

## EPF-Bulletin 5 – July 2009

- **Introduction**
- **A four year vision?**
- **The Future of Transport**
- **Monopoly or competition – different measures for passenger quality satisfaction**
- **Rail Passengers' Rights**
- **Meeting with CER**
- **Passengers' Rights on the Benelux IC link**
- **Voyages sans frontières – Reisen ohne Grenzen – Journeys without borders**
- **The "last mile" in a public transport journey should not be neglected !**
- **A European Public Transport sat nav?**
- **Is it Paris or Paisley?**
- **Kundeninteressen im öffentlichen Verkehr – Public transport and its users**
- **What were they doing there?**
- **Report from the CONCERTOUR workshop**
- **EPF Conference in Berne on March 14th 2009**
- **A date for your diary of next year**

**DEAR READER,**

**Bienvenue** au cinquième numéro de notre bulletin, dans lequel nous décrivons les activités de la FEV qui se sont déroulées depuis janvier 2009 et nous exprimons nos idées et nos opinions.

Nos membres ont participé dans des congrès ou des réunions de Madrid à Bucarest et de Londres à Vienne, y compris bien sur notre propre congrès et assemblée générale à Berne.

Nous souhaitons les nouvelles associations adhérentes en Finlande et en Hongrie les bienvenues.

Un nouveau Parlement européen vient d'être élu et bientôt l'Europe aura aussi une nouvelle Commission. C'est juste le moment de leur présenter nos idées pour une vision pour développer les transports

publics pendant les 4 années qui viennent.

Nous aimerions recevoir aussi les réactions de nos lecteurs sur les articles et sur les rapports présentés dans ce bulletin. Envoyez-les d'abord aux rédacteurs.

Trevor Garrod  
President

**Herzlich Willkommen** zur funften Ausgabe uneres Bulletins. Darin beschreiben wir die Tatigkeit vom EFV seit Januar 2009 und wir aussern unsere Ideen und Meinungen.

Unsere Mitglieder haben an Tagungen oder Treffen von Madrid bis Bukarest, von London bis Wien teilgenommen, und auch naturlich an unserer eigenen Tagung und Generalversammlung in Bern.

Wir heissen auch an neue Mitgliedsvereine aus

Finnland und Ungarn herzlich willkommen.

Ein neues europaisches Parliament ist gerade gewahlt worden und Europa wird auch bald eine neue Kommission haben. Es ist jetzt der richtige Augenblick, ihnen unsere Ideen fur eine Vision des offentlichen Verkehrs wahrend der kommenden vier Jahre vorzustellen.

Wir wuerden gerne auch die Reaktionen unserer leser auf Artikel und Derichte in diesem Bulletin erhalten. Schicken Sie diese an die Redaktuere.

Trevor Garrod  
Präsident

**Welcome** to the fifth issue of our bulletin, in which we describe the activities of EPF since January 2009 and express our ideas and views.

Our members have taken part in conferences and meetings from Madrid to Bucharest, from London to Vienna as well of course as our own conference and general meeting in Berne. We welcome also new member associations from Finland and Hungary.

A new European Parliament has just been elected and soon Europe will also have a new Commission. This is the right moment to present to them our ideas for a public transport vision for the coming four years.

We should also like to receive the reactions of our readers to the articles and reports in this bulletin. please send them initially to the editors.

Trevor Garrod  
Chairman

### **A FOUR YEAR VISION?**

We have a new European Parliament and we shall shortly have a new European Commission. What can European public transport passengers expect during the next four years?

The period of the last Parliament and Commission has been characterised by the development and implementation of rights for airline and rail passengers; while maritime and bus/coach passenger rights are expected to be finalised in the near future.

Steps must now be taken towards a vision of easier international travel, with public transport playing an increased role, in the interests of social inclusion and protection of the environment.

That means easy journeys. It means that it must be made easier to find out about and purchase tickets for an international journey. The TAP TSI on which the European Railway Agency has been working must be brought to fruition. A "public transport sat nav" should be developed at European level, to show customers how they can make an international multi-modal door-to-door journey.

The ideal would then be a single ticket for that journey, or at least for the greater part of it. The European Commission has already done work on rail/air integrated ticketing, and that would be relevant in this context.

For the journey to and from the station or airport, and around the urban area, a harmonised public transport smartcard should be developed.

Stations need to be customer-friendly and developed as transport hubs.

Journeys between major cities should wherever sensible be by high-speed trains, to give an attractive alternative to the aeroplane and private car. Night trains, for which convenient arrival and departure times are more convenient than speed, also have a role to play.

The European Commission could play a part by piloting new information systems and public transport services in the interests of passengers.

During an economic crisis there is also a case for investment in infrastructure which will create and maintain skilled jobs; but we must also ask the question: which infrastructure projects will bring most benefit to public transport customers and encourage greater public transport usage? Infrastructure must not be the result of technological possibilities, but must be the determined

by what is needed to create better timetables for the passengers.

## THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORT

On March 9th and 10th, Trevor Garrod and Marc Broeckaert represented the European Passengers' Federation at the High Level Stakeholders' Conference on the Future of Transport. The gathering was called in Brussels by EU Transport Commissioner Antonio Tajani and brought together some 400 transport professionals, decision-makers and academics plus representatives of users.

Mr Tajani opened the conference by stating that the European Commission could not plan future transport alone, behind closed doors, but needed to hear from all stakeholders. Transport guarantees freedom. Despite the economic crisis, it is important to have courage and invest today in future transport.



**Vice-President Antonio Tajani (source: press service EU)**

Other speakers pointed out that transport had steadily moved up the European Commission's agenda, and that harmonisation and inter-operability were keys to the easier movement of people and freight, not only within the European Union but also into and out of it. Transport policy must be built on three pillars: the economy, society and the environment.

It was stressed that public transport must be made more attractive, to encourage those European citizens who would like to use it but currently found it inadequate or too difficult. For freight, more efficient loading techniques and possibly larger vehicles were needed to enable rail to play a greater role.

40% of greenhouse gases were generated by urban transport and so there was plenty of opportunity for "greener" modes to make an impact here.

The Commission is working towards a further Transport White Paper in 2010. Its Transvisions Study was identifying paths towards a low-carbon society by 2050, which comprised technological innovation, voluntary changes in behaviour and organisational innovation. The alternative path would be via command and control. The aim was "an inclusive society connected by an integrated and sustainable transport system."

The conference divided into three seminars for in-depth consideration of passenger, freight and urban transport.

Trevor Garrod was rapporteur for the passenger seminar, in which capacity he joined other speakers for a working dinner with Mr Tajani and gave a report to the full conference the following day.

In his report of the seminar, Mr Garrod said he had expected a number of issues to be addressed in the seminar, and generally they had been addressed.

"If we want behavioural change," he stated, "it must be made easy to find out about and use public transport." Operators should be encouraged to share IT, to provide common information for customers. Indeed, one participant looked forward to a future when an entire multi-modal international journey could be booked via the internet.

However, there were also occasions when the would-be passenger wanted to seek advice from a real live human being - at the station/airport, on the phone or at a travel agency - so well-trained staff were still vital.

Airports and rail stations should be made into transport hubs, possibly owned and developed by a body separate from the operators and funded with public money.

Competition between modes could be to the passengers' advantage, but it was generally agreed that that competition must be fair, on a "level playing field." There was widespread acceptance that fast trains could win over passengers from short-haul flights for rail journeys up to 3 hours.

However, participants also emphasised the need for better links to countries beyond the EU's frontiers: to the East and to the South. "Most of this travel is likely to be by air," said Mr Garrod, "Can we not free up airport capacity for these longer flights by encouraging more people to travel by train on such routes as London - Manchester?"

The concluding session of the conference looked at Sustainable Mobility, with speakers arguing that this could not be left to market forces and that demand-management measures were needed.

A trade union speaker pointed out that 5% of the total EU workforce was employed in the transport sector and they needed good quality training, qualifications and working conditions.

Another speaker drew attention to current infrastructure spending in countries such as China and South Korea, and urged Europe to follow suit.

It was stated more than once that "the future is electric"; but as an environmentalist speaker put it, "The

challenge is to manage electrification so that it gives a boost to renewable power."

Former EU Commissioner Karel van Miert - who died on June 22th - brought the proceedings to a close with this message to his successors: "There is still so much to do. Don't repeat US mistakes. Continue to involve stakeholders and keep transport at the top of the agenda."

Read more about this important European strategy at the DG TREN website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2009\\_future\\_of\\_transport\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2009_future_of_transport_en.htm)

**MONOPOLY OR COMPETITION – DIFFERENT MEASURES FOR PASSENGER QUALITY SATISFACTION (SWEDISH PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLITICS)**

Since the middle of 1990s buses can compete freely on long distances within Sweden. Many train users and train operators were scared that bus competition could damage the train services. After a few years it was obvious that the bus competition - although quite strong between the bus companies - was not interfering very much with the train services. Many passengers had chosen bus trips instead of going by their own car. But after a while they had found that the faster trip by train could be even smarter. So the total public transport use increased, and both bus operators and train operators gained from the competition. And the passengers gained from the competition that offered more opportunities to travel and more different prices and comfort classes.

The idea to make competition increase public transport use even in the regions and to increase the number of train companies on the tracks has been on the agenda in Sweden for several years. Sweden was the first country to follow

the British example, although not as radical as Great Britain. Banverket was the first separate track authority (1988), but it was never privatised. And Sweden was eager to follow the EU directives and EP decisions in the Railway packages.

The opening of railways for international and national competition has been a focus from the government side. It has also been adopted for introducing competition within the regions. The old way – since 1978 – has been to create in every region a regional public transport company, that is responsible for the public transport in the region. Many of them not only decided on lines but were also bus - and later even train - operators. This meant they took a position of a monopolist, even when there was a tender situation. In some cases the public transport network has been very well developed, although in a monopolist way. The Skånetrafiken in Skåne (Scania) is one example. The PT use has increased by 100 per cent during their activity period.

The proposed idea is now that a public transport planning authority will have the task to describe the network and the service level, and that the different private operators (bus or train) will apply for offering transport on that decided network on their own economic responsibility. The decision items left for them are actually often the price, the vehicles and the staff service. In some regions the price has been much lower than in other regions, and this sort of public interference will be less dominant. Those lines where a free competition can't take place, will be treated by the public authority by giving a concession to one sole operator. A third category will be lines where not even that solution is enough. There, and only there, the tender option will be used. This means that the well spread tendering, that takes a lot of energy and forces from the operators, will be out of use. Instead those work activities will result in more

public transport. That is at least the idea of this solution.

The next step of this investigation is to take care of the passengers' rights in the regional public transport. The idea is that the decisions of the European Parliament (EP) on the railway area are to form a basis of rights even for the regional services. However most of the regional companies already have rules for supporting passengers in the case of delays and cancelled services. The rules should apply not only for rail travel, but also for bus travel and local boat line travel. This has given the Swedish government the option to declare that the regional public transport should be exceptions from the Railway package decision. The discussion goes on in this field, since exceptions are not the wish of Resenärsforum.



Older trams in Göteborg (picture: Rudy De Ceunynck)

The basic idea of the investigation by the government is to use competition as a tool to increase quality for passengers. Competition is not a goal in itself, it is just a means of making the operators more attentive to the needs and wishes of the passengers. And that is supposed to happen when the operators get more out of every passenger trip.

One additional factor is also declared necessary in order to make travelling easier for passengers. That is better information, collected into one source of information for the passenger, not

spread out in different points of search. And just like information, the ticketing has to be easy, available in one and the same system for all operators. Different prices are not the big problem. Instead the comparison between different operators has to be facilitated by selling all tickets in the same system. Resenårsforum has found that a compatible smart card could easily be one way of offering a simple ticketing system. That will be true, especially if "cash-paying" customers will use the compatible smart card for withdrawals from the stored value, and the "credit"-passengers can use the same card for a system of paying afterwards, in a monthly bill. Those two categories of passengers both need to have good solutions in parallel. Quality is not only a simple and low fare for a simple and low quality trip. Quality means much more to be able to choose from different sorts of qualities, and last but not least reliability in the public transport trip.

### **RAIL PASSENGERS' RIGHTS**

On April 8th, Rian van der Borgt and Josef Schneider represented EPF at a Customer Liaison Group meeting of the Community of European Railways in Brussels.

The meeting considered many issues concerning the Passengers' Rights Regulation for rail travellers, due to come into force in the EU on December 3rd.

For example: how will passengers be informed about these rights and to what extent will they be harmonised across the European Union and apply to bus/coach and maritime as well as train journeys?

New General Terms and Conditions are also due to be published in the autumn, when we should then contact individual

train operators to find out what they propose to do.

Rian and Josef asked for clarification on some issues:

- continuation of delayed journeys – until when can you continue the journey?
- choice of operator when continuing a delayed journey;
- compensation for delay or missing the last connection of the day;
- commission for travel agents and other operators who sell tickets.

We were also informed that the CER Charter is to be dropped from December 3<sup>rd</sup> despite the fact that some of its articles are more favourable for the passenger than the new passengers' rights regulation.

The Customer Liaison Group is due to meet next on October 8th.

### **PASSENGERS' RIGHTS ON THE BENELUX IC LINK**

The Benelux IC train link is the historic rail connection between Brussels and Amsterdam. The route is jointly operated by NS Hispeed (NL) and NMBS Reizigers Internationaal (BE) offering to the traveller an hourly intercity service of up to 17 daily runs in each direction. The same operators also run a more limited number of Thalys trains to Paris on the same route.

Where such an ample supply of comfortable and fast trains usually meets the expectations of the most demanding international traveller, this particular connection has been suffering from poor performance for several years now. As a result there has been increased attention to passenger rights in case of delay or cancellation.

As is the case for most international rail travel in Europe, passenger rights of international travellers on the Benelux IC trains are defined by the rather generic conditions described by CIV and the accompanying general terms and conditions (GTC-CIV). However, the resulting coverage proved unsatisfactory both to travellers and operators.

In order to apply for compensation in case of delays, the conditions laid down by GTC-CIV require a minimum ticket price of 50 €. Most international travellers on the IC trains do not meet this requirement. In the light of the substandard performance, the operators agreed to drop this minimum fare. But compensation levels are still inferior to what is offered to domestic travellers on the same train. Moreover, the Belgian operator decided not to communicate about this (temporary) extension of the compensation.



**Benelux train in Antwerp Central (picture: Stefan Stynen)**

In case of cancellation or delays of IC trains, there has been a big lack of clarity whether travellers are entitled to board a Thalys train in order to minimise delay at their destination. Experiences reported by travellers reveal a wildly varying practice – in line with the operators' statements on the issue. The passengers' associations Rover (NL) and TreinTramBus (BE) have brought this ambiguity to the attention of both

operators, which are now considering a more straightforward application.

The case of the Benelux IC link has confirmed the importance of clear passenger rights in case of incidents. EPF looks forward to further co-operation with the EU Commission's services to ensure that passenger rights derived from the new regulation are applied straightforwardly. Rover and TreinTramBus will follow up its implementation for the Benelux and Thalys train services. We invite readers to share their travel experiences by contacting Rian van der Borgt at [rian.vanderborgt@epf.eu](mailto:rian.vanderborgt@epf.eu).

#### **VOYAGES SANS FRONTIERES – REISEN OHNE GRENZEN – JOURNEYS WITHOUT BORDERS**

This aim must be part of the European Union's vision for the next four years !

Considerable progress has been made since we published our report of the above title in October 2007. (You can read it on our website)

For example, since September 2008, German trains along the Usedom coast have continued across the Polish border to a new station in the centre of Swinoujscie and there are plans to rebuild the line southwards to Dacherow.

Following the reopening of the Vinschgerbahn in the Alto Adige (South Tyrol) region of Italy, buses now connect with its trains and cross the border to Landeck in Austria and Zerne in Switzerland - to connect with those countries' railways; and further enhancements of the bus links are planned.

On the Czech - German border, we have learned from correspondents in both countries that work on reinstating the rail link between Dolni Poustevna and Sebnitz should be finished in September.

A limited passenger train service over the Czech - Polish border between Kralovec and Lubawka was reintroduced in July 2008 but then suspended because of lack of funding on the Polish side.

New bus links have been introduced across the Swiss - German border from Basel to Grenzach and at Rheinfelden; while the Basel tram network is being extended across the border to Weil and the new line should be open in 2012.

An agreement has also been signed for 17.7 km of new or upgraded track from Mendrisio to Varese, making new and improved rail journeys possible between Italy and the Swiss canton of Ticino.

The recently introduced Austrian Railjet trains should make rail a much more attractive option for journeys from Vienna to such cities as Budapest, Prague, Munich and Zurich.

We also follow with interest negotiations to rebuild the "Iron Rhine" rail route from Antwerp to Mönchengladbach via Roermond.

Such developments will be reflected in the second edition of "Journeys without Borders" which we hope to publish by the end of 2009. Trevor Garrod and Albert Lambert welcome further news.

#### **THE "LAST MILE" IN A PUBLIC TRANSPORT JOURNEY SHOULD NOT BE NEGLECTED!**

Trevor Garrod illustrates this with his following experience:

A few weeks ago I needed to travel to a town called Corby to meet someone and to look at a hall where Railfuture plans to hold its autumn conference. From Lowestoft where I live it is some 200 kilometres to Corby. I can get to Peterborough easily by train but there has never been a direct rail link from

Peterborough to Corby, some 40 km further west. Therefore I looked on to [www.nahverkehr.info](http://www.nahverkehr.info) and after four clicks I had on the screen in front of me a bus timetable from Peterborough to Corby. The only thing that this website could not tell me was how to reach the hall when I arrived in Corby. In fact, the bus route from Peterborough had a stop just 50 metres away from it.

The Nahverkehrswegweiser website, established and operated by Jörg Bruchertseifer, is therefore a very useful signpost for door-to-door public transport journeys in many European countries. The next stage in this information technology is surely to develop a public transport Global Positioning System, or Satellite Navigation, that will enable you to plan an international intermodal journey.

Work has been done in Catalonia on such a project. At the January meeting of the EPF Board, Pau Noy gave an interesting presentation on their WikMob (or Open Mobility) scheme. Google Transit is a similar scheme developed in the USA. A door-to-door journey planner already exists in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Belgium, ... and may be developed in Sweden ...; but these planners never cross the internal EU-borders.

EPF would welcome a Europe-wide "public transport sat nav" and believes that the incoming Commission and Parliament should encourage its development. We would be willing to play our part in this, and have also put the idea to UITP, who should also have a key role.

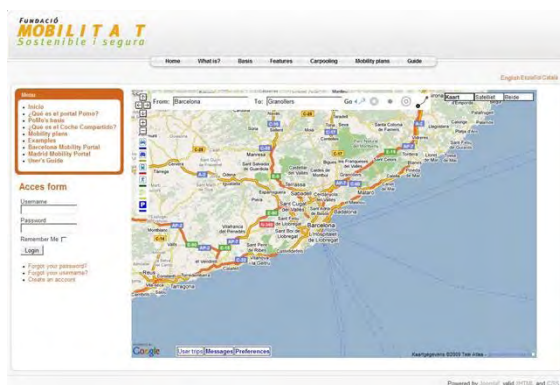
#### **A EUROPEAN PUBLIC TRANSPORT SAT NAV?**

Motorists can plan their journeys nowadays using Global Positioning Systems or satellite navigation. But what about people who want to use public transport?



There are already possibilities in some countries and regions. For example, in 1998 I was able to use a Dutch computer programme to plan a public transport journey from my hotel in Utrecht to the beach at Katwijk aan Zee. All public transport operators in the Netherlands have an obligation to deliver their information into a national system and keep it up to date. The Dutch system has now been adapted for use in Sweden.

In the Spanish region of Catalonia, work is in progress to develop an "Open Mobility" system which will offer a similar facility, see <http://www.fundaciomobilitatsostenible.org/>.



**Spanish Mobility portal screenshot**

In the USA, "Google Transit" provides such information, and this can also be used in Switzerland and Austria. And of course, there are many more examples.

Then there is the website "Nahverkehrswegweiser" developed as a voluntary project by IT expert Jorg Bruchertseifer of Augsburg. By logging on to [www.nahverkehr.info](http://www.nahverkehr.info) you can obtain details of local public transport services, or web links, in towns and cities to which you may be travelling by long distance train. This website, which is in English as well as in German, includes the UK.

But do we need one easy-to-use, all-European system for public transport

journey planning? The recent EPF council meeting considered this a worthwhile goal over the next five years.

Thus a group of rugby fans from, say, Wisbech, could plan a trip to the Stade de France in the suburbs of Paris; or a businessman in Antwerp could work out how to reach a Business Park on the outskirts of Newbury.

Could EU funding be sought to build on the existing systems and develop an international public transport users' sat-nav?

EPF is exploring the possibilities and the views of Bulletin readers would be welcome.

## IS IT PARIS OR PAISLEY?

Everyone knows that Paris is the capital of France. Paisley is less well known. It is an industrial town to the west of Glasgow. The websites of some British Train Operating Companies have a problem here, however.

This was discovered by colleagues in our British member association Railfuture, when they recently undertook a Mystery Shopper exercise. They tried to find out about, and book, a ticket from their local station, using the TOC's website (one website for all the train operating companies:

<http://www.nationalrail.co.uk>) and also by phoning the operators.

The results were, in the words of one of the train operators to whom our report was sent, "sobering." Many of the websites could not provide information about how to reach Paris by train (some asked the customer if he/she wanted to go to Paisley). One TOC website included a Eurostar link but only under "Leisure" - perhaps this company (which carries thousands of commuters and business travellers every day into London)

thought that no business people would want to go by train to Paris, Lille or Brussels? The responses to phone calls ranged from very helpful to quite unhelpful. In fact, 25% of agents gave no information, not even another number to ring.

A copy of the survey report is available (by normal post only) from Trevor Garrod ([chairman@epf.eu](mailto:chairman@epf.eu)).

It would be interesting to hear from other associations that have carried out such surveys or tests of international rail travel.

We now have many good fast international rail services in Europe - but the challenge remains to publicise them properly and make them easy to use, especially for customers who do not actually live in London, Paris or other cities served by them. To achieve this, there remains plenty of constructive lobbying for EPF and its member organisations to do.

#### **KUNDENINTERESSEN IM ÖFFENTLICHEN VERKEHR – PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ITS USERS**

Die Deutsche Version dieses Buchs ist auch jetzt erschienen.

ISBN 978 3 503 11009 4 beim Erich Schmidt Verlag in der Schriftenreihe für Verkehr und Technik Band 96.

In 335 Seiten lesen Sie Beiträge von 14 Kolleg(inn)en aus mehreren europäischen Ländern, die Themen wie Verbraucherschutz, Kundenperspektive im Qualitätsmanagement, Verbraucherbeteiligung im öffentlichen Verkehr, Fahrgastrechte und Kundenvertretung behandeln.

Das Buch stammt aus einer Tagung in Berlin im 2005 und richtet sich an Akteure aus Verkehrsplanung und

Verkehrspolitik aber auch an die praxisnahe Forschung in diesem Bereich.

EPF und verschiedene andere Verbände werden darin erwähnt.

The English translation of this book is published by Ashgate at £60. ISBN 978-0-7546-7447-4 It originated at a conference in Berlin called by our colleagues in NEXUS and studies the integration of passengers' views in the planning process, protecting passenger interests and customer care in nine EU countries. The early work of EPF is also included.

#### **WHAT WERE THEY DOING THERE?**

What was Rian doing in Berne and Brussels, Josef in London and Vienna, Kurt in Madrid and London and Varujan in Bucharest?

These EPF colleagues were taking part, and giving presentations, about our work and views at international conferences during the first half of 2009.

You can read their presentations, and more about the conferences, by logging on to the EPF website [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu).

Christopher Irwin, Varujan Apelian and Nassos Kokkinos have recently met an official of the Greek transport administration to discuss railway problems.

Lobbying for better public transport all over Europe, is one of the main aims of EPF.

#### **REPORT FROM THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CONCERTOUR WORKSHOP**

Accessibility of tourist destinations was the central theme of the third CONCERTOUR workshop, held in

Rotterdam on April 24th 2009, to which EPF was invited to participate. CONCERTOUR is a research project of the seventh framework programme funded by DG Research of the EU Commission.

At the workshop a broad range of challenges in matching tourism demand with transport supply were identified. The discussion paid much attention to barriers that leisure travellers (including PRMs) are faced with in using local as well as long distance public transport. The focus on public transport was influenced by its potential to manage congestion, its good safety record, easy access for all and its relatively favourable environmentally footprint.

The topics that were considered and to which EPF contributed its expertise include generic information provision and issues with ticketing. EPF strongly favours an approach where the traveller is interoperable in that devices and interfaces used by the traveller are standardised.

The methodological approach of the CONCERTOUR project is to analyse over 150 case studies with respect to the topics discussed at the workshops. The identified best practice will be disseminated by mid 2009 in a handbook that guides EU authorities in making decisions.

A separate deliverable of the CONCERTOUR project is a position paper on barriers in accessibility of tourist destinations. CONCERTOUR is consulting all relevant stakeholders (including EPF) to learn their position on the subject by means of a questionnaire.

EPF highly values the contribution made by CONCERTOUR in identifying and removing barriers for leisure public transport travellers and is pleased for having been provided with this

opportunity to participate in policy support oriented research.

We subsequently sent the Commission our response to some more detailed questions. If you would like a copy, please e-mail [chairman@epf.eu](mailto:chairman@epf.eu) with your postal address.

### **EPF CONFERENCE IN BERNE ON MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> 2009**

70 delegates from 14 European countries, including a group of Railfuture members, converged on Berne, Switzerland, for the seventh Annual General Meeting and Conference of the European Passengers' Federation on March 14th.



**Trevor Garrod speaking at the EPF conference (picture: Marc Broeckaert)**

They were addressed by Andreas Meyer, Chief Executive of Swiss Federal railways (SBB), who stated, "Switzerland is known for its chocolate and its reliable railways." The rail network had fascinating technical achievements, "but, in the final analysis, we are doing these for our customers."

It was evidence of their success that every second citizen was a regular rail customer and passenger-kilometres had grown by 31% in the period 2003/8. The greatest challenge now was how to cope with the increase.

His colleague Martin Butikofer explained how the SBB encouraged and acted upon feedback from its customers and how they were improving information - such as by use of mobile technology and on-train screens with information about both train and bus connections.

Alain Barbey of the international train operator Cisalpino described the challenges and future plans for their services between Switzerland and Italy; and how their trains were integrated into those countries' domestic timetables.

A very informative presentation by Markus Thut described the General Abonnement (a public transport travelcard) now used in one form or another by over 2,500,000 people in Switzerland. "The travelcard is like a car", he said, "Once you've got it, it is there and you get in." He also explained how income was apportioned to the many participating operators and how regular customer surveys were undertaken.

Other speakers dealt with the development of Post Bus services (not just in Switzerland) and accessibility for persons of reduced mobility.

For EPF, Albert Lambert reported on the work of the study group to make international multi-modal journeys easier; while Christopher Irwin set out what should be European priorities in the coming years. These included clear modal-neutral passenger rights; ensuring that IT enabled the users; wise allocation of transport costs, and action on sustainable mobility. He saw "great opportunities for European knowledge-based industries" in making public transport travel easier.



**Excursion to Brig after the conference (picture: Marc Broeckaert)**

Thanks are due in particular to Edwin Dutler and Jürg Tschopp for their very efficient organisation of the conference and the interesting train trips the following morning through the new Lötschberg base tunnel and back through the higher-level tunnel through the mountains.

The presentations given at the conference and the full conference report can be found on [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu). The conference report is available also from Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Rd South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ. Thanks also to Trevor Jones for doing the lion's share of the work on it.

The Annual General Meeting after the conference adopted EPF's annual and financial reports and its work programme for the coming 12 months.

The new EPF Board, consisting of one nominee from each member organisation, was approved; and from its members were elected: Chairman - Trevor Garrod; Vice-Chairman - Christopher Irwin; Secretary - Josef Schneider; Treasurer Rian van der Borgt.

## **SALZBURGER VERKEHRSTAGE 2009**

From 7 to 9 Oktober 2009 the Salzburger Verkehrstage will be held in Salzburg.

Sustainable urban mobility will be the central congress item. More information about this event on its website : [http://www.regionale-schienen.at/3\\_7ISVT.asp?bereich=3&show=7svt](http://www.regionale-schienen.at/3_7ISVT.asp?bereich=3&show=7svt)

## **A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY OF NEXT YEAR**

Saturday March 20th, 2010 is the date of the next EPF Conference and Annual General Meeting. We shall be holding it at Malmö, Sweden, hosted by our colleagues from ResenärsForum.

Why Malmö? This important city is on the coast, just north of the Öresund Bridge which now links Sweden with Denmark and the rest of Continental Europe. It is therefore easy to reach by rail. Trains from Copenhagen every 20 minutes take just 35 minutes for a trip that used to take at least 90 minutes by ferry. For anyone flying to Copenhagen Airport, the trains also call at a station there.

Denmark and Sweden also have some local public transport services franchised to private operators and it will be interesting to hear about and even sample these; while a cross-city tunnel is also being built in Malmö.

We hope to include full details of the conference in our next bulletin, due out in December, and they will also be on our website.

### **Colophon**

*Contributors to this bulletin include:  
Marc Broeckaert, Trevor Garrod, Kurt Hultgren,  
Jasper Knockaert, Josef Schneider, Bram Van den  
Bulcke, Rian van der Borgt and others  
Copy finished on 17 July 2009*