a request raised at a previous RSC meeting.
7. Also, a few regional partners raised issues regarding the duration of the reimbursement process. Some of them did not receive reimbursement from the last meeting in Zagreb (5 October).
8. The TCT Secretariat will assess all aspects of the process and will do its best to facilitate the whole procedure of reimbursement.


#### Expert discussion:

9. The TCT Secretariat presented two documents under preparation:
  - A Dashboard Overview with basic indicators will be used for internal usage. It should be a quick answer to the question “What is the current state of play”.
  - Draft of Rail Action Plan 2024 – 2028
10. All regional partners will send remarks and proposals (including a deadline for each specific action) by 21 December. The timeline for approval of the new Rail Action Plan is:
  - First draft - by February 2024
  - Internal consultation with each regional partner by May/June 2024
  - Adoption at the level of Technical Committee – June 2024
  - Administrative procedure in each regional partner June – September 2024
  - Adoption by Regional Steering Committee – October 2024

(\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

11. A representative of DG MOVE intervened with concrete proposals to be included or deleted in the Dashboard and in the new Rail Action Plan:
  - New Rail Action Plan: all RPs should provide evidence (or plan adoption) of a national rail infrastructure development strategy in accordance with the requirement of Article 8 of Directive 2012/34/EU, i.e. with a view to meeting future mobility needs in terms of maintenance, renewal and development of the infrastructure based on sustainable financing of the railway system. That strategy shall cover at least five years and be renewable.
  - Dashboard: the whole document should be shorter (keep just essential) and streamlined, e.g. in area separation of infrastructure and operation
12. All participants acknowledged the presentation by Mr. Panagiotis who presented challenges from the real sector in terms of the railway transport from the port of Piraeus towards Central Europe.
13. The next TC on Railway will be held **in February** (the place will be fixed in the coming days).
14. Regional partners, who did not send data regarding traffic volume, will do it by 21.12.2023.
15. All regional partners will send proposals for technical assistance/designing in the next cycle of CONNECTA by 21 December 2023.
16. All participants welcomed the intervention of representatives of Georgia who informed them in detail about carried out and planned rail sector reforms in accordance and for the purposes of approximating Georgian railway legislation with the EU Rail Acquis.
17. All participants have been informed by ERA representative – Christoph KAUPAT about the plan for coming training under the ERA umbrella.

Done in Athens, on 06 December 2023.

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