

IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF RAIL TRANSPORT: THE WORLD EXPERIENCE

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Railroad transportation is a complex system of a country's economy. In a situation where managing a simple system requires a special approach, a complex system such as railroad transportation must be based on well-designed and effective principles for the entire country. In recent years, many countries have undergone various forms of railroad reform. The most common of these is the process of vertically integrated liberalization. This article examines the achievements and consequences of this process in different countries.

The purpose of the study is to examine changes in the global transport system as an experiment, i.e. to determine the feasibility of such processes as privatization and liberalization of rail transport in different countries on the railroads of Uzbekistan.[1]

As mentioned above, when implementing reforms or changes related to the liberalization of rail transport, it is necessary to analyze its competitiveness in different countries, because any action to be taken on rail transport should ultimately improve its operational efficiency. Consequently, it is necessary to assess the importance of railroad liberalization in terms of improving the efficiency of railroad operations through indicators of competitiveness.[2]

The 2008 seminar of the OSJD Commission on Transport Policy and Development Strategy analyzed the consequences of the railway transport market liberalization in the EU countries in view of the introduction of charges for the use of infrastructure in the OSJD member countries. The analysis shows, that in the EU countries, being OSJD members, the implementation of concrete methods of railroads liberalization, lasted for more than 10 years since 1994, depends on its peculiarities and consequences for each country. In the document "European Transport Policy to 2010". ("White Paper - European Transport Policy up to 2010"), the goals and directions of the reforms, the initial reforms and the results of the European Union reforms in the railway transport, as well as a number of interesting facts.[5]

Although the materials of the seminar showed the results of the analysis of the reforms of 12 years ago, the reforms especially in the railway transport do not give results in a month or a year, it takes many years to implement and monitor the results of the reforms in a large sector of the economy as the railroads. On the other hand, whether reforms in the railway transport are carried out now or 10 or 20 years ago, the study of the mechanism of reforms and their consequences will by no means lose its relevance. Because the conditions of each country, the directions of development, the

volume of railway transportation, the volume of resources, the volume of fixed assets are different and the reforms depend on this. Thus, when analyzing reforms, the importance of the above-mentioned indicators is more important than the years of reforms.

There was a comparative analysis of the situation in Europe and Uzbekistan on the liberalization of rail transport. According to the results of the analysis, the characteristics of the European countries are as follows:[3]

- ✓ Economy, technique and technology are highly developed;
- ✓ The share of rail transport in the total freight turnover is from 8 to 37%, in passenger transportation - from 5 to 10%;
- ✓ Rail transport mainly carries out passenger transportation;
- ✓ Rail transport is not as important as for social tasks, i.e. European countries can replace rail transport by another mode of transport;
- ✓ European countries, even neighboring Russia and Kazakhstan, have direct access to the sea and the ocean, i.e. they can easily participate in intermodal and multimodal transportation in optimal transport borders;
- ✓ The average gross train weight is up to 800 tons, the number of cars in a freight train is up to 20, the average distance is up to 400 km.

The characteristics for the railroad of Uzbekistan are as follows:

- ✓ The level of engineering and technology development is average;
- ✓ The share of rail transport in total freight turnover is 35%, in passenger traffic - 1.5%;
- ✓ Freight transportation is a priority in railway transport;
- ✓ Railway transport is of strategic and socio-economic importance for the country;
- ✓ The territory of Uzbekistan is unique in that the country is surrounded on all sides by land, without direct access to the sea;
- ✓ The average gross weight of a train is 2,000 tons, the train composition is 60 wagons, and the average transportation distance is 800-1,000 km.

It can be seen that in European countries short, light trains run mostly for short distances, and the train schedule is also strictly defined. Therefore, it is practically not difficult to organize the activities of several carriers in European countries. In Uzbekistan, if the relevant standards are not met, the level of profitability will fall, and in the case of several other railway companies it will be difficult to achieve these indicators. These are, on the one hand, time and organizational problems associated with the assembly of large trains, and, on the other hand, problems with the replacement and rest of locomotive crews during the movement of trains, replacement of locomotives, maintenance of cars and locomotives. [10].

In conclusion, it should be noted that the reforms that need to be carried out on the Uzbek railroads will not bring the expected results if they are implemented according to the European or Russian model. In other words, one of the most important directions of the ongoing reforms in rail transport is to increase competition in rail transport by privatizing or increasing the number of transport companies. Analyses have shown that even in mature countries with highly developed economies, techniques and technologies, such as Great Britain and Russia, the policy of privatization has not justified itself.[8]

As for the negative effects and consequences of liberalization, franchising in Great Britain was stopped because of the excess of car fleet, the distribution of empty cars was not carried out centrally, because private operators do not know what station to send cars to, which is the best option. Administration was brought back under state control. In addition, efficiency indicators - qualitative indicators of the use of cars decreased - led to increased idle time of cars, car turnover time, reduced productivity of cars, which led to other options for reforming the railroad to increase operating costs, efficiency.

It should be noted that the vertically integrated division of rail transport in European countries is associated with active investment in railway infrastructure from the state budget. In Uzbekistan, it is difficult to allocate large sums of money from the state budget for the construction, repair and maintenance of the railroad and railway infrastructure.[9]

In conclusion, in order to improve the operational efficiency of the railroad, the following peculiar directions of reforming the railroads of Uzbekistan can be proposed:

Give up directions that are not related to railway activities, but are subsidized at the expense of income from freight traffic;

Stop the practice of reimbursing railway passenger transportation losses at the expense of freight transportation, i.e., achieve full state subsidization of passenger transportation;

Given the unique geographical position of Uzbekistan and the fact that it was once the main transit area of the Great Silk Road, one of the priorities in the development of rail transport is to ensure the shortest distances to seaports and economically viable options for world trade, construction and active operation of international transport corridors.

Thus, to improve the competitiveness of rail transport a comprehensive approach is needed that takes into account such factors as the role of the industry in the country, its position, market structure, the degree of government influence on railroad management, and geographical location. Lack of full consideration of the factors, blind application of another country's model may lead to failure to achieve the goals set at the beginning of the reforms.

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