

CHAPTER VI. CASE STUDY OF KAZAKHSTAN AND UZBEKISTAN

A. Profile of the Central Asian region

The Central Asian subregion, consisting of the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, occupies a land mass greater than Western Europe. It is bordered by Afghanistan, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Russian Federation and the Caspian Sea but many Central Asian republics, unlike other landlocked states in Asia, are also partially bordered by landlocked countries. Uzbekistan is doubly landlocked. As a consequence, goods exported and imported by these republics often transit through more than one neighbouring state on the way to their final destinations, making the task of accessing markets and seaports more complex for these countries.

Central Asia is sparsely settled, with an estimated population of around 55 million. Transportation and communications face substantial barriers in the region, as the landscape is generally harsh, consisting of desert or semi-desert and steppe, as well as towering mountain ranges. Water is scarce in the region, and severe environmental problems have arisen from the poor conservation and utilization of this important resource from excessive irrigation. Nevertheless, the economies of the subregion are based largely on agricultural production, as well as their vast natural resources. The subregion has a significant percentage of the world's oil and gas reserves. The shares of the agricultural and industrial sectors continue to be large in each of these countries, contributing to more than half of GDP.

In Central Asia, the industrial sector is heavily reliant upon the mining and processing of natural resources, as well as the production of related machinery and equipment. The heavy reliance on petroleum is reflected in the high share of this sector in both Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and the double-digit rates of economic growth achieved by these countries during the recent rise in oil and gas prices. The economies of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan comprise four fifths of the economy of the Central Asian subregion, with Kazakhstan alone accounting for half of subregional economic output.

The five Central Asian republics have committed themselves to a process of market-oriented structural reforms but progress has been somewhat mixed.¹⁰ Reforming the so-called natural monopolies and fostering the development of private business activities have been among the more difficult steps on the reform agenda. However, the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises has received strong impetus in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, in particular. Poverty reduction has also been an issue of significant policy concern. The process of transition to a market economy has engendered considerable economic and social dislocations and disruptions in the form of higher unemployment reduced purchasing power and increased income inequality. The strong economic growth in recent years, after a period of negative growth rates in the early-1990s, has gone some way to alleviating these problems, but much remains to be done.

The Central Asian republics rely on a few commodities for the bulk of their export earnings, making them vulnerable to fluctuations in global commodity prices. For example, aluminum and cotton account for 70 per cent of annual export revenue in Tajikistan. The undiversified nature of the economies of these countries makes them heavily reliant on imports of consumption and capital goods. In Kazakhstan, where exports of oil and base

¹⁰ ESCAP, *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2003* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.F.11).

metals are the principal revenue earners, the large oil and gas sector also affects the terms of trade, crowding out domestic manufacturers, and leading to a more import intensive economy. There are prospects of increased economic diversification as foreign investors move into the pipeline and machinery sectors in this country, followed by food processing and other industries. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are pursuing import-substituting industrialization policies, in textiles, for example, through the introduction of non-tariff barriers and limits on hard currency sales. The countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) continue to be the most significant trade partners for the Central Asian republics, but countries outside the CIS are gaining in importance, for exports as well as imports.

Although a number of regional preferential trading arrangements exist among the Central Asian republics, these countries have generally taken World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations in precedence and trade liberalization in line with these obligations has been more successful. Upon liberalization of its trade policies, Kyrgyzstan became the first member of CIS to join WTO in 1998. Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are currently observers at WTO and in the process of accession.

At the regional level, the republics of Central Asia have created two preferential trading arrangements in recent years with other member countries of the CIS. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, together with Belarus and Russian Federation formed the Eurasian Economic Community in 2000. The Eurasian Economic Community, formerly known as the CIS Customs Union, aims to create a common external trade border by pursuing a unified foreign economic policy, regulating tariffs and prices, as well as facilitating the accession of its members into international trade organizations. Further, in 1992, all five Central Asian republics acceded as member countries to the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), an intergovernmental regional organization established in 1985 by Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey as the successor organization of Regional Cooperation for Development. However, all countries in the subregion have trade-restricting policies and practices.¹¹ Although tariff barriers may be relatively low, they have occasionally been raised very sharply and suddenly and some countries have imposed export taxes. The use of non-tariff barriers, including import quotas and government licenses, is more common. Procedural and operational barriers to trade create serious impediments that result in slow and difficult border procedures. Regulations can change without notice and the sudden closure of borders to trade is not unknown. The imposition of transit fees, transport restrictions and multiple inspections all act to limit intraregional trade.

Transport infrastructure in the Central Asia subregion was heavily influenced by the needs of the former Soviet Union, with road and rail networks designed to facilitate traffic flows towards the European part of Russia, particularly Moscow.¹² Road and rail connections within Central Asia itself, and between Central Asia and its neighbours to the east and south are less well developed. There is one major paved road corridor through the subregion, running east to west, linking Tashkent to Almaty, with connecting roads to China and Turkmenistan. There is also a single rail corridor to China, passing through the high mountains of the Kazakh-China border.

Although current road and rail networks are adequate in the sense of linking major cities and commercial and industrial centres, they are badly deteriorated and in need of

¹¹ From the Asian Development Bank web site, <http://www.adb.org/Carec/trade.asp> (2 July 2003).

¹² From the Asian Development Bank web site, <http://www.adb.org/Carec/transportation.asp> (2 July 2003).

upgrading and improved maintenance. The roads, in particular, were not built to support the heavy volume of trucks now using them. The demand for transport services changed dramatically after the five Central Asian republics became independent and the centralized Soviet economy was dismantled. The volume of freight traffic fell rapidly, by an estimated 80 per cent in the Kyrgyz Republic, 66 per cent in Kazakhstan, and 67 per cent in Uzbekistan in the years immediately following independence.¹³ However, the demand for freight traffic has been increasing recently, and this has favoured road transport, which provides greater flexibility to the growing numbers of small and medium-sized enterprises. The economy of Kazakhstan continues to be one of the most freight intensive in the world.¹⁴

Given the reliance on primary commodities for exports and on imports for capital equipment and consumer durables, rail and road transport are the principal modes of transport for the Central Asian republics. Since these countries are remote from the sea, most transit goods reach their final destinations by land transport modes rather than being transshipped at their nearest port. Air transport, although limited, is nevertheless essential in order to cover the vast distances in the thinly populated subregion. Water transport is largely limited to ferries crossing the Caspian Sea and to seasonal inland water transport, through the system of rivers and canals in Russian Federation, connecting the Caspian Sea with the Baltic Sea and Black Sea.

B. Transit transport infrastructure and facilitation

1. Transit transport infrastructure

(a) Railway transport

Railway transport provides the backbone for container and bulk cargo transport, connecting Central Asian republics with ports on the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, as well the Pacific. With the break-up of the former Soviet Union, these countries have had to cope with the transition from an integrated system, which used to serve the transport needs of a vast, centrally controlled economy, to systems that serve national interests.¹⁵ At present, the railway networks are expanding to connect with additional routes, such as to Islamic Republic of Iran and China.

A number of countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus have acceded to the AGTC, namely Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Poland, and Russian Federation. The European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) formalizes the transport network for multimodal transport and ensures conformity and application of internationally approved standards on agreed railway routes within the territory of its member countries. However some countries are unable to accede to the AGTC because their railway infrastructure does not yet meet its performance standards.

Parallel to the formalization of the European railway networks, ESCAP is promoting the formulation and formalization of the Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) among member countries and its integration into an integrated transport network. In this context, ESCAP is

¹³ *Regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia*, Asian Development Bank (1998).

¹⁴ From the World Bank web site,

<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/ECA/Transport.nsf/Countries/Kazakhstan?Opendocument>.

¹⁵ Only the Kyrgyz Republic does not depend substantially on rail for its transport needs, mainly because it has a very limited network.

organizing demonstration runs of container block trains along the TAR northern corridor between Asia and Europe. Out of five agreed routes for the demonstration runs, the Lianyungan (China)-Kazakhstan-Russian Federation-Belarus-Poland route would be very relevant for container transport to and from Central Asia. Once container block trains have been established on that route, the service would provide efficient access to ports in China as well as in Europe.¹⁶

According to some transport operators, exports of processed and manufactured goods from the Central Asian subregion have been increasing gradually, leading to a higher demand for empty containers for exports. This would reduce the transit transport costs of imports into the subregion, by reducing the frequency of empty returns. As a result, some shipping lines with representatives in the region are developing the logistics of access for republics in Central Asia and are beginning to sound out the market.

(b) *Road transport*

In recent years, road transport has been increasing its market share of transit freight, particularly for the import of manufactured and consumer goods from Western European countries and Turkey. The opening of the CIS countries to international trade has resulted in a dramatic increase in road transport with extensions to more distant destinations. Road transport routes for the transit transport of Central Asia and Caucasus have been identified through the E-road network as laid down in the 1975 European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR), administered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Asian Highway network, for which an intergovernmental agreement is currently being drafted under the auspices of ESCAP. Both network agreements identify transport routes as well as minimum technical standards to be met for roads designated for international road transport. The geographical coverage of both networks includes countries in Central Asia, as well as transit countries.

An increasing number of private sector transport operators are participating in the road transport sector, although there are significant differences in national regulations and compliance requirements along international routes. This situation presents problems for transporters in Central Asia travelling to Europe, as the enlargement of the European Union (EU) extends eastwards and countries increasingly comply with EU Directives as international transport standards. Nevertheless, there are increasing numbers of medium-sized operators in the subregion able to operate to and from Europe, using modern trucks that meet the high technical and environmental standards enforced in the EU. The lower cost structure of Central Asian truck operators gives them an advantage that allows them to compete against their counterparts in Europe, even under the current difficult conditions where most road traffic is generated outside the subregion, for example in Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, Russian Federation, and in the countries of Europe.

¹⁶ For implementation of the container block train demonstration runs along the TAR Northern Corridor, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by ESCAP, Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, the International Union of Railways and the Organization for Railways Cooperation (OSJD). For further information, see ESCAP website at <http://www.unescap.org/ttd>.

2. Legal framework

The existing frameworks for transit transport in the Central Asian subregion are based on national regulations, bilateral and multilateral agreements, as well as international conventions. The main regulations and agreements, which differ between railway and road, are described separately below.

(a) Rail transport

The railway networks of the CIS countries and China, Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey provide rail transport linkages for Central Asia and Caucasus. These networks are identified regionally through a number of agreements and intergovernmental programmes, which include:

- Multilateral agreements under the auspices of ECE, such as the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC) and AGTC;
- Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) routes identified by ESCAP;
- Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) routes; and
- Railway routes for container and passenger trains promoted by the ECO.

In addition, the framework of legal instruments regulating rail transport in Central Asian republics consists of national regulations and a number of important conventions, such as the 1972 Customs Convention on Containers and two conventions specific to railways:

- The Agreement on International Rail Freight Communications (SMGS), which has 24 member countries, including countries in CIS, China and Islamic Republic of Iran, and is managed by OSJD; and
- The Uniform Rules Concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Goods by Rail (CIM), formulated by the Convention Concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) and managed by the International Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF).

National regulations concerning rail transport usually define the status of the national railway organization and its functions concerning infrastructure, including track, rolling stock and train operations. Historically, railway organizations in Central Asia had a monopoly on infrastructure and operations, inherited from the former Soviet Union, but recent policy changes in some countries has led to greater private sector participation. For example, Kazakhstan recently introduced legislation permitting private rail freight operators, and private entities have emerged in that country operating their own rolling stock. However, difficulties have been reported, as the current regulations under SMGS do not cover the freight forwarding business sufficiently.

The railway organizations that are members of OSJD work under different legal, economic and technical conditions. The main difference is in the application of different systems of transport laws (SMGS, on the one hand, and COTIF, on the other) and the existence of different gauges (mainly 1,435 mm and 1,520 mm), to which the various standards and technical provisions are connected.

Despite efforts to harmonize transport laws, both systems are likely to exist in parallel for quite some time. This means it is necessary to find a way of making it easier to transfer from one system to the other so that the individual parts can be brought more closely into alignment. Some countries participate in both systems, making the procedure for issuing transport documentation more flexible and facilitating international rail transport. In recent years, the tendency of both systems to expand areas they have in common has been given a boost with the accession of Islamic Republic of Iran to SMGS and its willingness to accept the SMGS consignment note as the common transit document for rail transport under TRACECA. The joint OSJD and ECE work¹⁷ on using the SMGS consignment note as a customs transit document will also contribute towards making railway transport operations easier.

Railway transit tariffs are set in accordance with the so-called MTT/ETT (International Transit Tariff) scale, which is intended to apply to rail freight traffic between OSJD member countries. The tariffs are based on a tariff book originally elaborated in the former Soviet Union and revised twice yearly in OSJD forums. The mechanisms for setting tariffs are institutionally and legally entrenched. Although the tariff is based on MTT, national governments set domestic rates. The tariff scales appear to be based on costing methodologies, dating from the central planning era. The MTT scales allow heavy discounts, which compensate somewhat for the lack of rational costing and permit some commercial flexibility. In general, high transit tariffs appear to cross-subsidize domestic traffic.

Because the traditional MTT tariff structure is commodity and distance oriented, it is perceived to be an obstacle for multimodal transport for which unit rates and through tariffs per container unit would serve the needs of customers better. A number of attempts intended to increase transport efficiency through greater use of container transport, including projects under TRACECA¹⁸, have had limited success. Obstacles to the use of containers in Central Asia and the Caucasus is a sign of the problem, and the lack of common through tariffs for containers constitutes the major institutional barrier to their wider application. Inclusion of common through tariffs for international container transport in the framework of MTT/ETT would promote containerization and multimodal transport in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

(b) *Road transport*

(i) *International conventions*

Compared with other parts of Asia, the countries in Central Asia have a relatively high rate of accession to many of the international conventions administered by ECE. This is reflected in appendix table VI.1 below, which shows the status of accession to the seven international conventions recommended under ESCAP Resolution 48/11 on “Road and Rail Transport Modes in Relation to Facilitation Measures” (23 April 1992), as of October 2002. The primary convention which facilitates customs transit procedures to and from Central Asia is the TIR carnet, while the Safe TIR System is used for closely monitoring the security chain.

Implementation of these conventions require the strengthening of public administration in the transport sector and increase of resources at the disposal of the relevant

¹⁷ ECE Inland Transport Committee, Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport, 102 Session, Oct 2002.

¹⁸ TRACECA Intermodal Service Project: *Final Report 2001*.

ministries, as well as authorities at provincial and local levels. Effective enforcement of the conventions also requires close international and national cooperation, for example, between transport authorities, customs and law enforcement authorities.

(ii) Subregional cooperation agreements

The countries in Central Asia have been involved in several multilateral agreements on international transport. In 1995, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan signed an agreement for traffic in transit. In 1998, the twelve TRACECA countries signed the Basic Multilateral Agreement on International Transport for Development of the TRACECA routes. In the same year, the ECO members signed the Transit Transport Framework Agreement. Also in 1998, China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan signed an agreement on international road transport. These agreements contain standards and regulations aimed at the facilitation and harmonization of transit transport for the signatories, including the republics of Central Asia.

Given the complexity of multilateral agreements, it is not surprising that the implementation process has been relatively slow. In this regard, a number of key issues need to be further analyzed and addressed. One is the issue of overlapping agreements. Kyrgyzstan is a signatory of all four agreements, while Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are signatories to three and Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey to two. With different provisions in each agreement, countries need to review carefully the implementation of substantive articles of the agreements. They also need to list clearly their commitments to each agreement as contracting parties.

While some of the agreements have entered into force and are currently being implemented, in most countries the management systems for customs, immigration, traffic management and so on have not as yet been put in place or adjusted in accordance with the requirements of the agreements. Countries need to take action to establish appropriate management systems within the relevant national authorities.

Finally, both the ECO and TRACECA agreements encourage contracting parties to accede to a number of international conventions for transport facilitation that provide a framework beyond the regional coverage of these agreements.

(iii) Bilateral agreements

To facilitate and promote transportation of goods and passengers between countries in Central Asia and Europe, bilateral transport agreements have emerged to regulate reciprocal usage of road networks in accordance with applicable national laws. These agreements regulate terms and conditions under which transport operators from one nation can function in the other, including acknowledgement of each other's national laws and regulations. Annual quotas, fixing the total number of permits granted by each country, are ascertained through bilateral consultations reflecting transit transport requirements of both sides. A number of permits, available free of charge, are also granted under these agreements to give preferential access to one country's road network for truck operators from the other.

Road transport between a Central Asian and a European country requires transit transport through a large number of countries for which permits must be obtained, in order to make use of preferential treatment under the bilateral regulations. Where bilateral agreements do not exist, for example, in the case of Kazakhstan with Austria and the United Kingdom of

Great Britain and Northern Ireland, treatment is often not reciprocal. Truck operators from Kazakhstan are not permitted to enter or transit either country in Europe but truck operators from both countries can enter Kazakhstan on payment of a transit fee, according to a national regulation applicable to trucks not holding bilateral permits.

The system of quotas through bilateral agreements appears to be complicated, since a number of government agencies are involved in the process. Reports indicate¹⁹ that bilateral quotas are often too low, resulting in extremely high prices for road permits on occasion. These high prices, together with difficulties in obtaining permits, result in a great deal of inconvenience and expense. For example, trucks of one nationality may have to be substituted for another, loads may have to be transhipped from one truck to another at border crossings, and so on.

High levels of transit fees tend to have a prohibitive effect on transport of landlocked countries that depend on transit routes through neighbouring countries. For example, the feasibility of exporting agricultural commodities, with limited sales margins, may depend on the level of transport costs. In this regard, it has been reported that high transport costs are proving prohibitive for the export of agricultural products from a number of Central Asian countries to traditional markets in Russian Federation. Producers from Turkey who benefit from lower transport costs have substituted supply.

The European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) also operates a multilateral permit scheme for journeys between its member countries.²⁰ The ECMT permits facilitate transport operations of member countries, with liberal movement within the ECMT region. As the five Central Asian republics have not achieved membership in ECMT as yet, they are obliged to establish the complex and time consuming system of bilateral agreements with countries in Europe. Participation in the ECMT multilateral transit permit scheme for the Central Asian countries would certainly be a big step towards harmonization of road transport between the subregion and Europe.

(iv) National Regulations

The main national regulations with regard to road transport are:

- Regulations concerning the terms and conditions under which foreign transport operators are permitted to use national roads;
- Regulations with regard to permissible vehicle dimensions, gross vehicle weight and axle loads;
- The customs code and regulations for cross-border and transit transport; and
- Visa regulations for foreign truck drivers.

¹⁹ TRACECA project: *Unified Policy for Transit Fees and Tariffs-Inception report*.

²⁰ Member countries of ECMT are: Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia.

Kazakhstan recently overhauled its rules and regulations concerning road transit by the introduction of a decree regulating the entry, exit and transit of all foreign buses with more than nine passengers, including the driver, and trucks able to carry loads over 3.5 tonnes. The decree sets out the regulations for granting transit permits, taking into account bilateral and multilateral agreements, and provides equal treatment for all countries. The fee currently payable for an entry or transit permit, for trucks without permits obtained through bilateral quotas, is about US\$ 160. In addition, customs procedures have also been recently streamlined. By way of contrast, national regulations for road transit in Uzbekistan have a bilateral orientation, where a number of decrees of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan regulate entry and transit fees for vehicles of specific neighbouring countries.

Establishment of non-discriminatory national legislation for road transit transport, taking into account requirements and commitments resulting from bilateral and multilateral agreements and international conventions, could be an important step in framing governing policy for developing the transport sector and implementing transport facilitation measures at the national level. The legislation recently introduced in Kazakhstan can be seen as an example in this regard. If comparable policies and national regulations could be established in all the landlocked and transit countries of Central Asia, transit and cross-border procedures would be greatly harmonized.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that road transport operators from Uzbekistan are not actively utilizing transit routes via Kazakhstan as yet, even after the introduction of the new transport regulations. These truck operators indicate that the route is not viable in economic terms, owing to high transit charges of about US\$ 1,500 per truck through Kazakhstan. These charges are apparently the sum of payments for transit fees as well as to rent-seeking entities. Closer cooperation between the authorities concerned in both countries to implement the new national legislation in the context of the bilateral agreement between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan may result in reduced transit costs.

(c) *Customs Convention*

In addition to the above, transit transport systems and processes in the region are affected by the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Kyoto Convention). This Convention, which entered into force in 1974, is a key legal instrument for harmonization of cross-border procedures. It was revised in 1999 to take account of the tremendous increase in international cargo, as well as rapid developments in information technology and the highly competitive business environment under which international trade occurs today. Since implementation of the Kyoto Convention is considered to be an important step towards accession to WTO, Kazakhstan has initiated the process of acceding to the revised convention and is making every effort to implement its provisions, both nationally and bilaterally. The steps being taken include the introduction of transit transport legislation, revised customs guidelines and implementation of a central, computerized customs system.

3. Transit transport procedures

(a) Rail transport

Complex operational processes and procedures accompany border crossings by rail. These include changes of locomotive and crew, break-of-gauge operations, marshalling, technical inspections and preparation of rail transfer documents. Institutional procedures include customs checks of railway bills against wagon lists and cargo documents, customs inspections, veterinary and phytosanitary controls. Average border-crossing times in Europe are in the 30-40 minutes range, whereas those in the CIS countries are measured in days rather than hours. The ECE recommendation for border stopping time is 60 minutes for international shuttle trains²¹ and 30 minutes for combined transport.²² Regional studies carried out under the auspices of TRACECA²³ indicate that border-crossing procedures can be simplified and streamlined and have recommended performance indicators to establish common standards (box VI.1).

Box VI.1. Railway border performance indicators

It is recognized that the processing time for this type of operation is dependant on the size of train, number of wagons and whether wagons are being inspected by one or two railway organizations. However, it is considered that a target processing time of 120 minutes should be achievable, even on the largest international trains.

The breakdown of the 120 minutes is as follows:

- Railways: registration of documents – 30 minutes
- Customs: registration of documents – 60 minutes
- Railways: final preparation of documents – 30 minutes

Inspection by both railways and customs should be completed within the overall time span of two hours. In the case of total transit trains with bulk cargo, this should be reduced to 90 minutes.

Source: TRACECA Project: Harmonization of Border Crossing Procedures, Recommendation of Border Harmonization Evaluation Workshop.

(b) Road transport

Border crossing times vary from a number of days to a few hours or minutes. Whereas crossing borders in Western Europe is a swift procedure, it is cumbersome and time consuming in the CIS countries. A huge number of checks and inspections can be applied to international road transport, depending on the country concerned, related to the cargo, the vehicle and the driver. Procedures related to cargo include customs control and inspection, veterinary and phytosanitary inspection. Procedures related to the vehicle can include a fuel quantity check for the taxation of fuel levels exceeding a given tax-free threshold; vehicle tax; road charges; transit fees; Green Card for vehicle insurance; mandatory national insurance payments; transport permits (bilateral, transit, third country, ECMT); payments for special permits; axle loads; gross vehicle weights and dimensions; vehicle certificate; road

²¹ UNECE Inland Transport Committee, Resolution 248 on the Reduction of Border Stopping Time of Shuttle Trains in International Traffic.

²² AGTC.

²³ TRACECA Project: *Harmonization of Border Crossing Procedures, Recommendation of Border Harmonization Evaluation Workshop.*

worthiness; compliance with ADR and ATP provisions; customs security of transport vehicles; statistical data, and so on. Procedures related to the driver include the driving license, passport and visa as well as checks of provisions concerning driving and rest periods.

Existing border procedures in the Central Asian republics are not yet in compliance with the principles of the revised Kyoto Convention nor do they meet obligations arising from many bilateral and multilateral agreements²⁴ and international conventions that have been signed and ratified. Although these agreements have been concluded in order to simplify and harmonize cross border procedures, the procedures have not changed significantly over the years. As traffic increases, border delays will become more severe and countries need to attach the highest priority to improving border procedures and facilities.

Regional studies carried out under the auspices of TRACECA²⁵ indicate that border-crossing procedures can be simplified and streamlined and recommend performance indicators to establish common standards. For outbound and inbound trucks, average transit time through the control zone should not exceed 20 minutes per truck and a processing minimum of three trucks per hour per processing lane should be achieved. The target is to achieve 10 minutes per truck or six trucks per hour per lane in future, with automation or the introduction of reduced controls.²⁶ The recommended performance indicator is also in line with the provisions of the TIR convention but may be considered a long term target to be achieved through the implementation of a number of measures to improve physical conditions as well as legislation.

C. Analysis of selected corridors²⁷

1. Road transport routes

Transit transport by road is primarily used for connecting Central Asia with markets in Western Europe, Turkey and Russian Federation. Among the main road transport routes which serve the region, two are examined in more detail below.²⁸ These are the road transport routes between Central Asia and:

- Countries in Europe via the northern route through Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Belarus, Poland and Germany;
- Countries in Europe via the southern route through Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, and the Balkan countries.

Taking the example of Tashkent to Berlin, the relative distances along five main routes between Central Asia and Europe are shown in table VI.1.

²⁴ MLA Basic Multilateral Agreement of TRACECA, ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement.

²⁵ TRACECA project: *Harmonization of Border Crossing Procedures, Recommendations of Border Harmonization Evaluation Workshop.*

²⁶ TRACECA project: *Border Harmonization Evaluation Workshop, Baku, September 2002.*

²⁷ The analysis below is based on information collected during a mission to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, responses to questionnaires distributed to Governments and freight operators in Central Asia, and various reports and studies.

²⁸ A third route between Tashkent/Almaty and the port of Bandar Abbas in the Islamic Republic of Iran is also being used by road operators, but is not covered in this study.

Table VI.1. Transit routes for road transport between Central Asia and Europe

<i>Transit Route</i>	<i>Length (km)</i>
1) Northern route (via Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Belarus, Poland, Germany)	5 790
2) Southern route (via Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, European countries, Germany)	7 000
3) TRACECA route (via ferry Aktau-Baku, Poti-Ilichevsk, Ukraine, Poland, Germany)	6 250 (4 710 road and 1 550 ferry)
4) TRACECA route (via ferries Turkmenbashi-Baku, Poti-Ilichevsk, Ukraine, Poland, Germany)	5 980 (4 440 road and 1 400 ferry)
5) Pan European Corridor III route (via Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland, Germany)	4 600

Routes used by transport operators vary from country to country. Truck operators in Kazakhstan prefer the northern route into Europe, which has an average transit time of 10-13 days²⁹ whereas truck operators in Uzbekistan opt for the significantly longer southern route to enter the EU, with an average transit time of about 20 days.³⁰ Since the two major cities of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Tashkent and Almaty, are very close to each other and the distance along the northern route from EU countries to Tashkent is virtually the same as to Almaty, the rationale underlying route selection appears to relate to factors other than distance. Transport operators must also consider impediments in transit countries that affect transport costs along the possible routes. Transport operators in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan stated that transit fees are a major issue affecting the economic viability of different transit routes.

The route assessment revealed that other possible routes, such as the TRACECA routes, or via Kazakhstan, passing the Caspian Sea on the northern side, Russian Federation, Ukraine and leading into the Pan European Corridor III (PEC III) through Poland, are not yet perceived as alternative options. For example, although the TRACECA route crossing the Caspian Sea by ferry and transiting through Azerbaijan and Georgia is shorter than the southern route, it is currently perceived as not being viable. The reasons are the poor condition of access roads to the port of Aktau in Kazakhstan, insufficient ferry services across the Caspian Sea for trucks to Baku and high transit fees, and charges imposed along the route transiting through Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Under present conditions, truck operators in Central Asia are confined to their chosen routes, as Kazakh road transport operators realized recently, when the TIR carnet system was about to be suspended on the territory of the Russian Federation at the end of 2002. Alternative independent viable trucking routes need to be developed to overcome the present route confinement. There is also a need to examine ways to counteract the implications of the current trade imbalance. The road transport association in Kazakhstan (KAZATO) indicated

²⁹ KAZATO.

³⁰ UZIFA, Central Asia Trans.

that 75 per cent of current transport volume between Europe and Central Asia is imports into Kazakhstan and 25 per cent exports to European countries, indicating a ratio between imports and exports transported by road of 3:1.

Comparison of northern and southern routes between Central Asia and Europe

Overall transport time for road transport between countries in Central Asia and Europe varies between 10 and 20 days depending on the transport route and country. Factors influencing the road transport time include: border crossing procedures; regulations for issuance of visas; customs transit regulations; control stops by traffic police; and poor road conditions. Reported transit times and other significant waiting times on the northern and southern routes are summarized in the box VI.2.

Box VI.2. Transit times and waiting times

Northern route

- Average transit time is 10-13 days for destination in Germany (KAZATO)
- Russian customs operates a “customs convoy” which can lead to 3-4 days waiting time for trucks (KAZATO)
- Waiting time at the Belarus border is 4-7 days (KAZATO)

Southern route

- Average transit time is about 20 days (Central Asia Trans)
- Visa regulations for Turkmenistan require 5-12 days waiting time (Central Asian Trans, UZIFA, IRU Report)
- Ferry in Turkmenistan (IRU Report)

The data on distances, time and cost for transit transport along the northern and southern routes is given in Tables VI.2. and VI.3. below and plotted in Figures VI.1. and VI.2. From Figure VI.1. it can be seen that road transport on the northern route is, on average, 7-10 days shorter than on the southern route, indicating that Kazakh transport operators perform comparable transport services between Central Asia and Europe in 50 to 65 per cent of the time taken by operators from Uzbekistan.

Analysis of the transit time on the northern route clearly indicates that more than 50 per cent of the transit time is spent waiting at border crossing points between Kazakhstan and Russian Federation (3-4 days) and between Russian Federation and Belarus (4-7 days). Assuming that waiting times could be reduced to a reasonable level of, for example, five hours waiting time at each border through policy measures, transit time would then be shortened by more than 50 per cent, to about 6 days.

Road conditions, institutional barriers within countries and other stoppages influence the average driving speed of the trucks in various countries. For transit through Belarus, Kazakhstan, Poland and Russian Federation, the average speed is about 50 km/h, while for transit through Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Spain the average speed is about 70 km/h. The average speed is an indicator of road conditions and the level of institutional barriers within transit countries, and may point to the importance of improving road transport infrastructure in order to achieve the economic benefits of faster road transport.

Table VI.2. Distances, transport time and cost over the northern route
(per 12 meter semi trailer)

<i>Northern Route</i>	<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. Distance (km)</i>	<i>Time (days)</i>	<i>Cum. Time (days)</i>	<i>Cost (US\$)</i>	<i>Cum. Cost (US\$)</i>	<i>Cum. Cost without Convoy (US\$)</i>
Almaty	0	0	0	0	200*	200*	200*
Almaty – Kurlin (Russian Federation)	2 789	2 789	2.21	2.21	2 000	2 200	2 200
Kurlin		2 789	3	5.21	1 500**	3 700**	2 400
Kurlin – Krasnoe (Belarus)	1 902	4 691	1.6	6.81	1 500	5 200	3 900
Krasnoe		4 691	4	10.81	280	5 480	4 180
Krasnoe – Brest (Poland)	599	5 290	0.48	11.29	↓	↓	↓
Brest		5 290	1	12.29	↓	↓	↓
Brest – Kostrzyn (Germany)	796	6 086	0.64	12.93	900	6 380	5 080
Kostrzyn		6 086	0.17	13.10		6 380	5 080
Kostrzyn – Kassel	481	6 567	0.29	13.39	200	6 580	5 280

* Cost of TIR carnet, customs clearance. ** Including US\$1 300 cost of convoy.

Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff. (Cum. = cumulative).

Table VI.3. Distances, transport time and cost over the southern route
(per 12 meter semi trailer)

<i>Southern Route</i>	<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. Distance (km)</i>	<i>Time (days)</i>	<i>Cum. Time (days)</i>	<i>Cost (US\$)</i>	<i>Cum. Cost (US\$)</i>
Tashkent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tashkent - Alat/Farab (Turkmenistan)	650	650	1	1	750	750
Alat/Farab		650	4	5	1 000	1 750
Alat/Farab – Sarakhs (Islamic Republic of Iran)	480	1 130	2	7	500	2 250
Sarakhs		1 130	1	8		2 250
Sarakhs – Barzargan (Turkey)	1 780	2 910	4	12	1 800	4 050
Barzargan		2 910	0.5	12.5		4 050
Barzargan – Kapikule	1 940	4 850	4	16.5	2 000	6 050
Kapikule		4 850	0.5	17		6 050
Kapikule – Berlin (Germany)	2 150	7 000	3	20	1 000	7 050

Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff. (Cum. = cumulative).

Figure VI.1. Transport time related to distance for road transport between Central Asia and Europe, northern and southern routes

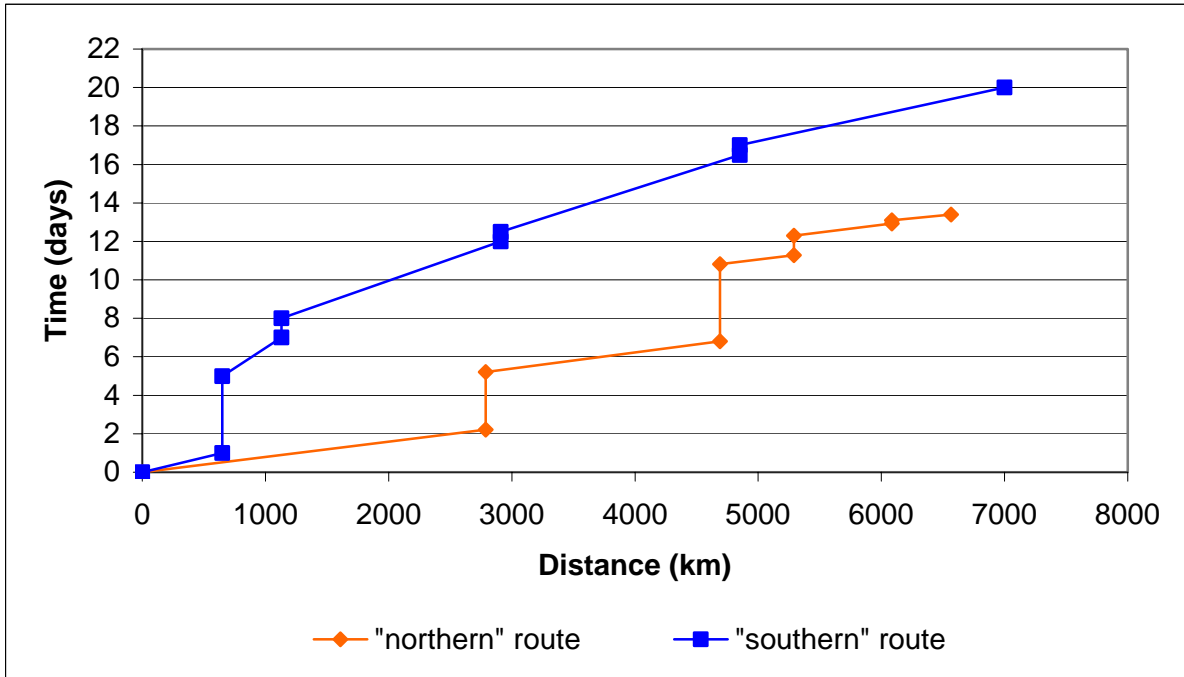
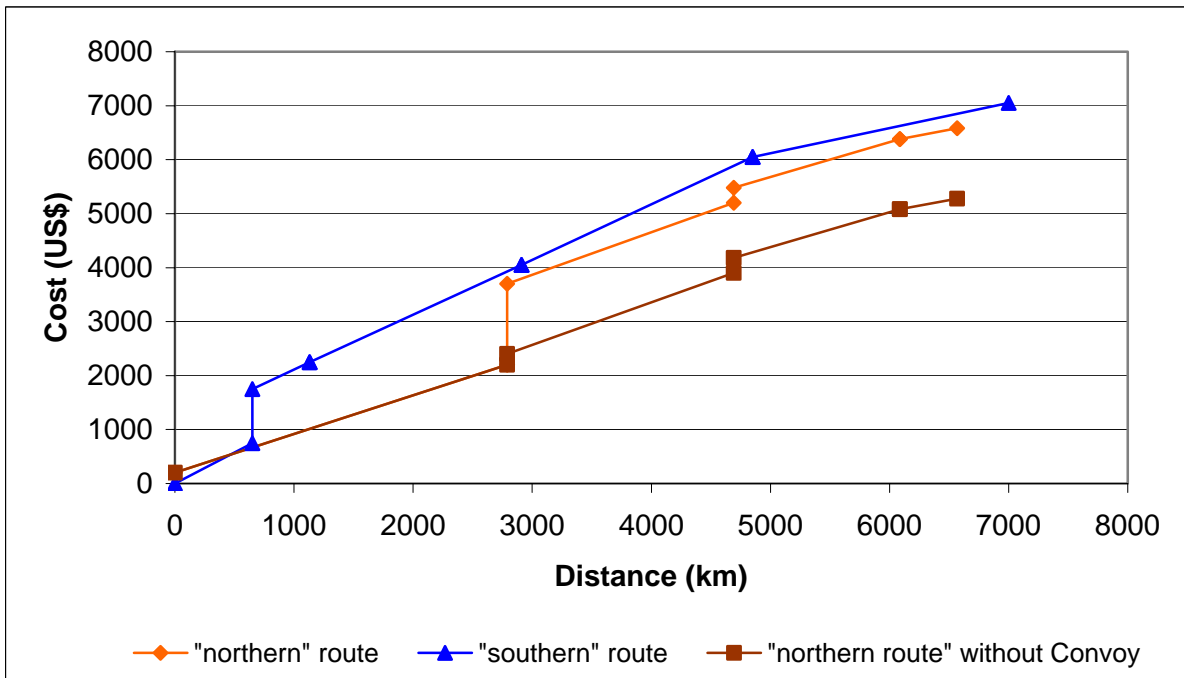


Figure VI.2. Transport costs related to distance for road transport between Central Asia and Europe, northern and southern routes



Overall costs for transport between Central Asian and European countries are reported to be in the range of US\$ 6,000 to US\$ 10,000 depending on the nationality of the truck operator and the route being taken. The contract price for a European trucker, from Germany for example, is reported to be US\$ 8,000-10,000. For Kazakh trucks, the rate is US\$ 6,000-7,000 for origin or destination in Kazakhstan, and for Uzbek trucks US\$ 7,000-8,000 for origin or destination in Uzbekistan. The rates are applicable to a standard European 12-metre semi-trailer. The prices quoted represent the contract price for a customer and include all applicable transport costs, fees and charges incurred during the trip. Due to the trade imbalance, which affects transport volumes, the contract price also includes some charge for the empty return journey. The major fees and charges reported on different routes are summarized in box VI.3.

Box VI.3. Transit fees and charges

Northern route

Russian customs operates a “customs convoy” and its official charge per truck is said to be US\$ 200, but the total costs for the convoy per truck is reported to be US\$ 1,500 (including rent sought by the convoy operators).

Belarus imposes a number of charges such as entry charge, customs stamp charges, compulsory insurance despite the Green Card, ecological fees, local levies, parking fees, road fee for the main trunk route and so on, amounting to about US\$ 300 per journey (IRU report).

Southern route

Turkmenistan imposes a variety of different charges and levies, reported to range from US\$ 650 to US\$ 1,000 depending on several factors.

Figure VI.2. above shows the cost advantage of the northern over the southern route, even including the additional cost for the convoy through the Russian Federation. Considering the significant level of transit fees as they occur in Belarus, Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, transport costs could be reduced by almost 30 per cent on the northern route and about 10 per cent on the southern route if transit fees and rents could be eliminated through policy measures.

Further potential for transport cost reduction lies with possible reductions of transit time, since transport efficiency and utilization of equipment will increase. Preferential treatment of Central Asian trucks in the countries of Central Asia, as intended by the Memorandum of Understanding for road transport in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) region, and accompanying policy measures at the national level to ensure a reduction in rent seeking behaviour along transport routes, would open up the benefits of the northern route to all truck operators in Central Asia.

2. Rail transport routes

The length of railway routes which connect Central Asian countries with major seaports on the Persian Gulf, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Baltic Sea and the Pacific ranges between 3,000 kilometres and 6,000 kilometres depending on origin or destination. Of the extensive railway network, a number of important corridors can be identified. These run between Central Asia and:

- Overland routes to Western Europe via the Russian Federation (container, bulk cargo);

Overland routes to Western Europe via the TRACECA routes (container, bulk cargo);

- Baltic ports through Kazakhstan, Russian Federation and Baltic states (container, bulk cargo);
- Turkey (and other Mediterranean and European ports) through Kazakhstan and Russian Federation via the port of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea (container);
- Pacific ports in China and Russian Far East (container).

The distances with respect to Almaty and Tashkent as points of reference are shown in table VI.4.

Table VI.4. Distances of railway routes between Central Asia and major seaports

<i>From</i>	<i>Routing</i>	<i>Distance (km)</i>
Almaty	– Drushba-Shanghai (Pacific)	5,370
	– Vladivostok (Pacific)	7,850
	– Novorossiysk (Black Sea)	4,630
	– Aktau-Baku-Poti (Black Sea)	4,600*
	– Riga (Baltic Sea)	5,350
	– Bandar Abbas (Persian Gulf)	4,800 [3770**]
	– Mersin (Mediterranean Sea)	5,421
Tashkent	– Drushba-Shanghai (Pacific)	6,320
	– Vladivostok (Pacific)	8,800
	– Novorossiysk (Black Sea)	3,950
	– Aktau-Baku-Poti (Black Sea)	3,900*
	– Riga (Baltic Sea)	5,500
	– Bandar Abbas (Persian Gulf)	3,800 [2770**]
	– Mersin (Mediterranean Sea)	4,421

Notes: * Include distance across Caspian Sea (450 km); ** After commissioning of Mashad-Bafq section in Islamic Republic of Iran.

The railway organizations in Central Asia in cooperation with the railways in China, Russian Federation and Ukraine transport substantial cargo volumes. For example, Kazakhstan railway transported 3.9 million tonnes of freight during the first 11 months of 2002, of which 7 per cent was reported to be containerized. Whether export of cotton and oil products, or import and transit of humanitarian goods, and containerized project cargo for newly established industries, rail transport is perceived as being efficient and achieving acceptable performance levels. For example, containerized shipments from the Republic of Korea to Uzbekistan were delivered from ports in China to the Kazakh border at

Drushba/Alashankou within seven days by block trains plus a further two days to reach the destination.

Rail transport competes with the road transport sector, where transport operators arrange unit shipments for the import of consumer goods using one or more covered wagons. In this regard, rail transport offers competitive alternatives in terms of price. For example, a consignment from Istanbul (Kapikule) to Almaty or Tashkent loaded in a CIS wagon with a capacity of 53 tonnes costs about US\$ 7,500, compared with a truck capacity of about 30 tonnes and reported transport costs of about US\$ 6,000. However, the transit time of conventional rail transport, which varies between 30 to 35 days for a single wagon, is relatively less efficient. Nevertheless, the reliability of rail transport is reported to be high, as the same sealed wagon can be used and transshipments between wagons at break-of-gauge points can be avoided. In cases where the cargo has been transferred between wagons of different gauge (along the land route from Turkey via Moldova, for example), pilferage has occurred.

Existing break-of-gauge points at Drushba/Alashankou (China/Kazakhstan), Sarakhs (Turkmenistan/Islamic Republic of Iran) and Brest (Belarus/Poland) are certainly operational hindrances, but do not cause exceptional delays compared with existing institutional barriers, which represent the main reasons for waiting times and delays at border crossing points. Reported transit times for railway transport routes between destinations in Central Asia and various ports vary between 9 and 35 days. Table VI.5 indicates transit times for container shipments on selected routes. Different types of railway operations for transport to Central Asia have achieved different transit speeds, with commercially organized block trains achieving speeds in excess of 700 kilometres per day. The potential for realizing transit times of 3-7 days for the routes indicated in table VI.6 could become a reality, once commercially organized block train operations become more widespread.

Table VI.5. Transit times for containerized shipments transported by rail

<i>Routing</i>	<i>Transit time</i>
Ports in China-Alashankou/Drushba-Tashkent (container block trains carrying Daewoo shipments)	9 days
Ports in China-Alashankou/Drushba-Almaty (regular railway transport)	15 – 23 days (12 – 18 days to China border, 2-3 days waiting time at the border)
Novorossiysk-Almaty (single container shipment)	14 days
Kapikule (Turkey)-Varna (Bulgaria)-Ferry-Ilichevsk (Russian Federation)-Kazakhstan-Tashkent/Uzbekistan (single covered CIS wagon or 5-6 covered CIS wagons)	30 – 35 days (single wagon) 20 – 25 days (5-6 wagons)
Tashkent/Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Islamic Republic of Iran-Istanbul/Turkey	Approximately 20 days
European country-Almaty/Kazakhstan	30 – 35 days
Brest/Poland-Belarus-Russian Federation-Kazakhstan border	15 – 16 days (+/- 5days)

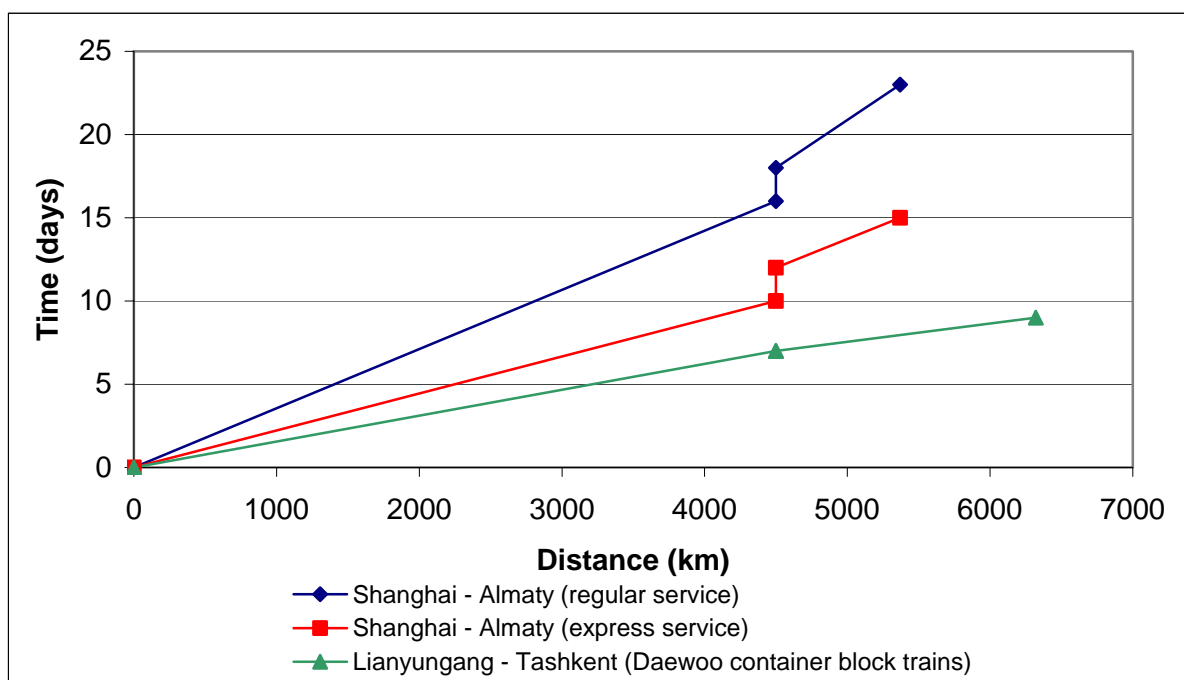
Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff.

(a) Ports in China-Central Asia routes

Minimum and maximum transit times, of 15 days and 23 days respectively, for regular and express rail services from ports in China to Kazakhstan are illustrated in figure VI.3. The significant variation of about eight days is clearly reflected in the figure, which shows that the transport operations of the railways in both China and Kazakhstan have a bearing on total transit time. Freight forwarders have reported that the transfer time at the border between China and Kazakhstan is 2-3 days, which includes break-of-gauge handling and customs documentation and proceedings. Meanwhile, data on the container block trains established for shipments from Daewoo Corporation in Republic of Korea via the Chinese port of Lianyungang, just north of Shanghai, reveal that a transit time of nine days is possible.³¹ This suggests that significant reductions in transit time can be achieved if a high level of priority is given to the transit service.

In terms of transportation costs, the quotation obtained for transporting a 20-foot container from Shanghai to Almaty via Drushba/Alashankou was US\$ 1,522, including port charges of approximately US\$180. It should be noted that this quotation also includes a portion for the transport of the empty container back to the port or depot of the shipping line.

Figure VI.3. Estimated cumulative transit times necessary for the import of containerized cargo by rail from ports in China to Central Asia



³¹ This figure does not show the time needed for the break-of-gauge at the border.

Table VI.6. Cumulative times for three types of railway services between ports of China and Central Asia

	<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. time – regular (hours)</i>	<i>Cum. time - express (hours)</i>	<i>Cum. time – block (hours)</i>
Shanghai	0	0	0	0	0
Shanghai - Alashankou/Drushba	4 500	4 500	16	10	7
Alashankou/Drushba (border)		4 500	18	12	7
A. Alashankou/Drushba – Almaty	870	5 370	23	15	
B. Alashankou/Drushba – Tashkent	1 820	6 320			9

Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff. (Cum. = cumulative).

(b) Novorossiysk (Russian Federation) and Turkey-Central Asia routes

Two railway-based routes leading to Central Asia from the Mediterranean Sea were examined:

- Istanbul-Kazakhstan via the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk (Russian Federation);
- Kapikule (Turkey)-Uzbekistan via Varna (Bulgaria), Iyichevsk (Ukraine), Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

A detailed breakdown of distance and time for each route is shown in Table VI.7. The route Istanbul – Novorossiysk – Almaty describes the movement of intermodal containers which can be loaded and unloaded directly between the feeder vessels and railways. In the case of the route Kapikule – Tashkent via Varna (Bulgaria), Iyichevsk (Ukraine), Russian Federation and Kazakshtan, only an overall estimate of both time and costs for a covered CIS-wagon were available. Both routes involve a ferry crossing (Istanbul – Novorossiysk and Varna – Iyichevsk), which require waiting times of up to a week in the case of the weekly feeder vessel service between Istanbul – Novorossiysk, and 3 –4 days in the case of the ferry between Varna and Ilyichevsk.

Using available data, a comparison of transit time is shown in Figure VI.4. The most significant factor explaining the variations of transit time within the route from Kapikule to Almaty via Varna was whether the container was moving in a single wagon shipment or in a multiple wagon shipment of 5-6 wagons. A considerable gain could be realized by consolidating the shipment in more than one wagon. The waiting time for the ferry in Varna (3-4 days) also added to the total time, making this route less attractive than the route from Istanbul to Almaty via Novorossiysk. If average train speeds could be raised to match the container block trains instituted for shipments from Daewoo, the transit time between Novorossiysk and Almaty could potentially be reduced to about seven days.

Figure VI.4. Estimated cumulative transit time required for the import of containerized cargo by rail from Istanbul to Almaty via Novorossiysk and via Varna

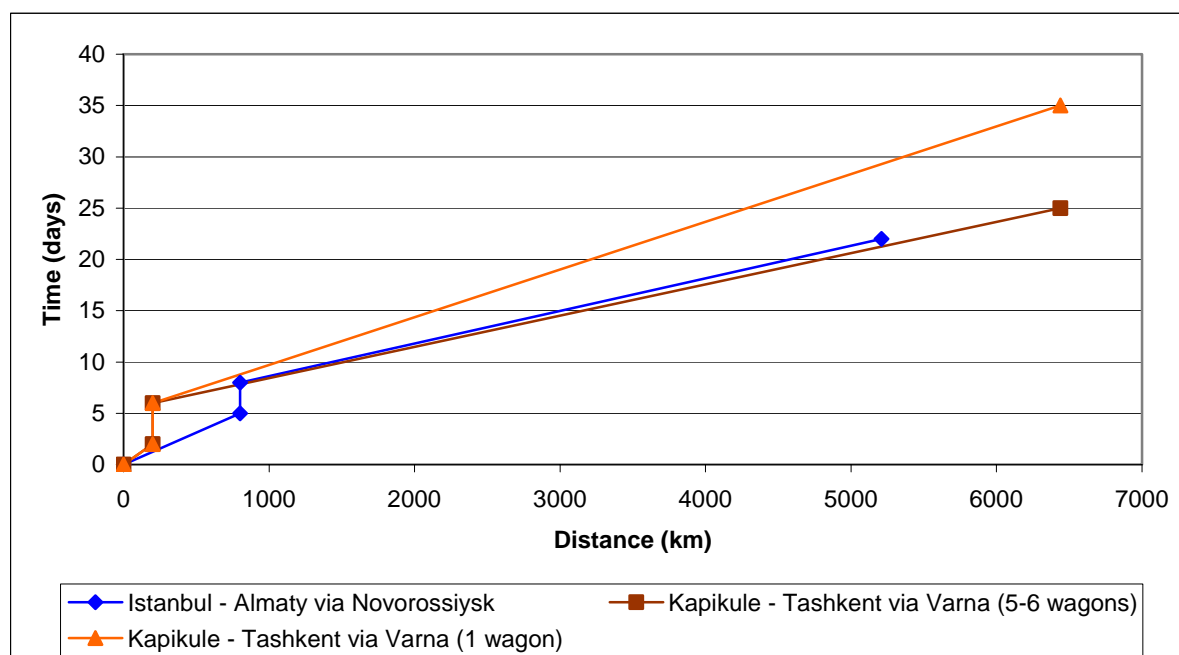


Table VI.7. Comparison of distances and times for Turkey – Central Asia railway route via Novorossiysk and via Varna

<i>Via Novorossiysk</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. distance (km)</i>	<i>Time (days)</i>	<i>Cum. time (days)</i>
Istanbul		0	0	0	0
Istanbul- Novorossiysk (Russian Federation)	ferry	800	800	5	5
Novorossiysk			800	3	8
Novorossiysk – Volgograd – Astrakhan (Kazakhstan)	rail	1385	2185	14	22
Astrakhan – Almaty	rail	3025	5210		
<i>Via Varna</i>		<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cum. distance (km)</i>	<i>Time (days) - 5-6 wagons</i>	<i>Time (days) - 1 wagon</i>
Kapikule (Turkey)		0	0	0	0
Kapikule-Varna (Bulgaria)	rail	200	200	↓	↓
Varna			200		
Varna – Iyichevsk (Ukraine)	ferry	400	600		
Iyichevsk – Almaty (via Russian Federation)	rail	3580	4180		
Almaty – Tashkent	rail	2260	6440	20-25	30-35

Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff. (Cum. = cumulative).

Due to differences in the type of unit being transported in each route, it is difficult to compare the costs. According to transport operators in Kazakhstan, the cost of transportation by rail between Istanbul and Almaty is in the US\$1,435 to US\$ 2,000 range for a 20-foot container, and is US\$ 2,385 for a 40-foot container. According to Uzbek transport operators, the cost of a wagon between Kapikule and Tashkent is in the range of US\$7,500 - \$8,000, depending on the commodity. Table VI.8 below shows the various quotes for costs of transport by rail and compares them with the cost of container transport from the Port of Mersin (Turkey) to Tashkent by road.³² It appears that the ferry/rail option of Istanbul – Novorossiysk – Almaty has a significant cost advantage over the other routes, even taking into account the fact that the quote is for up to Almaty. For both rail and road, the transport costs also include a portion for the empty return of the container to the depot. A reduction in costs would be possible if the import and export of container transport was better balanced.

Table VI.8. Comparison of costs between Turkey and Kazakhstan/Uzbekistan, by ferry/rail and road

<i>Route</i>	<i>Modes</i>	<i>Distance (km)</i>	<i>Cost (US\$)</i>
Istanbul – Novorossiysk – Volgograd – Astrakhan – Almaty	Ferry/rail	5 210	1 435 - 2 000 (20 foot container) 2 385 (40 foot container)
Kapikule – Varna – Iyichevsk (Ukraine) – Russian Federation – Kazakhstan – Tashkent (Uzbekistan)	Rail / ferry / rail	6 440	7 500 – 8 000 (per wagon, commodity based tariff)
Mersin – Bazargan (Is. Rep. of Iran) – Tehran – Sarakhs (Turkmenistan) – Farab – Alat (Uzbekistan) – Tashkent	Road	4 540	4 000 (TEU)

Source: Data collected by ESCAP staff.

³² Data for time taken for the road transport between Mersin (Turkey) and Tashkent was not available.

Appendix Table VI.1. Status of selected ESCAP member countries' accession to international conventions listed in Commission resolution 48/11, as of October 2002

<i>Country</i>	<i>Convention on Road Traffic (1968)</i>	<i>Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)</i>	<i>Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (1975)</i>	<i>Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)</i>	<i>Customs Convention on Containers (1972)</i>	<i>International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)</i>	<i>Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) (1956)</i>
Afghanistan			x	x			
Armenia			x			x	
Azerbaijan	x		x	x		x	
China					x		
Georgia	x	x	x		x	x	x
Islamic Rep. of Iran	x	x	x				x
Kazakhstan	x	x	x				x
Kyrgyzstan			x	x		x	x
Pakistan	x	x					
Russian Federation	x	x	x		x	x	x
Tajikistan	x	x	x				x
Turkey			x		x		x
Turkmenistan	x	x	x				x
Uzbekistan	x	x	x	x	x	x	x