

Eurasian transport network as a driver of sustainable transport development in the Eurasian region

Maria Drozdova^{1*}, *Irina Berezovskaya*¹, and *Olga Shipunova*²

¹Emperor Alexander I St. Petersburg State Transport University, Moskovsky pr., 9, 190031 Saint Petersburg, Russia,

²Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, Polytechnicheskaya, 29, 195251 St. Petersburg, Russia

Abstract. The article deals with topical issues of sustainable development of the transport and logistics ecosystem in the Eurasian region. The tectonic changes in international relations in 2022 and 2023 led to the development of disintegration processes in Eurasia, which also affected the transport sector. The authors analyze current trends in the formation of a new paradigm of sustainable transport to ensure the transport sovereignty of Russia and the EAEU countries. New challenges pose new challenges in ensuring logistical connectivity of Russia with its international partners, the digitalization of the economy and the introduction of Industry 4.0 technologies create both new opportunities and the need to increase the innovative potential of the industry to ensure its competitiveness at the global level. The study of the prospects of implementing the project "Eurasian Transport Network" to ensure the sustainable development of the transport and logistics ecosystem of the region allows to formulate proposals to improve the regulatory framework to enhance the effectiveness of transport and logistics policy within the EAEU.

1 Introduction

In 2022 most of the risks to achieving sustainable development goals in the transport sector became real. The difficult geopolitical situation and international sanctions imposed against Russia, which caused a breakdown of effectively operating transport and logistics routes with Europe and the closure of certain markets for the supply of transport equipment and technology led to the need to form and develop a new model of sustainable transport in the Eurasian region. The implementation of major projects aimed at the convergence of the transport systems of EAEU countries in the medium term should level the barriers and difficulties created by the sanctions imposed on Russia and, at the same time, contribute to the realization of the goals of sustainable development in the region. The Eurasian Transport Network should contribute to both the implementation of the Union's transit potential and the environmental agenda in the transport sector.

* Corresponding author: drozdova@pgups.ru

2 Materials and Methods

The paper uses data from open sources, the official website of the Eurasian Development Bank, legal acts of the Russian Federation and the Eurasian Economic Union in the field of transport and logistics, statistical data on the volume of transport in the EAEU and the effectiveness of integration processes. The authors used methods of synthesis, analysis, systematization and comparison, as well as the comparative legal method of research.

3 Results and Discussion

The difficult geopolitical situation in 2022 and 2023, the international sanctions imposed on Russia, the rupture of logistics routes with Europe, which caused the reorientation of international economic cooperation of Russia to the East, have created the need to develop the transport and logistics ecosystem of the EAEU, taking into account the new paradigm of forming both economic cooperation and necessary to ensure its convergence of transport systems of EAEU member states, the formation of the international legal framework of interstate cooperation,

New digital solutions in transport, digital logistics services providing seamless international transportation, the development of electronic document management, as well as the introduction of such Industry 4.0 technologies as the Internet of Things, Big Data, artificial intelligence, including unmanned transport technologies, large-scale inter-machine communication are the leading drivers of the transport and logistics industry [1,2,4-6,8-10,13,15]. New projects aimed at realizing the transit potential of the Eurasian region include the tasks of developing process automation and data exchange within the existing cyberphysical systems, as they are the key to the competitiveness of the industry enterprises in the international market, ensuring cost reduction and reducing the time of transporting goods.

One of the central documents regulating the implementation of a unified transport strategy within the EAEC is the decision of the EAEC "On the Main Directions and Stages of the Coordinated Transport Policy". [12]. In accordance with this document, the EEU member states must ensure the removal of restrictions on transportation within the EEU, as well as the implementation of measures to create a common market of transport services.

One of the major projects within the framework of the integration of the transport systems of the EAEU member states is the "Eurasian Transport Network".

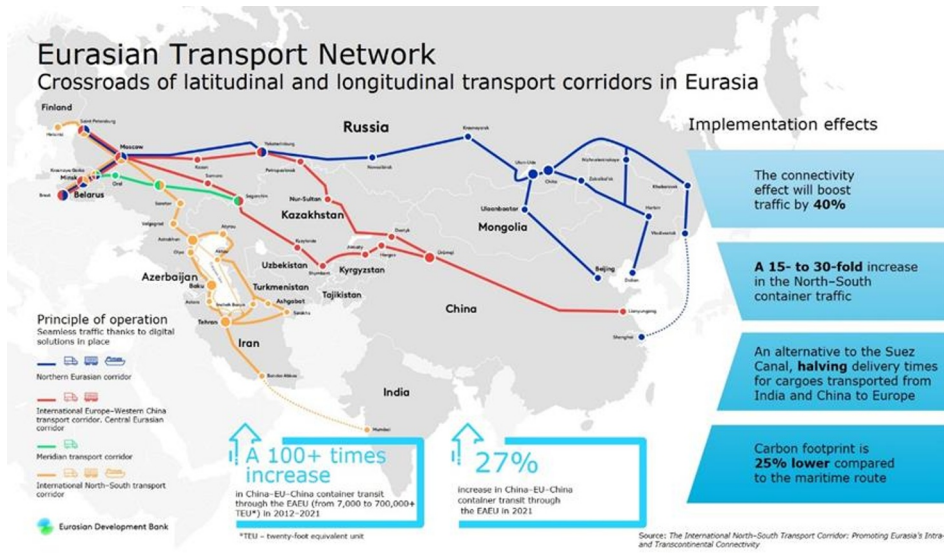


Fig. 1. Eurasian Transport Network. Source: Eurasian Development Bank [7]

The project aims to create a network of international transport and logistics corridors in Eurasia on the axes of North-South, East-West. The participating countries are Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan. It is assumed that the expected synergistic effect is to increase the traffic by 40%, halve the delivery time of goods to Europe from India and China, reduce the carbon footprint by 25% compared to the sea transport routes actively used until 2022. At the moment the project is at the stage of pre-project documentation development. The budget of the megaproject is estimated at 7 billion rubles.

The Eurasian transport corridor is implemented within the framework of public-private partnerships (PPP), which allows to pool resources and share the risks of the state and private companies involved in the project. For the state, PPP is of interest due to the possibility of accelerating the implementation of major infrastructure projects, postponing financing to a later date. Within the EAEU, the Eurasian Development Bank provides a wide range of credit and non-credit offers for PPP projects, ensures the availability of financial resources and technical assistance in the formation of documentation for projects such as the Eurasian Transport Network.

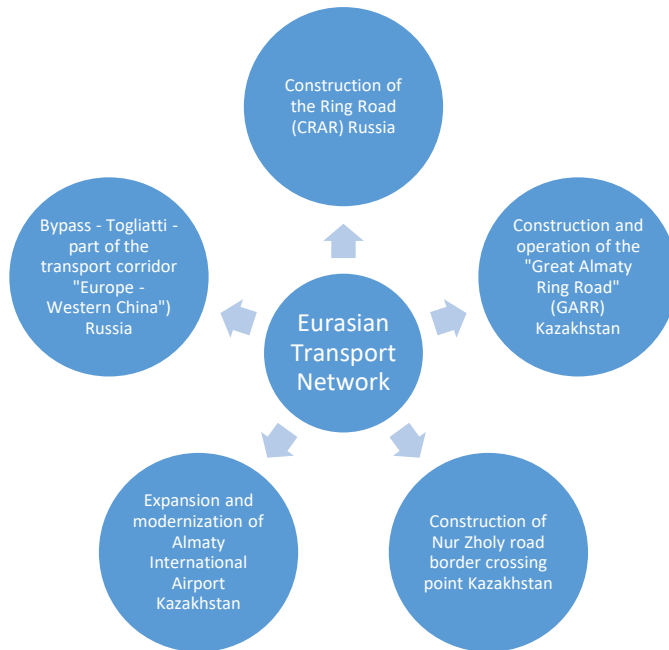


Fig. 2. Scheme of subprojects within the framework of the "Eurasian Transport Network" project.

It should be noted that, despite the fact that the legislation of the EEU countries on PPP is based on similar principles of definition, legal regulation and the legal position of the public and private partners, there are differences in the form, procedure of selection of PPP projects, as well as in the amount of budgetary opportunities in the legislation of the countries. The Eurasian Development Bank, in addition to assisting in the financing of PPP projects in the EAEU, develops recommendations to simplify the procedure for drafting project documentation, and the Eurasian Economic Commission has compiled a practical guide "Public-Private Partnership in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union". [14]. Currently, the most significant and capitalintensive are transport PPP projects within the EAEU, such as the Eurasian transport framework.

The EAEU countries include a huge territory with a population of about 84 million people. The transit potential of the Union provides great opportunities for increasing the level of socio-economic development of the region through the development of transport and logistics infrastructure, providing transport connectivity of the region.

Pairing with the project to build a third rail border crossing on the Sino-Kazakh border should have a positive impact on the rate of growth of trade exchange in the region and increase the speed of transportation, which is an important task in connection with the formation of new logistics routes in connection with the international sanctions imposed on Russia.

Given the trend of multimodal transportation in Eurasia, including the transportation of goods by rail and road transport, the development of piggyback transportation, it seems that the conjugation of the project with the existing rail infrastructure, should increase its efficiency due to the synergistic effect.

To improve the competitiveness of the Eurasian transport corridor, it is necessary to ensure both the legislative and technical possibility of using unmanned freight transport, which is one of the main trends in improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the logistics industry. The project "Unmanned Logistics Corridors" aimed at introducing

unmanned transportation of goods by road, in the framework of which a digital infrastructure for the safe operation of unmanned vehicles was created on the M-11 "Neva" highway, should become a model for the further development of unmanned transport movement within the Eurasian transport framework. The legal regulation of unmanned transport in the Russian Federation is based on the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of November 26, 2018 N 1415, which regulates the experimental procedure for the application of these technologies on the roads of Moscow, the Republic of Tatarstan, St. Petersburg and 10 other subjects of the Russian Federation from 2018 to 2022. A federal law on highly automated vehicles based on the results of the experimental legal regimes is currently being finalized. It seems necessary to develop a similar document within the EAEU to ensure the competitive innovative potential of the megaproject.

As far back as 2021, the EAEU developed a recommendation of the EEC on the development of cooperative cooperation between EAEU countries in the field of joint production of unmanned aerial vehicles [11]. At present, it is the "soft law" mechanisms within the EAEU that seem the most relevant for the development of the regulatory framework for cooperation in the digitalization of subprojects of the Eurasian transport framework, which will make it possible to harmonize the legislation of member countries in the implementation of digital infrastructure in various modes of transport.

A significant step towards the implementation of major projects in the format of public-private partnership within the EAEU was the removal of the barrier to the access of suppliers from other EAEU member states to the Russian government procurement market from June 1, 2023. Protectionist measures, which did not fully meet the requirements of the Union Treaty, in particular, Article 3, which provides for compliance with the principles of market economy and fair competition [3], as well as providing suppliers from the EAEU countries with national treatment of access to government contracts of other member states, were abolished by Russian Government Resolution No. 579 of 10.04.2023. The EEC Collegium at its meeting on 13.06.2023 recorded the "removal of a barrier with signs of a barrier" in the area of ensuring equal access to state contracts by EAEU suppliers.

To intensify integration processes in the field of transport, it is necessary to harmonize the legal regulation of the transport and logistics industry of the EAEU member states both in the field of technical regulation (for example, the Rules of technical operation of rail transport) and the use of electronic document management.

4 Conclusion

Thus, the main directions of development of international legal regulation in the transport and logistics sphere within the EAEU to ensure the normative regulation of major projects and its sustainable development, including the Eurasian Transport Network should be:

- unification of requirements for electronic document flow,
- development of a unified legal framework, including technical requirements for digital infrastructure, in the use of unmanned transport,
- creating a unified approach and requirements for the security of digital transport infrastructure, -Harmonization of the regulatory framework governing public-private partnership in the EEU countries, including the issues of its subsidization.

The development of international legal regulation of the convergence of transport and logistics systems in the Eurasian region should provide an actual regulatory framework for achieving "seamless" transportation through their digitalization, since the implementation of such an important project to ensure the transport sovereignty of Russia as the Eurasian Transport Framework requires an actual and coherent legal regulation both at the level of the EAEC and the level of the Union member states.

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