



A breather from the lockdowns

European Combined Transport volumes changed minimally, down by 1,43% during the July-September period of 2020 demonstrating the breather that the slower spread of the coronavirus pandemic allowed after the Spring lockdowns. The year-to-date reduction in intermodal transport performance has been somewhat lower than the decline in the EU GDP. The ongoing economic disruption is foreseen to weigh heavily on Combined Transport. While the sector is working hard to maintain services and to acquire new customers, the sentiment of CT actors for the next 12-month period stands at 'slightly negative'.

Rail freight seemed to have been operating without many of the obstacles that hindered the circulation of trucks during the sudden lockdowns imposed during the Spring. The easing of the border crossing restrictions together with the "green lane concept" – quickly invented and championed by the European Commission – has meant that the obstacle rapidly evaporated. In its place came traffic-free motorways, record low fuel prices and hauliers desperate to hold on to their market shares. Road freight rates rapidly declined to a two-year low.

The compensation of railway transport emerged as a necessity. The European Commission drafted a proposal, which was passed by the European legislator in October enabling the waiver of track access charges – the most practical way to extend support to both passenger and freight transport by rail. UIRR has pleaded with rail freight undertakings to pass on the track access charge rebates that they may receive to the Combined Transport Operators, who bear the commercial risk for the intermodal trains that they struggled to refrain from cancelling to maintain service quality levels.

Long-term rail freight sector initiatives progressed even as the pandemic caused significant daily challenges. While the Berlin Declaration – organised by the German Council Presidency – offered the opportunity for Member State governments to attest to their intentions for having more rail freight, the accompanying Sector Statement Group report confirmed the considerable progress achieved by the sector players. These reorganisation efforts will fix several of the causes that result in the inconsistent quality performance of rail freight in Europe.

The European legislative scene has been focused on the Multiannual Financial Framework, the 7-year EU budget, and Next Generation EU, the €750 billion post-COVID economic recovery package of the block. Rail freight and intermodal transport offer several opportunities for Member States to use these funds in an efficient way that also takes them closer to their respective decarbonisation objectives.

UIRR produced the European Intermodal Summit videoconference on 27 October. The line-up of speakers included Transport Commissioner Adina-Ioana Valean, German State Secretary Steffen Bilger, EP TRAN Committee First Vice Chair István Újhelyi alongside 12 intermodal CEOs. The focus of attention at the well-attended conference was on the solutions that Combined Transport delivered to the European society and economy since its inception, as well as the efficient solutions that it presently offers to counter the significant challenges of our day.

Ralf-Charley Schultze – President

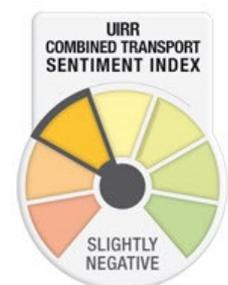
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UIRR Quarterly CT Performance Gauge



Business outlook for the 12 months between 1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021



**Rail Freight Day
 Conference**

Online event, 10 December 2020



**International Trade Fair
 for logistics**

Munich, 4-7 May 2021

Quality Performance of Rail Freight

Austria and France to waive track access charges of freight trains

July 2020

Making use of the European Regulation that permits the waiver of track access charges both Austria and France, committed to cutting this most significant of operational costs so as to provide a much needed COVID-19-related relief to the sector.

Links: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1604-french-freight-access-charges-waived.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1619-reduction-of-track-access-changes-in-austria-from-autumn.html>

Transalpine market share of rail freight under attack from the road

August 2020

Transalpine rail freight volumes declined in Austria and Switzerland during 2019, which the French growth could not counterbalance.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1603-transalpine-traffic-report-for-2019-released.html>

Germany pledges €500 million to R&D for rail freight

June 2020

The European Commission approved the €500 million worth of R&D funding for rail freight that the German government has pledged over the 2020-2024 period.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1624-ec-approves-german-scheme-to-support-rad-in-rail-freight-.html>

Ceneri base tunnel opens: 2 hours less on Rotterdam-Milan route

September 2020

28 years after the commencement of its construction, the New Railway-Alpentransversale (NEAT) has been completed with the commissioning of the Ceneri base tunnel in Switzerland.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1623-ceneri-base-tunnel-commissioned-on-4-september.html>

Reform proposals formulated for Polish rail freight

September 2020

Dariusz Stefanski, CEO of PCC Intermodal, laid out his reform proposals for Polish rail freight during the RailFreight Summit conference in Poznan. Accordingly, the track access charge should be fully reimbursed if the timetable speed is below 40km/h.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1658-when-average-speed-dips-below-40kmh-railways-should-be-free.html>

Capital raise in the DB Group heavily criticised

September 2020

The €5 billion capital increase of the Deutsche Bahn group has been heavily criticised by the competitors of DB, who include several non-incumbent infrastructure managers as well as railway undertakings not receiving such funding from the state.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1645-bahn-konkurrenten-protestieren-gegen-hilfe-fuer-staatskonzern.html>

Berlin declaration and progress on sector initiatives

September 2020

EU Ministers of Transport reiterated their commitment to advance the cause of rail freight. The rail freight sector pledged 11 actions of its own to assist this process, one of which – covering ETA – is coordinated by UIRR. The progress is promising.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1641-uirr-press-release-berlin-declaration-ssg-progress-report.html>

COVID-19 relief measures offered to the rail sector by Europe

September 2020

The complete waiver of track access charges and mark-ups if applicable alongside reservation fees due if cancelling train paths have become possible for 2020 with the new European legislation. The Commission may extend the validity of the Regulation to 2021 if the pandemic justifies it.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1639-uirr-press-release-covid-19-relief-measures-to-rail-freight-are-welcome.html>

UIC-UIRR Combined Transport Report published

November 2020

UIC and UIRR have collaborated on the most recent edition of the Report on European Combined Transport by rail, which found that intermodal rail is not only the most dynamically growing production system of rail freight, but it already contributes 43% in tonne-kilometre terms.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1675-2020-report-on-combined-transport-in-europe.html>

Fair, Mode-neutral Regulatory Framework

Truck CO₂ emissions more than double between 1990-2019

June/July 2020

Austrian NGO VCÖ found that the CO₂ emissions of trucks have grown by 128% between 1990 and 2019. Austria will have to reduce its freight transport-related CO₂ emissions by 36% to meet 2030 targets.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1629-vcoe-publication-on-freight-transport.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1629-vcoe-publication-on-freight-transport.html)

9 Member States challenge Mobility Package 1 at the EUCJ

October 2020

9 Member States submitted a formal legal challenge against the EU legislation contained in Mobility Package 1 at the European Union Court of Justice.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1670-hungary-contests-eu-mobility-package-with-cjeu-.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1670-hungary-contests-eu-mobility-package-with-cjeu-.html)

Enhancement of Intermodal Transport

North America: intermodal transport is on the rebound

September 2020

Intermodal transport volumes in North America rebounded in the third quarter and despite the still struggling transcontinental container shipping, year-to-date the sector is only minimally below its 2019 performance.

[Links: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1617-us-intermodal-traffic-trending-in-right-direction.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1617-us-intermodal-traffic-trending-in-right-direction.html)
[- http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1652-in-ianas-august-numbers-first-signs-of-a-return-to-normalcy.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1652-in-ianas-august-numbers-first-signs-of-a-return-to-normalcy.html)

Russia to subsidise container traffic that transits by rail

August 2020

According to the decree, the new measure concerns the transit railway connections between the Russian seaports in the Pacific and the harbours on the Baltic and Black Seas together with the border crossings to Finland, Belarus, Poland and Azerbaijan.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1627-russia-implements-subsidies-for-transit-container-trains.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1627-russia-implements-subsidies-for-transit-container-trains.html)

China-Europe intermodal rail traffic reaches new records

September 2020

Greater customs process efficiency has contributed materially to the increase of the number of freight trains between China and Europe to 7600 during the first 8 months of 2020.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1648-china-europe-7601-freight-train-trips-in-first-8months.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1648-china-europe-7601-freight-train-trips-in-first-8months.html)

Intermodal rail plays key role in rail freight growth in Hungary

September 2020

Intermodal rail contributed substantially to the 7,5% increase in tonne-kilometre performance realised by the Hungarian rail freight sector during the first three quarters of 2020.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1647-intermodal-performs-strongly-during-h22020-in-hungary.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1647-intermodal-performs-strongly-during-h22020-in-hungary.html)

Price reduction for RoLa on the Brenner route

September 2020

Rail Cargo Operator has announced a reduction in the price of carriage of full trucks by rail, also known as Rollende Autobahn (RoLa) services, on the Brenner route to encourage the shifting of traffic from road to rail.

[Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1646-oebb-rcg-senkt-preise-auf-rola-brennerachse-.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1646-oebb-rcg-senkt-preise-auf-rola-brennerachse-.html)

Nordic region has ambitious plans for Combined Transport

August 2020

The 5th UIRR Nordic Seminar was organised with the support of the COMBINE Project that aims to boost intermodal transport in the Baltic Sea Region. The meeting – for the first time – had to be organised as an online event.

A positive dynamic has been accounted for from the region. The participants expressed strong hope for Sweden to begin implementing the plan devised by Trafikverket, which foresees significant improvements to the most important railway line in the southern regions of the country.

Combined Transport actors ranging from terminal managers and railways through Combined Transport Operators to intermodal logistic service providers from all around the region.

Substantial terminal- and port-related improvements were reported that will support the continued development of the intermodal business.

Personnel News

KOMBIVERKEHR
 September 2020



The former chair of Kombiverkehr's Board of Directors, **Gudrun Winner-Athens**, has been admitted to the Logistics Hall of Fame in recognition for her work to engineer modal shift from road to rail and her commitment to Combined Transport. [Link: http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1644-logistics-hall-of-fame-gudrun-winner-athens-.html](http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1644-logistics-hall-of-fame-gudrun-winner-athens-.html)

RCO
 September 2020



For more than two years **Christopher Müller** has been the CEO of RCO-CSKD/AT and has now accepted a new exciting challenge at Logwin Solutions. Bernhard Ebner will succeed him with all agendas. We would like to take the opportunity to thank Christopher Müller for the excellent cooperation and the great commitment.

RCO



Bernhard Ebner has been named the Head of Business Unit Intermodal and Member of the Management Board at the Rail Cargo Group in 2018. Mr Ebner has worked in the field of logistics for over 30 years – most recently as the CEO of Berger Logistics. With great experience and high motivation he will have both functions now as head of business unit intermodal and CEO of RCO-AT.

Members' News

AMBROGIO
 October 2020

Ambrogio Trasporti among the top 400 Italian companies on 2016-19 growth performance

[Click: https://ambrogiointermodal.com/en/news/champions-of-growth-2021/](https://ambrogiointermodal.com/en/news/champions-of-growth-2021/)

EAST WEST IL
 September 2020

East-West Gate, the new name and logo of Fényeslitke terminal

[Click: https://eastwestil.com/](https://eastwestil.com/)

KOMBIVERKEHR
 July 2020

Kombiverkehr successfully tests transport of extra-heavy 72t on 52-foot wagons

[Click: https://www.railfreight.com/railfreight/2020/07/29/kombiverkehr-tanktainers-successfully-roll-across-europe/](https://www.railfreight.com/railfreight/2020/07/29/kombiverkehr-tanktainers-successfully-roll-across-europe/)

LINEAS
 October 2020

Antwerp Mainhub Terminal doubles its capacity to expedite timber shipments towards China

[Click: https://lineasintermodal.net/en/news/20201022_lineas-and-ews-group-double-fumigation-capacity-in-port-of-antwerp](https://lineasintermodal.net/en/news/20201022_lineas-and-ews-group-double-fumigation-capacity-in-port-of-antwerp)

LUGO TERMINAL
 July 2020

New website

[Click: https://www.lugoterminal.com/](https://www.lugoterminal.com/)

MERCITALIA INTERMODAL
 August 2020

New website

[Click: http://www.mercitaliaintermodal.it/](http://www.mercitaliaintermodal.it/)

METRANS
 August 2020

New website

[Click: https://metrans.eu/](https://metrans.eu/)

RAILPORT ARAD
 September 2020

New website

[Click: https://www.railportarad.ro/en](https://www.railportarad.ro/en)

Key Dates & Events

1 December, online	Competition Law in Transport
3 December 2020, online	Northsea Med Rail Freight Corridor Terminal Advisory Group meeting
4 December 2020, online	20th Florence Rail Forum on the governance of Rail Freight Corridors
10 December 2020, Vienna	Rail Freight Day Conference
19/20 January 2021, online	14. BME/VDV-Forum Schienengüterverkehr
4-7 May 2021, Munich	Transport Logistic Fair and Conference
20 May 2021, Brussels	UIRR General Assembly

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