

Military Mobility from a Combined Transport perspective

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the capabilities and capacities of Combined Transport from a military mobility perspective, and to formulate the suggestions of the Combined Transport Community on how this potential could be optimally released. The following documents were considered during this analysis: the REArmEurope¹ plan and the proposal on the related investments², the military mobility programme³ including the public consultation⁴, the Implementing Regulation on Dual-use Infrastructure⁵, the Directive on the Resilience of Critical Entities⁶, as well as the European Parliament rapporteurs' draft report on Military Mobility⁷ (by Petras Auštrevičius and Roberts Zīle).

Main messages

Combined Transport has substantial capabilities to support military mobility.

- A Pan-European network of over 500 daily intermodal freight trains ready to and capable of transporting military cargo on short notice.
- An extensive network of secure transshipment terminals equipped with the necessary transshipment technologies to service all kinds of intermodal trains,

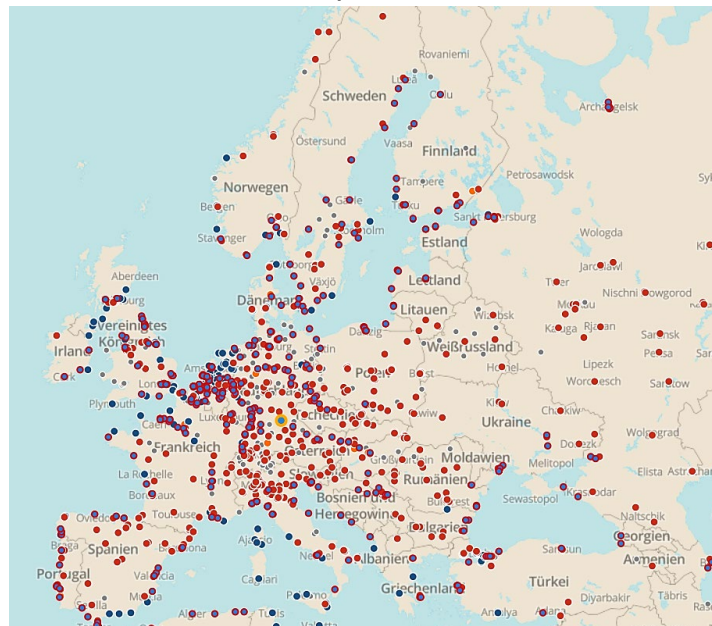


Image SGKV – Intermodal map

¹ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/769566/EPRS_BRI\(2025\)769566_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/769566/EPRS_BRI(2025)769566_EN.pdf) and

https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/65aeb731-9e07-44bf-baa9-6f122c01a1a5_en

² https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2024_2029/plmrep/AUTRES_INSTITUTIONS/COMM/COM/2025/07-16/COM_COM20250188_EN.pdf

³ https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/military-mobility_en

⁴ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/consultations/targeted-consultation-military-mobility-package_en

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1328>

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022L2557>

⁷ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CJ57-PR-774374_EN.pdf

- A fleet of 10.000 intermodal flat wagons and 4.000 different pocket wagons for the transport of rubber-wheeled military vehicles,



- 30 UIRR Combined Transport operators throughout Europe equipped with the skills, the capacity and the know-how to organise ad hoc cross-border military transport trains on short notice over the European Union railway network.

Intermodal requests

1. The **transshipment terminals** relevant for military transports along the 4 military mobility corridors should be identified and adequately designated.
2. Military-designation terminals should be **granted priority** when bidding for EU or national state aid schemes for upgrades.
3. The Dual-Use Infrastructure Regulation should be revised to **cover all unmovable transshipment technologies** that are installed at terminals.
4. **Combined Transport Operators** should be recognised in the Resilience Directive 2022/2557 as **critical entities**⁸ in their capacity of providing essential services in organising transports along the critical infrastructure of the European Union from a military mobility perspective. Combined Transport Operators should thereby become part of the Member State strategy for enhancing the resilience of such critical entities.
5. The efficient functioning and resilience of Combined Transport Operators should be ensured through the **Combined Transport Directive** and other legal instruments, such as the **Weights and Dimensions Directive**, the **TSI Telematics** Standard and the **eFTI Regulation**.

Requirements of military mobility and the capabilities of Combined Transport

A pan-European network of 500 daily intermodal trains, capable of carrying any type of military cargo, is at the disposal of military logisticians. These intermodal freight trains provide frequent connections between 1.000 transshipment terminals distributed throughout Europe.

Intermodal terminals

- are already an integral part of the railway network and are recognised as critical entities in their capacity as rail service facilities;

⁸ Operators of service facilities such as intermodal terminals are already designated as a critical entity

- are safe and secure facilities for the handling of every type of cargo, most of which offer safe temporary storage for the cargo transhipped; and
- are interconnected with the information network of the European railway infrastructure providers.

Combined Transport Operators

- are the organisers of cross-border intermodal freight transport services, they own and operate 14.000 intermodal flat and pocket wagons capable of performing most military transport assignments;
- are interconnected through standardised European digital solutions to facilitate their daily operations and to exchange data effectively with every economic actor involved in the facilitation of their services – soon including governmental enforcement authorities due to the eFTI Regulation;
- operate a network consisting of 500 daily intermodal trains that are capable of carrying most military transports; and
- possess the systems, staff and know-how needed to organise ad hoc intermodal transport trains throughout the European railway network.

Reinforcing and further enhancing the potential of Combined Transport

In 2024, the output of European door-to-door combined transport operations was about 200 billion tonne-kilometres. The average non-road distance covered exceeded 800km. This performance equated to around 20% of long-distance land transport by trucks. Combined Transport should triple its performance over the coming decades, motivated by several civilian considerations, such as energy efficiency, truck driver shortage, the need to spare the overloaded and ageing road infrastructure from the heavy transports, reducing road accidents and boosting transport safety, minimising cargo theft and boosting security, as well as environmental and climate considerations. The needs of military mobility overlap with many of these considerations. Moreover, military logisticians have been trying to incorporate the European railway infrastructure into their portfolio of solutions. Combined Transport offers the most effective method, and Combined Transport Operators have the necessary know-how.

Measures to grow Combined Transport

- The relevant intermodal terminals along the 4 military mobility corridors should be designated and resources to enhance their capabilities should be allocated.
- Funding to upgrade the road and rail last mile connections of military mobility-relevant terminals should be provided – this is also a TEN-T obligation
- The Dual-Use Infrastructure Regulation should be extended to include transhipment equipment among the subjects eligible for funding.
- The scope of the Resilience Directive should be extended to Combined Transport Operators in their capacity as Authorised Applicants (for railway infrastructure).
- Support should be provided in the Strategic Guidance documents for more and better-quality train paths for freight trains under the Railway Infrastructure Capacity Management Regulation, to reinforce the daily operation of the Combined Transport train network.
- Prioritising freight needs under the national implementation plans of the TEN-T Guidelines Regulation.
- Revision of the Combined Transport Directive and upholding the interoperability and compatibility requirements under the Weights and Dimensions Directive. A strong focus on the needs of Combined Transport when amending the TSI Telematics and during the implementation of the Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Regulation.