

# EPF-Bulletin #14 – December 2013



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## INTRODUCTION

Bienvenu au quatorzième numéro du bulletin d'activités de la Fédération européenne des Voyageurs (EPF ivzw).

Ici vous pouvez lire des rapports de notre entretien avec l'exploitant international de trains Eurostar et de notre enquête sur les expériences des clients qui prennent les trains à grande vitesse de Rail Team.

D'autres rapports sont témoins de notre intérêt aux droits des passagers aériens, à la sécurité, à la billetterie et aux moyens de paiement; au quatrième paquet ferroviaire et au projet SHIFT2RAIL; aux liaisons transfrontalières entre la France et l'Espagne et aux liaisons maritimes entre l'Irlande, la Grande Bretagne et le Continent.

Nous venons de publier notre rapport concernant "Le dernier mile - et le mile intermédiaire" et nous sommes en train de préparer notre prochain congrès, le 14-15 mars à Milan.

Dans ce bulletin on mentionne aussi Timisoara, Belfast, Santiago de Compostela et Courtrai. Cherchez-les, et vous les trouverez en-dessous!

## Introduction

Welcome to the fourteenth issue of the bulletin of activities of the European Passengers' Federation.

Here you can read reports of our meeting with the internal train operator Eurostar and our survey of the experiences of customers using the high speed trains of Rail Team.

Other reports demonstrate our interest in air passenger rights, safety, ticketing and means

of payment; the 4th Railway Package and the SHIFT2RAIL project; cross-border links between France and Spain and ferry services between Ireland, Great Britain and the Continent.

We have just published our report on "The Final Mile - and the Mile in the Middle" and we are in the process of preparing our next conference, on March 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> in Milan.

In this bulletin there are also mentions of Timisoara, Belfast, Santiago de Compostela and Kortrijk. Look - and you will find them there!

## Einleitung

Willkommen zur vierzehnten Ausgabe des Bulletins der Tätigkeit des Europäischen Fahrgastverbands EPF.

Hier können Sie Berichte lesen, betreffs unseres Gesprächs mit dem internationalen Zugbetreiber Eurostar und unserer Untersuchung der Erfahrungen von Kunden der Hochgeschwindigkeitszüge von Rail Team.

Andere Berichte zeigen unseres Interesse an Fluggastrechten, Sicherheit, Fahrscheinen und Zahlungsmitteln; dem vierten Eisenbahnpaket und dem Projekt SHIFT2RAIL; grenzüberschreitenden Angeboten zwischen Frankreich und Spanien und Fähren zwischen Irland, Großbritannien und dem Festland.

Wir haben gerade unseren Bericht mit dem Titel "Die letzte Meile - und die Meile in der Mitte" herausgebracht und wir sind dabei, unsere nächste Tagung am 14./15. März in Mailand vorzubereiten.

In diesem Bulletin werden auch Timisoara, Belfast, Santiago de Compostela und Kortrijk erwähnt. Suchen Sie mal - und Sie werden diese dort finden!

Trevor Garrod, EPF chairman

## SHIFT<sup>2</sup>RAIL

Over fifty companies in the rail sector have signed up to [Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail](#). This is a proposal to create a Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) to further research and innovation in rail-related areas. JTIs are legal structures for performing and funding research at EU level. They can be described as long-term Public-Private Partnerships and are created under Article 187 of the Treaty on the Funding of the European Union. One basic principle of a JTI is that at least 50% of its cost is funded by the private sector, the balance coming from the European Commission's 70€ billion budget for research and innovation in the period 2014-19 under the Commission's Horizon 2020 programme.



JTIs are large-scale multinational research activities that can make a major contribution to European industrial competitiveness. JTIs are stand-alone arrangements with integrated management of the respective research projects. They have a defined budget and dedicated staff and provide a framework for the public and private players to work together. JTIs organise calls for proposals, monitor selection procedures and put contractual arrangements in place for projects set up to implement the research agenda of the respective JTI. JTIs already exist for other parts of the transport sector, principally Aeronautics and Air Transport (Clean Sky) and Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology (FCH).

Shift2Rail will be the first European rail joint technology initiative to seek focused research and innovation (R&I) and market-driven solutions by accelerating the integration of new and advanced technologies into

innovative rail product solutions. It is intended to promote the competitiveness of the European Rail Industry and will meet the changing EU transport needs. Through the R&I carried out within this Horizon2020 initiative, the necessary technology will be created to complete the Single European Railway Area (SERA).

There are increasing signs that Shift2Rail appears to have gathered the support essential from the various parts of the European Commission, particularly DG MOVE. A public consultation was concluded in September. A response submitted by The European Passengers' Federation gave the proposed JTI a generally welcoming response.

We set out a clear vision of what was required to set the European rail manufacturing and supply industry on a more competitive path globally. Our response emphasised that, in the past, the rail sector had focussed insufficiently on the needs and aspirations of end-users. This short-coming reflected the way in which rail undertakings had tended to be insulated from normal commercial pressures. We noted that, historically, they were often inclined to regard themselves - and to be seen as - extensions of the instruments of national governance rather than as a customer-focussed service industry. These often combined to discourage innovation or to inhibit the search for value through increased equipment standardisation. Many players in the sector tend to do things in their own way or, no less importantly, draw on ideas, materials and technologies pioneered in other sectors.

Lack of attention to end-users' needs compares poorly with the effort and investment made by the aerospace and automotive sector when developing new product concepts. It is no surprise that rail performs so poorly in the indices of consumer satisfaction recorded in DG SANCO's Annual Consumer Markets' Scoreboard: rail appears near the bottom of the list along with banks, real-estate and insurance sales. In contrast, air services and car sales come in the top quartile.

## FOURTH RAILWAY PACKAGE

By the time you read this bulletin, the Transport & Tourism Committee of the European Parliament should have voted on the Fourth Railway Package. However, discussions and work on it will continue at EU level and, of course, when it is finally agreed, the governments of Member States will need to implement it.

These are the guidelines which EPF issued to its member associations:

1. We judge the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package by what it will do for passengers - both actual and potential passengers.
2. It must lead to reduced prices, improved reliability, quality and information and create a better network.
3. We therefore welcome the streamlining of acceptance and safety procedures. This will save money and help innovation and cross-border services.
4. Well-trained and well-motivated staff are also essential for passengers and so we welcome proposals to protect their interests and retain their expertise. It is vital that the rail industry, even if fragmented, retains a teamwork culture and an attractive career structure.
5. "One size does not always fit all" but harmonisation is very important in a Single European Railway Area.
6. We welcome the compromise system of authorisation which allows National Safety Authorities to continue to authorise stock that is unlikely ever to be used in more than one country.
7. An independent infrastructure authority should be the norm. We welcome "Chinese Walls" for Holding Companies.
8. Unbundling may not be appropriate for very small rail networks which are self-contained, or almost self-contained. There may be instances where an integrated structure remains the best for delivering good services to passengers.

9. New entrants to the market, whether open access, franchisees or concessions, are welcome if they bring overall benefits to passengers and increase rail's market share. Participation by all operators in national ticketing and information systems is essential; as is a procedure for a contract to be terminated if an operator fails to deliver a satisfactory or promised service.

10. There must be proper consultation with passengers and other stakeholders before and during a franchise period. We therefore welcome the proposals for user involvement when Public Transport Plans are drawn up, as a step in that direction. Also welcome is the proposal for users' representatives to be on corridor committees.

11. There must be regular and independent monitoring of passenger satisfaction. We therefore welcome the proposed strengthening of the Rail Market Monitoring System.

12. Member State Governments must keep the liberalised system under constant review; and we expect the European Commission to take account of the review currently being undertaken by the Swedish Government.

## EPF REPORT ON SEAMLESS JOURNEYS

You can buy an international day return ticket from Dublin to Belfast for 40 Euro and enjoy a fast journey by "Enterprise" inter-city train up the coast and past the Mountains of Mourne and rolling hills of Ulster to Belfast Central station. Unfortunately,



when you arrive in Belfast Central station you are not in the centre of the city. However, your train ticket also allows you a free ride on the city buses which provide a frequent link to the square in front of the City Hall. Your rail ticket is also, alternatively,

valid on local trains to four other stations in different parts of Belfast.

This is one of many examples of good practice quoted in the new EPF report "The Final Mile - and the Mile in the Middle". We also point out the "City Ticket" facility available at many towns and cities in the German-speaking countries and, in Italy, the integrated train and urban transport fare now offered by high-speed operator NTV to travellers to Firenze, Napoli and Salerno.

However, there are many other European countries which do not yet offer such seamless travel. We hope that our report will give them some ideas. It can also be useful for readers planning to travel by train to - for example - Avignon, Bilbao, Bratislava or Odense to know what is - or is not - available. We also urge train operators and agents to make their customers aware of such information..

"The Mile in the Middle" is the challenge when you travel from, say, Aberdeen to Manchester or Rouen to Perpignan, and have to cross Glasgow or Paris. Again, our report gives good and not so good examples of public transport links between termini and whether these are free, included in the ticket or requiring an extra ticket.

The 6-page report is available in English, French or German. Thank you to Aljoscha Köhler and Maud Labeille for translations and to David Adams of Gryff Consulting for design work. Paper copies are available from Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Road South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ but you can also view the report on the [EPF website](#).

The International Long-distance Travel Working Group of EPF will be pleased to receive updates - for some of this information is bound to change over the coming years. [trevorgarrod2000@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:trevorgarrod2000@yahoo.co.uk) or [albert.lambert@education.lu](mailto:albert.lambert@education.lu)

## "UNLOCKING THE DOOR TO DOOR JOURNEY"

This was the message of the 2013 Sustainable Transport Conference in London, at which Trevor Garrod was invited to represent EPF. Over 200 people attended, including many industry professionals and decision-makers but also interest groups such as ourselves.

The conference presentations can be found on [www.securingthefuture.co.uk](http://www.securingthefuture.co.uk). They covered such issues as improving bus services, electric cars and cycle facilities, referring mainly to British circumstances, problems and achievements.

What was especially interesting for us, however, was a set of three presentations by Atos, VISA and ITSO, dealing with new forms of ticketing, especially in urban transport. This has been an issue frequently raised by EPF and some encouraging developments were explained to us.

It was said that smart card payments for journeys should be kept simple and introduced gradually, with staff input taken into account when the system is designed. However, as one speaker who frequently visits other European countries put it, he now had more city smartcards in his wallet than credit and debit cards!

A presentation by VISA described the growth in transactions by their cards, with 69 million now in circulation in Europe and 1 million terminals. Contactless VISA cards could speed up transactions and could be diversified to give, for example, cheaper travel to a particular shopping centre as part of a special promotion.

There were, however, limits to how much travel information could be stored on a credit or debit card. On the other hand, an EU project on Interoperable Fare Management, completed in 2010, had led to the formation of the Smart Ticketing Alliance, aiming to achieve more harmonisation and economies of scale.

In amongst all the talk of new technology, however, it was also pointed out that a driver showing empathy to his or her customers could make the difference between someone using public transport again or travelling by car instead.

I introduced delegates to the EPF report "The final Mile" - and one way in which that final mile or a couple of kilometres could be achieved by a credit card or smart card from the station to their final destination.

Finally, without comment: It was reported that a young man from Leeds, in response to a question by a researcher, said, "But they wouldn't have a website. They're only a bus company !"

**"TRAIANUS"** *a train adventure lived by Trevor Garrod*

In the 2nd century AD, the Roman Emperor Trajan expanded his territory eastwards into Dacia - which is now Romania.

The day train between Budapest and Bucharest is named after him, "Traianus", and I took it on October 7<sup>th</sup>.



At first light I walked from my hotel in Budapest to Keleti (East) Station, round a construction site where a new metro station was being built, had time to buy a French newspaper ("Le Monde", 2 days old), saw the

Austrian Railjet depart for Vienna and climbed aboard the "Traianus" - or train 73 - an Inter City service composed of Hungarian and Romanian carriages and hauled throughout by a Hungarian electric locomotive. It left on time at 07.10.

The grey morning developed into a beautiful sunny one as we sped east, with just a couple of speed restrictions, through woodlands and across the Great Hungarian Plain.

I was the only customer at that time in the Romanian buffet car, which was to sustain me with coffee, orange juice, beer, biscuits, sweets and sandwiches at various points during the 14-hour journey. The buffet also displayed, in Romanian, a small notice on European passenger rights. We made five stops, some at quite small places, before drawing into Lőkösháza at 10.19. The train spent 16 minutes here, police boarded and checked passports and the Hungarian carriages at the rear were uncoupled.

Our Inter City train was only four carriages long with a modest number of passengers as it trundled across the border to Curtici, where we changed to East European time. Romania has applied to join the Schengen area but has not yet been accepted, and so there was a passport control.

In the sidings I saw much evidence of freight and engineering traffic. In Romania and in Hungary one saw a variety of goods trains, sometimes with locomotives of DB, ÖBB or open access operators. Work is in progress on upgrading the line from here to Arad, where the station is being rebuilt, as part of Corridor IV of the Trans European Network. Train 73 picked up a considerable number of passengers and then sped south on single track to Timisoara where it spent, as scheduled, 45 minutes in the main station. It did not need so much time for the coupling of extra carriages (and entraining of many passengers) but I was told later that the long wait was due to pathing problems thanks to ongoing engineering work.

At 14.10 Traianus headed east and then south, wooded hills and distant mountains closing in on the flatlands of the Banat and slowed greatly for

the sinuous line through the hills, crossing regional passenger trains and freight trains in loops.

This leisurely scenic ride continued with the passage of the Iron Gates from Orsova to Turnu Severin, alongside the wide waters of the Danube, dammed to generate hydro-electricity, with fine views across to the wooded hills of Serbia on the opposite bank. A slow winding climb out of the valley gave dramatic views before night closed in.

At the important industrial city of Craiova large numbers of passengers got in and out and we finally reached Bucharest Nord on time at 22.27 after a journey of over 700-km taking 14 and a quarter hours (of which well over an hour was spent standing at three stations) and 19 station stops.

Obviously investment in the track will improve line speeds and capacity - but at least this leisurely international train was more comfortable than the low-cost aircraft in which I flew from Luton to Budapest and from Bucharest back to Luton and, if time was not too important, more interesting!

## RAILTEAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for everyone who has used the questionnaire on our website to report on high-speed train journeys. Here is the analysis which we presented to RailTeam on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

This questionnaire has now been on our website for over two years and we are now updating it, changing certain questions in the light of experiences and developments. It will still be in English, French, German and Dutch.

Please continue to use it to tell us your experiences.

### 1. Journeys

Between November 2011 and May 2013, we received reports of 72 journeys.

58 different origin or destination stations were given. In a few cases the station is not on the RailTeam network, but the person started or finished there on a journey which involved 2 or more RailTeam trains.

### 2. Stations

London St Pancras was the most popular station, with 26 journeys starting or finishing there. Others were Brussels (10), Basel(8), Berlin (6), Cologne (6), Salzburg (5), Vienna (4), Paris (4), Munich (4), Lyon (3), Aachen (3), Antwerp(3)

Other stations featuring just once or twice were; Aix-en-Provence, Angers, Augsburg, Bayonne, Berne, Bonn, Budapest, Delft, Derby, Dresden, Ebbsfleet, Edinburgh, Eisenach, Figueras Vilafant, Filderstadt, Flensburg, Frankfurt am Main, Frankfurt Flughafen, Grafenau, Hamburg, Holzkirchen (near Munich), Karlsruhe, Lausanne, Leipzig, Liège, Lille, Linz, Lons le Saunier, Madrid, Malaga, Mannheim, Minden, Moutiers, Leustadt (Marburg), Padborg, Perpignan, Sargans, Schiphol, Seville, St. Jean de Luz, Strasbourg, Stuttgart, Utrecht, Weesp, West Worthing and Würzburg.

### 3. Ticket purchase

Respondents purchased their tickets as follows:

- Station ticket office 24%
- Travel agent 33%
- Internet 39%
- Call centre 4%

### 4. Satisfaction

Almost all respondents answered this question. Of those booking at station ticket offices, only 1 was dissatisfied and 11 were satisfied; 25 were satisfied with the service they received from a travel agent and 1 was not; all were satisfied with the call centre. However, while the internet was the most popular medium, accounting for 28 journeys, 8 people declared themselves dissatisfied .

## 5. Problems and help on the journey

(a) There were a few comments about unhelpful staff, but equally several members said that things went well and they did not require any help.

Both positive and negative comments were made about staff at Paris Nord and Brussels Midi. There were also some complaints about systems - such as the need to show tickets and passports on arrival at St Pancras; defects in indicators at Cologne; inadequate announcements at Aachen; and check-in delays at Lille Europe - possible because of UK Border Agency staff shortages here.

On the other hand, compliments were paid to individual helpful staff at London St Pancras, Paris Nord and Budapest Keleti.

(b) Comments about on-train staff also varied. For example, on one late-running Paris-bound Eurostar, the staff gave constant updates; on another Eurostar, the announcements were described as "garbled and unintelligible". On a disrupted Berlin - London journey, ICE and Eurostar announcements were described as "very helpful". There were complaints about insufficient announcements on Thalys concerning connections. It was noted by other respondents that Eurostar regularly gave information on connections as the train approached Brussels together with advice on using the "South" exit.

(c) Crossing Paris was an issue that provoked many comments. The RailTeam leaflet in English on crossing Paris was seen at the Gare de Lyon and described as very helpful. How widely is it distributed?



However, several respondents complained about the need to buy a RATP ticket to cross from the Gare du Nord to the Gare de Lyon (or Montparnasse) when for a similar journey across central London the Underground fare is included in the rail ticket

One member found that the bar-buffet of the TGV Lyria from Switzerland had sold out of RATP tickets; while another found that the Eurostar bar sold them but only as carnets.

There were also complaints about the automatic ticket machines at the Gare de Lyon .

Some criticism was made about overcrowded or short formation metro and RER trains.

(d) A few comments were made about the on-train facilities. ICE and Railjet catering was praised but that on Eurostar was described by one respondent as "very modest considering the high fares."

TGC Duplex was criticised for having insufficient luggage space. On Railjet it should be made clear whether wifi was available on the train.

(e) Some respondents called for a simpler and more flexible booking and fares system, Thalys being described as particularly complex. On-train staff were not always helpful or sympathetic if a passenger had the wrong ticket.

A further criticism was the inability to book domestic Austrian tickets when travelling from Germany.

The "any Belgian station" supplement on Eurostar was considered a very good idea but it was suggested that it be extended to cover Luxembourg and possibly Trier.

One respondent said that an "Europa Spezial" ticket to London was not easy to book on the internet. One had to "trick" the system.

(f) Some references were made to connection problems. A Thalys/ICE connection at Cologne was not held, and the member then had a 2-hour wait; but the ICE would only have been delayed for 5 minutes if it had waited for the late-running Thalys. General calls were made for better Eurostar/TGV connections at Lille and better onward Eurostar connections at Brussels for passenger arriving from Germany.

A call was also made for more classic trains between Liège and Aachen, to ease overcrowding on the high-speed services.

(g) There was criticism of the security and passport checks at St Pancras and it was suggested that these should be carried out on the trains. The need to check passports and tickets of passengers arriving in St Pancras was also questioned.

## 6. Delays and cancellations

None of the respondents to our questionnaire reported that any of their trains had been cancelled, but 26% reported that one of their services had been delayed.

In many of these cases, however, the delay was minor and did not disrupt the overall journey. A few respondents said that they had allowed enough time in the schedule for small delays and one said he was expecting ICE disruptions because of the Elbe flooding in June.

The most important experiences reported were:

- (a) Brussels staff were helpful and rebooked traveller on a later Eurostar.
- (b) Respondent was allowed to travel on a later ICE even though the reservation was for an earlier one.
- (c) The ICE from Berne was late because it had to make extra stops for passengers from an earlier cancelled train; but the connecting ICE to Utrecht was held at Frankfurt.
- (d) A Munich - London journey was described as "an ordeal" - specifically the Frankfurt - Brussels leg where replacement services were badly handled and information given by staff turned out to be wrong.
- (e) SNCF staff had ready claim forms for compensation.
- (f) Refreshments kiosks at Cologne and Brussels closed too early for passengers arriving in the evening and waiting for connections.
- (g) Warnings were given on a London-Paris Eurostar that there would be 30-minute

delays because of snow. In the event, the delay was only 20 minutes.

## OVER 150 REPLIES TO FERRIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Our British member association Railfuture has received over 150 responses - on line or on paper - to its questionnaire on journeys made by ferry and how easy or difficult it was to reach the port or continue the journey.

Over 70 British, Irish or Continental ports were used, for people crossing the North Sea, Irish Sea or English Channel. The two most popular routes, however, were Harwich - Hoek van Holland and Holyhead - Dublin, both of which are rail-served at the British end and, in the case of Hoek van Holland, has easy rail access on the Dutch side.

Interestingly, some travellers between England and France used the ferry in one direction and Eurostar in the other. Responses were also received on some journeys between Scotland and the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland Isles.

Critical comments were received on some of the bus links to seaports, often tied to concerns about which type of traveller is first allowed to leave the vessel (that is, motorised passengers before foot passengers).

While most responses came from Great Britain, Railfuture was also pleased to receive some from Ireland and the Netherlands.

The questionnaires were being analysed during October and a report is due to be issued at the end of November. It will be available on [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk) but paper copies can also be obtained from Trevor Garrod 15 Clapham Rd, Lowestoft. NR32 1RQ, UK

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN 2014

These important elections will take place on May 25<sup>th</sup> (except in at least one Member State, which will hold them on May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

Our member association Railfuture had already written to all the main political parties in Great Britain making 9 points to them as they draw up their manifestos for the election.



Some of these points refer specifically to the British situation, but others could apply to parliamentary candidates elsewhere.

**1.** Do you believe that the European Parliament should have more powers? Should it be able to introduce legislation on transport, for example?

**2.** Would you support moves to ease and encourage rail travel through the Channel Tunnel?

(a) For example, the 30-minute check-ins for passport control, baggage and security checks of all passengers boarding Eurostar services in England, France and Belgium and elsewhere are also an expensive deterrent to new service providers and for future long-distance through journeys such as Manchester to Paris or London to Frankfurt.

(b) In what other possible ways could such checks be done?

**3.** The European Commission is working on an EU-Journeyplanner which would provide information to make it easier to plan and

international multi-modal journey. Do you consider this a worthwhile project?

**4.** The European Parliament has recently considered a report on common rights for passengers in all modes of public transport. Do you support this move or do you have any reservations about it?

**5.** The 2011 EU White Paper on Transport contained ambitious targets for reducing carbon emissions and for a shift of more passengers and freight on to rail. Do you support these targets? Would you press for clear steps towards these targets - which may include measures which could be taken within the 2014-18 parliamentary session?

**6.** In 2009 the EU adopted an Urban Transport Action Plan. It envisages an ultimate elimination of carbon emissions in urban areas. Would you support steps to reduce car traffic and encourage electrified public transport in cities?

**7.** The European Union has encouraged and invested in Trans European Networks (TEN-Ts) for both road and rail. How do you see these developing in the future? Should there be any changes?

**8.** What is your view on megatrucks? Should Heavy Goods Vehicle weights be increased and, if so, only under certain enforceable conditions?

**9.** Aviation fuel is untaxed. This gives aviation an unfair advantage over other transport modes. Should the EU take any action on this issue? If so, what action?

## BURSTING THE SPANISH AVE BUBBLE

*Article issued in El Periódico de Catalunya*

The Alvia train crash in Santiago de Compostela has bursted the bubble of the Spanish AVE (Alta Velocidad Española) and shown, as ever before, the inconsistency of the high speed Spanish miracle. I stress "Spanish" because this is at the

same time both the key policy of its arise and the penance that now it must suffer. As everybody knows, except Spain, not any other European country has linked its national brand with fast trains. Neither France, Italy, Germany, Belgium or the UK have done this with their fast trains, which they are known, respectively, as TGV, Frecciarossa, ICE, Thalys and Eurostar. Successive Aznar's governments, then Zapatero and now again Rajoy, have continued to promote the concept of high speed linked to the brand Spain. The AVE has been the great banner of the Spanish nationalism in its purpose of structuring politically Spain in favour of their interests and braking the claims of the Spanish periphery, always so unruly with the courtesan power of Madrid. Do you remember the litany of "placing all Spanish provincial capitals within four hours of Madrid"? Spanish nationalism has strengthened its national coherence discourse riding on the back of the AVE and becoming it into a territorial right instead of a profitable infrastructure. So that, it is now quite clear that having mixed the AVE concept with the brand Spain is a mistake of tragic consequences. Nobody in the whole world will easily forget the 78 killed in an accident that seems to bear the seal of a real fudge.

### **Security systems**

How is it possible that the fabulous safety system ERTMS does not deliver a train Alvia, when entering Santiago it changes to the regulatory area ASFA, as it happens in Madrid and as it recently happened in Barcelona, with the speed limit which is not that of high speed, but that of current speed? ASFA system works very well at low speeds. It is designed to prevent collisions between trains on the same track but not for lowering speed trains running at a runaway speed. For this purpose an ERTMS or ATP system is needed.

What happened in Santiago is actually very serious. The crazed Alvia train should have never entered the ASFA regulatory area faster than 100 km / h. When the AVE trains enter Madrid from Barcelona, the ERTMS system

delivers trains at this speed in the vicinity of Atocha (surrounding area of Madrid). Very serious is also the decision of removing more than a hundred of regional trains, based on the statistical lie of weak traffic, while hundreds of km of high-speed train are being built with traffics so weak as the line of Pobla de Segur (Catalonia) has.

### **A real tease**

A tough situation is posed when after investing lots of money, the final agreement between Renfe and SNCF for running trains through the new HSL tunnel in the French border just foresee 5 daily trains between Barcelona and France, a real tease. Another serious situation can be found in the Barcelona- Valencia rail corridor, the best at Spanish level, when we see that the speed of its trains is today the same than 20 years ago for the simple reason that trains do not run through Madrid, forgetting that this corridor is the most productive of Renfe. And what to say when we see that the prognosis of passengers in the corridor Madrid-Barcelona-French border, with extension to the Basque Country through Ebro river, was three times higher than the real figures of passengers of today?

The dramatic accident in Santiago must be a before and an after in Spanish rail development, which should look further than its own nose and pay more attention to how things are being done in Europe.

Barcelona, the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2013



Pau Noy  
Industrial Engineer

## **HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR JOURNEY?**

Bus operators in Sweden want to abolish cash payments and expect passengers to pay for their journeys by other methods, such as smartcards. The matter is. being referred to the Swedish

Consumer Authority (Konsumentverket) by our member association Resenårsforum and also led to a detailed discussion at the EPF Council meeting on October 19th. There have been similar moves in some other European countries.

In urban transport, in particular, cashless travel can speed up services, to the benefit of both passengers and operators, and make life easier and safer for staff. However, it can also discriminate against vulnerable people and make things difficult for occasional visitors to a city or area.

We therefore agreed that :

- everybody must be enabled to use public transport and be able to pay for it.
- payment, in cash, must be possible if the customer comes with a reasonable amount of money (not a 100 Euro note for a 1 Euro fare).
- if tickets or smartcards are also on sale at other outlets (such as shops or kiosks), this fact must be well publicised.
- payments by smartcard, mobile phone, credit/debit cards have all become possible in recent years and, to help Europeans and visitors to Europe to move about easily, a degree of standardisation and compatibility is needed.

## MEETING WITH EUROSTAR

EPF colleagues from Belgium, France and Great Britain met managers of Eurostar in Brussels on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, for a very useful discussion. Eurostar are looking at all forms of assistance offered to various groups (such as wheelchair users and unaccompanied minors) to see how accessibility can be improved. They are upgrading their website to give better information when services are disrupted and also to make possible bookings to a wider range of destinations.

By the end of 2015, a fleet of ten new Siemens trains will be in service and most of the existing fleet will have been refurbished. There are plans to run a through London - Amsterdam service in 2016 and usage of the through trains from London to Aix-en-Provence earlier this year was encouraging. We were pleased to learn that Eurostar is reinstating the "any Dutch station" add-on to its tickets from Great Britain; and that discussions for through tickets to major German cities are progressing well.

It was also pleasing to learn that single Paris metro tickets are now being sold in the bar-buffet of Eurostar trains. Less pleasing was that Brussels JUMP tickets still cannot be bought in this way. However, it was pointed out to us that a Eurostar ticket from England is to "zone de Bruxelles / zone Brussel" and so can be used for onward Belgian Railways trains to other stations in the city - such as Schumann if you have business in the European quarter!

## FUTURE EPF MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

The EPF Administrative Council will next meet on Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Lille, France; on Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup> in Cologne (Köln), Germany; and on Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup> in Brussels, Belgium. It will then meet on Saturday January 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 at a place to be decided.

The 2014 Conference and Annual General Meeting will be on March 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in Milan, Lombardy, Italy.

We had agreed in principle to hold our 2015 Conference and Annual General Meeting in Hungary. It will be on Friday/Saturday March 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> 2015 and after considering the options, our Council has decided to hold it in Budapest. It



will be an opportunity to learn more about the work of our two Hungarian member associations VEKE and DERKE. On the Sunday after the conference we normally offer a choice of two excursions. It is planned to have a visit to places of historical and transport interest in the city of Budapest and to offer an excursion by train to Debrecen in eastern Hungary.

## A ROLE FOR NIGHT TRAINS?

EPF Chairman Trevor Garrod has had an article published in the Austrian magazine 'Regionale Schienen' (issue 3/2013) entitled "Hat der Nachtzug Zukunft?" ("Does the night train have a future?")

The article was written in consultation with several other EPF members. It analyses reasons for the decline in sleeper services over the past 20 years, but calls for more market research into the demand for them and the price that passengers would be prepared to pay; and a new look at financing and operating issues. The article suggests that the night train can have a future, provided that it runs at a convenient time and at a reasonable price, and that arrival time, reservation and ticket distribution are customer-friendly - especially for international travellers.

The article is in German but has also been translated into English and French. If you would like a copy, please contact Trevor

Garrod, 15 Clapham Road South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ or email [trevorgarrod2000@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:trevorgarrod2000@yahoo.co.uk)

Ein Exemplar von der Zeitschrift "Regionale Schienen" können Sie erhalten, indem sie diese Webseite besuchen: [www.regionale-schienen.at/abo](http://www.regionale-schienen.at/abo) Ein RS-Abo zum Preis von 29 Euro (Inland) und 34 Euro (Ausland) inklusive Versandkosten ist auch zu bestellen. Das Abo enthält 4 Ausgaben RS-Fachzeitschrift, 12 Ausgaben RS-Express und alle Sonderausgaben des jeweiligen Jahres.

## PROPOSED HOTEL GUIDE FOR RAIL TRAVELLERS

Albert Lambert, chairman of the EPF Work Group on Long-distance Travel, proposes to do a project on hotels near stations, which members of EPF affiliated associations can recommend.

It could be a hotel near a station or a hotel which is easy to reach by public transport from a station. Are you able to assist Albert with this project? Can you recommend a hotel or a website or other source of information which you have found helpful?

If so, please contact [albert.lambert@education.lu](mailto:albert.lambert@education.lu) in French, German or English.

## GAPS IN THE EUROPEAN LONG-DISTANCE RAIL NETWORK

We congratulate Michael Bienick, a member of EPF's Work Group on Long-distance Travel, on obtaining his Bachelor qualification. He wrote a thesis on the above topic, identifying eleven reasons for the gaps. Some of these are technical, others result from funding problems, unequal modal competition and the absence of co-operation across national boundaries.

Michael acknowledges EU intentions to remedy the shortcomings but describes the track record of previous strategies, based mainly on competition, as "doubtful."

For a substantial improvement, he concludes, the nations of Europe should formulate and promote a clear target. In many EU countries, an intensive discussion is needed concerning the future of transport in general and the role of the railways in particular.

In that discussion, the external costs of transport, location policy and the role of long-distance train services for attaining climate goals must be addressed.

## REPRESENTING EPF...

EPF continues to be represented at many international gatherings, enabling us to put our members' views and experiences to decision-makers and opinion-formers, and to learn things which will be useful to EPF and its member associations. Here are some of the things which we have done since July.

July 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> - Kurt Hultgren attended an ERA working party for the revision of the PRM TSI in Lille

July 9<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended the Rail Forum Europe event.

July 10<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended an SNCF meeting on ticketing.

July 17<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin attended a meeting in Brussels of the Steering Group that acts as the board of the European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC).

In July, September and October Willy Smeulders attended meetings of the European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC).

August 29<sup>th</sup> - Trevor Garrod represented EPF on the judging panel for the Bus Excellence Awards - won by the city transport operation of Alba Iulia, Romania.

On the same day Josef Schneider chaired a press conference in Berlin, on air passenger rights proposals, with Michael Cramer MEP and Professor Roland Schmid. Josef made the point that, under proposed new rules, 72% of passengers currently entitled to compensation because of late flights etc, would now go away with nothing.

September 4<sup>th</sup> - Kurt Hultgren attended an ERA working party for the revision of the PRM TSI in Lille.

September 9<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders and Maurice Losch attended a meeting for NGOs organised by DG Environment.

September 12<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders represented us at a SHIFT<sup>2</sup>RAIL meeting.

September 18<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended an AWT meeting.

September 19<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin represented EPF at the European Commission's meeting on Rail Market Monitoring Studies in Brussels.

September 23<sup>rd</sup> - Christopher Irwin chaired meeting of European Railway Agency Financial, Budgetary & Staff-related Issues Board Sub-Committee in Brussels

September 25<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended a Steering Committee meeting on future governance of the Telematics Application for Passengers TSI.

September 30<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders represented EPF at a Forsterrail meeting.

October 3<sup>rd</sup> - Christopher Irwin attended meeting of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Transport Advisory Group in Brussels.

October 3<sup>rd</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended the Regions of Connected Knowledge meeting on Making the Case of Measuring Impacts of New Rail.

October 7<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin attended Vice-President Siim Kallas' advisory Rail Strategy Platform.

October 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> - Trevor Garrod gave a presentation at the Railway Days of the Wider Black Sea Area in Bucharest, dealing with Inter City and urban rail.

October 14<sup>th</sup> - Rian van der Borgt and Willy Smeulders attended a Stakeholder Meeting with National Enforcement Bodies.

October 15<sup>th</sup> - Rian van der Borgt and Varujan Apelian attended a Workshop on Rail Passengers' Rights organised by CIT and CER.

October 15<sup>th</sup> – Willy Smeulders attended the ERRAC meeting.

October 16<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders represented EPF at a meeting on Integrated Ticketing in the European Parliament.

October 17<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin gave a presentation to the TEN-T Days in Tallinn on the development of Trans-European networks.

October 17<sup>th</sup> - Gilles Laurent represented EPF at the first meeting of the Citizens' Mobility Forum, linked to the "Smart Move" bus and coach project, in Kortrijk, Belgium.

October 18<sup>th</sup> – Janet Cooke, Willy Smeulders and another person attended a meeting with Eurostar

October - Josef Schneider has had an article in the TÜV-SÜD Journal, stating "In the planning of rail projects the passenger must stand in the foreground."

October 18<sup>th</sup> – Willy Smeulders attended Eurostar meeting and a Benelux meeting on EPF strategy

October 22<sup>nd</sup> - Christopher Irwin and Willy Smeulders attended a meeting of the ERRAC Steering Group.

October 22<sup>nd</sup> - Trevor Garrod took part in the London meeting of the Association of European Rail Agents.

October 25<sup>th</sup> - Rian van der Borgt co-ordinated and submitted EPF comments on Access to multi-modal traffic and travel data in the EU.

November 8<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin spoke on air passenger rights at the annual conference of the European Air Law Association, Madrid.

November 12<sup>th</sup> - Trevor Garrod gave a presentation of passenger rights at the European Rail Congress.

November 15<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin attended the annual plenary meeting of ERRAC in Brussels.

November 18<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin chaired meeting of European Railway Agency Financial, Budgetary & Staff-related Issues Board Sub-Committee in Brussels.

November 19<sup>th</sup> - Trevor Garrod gave a presentation on passenger expectations at a station, and chaired a panel, at the Railway Telecommunications Conference in Amsterdam.

November 22<sup>nd</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended a Steering Committee meeting of the Telematics Application for Passengers TSI.

November 26<sup>th</sup> - Christopher Irwin chaired a meeting of the Board of ERA in Lille.

November 26<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended the Rial Forum meeting.

December 3<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended the All Way Ticketing Advisory Board.

December 10<sup>th</sup> - Willy Smeulders attended the 31 BS meeting of the UITP project.

December 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> - Kurt Hultgren attended an ERA working party for the revision of the PRM TSI in Lille.

December 13<sup>th</sup> – Mobility Day on “What does the customer expect ?”, organised by NMBS/SNCB in Brussels; presentations were given by Trevor Garrod, Ariën Kruyt and Kees Smilde and at least five other Belgian colleagues took part.

## THALYS OBTAINS SERVICE QUALITY CERTIFICATION

On August 26<sup>th</sup>, Pierre Havelange of the Association des clients des transport publics represented EPF at the public award of quality certification to the international train operator Thalys for its Paris - Brussels high speed service.

The press release to mark the event acknowledged the role of EPF in the certification process, which included an audit of 22 key criteria including punctuality, information, welcome, comfort, cleanliness and on-board services including catering.

The certification has been awarded to over 250 products and services in France since 1947 and his is the first time that it has been received by an international train operator.

## THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION LAUNCHES THE “CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY”



Commission triples investment in European infrastructures.

Allocating €26 billion for the period 2014 – 2020, the Commission is opting to build a European core transport network by establishing nine new major Corridors: 2 North–South, 3 East–West, and 4 diagonal; for that the Commission triples its investment in European infrastructures.

This significant investment is allocated under "Connecting Europe Facility" (CEF), the EU's new funding mechanism supporting the development of high-performing, sustainable and efficiently interconnected trans-European networks in the field of energy, telecommunications and transport.

Reshaping the map of European infrastructures means allowing a smoother and safer circulation of goods and people.

In this line, commenting on the opening of new European Corridors, Vice-President Kallas put in mind once again that “Transport is vital to the European economy” and that the new infrastructure policy will “put in place a powerful European transport network across 28 Member States to promote growth and competitiveness”. The existing patchwork of European roads, railways, airports and canals will be turned into a

unified trans-European transport network (TEN-T), a real backbone of Europe 's single market, easing connections between Eastern and Western areas.

Further information and a map of the new corridors are available on the EC website.

EPF agrees with the importance of transport infrastructure for the European society. Our citizens’ initiative based association wants to stress that transport infrastructure is a public equipment, paid by the tax payers and managed by politics, that has to serve society and its citizens.

## EPF RAISES ISSUES WITH COMMUNITY OF EUROPEAN RAILWAYS

The Community of European Railways organises a twice-yearly meeting of its Customer Liaison Group. EPF participates in the work of this Group.

At its October meeting, two issues raised by us were discussed:

1. Disruption caused by engineering work - how it is handled and the need to inform customers well in advance.
2. New rules on the validity of international tickets.

The points raised about engineering work will be fed back to the relevant CER working group. Both issues will be discussed further at the next Customer Liaison Group meeting, on April 2nd. Please send your further experiences of engineering work - good or bad - to Josef Schneider at [josef.schneider@epf.eu](mailto:josef.schneider@epf.eu)

## JOINT ACTION IN REGION OF PYRENNEES - MÉDITERRANÉE

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, representatives of our French and Catalan associations, together with five local groups, met in Vilafranca de Conflent/Villefranche de Conflent to discuss the problems of public transport in this region which covers part of south-west France and north-east Spain.

They agreed to work more closely together as an alliance and to meet again in the autumn. A key concern is the lack of co-ordination between the regional services of SNCF and Renfe, which is seen as restricting the right of mobility of European citizens. There is a need to overcome the technical and political constraints in the rail sector, as had already been achieved in the road sector.

The alliance sees it as important to introduce even-interval regional services, on the Swiss model, with connections being maintained at five key hubs: Latour-de-Carol, Villefranche, Cerbère/Port Bou, Perpignan and Narbonne.



Members will compile a dossier on the actual state of public transport services and propose a plan of action.

An Annual Conference will be organised for all players to discuss the improvement of train and bus links throughout the Euroregion.

## WELCOME TO NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER IN POLAND!

Przyjazne Latanie, the Polish Air Passengers' Association, has joined EPF as an Associate Member. You can read about them on their website [www.friendlyflying.org/](http://www.friendlyflying.org/)



The association was formed at the start of 2013 as an independent consumer watchdog organisation. They promote sustainable development of transport, caring for balanced development of air travel with careful consideration of ecology, ethics and other social aspects.

You can contact Mr Jaroslaw Nowicki on [przyjaznelatanie@gmail.com](mailto:przyjaznelatanie@gmail.com)

## QUESTION MARK OVER FUTURE OF HAMBURG - VIENNA/BUDAPEST SERVICE

There have been reports that the Euro City train service currently linking Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Brno and then either Vienna or Bratislava and Budapest will cease in its present form in December 2015.

Instead there will be a Hamburg - Prague service, and it is not clear what will operate southwards from the Czech capital.

We understand that Deutsche Bahn may prefer to work with Regiojet in the Czech Republic rather than České Dráhy. There have also been reports that Austrian Railjet trains may link Prague with Vienna.

Obviously the service provides many journey possibilities - such as Berlin - Prague or Vienna -

Dresden. It would be interesting to know how many people use it end -to-end. Nevertheless, having to change trains can be a disincentive, as it would make the journey slower overall and more stressful.

EPF's Chairman has been in correspondence with our member associations in the countries concerned and with some outside bodies and it is hoped that a common approach to the train operators concerned can be made.

On the wider issue of the future of Euro City trains, Ian McDonald (of our British member association Railfuture and EPF Long-distance Travel Work Group) will introduce a discussion at a meeting called by the Green Party at the European Parliament on December 5th.

## EPF CONFERENCE IN 2014

**EPF invites you to participate in the Annual Conference in Milano on 14-15-16 March 2014.**

Detailed information is available on the EPF-website [www.epf.eu](http://www.epf.eu) where you can also book; or you can contact us at the TTB office Kortrijksesteenweg 304, B-9000 Gent, Belgium.

### COLOPHON

*Contributors to this bulletin include:*

*Marc Broeckaert, Trevor Garrod, Kurt Hultgren, Christopher Irwin, Stijn Lewyllie, Pau Noy, Josef Schneider, Willy Smeulders, ...*