

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### ERFA PUSHES THE ESTIMATED TIME OF ARRIVAL (ETA) PILOT



Irmtraut Tonndorf, ERFA President, Rail Freight Days, 9<sup>th</sup> December

During the 2016 Rail Freight Day in Vienna, Irmtraut Tonndorf, ERFA President, called the rail sector to get involved in the ETA pilot project. This is a “**simple tool in order to boost efficiency**” of rail freight, she said. Train tracking and tracing information is crucial for the end-customer. A better information flow between all actors in the transportation chain needs **standardized data** but also that all partners involved in a single train run share information by actively feeding their data into the **common TIS platform**. ERFA in collaboration with other stakeholders and RNE is actively involved in the design of the ETA pilot project.



ERFA Secretary General, Julia Lamb, EP Press Seminar on the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016

## 4<sup>th</sup> RAILWAY PACKAGE DEFINITELY ADOPTED

The **4<sup>th</sup> Railway package has been definitely adopted** by the European Parliament on the 14<sup>th</sup> December. After 4 years of discussion the political pillar finally comes to an end. Although the technical pillar of the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package (already adopted in June 2016) is an important and overall positive step forward for the rail sector, the political pillar is far from the European Commission’s initial ambition to strictly separate track and trains.

The outcomes have been dominated by national monopoly players’ interests, preventing the completion of the Single European Railway Area. Loopholes persist concerning the financial transparency, allowing potential cross-subsidisation in the future between IM and RU in the same holding company. IM will still be linked to the incumbent operators in case of integrated structures, which is threatening the impartiality of their decisions.

Now the legislative process has come to an end, **ERFA will actively work on the proper, full and timely enforcement** of EU rules in order to best ensure that the basic conditions for an open rail market are met. A strong dialogue with Regulators will be pursued in that regard.

In parallel, **ERFA will continue to strongly raise its voice against unlawful state aid and abuse of dominant position** in the rail sector. The [recent investigations](#) against the Czech Rail incumbent, České dráhy, were a strong signal sent by the European Commission against anti-competitive practises in the rail market.

ERFA will closely work with competition authorities to **bridge the existing gaps in the legislation in order to improve rail’s performance**.

[ERFA press release](#)

## ERFA / UIRR EVENT: DIGITALISATION OF RAIL FREIGHT



Markus Vaerst, ERFA Acting Secretary General

On December 14<sup>th</sup> 2016 ERFA together with UIRR (Combined Transport Association) welcomed nearly 40 participants to the **Workshop on "Rail Freight Digitalization"**. 8 speakers provided valuable "food for thought" regarding different digital solutions, covering all aspects of rail freight transportation including interfaces to infrastructure managers, terminals and the customers. The participants agreed that **digitalization is an indispensable prerequisite** in order to gain more efficiency, reduce cost and increase the modal share for rail freight. Sharing data amongst the actors while respecting sensitivity of some individual information is crucial as well.

All presentations [here](#).

### ERFA CONTRIBUTED TO THE DISCUSSIONS ON TRACK ACCESS CHARGES (TAC)

ERFA presented its [position paper](#) on how to improve the **efficiency, the consistency and the transparency of TAC** during a dialogue meeting with the leading Dutch MEP Wim van de Camp. An effective implementation of existing EU rules by IMs can quickly improve the quality of the services for RUs and reduce the costs of the network. **TAC can be an important tool for the competitiveness of rail.**

## ERFA'S INPUTS ON ACCESS TO SERVICE FACILITIES

Many essential facilities for rail are still managed by incumbent rail operators, creating potential discriminations for small/private RUs e.g higher charges, refusal of the access by pretending that the facility is full, intentional low quality of services, which provide a competitive advantage to their 'own' operator.

Therefore, ERFA believes the draft implementing act presented by the European Commission on Access to service facilities will help ensuring for all RUs a non-discriminatory, transparent and fair access to all service facilities. In [its input paper](#), ERFA highlighted the following points:

- **The list of basic information concerning the facility** to be published by service facility operators is an important step toward a more transparent market, improving the marketability of the facility sector and facilitating access for all RUs. **Charges and discounts should be fully transparent** to avoid discrimination.
- **Better procedures for the allocation of capacity** and a **transparent coordination process to solve conflicting requests** to access to a service facility are crucial to ensure an optimum effective use of facilities and to avoid long appeal procedures put forward to the Regulatory Bodies.
- A **differentiation** between facilities controlled by a company with a dominant position in the national railway transport service market and other facility operators should be introduced in the text in order to mitigate the administrative work for small facility operators.

After collecting views, the EC will publish a new draft implementing act mid-January. **A joint RUs, IMs and Regulators meeting will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> February**. All ERFA members are encouraged to contribute.

## RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDORS: REVISION OF LEGISLATION?

While the rail sector is exploring how to best implement the sector statement in order to improve operations along the rail freight corridors (RFCs), the EC organised a stakeholder meeting to discuss the **potential revision of the legislation**. How to improve the governance of the RFCs was raised during the meeting. ERFA clearly stressed that the decision-making process should be clarified and transparent, i.e.:

- Better inclusion of RUs and end-customers in the decision-making process;
- Accountability of the decisions, e.g. transparent performance targets to be reached, clear development plan, annual strategy meetings;
- Appointment of an independent coordinator giving a supranational orientation to the RFCs and helping to reach an efficient decision making process;
- Dedicated budget for RFCs in order to also allow small-scale investments;

ERFA strongly supported the idea to strengthen the One-Stop-Shop in order to have real competitive products for handling international rail freight traffic.

Although many Member States seem very reluctant to give more flexibility to the RFCs, more and more stakeholders are open to strengthen the role of the RFCs in order to make them a real attractive option for rail freight.

**In addition to the on-going improvements of the RFCs through the implementation of the sector statement, [ERFA strongly supports a revision](#) of the governance of the RFCs in order to give a clear supranational approach.**

At the end of the evaluation process, the EC will decide whether a revision is needed in order to achieve a better result.

## LIBERALISATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES IN THE EU

ERFA attended the presentation of [the study made by the CERRE](#) on the benefits of the liberalization of passenger rail services. Where the liberalization of regional services already occurs (e.g. DE, UK, SE) **the rail traffic increased largely**, in particular due to improvement of the quality and the reduction of prices for passengers. On the contrary where the market is not opened to competition, in particular on long-distances, the traffic decreases.

However, **Erich Forster**, CEO of **WESTbahn** and ERFA member, highlighted: private companies are **still facing major obstacles** to access to the passenger rail market:

- Discrimination to access to facilities;
- Difficulty to be integrated in the ticketing system;
- Access to rolling stock;
- High TAC;

## ERA'S WORKING PROGRAMME 2017-2019

ERA published its [working programme](#) for the coming years. One of the objectives is to improve rail's competitiveness by:

- Making European rail, a global leader in safety and security;
- Implementing the technical pillar of the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package.

## LACK OF COMPETITION IN RAIL: AN OBSTACLE FOR DECARBONISATION OF TRANSPORT

The [European Environment Agency](#) identifies the domination of incumbent rail operators in national rail market as a major obstacle for the development of sustainable mobility!

## ERFA PROMOTES ONE SINGLE OPERATIONAL LANGUAGE FOR ONE EUROPEAN RAIL NETWORK!

[In its contribution](#) to the evaluation process of the train drivers' directive, ERFA promoted the **progressive deployment of one single operational language** for international rail traffic. Today, language requirements in Europe are a major obstacle and cost burden for cross-border traffics without achieving interoperability benefits: a Railway Undertaking operating between e.g. Antwerp (BE) and Milan (IT) must provide drivers speaking at least 4 different languages (B1 level).

In line with the language requirements in aviation, ERFA believes that one single operational language will **reconcile the requirements for safety** in the railways with the need for rail to **be competitive at the supranational level**. This is one cornerstone to enable rail to compete with other modes of transport.

A step-by-step approach could be adopted, starting from standardisation of communications between train drivers and operating centres to the implementation of English as a single language at the corridor level. The last step will be the full deployment of English for both freight and passenger trains throughout the EU. However, ERFA believes that the option to use national languages, e.g. for national traffic or between staff speaking the same language, should be maintained.

**ERFA is convinced that the deployment of a single language for railways is a necessary step toward an integrated, and fully interoperable, Single European Railway area.**

## VEHICLE AUTHORISATION FOR BROAD GAUGE RAILWAYS

In a [common position paper](#), ERFA and CER highlighted **the differences of the broad-gauge systems** and showcased their **specific needs for vehicle authorisation** in light of the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package's Technical Pillar. Although the majority of the trans-European railway network was built with a 1.435 mm track gauge, Finland, the three Baltic States and some part of the Polish and Slovakian networks differ in terms of technical parameters, operational aspects and vehicle authorisation. Considering that the exchange of vehicles with third countries, especially Russia, is important for broad-gauge networks in Northern and Eastern Europe, the position paper states that the agreement on the common usage of the fleet of 1.520mm freight wagons needs to be fully respected. Rolling stock entering the European Union from third countries **shall not be re-authorised** by the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) or by the National Safety Authorities. This is a pre-condition to maintain the competitiveness of railways in those networks.



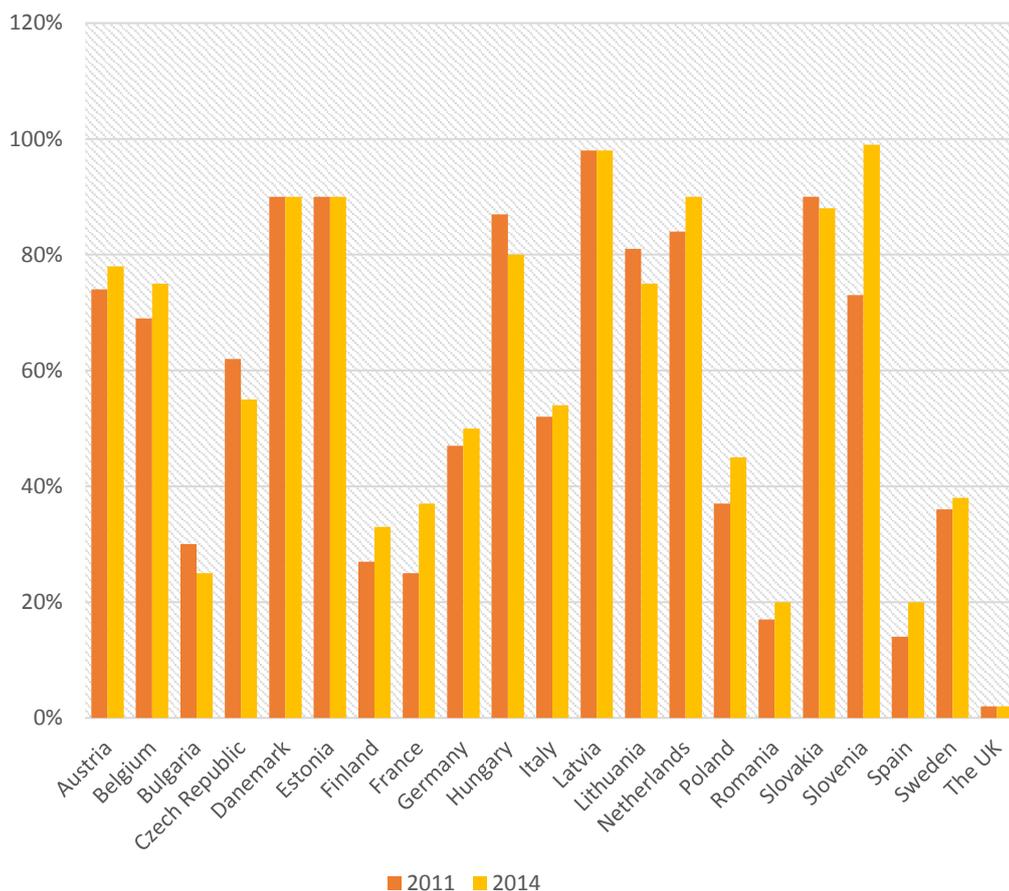
## INFOGRAPHICS – INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN FREIGHT

The EC just published the [5<sup>th</sup> Rail Market Monitoring Study \(RMMS\)](#). This report published every two years by the European Commission gives a comprehensive overview of the rail market’s state in terms of investments and use of the network, capacity allocations and charges, market opening and employment.

While we discuss how to improve the efficiency and the performance of the rail freight corridors, ERFA wants to propose you an infographic on the proportion of international traffic in each Member State. In 2011, international traffic represented 47% of tonnes/km in the EU. In 2014, it accounts for 50% of tonne/km. This shows the important potential of rail freight on long distance across the EU.

As expected, in small Member States rail freight traffic is more international than in bigger Member States. However, in Germany, Poland, Italy and France, the proportion of international traffic increased from 2011 to 2014, which shows an ‘internationalisation’ trend of rail freight activities.

Proportion of international traffic (percentage of tonne/km)





Julia Lamb, ERFA Secretary General, will be back from her maternity leave on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017.

In the meantime, ERFA's office is closed from the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

The ERFA logo is centered in the middle of the page. It features the letters 'ERFA' in a blue, stylized font. A yellow dot is positioned above the 'E' and another yellow dot is above the 'A'. Below the letters is a horizontal line of ten yellow dots. The background of the entire page is a light grey line-art illustration of a train and its tracks.

**THE VOICE** OF NEW ENTRANTS ON THE RAIL MARKET

WISHES YOU A HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL NEW YEAR

**2017**