

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region
Priority Area 1b: To improve mobility and Multimodality – road, rail and air links

SUMMARY OF AD HOC WG ON RAILWAYS

„The Impact of Covid-19 on Rail Transport in the Danube Region“

Held on 16 September 2020 - Virtual (online tool ZOOM) – 27 participants

Item 11

Franc Žepič, Secretary & PAC 1b

- Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenia

Miodrag Poledica, State Secretary & PAC 1b

- Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Serbia

Željko Janjoš, Adviser to PAC 1b

- Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Serbia

21st SG meeting
14 October 2020

Virtual (online tool ZOOM):

Ljubljana (SI), Vienna (AT), Sarajevo (B&H), Sofia (BG),
Zagreb (CRO), Prague (CZ), Munich and Stuttgart (DE),
Budapest (HU), Podgorica (ME), Chişinău (MD),
Bucharest (RO), Bratislava (SK), Kiev (UA), Belgrade
(SRB) & Brussels (BE)

Co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA II)

Agenda

13.00 – 13.20	Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Miodrag Poledica (PAC) - Johan Magnusson, Team Leader Danube and Baltic Sea Region, DG REGIO - Franc Žepič (PAC)
13.20 – 13.30	Opening expression of facts on rail services in 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr Libor Lochman, CER Executive Director
13.30 – 14.30	Past/Present: Examining the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the railway transport – analysing regional data (freight and passenger transport) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dejan Lasica, Rail Policy Coordinator, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat - Exchange of information (Representatives of Danube region countries)
14.30 – 14.45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
14.45 – 16.00	Present/Future: Railway passenger transport in uncertain times - short, midterm and long term challenges (How to organise safe transport, tickets compensation, PSO obligation and financial compensation)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introductory presentation:: Vlasta Kampos-Jerenec, Head of Unit, Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenia - Exchange of information and views / Discussion
16.00 – 16.10	Way We See It: Final observations, recommendations and conclusions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assoc. Prof. Borna Abramović, University of Zagreb, Croatia
16.10 – 16.15	Closing of the Ad hoc WG meeting (Exit ZOOM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PA1b PACs

Summary and Conclusions of the workshop:

The impact of Covid 19 on the rail transport, based on the presentations and round table discussions, can be summarized separately for:

➤ **Passenger transport**

☐ **Negative impact**

☐ **Positive experiences**

➤ **Freight transport**

☐ **Negative impact**

☐ **Positive experiences**

Passenger transport:

➤ Negative impact

- Lockdown in most countries stopped passenger transport completely in March and April
- After relaxing measures – demand for passenger transport dropped about 80 – 85% (across the region)
- Passenger transport showed little flexibility

➤ Positive experiences

- Online ticketing – what was not possible for years – happened in short period of few weeks
- Introduction of train from Prague to Rijeka, 12 wagons – private initiative – 12 h but with excellent catering – 100% full

Passenger transport (continued):

➤ What to expect and do in the future:

- High expectations from rail passenger transport as a sustainable way to travel – use opportunity to attract passengers
- Learn from good practices – make rail travel attractive
 - private initiatives – line Prague – Rijeka
 - further improve accessibility (online ticketing)
 - use this window to accelerate infrastructure projects (Hungary)
- Higher demands for financial compensations – pressure to amend PSO contracts – use money wisely
- Use this opportunity to implement reforms – (Transport Community Short Term Goals)

Freight transport:

➤ Negative impact

- Average loss of rail freight revenues was about 17% (CER)

➤ Positive experiences

- Freight transport proved to be very robust – moves large volumes of goods with minimal human resources
- New type of goods – consumer electronics (from road and air)
- Reintroduced ‘single wagon load’ (after 20 years between Italy and Croatia)
- Good cooperation made the freight transport running

**IT IS NOT TIME FOR CELEBRATION, BUT TO IMPROVE FURTHER AND
TAKE BIGER SHARE OF THE MARKET PERMANENTLY**

Thank you very much!

Please visit:

<https://transport.danube-region.eu/>



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