



**TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE**

**TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
Steering Committee
52nd session, 2nd June 2021**

REPORT

The 52nd session of the TER Steering Committee (SC) was held online as a Webex videoconference on 2nd June 2021.

PARTICIPATION

The countries that participated in the session were: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czechia, Poland, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, and Turkey. Representatives of the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division and the TER Deputy Project Manager (DPM) attended the meeting. The consultants also participated in certain parts of the meeting.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. Pavol Hartl, the Chairman of the previous session welcomed the members of the Steering Committee.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda of the session (Annex 1) as submitted by the DPM was approved.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Steering Committee elected Mr. Mustafa Kovacevic (Chairman, BA) and Ms. Małgorzata Kopczyńska (Rapporteur, TER DPM) as its officers.

3. REPORT OF MANAGEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TER PROGRAMME OF WORK 2020 AND RELATED UNECE ACTIVITIES

The Deputy Project Manager delivered a presentation on the implementation of the TER Programme of Work 2020. She emphasised that due to the global situation, many activities had been delayed, postponed, or even cancelled. She reminded the SC that during its 50th session, the validity of the current Attachment to the Trust Fund Agreement (programme of work, budget, and cooperation framework) had been extended to 31st December 2021. It will be drafted after the TER Strategy 2025 has been adopted. She informed the SC that she had attended an online session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) held in February 2021. At the ITC, she emphasised the willingness of TER to sustain its cooperative approach with other UNECE initiatives, and presented TER plans pertaining to the projects and strategy. She informed the SC that data collection has been postponed this year – a procedure for the selection of a consultant responsible for drafting the TER network report and other TER documents is needed. Furthermore, she expressed gratitude to the government of the Republic of Serbia for hosting the Project Central Office in Belgrade. She informed the SC that its next meeting is planned to be held in Autumn 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland. Then, she briefed the SC on the work of two UNECE working groups: the Group of Experts on Benchmarking Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs; and the Group of Experts on Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Inland Transport. She encouraged members of the SC and their colleagues from the field of transport and infrastructure to participate in the work of both groups. Mr. Markus Radl (AT) commented that the online meetings save time and money, and shouldn't hinder the work of TER. He also complemented the DPM's words with information on another UNECE working group – New International Railway Hubs.

4. TER STRATEGY 2025

Ms. Ekaterina Kozyreva (TER Consultant) provided a presentation on her proposal of TER Strategy 2025. Slovakia was satisfied with the document except on the number of workshops that had been proposed – one workshop a year should be sufficient. The Russian Federation was fully satisfied but open to any further comments provided the exact needs are formulated. Austria complimented the Consultant for her excellent work. Bulgaria agreed with the document, regarding it as the comprehensive one. Poland stated that the document should be reconsidered – it is too extensive and too many proposals go beyond the scope of TER characteristics. Turkey agreed on the document. Serbia was also satisfied. Mr. Nikolic emphasised that the Strategy 2025 is only a framework programme. The SC adopts the annual plans, which will be formulated on the basis of ideas presented in the Strategy 2025. The tasks drafted in the document provided by the Consultant are not obligatory. It was decided that by the 9th June 2021 the Strategy 2025 (the latest version with all remarks shown in track changes) will be analysed by the SC again and the comments will be sent to the Consultant.

5. TER PROJECTS

Mr. Peter Los (TER Consultant) presented the online application for presenting TER data in GIS format. It was enthusiastically welcomed by the SC. The trial version will be ready soon. The SC members and TER consultants will have an opportunity to check its functionalities and express their needs to Mr. Los.

Mr. Dionori informed the Steering Committee that Mr. Covrk had submitted a request for his contract to be terminate. Mr. Covrk, however, had reconsidered and attended the meeting, having presented his view on the project. He was asked by the SC whether he was confident that he would continue his work for TER. He confirmed his willingness to continue. He was requested by Mr. Dionori that he send an e-mail withdrawing his contract termination request. He was obliged to prepare the inception report within seven days of sending an e-mail stating his willingness to continue with his work. Contrary to the consultant's request, no changes of ToR are possible.

6. HIGH SPEED RAIL MASTER PLAN – PHASE II

Ms. Kopczyńska informed the Steering Committee that the report on the TER High Speed Rail Master Plan – phase II was adopted at the 51st TER SC with the extended title, '- a general background to support further required studies'. No decision on final payment has been made. The position of Poland remains unchanged: that the work of the Consultant should be unpaid. Mr. Nikolic (UNECE) read the position of the UNECE Executive Office sent by Mr. Nikolic to the SC on 21st April 2021 via e-mail - Ms. Kopczyńska requested that the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division proceeds accordingly.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Mr. Nikolic delivered short information on the TER budget. Six member states have contributed this year. There were no expenses in 2020.

There were two candidates for the post of TER Project Manager – one Croatian and one Polish. Mr. Nikolic informed the SC that on the day of the SC meeting, Croatia had withdrawn its candidate. Ms. Małgorzata Kopczyńska (PL) was elected TER Project Manager unanimously, according to her achievements.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Kopczyńska reminded the SC of the need to select a consultant to draft the TER Annual Report and other TER documents. The SC requested that Ms. Kopczyńska prepare the ToR for this post, so that the official Inspira procedure can commence.

9. ADOPTION OF MAIN DECISIONS

The main decisions of the 52nd session of the TER Steering Committee:

- The Strategy 2025 will be analysed by the SC again and the comments will be sent to the Consultant – deadline: 9th June 2021;
- The SC members and TER consultants will have an opportunity to check functionalities of application on presenting data in GIS – deadline: to be set;
- Mr. Covrk was obliged to prepare the inception report within seven days of sending an e-mail stating his willingness to continue with his work;
- The UNECE Sustainable Transport Division will proceed with the issues related to the TER High Speed Rail Master Plan – phase II;
- Ms. Małgorzata Kopczyńska was elected TER Project Manager;
- TER PMO will prepare a ToR for a post of the consultant for drafting the TER Annual Report and other TER documents – deadline: as soon as possible.

The SC extended its thanks to the Chairman for his excellent services. The report of the 52nd TER SC session and the main decisions (Annex 2) will be adopted via written procedure.

Annexes: 1