

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### 100 million € to support key European projects



Recently the European Commission has published a [call](#) opening financial support for transport projects, of which 65 million € will be dedicated to removing bottlenecks and bridging missing links, enhancing rail interoperability and improving cross-border section within the trans-European transport Comprehensive Network. The remaining 35 million € will be dedicated to the reduction of noise through the promotion of silent technologies.

The applications can be submitted from January 2019 and 24 April 2019.

## BELOW SOME OF THE CHALLENGES WE WILL BE FOCUSING ON IMPROVING IN 2019:



**Lithuania is not yet on the right track! Private railways still struggle to enter the market**

ERFA is concerned at the lack of positive developments on the Lithuanian railway market.

**Rail discrimination** problems relating to capacity allocation and track access charges persist. Both are vital for creating a business-friendly environment for rail competition. They are also a basic requirement of EU rules.



### Polish aid scheme

In view of the recent use of EU funds for funding rail freight rolling stock in Poland, ERFA is seeking clarification regarding the use of state aid for the purchase of rolling stock.

## ERFA Strategy day – Supporting modal shift objectives



Private rail freight companies, represented by ERFA, held their annual strategy workshop in Brussels on 21st November in Brussels. The conditions needed to boost rail freight

growth in Europe and to drive rail's attractiveness for customers on quality, reliability and cost issues were the main theme of the day.

**Simplifying language requirements** to support modal shift objectives was a major topic of the discussions. We very much welcomed the positive steps taken in the contingency handbook adopted by infrastructure managers to identify structures and processes needed to better support international rail services in the event of disruptions. ERFA also kick-started a discussion on the main elements of Rail Undertakings contingency plans that could help minimise the impact of a large-scale disruptions. Additional recommendations could be made to support effective communication. The development of an EU-wide strategic plan to identifying a clear set of tools that boost rail freight at national and international level is a key priority for 2019.

## Rail freight Day




The Rail Freight Day was an opportunity to take stock of the progress made during 2018 via the on-going cooperation to boost international rail freight and increase awareness of the

targeted support needed from national governments in order to maximise rail's potential. On the occasion ERFA President Lindsay Durham during her intervention highlighted the need of:

- Increasing efficiency and reducing costs through a more standardised infrastructure
- Increasing the reliability of rail services by putting in place incentives for infrastructure managers to deal with recurring problems on the network, which lead to service delays/cancellations

ERFA strongly **supports measures in favour of modal shift**, but is concerned at the **potentially distortionary impact of the aid**. It is essential to send the right signal to private investors in rail – that the **conditions for accessing the European rail freight market are guaranteed on an equal, non-discriminatory and transparent basis**.

 **Bulgaria: failure to transpose and comply with EU rules on railway safety**

The EU Commission has found that Bulgaria **has not correctly transposed and implemented EU legislation on railway safety** ([Directive 2004/49/EC](#)). Especially with regards to the **lack of independence of the investigating body**. The investigating body should be able to independently decide whether or not an investigation of a rail accident or incident should be undertaken, and determines the extent of investigations and the procedure to be followed. **And up today this is not the case.**

### Combined Transport: where are we now?

Early December the EU Member States adopted a **disappointing position** on the proposed new rules for combined transport. Instead of supporting a more harmonised European framework that would boost this eco-friendly sector's competitiveness, **the Member States have opted for more flexibility at national level**. This goes against the **international nature of combined transport operations and the need for more coordination between EU countries**. It is important to create **attractive conditions** for end customers to **shift their business onto combined transport operations**.

charges in Europe with a particular focus on the Italian market.

The event brought together many key figures from the Italian rail sector, including the **CEOs of the main rail freight companies**, Italian infrastructure manager-**RFI**, Italian transport authority-**ART**, representatives of the **Italian Ministry of Transport** and **many other stakeholders**.

-An improved framework for delivering competition within rail. An open and competitive market does not yet exist in all countries.

**Strong cooperation** within the sector is key to **unlocking rail's potential** and securing its place as the **best solution** for **reducing harmful emissions, decongesting** Europe's roads and providing the **efficient and competitive services sought by customers**.



### 30 by 2030

European rail Freight companies have decided to set up a **coalition aimed at promoting rail as the solution to reducing the negative impact of freight**

**transport on the environment**. Based on the goals of the European White Paper, the Rail Freight Coalition wants to increase the modal share of rail freight from 17% up to 30% by 2030. **The launch event in Katowice** was a great opportunity to **raise awareness** the importance of rail as **backbone of mobility and essential to achieve the goals of the White Paper**.

How do we get there? Rail stakeholders need to do their homework!

- **Infrastructure managers** have to provide **higher quality infrastructure** that better matches with rail needs
- **Policy makings and authorities** have to put **more measure in place to support rail**
- **Rail undertakings** should continue on their work on **improving the quality of the offered services**.



### TRACK ACCESS CHARGES: problems and business opportunity in the freight market.

On 30th November ERFA together with the University Bicocca of Milan organised a **conference on track access charges** aimed at analysing the problems related to the calculation of rail access



The result was a **very interesting discussion** which included an overview of the main issues related to **TACs**, infrastructure **efficiency** and **incentives** for rail freight.

Track access charges make up a high proportion of rail undertakings' costs, so understanding the **method of calculation** and **their impact on customers** is **essential and crucial** for creating the **right dynamic to develop rail's share** of the transport market and to keeping environmentally-friendly rail at the forefront of Europe's sustainable transport system.



In spite of the two important EU regulatory texts that regulate access charges (**Directive 2012/33 and the Regulation 2015/909**), significant problems still persist linked to the methodology for **calculating direct costs and markups**.

Even a small change in the setting of track access charges has a **huge impact on the overall transport system**. **Reductions** would certainly enable railway undertakings to **reduce their prices to customers and be more competitive with road**. This would encourage modal shift to rail and deliver benefits such as **improved safety, reduce carbon emissions and reduce congestion** on the road network for other users.



## RU DIALOGUE



ERFA presentation on  
Gauge issue linked to FCT  
recommendations

Brussels

Julia Lamb, ERFA Secretary General

At the RU Dialogue plenary hosted by the European Commission in November, **ERFA presented concerns regarding the sometimes poor availability and/or accuracy of gauge data**. The topic is a basic market access issue as **RUs need to meet gauge clearance requirements in order to access the rail network**. ERFA seeks to **support the evolution of the RINF** (Register for Infrastructure) into a useful tool for the market, providing in particular **more accurate, up-to date and transparent information on gauge**.

ERFA also presented on the **on-going work of the ERFA RU Subgroup**, which aims to **support the implementation of a new framework designed to help IMs better plan infrastructure works** so that their disruptive impact on rail services is minimised. ERFA **seeks on-going cooperation with the Infrastructure Managers and National Ministries** to ensure that IMs put in place processes and measures that **meet market needs**.



RU SubGroup « Future  
Legislation,  
Implementation, Soft  
measures »

Brussels

Julia Lamb, ERFA Secretary General