

2018: a decisive year for Combined Transport

The intermodal performance statistics collected by UIRR, from 39 members across 18 European countries, reflect a decisive performance in terms of number of consignments transported using Combined Transport. They reached a historic high of 8.6 million TEU (or 4.3 million UIRR consignments) in 2018. This constituted a nearly 5% increase compared to the year before. The growth was partly attributable to one-off sectoral consolidation and partly to organic growth of the members.



The UIRR Report 2018-19¹, adopted during the General Assembly of 16 May 2019, provides the details of how European Combined Transport performed in 2018, of what the challenges were, as well as what the factors that will determine the coming years are. Combined Transport is best positioned to fill environmentally sustainable (electric-powered) freight trains by shifting to the rail the cargo presently carried in long-distance trucks. However, this potential will not be achieved without the progressive amendment of the Combined Transport Directive, which should provide an enhanced and harmonized European regulatory framework for operating this typically border-crossing freight transport service – crucial if Europe is to achieve its COP21 climate targets.

The day before the General Assembly UIRR members held an extensive workshop with European Commission officials from DG MOVE to discuss the challenges that lie ahead and to consider the measures needed to improve the quality performance of rail freight, to create a fair, mode-neutral regulatory environment and to support the enhancement of Combined Transport during the coming 2019-2024 legislative period. DG MOVE Deputy Director General Maja Bakran Marcich, Land Transport Director Elisabeth Werner and Head of Unit for the Single European Railway Area, Maurizio Castelletti have offered their visions and solutions, while also listening to the participating sector representatives.



UIRR, as the association of European intermodal transport, developed its membership by adding three new members - Metrans, VIIA and WienCont, four new technology partners - Combipass, GATX Europe, Railwatch and Wielton, and signing MoUs with two national peer associations - the Rail Freight Group of the UK and USER of Romania, during 2018.

UIRR remains committed to its mission of **'Growing the market for Combined Transport based on technical merit and management excellence'**.

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Ralf-Charley Schultze

"2018 has been a decisive year for UIRR as the members of the association reported a historic high traffic performance. The development of Combined Transport is in the interest of every European citizen as intermodality offers the most efficient means to insert non-road modes of transport into longer distance logistics chains in Europe. Nevertheless, we cannot rest as political decision-makers have not yet committed to this course." - commented UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze.

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).

¹ <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/annual-reports/annual-reports/mediacentre/1188-uirr-annual-report-2018-19.html>