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Development of transport networks and links

Trans-European North-South Motorway and Trans-European Railway Projects

Submitted by the TEM and TER Project Managers

Introduction

This document has been compiled by the managers of the TEM (Trans-European North-South Motorway) and TER (Trans-European Railway) projects to inform the Working Party about their activities implemented since its previous session.

Annex I

Information on the Trans-European North-South Motorway project development

I. Trans-European North-South Motorway project activities and achievements in 2023

1. During the reporting period two TEM Steering Committee sessions have been held:
 - The eighty-first session of the TEM Steering Committee took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on 16 and 17 October 2023.
 - The eighty-second session of the TEM Steering Committee took place in virtual format on 21 May 2024.
2. Main decisions taken during the Steering Committee sessions include:
 - Agreement, in principle, to continue within TEM and TER, the work launched by the Group of Experts on Benchmarking of Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs (WP.5/GE.4).
 - Launching, in a test phase, of a newly developed TER Geographic Information System (GIS) data tool.
 - Selection of a consultant for preparing the TEM Backbone Network Report 2024.
 - Accepted the Report on Road Safety Audit and Road Safety Inspection.
 - Decided on the main activities of the TEM Programme of Work 2024.
3. On 6 and 7 June 2024, in Sofia, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) TEM project together with the American Highway Engineers Exchange Program organized a workshop on “Building information modelling (BIM) in the Road Sector”. Experiences from the TEM region and the United States of America were presented. Based on the presented best practices and advanced experiences the ECE publication titled “Building Information Modelling (BIM) for road infrastructure: TEM requirements and recommendations” (of May 2021) will be updated to accelerate BIM implementation.

II. Future activities planned

4. “Planning and Monitoring the Development of the TEM Backbone Network”: The TEM Backbone Network aims to provide up-to-date information and forecasts related to traffic demand and infrastructure provisions within the TEM region. This will contribute to the integration of transport networks and enhance multimodality in Central Europe. The ultimate goal is to prepare an official document for the TEM Steering Committee, focusing on the TEM Backbone Network and the availability of traffic data.
5. “Enhancing Road Safety through Best Practices”: Utilizing the experience and best practices of TEM member States and international standards in road safety audits and inspections, this initiative aims to contribute to the United Nations' regulatory efforts in road safety. The focus will be on improving safety measures and ensuring compliance with global safety norms.
6. Continue cooperation with relevant partner organizations in road sectors such as the American Highway Engineers Exchange Program (HEEP), the International Road Federation (IRF), Conference of European Directors of Roads (CEDR), World Road Association (PIARC), the European Commission (EC) and others.

III. Conclusion

7. The TEM Project focuses on priority topics for participating countries, facilitating the rapid integration of transport infrastructure networks along the North-South axis. It promotes the standardization of business processes within the road network management framework, enhancing these processes and fostering a shared understanding of transportation trends and challenges among infrastructure operators. Through these efforts, the TEM Project strengthens cooperation among countries to ensure a higher quality of service on major motorway corridors.

Annex II

Information on the Trans-European Railway project development

I. Trans-European Railway project activities and achievements

1. During the reporting period three TER Steering Committee sessions were held:
 - Fifty-sixth session on 15 June 2023 – in Gdańsk, Poland and online.
 - Fifty-seventh session on 14 November 2023 – in Geneva, Switzerland and online.
 - Fifty-eighth session on 17 May 2024 – in Kraków, Poland and online.
2. The main activities undertaken during the above-mentioned sessions include:
 - Adoption of the TER Backbone Network Annual Report 2023.
 - Decision that the TER Backbone Network Report be prepared biannually, i.e. the next one based on data of 2023 and 2024.
3. On 16 June 2023, TER held a workshop on railway accessibility to seaports, as well as a site visit to the seaport of Gdańsk and its container terminal. The participants could see the results of a project implemented by Polish Railway Lines to improve railway accessibility to the seaport of Gdańsk.
4. On 16 May 2024, TER held a workshop on the resilience of railway assets to climate change. The workshop was hosted by Polish Railway Lines, whose representatives gave presentations on their climate change adaptation plans and on the resistance of railway infrastructure to intensive precipitation based on the example of the flood of 2010. The subsequent part of the workshop was an interactive stress test of a fictional, but realistic railway line, conducted by the consultant – Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich. This was followed by a panel discussion among Czech and Polish experts. Also, the representative of the Czech infrastructure manager delivered a presentation on resilience of Czech rail infrastructure to climate change.

II. Future activities planned

5. TER will continue the initiatives started with the workshop on the resilience of railway assets to climate change, held on 16 May 2024, in Kraków. These activities will focus on addressing the needs of interested TER members and will involve collaboration with academia and other stakeholders.
6. This year, TER is set to complete a study on the compliance of its member countries' infrastructure with the technical parameters outlined in international legal agreements. The study is nearly finished, with the finalization requiring key suggestions and recommendations.
7. The Steering Committee has decided that the TER Project Central Office will explore opportunities to organize a workshop at the European Union institutions. The aim is to promote the TER Project as a unique platform for collaboration between European Union member states, European Union candidate countries, and neighbouring countries.
8. TER plans to explore the possibility of organizing an event alongside InnoTrans in Berlin in September 2024. The event will focus on the TER project and the new convention on Unified Railway Law.

III. Administrative matters

9. The TER National Coordinator of the Russian Federation announced that the country will end its participation in the TER Project effective 1 January 2024. This change leaves twelve remaining TER member states: Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Türkiye.

10. The status of the Host Country Agreement is currently unknown. The existing agreement with the government of the Republic of Serbia was set to expire at the end of June 2024.

11. The contract for the TER Project Manager for the 2024–2025 term is pending completion of the ECE administrative procedure.
