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journal homepage: www.unistroy.spb.ru



Preliminary technical studies for the connection of the two Pan-European Corridors in the district between Sopotnica and Meseista

Z. Zafirovski¹, Z. Krakutovski², G. Gjosevski³

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, blvd. Goce Delcev 9, 1000 Skopje, Republic of Macedonia

ARTICLE INFO

Original research article

Article history

Received 19 October 2014
Accepted 19 November 2014

Keywords

construction of railways,
Investment costs,
Pan-European Corridors,
Corridor VIII,
Corridor X,
connection,
railway track;=

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to promote a solution for the connection of the two Pan-European Corridors i.e. the Corridor VIII and the Corridor X that go through the territory of Republic of Macedonia. Their single joining point is the city Skopje, and as a result we came to an idea to use their connection at another place. This connection is going to enable better railway traffic and circular motion over the rail in the country along with the uplift of the quality and service of transport in Macedonia. Moreover, we are taking about a single track section with normal width of the track section which connects both Pan-European Corridors in the district between Sopotnica and Meseista.

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Corresponding author:

zafirovski@gf.ukim.edu.mk (Zlatko Zafirovski, Ph.D., Associate Professor)

2

krakutovski@gf.ukim.edu.mk (Zoran Krakutovski, Ph.D., Professor)

3

ggjosevski@gmail.com (Goran Gjosevski, B.Sc., Student)

Introduction

The Corridor VIII has big economic and social influence on the development of the Republic of Macedonia. The Corridor presents an existing railroad Kumanovo – Skopje – Tetovo – Kicevo – Struga. This railroad is very important for the connection between Republic of Albania and Republic of Bulgaria. In 1992 the three countries agreed on building a transport Corridor Durres – Tirana – Gostivar – Skopje – Kumanovo – Gueshevo - Sofia - Burgas and the purpose of that Corridor will be the connection between the Italian ports (Bari, Brindisi) and Albanian ports (Durres, Vlova) from the one side, and the Bulgarian ports (Burgas, Varna) from the other side. Another important Pan- European Corridor passes on the territory of Republic of Macedonia, the Corridor X. It is a connection between Western European countries and the Greek port (Thessaloniki). The geographical position of Sopotnica and Mesheishta and their distance of only 30 kilometers is a perfect opportunity for connecting these two places with a railroad and in that case we are connecting the both Corridors (Corridor VIII and Corridor X). This connection of the two Pan- European Corridors i.e. the Corridor VIII and the Corridor X will enable better railway traffic and circular motion over the rail in the country along with the uplift of the quality and service of transport in Macedonia [1-26].



Figure 1. Pan-European Transport Corridors in the South of Europe

Terrain features and technical parameters

The Section between Sopotnica and Mesheishta is characterized with mountainous terrain, hard to reach places and mountain peaks with height of 1500 m altitude. The whole section is characterized with high mountain peaks and steep ravines which require building expensive objects and raises the price of this project. The first and the last station are on about the same altitude Sopotnica (583 m) and Mesheishta (594 m). The air distance between them is 33 km and 550 m.

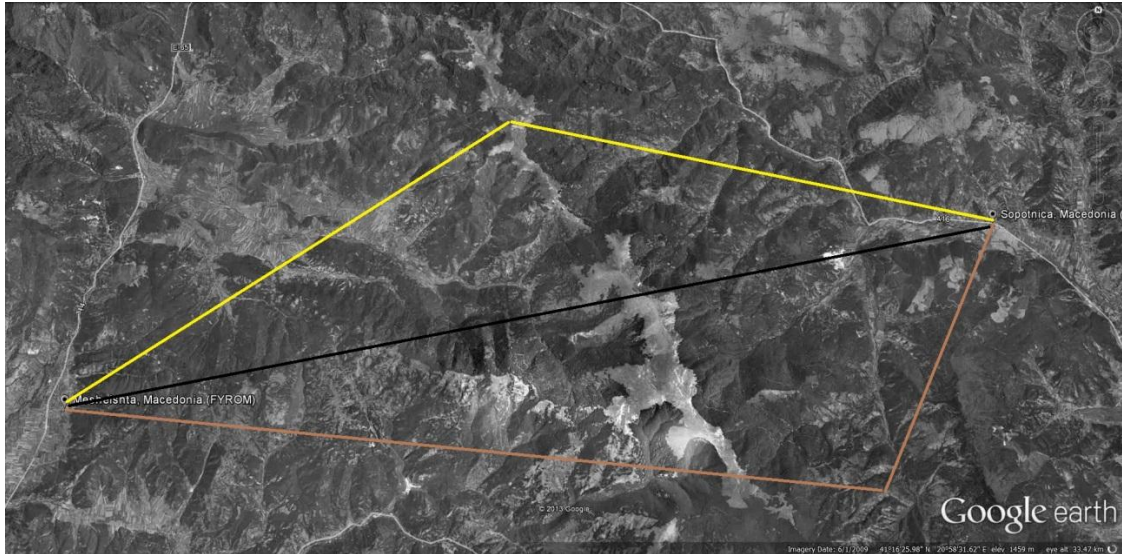


Figure 2. Terrain characteristics

The setting of the alignment offered various possibilities. The first solution was to build an object-tunnel with length of 30 km which will join these two places. This was a very expensive solution so it was omitted from the start. The price of the other two alignments was more acceptable.

Their idea was to sneak the railroad between the peaks and ravines and to offer quality and respectable railroad traffic. In this two final variants were projected satisfying technical parameters such as:

Max speed: variant 1 (100 km/h), variant 2 (80 km/h).

Min curve radius: variant 1 (500 m), variant 2 (300 m).

Max gradient: 25 ‰.

Max gradient in tunnel 10 ‰.

Technical characteristics and investment costs

1 Technical characteristics

1.1 Coefficient of developing (K_r)

$$K_r = ((L_{vk} - L_0) / L_0) * 100, [\%]$$

K_r – Coefficient of developing

L_{vk} – total length of alignment

L_0 – length of straight line

The variant with bigger Coefficient of developing has a lower quality.

1.2 Coefficient of the route in curves (K_{kr})

$$K_{kr} = (\sum D_k / L_{vk}), [m/km]$$

K_{kr} – Coefficient of the route in curves

D_k – total length in curves

L_{vk} – total length of alignment

The variant with lower Coefficient of the route in curves has a better quality.

1.3 Coefficient of angles (α)

$$\alpha = (\sum \alpha / L_{vk}), [^\circ/km]$$

α – Coefficient of angles

$\sum \alpha$ – amount of all angles

L_{vk} – total length of alignment

The variant with lower Coefficient of angles has a better quality.

1.4 Middle curve radius (R_{sr})

$$R_{sr} = (57.3 * (\sum D_k / \sum \alpha)), [m]$$

The variant with bigger Middle curve radius has a better quality.

Technical characteristics (Variant 1) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Technical characteristics (Variant 1)

Variant 1	80 km/h (300 m)
The alignment has:	
total length	$L_{vk}= 56\ 833\ m$
49 curves with length	$D_k=17\ 923\ m$
The length of straight line	$L_0=38\ 910\ m.$
The amount of all angles	$\Sigma\alpha_i=2910^\circ.$
Coefficient of the route in curves	$K_r=46\ \%$
Coefficient of the route in curves	$K_{kr}=315\ (m'/km)$
Coefficient of angles	$\alpha=51.2\ (^\circ/km)$
Middle curve radius	$R_{sr}=353\ m$

Technical characteristics (Variant 2) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Technical characteristics (Variant 2)

Variant 2	100 km/h (500 m)
The alignment has:	
total length	$L_{vk}= 51\ 852\ m$
36 curves with length	$D_k=22\ 605\ m$
The length of straight line	$L_0=29\ 247\ m$
The amount of all angles	$\Sigma\alpha_i=2298^\circ.$
Coefficient of the route in curves	$K_r=77\ \%$
Coefficient of the route in curves	$K_{kr}=436\ (m'/km)$
Coefficient of angles	$\alpha=44,3\ (^\circ/km)$
Middle curve radius	$R_{sr}=564\ m$

2 Investment costs

Investment costs (Variant 1) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Investment costs (Variant 1)

Variant 1	80 km/h (300 m)
Total length	56,833 m
Length of tunnels	6,260 m
Length of bridges	830 m
<i>Investment costs</i>	569,497,000 €
<i>Total cost of the project</i>	710,000,000 €
<i>Cost of the project by km</i>	12,493,000 €/km

Investment costs (Variant 2) are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Investment costs (Variant 2)

Variant 2	100 km/h (500m)
Total length	51,852 m
Length of tunnels	6,350 m
Length of bridges	700 m
Investment costs	631,939,000 €
Total cost of the project	787,000,000 €
Cost of the project by km	15,178,000 €/km

Conclusion

The results of the analysis are quantitatively and qualitatively talking about two variants.

The results are saying that the second variant (80 km/h and 300 m) is longer (56,833 km) and has less objects along the alignment which means that it is cheaper with amount of 12,500,000 € per 1 km length.

The first variant (100 km/h and 500 m) is characterized with shorter route (51,852 km), but with more objects along the alignment which means it is more expensive i.e. with amount of 15,200,000 € per 1 km length. The aspect of time is very important and it is clear that the first variant (100 km/h) provides better solution for transport of people and goods.

The Technical characteristics are clearly saying that the second variant (80 km/h) provides better quality and in this stage of development it is a better choice for this kind of mountain route and gives satisfying technical parameters and costs less.

In our opinion, we may conclude that in this development stage the second variant is recommended as being a more rational solution.

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Предварительные технические исследования для соединения двух общеевропейских транспортных коридоров на участке Сопотница - Мешеишта

З. Зафировски¹, З. Кракутовски², Г. Гйошевски³

Университет Святых Кирилла и Мефодия в Скопье, бульвар „Гоце Делчев“ бр. 9, 1000 Скопье,
Республика Македония

Информация о статье	История	Ключевые слова
УДК 69 Научная статья	Подана в редакцию 19 октября 2014 Принята 19 ноября 2014	строительство железных дорог, Инвестиционные затраты, общеевропейская коридоры, коридор VIII, коридор X, транспортная связь, железнодорожные пути

АННОТАЦИЯ

Целью данного исследования является содействие развитию двух общеевропейских коридоров: коридора VIII и коридора X, которые идут через территорию Республики Македония. В настоящее время их единственной точкой пересечения является город Скопье. В результате, появилась идея соединить эти два коридора и в другом месте. Это соединение должно обеспечить лучшее железнодорожное движение и круговое движение по железной дороге в стране наряду с поднятием конкурентоспособности дорог в Македонии, улучшением качества услуг на железнодорожном транспорте. Рассматривается участок пути, который соединяет оба общеевропейских коридора в районе между селениями Sopotnica и Meseista.

Контактный автор:

1. zafirovski@gf.ukim.edu.mk (Зафировски Златко, к.т.н., доцент)
2. krakutovski@gf.ukim.edu.mk (Кракутовски Зоран, к.т.н., профессор)
3. ggjosevski@gmail.com (Гйошевски Горан, студент)

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