



Alpine-Western Balkan
rail freight corridor



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility

Unlocking New Possibilities with the Extended WBEM RFC

Annual Stakeholders' Conference – Danube Region Transport Days 2025



AWB RFC lines



AWB RFC vs. WBEM RFC main figures

	AWB RFC	WBEM ETC
Countries	5	13
Infrastructure Managers	5	14
Border crossings	5 (3 internal EU borders)	17 (4 internal EU borders)
Seaports	0	11
River ports	3	6
Terminals	21	23*
Marshalling yards	12	15*

WBEM lines



Why Rail Enlargement (AWB RFC → WBEM RFC)?

- ❑ A more **connected and comprehensive rail network** – broader geographic coverage supporting transit, TEN-T continuity, and access to new regions.
- ❑ Higher **resilience and reliability** – coordinated capacity management across more IMs reduces bottlenecks and strengthens disruption handling.
- ❑ Harmonized **operational** framework – aligned procedures, standards, and communication across an enlarged corridor.
- ❑ Greater competitiveness for rail freight – more services, better path options, improved access for Railway Undertakings.
- ❑ Stronger platform for knowledge & data sharing – **more IMs = more expertise**, innovation potential, and **cooperation** (TTR, digital tools, KPIs).

Core IM Actions – Existing Corridor

- Harmonisation of infrastructure & technical parameters (train length, axle load, electrification, signalling)
- Coordinated capacity allocation & timetable/path planning across borders
- Joint multi-year works planning & cross-border possession management
- Data exchange & interoperability (data compliance)
- Performance monitoring & harmonised KPIs (punctuality, delays, border crossing times)
- Border-crossing optimisation & streamlined handover procedures
- Shared risk management & contingency planning for disruptions

Benefits of the Extended Corridor (WBEM RFC)

- Broader cross-border rail connectivity across Western Balkans + Adriatic–Danube region
- Enhanced freight & potential passenger flows, improved service reliability
- Stronger cooperation among IMs → operational efficiency & resilience
- New opportunities for international trade, modal shift from road to rail, and intermodal transport growth
- Expected growth of volume between* **14-40%**

Next Steps

- Formalisation, accession, and organisational updates: finalise formal process for candidate countries, and proceed with corridor rebranding
- **Align infrastructure, operations, and capacity planning** across the entire extended corridor
- Launch working groups, **data-exchange** platforms, and **capacity allocation** under the new structure

Key Take-aways

- Cooperation among IMs is **essential for a seamless transport network**
- Extended WBEM RFC opens **strategic, long-term opportunities** for the region
- Stepwise approach: consolidate existing members → accession of new members → operational implementation
- Integrated transport system → **sustainable growth, resilience, cohesion**
- Move beyond “mode protection” → **cooperation over competition**
- Platforms for: data & knowledge exchange, best practices, partnerships

Together, we support a **sustainable, competitive, and integrated European freight network.**

Thank you for your attention

[Visit us: https://www.rfc-awb.eu/](https://www.rfc-awb.eu/)

