

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### ERFA SUPPORTS THE FREE INTER-RAIL PASS PROJECT

ERFA welcomes the European Parliament's initiative, but urges the European Commission and Eurail to **allow all operators to join the scheme on a fair and equitable basis without delay** and not to shut out new entrants from the free InterRail pass project, as they represent a growing part of the rail market and bring benefits for the whole rail sector.

[Read more](#)

### ERFA PROMOTES CUSTOMER-ORIENTATED KPIS.

During the RU International Freight Subgroup, ERFA has succeeded to find an agreement on **priority and strong Key performance indicators (KPIs)** in order to measure progress and steer improvement in terms of **capacity management**, performance and the **quality of infrastructures** at the corridor level. ERFA strongly recommended the development of **public KPIs on punctuality**, identifying the causes of delays and the main bottlenecks. Other KPIs aim at measuring restriction of capacities due to works, the average speed, and the performance of RFC in allocating capacities. ERFA will welcome a **joint meeting with IMs and end-customers on this issue.**



Sector Stakeholders, ERFA Acting Secretary General, Markus Vaerst, and Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc

## ERFA COMMITS TO WORK ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF ERTMS

In the presence of European Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc, Markus Vaerst on behalf of ERFA, and other rail sector associations, co-signed the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) for the deployment of ERTMS at Innotrans on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. The MoU aims at ensuring a **collective discipline** and a **collaborative approach in the deployment of ERTMS** in order to achieve the migration on the TEN-T Core Network by 2030.

ERFA welcomes the signature of the MoU as a further step to an interoperable Single European Rail Area. One of the objectives is to achieve and maintain compatibility and the stability of the specification Baseline 3 release 2 in order to achieve certainty and to secure investments made in ERTMS. Infrastructure Managers commit to the "free circulation of ERTMS equipped vehicles". The MoU also leaves open the possibility for future technologies such as automated train operations (ATO) to be deployed. ERFA is convinced that a deeper collaboration between RUs, IMs and Rail suppliers, especially through the **ERTMS stakeholders' platform**, will be a key enabler for ERTMS deployment.

However, although the MoU acknowledges that the success of ERTMS will depend on the availability of financial resources, it falls rather short on the **cost side especially for RUs**. ERFA highlights that without funding solutions, RUs, in particular private ones, are not able to bear the **financial burden of ERTMS on-board equipment**. According to the recently published Report "Business case on the 9 core network corridors", benefits for RUs such as increase of infrastructure capacity and interoperability are only expected in the long term. Therefore, **ERFA will actively work on elaborating concrete financial/ funding solutions to support RUs** in the deployment phase.

## SNCF WANTS TO CLOSE COMPETITION!

This was the message of the French incumbent operator during an internal seminar in September. SNCF CEO, Guillaume Pépy called for a “**better integration and solidarity between the IM and the RU**” in order to tackle competition. ERFA will closely pay attention to the French market in order to avoid any anti-competitive practises.

## INFRINGEMENT PROCEDURE AGAINST LITHUANIA

The [EC requests Lithuania](#) to comply with the EU legislation **on rail interoperability**. Member States had to transpose EU rules into national laws by the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 in order to ensure the safe and uninterrupted movement of trains. Lithuanian authorities have 2 months to react until the EC may decide to refer the matter to the Court of Justice of the EU.

## DISCUSSIONS ON EU BUDGET FOR TRANSPORT

The EC wants to increase the Connecting Europe Facility budget for Transport (CEF - grants) of **€400 million until 2020**. The CEF is often dedicated to sustainable transports and missing links. However, the EC already announced its will to **extend and increase the Investment plan** (EFSI). If it is confirmed, EFSI will drain €155 million from the CEF budget for Transport. The EC's new funding priority for transport is to **blend grants** from CEF and **loans** from EFSI in order to attract investors. €1 billion will be dedicated to this.

## ERFA IN FRONT LINE TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS ON THE RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDORS

Following the “[Sector statement](#)” on Rail Freight Corridors, Irmtraut Tonndorf, ERFA President, together with a small group of volunteers took the lead on the implementation of the statement by translating it into a very **concrete action list**. The action list defines responsible actors for implementation, the objectives to be reached and the timeline. Although all issues need to be tackled, the list identifies 5 main priority projects, where benefits can be achieved in short terms:

- **Estimated time of arrival:** a pilot project will be launched to provide the end-customer with information about the status of their shipment;
- **Coordination of works** between IMs and systematic consultation of RUs from the beginning in case of capacity restrictions;
- **TEN-T parameters** to be included in the plan of RFC (e.g 740 train length, 22.5 axle loads, 100km/h line speed, full electrification, deployment of ERTMS);
- **Time Table redesign** for rail freight capacities;
- **Cross Border/ operational bottlenecks:** harmonisation of Safety certification, locomotive authorisation, drivers' certification and language requirements on cross border sections.

ERFA is convinced that the **joint dialogue between stakeholders** and the **action list** are the cornerstones in order to remove operational bottlenecks and improve efficiency of the RFCs. However, in order to give a real supranational approach to the RFCs, a **revision of the current legislation will be needed**.

## ACCESS TO SERVICE FACILITIES LEGISLATION: AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD A COMPETITIVE RAIL MARKET

ERFA welcomes the European Commission's [draft legislation on Access to service facilities](#). It responds to the concerns raised by many RUs in the RU subgroup chaired by ERFA on the need to improve transparency and to avoid discrimination in the facility market.

Facility operators will have to publish and regularly keep up to date a **list of basic information concerning the facility**, e.g. description of the facility, charges, key contact details, procedures for requesting access, connection to the main network. The EC clarifies the **procedures of allocation of capacities** and the **resolution of conflicts** between different requests in order to ensure an optimum effective use of available capacity. Facility operators will need to set a **transparent facility coordination process** to ensure the best possible matching of all requests. In case, the facility operator cannot respond to all requests, he will have to justify to the applicant and the Regulatory body his refusal and to provide information on the **best available viable alternative facilities**.

A better coordination in the allocation of capacities between facility operators and IMs is also included in the draft text. Therefore, **ERFA is convinced that the EC's proposal will ensure that the facility market best supports rail's competitiveness**.

The draft legislation will be discussed in the next RU subgroup on Access to Service Facilities, which will take place on the **19<sup>th</sup> October in Brussels**.

## JOINT WORKSHOP BETWEEN RUS/SHIPPERS

ERFA participated to a **Shippers/Railways meeting on rail freight's competitiveness** and attractiveness organised by the European Shippers Council (ESC). The idea was to have **mutual and better understanding** of the respective needs and constraints. Long discussions took place on the level of track access charges, the need for **flexibility in the allocation** of capacities and the possibility for shippers to cooperate in order to **reduce empty runs** and to lower the cost. One of the conclusions of the session is to jointly address those issues to IMs in a future meeting.

## EU AGENCY FOR RAILWAYS CLEANS UP NATIONAL RULES

In March 2016, the Agency started a process of cleaning-up national rules, which are **not compatible and/or duplicate the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) rules**. It concerns e.g. interoperability, safety, requirements on staff. The aim is to simplify the legislation and to harmonise/align national rules with the EU level. The recently published progress report can be found [here](#).

## HOW TO PROMOTE COMBINED TRANSPORT?

The EC plans on **amending the legislation on combined transport (CT)** in order to better implement and promote modal shift on long distance to rail. Adopted in 1992, the implementation of the combined transport legislation led to rather heterogeneous interpretations among Member States and creates a significant administrative burden.

In a workshop organised by Transport & Environment (T&E), Irmtraut Tonndorf, ERFA President, highlighted the **need for clear and harmonised definition of intermodal transport**, which allows to develop the sector in a sustainable way. Switzerland can be used as a model in promoting combined transport: The Swiss government is phasing-out incentives as the rail infrastructures – with the new Gotthard Base Tunnel – are improving in terms of quality and responsiveness to the customers' needs. The European combined transport legislation should allow similar financial schemes to **compensate structural disadvantages for rail** (e.g. lack of infrastructure, unequal level playing field between road and rail etc.) on a temporary basis as long as these disadvantages persist. Another crucial challenge for the EC will be to find a suitable limitation to the road leg of an intermodal chain, considering both market requirements and modal shift goals. ERFA also stressed the need of grants for the construction of transshipment terminals as one of the most important tools to promote intermodal transport. The EC's proposal on combined transport is expected by the end 2017.

## CONSULTATION ON ROAD CHARGING LEGISLATION

ERFA answered to the public consultation on road charging, highlighting the **unfair competition** between modes of transport. Although the current road charging legislation introduced user-pays and polluter-pays principles, only 5% of the road network is subject to charges (e.g. Toll), whereas trains pay for each km of track used. This penalises the use of environmentally friendly modes, such as rail, or multimodal transport solutions, especially on long distance. Therefore, **ERFA calls for an ambitious revision of the road charging legislation**, including:

- **Mandatory distance-based toll system** for road users in order to create a level playing field between modes on long distance, where rail can have a competitive advantage.
- **Mandatory integration of external costs** in road tolls in order to incentivise shippers/customers to use environmentally friendly modes and multimodality.
- **Integration of CO2 emissions** as an external cost element.

The revision of the road charging legislation will be one of the cornerstones of the European decarbonisation strategy in the next years. **ERFA will promote modal shift as the key driver to decarbonise the European transport system.**

## ACTIVITIES



### AGENDA

#### RU DIALOGUE PLENARY MEETING

The RU Dialogue plenary is an opportunity for RUs to raise their concerns and provide input directly to EU decision-makers.

- 27<sup>th</sup> October in Brussels

[Programme and registration](#)

#### FERRMED EVENT

Ferrmed is organising the event "Trans-Eurasian railway connections and multimodal links in the EU and Neighbouring Countries".

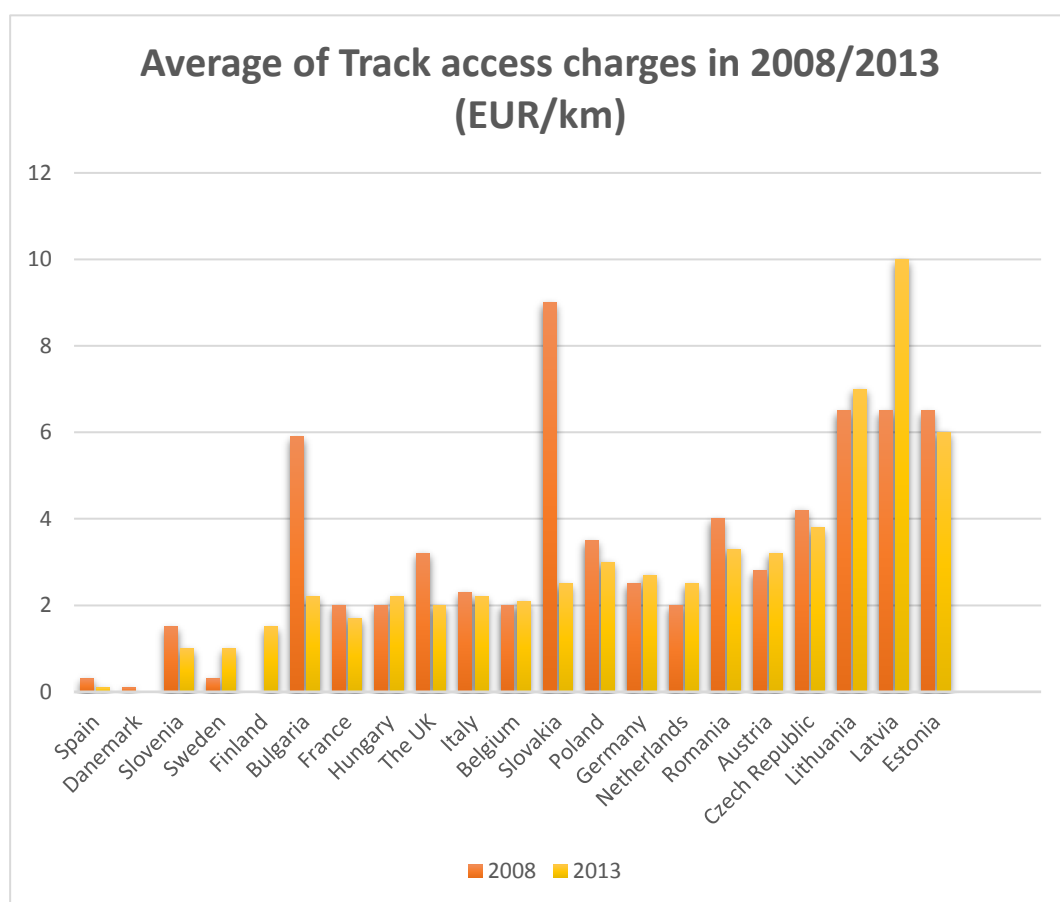
[Programme and registration.](#)



## INFOGRAPHICS

Whereas only 5% of the road network is subject to toll charges, 100% of the rail network is charged. The disadvantage for rail is enhanced by the lack of correct implementation of the EU legislation on Track access charges (TAC). A better enforcement of existing EU rules can improve **transparency, efficiency** and **consistency** of charges as well as harmonisation in the calculation method. In line with the Recast Directive, IMs are **obliged to reduce their cost** and the level of charges and introduce more transparency in the calculation. You can find ERFA's position [here](#).

ERFA presents you an infographic comparing the level of TAC in 2008 with the level in 2013.



Source: COM(2008)54 & data from the RMMS report