

## EPF-Bulletin #17 – June 2015

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## INTRODUCTION

Bienvenue au dix-septième numéro de notre bulletin d'activités, dans lequel vous pouvez lire ce que la Fédération européenne des Voyageurs (EPF) a fait au niveau européen pour les clients des transports en commun.

Vous pouvez aussi en lire plus sur notre site web [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu) qui contient aussi des liens à nos 34 associations et organismes adhérents.

Dans ce numéro vous trouverez un rapport de notre congrès annuel, qui eut lieu en Hongrie, et nos opinions concernant les droits des passagers, les trains de nuit et ce qu'il faut faire pour améliorer les offres transfrontaliers.

Nous nous occupons aussi de l'examen du livre blanc des transports européens et d'autres consultations; des développements des transports urbains et le rôle des trains internationaux EuroCity; et nous venons de commencer deux nouveaux projets européens.

La FEV a beaucoup à faire - et il est important de souligner combien de nos efforts sont faits par les bénévoles.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the seventeenth issue of our bulletin of activities, in which you can read what the European Passengers' Federation (EPF) has been doing at European level for public transport customers.

You can also read more on our website [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu) which in addition contains links to our 34 member associations and bodies.

In this issue you will find a report of our annual conference which took place in Hungary, and our opinions about passenger rights, night trains and what should be done to improve cross-border services.

We are busy with the review of the White Paper on European Transport and other consultations, developments in urban transport and the role of international EuroCity trains, and we have just started two new European projects.

EPF has a lot to do - and it is important to underline how much of our work is done by volunteers.

## EINLEITUNG

Herzlich Willkommen zur siebzehnten Ausgabe unseres Bulletins, in dem Sie lesen können, was der Europäische Fahrgastverband (EPF) auf europäischer Ebene für die Kunden des öffentlichen Verkehrs gemacht hat.

Mehr darüber können Sie auch auf unserer Webseite [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu) lesen. Diese enthält auch Links zu unseren 34 Mitgliedsverbänden und -gremien.

In dieser Ausgabe werden Sie einen Bericht über unsere Jahrestagung, die in Ungarn stattfand, und unsere Meinungen betreffs Fahrgastrechte, Nachtzüge und was gemacht werden sollte, um grenzüberschreitende Angebote zu verbessern.

Wir beschäftigen uns auch mit der Überprüfung des europäischen Verkehrsweißbuchs und anderen Konsultationen; mit Entwicklungen im Stadtverkehr und mit der Rolle der internationalen EuroCity-Züge; und wir haben gerade neue europäische Projekte angefangen.

Wir haben viel zu tun - und es ist auch wichtig zu betonen, wie viel unserer Arbeit ehrenamtlich gemacht wird.

**Trevor Garrod**

*Président – Präsident - President*

## EPF CONFERENCE IN BUDAPEST

On a bright sunny day in early spring, 80 people met in the Bálna Centre on the bank of the Danube in Budapest for the 13th annual conference of EPF.



The first part of the event focussed on the work of eight of our member associations and our Working Group on International Long-distance Travel. Gábor Nagy (VEKE) and János Vincze (DERKE) reported on issues and achievements in Hungary; Ian McDonald (Railfuture) introduced our new discussion paper on Eurocity Trains and Christoph Wachholder (probahn Österreich) spoke of the study into improved cross-border links between Austria and Hungary.

Jaroslav Nowicki (Friendly Flying) reported on their survey of air passengers in Poland and the implementation of passenger rights, while Peter Cornelius (Pro Bahn) surveyed EU efforts to improve international multi-modal information and ticketing. Anne-Marie Ghémard updated us on the work of FNAUT in representing rail users in France while Kurt Hultgren (Resenärsforum) reported on positive developments in Sweden but also on challenges. Miroslav Vyka (SCVD) described both positive and negative effects of rail liberalisation in the Czech Republic.

The welcome dinner has become a regular feature of EPF conferences, but this was the first time it had been held on a ship - the Vén Hajó, moored next to Chain Bridge, with

magnificent views of the heights of Buda on the opposite bank.

The following day, delegates were welcomed by Dr Balázs Szenczey, Deputy Mayor of Budapest, and heard interesting presentations from the Ministry of National Development, MÁV-Start (the national rail passenger operator) and GySEV / Raaberbahn which operates passenger and freight trains in both Hungary and Austria.

The European perspective was given by Mrs Olga Sehnalová MEP, a member of the Transport & Tourism Committee; Mr Lothar Zeller of the European Investment Bank and Mr András Ekés of the Metropolitan Research Institute on Sustainable Urban Transport.

The transport industry was further represented by speakers from Stadler Rail and DKV (the public transport company in Debrecen), while a further speaker from Resysen Ltd gave an insight into how the travelling environment could be made healthier.



The afternoon was rounded off by Willy Smeulders and Josef Schneider who gave a thorough report on the many aspects of EPF's work at European level.

Most participants stayed in Budapest for the Sunday, when they enjoyed tours of the city and its surroundings using public transport; and 22 then spent Monday in Hungary's second city, Debrecen, visiting the MÁV regional control centre, hearing a presentation by the Deputy Mayor, riding the modern trams, including on the second line opened in 2014, sampling modern hybrid

trolleybuses and being shown around the DKV depot.

Our thanks go especially to Lajos Dorner and Gabor Nagy of VEKE and to János Vincze and Zoltán Jónás of DERKE for all the efforts which they put into our memorable and productive time in Hungary.

The conference presentations are now on the EPF website, while the two Trevors from England have produced a fuller conference report which is [available on the EPF website](#), and in a limited number of paper copies, from [trevor.garrod@epf.eu](mailto:trevor.garrod@epf.eu) or from Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Road South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ UK.

## OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, NEW STATUTES AND FUTURE PLANS

EPF's Annual General Meeting took place after the conference in Budapest on March 21st. 20 of our full member associations were represented in person or by proxy. Delegates accepted the Annual Report (now posted on our website in [English, French and German](#)) and Financial Report and agreed the Budget and Work Programme for the coming year.

The outgoing Chairman thanked all colleagues who had contributed to EPF's work during the previous 12 months and our Hungarian colleagues in VEKE and DERKE for organising and interesting conference and programme.

The new EPF statutes, which had resulted from many months of discussion within the Federation, were approved and took effect immediately. A secret ballot was held and Trevor Garrod was elected President; while seven colleagues were elected to the new Management Board: Annemarie Ghémard, Kurt Hultgren, Christopher Irwin, Arriën Kruyt, Josef Schneider, Willy Smeulders and Rian van der Borgt.

The new Board held its first meeting on April 18th in Ghent and elected as Chairman Josef Schneider and Treasurer Rian van der Borgt. Our Administrator is TTB employee Stijn Lewyllie and another TTB employee is also due to help - initially with enhancing our website. Josef Schneider and Willy Smeulders will be responsible for staff matters.

The Board will hold a monthly teleconference and has scheduled further meetings for September 12<sup>th</sup>, November 7<sup>th</sup> and February 6<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile, representatives of all our member associations will hold a General Meeting three times a year. Here they will receive and consider a report from the Management Board as well as discussing issues around Europe and deciding policy and future action. The General Meetings will be held on June 13<sup>th</sup> in Berlin, October 17<sup>th</sup> in Ghent and January 9<sup>th</sup> in London.

## EPF WORKS ON PROJECTS

It is an important part of EPF's work to take part in European Union projects. We do this as partners in consortia with commercial companies, transport authorities, consultants, research centres and universities. It brings us influence and income.

We have been involved in NODES, a project on urban transport interchanges, for some time; and on May 1st started two new projects:

**CIPTEC** will explore how to create a significant growth in public transport using a marketing approach and at a limited extra cost. It will study innovation in customer orientation, service concepts and synergies with other sectors.



**IT2RAIL** looks at developing and delivering a Proof of concept of an IT-driven travel companion. Our task will be to advise on end-user applicability and to help with reporting and publicising the result.



IT2RAIL is also a precursor to one of the SHIFT2RAIL projects in which we hope, in due course, to be involved. Negotiations about this are on-going.

## HALBZEIT IN HALBERSTADT

Halberstadt is a town of nearly 40,000 people just to the north of the Harz mountains on the cross-country rail route from Hannover to Halle (Saale) and junction with three other lines. DB regional trains and services operated by the franchisee HEX (Harz-Elbe-Express) serve its main station at regular intervals and are intelligently co-ordinated to provide many handy connections.

The station is over 170 years old and has been beautifully restored, with ticket and tourist office, restaurant, fast food outlet and bakery, an office for HEX and a large well-stocked shop and post office, plus a hairdresser; while on the upper floor a company has rented offices. In the well-restored entrance hall is a real-time information screen for trains and local public transport; while the square outside has a bus interchange, covered cycle racks and a turning loop for the narrow-gauge trams.



It was to this impressive town that Pro Bahn Chairman Jörg Bruchertseifer invited his guests (including five EPF representatives from Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria and the UK) for his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Based at the Hotel Villa Heine close to the station, we were given an interesting tour of Halberstadt's mediaeval cathedral and its treasures; and of the factory where the renowned sausages are made; while a further highlight was a tour of the tram network and visit to the depot.

As well as the modern low-floor vehicles, the HVG (Halberstadter Verkehrsgesellschaft GmbH) brought out two of its beautifully restored historic trams, built in 1939 and 1956 respectively, and the 85 guests paraded round the entire network with explanations provided by the staff. A reporter from the Halberstadter Volksstimme also interviewed and photographed some of us.

At least one EPF representative vowed to return to Halberstadt for a holiday - prompted also by the HATIX mobility ticket which is offered free of charge to all overnight guests, for use on the trams and on the country buses in a wide area of the eastern Harz. For more information, go to [www.hatix.info](http://www.hatix.info)

## EPF AT THIRD PILSEN MUNICIPAL TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

At the end of April, the Czech city of Pilsen hosted its third Municipal Transport Conference, on the theme "Smart and Healthy", and attracted nearly 300 participants from 12 countries.

The three specific topics dealt with by 22 speakers, including EPF President Trevor Garrod, covered sustainable urban transport, new technology and the customers. Mr Alan Flausch of UITP set the tone by stating in his introduction, "The issue is not public transport itself, but what sort of city do we want to live in?"

Speakers dealt with the potential of car-sharing; the process leading to the pedestrianisation of the Mariahilferstraße in Vienna and the "Mobility as a Service" concept in Helsinki - which could be summarised as "replacing cars by apps." It was not necessary, this speaker contended, to invent new means of transport "but just to plug them together" and offer an information and booking

package "to enable individuals to organise their travel arrangements."

Interesting presentations were given about the development of the "one stop mobility shop" for Hannover and the bicycle master plan for Leipzig. The thought-provoking comparison was made with a supermarket: you pay for your shopping in one transaction, so why not also your mobility? It was, however, necessary first for transport providers to break out of their "silo mentality."

Some lively discussion arose from a presentation on free public transport in Colomiers (a suburb of Toulouse) and Hasselt and ranged over examples of more targeted free or cheap-rate travel.

Trevor Garrod was invited to speak on "Public Transport as part of a city's Image, Prestige and Marketing." He stressed that there was more than one way of organising it - but that it should be treated as a network (even if more than one operator was involved), that a city's mobility system should be one of which its residents could be proud and which would encourage people to visit it. Part of the work of EPF and its member organisations was to spread good practice, and warn against bad practice, from the customer point of view.

Speakers from the Czech Republic gave examples of payment cards and the use of social media by operators; and of EU funding to help towns develop sustainable mobility.

Industry speakers described the most recent developments in electric and hybrid vehicles, some of which were also on display.

For many of us, the show-stopper was the videoclip made by the municipal transport operator of České Budějovice showing, in a mildly humorous way, the teamwork and achievements of their employees - a reminder that public transport is not just about hardware and software but also about people.

The presentations can be viewed [here](#) and on [YouTube](#).

## THE ROLE OF STAFF ON TRAINS

EPF's President was invited to address a meeting of the European Transport Workers' Federation on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

The meeting was concerned with the role of on-board personnel on trains and concerns about passenger safety, security, comfort, information and assistance.

In his presentation, Trevor Garrod acknowledged these points but also pointed to the importance of staff in ensuring that everyone paid for their journey; in helping especially passengers who were new or occasional travellers and on implementing Plan B in case of disruption.

Advances in technology meant that services sometimes could be operated with fewer staff, but that staff should be available on the train, at the station or at the end of a phone - or in a combination of these places. He also posed the question: "To what extent should staff multitask?" For example, in some trains in Scandinavia, the same member of staff checks ticket and runs the small buffet. Staff in the bar-buffet of some trains to Paris also sell urban transport tickets.

Our President concluded that both customers and staff wanted an attractive, stable public transport system.

The European Transport Workers' Federation is planning a Europe-wide campaign on the role of on-board staff and we in EPF will be kept informed about their plans.

## HOTELS NEAR RAILWAY STATIONS

Albert Lambert has now compiled a list of 30 hotels near railway stations in several countries. These are hotels which EPF colleagues have used, on

holiday or business trips, and can recommend. In a few cases the hotel is on a direct and frequent tram or bus route from the main station and is therefore suitable for rail travellers.

To obtain the list electronically, please email [albert.lambert@education.lu](mailto:albert.lambert@education.lu)

Please continue to send him details of other hotels near stations which you have personally used and can recommend.

### 3<sup>RD</sup> FLORENCE INTERMODAL FORUM

By Trevor Garrod

On March 9<sup>th</sup> I was invited to take part in a forum at the Florence School of Regulation, to discuss innovative and sustainable mobility. Marco Gariboldi of EPF's member association AUTP also took part and there were representatives of transport companies, the European Commission and Parliament, academics and consultants.

It was stressed in presentations that people nowadays expected personalised services, but were also more prepared to share and that digitalisation had, in some respects, reduced the need to travel. There was also a trend towards "enabling rather than providing", with people in a city, for example, using their smartphones to locate a car or a bicycle to use.

A 300 euro a month mobility package could, for some people, be a better use of money than buying a car which might also be used for 4% of the time.

Examples were given of ticketing which included "the first or final mile", such as intercontinental tickets which included the local public transport leg to the airport. We were also shown how "ePaper" for passenger information meant that a radio interface

enabled bus stop timetables to be changed "from the back office."

In Germany it had been found possible for an electronic journey planner to include services of over 200 operators. Should the EU make such information systems mandatory, at least for a limited, specific set of data?

I was asked to speak on "New Passengers' Needs and new Mobility Solutions" and began by stating that, for many public transport users, the needs remained what they always had been: a safe, stress-free, efficient journey, at a reasonable price, easy to find, book and use, often part of a journey chain and with information on different options enabling an informed choice to be made.

However, changes now brought new challenges and opportunities. For example - new technology meant that people expected things to be easier and quicker, inclusivity was now more of a priority and many people now had more flexible working patterns and hours.

I referred to instances of demand-responsive transport outside normal operating hours, guaranteed quality standards so that customers knew what to expect, and multifunctional payment cards.

Would-be travellers should be able to research and plan electronically an end-to-end journey; but it should still be possible to look on a notice, speak to a person and pay in more than one way.

A full report of the forum and the presentations can be found on [www.florence-school.eu](http://www.florence-school.eu).



## EU WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT - TIME FOR REVIEW

In March 2011 the European Commission published a White Paper on Transport which contained many aims which EPF welcomed. Indeed, we had argued for these in the consultations leading up to its publication. EPF has submitted its comments, which can also be found on the [EPF website](http://www.epf.eu). Already we discussed it in our January meeting in Barcelona and, as a result, issued a declaration at our March 21st Conference in Budapest.

In this declaration we urged the EU and Member States -

- to tackle the problem of air pollution caused by the internal combustion engine, which is costly and causes more deaths than road accidents.
- to recognise that cars, whether petrol, diesel or electric, cause congestion and occupy parking space that could be used more productively; and therefore to reduce car-dependency of European citizens.
- to treat public transport as a central element in the planning of urban and journey-to-work areas.
- to encourage the development of public transport because of its key role in creating high-quality jobs - in research, manufacturing, the knowledge economy (IT) and operation.

- To reduce fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from transport, focussing on active and saving modes: cycling, walking, public transport.

Subsequently Christopher Irwin put the EPF viewpoint in detail at a conference organised by the European Economic & Social Committee in Brussels at the end of March. His presentation is now on our [website](http://www.epf.eu).

## A ROLE FOR MORE EUROCIITY TRAINS?

International rail travel in Europe has been greatly improved by the construction of high speed lines in and between several countries. But what about those towns and cities which are not on the high-speed network or cannot easily be served by it?

EPF considers that there is still an important role for classic trains, particularly for regular interval EuroCity train between such places.

That is why Ian McDonald and Michael Bienick have produced, in consultation with many other members, a Discussion Paper "Possible European International EuroCity Trains Network". The 12-page document can be downloaded from our website [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu) and comments will be very welcome. They should be emailed to [ian.mcdonald@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ian.mcdonald@railfuture.org.uk) and [michael.bienick@googlemail.com](mailto:michael.bienick@googlemail.com). The discussion paper has also been sent to many European decision-makers.

## REPRESENTING EPF

- 05.12.2014: Christopher Irwin spoke on Passengers' Priorities for Rail Safety at Transport Safety Research conference convened by the Italian Presidency and the European Commission in Genoa; moderated final plenary sessions.



- 11.12.2014: Meeting of the Shift2Rail Strategy Board, European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC), Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 12.12.2014: Meeting in London with Director of External Affairs, International Air Transport Association on possible future consumer representation and relationship with EPF Christopher Irwin
- 15.12.2014: LivingRAIL advisory board, Frankfurt Christopher Irwin
- 13.1.2015: Plenary meeting of the European Commission's Rail Market Monitoring Study, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 19.1.2015 Christopher Irwin and Trevor Garrod had a discussion with Libor Lochman and Jacques Dirand of the Community of European Railways
- 19.1.2015 Trevor Garrod had a meeting with Williams Todts of Transport & Environment
- 19.1.2015 DG-MOVE EU security Willy Smeulders
- 19-20.1.2015: Meeting of the European Commission's Land Security expert working group, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 21.1.2015 European Railway Awards Willy Smeulders
- 28.1.2015 ERRAC steering Committee Willy Smeulders
- 29.1.2015 Josef Schneider attended a Steering Committee meeting of EUROOC in Warsaw
- 30.1.2015: Meeting of the advisory board of the EU-funded CARONTE research project (Creating an Agenda for Research on Transport Security,) Frankfurt Airport Christopher Irwin
- 4.2.2015 ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Josef, UITP reception Willy Smeulders
- 10.2.2015 Rian van der Borgt attended a meeting of the TAP TSI CCM board in Lille
- 11.2.2015 Errac Fosterrail structure at CER Willy Smeulders
- 11.2.2015: Meeting of the ERRAC Steering Group Christopher Irwin
- 12.2.2015 TAP-TAF TSI Steering Committee meeting Willy Smeulders
- 24.2.2015 Josef Schneider attended a Steering Committee meeting of EUROOC at Brussels
- 25.2.2015 Trevor Garrod and Willy Smeulders had a meeting with Ursula Pahl of the European consumer federation BEUC.
- 25.2.2015 Willy Smeulders and Trevor Garrod met Laszlo Polgar of SGMOVE to discuss cross-border rail services.
- 2.3.2015 ERRAC steering committee Willy Smeulders
- 3.3.2015 EWG Fosterrail WP6 Willy Smeulders
- 6.3.2015: Presentation to European Economic & Social Committee workshop on Mid-term Review of 2011 Transport White Paper, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 11.3.2015 NEB on passenger rights Willy Smeulders
- 12.3.2015: Meeting of the Shift2Rail Strategy Board, ERRAC, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 12.3.2015: Meeting with David Avanzata, Director European Department, UITP Christopher Irwin
- 17.3.2015: Presentation to European Parliament Transport & Tourism Committee workshop on Mid-term Review of 2011 Transport White Paper, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 24.3.2015 Josef Schneider attended a meeting of the Administrative Board from the European Railway Agency
- 24.3.2015 Josef Schneider attended the yearly ERFA-reception at Brussels
- 25.3.2015 Trevor Garrod, Willy Smeulders and Marc Debrincat met Jocelyn Fajardo, a member of the cabinet of European Transport Commission Violeta Bulc, and Jean-Louis Colson, head of passenger rights at DGMOVE.
- 25.3.2015 Josef Schneider attended the customer liaison group of CER
- 31.3.2015 Landsec 7th DG-Move Willy Smeulders
- 31.3.2015 Rian van der Borgt attended a meeting of National Enforcement Bodies and stakeholders for Regulation 1371/2007 on Rail Passengers' Rights and Obligations
- 14.4.2015 Josef Schneider attended a Steering Committee meeting of EUROOC at Brussels

- 23.4.2015 Living Rail + Spider plus Willy Smeulders
- 23.4.2015: Panellist at Rail towards 2050, concluding conference of LivingRAIL and SPIDERPLUS research projects, organised under 7th framework programme of the European Commission, Brussels Christopher Irwin
- 29.4.2015: ERRAC Plenary meeting, UIC Paris Christopher Irwin
- 5.5.2015 Rail Forum Europe Willy Smeulders

## CROSS-BORDER RAIL LINKS FOR BREAKFAST



78 decision-makers, opinion-formers and transport professionals filled the room for a breakfast event of Rail Forum Europe on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The event was sponsored by EPF with additional financial support from our members Railfuture and Deutscher Bahnkundenverband.

Our theme was "deteriorating international rail links - what can be done?" EPF Chairman Trevor Garrod began by pointing to successes - such as high-speed trains between Brussels and Paris or Paris and Barcelona. Work was still needed to improve ticketing on such journeys, however, and he cited the difficulties encountered by a colleague wanting to travel from Wetzlar to Lille.

There were success stories, such as the extension of the Usedomer Bäderbahn into Poland and the reinstatement of trains across the German / Czech border between Sebnitz and Dolní Poustevna. However, there were

also examples where modest investment, such as signalling at Görlitz, would improve cross-border services. In other cases, smarter working would give more connections across the French / Spanish border at Latour-de-Carol and Port Bou.

Mr Garrod also concluded that when funding for cross-border improvements was required, "both sides should be shown that they can benefit from it."

Dr Karl Schambureck of probahn Österreich then presented a detailed case study of the routes between Austria and Italy via Tarvisio and via Ljubljana. EU regional funding had enabled two additional trains to run via Tarvisio. Dr Schambureck was in discussions with operators and local authorities and put the case for some EuroCity services to link Vienna, Maribor, Ljubljana and Trieste. He called upon the EU to support this process.

Mr Patrizio Grillo of the European Commission explained how the 4th Railway Package and Telematics Application for Passengers should make it easier, technically, to improve cross-border services; and Mr Michael Cramer MEP stressed the need for political will to make things happen.

The full presentations and a further report of the event can be found on [www.rail-forum.eu](http://www.rail-forum.eu).

## RAILFUTURE MEMBERS BY THE BALTIC

For two decades, members of EPF's member association Railfuture have enjoyed trips by train to Continental Europe, usually meeting up with some members of local associations at their destination.

This year, 17 Railfuture members left London on May 5th for Bremen and then Rostock, close to the German Baltic Coast where, thanks to Pro Bahn member Marcel Drews, they met officials of the Verkehrsverbund Warnow and learned about public transport in the city and its region.

The Verkehrsverbund, or transport authority, brings together 6 operators in the Rostock urban area and its surrounding rural district, serving a total population of 420,000. 18% of journeys are made by public transport, 36% by car, 14% by bicycle and 32% on foot, with regular questionnaires completed by citizens.

The British visitors found the weekly public transport ticket very good value for money and also made good use of the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern ticket, which gave rail travel for up to 5 people at an attractive rate. They were impressed by Rostock's main station, largely rebuilt in 2003 with a tram tunnel underneath. There were good multimodal interchanges and, on the outskirts of the city, some park-and-ride sites.

Some of the group made a bus/ferry/bus journey to Nykøbing in Denmark, while visits were also included to two well-run narrow-gauge steam railways.

The outward journey was marred by a technical fault on a Brussels - Cologne train, a fallen tree blocking the line east of Aachen and some cancellations because of the strike by some train drivers in Germany - but it was also instructive to see how SNCB/NMBS and Deutsche Bahn coped with the resulting disruption.

The return journey showed the capability of the rail network, however, with the 1284 km (just over 800 miles) from Rostock to London covered in 12.5 hours with just two changes of train.

We were told that the Baltic coast of Germany receives a lot of Scandinavian visitors, but not many British. Several of our group promised to return for a further holiday.

## BUS EXCELLENCE AWARD

EPF President Trevor Garrod has accepted an invitation to serve on the jury for the 2015 Smart Move IRU Bus Excellence Award.

He served on this jury for the previous award in the summer of 2013, when the winning entry was from the city transport operator of Alba Iulia in Romania. The winner of the 2015 award will be announced in the autumn.

The aim is to give recognition to best practice, excellence and innovation by companies in the fields of urban, interurban and regional bus and coach transport.

## FERROWORLD IS ON ITS WAY...

You can now book for Ferroworld, a new event to be held at Palexpo, Geneva, on September 9th - 11th. Go to [www.ferroworld.org](http://www.ferroworld.org)

Under the subtitle TRAIN FOR ALL, the congress will cover the state as railway patron, global freight, the railway industry and the railways of tomorrow. It will discuss the developments and challenges in rail transport, not only in Europe but in other parts of the world as well.

EPF President Trevor Garrod will be moderator of a session on The Rights and Obligations of Passengers and Operators, which will also seek to make comparisons with other service industries and modes of transport and enable people from different countries, and indeed from different continents, to learn from each other.

## EPF AND NIGHT TRAINS

After further discussion among our members, EPF issued a statement on January 18th, expanding on our earlier call for an independent study:

"As passenger representatives with considerable experience of long-distance travel across Europe we consider, from our own observations, that there is a demand for international night trains.

Their role is different to what it was 40 years ago, because high speed trains have in many cases made it possible to reach destinations within a day.

However, in many instances there is still a strong need for good night train connections where there is no high speed alternative and many passengers value the possibility of departing and arriving at a reasonable time on an overnight train and, in some cases, transferring to and from day trains or indeed other modes.

The study should also take into account -

- whether the greatest demand for night trains is on routes which have no high-speed trains;
- whether existing night trains are being sufficiently promoted through information and ticketing.
- whether there are particular regions where new high-speed lines may not be justified but where there is a demand for night connections.
- to what extent some potential passengers may be unable or unwilling to travel by air for health or other reasons.

We therefore call for an independent study, funded by the EU, to establish:

- (a) the demand for night travel between major European centres, either by sleeper/courette or by good quality trains with seats, and the alternative modes.
- (b) whether the market is failing to deliver such services, perhaps because of infrastructure costs or rolling stock procurement problems.
- (c) whether intervention in the market by a Europe-wide authority would improve the situation.
- (d) the economic, social and environmental effects if no action were taken and international night train services continued to decline."

The statement may be used by our member association to guide them in their work in

their respective countries. For example, members of Railfuture have had discussions with some British MEPs on this and related issues. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, representatives of associations in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany met in Lund to discuss the case for reintroducing night trains in northern Europe. EPF President Trevor Garrod is due to take part in a Brussels event on revitalising international night trains and cross-border trains organised by Green MEPs in Brussels on July 1st.

At the end of May, a declaration was issued by the associations who took part in the Lund meeting. It concerned both day and night trains. On the latter it specifically called for a night service between Hamburg and Gothenburg and between Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Oslo. It also called for retention of the Stockholm - Malmo - Copenhagen night service and the re-establishment of night services from Copenhagen to Amsterdam, Basel, Munich, Prague and Vienna. "If necessary the suggested services should get financial support from the states concerned. This should well be justified by the environmental and energy advantages of rail, and an increased opportunity to travel, also for those who cannot or will not travel by car or bus and for those who live in towns between the large cities and the large airports."

## PACKAGE TRAVEL DIRECTIVE

On February 12<sup>th</sup> EPF wrote to the European Commission about its proposed update of the Package Travel Directive.

We warmly welcomed the aim of the Directive to provide transparent consumer protection and a fairer regulatory framework for travel business across the EU. Our letter also called for "transparent protection standards and passenger rights which are able to be explained to them in a clear and simple manner."



## RAIL PASSENGER RIGHTS - THE NEED FOR CLARITY



EPF has submitted 5 pages of comments to the European Commission on the draft interpretative guidelines on Regulation 1371/2007. Thank you to Rian van der Borgt and other colleagues for their

work on this important matter.

Issues highlighted in our submission include -

1. The concept of a "carrier", especially when a third party may be involved in, for example, providing an electronic ticket. We argue that complaints should be directed to the railway undertaking rather than the smartcard provider.
2. Passengers should be properly informed about all fares that are available, even if some are not available through all sales channels.
3. "Pay as you go" schemes, and journeys where it is necessary to check in and check out on different segments can have a detrimental effect on passengers' rights. We argue that "the moment when a contract of carriage is concluded should be no later than the activation of the first segment of a journey."
4. Questions of ticket availability and price discrimination must also be addressed. For example, on certain booking websites a passenger may have to pay more depending on the country of residence which he or she indicates.
5. When a train is cancelled or a connection missed, how long does a passenger have to wait for promised alternative transport before he or she can assume no assistance is provided and arrange his or her own alternative?
6. When a passenger has paid a supplement or booking fee, this should be included in the calculation of any compensation
7. Railway undertakings should let passengers know what they have to do if they need their original tickets for something else (such as an expenses claim).
8. Clearer definitions are needed of "comparable transport conditions" in cases of rerouting or using a later train.
9. Information must be provided to passengers about their rights - some may not even know that they have any rights at all.
10. National Enforcement Bodies must tell passengers about any appeal rights or alternative possibilities or solving their problem.

## CONSULTATION ON MARITIME POLICY

On April 21<sup>st</sup> EPF submitted comments on the mid-term review of EU Maritime Strategy. Thank you to Christopher Irwin and Rian van der Borgt for coordinating these comments and to other colleagues for their input.



In our submission we stress the importance of treating the maritime sector in a way that is comparable to other modes of transport. Therefore we call for the internalisation of external costs; competitive tendering for public service contracts; consistent rules for the award of Public Service Obligation funds; a more customer-orientated culture and the effective enforcement of passenger rights.

Referring specifically to ferry services, our submission states, "The attractiveness of maritime careers will be enhanced by the creation of more competitive and attractive services for users which, in themselves, should help ensure greater long-term viability for the industry."

We state that today's passengers expect access to wifi and mobile telephony throughout their journeys.

Consideration should also be given to the use of less polluting fuels.

We put the case for monitoring service quality performance and making the results available to potential customers.

Special attention should be given to encouraging greater connectivity. At present, foot passengers and cyclists often feel that they are discriminated against.

Finally, our submission calls for the development of an EU-wide passenger application telematics system, covering information, reservations and ticketing, as is being developed in the rail sector.

## SALZBURGER VERKEHRSTAGE

Diese wichtige Tagung in deutscher Sprache findet dieses Jahr vom 30. September bis zum 2. Oktober statt. Zur selben Zeit wird auch das 75. Jubiläum der Salzburger O-busse gefeiert. "Thema - Mobilität gestalten statt verschecken. Ein Plädoyer für mutiges Unternehmertum."

Mehr darüber lesen Sie bei [www.salzburger-verkehrstage.org](http://www.salzburger-verkehrstage.org)

### COLOPHON

*Contributors to this bulletin include:*

*Marc Broeckert, Trevor Garrod, Christopher Irwin,  
Josef Schneider, Willy Smeulders, Rian van der  
Borgt, Miroslav Vyka, Albert Lambert, Ian  
McDonald, Michael Bienick...*

