

# Regional Dialogue

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

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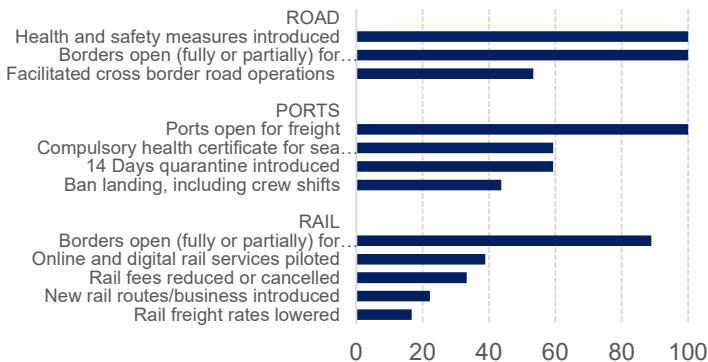
**29 September 2020**



# Preserving Transport Connectivity during COVID-19

## COVID-19 response

- Great efforts made by the countries to keep their borders open for freight, piloting digital/contactless solutions and readjusting their transport offer
- The response capacity was often undermined by pre-existing issues (lack of facilitation and digitalization, road-centric freight system)
- There is clearly insufficient coordination in the pandemic response, even at the national level



■ Percentage of surveyed countries, who implemented the measure

## COVID-19 impact

- Great economic losses and much higher precarity** in international freight transport, due to the contracted demand and introduced restrictions
- Containment measures** related to Covid-19 could **reduce global freight transport volumes by up to 36%** by the end of 2020 with the highest reduction, of more than half, projected for ASEAN, Russian Federation, Central Asia and India
- Additional inspections, reduced hours of operation, road and border closures, increases in transport costs, etc. **could lead to an increase in trade costs of 25%**.
- Widening of the existing connectivity gap**, especially for LLDCs and SIDs, but also other vulnerable countries.

# Legal instruments during COVID-19

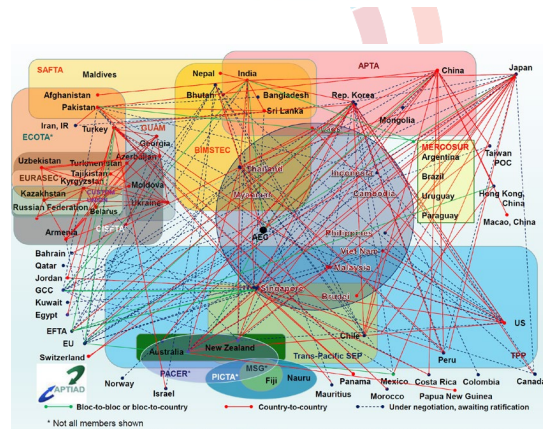
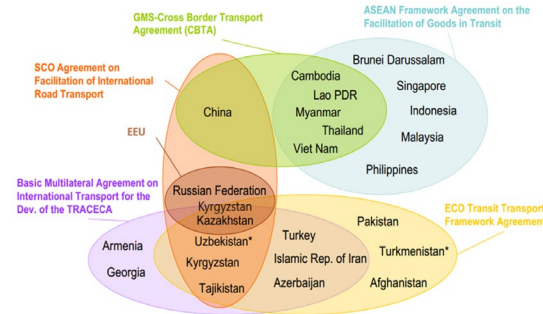
Asia and the Pacific is covered by numerous transport and trade international conventions, subregional as well as bilateral agreements.

During the pandemic ad-hoc policies and domestic regulations were introduced, without consulting with neighbors, often in breach of the international legal instruments.

Rapidly changing requirements, lack of clarity and limited information, resulted in increased cross-border transport waiting time and costs.

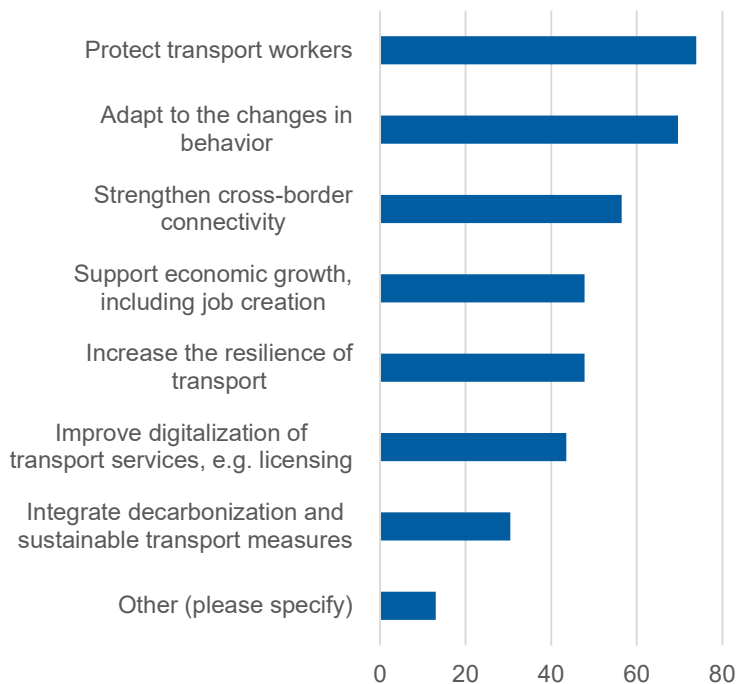
Existing legal instruments on international carriage of goods and passengers may lack provisions on cooperation during current crisis or other potential extraordinary situations.

The five UN regional commissions, UNCTAD and UNDESA are implementing a new joint UNDA project "Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics". It seeks to equip governments in developing and least developed countries to adapt to new post-COVID-19 conditions by tapping into UN expertise, standards, tools and guidance, while considering their specific and local conditions.

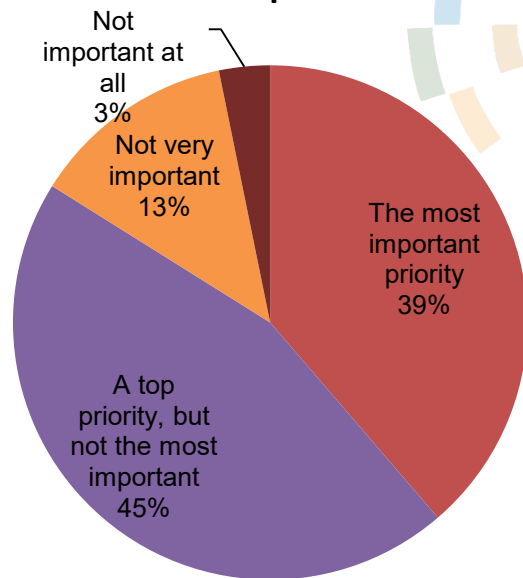


# Recovery policies in Asia and the Pacific

## Stated priorities in the recovery policies



## Priority given to regional cooperation



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

# Building Back Better: Reshaping transport connectivity in Asia-Pacific

## DIGITALIZED

- Smart infrastructure
- Paperless trade
- Intelligent transport/logistics

## RESILIENT

- Multimodality
- Operational connectivity
- Transport facilitation

## GREEN/DECARBONIZED

- Rail
- Waterborne transport
- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy

## Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Network and Dry ports

**ESCAP Resolution 76/2: Regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of pandemics and crises in Asia and the Pacific**

**Next Regional Action Programme on Sustainable Transport Connectivity (2021-2026)**

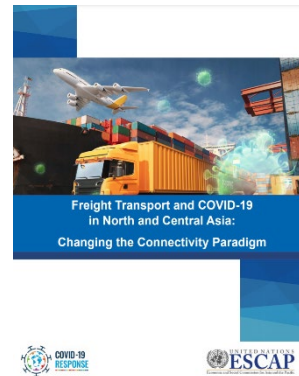
# Changing the connectivity paradigm in NCA

## National and domestic priorities for building back better

- Support the recovery of freight transport operations in the aftermath of COVID-19
- Better leverage innovative solutions to simplify processes and procedures for cross-border freight transport
- Further develop efficient intermodal connectivity
- Continue to improve infrastructure and operational framework
- Support the shift towards more sustainable freight sector

## Scaling up regional cooperation on sustainable and resilient transport connectivity

- Cooperate regionally to improve transit terms for landlocked states in North and Central Asia
- Strengthen regional cooperation and coordination on pandemics, emergencies, and disasters response



\* <https://www.unescap.org/resources/freight-transport-and-covid-19-north-and-central-asia-changing-connectivity-paradigm>

# THANK YOU

## Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19: ESCAP Framework

<https://www.unescap.org/covid19>

