

Regional Dialogue

Strengthening transport connectivity in the SPECA region and beyond in the era of COVID-19

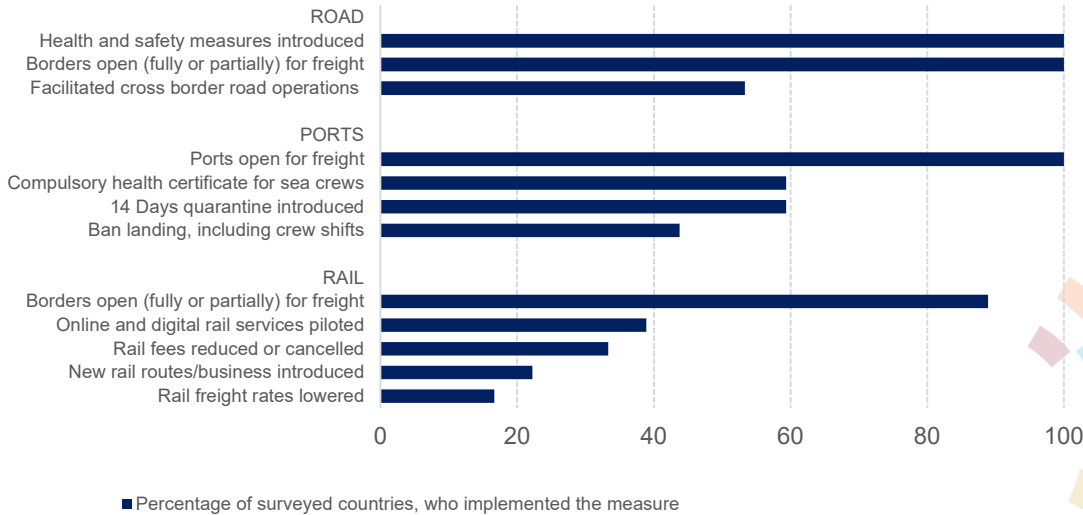
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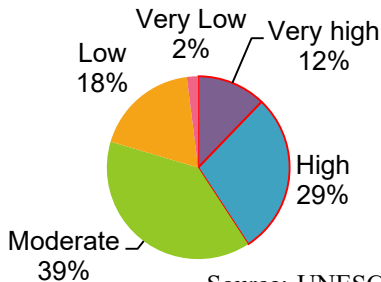
29 September 2020



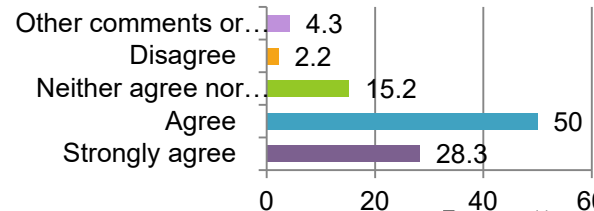
Impact of COVID-19 on Transport Connectivity



Level of disruption on freight transport services



The pandemic increased time and cost of cross-border freight operations



Source: UNESCAP survey on Freight Transport Policy Responses to COVID-19, 2020.



Pre COVID-19

- ❑ Infrastructure shortages
- ❑ Lack of digitalization
- ❑ Disbalanced freight modal split (road, rail, maritime)
- ❑ Inefficient or fragile transit arrangements
- ❑ Manual practices/checks at the border crossings
- ❑ Divergent standards on vehicles, drivers and international transit
- ❑ Connectivity gaps across the region

During COVID-19

- ❑ Restrictions
- ❑ New controls
- ❑ Market inefficiencies

But also

- ❑ Transit/green corridors
- ❑ Electronic platforms for transport operations
- ❑ No/reduced charges or penalties for storing cargo and other associated services
- ❑ Emergency Response Centers for shippers and transport operators

Aftermath



- ❑ **Impact on infrastructure connectivity (investments)**
- ❑ **Impact on operational connectivity (facilitation)**
- ❑ **SDGs and sustainability targets**

Transport Connectivity as part of the Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 [ESCAP Framework]

Key Areas



PROTECTING PEOPLE AND ENHANCING RESILIENCE



SUPPORTING ECONOMIC RECOVERY



RESTORING SUPPLY CHAINS AND SUPPORTING SMEs

Overarching Principle



BUILDING BACK BETTER



Approach



STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION
AND COLLABORATION



Impact assessment on availability and affordability of international freight transport

Enhancing sustainability of transport connectivity, promoting digitalization and facilitation

Leveraging the ESCAP intergovernmental platforms in COVID-19 response



Multi-stakeholder cooperation on regional connectivity, transport corridors and integrated multimodal transport systems

- ❑ Close engagement with the countries through expert discussions, surveys and individual consultations
- ❑ Raising profile of transport connectivity as part of Building Back Better
- ❑ Tracking tools, policy briefs and technical notes: policy responses and lessons learned
- ❑ Support to sub-regional initiatives (ASEAN guidelines for road freight transport and recovery policies, NCA SDG dialogue)
- ❑ Virtual trainings and capacity building tools

Contactless, seamless and collaborative solutions in cross-border trade and transport COVID 19 response

Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics

UN solutions for contactless, seamless and collaborative transport and trade

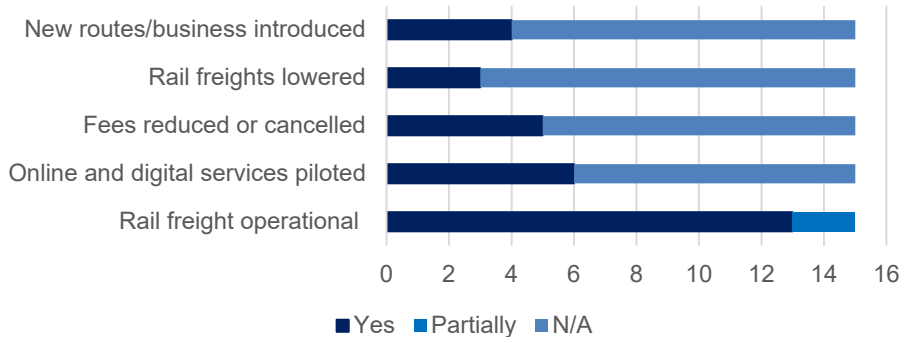


A joint project that will implement United Nations solutions, including standards, guidelines, metrics, tools and methodologies to immediately help governments, including Customs and other border agencies, port authorities, and the business community world-wide, to keep transport networks and borders operational to facilitate the flow of goods and services, while containing the further spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Implementing entities:

Lead agencies: ECE, ESCAP, UNCTAD. Additional partner agencies: ECA, ECLAC, ESCWA
Concept note, submitted to DESA on 29 April 2020.

Example: Boost to promoting international rail transport along the Trans-Asian Railway Network



The China-Europe Railway Express saw steady growth in the first quarter of this year, with a total of 1,941 trips run by freight trains carrying 174,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers, increasing 15 percent and 18 percent year-on-year.

Source: China Communications News

Online and digital services piloted	Fees reduced or cancelled	Rail freight rates lowered	New routes/business introduced
China	China	Kazakhstan	China
Kazakhstan	India	Kyrgyzstan	India
Kyrgyzstan	Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	Kyrgyzstan
Russian Federation	Kyrgyzstan		Uzbekistan
Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan		
Uzbekistan			

COVID-19 crisis showed an important degree of resilience of the network and agility in responses

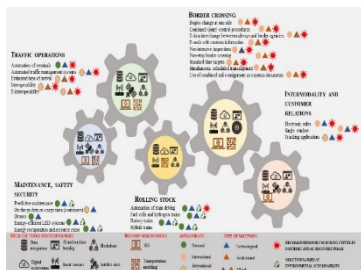
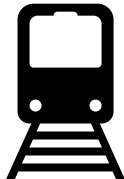
Example: Accelerating digitalization and smart connectivity along the intermodal regional network



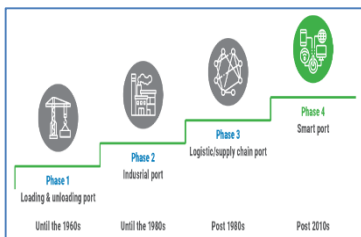
❑ Mobilizing Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railways and Dry Ports networks

❑ Focus on awareness raising and capacity building

❑ Levelling the playing field across modes but also regions



❑ South – South Cooperation and exchange of lessons learned and best practices



THANK YOU

