

Think Tank Session: Sustainable transport supporting COVID-19 recovery strategies in the MENA region

Middle East + North Africa (MENA) Climate Week
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
30 March 2022



Agenda (All times in Gulf Standard Time)

12:00 - 12:15

Welcome and Session Overview

12:15 - 13:25

Think tank discussions

12:15 - 12:50 (Segment 1)

Pandemic Transport and Mobility Responses

12:50 (Segment 2)

Pandemic Transport and Mobility Responses

13:25 - 13:30 (Segment 5)

Wrap-up and next steps

**Please refer to
meeting instructions
in the Teams chatbox**

Welcome and Session Overview



Christopher Dekki

Director, Global Advocacy and Engag
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Atiq Ahmad

Lead Global Transport Specialist
Islamic Development Bank

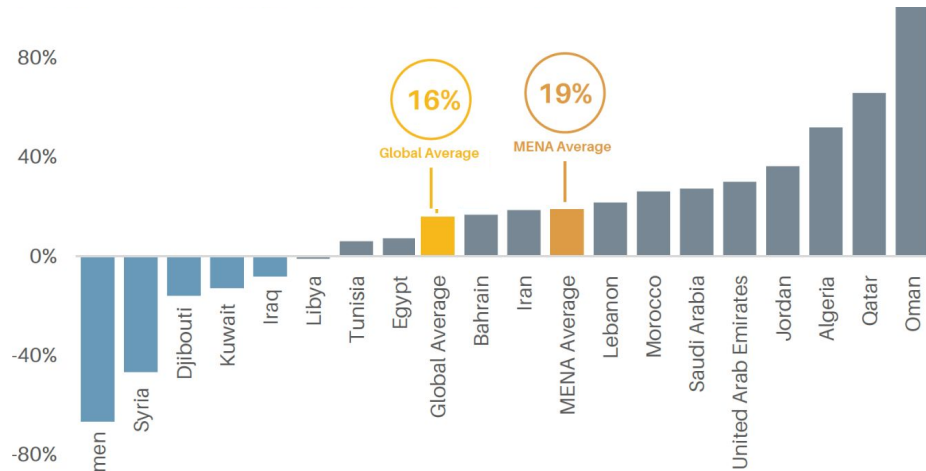
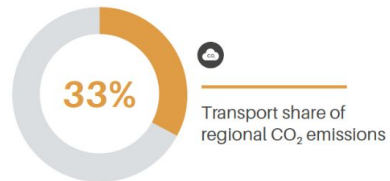
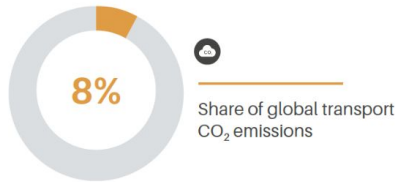
MENA regional transport context

MENA's transport emissions are growing faster than the global average

MENA's transport emissions increased **19%** between 2010 and 2019.

In 2019, MENA emitted 567 million tonnes of CO₂ and 1.24 tonnes per capita, **contributing to 8% of total global transport CO₂ emissions** (excl. international aviation and maritime transport).

While several countries, many of which are in conflict, recorded a decrease in transport emissions, **more than ten countries reported above-global average emission growth.**



Change in transport CO₂ emissions in MENA, 2010-2019

MENA regional transport context

Welcome and
Session Overview



Growing regional demand for cars



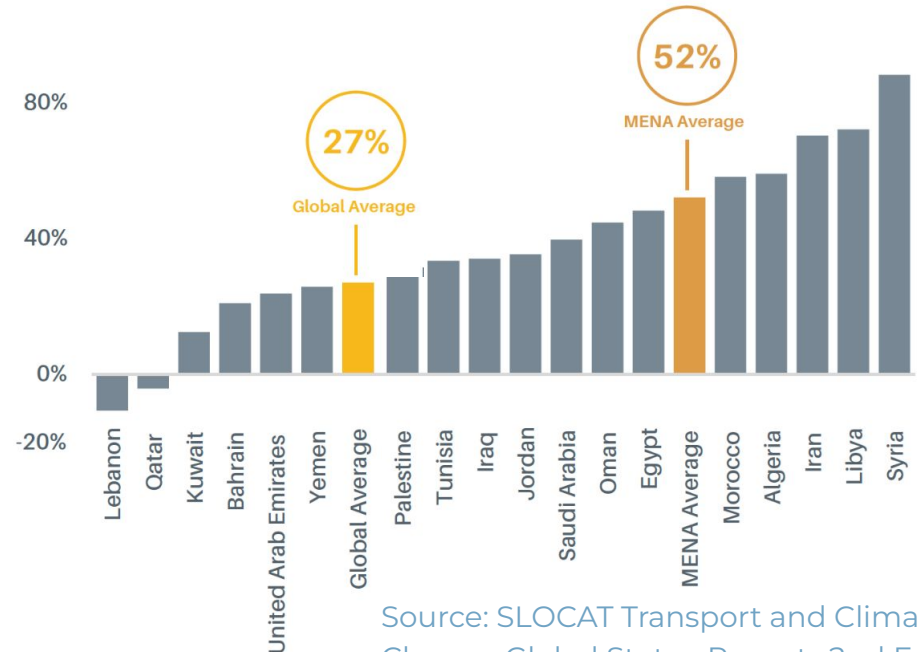
Car ownership is rising at twice the global average in MENA.

Middle Eastern countries have some of the highest car ownership levels in the world.

2.6 million **new vehicles** were sold in 2019 (33% less than in 2010).

In North Africa, growth in car ownership stems primarily from the importation of **used vehicles** from other regions.

Growth in car ownership in MENA, 2005-2015



Source: SLOCAT Transport and Climate Change Global Status Report., 2nd Ed,

Think tank discussions

Segment 1: Pandemic Transport and Mobility Responses



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Overarching question (1)

Think tank discussions
**Segment 1: Pandemic Transport and
Mobility Responses**

Which transport policy responses will help drive the shifts toward more sustainable, low carbon transport modes, and, where relevant, the recovery of public transport and paratransit ridership to pre-pandemic levels in order to meet Paris Agreement targets?

Challenge statement (1)

- *Public transport ridership dropped 70-90% in major cities*
- *Low-income residents are more likely to rely on public and paratransit services, underscoring social equity issues.*
- *Many have shifted to private transport modes, due to **largely negated** fear of virus contagion on public transport.*
- *The MENA region, while facing service reductions, has demonstrated **above-average recovery** in key markets.*

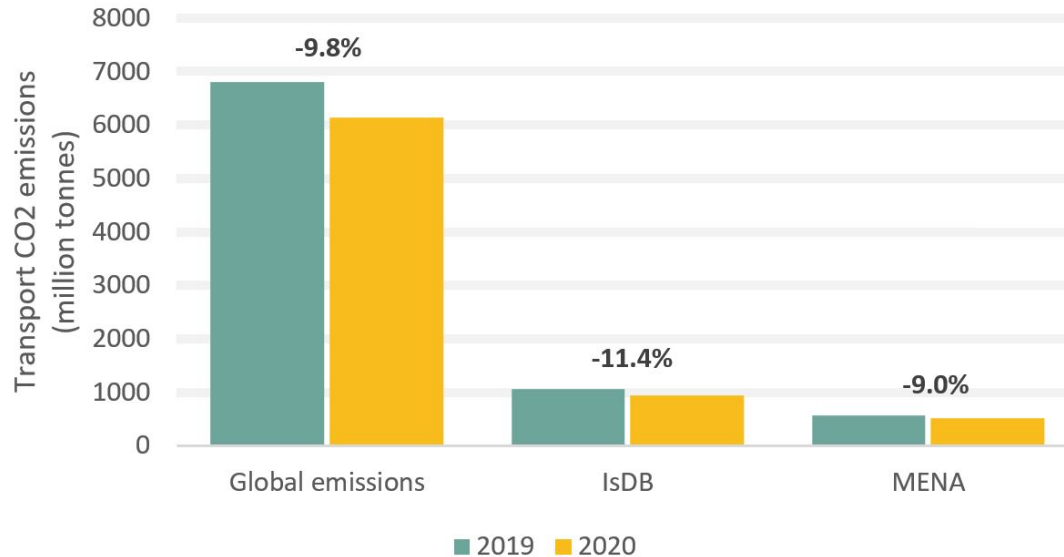
Aspects to address (1)

- Increased remote work
- Surging e-commerce
- Rebounding congestion
- Increasing private motorisation
- Unequal access to public transport and paratransit
- Rising fuel prices.

MENA transport trends

Think tank discussions
*Segment 1: Pandemic Transport and
Mobility Responses*

Transport CO₂ emissions decline in 2020 (post-pandemic)



The decrease of transport CO₂ emissions was stronger among IsDB member countries (-11.4%) than in MENA (-9%) or all countries (-9.8%).

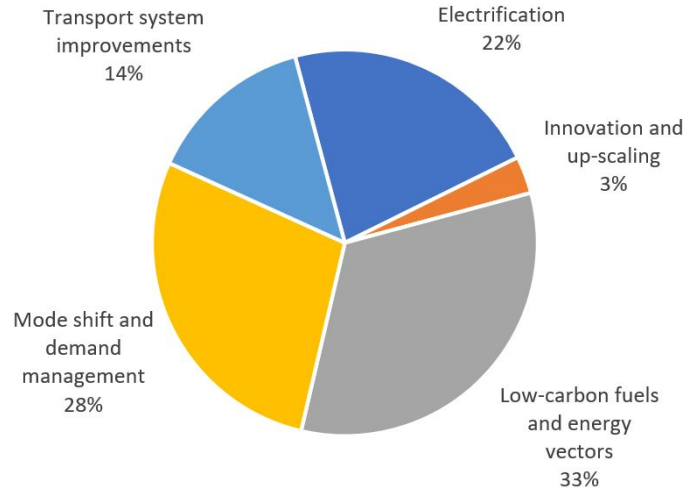
Source: SLOCAT analysis based on EDGAR, 2021, GHG emissions of all world countries

MENA transport trends

Think tank discussions
*Segment 1: Pandemic Transport and
Mobility Responses*

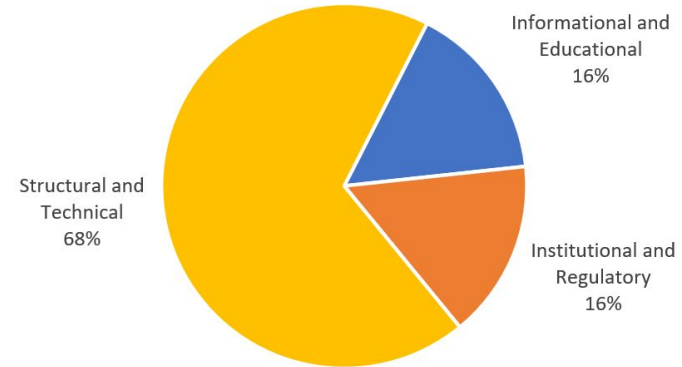
Transport mitigation and adaptation actions in NDCs

Transport mitigation actions by category



Palestine is the only MENA NDC to include multiple mitigation targets related to motorised transport demand, mode share, and vehicle efficiency targets.

Transport adaptation actions by category



Only NDCs from **Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Syria** and **the United Arab Emirates** contain transport adaptation actions. Many focus on structural and technical solutions, especially improving road resilience.



Public Transport Development Strategies: Beyond COVID-19 & Winning Back Passengers

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WHO WE ARE

We are the only **worldwide network** to bring together all public transport **stakeholders** and all sustainable transport **modes**.



+1,900

MEMBER COMPANIES



FROM
100

COUNTRIES

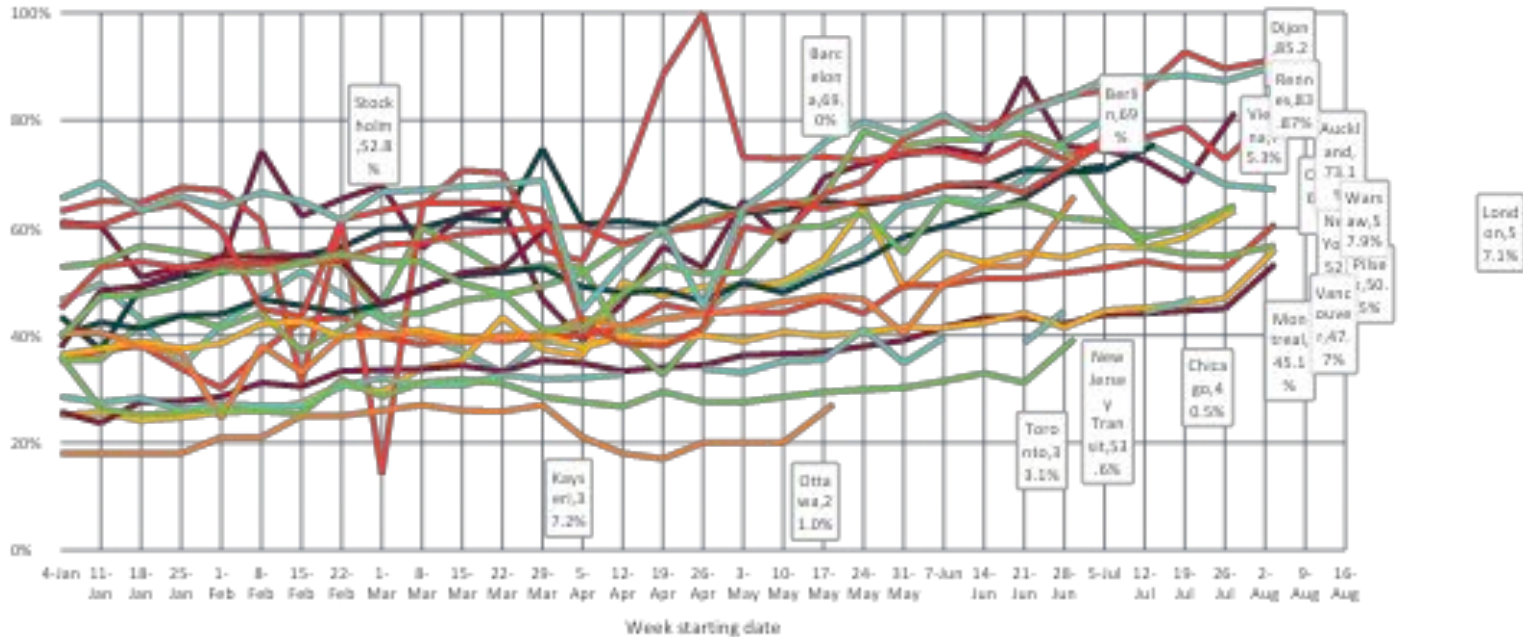


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OFFICES

MULTI-CITY COMPARISON

Weekly evolution since the start of January 2021



The lines in this graph refer to multimodal operators and networks where a total figure for ridership has been calculated.



CRISIS RESPONSE: WHAT HAVE TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES BEEN DOING?

PROVIDING ENOUGH TRANSPORT SUPPLY

Focusing on the needs of users, staff and assets, PTAs have worked with operators to **adapt the level of transport supply and manage capacity**. Measures have consisted of implementing additional and specific services and changing bus routes. These actions have primarily benefited essential workers and vulnerable persons, and kept public facilities and other essential services accessible, while ensuring physical distancing is possible.



Adjusting the level of supply

- ▶ In Helsinki, Finland, the services have been set at 90% for buses and 60% for trams.
- ▶ In Singapore, off-peak services and peak-time fringes benefit from an increase in transport demand.
- ▶ In Basel, Switzerland, service level reached 75% during the full lockdown in April 2020, but resumed to almost 100% when activities restarted, although some restrictions are still valid, and demand was around 65% in April 2021.
- ▶ In Barcelona, Spain, transport services have been running at 100% while the demand has reached 60% of pre-pandemic level.



CRISIS RESPONSE: WHAT HAVE TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES BEEN DOING?

ENSURING A SAFE TRAVEL ENVIRONMENT

To provide physically safe travel conditions to users, frontline staff and the community, PTAs have been involved in **operating conditions specifications**. This has covered capacity caps on transport, favouring back door boarding on buses and closing front doors and seats to protect the driver, and banning using the front seat in taxis. PTAs have enforced travel rules or cooperated with the police to ensure compliance and wellbeing of all.

In addition, PTAs have defined prescriptions and specifications for operators and mobility providers on cleansing, hygiene and sanitary protocols. This has led to an increase, both in frequency and scale, of disinfection on touchpoints, rolling stock and transport hubs.

- ▶ Seoul's PTA, Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG), has called on operators to intensify cleaning 14 times stronger than usual.
- ▶ In Belgrade, Serbia, recommendations have been formulated for public transport operators, taxis, bike-sharing and other free-floating services.
- ▶ In Belgrade, Queensland and Ottawa, Canada, PTAs have ensured that public transport spaces are equipped with hand sanitisers.
- ▶ In Helsinki and Seoul, masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been provided for free or made available in vending machines.
- ▶ In Singapore, up to 11,000 driving staff from operators, taxis and ride-hailing services have undergone regular COVID-19 testing and temperature checks. By showing healthy drivers and personnel (infection rate about 0.1%), transport operators have played their role to regain user's trust in public transport.





CRISIS RESPONSE: WHAT HAVE TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES BEEN DOING?



LIAISING WITH USERS AND THE PUBLIC

PTAs have used a large variety of communication channels and tools to liaise with users and the public.

- ▶ Digital tools have been used in Seoul to inform users of the real-time network occupancy, suggest alternative routes, support contact tracing strategies and help citizens feel safe in public transport.
- ▶ In Ottawa, a COVID-19 Q&A hotline has been put in place.
- ▶ In Belgrade, a video aiming at raising awareness of users has been broadcasted widely.
- ▶ In Queensland, a COVID-safe public transport plan was published.



CRISIS RESPONSE: WHAT HAVE TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES BEEN DOING?

MANAGING TRAVEL DEMAND

PTAs have implemented demand management measures aiming at changing travel time and flattening peak travel. This approach aims at influencing travel behaviours and level of demand to ensure physical distancing and high quality transport conditions, focusing less on the calibration of supply to cover peak demand.

- ▶ In Barcelona, homeworking has been encouraged to reduce peak time commuting and to promote active and healthy transport solutions. Practically, initiatives have focused on hearing businesses concerns through personalised interviews and collaborative sessions. Moreover, a digital tool has been set up to help companies design customised, sustainable and safe solutions. This policy aims at facilitating the management of companies' mobility under the COVID-19 crisis⁴.



PTAs in cooperation with municipalities and road authorities have supported alternative transport solutions and modal shift towards sustainable modes by reallocating space in favour of non-motorised transport. Road traffic management measures have also been reactivated to hamper car traffic recovery.

- ▶ In Ottawa, Lagos, Cape Town, Belgrade and Seoul, more carriageway space for pedestrians and cyclists has made walking and cycling safer and more comfortable. Vehicle-sharing and micro mobility services have also been encouraged⁵.



C. THE PODIUM : THE TOP MEASURES IDENTIFIED TO WIN BACK PASSENGERS IN A POST-COVID CONTEXT

The table below ranks the top-measures identified by respondents as most relevant to win back passengers, in a post-covid context.

Ranking	Top measures identified to win back passengers in a post-covid context
1	Accelerate digitalisation of the public transport sector (ticketing, MaaS, contactless payment, etc)
2	Improve cleaning operation (innovative cleaning tools, staff onsite,...)
3	Communication towards passengers (public transport is safe, Communication campaigns, etc.)
4	Stronger role of the public transport sector in the National/European decision-making process regarding post-covid measures (sanitary pass, capacity restrictions, mandatory mask wearing, etc.)
5	Promote modal shift & discourage solo-car use (UVARs, SUMP, etc.)
6	Price incentives
7	Develop partnerships (with schools, enterprises) or between operators in a multimodal approach
8	Long-term measures to flatten the peak
9	Easier access to the EU Funds (for innovation, infrastructures projects, clean busses, etc.)



COVID-19 and public transport in MENA: Lessons learned

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About MENA Centre for Transport Excellence

- Launched in 2011 as a joint effort between Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) and UITP to unify regional efforts to build sustainable transport systems, consolidate transport knowledge and develop innovative research to advance effective transport policies, strategies and solutions in MENA countries.



Recent and ongoing research projects

- MENA Transport Report 2021
- Policy Paper: E-Bus in MENA 2020
- Economics of Public Transport in MENA 2020
- MENA Mobility post-Covid 2021



➤ COVID-19 and Public Transport (PT) in MENA

Following local lockdowns & curfews:

- **PT service suspensions (short & long-term)**
- **Reduced PT operations (frontline staff)**
- **Repurposing PT fleets for emergency services**



Abu Dhabi Healthcare Link – ©: ITC



Bahrain Mobile Testing Unit ©: MTT



Covid-19 mobile testing bus – ©: Mwasalat



Food delivery during lockdown in Amman ©Reuters

➤ COVID-19 public transport resumption

Following local guidelines & protocols:

- Capacity limits & social distancing
- Regular extensive disinfection
- Mask enforcement etc.



Temperature checks in Kuwait ©: KGL



Disinfection of CasaTramway platform and turnstile ©: Casa Transports



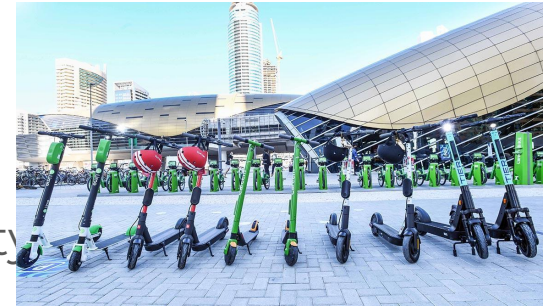
Social distancing and mask enforcement in Dubai ©: RTA



Provision of hand sanitizers on PT ©: Mwasalat

➤ Post-COVID Public Transport Trends in MENA

- Ease of restrictions
- Resumption of regular services
- Relaunch of PT mega-projects
- Renewed interest in walking and micromobility
- Focus on on-demand mobility and e-mobility



Micromobility options in Dubai



New Administrative Capital Monorail Project in Cairo



BRT Launch in Amman



BE-Bus trial in Dubai

➤ Lessons learned from COVID-19

- PT authorities & operators have shown resilience in the face of significant drops in ridership and fare revenue.
 - PT kept cities moving during peak-pandemic and post-covid.
 - Public transport is the backbone of mobility.
- The pandemic has reinforced the importance of resilience
 - Sound mitigation plans (risk & crisis management)
 - Effective internal & external communication channels
 - Financial sustainability and emergency packages
 - Diversification of PT revenue streams

Expert discussion (1)

Think tank discussions
***Segment 1: Pandemic Transport and
Mobility Responses***

Jamboard: Frame #1

Think tank discussions

Segment 2:

Pandemic Recovery Investments



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Overarching question (2)

Which post-pandemic investments in sustainable transport are needed to enhance equitable passenger transport access and bolster more sustainable logistics chains to support economic recovery and ensure no one is left behind?

Challenge statement (2)

- COVID-19 recovery packages *dwarf low carbon investments.*
- *Within recovery packages, only around one third of transport investments are linked to clean transport.*
- *In the MENA region, relatively few public recovery packages have been introduced.*
- *Transparent and credible environmental, social and governance impact reporting remains limited.*

MENA transport responses

Think tank discussions
Segment 2: Pandemic Recovery
Investments



Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic required new mobility solutions

The MENA region recorded the **largest decline in air travel** of any global region during 2020. Border closures and lockdown measures have also led to prolonged and significant impacts.

Paratransit services have been particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic, due to travel restrictions, reduced capacities and rising costs.



Disinfection of CasaTramway platform and turnstile
©: Casa Transports



During the first major lockdown, **Dubai's** Roads and Transport Authority supported essential workers through **free public bus services and discounted taxi rides**. **Contactless payments** were later introduced on public transport and further technological innovations are being pursued.

MENA passenger transport

Think tank discussions
Segment 2: Pandemic Recovery Investments

Source: SLOCAT Transport and Climate
Change Global Status Report, 2nd Ed,



MENA implemented several urban transport and intercity rail services

Doha Metro consists of three lines and 37 stations



Public transport offerings were expanded through bus rapid transit systems and new metro lines, but still at a slower pace than in any other region.



Amman (Jordan) inaugurated a BRT system in 2021 and Doha opened three subway lines since 2019.



Cities in the Middle East experimented with autonomous vehicles, shared mobility services and new digital mobility solutions.



In 2020, Dubai enabled the operation of a bike sharing service with 3,500 bicycles distributed over 350 stations.



Dubai RTA and ride-hailing service Careem launched bike sharing in 2020

High-speed rail development by region, 2010-2020

China



Europe



Japan



Korea



Morocco



Saudi Arabia



Turkey



MENA countries initiated several high-speed rail services in support of more efficient inter-city travel and significantly shorter travel times.

In 2018, high-speed rail services were launched in Casablanca-Tangier (Morocco) and in Medina-Mecca (Saudi Arabia).

2020

MENA freight transport

Think tank discussions Segment 2: Pandemic Recovery Investments

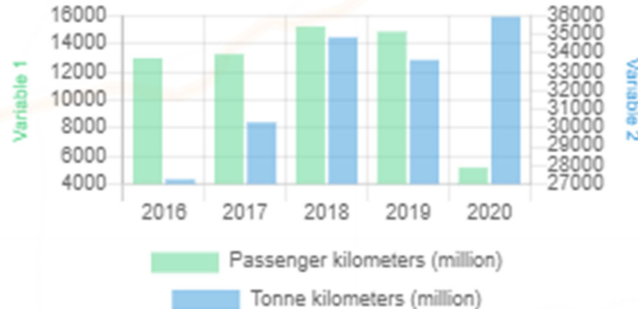
Rail freight has remained resilient throughout the pandemic.

Rail freight has kept going, getting essential goods where they need to be.

Saudi network is planned to expand by 8000km and double freight capacity, adopting modern technology and setting new high environmental protection standards in operating licenses



Freight by rail in Iran has continued to grow during pandemic as passenger numbers have dropped



Iran: Bostan Abad-Tabriz project has capacity for 2 million tonnes of freight a year and help complete the east-west corridor



ESG Reporting

Think tank discussions Segment 2: Pandemic Recovery Investments

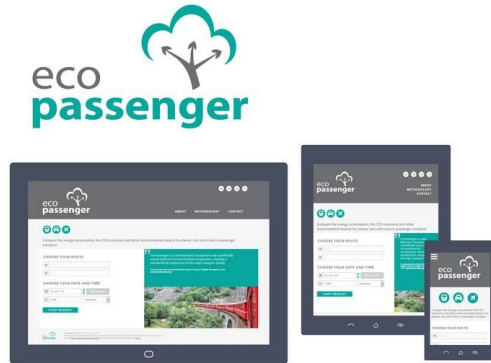
How can public transport and rail service providers better demonstrate their sustainability credentials to attract investment?

Rail Sustainability Index is one way reporting can be standardised and benchmarking can be regional and global

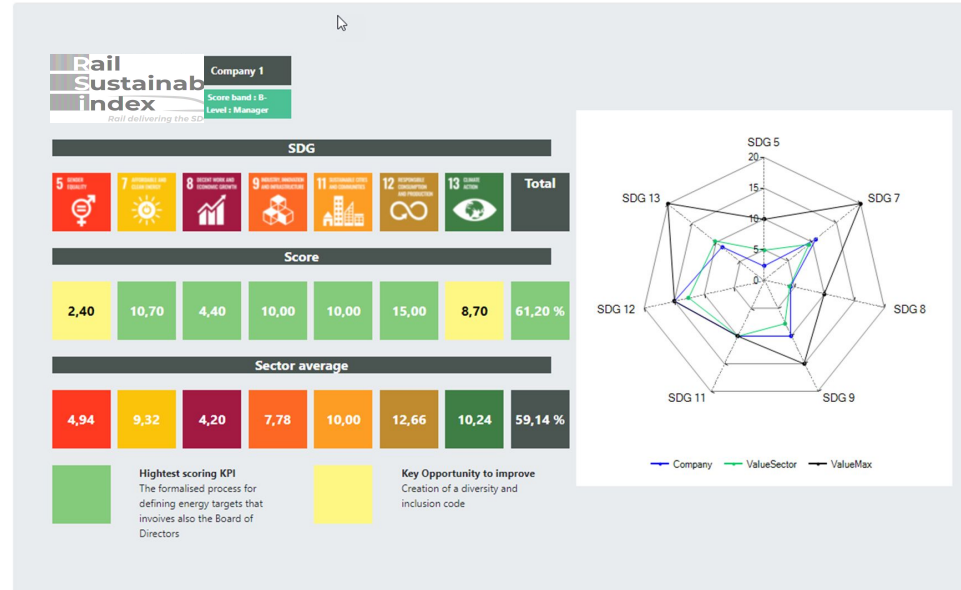


330
Railway specific environmental performance indicators
Format : Downloadable
Ed. no.1 , August 2008
EN

Global co-created technical standards to bring about harmonised reporting with transparent methodology



ecopassenger.org



Aspects to address (2)

- Public-private investment in recovery efforts
- Shifting areas of goods production and consumption
- Persistent fossil fuel subsidies
- Constrained government budgets
- Emerging and expanding transport investments, e.g. Egypt e-bus production, Morocco high-speed rail

Expert discussion (2)

Think tank discussions
Segment 2: Pandemic Recovery
Investments

Jamboard: Frame #2

Wrap up and Next Steps



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Want to find out more about trends in specific countries in MENA?

Check out the **country fact sheets** with data on transport demand, emission trends and measures taken at the national level towards achieving sustainable, decarbonised transport systems:



Algeria



Egypt



Iran



Morocco



Saudi Arabia



Read the SLOCAT country fact sheets on [fossil fuel and renewable energy use](#) (available for [Egypt](#)).

See these **resources** from UITP MENA Centre for Transport Excellence

- MENA Transport Report 2021
- Policy Paper: E-Bus in MENA 2020
- Economics of Public Transport in MENA 2020
- MENA Mobility post-COVID 2021



Thank you!

