

## Czech Republic – consequences of Covid 19 pandemic for transport performance

### *ITF Webinar Meeting 4 June 2020, additional information*

Czech Republic locked down due to Covid 19 pandemic in the mid-March 2020 and a state of emergency was introduced. This situation lasted for 2 months, until the 17th May. Already before the 15th March some limitations were in place. These were mainly recommendations concerning travelling to some specific places and countries not considered to be safe from Covid 19 point of view, and business trips were stopped or cancelled as much as possible. All schools were closed on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

The first Coronavirus cases in Czechia were detected on the 1<sup>st</sup> March and the first death was recorded 3 weeks later.

So already at that time mainly transport activities were affected. Firstly it concerned passenger public transport but still travelling across a border was allowed if duly justified. As in many other countries, all the shops but with food and medical drugstores were closed, the provision of various types of services was also stopped. The borders were gradually closing and finally it was locked almost completely, only the Czech citizens could cross the border into the country and foreigners could leave, and there were only limited border crossing points. Only freight transport had exception, i.e. truck drivers and rail crew. Transport of goods has never been stopped. Air passenger transport was actually stopped, all airports but Prague international airport were closed completely. All these measures of course resulted in significant decline of passenger transport and some decline in freight transport as lot of economic activities were muted.

### TRANSPORT STATISTICS

As regards transport statistics the Ministry of Transport responsible for transport data collection faced probably similar problems as all the others data producers in different countries. Ministry of Transport was aware of the fact that statistical data on transport would become one of the key issues after the critical situation with Covid 19 will be over in order to assess all economic consequences and possibly prepare relevant measures. Therefore we all tried to do our best to keep transport statistics “going”. Even already during the beginning of the pandemic in Czechia, requests were received for preliminary data but unfortunately it was too early and only very little information was available. However the Ministry also realized, that for respondents statistics would not be a priority during this difficult time. Therefore several measures were taken to facilitate respondent’s burden.

First of all we kept explaining the importance of statistical numbers, if possible, reasonable requests for postponing deadlines were accepted and various forms of data structures were acceptable as well (in house documents or various forms of way bills etc.)

It was clear that statistical data collection could not be stopped because especially some kind of statistical data would be lost forever without any chance to receive them later.

Even if demand for data is enormous, it is too early to evaluate transport data, they are not mostly available yet. But based on some preliminary figures some development could be already observed.

### RAIL PASSENGER TRANSPORT

According to the preliminary figures total decrease in rail passenger transport in the first quarter 2020 was 20% in number of passengers transported and 15% in pkm.

However if monthly figures are considered, in **March** rail passenger transport dropped to **nearly half** in volume of passengers as well as in pkm. In **April, number of passengers transported by rail was in comparison with the previous year less than 1/3 and in pkm it was even 1/5, i.e. 20%**

### RAIL FREIGHT TRANSPORT

Freight transport in general was not effected so much as it had many exceptions. For the first quarter 2020 decline was “only” 8%, while in **March it was 14% in tonnes and 8% in tkm. In APRIL decline was ¼ (drop to 75%)**

### AIR PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Some figures for **aviation data** are already available. Airports performance in the Czech Republic went down in **March to 35%** in comparison with the previous year 2019 and in **APRIL practically to zero (1%)**

As far as Czech air carriers are concerned, only quarterly data are available and according to those figures number of passengers transported in the first quarter of 2020 decreased by 37% and pkm even by nearly 50%.

### BUS TRANSPORT

Data on bus transport are collected on quarterly basis. According to preliminary data number of passengers decreased in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2020 compared to the previous year by 17% and pkm by cca 20%.