

Advancing Connectivity, Interoperability, and Resilience of the Danube Region Railway Network

*Joint EUSDR PA1b coordinators¹ and Transport Community event
under the auspices of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency of the EUSDR*

Wednesday and Thursday, 4th - 5th June 2025

Sarajevo / Bosnia & Herzegovina

Venue: **Swissôtel Sarajevo** (<https://www.swissotel.com/hotels/sarajevo/>), Vrbanja 1, Sarajevo

Draft A G E N D A

Workshop Objectives:

1. Highlight the Danube region's railway network's importance as a backbone for regional trade and mobility
2. Address connectivity and interoperability gaps to enhance cross-border rail operations
3. Explore solutions to adapt railway infrastructure to resilience challenges
4. Foster regional cooperation and investment strategies to create a future-ready railway system.

Ver.: 25-5-2025

Wednesday, 4th June 2025

18.30 – 21.00 **Networking Dinner** (sponsored by BiH EUSDR Presidency)

Thursday, 5th June 2025

8.30 – 9.00 **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

09:00 – 9:45 **Opening Session**

Moderator:

- *Mr. Midhat Džemić, Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency of the EUSDR / Directorate for European Integration of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina*
 - Welcome remarks
 - *Mr. Beno Fekonja, PA1b PAC, Ministry of infrastructure, Slovenia* &
 - *Mr. Aleksandar Banjac, PA1b PAC, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Serbia*
 - *Mr. Robert Lichtner, Coordinator, Danube Strategy Point*
 - Welcome speech by the European Commission
 - *Mr. Johan Magnusson, Team Leader, DG REGIO, The European Commission*
 - Introductory speech by host country representative
 - *Mr. Edin Forto, Minister of Communications and Transport, Bosnia and Herzegovina*
 - Keynote address: "The Role of Railways in Regional Connectivity and Sustainable Development"
 - *Mr. Matej Zakonjšek, Director, the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat*
 - Keynote address: "Challenges in implementing the newly established TEN-T corridor"
 - *Mr. Marian-Jean Marinescu, EU Coordinator, The Western Balkans - Eastern Mediterranean (WBEM) European Transport Corridor*
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¹ Ministry of Infrastructure of the Republic of Slovenia and Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia

09:45 – 10:35 **Session 1: Tackling Connectivity and Interoperability for enhanced Cross Border rail activity in the Danube Region**

Objective: Identify and address gaps in cross-border rail connectivity. Showcase technological and institutional solutions for overcoming interoperability challenges.

Speakers:

- Evolution of Railways in the Danube macro-region
- *Mr. Franc Žepič, Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenia*
- Compliance with TEN-T requirements, the current state of play
- *Mr. Dejan Lasica, Rail Policy Coordinator, Transport Community Treaty Permanent Secretariat, Belgrade*
- Border Crossings as Bottlenecks and International Capacity allocation with Corridor's One-Stop-Shop solutions
- *Mr. Tihomir Španič and Mr. Dino Džafo, PMO - Project manager office Alpine Western Balkan Railway Freight Corridor, Croatia*
- Implementing ERTMS standards in the Danube region
- *Mr. Marko Vajdić, Branch Office Manager at DB Engineering & Consulting GmbH, Croatia*

Format: Presentations followed by Q&A.

10.35 – 11.00 *Coffee Break & Family photo*

11:00 – 12:00 **Session 1: continued!**

Speakers:

- Implementing ERTMS standards in the Danube region
- *Mr. Marko Vajdić, Branch Office Manager at DB Engineering & Consulting GmbH, Croatia*
- Digitalising rail transport for seamless connectivity
- *Ms Eneida ELEZI, Foreign Affairs expert, Albanian Railways, Albania*
- RNE contribution to effective cross-border operation
- *Mr. Peter Šišolák, Head of Traffic Management, RailNetEurope, Vienna*
- E-freight: Single access point for administrative procedures in all modes
- *Ms Tanja Bošković, Ph.D., Head of GIZ RegioTrade Project, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Format: Presentations followed by Q&A.

12:00 – 13:00 **Session 2: Prioritizing Investments for Regional Rail Connectivity and Identifying Connectivity Priorities**

Objective: Address funding challenges and opportunities for infrastructure projects, and measures for enhancing rail connectivity in the region. Gather participants' input on priority projects

Speakers:

- Strategic prioritization of key corridors and rail links
- *Mr. Dejan Lasica, Rail Policy Coordinator, Transport Community Treaty Permanent Secretariat, Belgrade*
- WBIF for funding TEN-T priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- *Ms Sabina Dizdarević, Head of Unit, Directorate for European Integration, NIPAC Office Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- The role of railways in the growth of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- *Ms Svetlana Vukanović, Senior Transport Specialist, World Bank (WB)*
- "Czech HSL System – The Crucial Element of TEN-T Connectivity in Central Europe".
- *Mr. Petr Košťák, Projects' Specialist, Správa železnic, státní organizace (SZCZ), Czech Republic*

Format: Presentations followed by discussion with participants.

13:00 – 14:15 *Networking Lunch*

14:15 – 15:15 **Session 3: Climate Impacts on Rail Infrastructure and Innovative Solutions for Resilient Railways**

Objective: Discuss recent climate events and their impact on railway infrastructure. Explore innovative technologies, policies, and practices for building resilient railway infrastructure.

Speakers:

- Climate-related rail disruptions: Floods and landslides in Jablanica
- *Ms Mirna Hebib, The public railway company of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH railways), Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- Identifying vulnerable sections of the rail network
- *Mr. Nedim Begović, Green/Multimodal/Innovative transport solutions Desk Officer, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, Belgrade*
- Planning and building resilient railway infrastructure (case: Divača-Koper second track)
- *Mr. Marko Žitnik, Head of Technical Sector and Ms Nina Kolenc, 2 TDK Ltd., Slovenia*
- Predictive maintenance and monitoring systems for railways
- *Mr. Václav Bolech, MeteoSource Ltd., Czech Republic*

Format: Expert presentation followed by Q&A.

15:15 – 15:45 *Coffee Break*

15:45 – 16:30 **Session 4: Institutional Frameworks and Policy Harmonization**

Objective: To explore the regulatory and policy landscape governing railway interoperability and cross-border connectivity, to identify opportunities for enhanced cooperation and alignment.

Moderator: Mr. Dejan Lasica, Rail Policy Coordinator, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat

Format: Introductory presentation with panel discussion with speakers and experts on the topics:

- Key EU regulations and their implementation in the non-EU Danube Region Countries
 - Cross-border cooperation frameworks for interoperable and resilient railways
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16:30 – 16:55 **Closing Panel Discussion: "Achieving Connectivity, Interoperability, and Resilience: The Way Forward for the Danube Region"**

Objective: Reflect on the day's discussions and outline key steps for regional cooperation.

Moderator: Mr. Franc Žepič, Deputy PAC, Secretary at Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenia

Format: Moderated discussion with participants.

16:55 – 17:00 Closing remarks by Organizers (and possible: announcement of follow-up initiatives or events)

**Please note the agenda is subject to change*

Conference language: **English**. No interpretation available.