



Coronavirus: threats and opportunities

With most of the disturbances that clouded over the last quarter of 2019 gone and prior to the coronavirus outbreak hitting hard, Combined Transport performed relatively well by generally matching the performance of a year earlier during the first three months of 2020. The quarterly CT Performance Gauge shows a slight positive year-on-year performance after two consecutive quarters of decline.

The adverse economic effects of the pandemic-related shutdown of the European economy, regrettably, are foreseen to weigh heavily on Combined Transport as well. While the entire intermodal sector is working hard to maintain services and to acquire new customers, the sentiment of CT actors for the next 12-month period has declined to 'negative'.

Finding the solution to the macroeconomic imbalance that emerged in the surface freight transport market, due to a combination of the record low oil price and the easings of European rules of the profession that were granted to the trucking sector, is presently the greatest challenge. Like the rest of the economy, the intermodal sector will need external assistance in this endeavour, which is exacerbated by a simultaneous decline in both revenues and profitability. UIRR formulated several proposals towards the EU policymakers and the Member States, which are hoped to be pursued.

UIRR has been busy assisting in the resolution of operational difficulties at the start of the lockdown and supporting the communication effort to underline the resilient functioning of Combined Transport – also on cross-border relations.

The period has presented longer-term challenges requiring equal attention. Concerning Mobility Package 1, the European Council proceeded with officially endorsing the trialogue deal without any changes. The new paragraph 7 in Regulation 1072/2009, invented behind the closed doors of the trialogue, would severely undermine existing CT chains by allowing Member States to suspend the legal equivalence between cross-border road haulage and its corresponding Combined Transport alternative enshrined in Article 4 of the CT Directive. The sector hopes that the second reading in the European Parliament will offer if not a deletion then at least an opportunity to correct this anomaly by making the provision a truly extraordinary regulatory option only to be used under extraordinarily unique and proven conditions for only as long as these conditions prevail.

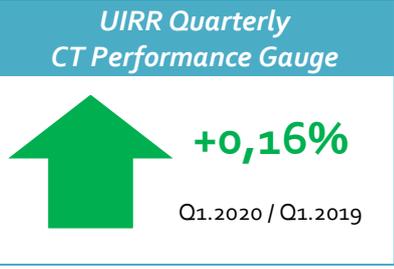
Reformulated temporary compensatory measures to Combined Transport have been announced in the United Kingdom, while the extension of support until 2023 was announced in France. Germany introduced a special incentive scheme to assist the buyers of craneable semi-trailers by covering the price difference charged for craneability of the equipment. UIRR has been advocating for Europe-wide standardised compensatory measures and a single European portal for publishing these.

UIRR welcomes new members CFL Terminals, East-West IL, Samskip and Terminali Italia, while Crokombi ceased its activities and Amber Rail transferred its membership to GYSEV Cargo. Equimodal of Zaragoza, Spain has become the latest Partner of our association. As of 2020, UIRR is donned with 71 members, partners and national peer associations based in 18 European countries.

Ralf-Charley Schultze – President

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Business outlook for the 12 months between 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021



Growing together

UIRR
 1970-2020
 INTERNATIONAL UNION
 FOR ROAD-RAIL
 COMBINED TRANSPORT

European Intermodal Summit
 - to commemorate the
 50th Anniversary of UIRR's founding
Brussels, 27 October 2020


European Logistics Platform

COVID-19: Mastering the challenges for freight transport

Webinar from 15h CET on 6 May
<http://www.european-logistics-platform.eu/en/events/covid-19-mastering-the-challenges-for-freight-transport-now-and-for-the-transition-to-the-post-virus-era.htm>

Quality Performance of Rail Freight

Germany will spend €12,2bn on rail infrastructure in 2020

January 2020

More construction sites and more operational disturbances are to be expected throughout the German railway network due to the record high spending pledged by the government.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1384-2020-record-investments-of-eur-122-billion-in-rail-infrastructure.html>

UK freight network disrupted by high number of derailments

February 2020

Infrastructure maintenance-related derailments of freight trains are being investigated by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch of the UK government to determine the causes of a growing number of mishaps that plague the British rail network.

Links: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1398-uk-freight-network-remains-disrupted-by-derailments.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1399-uk-derailment-eastleigh-caused-by-infrastructure-fault.html>

Rail traffic from China has come to a halt

February 2020

The coronavirus outbreak in China has resulted in the suspension of transcontinental container trains between Europe and the Far East.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1389-another-week-of-little-movement-in-rail-traffic-from-china.html>

Newly constructed third track along key Swiss line to aid freight

February 2020

As part of a CHF 4 billion capacity expansion project along the Geneva-Lausanne line, the construction of a third track between Coppet and Founex – at the cost of CHF 73 million – will enable the smooth and punctual operation of freight trains.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1415-construction-of-third-track-to-uphold-freight-traffic-on-busy-swiss-line.html>

Freight trains to be prioritised in Norway and the United Kingdom

March 2020

Both Norway and the United Kingdom have upgraded the traffic priority of intermodal trains on their railway network to enhance punctuality. This is clear evidence that the occasional poor-quality performance of freight trains is partly attributable to a consciously chosen low traffic prioritization.

Links: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1474-covid-19-freight-trains-in-norway-prioritised-over-passenger-traffic.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1486-uk-intermodal-trains-enjoy-same-status-as-express-passenger-services.html>

European Commission proposes 2021 as the EU Year of Rail

March 2020

Recognizing the need to bring rail freight closer to society – the electorate, as well as the policymakers – the European Commission has initiated the designation of 2021 as the European Year of Rail.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1430-uirr-press-release-eu-climate-law-proposal-2021-year-of-rail.html>

Fair, Mode-neutral Regulatory Framework

Amendment of the CT Directive withdrawn by Commission

January 2020

The European Commission has proposed the withdrawal of the CT Directive amendment unveiled as part of Mobility Package 2 in November 2017. UIRR has been calling for the revision of the legislation, crucial to Combined Transport, since 2012. The intermodal sector looks forward to the promised revealing of an even more ambitious amendment, as promised, in May 2021.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1380-uirr-press-release-withdrawal-of-the-ct-directive-amendment.html>

Swiss National Council appropriates more funding for modal shift

March 2020

Recognising the insufficient progress in removal of heavy trucks from the Swiss roads, the Nationalrat decided, with an overwhelming majority (148 against 8), the appropriation of more funding to encourage modal shift as well as it has instructed the Ministry of transport to negotiate a second railway route on the left bank of the Rhine with France and Belgium.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1449-nationalrat-verlangt-mehr-geld-fuer-verlagerung-des-gueterverkehrs.html>

Need to correct regulation-related EU freight market imbalances

April 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has brought to the surface the EU-level regulatory deficiencies of the freight transport marketplace, which periodically results in serious imbalances that can only be explained with an ineffective, modal approach to regulation. UIRR calls for a high-level reconsideration of the principle based on which EU transport legislation is devised.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1518-uirr-press-release-combined-transport-resilience-and-greening-at-the-same-time.html>

Enhancement of Intermodal Transport

New types of cargo carried on transcontinental intermodal rail

January 2020

The easing of regulatory limitations by China and Russia has given a substantial boost to transcontinental intermodal rail transport. Foodstuffs, as well as containerised bulk and liquids, sometimes falling into the dangerous goods category, can be shipped by intermodal rail.

Links: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1393-hazardous-goods-on-the-train-from-south-korea-to-poland.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1493-containerised-bulk-and-liquids-gains-popularity-on-china-russia-route.html>

Compensatory measures to CT in France, Germany and the UK

February 2020

The French government announced the extension of its CT support measure until 2023. The German government developed a new type of support measure that covers the additional cost of craneability when purchasing a new semi-trailer; this enables the easiest vertical transshipment of the semi-trailer onto a train. The UK government improved the conditions of its grant offered to rail freight, which positively impacts intermodal rail.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1402-france-paris-announces-combined-transport-aid.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1406-craneable-semi-trailers-additional-costs-qualify-for-state-compensation.html>
- <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1445-new-criteria-for-road-to-rail-grants-in-uk.html>

Port of Hamburg reaches record rail hinterland volumes in 2019

January 2020

The hinterland transport of containers from the Port of Hamburg has reached a new record in 2019, whereby 2,7 million TEUs that were transported between the Port and their inland destinations. The 10,4% growth in volume means that nearly 1-in-3 containers handled in the Port is carried by rail.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1407-port-of-hamburg-104-growth-in-rail-intermodal-hinterland-volume.html>

Construction of huge new terminal starts in The Netherlands

March 2020

The construction of a new intermodal terminal in Venlo, The Netherlands, has commenced on 28 hectares of land in March. The terminal located along the BETUWE line – Europe's only dedicated freight railway line – will have a capacity of 600.000 TEU/year.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1465-construction-of-europes-largest-inland-terminal-has-commenced.html>

New intermodal record reached on the tracks in Poland

March 2020

While total rail freight traffic declined 5,5% year-on-year in Poland, 2019 delivered 14,7% growth for intermodal rail. In terms of tonnage, intermodal rail volumes have reached an absolute record on the Polish railway network – crowning an unabated ten-year growth trend.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/news/mediacentre/1485-new-intermodal-record-on-polish-tracks.html>

Coronavirus: Combined Transport is prepared

February 2020

The European intermodal sector has confirmed its preparedness in the face of the coronavirus outbreak, preparing with a 'contactless terminal' protocol that helps to minimise human contact during the transshipment process.

Link: <http://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2020/mediacentre/1413-uirr-press-release-coronavirus-combined-transport-is-prepared.html>

Members' News

AMBROGIO TRASPORTI March 2020	COVID-19 information Click: https://ambrogiointermodal.com/en/news/covid-19-measures-in-northern-italy-no-restrictions-to-freight-transport/
BALTIC RAIL March 2020	Baltic Rail operates normally under the coronavirus outbreak Click: http://www.balticrail.com/news.html
EAST WEST IL January 2020	New state-of-the art terminal to boost Hungary-Ukraine rail freight Click: https://eastwestil.com/en/news/
GYSEV CARGO March 2020	Information for business partners on the situation caused by the 2019 coronavirus Click: https://www.gysevcargo.hu/en/news/information-for-business-partners-on-the-situation-caused-by-the-2019-ncov-coronavirus
HUPAC March 2020	Intermodal network at society's service Click: https://www.hupac.com/EN/Intermodal-network-at-society-s-service-ab999200
IMS March 2020	Measures to stem the Coronavirus Click: http://imscargo.com/content/en/media/news/news.aspx?NewsID=399&Status=1
KOMBIVERKEHR March 2020	Intermodal offer stable throughout Europe Click: https://www.kombiverkehr.de/en/service/customers/news:Kombiverkehr_KG_s_intermodal_offer_stable_throughout_Europe
LINEAS March 2020	Coronavirus: Operations continues as normal Click: https://lineasintermodal.net/en/news/coronavirus---lineas-operations-continue-as-normal
METRANS March 2020	Coronavirus: current status of Metrans service Click: https://www.metrans.eu/news/coronavirus-covid-19--current-status-metrans-service.html
NOVATRANS March 2020	COVID-19: Novatrans and Greenmodal remain operational Click: http://www.novatrans.eu/index.php/fr/l-entreprise/nos-actualites-novatrans
RCO March 2020	Rail Cargo Operator: impact of COVID-19 issue Click: https://www.railcargo.com/en/news/impact-of-Corona-issue
RALPIN March 2020	Rolling Motorway takes protective measures Click: http://www.ralpin.ch/
SAMSKIP March 2020	Operational update under COVID-19 Click: https://www.samskip.com/news/samskip-operational-update-covid-19/
T3M March 2020	COVID-19: T3M maintains its transportation plan Click: https://www.t3m.fr/covid-19-t3m-maintient-son-plan-de-transport/

Key Dates & Events

1-3 April 2020, Prague	International Rail Freight Conference (IRFC) – postponed
6 May 2020, Webinar	ELP: COVID-19 Mastering the challenge for freight transport
19 May 2020	UIRR General Assembly as videoconference
2-5 June 2020, Riga	UIC Global Rail Freight Conference (GRFC) – postponed
August 2020, Malmö	UIRR 5 th Nordic Seminar – exact date TBC
1-3 September 2020, Poznan	Rail Freight Summit
14-15 October 2020, Riga	Railtech Track Access Charges Summit
26 October 2020, Brussels	UIRR 50-year Anniversary Event
27 October 2020, Brussels	UIRR European Intermodal Summit
27-30 April 2021, Berlin	Innotrans Exhibition
27-28 May 2021, Oslo	ESPO Conference



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