



Improving Railways in the Western Balkans

Current situation, Challenges and Opportunities

Dejan Lasica

Rail Coordinator

Transport Community
Permanent
Secretariat

Content



TCT Overview



Strategic
Goals



Rail Policy
Reforms and
Projects



TCT Events
2021

TCT Overview and Main Objectives



01

The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat is an international organization in the field of mobility and transport with 33 members participants.

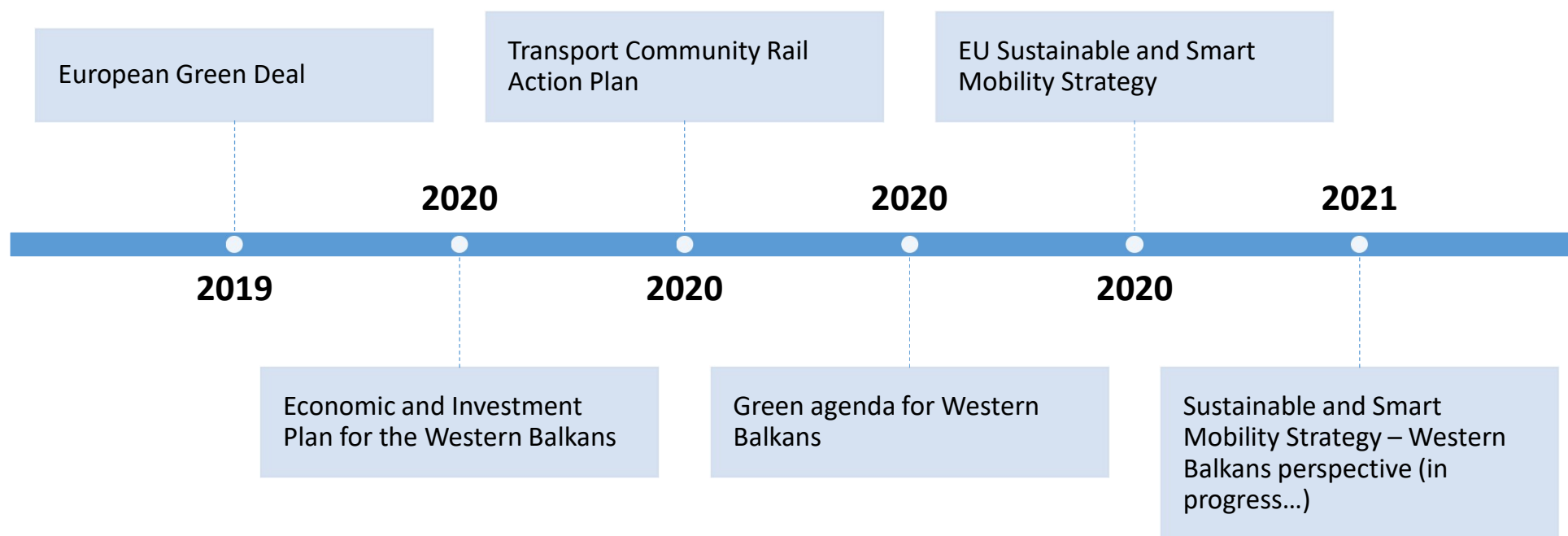
02

Aim: Integration of transport markets of the six Western Balkan regional partners into the EU.

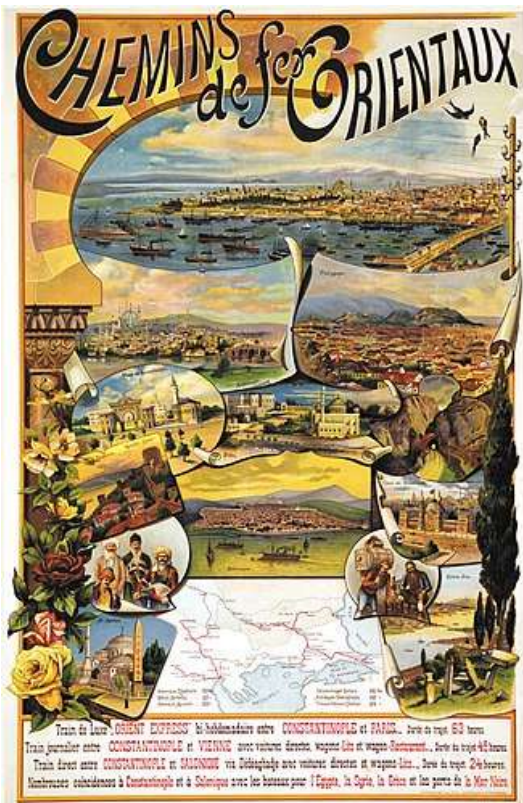
03

This is achieved through implementation of the EU Transport Acquis and connectivity projects that will improve the connections among all regional partners and with the EU.

Strategic goals - framework



Policy Reforms



Aligning with the necessary EU legislation, as well as increase or make the best use of available smart technologies/systems

Restructuring of the public rail enterprises

Simplifying border crossing procedures

Improve safety levels throughout the TEN T Core road and rail network,

Reduce accidents with fatalities and serious injuries

Maintenance plans

Rail Policy Reforms and Projects



Regional market opening

Network statement – regular publishing at domestic level

Establishing of regional Network Statement

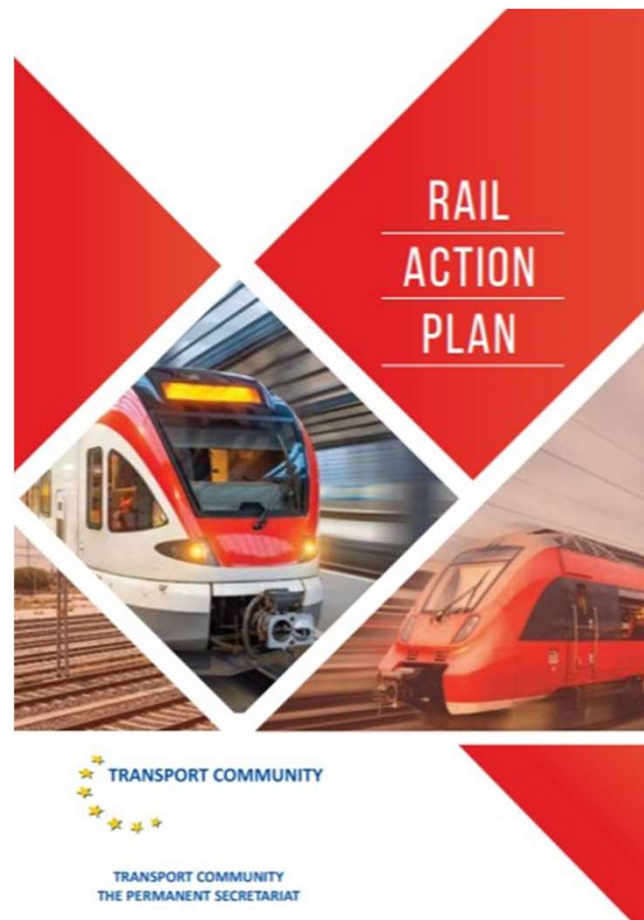
Mutual recognition of main rail documents

Implementation of the 4th Railway Package (market and technical pillar)

Adoption of the Multi Annual maintenance plans

Establishing of the electronic register of vehicle

Signing and implementation all BCAs



Progress Report on implementation of the Rail Action Plan (October 2020-September 2021)

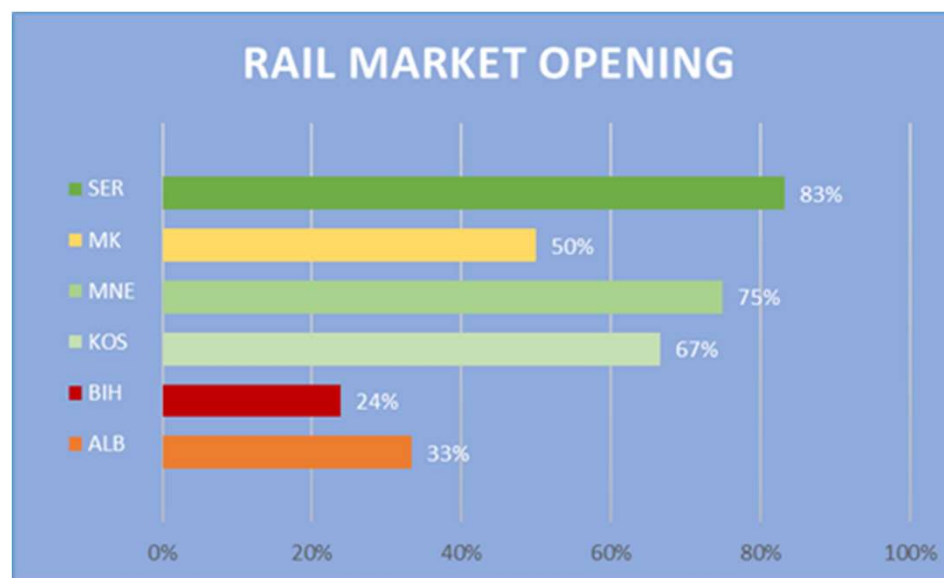
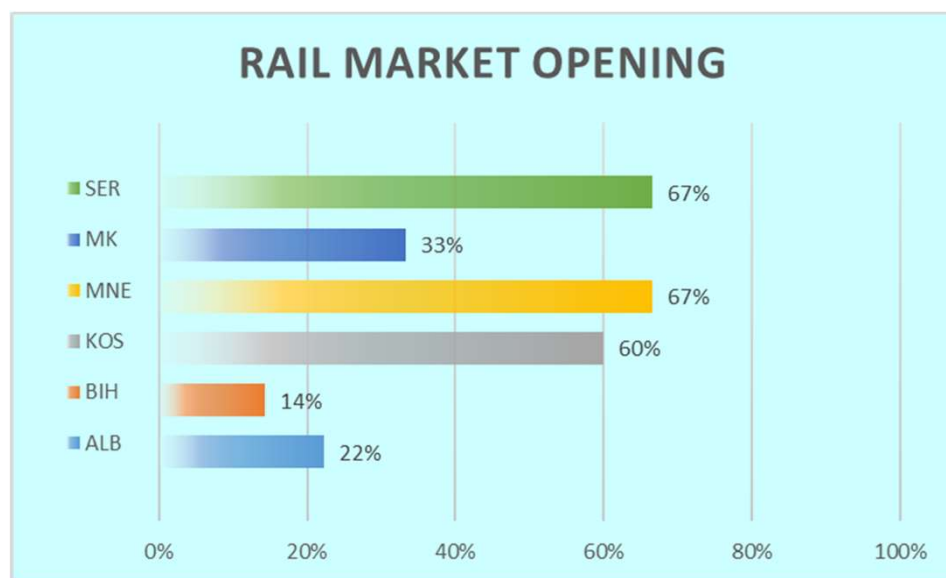


Figure 1. Rail market opening – October 2020 AND September 2021

Progress Report (October 2020-September 2021)

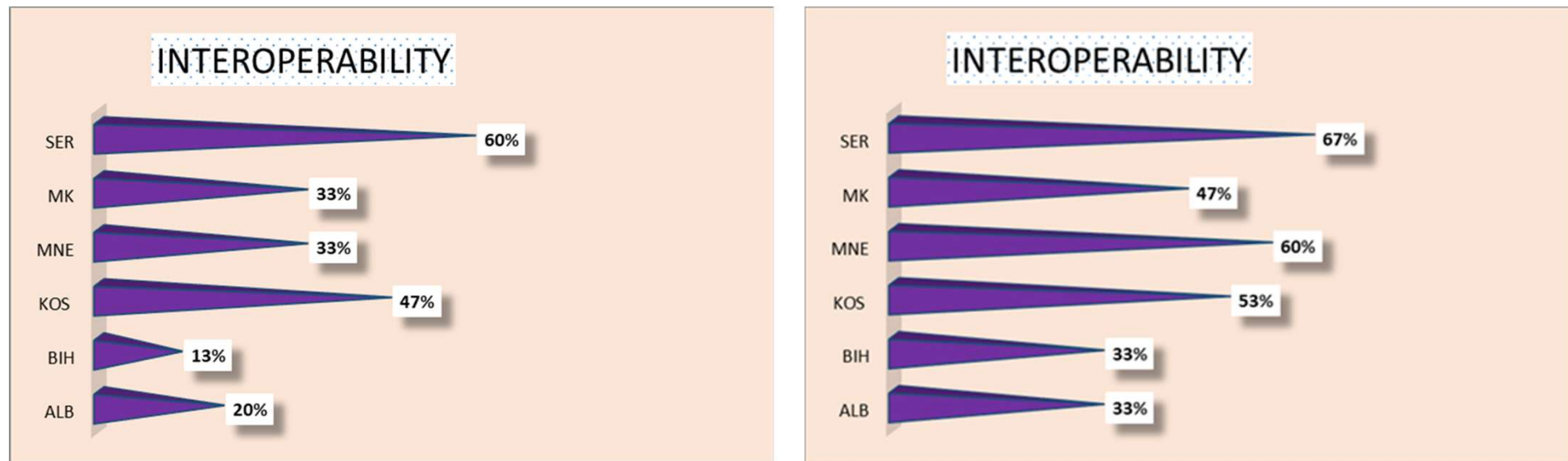


Figure 2. Interoperability - October 2020 and September 2021

Progress Report (October 2020-September 2021)

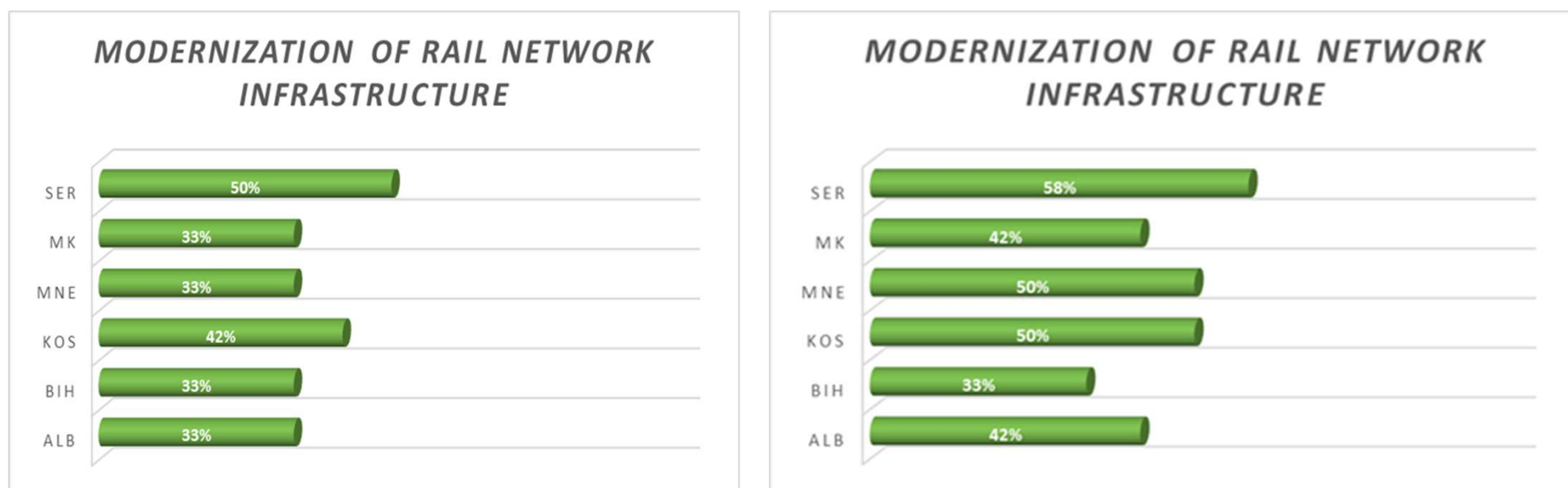
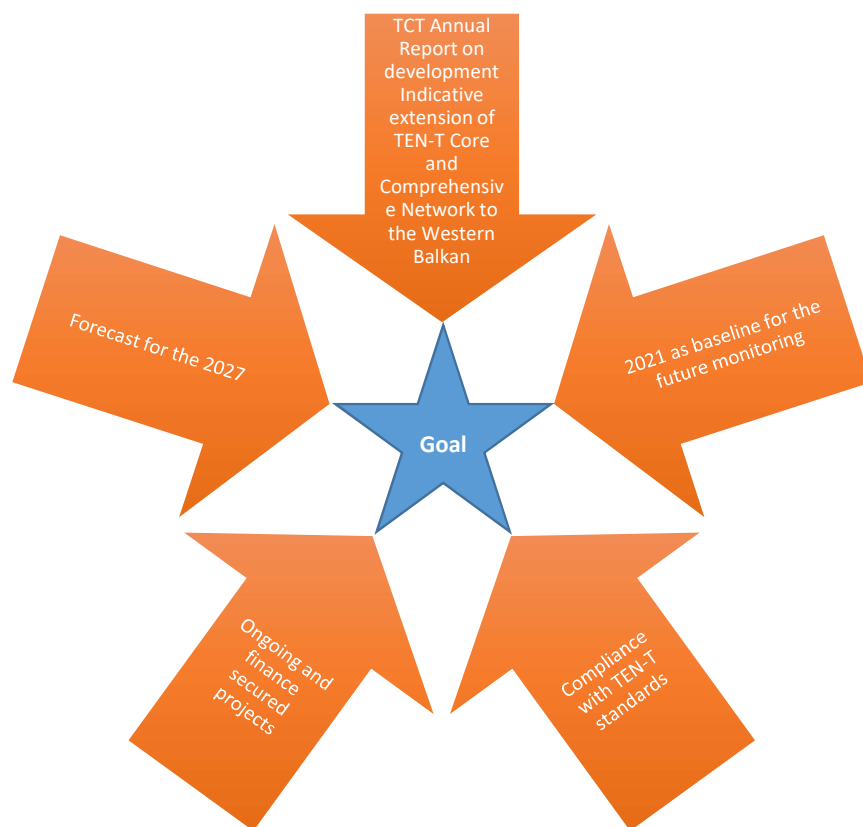


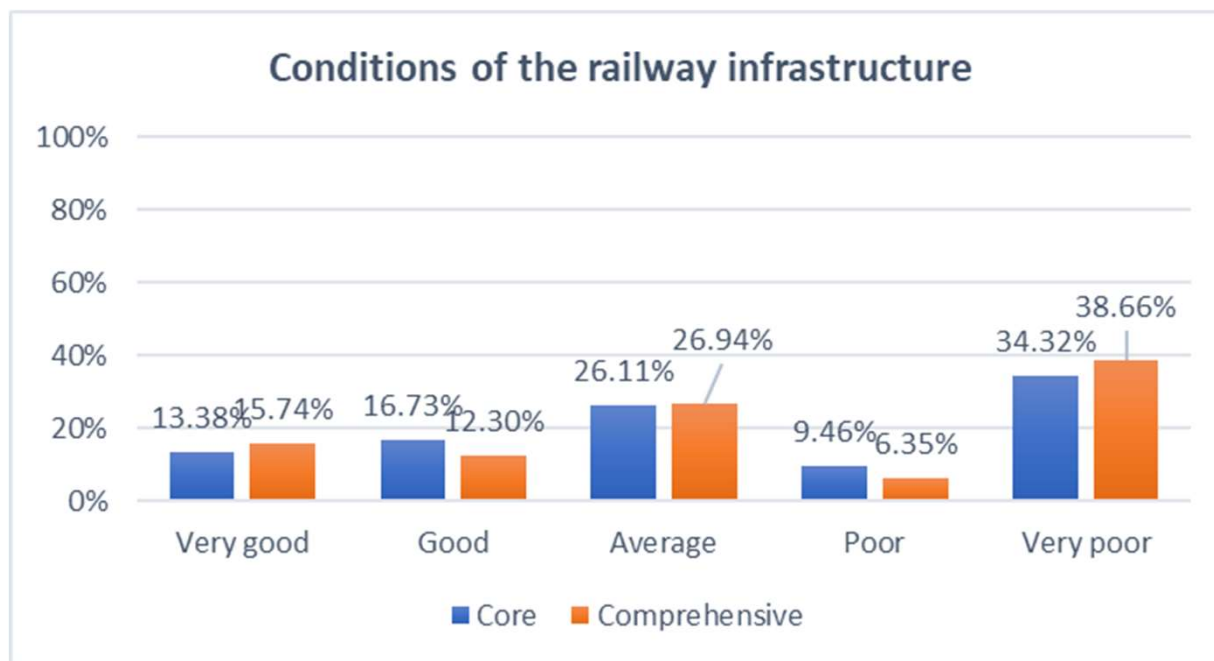
Figure 3. Modernization of rail infrastructure network - October 2020 and September 2021

Actions to be done - Projects



- TCT Annual Report on development Indicative extension of TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network to the Western Balkan
- 2021 as baseline for the future monitoring
- Compliance with TEN-T standards
- Ongoing and finance secured projects
- Forecast for the 2027

Challenges



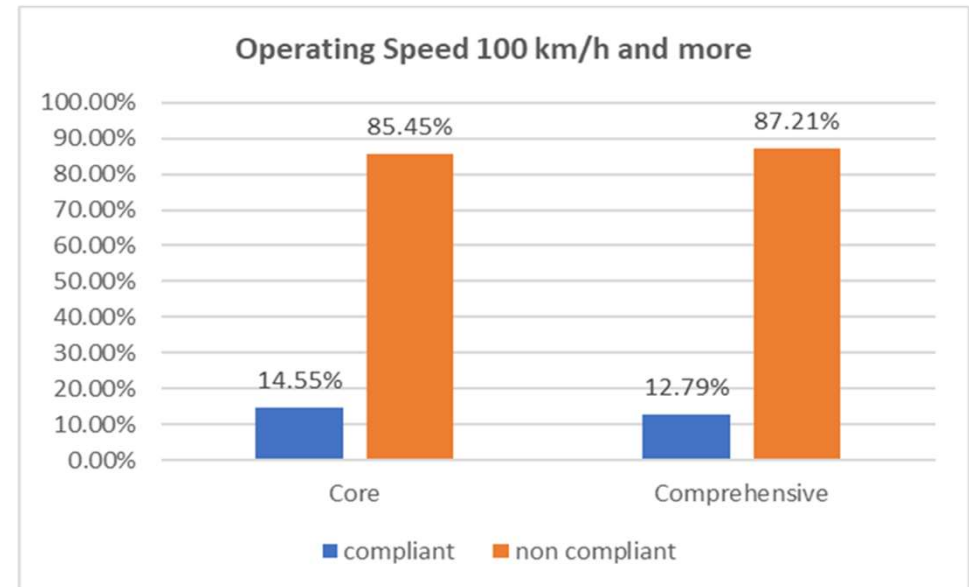
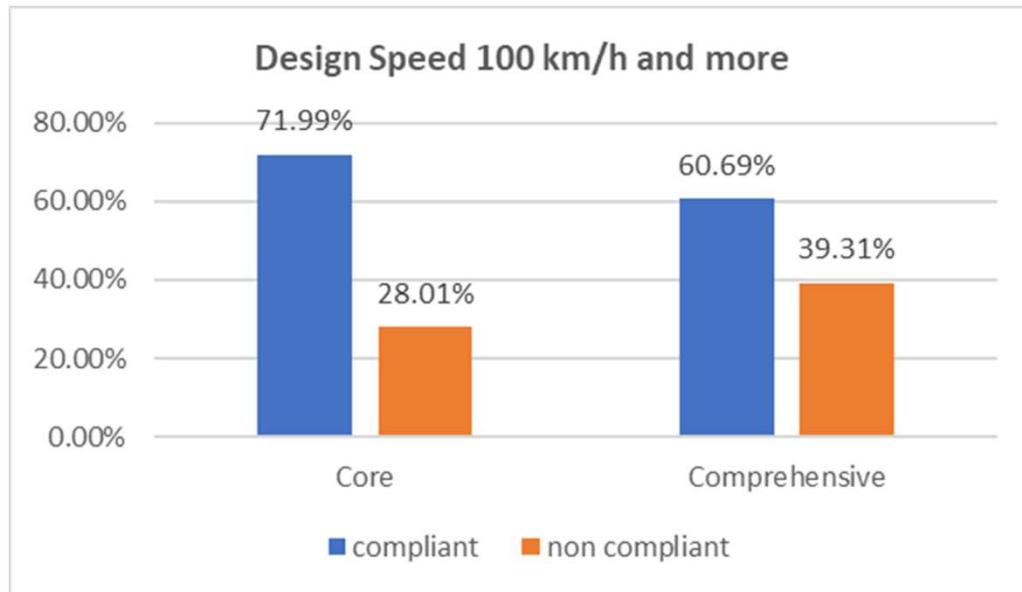
| Condition | Operational/Design speed |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| 5 | Very good (0,86 - 1) |
| 4 | Good (0,71 - 0,85) |
| 3 | Medium (0,61 - 0,70) |
| 2 | Poor (0,51 - 0,60) |
| 1 | Very Poor (0 - 0,50) |

| Conditions | Core | Comprehensive |
|------------|--------|---------------|
| Very good | 13.38% | 15.74% |
| Good | 16.73% | 12.30% |
| Average | 26.11% | 26.94% |
| Poor | 9.46% | 6.35% |
| Very poor | 34.32% | 38.66% |

Figure: Operating/Design Speed

Challenges

TEN-T 2020 compliance assessment



Ongoing infrastructure projects in the region



| Regional Partner | Name of the project | Core/Comprehensive Network | Foreseen intervention | Total length | Total Cost (M€) | Estimated completion deadline |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Albania | Durres- Tirana | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 41 | 90.45 | 2023 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Šamac – Doboj – Rječica | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 85 | 162.5 | 2025 |
| North Macedonia | Kumanovo-Beljakovce | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 30.8 | 48.9 | 2022 |
| North Macedonia | Beljakovce-Kriva Palanka | Core | New infrastructure, Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 34 | 145 | 2024 |
| North Macedonia | Kriva Palanka -Deve Bair | Core | New infrastructure | 34 | 420 | 2026 |
| North Macedonia | Nogaevci-Negotino | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 31 | 9.6 | 2022 |
| Kosovo | Railway Rehabilitation Route 10 | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 148 | 245 | 2025 |
| Montenegro | Vrbnica-Bar | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 159 | 244 | 2024 |
| Serbia | Brestovac - Presevo | Core | Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 23 | 60 | 2023 |
| Serbia | Belgrade - Novi Sad - Subotica | Core | New infrastructure, Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 183 | 1994 | 2024 |
| Serbia | Nis - Dimitrovgrad | Core | New infrastructure, Reconstruction/rehabilitation | 108 | 268 | 2024 |

Regional projects initiated by TCPS



- Level Crossings Safety Improvement
- Improvement of the maintenance by using special rail car for the measuring infrastructure parameters
- Re-establishing passenger train connections between capitals



TCT Events in 2021 as European Year of Rail



TCT Social forum

- Dedicated to Railways (February 2021)

Technical Committee on Railway

- 3 events in 2021

TCT Capacity building Summer Scholl 2021

- Dedicated to Railways (from 29 June – 02 July 2021)

Western Balkan Rail Summit 2021

- 13 September 2021
- Dedication to railway
- MoU between Infrastructure Managers

Dedication to Rail was signed by all SEE Parties



MoU for establishing Regional infrastructure Managers Network



Review of the situation at the BCP/CCPs



Figure 1

Role of passenger rail transport in post Covid-19 period

- Current rail passenger connections between capitals in the Western Balkan, number of trains, passenger traffic volume in the pre Covid-19 period - RPs
- Potential substitution of air traffic with rail within the Western Balkan region?
- Rail as alternative to other mode of transport during and after Covid-19 period
- Assessment of the capacity (rolling stock, infrastructure)
- Development of “night train” product

Challenges to operate night trains

- Expensive rolling stock (e.g. sleeping cars, couchettes)
- “Ideal night train timetable” constraints
 - Departure window between 18-22 in the evening, arrival window between 7-9 in the morning
 - Capacity bottlenecks in the morning and evening rush hours exist at a number of major stations
 - Ideal timetable not always possible
- Operational constraints
 - split / join operations cause delays
 - Reduced speed due to freight trains and access restrictions to high speed lines
 - Track maintenance works may trigger frequent timetable changes

Train connections between capitals in the Western Balkan region



Train connections between capitals in the Western Balkan region



| Route | Distance (km) | | Travel time (hrs) | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------|-------------------|------------|
| | Rail | Road | train | bus |
| Belgrade – Skopje | 400 | 435 | 11 | 6 – 7,5 |
| Belgrade – Zagreb | 423 | 395 | 6,5 - 8 | 5 - 6 |
| Belgrade – Bar | 476 | 485 | 11 | 9,5 – 11,5 |
| Skopje – Pristina | 93 | 96 | 3 | 2 – 2,5 |
| Tirana – Podgorica | 166 | 180 | n/a | 4 |
| Sarajevo - Zagreb | 450 | 390 | 10 (2007) | 6,5 – 8 |
| Belgrade - Sarajevo | 400 | 310/380 | 8 – 9,5 (2011) | 6,5 – 7,5 |
| Belgrade - Priština | 388 | 350 | n/a | 5,5 – 6,5 |
| Belgrade - Kosovo Polje - Peć | 388 | 350 | 10 (1999) | 5,5 – 6,5 |

Passenger transport in Covid-19 period



- PSO contracts – space for the improvement?
- Infrastructure charges
- Mitigation measures
- Cleaning protocols, Sanitation gel, Temperature Screening, Passengers with Reduced Mobility, Masks, Passenger reservation system changes, distance where it possible

Challenges:

- Which measures should be taken in next phase?
- How to ensure social distancing?
- Protocol in case of suspected infected person
- Are there different measures according to different services (Commuter, regional, long distance trains)
- New technologies – tickets, reservation, information system
- Feeling of security in trains and in stations
- Staff confidence

Thank you for your attention

Dejan Lasica

Rail Policy Coordinator

Transport Community Secretariat

dlasica@transport-community.org