Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy in the Western Balkans

Progress Report

November 2025

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List of Abbreviations

Annex I	Annex I to the Transport Community Treaty
ADM	Excise Customs and Monopolies Agency of Italy
ADR	Agreement for international carriage of dangerous goods by road
ANTOCC	Albanian National Traffic Operation and Control Centre
ARA	Albanian Road Authority
AoI	Area of interest
BCAs	Border Crossing Agreements
BCPs	Border Crossing Points
ClimaProof	Enhancing Environmental Performance and Climate Proofing of Infrastructure Investments in the Western Balkan Region from an EU integration perspective
CO2	Carbon dioxide
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CONNECTA	Technical Assistance to Connectivity in the Western Balkans
DAC	Digital Automatic Coupler
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	A digital version of the freight document, CMR
ECVVR	European Centralised Virtual Vehicle Register
EETS	European electronic toll service
eFTI	Electronic freight transport information
EIB	European Investment Bank
EKORR	National Road Operation Entity
ERA	European Union Agency for Railways
ERTMS	European Rail Traffic Management System
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
EUD	Delegation of the European Union
EU Member State(s)	European Union Member State(s)
EVR	European Vehicle Register
eQMS	Electronic Queuing Management System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions
FUAs	Functional Urban Areas
FBIH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina-entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INTERREG	Interregional cooperation programme co-funded by the European Union
IM(s)	Infrastructure Manager(s)
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
IWW	Inland Waterways

JASPERS	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LCs	Level-crossings
LIID	Local Infrastructure and Institutions Development
MaaS	Mobility as a Service
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoT(s)	Ministry(ies) of Transport
NAPs	National Access Points
NBs	National Bodies
NCTS	New Computerised Transit System
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIB	National Investigation Body
NSA	National Safety Authority
NSW	National Single Window
NUMP	National Urban Mobility Plans
NVR	National Vehicle Register
OPS	Onshore Power Supply
PERS	Public Enterprise Roads of Serbia
PHEV	Plug In Hybrid Electric Vehicle
PIU	Project Implementation Units
PSO	Public Service Obligation
RAMS	Road Asset Management System
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
RID	Agreement for international carriage of dangerous goods by rail
RIAMS	Railway Infrastructure Asset Management System
RIMN	Rail Infrastructure Managers Network
RINF	Registers of Infrastructure
RES	Renewable energy sources
RISM	Road Infrastructure Safety Management
RP	Regional Partners
RRA	Railway Regulatory Agency
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RSA	Road Safety Audit
RSI	Road Safety Inspection
RTTI	Real-Time Traffic Information
RU	Railway Undertaking
S2R	Shift2Rail
S2R JU	Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking
SEED	System for Electronic Exchange of Data
SEE Parties	Southeast European Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
SEESARI	Southeast Europe Strategic Alliance for Rail Innovation

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

SLA	Service Level Agreement
SSMS	Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy
SUMP	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan
SUPRAE	Support for Policy Reform, Accession, and Effectiveness
TA	Technical Assistance
TC	Technical Committee
TCT	Transport Community Treaty
TCT Secretariat	Transport Community Permanent Secretariat
TEAMS platform	Microsoft Teams business communication platform
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport networks
ToR	Terms of Reference
TODIS	Transport Community Transport Observatory Database and Information System
TPED	Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive
TSI(s)	Technical Specification(s) of Interoperability
TTF	World Bank Trade and Transport Facilitation Project
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value-added tax
WB	Western Balkans
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework
WBRSO	Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory
WB DESI	The Western Balkans Digital Economy and Society Index
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Executive Summary

The **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS)** continues to guide the Western Balkans toward a cleaner, more efficient, and better-connected transport system. Anchored in the principles of the **European Green Deal** and the objective of achieving **climate neutrality by 2050**, the Strategy provides a regional framework for aligning policies, investments, and infrastructure development with EU standards. The 2025 reporting period marks a steady shift from planning to implementation. Regional Partners are increasingly embedding sustainability, digitalisation, and resilience into transport planning and infrastructure projects. Progress is evident in the expansion of charging networks for electric vehicles, the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), and the gradual integration of climate resilience into investment planning and national transport strategies. While progress is uneven and challenges persist—especially in legislative alignment, funding, and institutional capacity—the direction of change is clear and consistent across all three SSMS pillars.

Sustainable Mobility

Under **Flagship 1**, focused on **boosting the uptake of zero-emission vehicles and alternative fuels infrastructure**, the region has advanced its transition toward cleaner transport systems through the introduction of alternative fuels infrastructure, sustainable urban mobility planning, and gradual fleet renewal. The expansion of electric charging networks continued, with Albania and Serbia showing tangible growth along major corridors and in urban areas. However, while charging points have increased, **none of the Regional Partners has yet transposed Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation**, and no airport or port in the region is equipped with alternative fuel infrastructure. Technical assistance launched by the Transport Community on the **Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) will** support all partners in preparing their National Policy Frameworks and identifying priority corridors.

Under **Flagship 2**, focused on **creating zero-emission airports and ports**, progress remained gradual but consistent. In Albania, the **Port of Durres** incorporated renewable energy elements and e-mobility solutions, while the **Port of Bar** in Montenegro advanced energy-efficiency upgrades through installation of solar panels and initiated feasibility studies for on-shore power supply. Despite these positive examples, aviation and maritime sectors across the region remain reliant on conventional fuels and require additional investment to reach EU decarbonisation standards.

Under **Flagship 3**, focused on **making interurban and urban mobility more sustainable and healthy**, efforts to promote sustainable and healthy urban mobility have gained momentum through the development of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)**. In Albania, Tirana is preparing its first comprehensive SUMP with GIZ support, focusing on public transport, cycling infrastructure, and pedestrian accessibility. In North Macedonia, SUMPs are being developed for **five municipalities**—Kavadarci, Prilep, Kočani, Strumica, and Struga—under the **World Bank technical assistance programme**. In Serbia, five cities (Belgrade, Aleksinac, Kruševac, Valjevo, and Šabac), have officially adopted SUMPs, while eight others are at various stages of preparation. Other municipalities across the region, such as Shkodra, Elbasan, and Belsh, have initiated isolated sustainable mobility measures, but comprehensive implementation remains limited due to financial and institutional constraints.

Under **Flagship 4**, focused on **greening freight transport**, Regional Partners continued to identify investment priorities for multimodal freight terminals and logistics centres. The TCT TA identified nine priority multimodal freight terminals in the region to be potentially proposed for TEN-T inclusion,

forming the basis for future investment planning. However, multimodal logistics operations and governance frameworks remain underdeveloped, and investment in combined transport terminals is still limited. The advancement of studies on **eFTI architecture and digital freight documentation** provides a basis for future efficiency improvements in freight transport and logistics.

Under **Flagship 5**, focused on **pricing carbon and providing better incentives for users**, work progressed mainly through the modernisation of e-tolling systems and cross-border interoperability. **Serbia and North Macedonia** maintained full e-tolling interoperability, while **Montenegro** achieved interoperability with Serbia in 2024 and continued testing connections with North Macedonia. In Albania, in November 2024, National Road Operation Entity was established with responsibility implement and manage tolling operations.

Smart Mobility

Under **Flagship 6**, focused on **making connected and automated multimodal mobility a reality**, Regional Partners advanced the deployment of **Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)** across road corridors. Albania completed construction of its **National Traffic Management Centre**, improving real-time traffic monitoring and coordination capacity while North Macedonia initiated a tender for ITS installation on the **Corridor X**, including control, detection, and communication subsystems. Although implementation of ITS is accelerating, **transposition of the ITS Directive (2010/40/EU and 2023/2661)** remains incomplete, and interoperability across borders and modes continues to be limited.

Under **Flagship 7**, focused on **innovation, data, and AI for smart mobility**, regional cooperation has strengthened through several milestone events. The **Digital Mobility and ITS Conference held in Seville in 2025** brought together decision-makers, Ministries of Transport and municipalities to explore applications of data-driven transport solutions, while the **Digital Mobility Summer School in Prague** provided training to young professionals in ITS deployment, AI applications, and digital governance. However, the lack of formal data-governance frameworks and limited R&I funding in the transport sector continue to constrain the pace of digital transformation.

Resilient Mobility

Under **Flagship 8**, focused on **working towards a single transport market**, Regional Partners have advanced the policy and strategic alignment of their transport sectors with EU objectives. **Serbia** is developing its **National Transport Strategy 2023–2030**, integrating sustainability and digitalisation priorities. **Montenegro** is updating its **Traffic Development Strategy 2019–2035**, with a new **Action Plan 2026–2027** focused on green mobility. **North Macedonia** completed the **third progress report** on its **Transport Strategy 2018–2030**, analysing CO_2 emissions and implementation progress, while **Albania** is drafting its **Sectoral Transport Strategy 2030**, aligning national priorities with EU sustainability and connectivity goals. Collectively, these efforts demonstrate a growing institutional commitment to EU alignment, although monitoring frameworks and inter-institutional coordination still require strengthening.

Under **Flagship 9**, focused on **making mobility fair and just for all**, the region continued implementing the **Action Plan on Social Issues and Passenger Rights in Transport**, endorsed by the Transport Community's Regional Steering Committee. The plan supports actions to ensure fair working conditions, promote gender equality, and safeguard passenger rights. Awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-building measures have been launched in all Regional Partners, though enforcement capacity remains limited.

Under **Flagship 10**, focused on **enhancing transport safety and security**, progress continued through the **Road Safety Action Plan** and the **Transport Community Road Safety Observatory**, which supported data collection and high-risk section identification. Several Regional Partners updated their national road safety action plans, integrating targeted interventions and improved emergency response measures. Nevertheless, limited funding and the absence of independent road safety agencies in some jurisdictions continue to hinder the full implementation of the EU road safety acquis.

Regional Outlook

The 2025 reporting period confirms that the Western Balkans are steadily transitioning from strategy development to practical implementation of the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**. While challenges remain in financing, digital interoperability, and legislative alignment, the overall trajectory is positive. Regional Partners are increasingly investing in clean mobility, digital solutions, and climate-resilient infrastructure, supported by strong collaboration within the **Transport Community framework** and through EU technical and financial assistance. Continued coordination, capacity-building, and targeted investment will be crucial for accelerating the transition toward a **sustainable, smart, and resilient transport system**—one that strengthens regional connectivity, supports economic growth, and aligns the Western Balkans ever closer with the European Union's transport and climate objectives.

2. Introduction

The Western Balkans stands at a decisive point in its transport transformation journey. In the context of the European Green Deal and the EU's commitment to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, the region's transport sector is progressively shifting from a model centred on conventional mobility towards one driven by sustainability, digitalisation, and resilience. With the adoption of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS) for the Western Balkans, regional partners have embraced a shared vision of a cleaner, smarter, and better-connected transport system that supports both economic competitiveness and environmental responsibility.

Over the past year, the Western Balkans has advanced from strategic planning to tangible implementation. The alignment with the revised Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation (EU) 2024/1780, the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), and Green Agenda Action Plan revision has accelerated efforts to deploy green and digital solutions across all modes of transport. Initiatives such as the development of zero-emission public transport fleets, multimodal freight terminals, and interoperable digital data systems are gradually transforming the regional transport landscape. The growing engagement of municipalities, regional transport operators, and private sector actors reflects the deepening ownership of the SSMS principles at all governance levels.

Despite these positive developments, the region continues to face structural and operational challenges. The dominance of road transport, limited availability of charging and refuelling infrastructure, slow digital integration, and fragmented governance frameworks remain critical barriers to a seamless, sustainable, and data-driven mobility system. Strengthening institutional capacities, ensuring investment readiness, and fostering public-private cooperation are therefore essential to fully unlock the potential of the SSMS.

The implementation of the SSMS is guided by three interlinked pillars — Sustainable Mobility, Smart Mobility, and Resilient Mobility — each contributing to the creation of an integrated and future-proof transport ecosystem. Under these pillars, ten flagship initiatives promote alternative fuel uptake, multimodal connectivity, intelligent transport systems, and climate adaptation measures. Together, they represent the backbone of a coherent regional framework for decarbonising transport and enabling digital interoperability with the EU Single Transport Area.

This progress report provides an analytical overview of achievements and developments made under the SSMS framework between 2024 and 2025. It highlights policy advancements, pilot initiatives, and cross-border cooperation efforts that are driving the Western Balkans closer to the European transport standards. The report also identifies persistent gaps and opportunities for targeted action, serving as a strategic tool for decision-makers, regional institutions, and financial partners to further accelerate the transition towards a sustainable and smart mobility system in the Western Balkans.

3. Progress by objectives and flagships

3.1 Sustainable Mobility

Flagship 1 - Boosting the Uptake of Zero-Emission Vehicles, Renewable & Low-Carbon Fuels, and Related Infrastructure

Building a sustainable transport system requires action on several fronts. This transition depends on several main pillars including adopting zero-emission vehicles, using renewable and low-carbon energy, and developing strong infrastructure to support these technologies. Together, these measures cut greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and move us toward greener mobility. The effort is guided by the following key actions:

i. Transposition of alternative fuel regulation

ii. Deployment of e-charging stations on the busiest corridors

iii. Encouraging incentives for zero-emission vehicles

iv. Improving emissions testing in roadworthiness checks

Transposition of the Alternative Fuel Regulation

As part of the *Fit for 55* package, Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, and repealing Directive 2014/94/EU entered into force on 13 April 2024. The regulation sets binding minimum requirements for alternative fuels infrastructure across all transport modes, with a focus on interoperability, clear user information, and easy payment options.

Albania is drafting the Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, which repeals Directive 2014/94/EU. During the reporting period preparatory steps have been undertaken for the drafting of Council of Ministers' Decisions, which will specifically address: (i) the promotion of clean vehicles in road transport; and (ii) the establishment of road infrastructure for alternative fuels. The alignment process is foreseen to be completed within 2025, through the adoption of dedicated secondary legislation covering the specific aspects of the acquis.

Montenegro began in September 2025 project related to the preparation of national policy frameworks for deploying alternative fuels infrastructure. Additionally, the new Transport

Development Strategy is expected to define the obligations and methodologies for designing and constructing climate-resilient road infrastructure in order to ensure alignment with:

- The deliverables of CONNECTA Technical Assistance on a strategic framework for the deployment of e-charging stations on the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network
- green mobility principles in accordance with the requirements of the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans.

Serbia is currently preparing the draft Law on the Introduction of Alternative Fuels Infrastructure in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR). The deadline for the adoption of the law is the fourth quarter of 2025. To support progress in the transposition and implementation of the AFIR Regulation across the region, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat will launch and award a Technical Assistance project by the end of 2025.

In North Macedonia, the Ministry of Energy, Mining and Mineral Resources is primarily responsible for the country's alternative fuels policies, which promote investments in renewable energy and green technologies. Previously this was responsibility of the Ministry of Economy.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
E-Mobility and fuels						
Clean Vehicles Directive 2009/33/EC[2]	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Alternative Fuels Regulation 2023/1804 [3]	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed

Table 1: Transposition of Sustainable Mobility Legislation

Deployment of E-Charging Stations on the Busiest Corridors

In Albania, the Agency for Energy Efficiency is actively expanding the electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Albania, following a feasibility study and detailed report on the development of charging stations. Namely, the Agency for Energy Efficiency has continued investments in the deployment of electric vehicle charging infrastructure along main corridors and in major urban nodes. Five charging stations have been installed in Tirana (four AC 22 kW and one DC 350 kW), one 50 kW fast charger in Shkodra, and one 60 kW charger in Dibra). Furthermore, nine fast chargers have been completed in key border cities and transit routes, namely Saranda (50 kW), Vlora (50 kW), Korça (50 kW), Durres (50 kW), Elbasan (50 kW), Vlora Port Authority (150 kW), Durres Port Authority (150 kW), and Hani i Hotit border point (150 kW). Furthermore, a 150-kW charger is being installed in cooperation with the Kakavija customs point. All stations are integrated into a central cloud-based system allowing real-time monitoring and are complemented by adapted parking

[2] Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy-Efficient Road Transport Vehicles.
[3] Directive ensuring a minimum deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure. As part of the Fit for 55 package, the European Commission proposed a new Regulation on alternative fuels infrastructure, repealing the previous Directive

spaces with appropriate signage. These developments mark significant progress in enhancing the e-charging network across the country, particularly along the busiest corridors and border points.

On Serbian motorways network until now 32 e-charging stations have been installed and in operation. An additional 13 e-charging stations are in the connection phase. For the majority of these, the connection requires increased electricity capacity. PERS is conducting consultations to ensure all e-charging stations are installed and put in operation by the end of 2025.

In Montenegro, the total number of charging stations is not officially recorded. Based on the available data, there are approximately 95 charging stations in total, of which 12 are private. Among these, around 10 stations are fast chargers. The remaining installations are predominantly AC chargers with a capacity of up to 22 kW. None of the e charging stations has been installed on motorway.

Aligning Emission Standards Across the Region: Setting a Minimum Standard for New Vehicles at EURO 6

Beyond the legislation in Annex I of the Transport Community Treaty, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy calls for adopting EU emission standards for light- and heavy-duty vehicles to ensure harmonisation across the Western Balkans. At present, only Montenegro has partially transposed some of these standards, while none has introduced carbon performance rules for vehicles sold in the EU, or implemented the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive. Closing these gaps is essential to align the region with EU vehicle emission and sustainability requirements.

Albania, during the reporting period, has undertaken preparatory actions to review the provisions of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/392 on the monitoring and reporting of CO_2 emissions data from passenger cars and light commercial vehicles, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/631. In parallel, Albania has initiated the establishment of a national monitoring system to ensure that all necessary parameters are collected and reported in line with EU technical requirements. Full approximation with Regulation (EU) 2019/631, which sets CO_2 emission performance standards for new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles, is planned by 2027. In addition, awareness-raising activities targeting car sales companies and other relevant stakeholders are being carried out to prepare for the effective implementation of future obligations.

In Montenegro, a new regulation entered into force on 1 July 2024, introducing stricter environmental standards for vehicle imports. The regulation prohibits the import of vehicles older than 15 years and sets the minimum emission standard at Euro 5, applying mainly to vehicles manufactured between 2009 and 2013. In addition, Euro 6 compliance is required for specific vehicle types, including Category M vehicles (over 400 kg, above 15 kW, for passenger transport) and Category N vehicles (over 550 kg, above 15 kW, for goods transport). Montenegro is the only Regional Partner that has transposed Regulations (EC) No 715/2007, and (EC) No 595/2009 on EURO 6 emissions standards.

In North Macedonia, the Law on Vehicles and its subsequent amendments introduce provisions related to the environmental category of vehicles, defined according to exhaust emission levels in line with ECE and EU regulations, as well as the introduction of an environmental sticker indicating each vehicle's emission category. The minimum emission standard for newly registered vehicles is currently set at Euro 5. The Ministry of Finance adopted a new approach for assessing motor vehicle tax that directly links payable duties and registration fees to measured CO_2 emissions, as specified in the EU Certificate of Conformity (CoC). The Law on Motor Vehicles Tax, adopted on 18 December 2019 and in force since 1 January 2020, formalised this system.

However, except for Montenegro, no progress has been made in incorporating Euro 6 emission standards (Regulations (EC) 715/2007, 595/2009, and (EU) 2019/631) into national legislation. The import of vehicles meeting at least the Euro 4 standard remains permitted, contributing to an ageing vehicle fleet and higher emission levels affecting air quality. While a CO_2-based vehicle import tax is in place, there are no direct incentives, such as subsidies or grants, to promote the uptake of zero-emission vehicles.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Vehicle regulations						
Euro standards for road vehicles Regulations (EC) No 715/2007[4], and (EC) No 595/2009[5]	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Carbon emission regulations Regulation (EU) 2019/631[6]	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed

Table 2: Transposition of Vehicle Regulations

Encouraging Incentives for Zero-Emission Vehicles

Albania aims to reduce carbon emissions and strengthen environmental protection, ensuring a sustainable transition in the maritime sector. In the context of EU legislation harmonization, they are working on the alignment of the Directive (EU) 2015/757 “On monitoring, reporting, and verification of maritime greenhouse gas emissions”, a harmonization requirement for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy by 2025.

Montenegro has continued its annual initiative (publishing the tender), which began in 2021, to support electric and hybrid vehicles purchase. The grant was set at €100,000 per year (totalling €200,000), with half earmarked for electric vehicles and the other half for hybrids. Individuals could receive a subsidy for one vehicle, while businesses could receive support for up to two vehicles. In 2025, the EKO-Fund budgeted €150,000 for subsidies to promote energy-efficient vehicle procurement for both individuals and businesses, as well as to develop charging infrastructure. Subsidies are related only to electric vehicle and are in a range from 4500-7200 EUR, depending on the car purchase value.

Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to support the purchase of electric vehicles, which began in 2021 through a reduction in customs rates and in 2022 with an incentive program. In 2024, the Decision on the temporary reduction of customs rates for the import of new cars was again adopted, by which the purchase of electrical vehicles is exempted from paying customs duties, Decision is valid until end of 2025 and continuation of the practice is being considered.

[4] Euro 6 Standards for Light Passenger and Commercial Vehicles. The European Commission proposed Euro 7 standards (COM/2022/586 final), repealing Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009

[5] Euros VI Standards for Heavy Duty Vehicles. The European Commission proposed Euro 7 standards (COM/2022/586 final), repealing Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009

[6] Regulation (EU) 2019/631 Setting CO2 Emission Performance Standards for New Passenger Cars and Vans. As part of the Fit for 55 package, the European Commission proposed a revised regulation on carbon standards for both light-duty and heavy-duty vehicles.

In January 2025, Serbia adopted a Regulation supporting purchases of new, fully electric vehicles (the sixth consecutive year for this initiative). Budget for 2025 is set at €1.45 million. Additional subsidies were introduced for public transport and taxi fleet renewal, with eligibility criteria for taxis requiring:

- Fully electric, hybrid, or compressed natural gas drive,
- Compliance with at least the EURO 6 engine standard.

Additional conditions stipulate that the vehicle price cannot be less than €13,000, and it must be either white or a light/dark shade.

Improving Emissions Testing in Roadworthiness Checks

Directive 2014/45/EU on periodic roadworthiness tests has been fully transposed in Montenegro and partially transposed by Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia. The Directive sets minimum requirements for vehicle inspections on public roads. However, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/621—detailing technical information, testing methods, and data procedures—has been fully transposed only in Albania. These gaps show that updates to roadworthiness systems are still needed to ensure full alignment with EU standards.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Roadworthiness						
Directive 2014/45/ on Periodic Roadworthiness Tests for Motor Vehicles and their Trailers	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Fully transposed	Partially transposed	Partially transposed
Regulation (EU) 2019/621 on Technical Information necessary for Roadworthiness Testing	Fully transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed

Table 3: Transposition of Roadworthiness Legislation

Flagship 2 - Creating Zero-Emission Airports and Ports

Sustainability in waterborne and air transport is key to reducing environmental impacts. The maritime sector is shifting to green technologies and alternative fuels like LNG to boost efficiency, cut emissions, and protect ecosystems. Aviation is advancing through fuel-efficient aircraft, wider use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), and better traffic management, all aimed at lowering emissions while maintaining global connectivity. This Flagship initiative includes the following actions:

- Following up on deliverables of INTERREG projects regarding Action Plans for Greening of Ports of Bar and Durres
- Setting the foundation for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure through the transposition of relevant EU Acquis in the air and waterborne sectors.

Following Up on Deliverables of INTERREG projects regarding Action Plans for Greening of Ports of Bar and Durres

Currently, alternative fuels infrastructure in inland waterways core network ports (Brčko, Šamac, Novi Sad, Pančevo and Belgrade) and maritime core network ports (Bar and Durres) is lacking due to limited demand for such facilities. Nonetheless, some steps have been taken to enhance the environmental sustainability of these ports.

In the current programming period, both Albania and Montenegro are participating in various EU-funded projects aimed at improving sustainability, connectivity, and environmental resilience in their transport and energy sectors. These initiatives include: The SA - Connectivity Project, as part of the Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme, which focuses on enhancing regional mobility and connectivity in the South Adriatic region through sustainable, climate-resilient, and smart intermodal mobility systems to improve accessibility and cross-border movement with coordinated actions. Port of Durres Action Plan under this project includes integrating new modules into the Port Community System (PCS). The TREASURE Project under the Interreg Euro-Med Programme, aims to protect biodiversity and reduce urban pollution through enhanced environmental monitoring and pollution mitigation in port areas. The project finances a pumping station to monitor hydrocarbon pollution levels in seawater at the Port of Durres, addressing the need for enhanced pollution detection. The RENEWPORT Project, also part of the Interreg Euro-Med Programme, promotes the adoption of renewable energy within Mediterranean ports through solar energy installations. Port of Durres will install solar panels, leveraging its 300 sunny days per year to lower energy costs and establish a renewable energy model for port infrastructure The ADRIREC project, funded by the Interreg IPA Adrion Programme, focuses on renewable energy investments through installation of photovoltaic panels to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and decrease energy costs. Photovoltaic panels will be installed on two structures at the Port of Durres, generating approximately 70 kWp of power. There is no reporting for transposition of the EU legislation regarding the measure toward the path to zero-emission in waterborne transport in Albania.

At the Port of Bar, several initiatives under the Local Action Plan for a Sustainable and Low-Carbon Port, supported by EU-funded projects (RENEWPORT, WATERBRIDGING, SUPERALFUEL), are progressing. These include the installation of solar panels, studies on onshore power supply (OPS), and assessments of alternative fuels such as hydrogen, ammonia, and methanol. The port has also introduced a dust emission reduction system (wheel washing and de-mucking) and conducts regular environmental monitoring, with quarterly air quality checks and annual seawater, soil, and sediment assessments by external experts.

Setting the Foundation for the Deployment of Alternative Fuel infrastructure through Transposition of Relevant EU Acquis in Air and Waterborne Sectors

Regional partners have not yet adopted the Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation, which governs this area. Furthermore, fixed storage tank facilities for aviation biofuel are currently unavailable are regional airports.

Regional Partner	Airports	Availability of Alternative Fuels Infrastructure
Albania	Tirana	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sarajevo	No
	Banja Luka	No
North Macedonia	Skopje	No
	Ohrid	No
Kosovo	Pristina	No
Montenegro	Podgorica	No
	Tivat	No
Serbia	Belgrade	No
	Niš	No
	Kraljevo	No
	Maritime ports	
Albania	Durres	No
	Vlore	No
Montenegro	Bar	No
	Inland Waterway ports	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Brčko	No
	Šamac	No
Serbia	Belgrade	No
	Novi Sad	No
	Pančevo	No
	Sremska Mitrovica	No
	Smederevo	No
	Prahovo	No

Table 4: Availability of Alternative Fuels Infrastructure in Airports/Maritime Ports/Inland Waterway Ports

Flagship 3 - Making Interurban and Urban Mobility more Sustainable and Healthy

Urban mobility is central to cutting emissions and improving air quality, especially in the Western Balkans, where some of Europe's most polluted cities are located. While sustainable mobility planning has advanced, stronger coordination between national and local authorities is needed. Aligning with the Green Agenda and EU Green Deal is vital to meet climate goals and boost connectivity. Revitalising rail is also key to unlocking the underused potential of interurban passenger transport. Actions under Flagship 3 include:

i. Encouraging regional capitals and assisting in defining sustainable urban mobility solutions for major urban nodes along core network (last mile solutions).

ii. Better managing and coordinating international rail traffic, including, if necessary, through revised rules for capacity allocation and infrastructure charging in rail.

iii. Transposition of Provisions of Fourth Railway Package.

iv. Introduction of regionally aligned Public Service Obligation for international passenger rail transport.

Encouraging Regional capitals and Assisting in Defining Sustainable Urban Mobility Solutions for Major Urban Nodes Along Core Network (Last Mile Solutions)

The newly adopted TEN-T Regulation strengthens the EU's commitment to a sustainable and resilient transport network while enhancing connectivity. It sets ambitious urban mobility targets for cities over 100,000 inhabitants, including those in the Western Balkans. By 2027, these urban nodes must adopt Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) for their full Functional Urban Areas, integrating modes of transport, promoting low-emission mobility, reducing pollution, and improving accessibility. By 2030, they must also establish multimodal passenger hubs to enhance first- and last-mile connections. The designation of urban nodes in the Western Balkans is ongoing, after which they will be required to meet these TEN-T obligations.

Additionally, in the Western Balkans and Observing Participants, as a follow up of the Clean Bus and Clean Fleet Initiative and the Green Mobility Declaration endorsed on 5th June in Sarajevo, Regional Steering Committee adopted modus operandi of the platform on RSC meeting in May 2025.

The Platform objective is to encourage voluntary participation to speed up the shift to zero-emission public fleets across the region. Its goals include promoting clean energy through electric and hydrogen buses, advancing green technologies for efficiency and battery lifecycle management, and ensuring sustainable disposal. It also focuses on building the necessary infrastructure—such as charging and refuelling stations—and integrating digital systems like MIS, ERP, and RTI to improve traffic management. Partnerships between public and private actors, as well as multi-city cooperation, are key drivers, alongside financial incentives and mobilisation of grants and private investment. By establishing a regional data platform for benchmarking and transparency, the Platform also aims to strengthen governance, planning, and integration of public transport into wider logistics and government fleet systems.

Implementation will be structured around four main operational blocks. Legal Transposition will support alignment of national frameworks with EU directives. Capacity Building will provide training and knowledge-sharing in procurement, operations, and financing. Technical Assistance and Project Preparation will guide project design, feasibility assessments, fleet planning, and infrastructure deployment. Finally, Procurement and Financing will offer advisory support on tenders, PPPs, aggregation models, and mobilisation of private capital. Together, these blocks create a practical framework for rolling out zero-emission public transport across the region.

In Albania, several municipalities are advancing sustainable urban mobility initiatives. Tirana is already implementing measures such as the introduction of electric buses, the expansion of bicycle lanes, the regulation of e-scooters, the creation of pedestrian zones, and the development of the upcoming Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. A formal Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Tirana is currently under preparation with the support of GIZ. In Durres, Albania's main port city and a major TEN-T node, urban mobility is being integrated with port development and road and rail access improvements, opening opportunities for last-mile freight and passenger solutions. Other cities such as Shkodra, Elbasan, and Belsh are taking initial steps through bicycle infrastructure and public transport fleet renewal. At the national level, the Transport Strategy 2030 (currently in draft)

promotes the adoption of SUMPs across municipalities and ensures alignment with the sustainable urban mobility requirements under the Transport Community framework.

In North Macedonia, the World Bank is providing technical assistance for the development of SUMPs in five municipalities—Kavadarci, Prilep, Kočani, Strumica, and Struga. The project, launched in June 2024, follows a structured five-task approach covering institutional setup, baseline mobility assessment, scenario development, action planning, and final adoption. Tasks 1, 2 and 3 —establishing steering committees, defining functional areas, and analysing the current mobility situation—have been completed, while the remaining activities for task 4 are scheduled for completion by January 2026 and task 5 (which includes training programmes for local and national stakeholders, an e-learning platform on SUMP development, etc) to be finished by April 2026.

In Serbia, five cities (Belgrade, Aleksinac, Kruševac, Valjevo, and Šabac), have officially adopted SUMPs, while eight others (Kragujevac, Niš, Pirot, Bajina Bašta, Vranje, Svilajnac, Čajetina, and Užice) are at various stages of preparation. Under the Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project (LIID), additional SUMPs will be developed in 28 more cities, divided into two phases (11 in the first batch and 17 in the second), with a revision of the Šabac SUMP also foreseen. The selection of consultants for this component is currently underway.

In Montenegro, the Ministry of Transport is updating the Traffic Development Strategy 2019–2035, together with the Action Plan 2026–2027 and an evaluation report for the 2020–2024 period. The updated strategy will explicitly incorporate activities related to sustainable and smart mobility, ensuring greater coherence between national transport planning and local SUMP initiatives.

Better managing and coordinating international rail traffic, including, if necessary, through revised rules for capacity allocation and infrastructure charging in rail.

Effective management of international rail traffic in the Western Balkans depends on close cooperation among infrastructure managers, with the Transport Community Secretariat facilitating stronger communication across the region. The Rail Infrastructure Managers Network (RIMN), established through the Memorandum of Cooperation signed at the 2021 Western Balkans Rail Summit, has become a central platform for this collaboration. A major milestone was reached on 28 March 2025 in Frankfurt when the Railways of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ZFBIH) joined the MoU, completing the participation of all regional infrastructure managers.

Transposition of Provisions of the Fourth Railway Package

Aligning with interoperability and safety standards is vital for regional cooperation, market opening, and reducing border delays. Mutual recognition of operating licences, train driver licences, safety certificates, and vehicle authorisations is a prerequisite for a regional rail market. During the reporting period, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia advanced interoperability by initiating national electronic vehicle registers, while Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo drafted Railway Safety Laws, with adoption expected by the end of 2025.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Interoperability and safety						
Directive (EU) 2016/797 on the interoperability of the rail system	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed	Transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed
Directive (EU) 2016/798 on railway safety	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed

Table 5: Transposition of Interoperability and Railway Safety Legislation

Introduction of Regionally Aligned Public Service Obligation for international Passenger Rail Transport

On 8 November in Trieste, the Central European Initiative (CEI) and the Transport Community Secretariat presented a study by Politecnico Milano on improving passenger rail services along the Trieste–Ljubljana–Zagreb–Belgrade route and across the Western Balkans. The study found strong market potential, with the corridor serving 6.6 million people and generating €93.8 billion GDP. It recommended strategic investments, renewed rolling stock, simplified border procedures, and alignment with EU standards, particularly the 4th Railway Package. High-demand routes such as Munich–Vienna–Ljubljana–Zagreb–Belgrade, Budapest–Belgrade, and Trieste–Ljubljana–Zagreb–Belgrade show significant potential, while improved passenger experience and marketing are key to making rail more competitive.

In Albania, there is an ongoing Connecta project 'Implementation Support to Establish Rail Passenger Operations in Albania'. The EU-funded initiative supports the development of a public service contract for passenger rail operations, marking an important step toward reintroducing national passenger services and aligning with EU public service obligation standards.

In North Macedonia, Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and road has been partially transposed, with full alignment planned once market liberalisation progresses. Amendments to the Law on Railways will enable the competitive award of passenger transport services to register railway undertakings through transparent procedures. In Serbia, there have been no changes in the reporting period regarding the transposition or implementation of the EU framework on public passenger transport services.

Flagship 4 - Greening Freight Transport

Enhancing multimodal freight transport is key to building a more efficient and sustainable logistics system. Integrating road, rail, and waterways enables smoother goods movement while reducing dependence on any single mode. Greener solutions—such as low-emission vehicles and alternative fuels—further cut the sector's environmental footprint. In the Western Balkans, this approach eases congestion on overloaded networks while supporting safer, more cost-effective, and environmentally responsible freight operations. This Flagship will be implemented through the following actions:

i. Rail Corridor Initiative – the Western Balkans will join Rail Freight Corridors

ii. Assessment of bottlenecks in modal interconnections and the current incentive system in place.

Rail Corridor Initiative – Western Balkans to join Rail Freight Corridors

In May 2024, the EU adopted Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, revising the TEN-T framework to push for a more sustainable, resilient, and integrated transport system. Under this regulation, the core network must be completed by 2030, the extended core by 2040, and the comprehensive network by 2050.

A major addition for the Western Balkans is the Western Balkans – Eastern Mediterranean (WBEM) Corridor, introduced under the updated TEN-T maps. This corridor links Central European member states with ports on the Adriatic and Eastern Mediterranean coasts via the Western Balkans. It overlaps with other major corridors (e.g. Rhine–Danube) and accommodates both road and rail transport, though inland waterways are not included. Some of the main challenges identified are gaps in electrification, low commercial rail speeds, insufficient last-mile connections, weak infrastructure in rail terminals, and delays in cross-border projects.

Additionally, under the governance updates in TEN-T, rail freight corridors have now been fully integrated into the European Transport Corridors, creating a single governance and monitoring framework. This integration allows for coordinated investment planning and streamlined oversight of both passenger and freight infrastructure. It ensures that freight transport needs are embedded in the development of each corridor, helping to prioritise key cross-border projects, improve interoperability, and remove bottlenecks. For the Western Balkans, this means that the newly established WBEM Corridor and the rail freight routes crossing the region will benefit from the same governance mechanisms, reporting structures, and performance monitoring as those applied in EU Member States—supporting faster implementation, better project sequencing, and stronger alignment with EU standards.

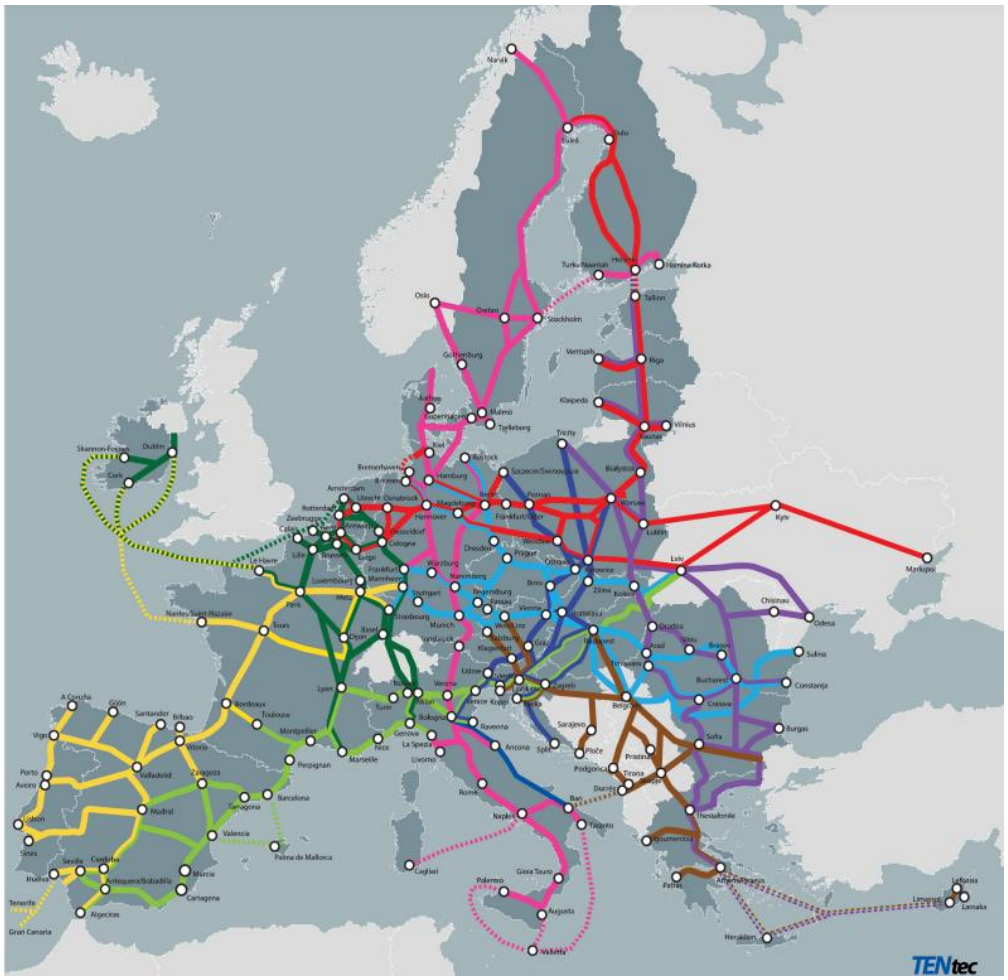

Figure 1 Western Balkans – Eastern Mediterranean Corridor[7]

Assessment of Bottlenecks in Modal Interconnections and the Current Incentive System in Place

Multimodality in passenger and freight transport is still at an early stage in the region, with work ongoing to establish the necessary regulatory, institutional, and infrastructure frameworks. A key milestone was reached with the opening of the Batajnica freight terminal, which is now operational. While in Albania works are ongoing to connect the Tirana airport with rail in the framework of Tirana – Durres and link and preparatory work conducted for the connection of Porto Romano and Vlora International Airport with the road and rail network. Despite these developments, the overall pace of constructing multimodal terminals and upgrading road and rail infrastructure to support multimodal transport remains relatively slow. Some regional partners, including Serbia and Montenegro, have partially transposed Council Directive 92/106/EEC on combined goods transport, but full alignment with EU legislation is still pending.

[7] REGULATION (EU) 2024/1679 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 13 June 2024 on Union Guidelines for the Development of the Trans-European Transport Network, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1153 and (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Multimodality						
Directive 92/106/EEC on combined transport of goods	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed

Table 6: Transposition of Combined Transport Legislation

Within the framework of the TEN-T, road, railway networks, and ports in the region have been clearly defined, but multimodal terminals have not yet been explicitly included. The revised TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 underscores the importance of adequate multimodal freight terminal capacity to support the network. Member States are required to ensure that terminals serve urban nodes, industrial centres, ports, and logistics hubs, while considering current and future traffic flows. To this end, they must carry out a market and prospective analysis of multimodal freight terminals within their territory and prepare an action plan for establishing a cohesive multimodal freight terminal network, which is then to be notified to the European Commission. These measures are designed to strengthen multimodal integration and improve the efficiency of freight transport across the TEN-T and its Western Balkans extension.

To that purpose TCT Secretariat, contracted Technical Assistance on Multimodality, Terminal Assessment, and Digitalization, awarded in December 2023 and finalised on 10 December 2024. The specific objective was to assist the six SEE Parties in aligning with the EU acquis, especially the TEN-T Regulation, by identifying barriers to multimodality (infrastructure, policy, digitalisation), conducting a market and prospective analysis of terminals, and preparing an action plan for a regional multimodal freight terminal network.
Project deliverables included:

- Survey on satisfaction with multimodal/intermodal services
- Market and prospective analysis and Action Plan for multimodal freight terminal network
- Report on digitalisation for enhanced multimodality and seamless supply chains
- Institutional building activities – Training/Study visit

Members of the Rail Technical Committee and the Technical Committee on Waterborne and Multimodal Transport were actively involved, consulted on all deliverables, and agreed on the study outcomes. According to TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 criteria—designating a main rail-road terminal for each NUTS 2 region—nine multimodal freight terminals have been identified for the Western Balkans for proposal to the European Commission:

- Albania: 1 (in or adjacent Durres)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 2 (Sarajevo, Doboj)
- Kosovo: 1 (Pristina)
- Montenegro: 1 (Bar)
- North Macedonia: 1 (Skopje)
- Serbia: 3 (Belgrade, Niš, Novi Sad)

The identification of these nine multimodal freight terminals marks an important step toward aligning the Western Balkans with the TEN-T framework. Their development will help integrate regional logistics chains into the wider European transport system, reduce bottlenecks, and enhance both cross-border connectivity and sustainability. By advancing these terminals, the region can strengthen its role as a strategic link between the EU and neighbouring markets while contributing to the objectives of the green and digital transition.

Flagship 5 - Pricing Carbon and Providing Better Incentives for Users

Transport drives economic growth but also creates significant environmental impacts. People and businesses often lack data on emissions or greener alternatives. Raising awareness of these impacts is essential to encourage more sustainable travel choices. This Flagship focuses on the following actions to address these challenges:

i. Deploying e-tolling, achieving interoperability of electronic road toll systems, and facilitating the cross-border exchange of information.

ii. Establishing the Transport Community Transport Observatory Database and Information System (TODIS).

Deployment of E-Tolling and Achieving Interoperability of Electronic Road Toll Systems and Facilitating Cross-Border Exchange of Information

There has been no overall progress in the transposition of Directive 2019/520/EC on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems and the cross-border exchange of information on non-payment of road fees, effective since October 2021. To date, only Kosovo has partially transposed the Directive.

In Albania, the National Road Operation Entity (EKORR) was established by Decision of Council of Ministers No. 684 on 6 November 2024 as the authority responsible for planning, implementing, monitoring, and managing tolling operations across the national road network. A full assessment of the existing tolling framework is ongoing, with complete alignment to European electronic toll service (EETS) requirements targeted by 2027.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Public Enterprise *Motorways of FBiH* is introducing interoperability with Croatia, while technical-level discussions are ongoing with Serbia and North Macedonia. Montenegro is working toward a tolling interoperability agreement with North Macedonia. In Serbia, PESR is preparing to sign interoperability agreements with Montenegro and Croatia in the forthcoming period.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
E-tolling						
Directive 2019/520/EC on the interoperability of electronic toll systems	Not transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed

Table 7: Transposition of E-Tolling Legislation

Establishing the Transport Community Transport Observatory Database and Information System (TODIS)

The Transport Observatory/Database Information System (TODIS), operational since December 2023, is the central repository for TEN-T extensions in the Western Balkans. An upgrade, to be finalised by January 2026, will align the system with Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, adding new KPIs for all transport modes, climate resilience data, rail market monitoring results, and improved user functions. These updates were presented at the TODIS Stakeholders Workshop in Ohrid (10–11 June 2025), which also concluded the related data collection process.

3.2 Smart Mobility

Flagship 6 - Making Connected and Automated Multimodal Mobility a Reality

Digitalisation and automation are reshaping mobility and transport by enhancing sustainability and efficiency. They enable optimised routes, lower emissions, reduced air pollution, and smoother traffic flow through real-time data and predictive analytics. In the Western Balkans, however, digitalisation remains at an early stage, with efforts concentrated on isolated solutions rather than integrated, network-wide strategies. This Flagship will be implemented through the following actions:

i. Initiating the deployment of ERTMS through the transposition of EU directives, TSIs, preparation of project documentation and deployment.

ii. Deploying ITS through the transposition of EU directives, standards, preparation of project documentation and deployment.

iii. Deploying Mobility as a Service (passenger and freight) applications and digital transport corridors, smart mobility solutions and multimodal travel information services.

iv. Assessing needs for setting up agencies or other bodies to support safe, smart and sustainable road transport operations.

v. Initiating the deployment of 5G transport corridors across the region on Core and Comprehensive Network.

Initiating of the Deployment of ERTMS Through the Transposition of EU Directives, TSIs, Preparation of Project Documentation, and Deployment

The TEN-T rail network consists of three layers: the Core, the Extended Core and the Comprehensive Network. The total length of the Railway Comprehensive Network is 4,287 km, of which 3,923 km exist. In total, there are 364 km of missing links. The Railway Core Network spans 3,051 km, with 2,972 km on the ground. The length of missing links is 78km.

The rollout of the ERTMS system has begun in the Western Balkans, marking a significant milestone. Nowadays, 7% of the Core Network and 5% of the Comprehensive Network are equipped with the ERTMS system, thanks to the opening of the reconstructed Belgrade – Subotica line in Serbia, and Kumanovo – Beljakovce in North Macedonia.

Most regional partners have partially transposed the interoperability directive (third or fourth rail package). With ongoing projects supported by funding, there are plans to implement ERTMS with ETCS level 1 or 2 in Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, and North Macedonia, which could increase ERTMS coverage.

However, deploying the ERTMS system presents significant challenges in meeting TEN-T parameters, and progress has been slower than expected. Therefore, all regional partners must intensify their efforts to transpose and implement the interoperability directive fully.

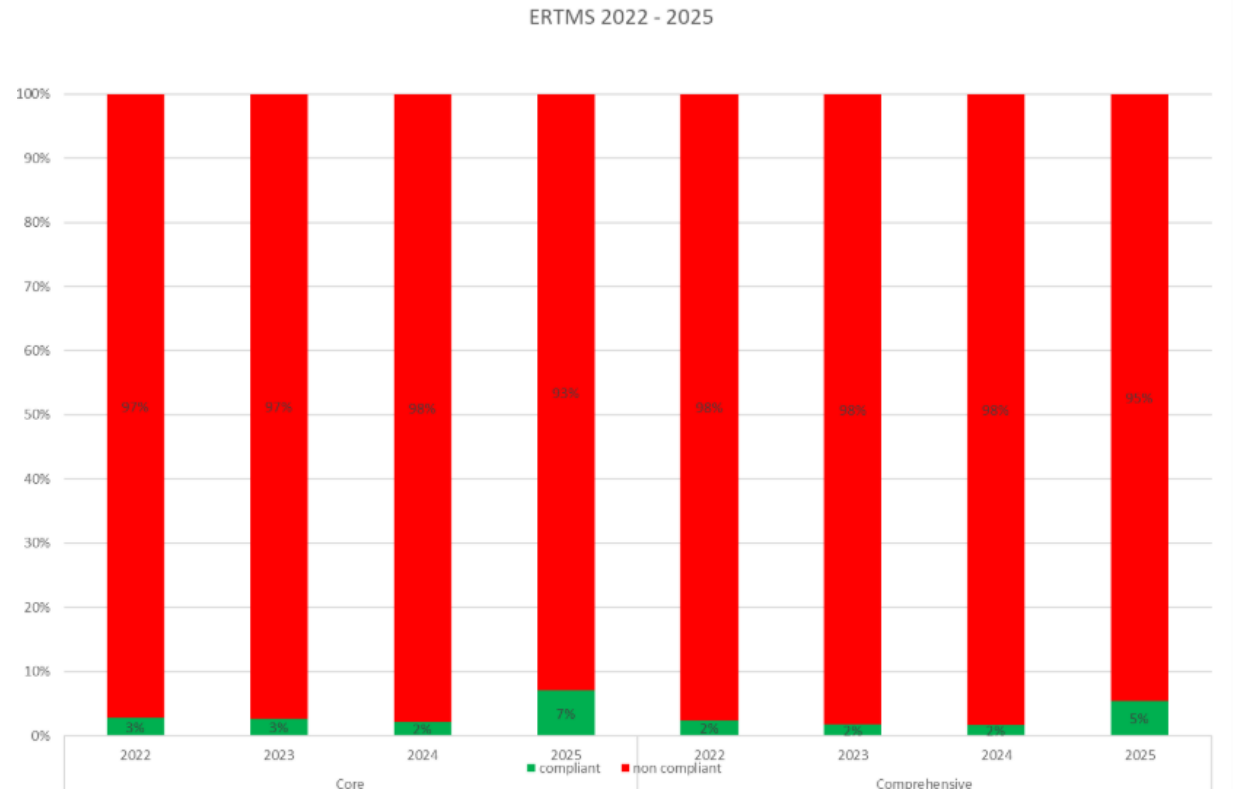

Figure 2. ERTMS deployment 2022 - 2025

Deploying ITS Through the Transposition of EU Directives, Standards, Preparation of Project Documentation and Deployment

The pace of progress in this pillar reflects the substantial adjustments required to align with the New Growth Plan Reform Agenda, which now mandates the transposition of three new EU legal acts: the revised ITS Directive (EU) 2661/2023 and Delegated Regulations (EU) 670/2022 and (EU) 490/2024.

Progress in ITS deployment remains mixed. Albania completed the construction and equipping of the national Traffic Monitoring Centre, while works are ongoing to equip 200 km of the primary road network with surveillance cameras and ITS infrastructure. Additionally, Albania started with full alignment with the consolidated text of Directive 2010/40/EU, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ITS Strategy was finalised in 2023 but is still pending approval. Kosovo is designing a Traffic Control Centre and drafting ITS legislation. Montenegro is implementing its 2022–2026 ITS Programme in phases. In North Macedonia, the technical documentation and specifications for Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) have been updated, with the tender for installation on the Corridor X, (Tabanovce–Bogorodica) planned for for public opening of the bids scheduled for 5th of December 2025. In parallel, through the World Bank's Trade and Transport Facilitation Project 2.0 (WBTTFP 2.0), financing is planned for ITS deployment on Corridor VIII (Tetovo–Skopje–Hipodrom, ~60 km), including Weight-in-Motion (WIM), HAZMAT monitoring, and GHG/SLCP emission tracking systems along Corridors VIII and X.In Serbia, the ITS Strategy has been finalised, though the Strategy awaits formal adoption. Law on Roads has been drafted. Further alignment with EU directive 2010/40/EU with its amendments has been carried out. The new law will specify who will have the authority to establish a national access point as well as who will perform the function of National Bodies. Adoption of the Law will give the legal base to work on preparation of Real time traffic information Regulation – RTTI and multimodal travel information services Regulation, as well (deadline according to Growth Plan is III quarter of 2026).

Looking ahead, the New Growth Plan and its Reform Agenda are expected to provide new momentum for ITS deployment by prioritising the transposition and implementation of EU-related legislation.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
ITS						
Directive 2010/40/EU on the framework for the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems in the field of road transport and for interfaces with other modes of transport	Partially transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed	Partially transposed	Partially transposed	Partially transposed

Table 8: Transposition of ITS legislation

Deploying Mobility as a Service (passenger and freight) Applications and Digital Transport Corridors, Smart Mobility Solutions, and Multimodal Travel Information Services

The EU's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS) sets 2030 as the target for paperless freight transport, while the Western Balkans aim for 2035. Regulation (EU) 2020/1056 on electronic freight transport information (eFTI), part of the Transport Community Treaty Annex I, provides the framework for digitising freight documentation across all modes. A 2022 TCT study showed significant efficiency gains for the Western Balkans, estimated between €26.5–163.5 million over five years.

Currently, no progress has been made regarding transposition of Regulation 2020/1056. New momentum for advancing e-freight in the region is expected under the New Growth Plan and Reform Agenda, which prioritises the transposition and implementation of EU-related e-freight legislation. Launched in 2024 by DG NEAR and co-funded by the EU and BMZ, the EU4Digital programme supports digital transformation in the Western Balkans, with GIZ as the implementing partner. One of its three core pillars focuses on e-freight, aiming to enhance infrastructure, interoperability, and business digitalisation. The project will deliver National Roadmaps for eFTI deployment in all WB6, covering strategic, legal, technical, and financial prerequisites. Specific actions include raising awareness, reviewing existing regulations and IT solutions, capacity building for public authorities, private sector involvement, roadmap development, and technical pilots of eFTI architecture.

No progress has been made in transposing Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/1926 of 31 May 2017, which supplements Directive 2010/40/EU of the European Parliament and the Council. This regulation pertains to the provision of EU-wide multimodal travel information services. Only in Albania, preparations are underway for the transposition of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/1926 on Multimodal Travel Information Services (MMTIS).

In September 2024, the Transport Community Treaty (TCT) launched a tender for the assessment of establishing National Access Points (NAPs) and National Bodies (NBs) in the Regional Partners. The initiative aims to create interoperable NAPs and NBs across the Western Balkans, in line with EU standards and the ITS Directive (EU) 2023/2661. Its objectives are to improve data integration, harmonisation, and the efficiency, safety, and sustainability of road transport, while strengthening regional connectivity and economic growth. It is currently underway and scheduled for completion by the end of 2025.

Albania has made progress on Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/670 on Real-Time Traffic Information (RTTI) services by partially transposing it through Ministerial Guideline No. 12 of 30 December 2024. The Guideline establishes the legal framework for RTTI services, designates the Albanian Road Authority (ARA) as the future National Access Point, and proposes the Institute of Transport as the National Body. Some provisions applying only to EU Member States were not included due to Albania's candidate status, with full transposition targeted by 2027.

The Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) for Telematics Applications in Freight and Passenger Services define standards for digital communication and data exchange across rail networks. These standards ensure that rail systems can operate seamlessly and coordinate effectively across EU member states, improving both efficiency and customer service within the sector. However, progress among the Regional Partners remains uneven. Serbia and Montenegro have fully transposed the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem

'telematics applications for passenger services' of the trans-European rail system. while Kosovo has only partially transposed it. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia have not yet transposed this Technical Specifications for Interoperability. This divergence highlights the varying levels of readiness across the region and underlines the need for stronger efforts to ensure full alignment with EU interoperability standards.

New momentum in the advancement of multimodal travel information services in the region is i expected with the introduction of the New Growth Plan and its Reform Agendas, which prioritise the transposition and implementation of EU-related ITS legislation.

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
E-freight and MaaS						
Multimodal- Regulation (EU) 2020/1056 on electronic freight transport information (eFTI)	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Road - Regulation (EU) 2017/1926 of 31 May regarding the provision of EU-wide multimodal travel information services	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Multimodal- Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/670 with regard to the provision of EU-wide real-time traffic information services	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Rail- Regulation (EU) No 1305/2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to telematics applications for freight	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed	Not transposed
Rail- Regulation (EU) No 454/2011 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem 'telematics applications for passenger services' of the trans-European rail system.	Not transposed	Not transposed	Partially transposed	Transposed	Not transposed	Transposed

Table 9: Transposition of Digital Mobility Legislation

Assessing the Need to Establish Agencies or Other Bodies to Support Safe, Smart and Sustainable Road Transport Operations

Regional Partners, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia, are actively working on developing and refining their transport strategies, while also assessing their institutional, human, and planning capacities to support the transition toward a more digitally enabled and environmentally sustainable transport system. Despite these

ongoing efforts, concrete actions to effectively strengthen such capacities remain limited, highlighting the need for accelerated implementation and targeted support.

Initiating the Deployment of 5G Transport Corridors Across the Region on the Core and Comprehensive Network

Based on the Western Balkans Digital Economy and Society Index (WB DESI) 2024 report, there is notable progress in digital infrastructure dimension compared to the previous assessment. However, the region continues to lag the EU in both network coverage and the uptake of high-speed fixed broadband services. 5G services are already available in North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania, while the auction process is currently underway in Serbia.

Flagship 7 - Innovation, Data and AI for Smart Mobility

As the world advances toward climate resilience and sustainability, the transport sector is at the forefront of this transformation. Investment in innovative solutions is key to building a modern, sustainable, and interconnected system. Achieving this vision requires collaboration, research, and a strong focus on climate-aligned initiatives. This Flagship includes the following actions:

i. Developing R&I partnerships within the region and with EU bodies
ii. Improving coordination between public authorities, universities, and NGOs in the region to encourage interdisciplinary research in green and digital mobility
iii. Encouraging public companies/institutions/universities to establish innovation centres
iv. Increasing awareness and educating young leaders, officials, and other relevant stakeholders on the greening of transport
v. Undertaking impact assessment and preparing a roadmap for AI for mobility.

Developing R&I Partnerships within the Region and with EU bodies

On 20 May 2025, the Annual Summit of the Transport Community was held in Seville, Spain, alongside the 16th ITS European Congress. Organised as the Digital Mobility and ITS Conference for the Western Balkans and Observing Participants, the summit brought together authorities and stakeholders from the Western Balkans, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine to discuss how digitalisation and smart solutions can transform transport and logistics. The agenda centred on aligning regional efforts with the EU's green and digital transition, with a focus on innovation, data sharing, and smarter infrastructure. The programme featured five thematic sessions on regulatory and institutional enablers for digital mobility, autonomous vehicles, smart road infrastructure, multimodal urban mobility, digital rail and road networks, and the digitalisation of freight and logistics.

In its conclusions, the conference called for the establishment of a Digital Mobility Hub to accelerate transport digitalisation and advance the objectives of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, particularly Flagship 6 (Making Connected and Automated Multimodal Mobility a Reality) and Flagship 7 (Innovation, Data and AI for Smart Mobility).

Improving Coordination between Public Authorities, Universities, and NGOs in the Region to Encourage Interdisciplinary Research in Green and Digital Mobility

On 24–25 April 2025, the regional conference “Green Urban Transport Solutions” was held in Ohrid and gathered over 130 participants from the Western Balkans and the EU, including public authorities, universities, and NGOs. The event highlighted the need for stronger coordination among these actors to foster interdisciplinary research in green and digital mobility.

Discussions focused on electromobility, zero-emission buses, financing low-carbon solutions, and logistics strategies to cut CO_2 emissions. Participants stressed the urgency of adopting National Urban Mobility Plans (NUMP) and SUMPs, transposing EU directives, and creating multi-level governance structures. The conference reaffirmed that closer cooperation between institutions, academia, and civil society is key to accelerating the region’s transition toward sustainable and digitally enabled transport.

Further to this, many Regional Parties such as Albania have placed innovation as one of the pillars of its economic and social development, in line with the priorities of the green and digital transition, as well as the EU integration process. Public universities actively participate in EU-funded projects (e.g. Horizon Europe).

Encouraging Public Companies/Institutions/Universities to Establish Innovation Centres

The TCT Secretariat launched in May 2024 the Tender Procedure for Defining Details, Concept and Curriculum Development for Establishing a Regional Centre of Railway Excellence, building on the conclusions of the first Rail Infrastructure Managers Network Meeting and the WB6 Ministerial Dedication to Railway from the Belgrade Railway Summit of 2021. The assignment, running from October 2024 to June 2025, aimed to outline the key components for creating such a centre in the Western Balkans, including infrastructure and equipment needs, specialised training programmes, and strategic collaborations, with a roadmap to guide stakeholders in planning and implementation.

It assessed regional readiness, proposed development scenarios, and recommended a phased approach—starting with a coordination unit and evolving into a fully operational regional academy. The study confirmed that establishing the Centre would support EU integration goals, harmonise railway operations with European standards, and help build the skilled workforce needed for the sector’s modernisation The Regional Centre of Railway Excellence is envisioned as a flagship hub for training, peer learning, and innovation.

Increasing Awareness and Educating Young Leaders, Officials, and Other Relevant Stakeholders on the Greening of Transport

From 1 to 4 July 2025, public officials and transport professionals from the Western Balkans, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine gathered in Prague, Czechia for the Digital Mobility and ITS Summer School, a four-day programme dedicated to shaping the future of transport across the region. Organised by the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), the Summer School boosted skills and knowledge of public officials and transport professionals working to make transport smarter, greener, and more connected. Through interactive sessions where they learned directly from experts, the participants explored new technologies and designed their own digital mobility strategies in hands-on workshops. This year’s edition of the Summer School provided necessary insights into the future of transport, as the Western Balkans and observing participants look to modernise their transport networks in line with EU standards.

Undertaking Impact Assessment and Preparing a Roadmap for AI in mobility

All regional partners are actively developing ITS strategies across different transport modes and deploying ITS on motorways, railways, and inland waterways. While AI has been applied sporadically in some projects, no partner has yet established a comprehensive national-level strategic AI roadmap.

However, initial steps have been taken through broader digital transformation and innovation policies in some Regional Parties. For example, in Albania, the National Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation and the Digital Agenda of Albania 2022–2026 recognize AI and smart solutions as cross-cutting priorities. In transport, pilot initiatives on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), smart ticketing, traffic management, and logistics digitalization provide a basis for introducing AI applications in the future.

3.3 Resilient Mobility

Flagship 8 – Working towards the Single Market

The creation of a single transport market is vital for economic growth, greater efficiency, and seamless cross-border connectivity. Integrated systems reduce barriers, stimulate competition and innovation, lower costs for users, and encourage the shift to greener modes of transport. This, in turn, supports job creation and strengthens regional competitiveness.

In the Western Balkans, the Transport Community Treaty is spearheading efforts to build such a unified market across road, rail, inland waterways, and maritime transport. By harmonising regulations and fostering regional cooperation, the initiative is aligning the region's transport systems with EU standards and practices.

This Flagship includes the following actions:

i. Revisiting national transport strategies and prioritising green elements
ii. Capacity building for administration on the green and digital transformation of transport
iii. Adopting guidelines to assess climate change and natural hazards in the road network
iv. Developing and implementing climate resilience plans for Regional Partners' transport networks
v. Establishing efficient road maintenance through multiannual road maintenance plans and Road Asset Management Systems
vi. Electrification of the rail core network and implementation of Flagship 1, 2, and 3
vii. Reforming the railway sector through the transposition and implementation of market opening, passenger rights, interoperability, border crossings/common crossings legislation
viii. Reviewing transport-relevant State aid rules
ix. Improving road and rail border crossings/common crossings (removal of administrative bottlenecks, additional parking lanes, construction of joint BCPs/CCPs).

Revisiting National Transport Strategies and Prioritising Green Elements

In Albania, the forthcoming Sectoral Transport Strategy 2030, to be adopted by 2026, will provide the main framework for aligning infrastructure development, regulatory reform, and digital transformation with EU standards and sustainability goals. Environmental and green transport priorities are being integrated into national policies, promoting low- and zero-emission vehicles, sustainable urban mobility, and multimodal green transport solutions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina completed the revision of its Framework Transport Strategy at the end of 2022, with support from EU-funded technical assistance. The updated strategy integrates measures promoting sustainable transport, although its formal adoption is still pending.

In Montenegro, the Ministry of Transport is updating the Traffic Development Strategy of Montenegro 2019–2035, accompanied by an Action Plan for 2026–2027 and an evaluation report covering activities implemented during 2020–2024. The updated strategy will explicitly highlight initiatives related to green and low-emission vehicles, reinforcing Montenegro's commitment to sustainable transport development.

In North Macedonia, technical assistance under the SUPRAE project supported the preparation of the third progress report on the National Transport Strategy 2018–2030, covering January 2022–December 2023. The work, launched in May 2024, included data collection, analysis, and the drafting of a strategy revision, presented in September 2024. The report provides evidence-based recommendations for decision-makers to improve implementation and align activities with strategic objectives. While the strategy addresses CO_2 emission reduction through defined measures and scenarios, there is no data available on actual implementation or effectiveness.

The preparation of Serbia's National Transport Strategy 2023–2030 is currently underway, with support from the World Bank through the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project.

Capacity Building for Administration on Green and Digital Transformation of Transport

The Transport Community Treaty has organised several events to support capacity building on green and digital transformation, namely:

- From 1 to 4 July 2025, public officials and transport professionals from the Western Balkans, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine gathered in Prague, Czechia for the Digital Mobility and ITS Summer School, a four-day programme dedicated to shaping the future of transport across the region. Organised by the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), the Summer School boosted skills and knowledge of public officials and transport professionals working to make transport smarter, greener, and more connected. Through interactive sessions where they learned directly from experts, the participants explored new technologies and designed their own digital mobility strategies in hands-on workshops. This year's edition of the Summer School provided necessary insights into the future of transport, as the Western Balkans and observing participants look to modernise their transport networks in line with EU standards.
- On 21 May 2025, the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community organised the Workshop on Passenger and Freight Digitalisation to explore digitalisation of multimodal passenger and freight transport and innovative technologies, as well as building smart, transparent, and predictive freight systems. Workshop was organised back-to-back with

Digital Mobility and ITS conference and among other discussed digitalisation of freight transport.

- On 20 May 2025 the Annual Summit of the Transport Community took place in Seville, Spain, as part of the 16th ITS European Congress. Organised in the form of the Digital Mobility and ITS Conference for the Western Balkans and Observing Participants, the summit gathered authorities and stakeholders from across the Western Balkans, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine to explore how digitalisation and smart transport solutions can transform transport and logistics. Participants focused on aligning regional efforts with the European Union's green and digital agenda, unlocking new opportunities through innovation, data sharing, and smarter infrastructure. The event's programme included five sessions covering topics such as regulatory and institutional enablers for digital mobility, autonomous vehicles, smart road infrastructure, multimodal urban mobility, digital rail and road networks, and the digitalisation of freight and logistics.
- On 24–25 April 2025, the regional conference "Green Urban Transport Solutions" was held in Ohrid, gathering over 130 participants from the Western Balkans and the European Union, including decision-makers from national and local institutions, members of parliament, academics, civil society organisations, and regional experts. Organised in cooperation with the Transport Community, German Development Cooperation (GIZ), the Municipality of Ohrid, the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Bitola, CIVINET SLO–CRO–SEE, and a broad network of partners and academic institutions, the event addressed pressing issues such as the environmental impact of transport, integrated planning, financing sustainable mobility, fleet transition to zero-emission buses, the Clean Bus Platform, and the adoption of National and Local Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (NUMPs and SUMPs), alongside the proposal for a Law on Integrated Transport. Through a mix of panel discussions, interactive workshops, site visits, and thematic presentations, participants explored topics including electromobility, financing low-carbon solutions, developing barrier-free transport plans, regional connectivity, and logistics strategies to reduce CO_2 emissions, with a strong emphasis placed on political will, citizen participation in planning, and access to financing for smaller municipalities.
- On 21 November 2024 a workshop on e-freight was held in Brussels. The workshop provided an in-depth exploration of electronic freight information exchange (eFTI) regulations, with a particular focus on the latest updates to implementing and delegated acts. Key stakeholders engaged with experts to discuss the regulatory framework, practical challenges, and solutions for transitioning to digital freight operations. The discussions aimed at supporting seamless compliance and operational efficiency across different transport sectors. Participants received insights from representatives of DG MOVE, IRU, UNECE, and GIZ, among others. Key topics included the eFTI Regulation's state of play, implementation challenges, EU-funded digital freight projects, and alignment with international transport standards. Sessions focused on advancing digitalization in freight transport, capacity building for multimodal data exchange, and the role of UNECE standards in facilitating interoperability.
- Technical Committees (TC), where Sustainable and Smart Mobility was the focus, and the implementation of the Strategy and Green agenda was discussed. Prominent expert speakers were invited to raise awareness and build the capacity of our RPs for the green and digital transformation.

Developing and Implementing Climate Resilience Plans for RPs Transport Networks and Adopting Guidelines to Assess Climate Change and Natural Hazards of Road Network

Transport infrastructure in the Western Balkans remains highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including floods, landslides, heatwaves, and coastal erosion. Despite growing recognition of these risks, none of the Regional Partners has yet adopted a dedicated adaptation strategy for the transport sector. Nonetheless, several national initiatives and projects are underway to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of the Core and Comprehensive TEN-T networks.

In Albania, the World Bank–financed Building Resilient Bridges (BRB) Programme is improving infrastructure safety and resilience to climate-related and natural hazards. The National Strategy on Climate Change and the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2030 both integrate adaptation and resilience considerations, while the forthcoming Transport Sector Strategy 2030 will reinforce these priorities by promoting the sustainable and climate-resilient development of transport infrastructure. Climate risk assessments are increasingly incorporated into major investment projects, particularly those supported by the EU, EIB, EBRD, and WBIF, including road rehabilitation, railway modernisation, and port development in Durrës and Vlora.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Public Enterprise Roads of the Federation of BiH is preparing a Main Roads Modernisation Programme to address the most vulnerable sections of the Core and Comprehensive TEN-T network. In parallel, Roads of Republika Srpska is implementing the Sustainable, Integrated and Safe Road Infrastructure Project, financed by the World Bank, EBRD, and SSTP grants, which includes a key component on improving road network resilience and safety.

In Montenegro, the forthcoming Transport Development Strategy will define clear obligations and methodologies for designing and constructing climate-resilient infrastructure, drawing on the Technical Guidance on Climate Proofing of Infrastructure (2021–2027), the Transport Community's regional study on climate resilience, and the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans. In addition, resilience measures are partially addressed through the Medium-Term Programme for the Construction, Reconstruction, Maintenance and Protection of State Roads until 2028.

In North Macedonia, climate resilience considerations are incorporated into the design phase of road projects. The draft Law on Climate Action, introduces legal provisions for natural hazard management and adaptation. In 2019, under a World Bank–financed technical assistance project, Climate Resilience Design Guidelines were developed for the Public Enterprise for State Roads, providing a framework for integrating resilience into both new construction and rehabilitation projects in line with international best practice.

Establishing Efficient Road Maintenance through Multiannual Road Maintenance Plans and Road Asset Management Systems

Progress in this area has been limited, underscoring the need for Regional Partners to intensify efforts to establish Road Asset Management Systems (RAMS) and introduce Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Albania maintains its entire national road network through performance-based contracts, with €105 million allocated for the next three years. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, all four public road authorities use GIS inventory databases, but regular updates remain a challenge. Only

PE “Roads of FBiH” operates a fully functional RAMS, while the other three have achieved only partial implementation. Kosovo has prepared tenders for multiannual maintenance contracts. Montenegro adopted a medium-term programme for state roads until 2028, and with EBRD support, installed RAMS software and established a road network database. North Macedonia is preparing a 10-year strategy for road development and maintenance, while Serbia continues to implement its SLA for 2024–2026.

The main regional challenge is the continuous collection of road condition data, a prerequisite for effective RAMS operation. Even where RAMS are in place, authorities struggle with recruiting and retaining qualified staff. The broader use of SLAs is expected to be a significant step forward and could serve as a game-changer for road maintenance in the region.

Electrification of the Core Rail Network and Implementation of Flagship 1, 2, and 3

The TEN-T rail network in the Western Balkans is structured into three layers: Core, Extended Core, and Comprehensive. The Comprehensive Network totals 4,287 km, of which 3,923 km are in operation and 364 km remain missing. The Core Network spans 3,051 km, with 2,972 km operational and 78 km missing. Currently, 630 km of both the Core and Comprehensive Networks are under construction and temporarily out of service, while 90 km of the Core Network are closed for safety reasons due to insufficient maintenance.

As of 2025, electrification compliance stands at 62% for the Core Network and 50% for the Comprehensive Network. These rates reflect revisions from 2024 data following improved collection methods and the inclusion of previously missing sections. In this report, all missing links are categorised as “diesel” traction, which has reduced compliance rates by 3% on the Core Network and 5% on the Comprehensive Network.

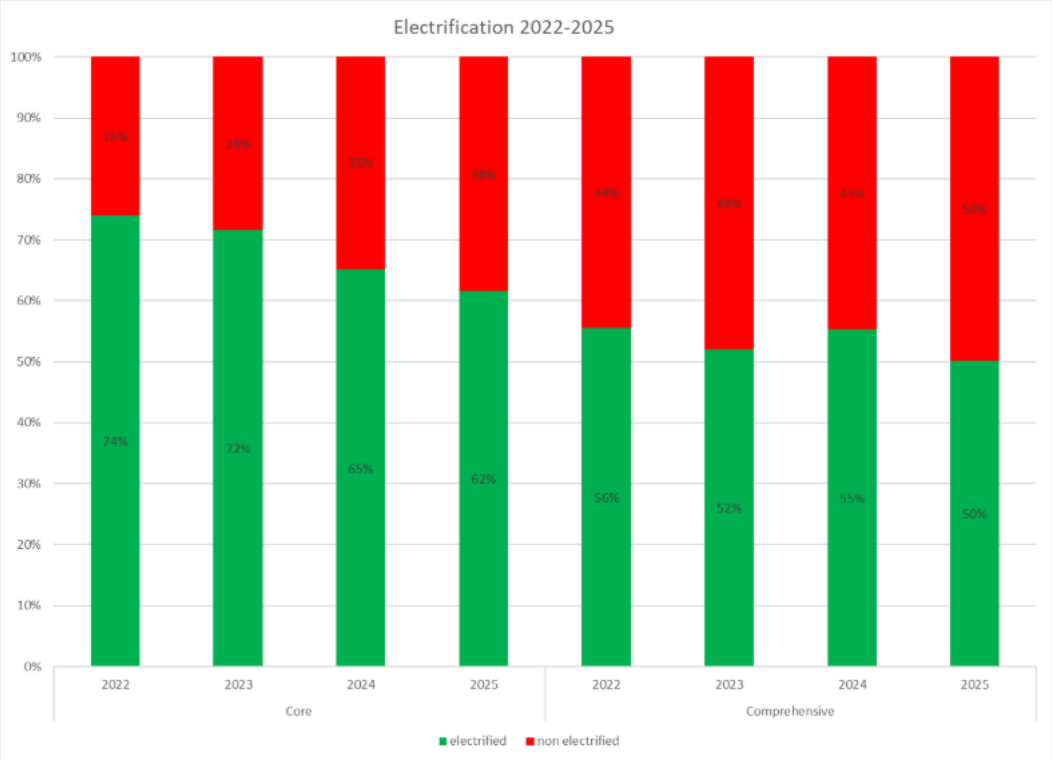

Figure 3. Percentages of electrified and non-electrified lines 2022 - 2025

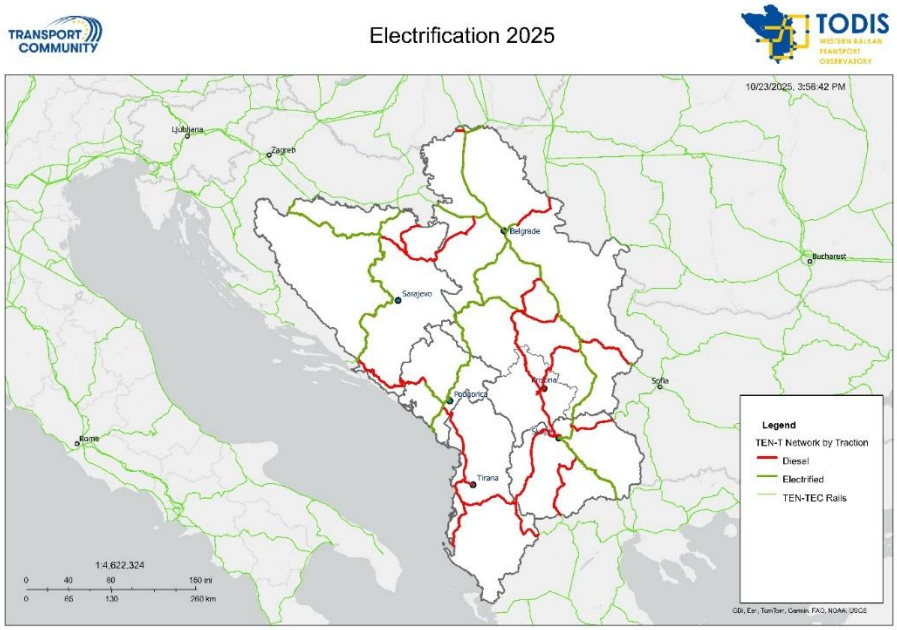

Figure 4: Map of Electrified Lines[8]

Reforming the Railway Sector through the Transposition and Implementation of Market Opening, Passenger Rights, Interoperability, and Border Crossings/Common Crossings Legislation

Since 2015, the Western Balkans rail market has moved from being fully closed to private operators to significant liberalisation under the Berlin Process, with 18 private freight operators now active across the region—except in North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where markets remain closed. Sustaining progress requires regional-level opening, further legislative alignment, and stronger infrastructure governance. In 2025, Montenegro adopted a new Railway Law and established a Rail Agency, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Railways of Republika Srpska signed infrastructure and public service contracts, Albania created a new Railway Regulatory Agency and legally separated infrastructure and operations, and North Macedonia signed a multi-annual infrastructure contract. Bosnia and Herzegovina still lacks full structural separation, though Republika Srpska began operating as a holding company in 2025.

Regional partners must align with the EU interoperability framework to enable integration with the TEN-T Network. This includes transposing Directive 2008/57/EC and Directive (EU) 2016/797 and establishing registers in line with European Vehicle Register (EVR) and Registers of Infrastructure (RINF) . In 2025, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia initiated national electronic vehicle registers, while Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo drafted new Railway Safety Laws, expected for adoption by end-2025.

Progress is needed on mutual recognition of key safety documents (operating licences, train driver licences, safety certificates, vehicle authorisations), as well as safety management systems and

[8] Transport Community Transport Observatory Database and Information System (TODIS)

maintenance certification. No regional partner advanced in this area during the reporting period, highlighting the urgent need for legislative reforms to meet EU standards.

Reviewing Transport-Relevant State Aid Rules

In the reporting period, there was no progress by the regional partners on this measure.

Improvement of Road and Rail Border Crossings/Common Crossings (Removal of Administrative Bottlenecks, Additional Parking Lanes, Construction of Joint BCPs/CCPs)

The joint border controls introduced by Montenegro and Serbia at Bijelo Polje remain the main success, with uninterrupted operations through 2024–2025 reducing waiting times and boosting the attractiveness of rail. Beyond this, little progress has been made. Apart from the Serbia–Hungary Border Control Agreement and the passenger line between Subotica and Szeged, other partners have not advanced in creating legal frameworks, common stations, or reopening cross-border lines. Stronger efforts are needed from both Western Balkans and neighbouring EU Member States to foster international rail links. The Transport Community Secretariat tracks Western Balkans commitments but highlights in the report where EU neighbour cooperation is missing.

In 2025, moderate progress was achieved at several road BCPs/CCPs. Kosovo and North Macedonia launched joint controls at Hani i Elezit/Blace in May, while North Macedonia and Serbia simplified one-stop checks at Tabanovci/Presevo in July, cutting waiting times and easing staffing needs. A second joint crossing between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro (Sitnica/Zupci) opened in April, demonstrating good bilateral cooperation. Work continues on preparing additional shared BCPs.

On EU borders, the Green Lanes initiative advanced with the endorsement of 11 priority crossings at the EU–Western Balkans Summit in Brussels, backed by €57 million under the Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme 2.0. CEFTA also prepared fiches for five intra-regional crossings, expected to be endorsed later in 2025. National authorities began using CONNECTA technical assistance for project preparation, supported by a February 2025 TCT workshop with CELBET. In parallel, Albania hosted the Second High-Level Conference of Customs Directors General, where Western Balkans and EU neighbours reaffirmed support for expanding Green Lanes, with SEED+ enabling real-time data exchange and reduced waiting times.

Flagship 9 - Making Mobility Fair and Just for All

The transport sector is a cornerstone of the Western Balkans' economies, driving employment and regional connectivity. Yet, economic volatility, growing international competition, demographic shifts, and the weakening of traditional social structures threaten social standards and regulatory stability. Tackling these challenges is crucial to building a skilled workforce and ensuring that the transition to greener and more digital systems is both fair and inclusive.

The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat is committed to promoting equitable mobility, particularly for individuals with reduced mobility and disabilities.

This Flagship includes the following actions:

i. Playing an active role in assisting regional institutions to remove legal barriers to women's economic empowerment opportunities

ii. Encouraging IFIs, Ministries in charge of transport and Transport Departments within Universities across the region to develop grant schemes for women internships in the transport sector

iii. Reviewing guidelines on Land PSO Regulation and providing guidance on freight PSOs

iv. Setting up a Platform for Change and removing legal barriers to women's economic empowerment.

Playing an active role in assisting regional institutions to remove legal barriers to women's economic empowerment opportunities

The Social Forum of the Transport Community serves as a platform for a social dialogue between key transport stakeholders from the European Union and the South East European Parties. One of the forum's key topics is gender inequality, with a focus on the transport sector more appealing to young people and women. To address these issues, in 2025 the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat prepared the Next Generation Action Plan for the Implementation of the EU Acquis in the Area of Social Issues and Passenger Rights in Transport. This Next Generation action plan will be endorsed in December 2025 at the TCT Annual Ministerial Council and is structured around three essential groups: Social Issues for establishing high social standards by providing fair, healthy and safe working conditions; passenger rights for strengthening Passenger Rights to ensure a fair and accessible transport system and gender equality and attractiveness of transport for providing equal opportunities and more attractive transport sector for everyone. Serbia has committed to the Declaration on Equal Opportunities for Women in Transport, raising awareness about gender inclusivity in the workforce, Additionally, Albania presented an Action Plan for Equal Opportunities, focusing on creating a fair, inclusive and diverse workforce.

Encouraging IFIs, Ministries in charge of transport and Transport Departments within Universities across the region to develop grant schemes for women internships in the transport sector

A two-day study visit to Brussels and Antwerp took place on 14-15 November 2024, focusing on fostering a more inclusive and attractive transport sector in the Western Balkans. On the first day, participants visited DG MOVE, where they received guidance on joining the Platform for Change, explored EU policies on gender balance in transport, and discussed key challenges such as automation, digitalisation, and labour shortages. The visit also included a meeting with the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) to learn about initiatives like Women in Rail and the STAFFER Erasmus+ project on skills development. On the second day, the group travelled to Antwerp, where they visited the Port of Antwerp to examine best practices in gender equality in transport. The study visit concluded with a meeting with the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA), where discussions centered on gender diversity, workforce innovation, and digitalisation in the maritime sector. The visit provided valuable insights into addressing labour shortages and automation challenges, equipping participants with strategies to enhance diversity and resilience in the transport sector.

Reviewing Guidelines on the Land PSO Regulation and Providing Guidance on Freight PSOs

No progress was made by the regional partners on this measure during the reporting period, and an update is awaited.

Setting up a Platform for Change and removing legal barriers to women's economic empowerment

The establishment of a "Platform for Change" is a pivotal action under our equal opportunities' initiatives in the Action Plan for the Implementation of EU Acquis in Social Issues and Passenger Rights in Transport. At the March 2023 RSC meeting, the European Commission invited regional partners to join this platform, which promotes equal opportunities and strengthens women's employment in the transport sector. This platform facilitates discussions and the exchanges of best practice for a more inclusive industry. No progress on Regional Partners joining the Platform.

Flagship 10 - Enhancing Transport Safety and Security

All Regional Partners have committed to the Vision Zero initiative, aligning with the UN and EU in adopting the Safe System approach within their new Road Safety Strategies. These strategies set the common objective of eliminating fatalities, representing a major step toward safer roads across the region. These measures highlight the region's determination to enhance safety across both transport networks. This Flagship includes the following actions:

i. Improving road safety management, enabling safer infrastructure and better protection of road users

ii. Preparing and adopting a Road Safety Strategy and setting road safety targets for the next decade (2021-2030)

iii. Improving domestic legislation by transposing the transport of dangerous goods Acquis.

Improving Road Safety Management, enabling Safer Infrastructure for Better Protection of Road Users and preparing and adopting Road Safety Strategy

Albania is finalising a new Road Safety Strategy under an EU project, while Bosnia and Herzegovina has made no progress in establishing a Road Safety Council. Kosovo's draft National Road Safety Plan remains pending approval, and North Macedonia has set up a commission to prepare a new strategy. Montenegro and Serbia are more advanced, having already adopted their strategies and action plans.

In the reporting period, there were no new lead Road Traffic Safety Agencies were established during the reporting period. Kosovo's Law on Roads provides the legal basis for an agency, but it has yet to be created. In North Macedonia, the draft law establishing such an agency has been stalled for two years. Montenegro decided not to form a separate agency, assigning its functions to a new coordinating body, while Bosnia and Herzegovina foresees only a Road Safety Unit within the Ministry of Transport.

In terms of coordination, Serbia stands out with adopted a Decision to establish the National Road Traffic Coordination Body, from July 2025, which brought together ten expert working groups to strengthen the road safety management system. Other Regional Partners made no progress in this area.

On infrastructure, progress has been made in implementing the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive (2008/96/EC) and its 2019 amendment. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina introduced legal guidelines and rulebooks, though implementation remains limited. Kosovo transposed the Directive into its Law on Roads. Montenegro and Serbia demonstrated strong

institutional capacity, with certified auditors carrying out audits and inspections, while North Macedonia advanced through a mix of legislative reforms, large-scale projects, asset management integration, and deployment of intelligent traffic systems.

Some advances were also noted in the implementation of the Directive on Minimum Safety Requirements for Tunnels (2004/54/EC). Albania included it in its draft Road Safety Strategy, and Kosovo transposed it into its Law on Roads. Montenegro not only transposed the Directive but also extended its scope to tunnels under 500 metres and reported on an EBRD-supported ITS project. In contrast, North Macedonia and Serbia reported no progress.

Improving Domestic Legislation by Transposing the Transport of Dangerous Goods Acquis

All regional partners continue to demonstrate progress in transposing the transport of dangerous goods acquis, though implementation gaps persist, particularly regarding ADR/RID 2025 translation and enforcement capacity development. Serbia maintains its leadership position with a comprehensive legal framework operational since 2017 and systematic biennial update mechanisms, while Montenegro achieved a major milestone by adopting comprehensive Transport of Dangerous Goods legislation in 2025 that incorporates all three EU directives. Albania continues to excel in Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED) implementation through its robust framework established under Decision of Council of Ministers No. 430 (2019) and demonstrates proactive engagement in ADR/RID 2025 translation efforts. Enhanced inter-agency coordination mechanisms have been established across multiple jurisdictions, facilitating improved regulatory alignment and operational effectiveness. However, persistent challenges remain, including pending ADR/RID 2025 translations across most jurisdictions, partial transposition of EU Directive 2022/1999 on uniform roadside checks, and underdeveloped market surveillance structures for TPED implementation. Priority actions for 2025–2026 focus on accelerating translation completion, strengthening enforcement frameworks, and establishing comprehensive coordination mechanisms across all transport modes to ensure full acquis alignment.

4. Conclusions and the Way Forward

The **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans (SSMS WB)** continues to guide the region toward a **green, smart, and resilient transport system**, in alignment with the **EU Green Deal** and the goal of **climate neutrality by 2050**. While progress in policy development, infrastructure investment, and regional coordination has advanced, challenges in **legislative alignment, digital integration, and institutional capacity** still hinder full implementation of the SSMS objectives.

Sustainable Mobility - The Western Balkans are advancing gradually toward cleaner transport systems. Progress is most visible in alternative fuel infrastructure, SUMP development, and vehicle fleet renewal incentives. Albania and Serbia, expanded electric charging networks, while Montenegro and Serbia continued national subsidy schemes for EVs. However, no Regional Partner has yet transposed the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), and airports and ports remain without alternative fuel facilities.

Rail electrification covers only about 60 % of the Core TEN-T network, and multimodal freight integration remains limited, though the identification of nine regional multimodal terminals provides a sound foundation for future investments. SUMP preparation and adoption is accelerating — several Serbian cities already adopted plans; Tirana’s is under preparation; and five North Macedonian

municipalities are developing them with World Bank support. Yet, implementation and monitoring of CO_2-reduction measures in national transport strategies remain weak.

Smart Mobility - Digitalisation represents the fastest-moving SSMS pillar. ITS deployment has advanced through new traffic control centres and tenders (notably Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia). The Digital Mobility Hub, eFTI technical assistance, and NAP/NB establishment project are strengthening interoperability foundations. Serbia and Montenegro have fully transposed TSIs for telematics in passenger services, while other partners remain in early stages of alignment.

Despite these achievements, most Regional Partners have not yet transposed the key EU acts on ITS (Directive 2010/40/EU and 2023/2661), eFTI (2020/1056), or MMTIS (2017/1926). Implementation is still project-based and fragmented. Regional cooperation through the Digital Mobility and ITS Conference, Summer School, and EU4Digital programme has improved institutional capacity and awareness, but systemic data exchange and real-time multimodal services are not yet operational.

Resilient Mobility - Climate resilience and regional integration are gaining prominence but remain in formative stages. Transport development strategies in several partners (e.g. Montenegro 2019–2035 update, North Macedonia 2018–2030 revision, Serbia 2023–2030 drafting) now integrate sustainability and digitalisation. Projects such as Albania's Building Resilient Bridges, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Main Roads Modernisation, and Montenegro's Medium-Term Programme for State Roads include climate-proofing components.

Nevertheless, no Regional Partner has adopted a dedicated transport adaptation strategy, and resilience planning remains project-driven rather than institutionalised. Adoption of Road Asset Management Systems (RAMS), Service Level Agreements (SLAs), and systematic climate-risk assessment guidelines is essential to safeguard infrastructure and ensure continuity of operations under future climate conditions.

Overall Outlook

The Western Balkans are progressing from planning to implementation, but the transition to a truly sustainable, smart, and resilient transport system requires:

- Accelerated legal transposition and institutional capacity building;
- Focused investment in green infrastructure, digital interoperability, and climate-proof assets; and
- Stronger cross-border and multi-level coordination through the Transport Community framework and the New Growth Plan.

These steps are critical to achieving full alignment with EU standards and the SSMS 2030 vision. Coordinated action — supported by EU, IFI, and private-sector partnerships — will be crucial to achieving a sustainable, smart, and resilient transport system by 2030.