

SUMMARY

Regardless of political and economic changes, intermodal transport is developing. Only its directions are changing. In the era of dynamic changes in foreign trade directions, China's economic potential is growing. This means that both sea and land trade routes are constantly developing. Thanks to the increasing diversification of cargo as well as China's transport policy (One Belt One Road and so-called Belt-Road Initiative), intermodal transport using rail transport is gaining in importance. Apart from the existing corridors through Russia and Kazakhstan, the role of the so-called southern corridor running through Central Asian countries to Iran and then through the Caucasian countries, the Black Sea and Ukraine to Poland is growing. At present, there are many investments in railroad infrastructure in Asia and Europe. New sections of the network are being built, such as the Kamchiq Pass crossing in Uzbekistan and the construction of the Astara-Rasht railroad in Iran. Existing sections of the network are being modernized and adapted to growing cargo volumes.

In Poland, the Silk Road corridor (E20) has an inlet at the border crossing with Belarus (Brest-Terespol), from where it runs westwards to the border crossing with Germany (Słubice-Frankfurt). The increasing intermodal transport cause congestion at the eastern border crossing due to prolonged customs clearance and the necessity to reload between different rail gauges (1520/1435 mm). The Polish administration has recognized the threat of reaching maximum capacity at this border crossing, but already today some intermodal cargo to Northern and Western Europe is diverted to the Baltic seaports in Russia and the Baltic countries. The political instability of Russia and Belarus favours the development of the southern railroad corridor, which also runs through Poland. Its inlets include two border crossings with Ukraine. The first is Mościska-Medyka, and the second is Izow-Hrubieszów. Further on the corridor (E30) runs through Rzeszów, Kraków, Katowice, Opole and Wrocław to the border crossing with Germany (Bielawa Dolna-Horka).

The comparative analysis of parameters of intermodal transport corridors indicates the bottlenecks on those corridors, examines strategic documents in terms of the planned investments and assesses the condition of Polish intermodal transport corridors at the time horizons of 2025 and 2030.