

Input to the review of EU Transport Policy

The EU Transport White Paper, the basic document outlining European transport policy objectives, is coming up for its mid-term review by the European Commission. UIRR, the industry association of Road-Rail Combined Transport, has prepared its input to this effort.

Combined Transport offers the most obvious solution to the fulfilment of the ultimate European transport policy objective of sustainability - when it comes to long(er) distance freight transport. And all this without compromising the fundamental desire not to curb mobility.

Viewing the poor performance of delivering on the aims of the 2011 Transport White Paper until this day, it is obvious that changes need to be made if truly wanting to achieve the ultimate objectives:

- 1) Pro-rata energy efficiency of freight transport needs to be made the prime key performance indicator.
- 2) Everyday matters of transport, both in case of investments and daily operations, need to be explicitly distanced from politically motivated decision-making (*de-politicisation*).

Horizontal solutions should be far deeper exploited by policy-makers, if desiring to make a meaningful advance towards the commonly shared objective of sustainability. This would require a departure from the vertical silo-mentality that each mode should solve its problems on its own, as well as a correction of price signals and the general reinforcement of the single European transport market to enable fair competition.

The European Commission needs to spearhead an initiative to achieve a voluntary harmonisation of track access contracts and track access charging principles to fulfil the Single European Railway Area. Similar action would be needed to proliferate homogeneous railway operating standards and practices with Europe's partners to the East: from our immediate neighbours all the way to China.

Member States will also have to do much more than in the previous 5 years. National transport policy plans should be adopted - for comparability's sake in accordance with a common methodology - and publicly announced. Their implementation systematically monitored and openly reported by the European Commission.

UIRR's position paper concerning the Mid-Term Review of the 2011 Transport White Paper can be found here: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2015/mediacentre/712.html>

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Ralf-Charley Schultze

"Extensive politicisation of rail has been mentioned by former Transport Commissioner, Vice President Siim Kallas over five years ago - during his EP confirmation hearing - as one of his greatest challenges. Well, it remains the greatest challenge, but not limited to rail, rather to the entire European transport sector. Market success should not depend on political favour, rather on technical merit and management excellence." - pointed out UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze on the occasion of publishing the position paper.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport** (UIRR) represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transshipment Terminal Managers.

Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).