

EPF-Bulletin 9 – July 2011



INTRODUCTION

2011 BARCELONA CONFERENCE OF EFP - THE BIGGEST SO FAR

NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION 'TRANSPORT WHITE PAPER 2020'

SHOULD THE EU STRIVE TO DOUBLE THE MARKET SHARE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE WHOLE UNION?

PASSENGER RIGHTS IN PRACTICE – EXPERIENCES TOLD BY TREVOR GARROD

WELCOMES AND THANKS

JOURNEYS WITHOUT BORDERS

USEMOBILITY PROJECT – PROGRESS MADE

EPF PARTICIPATES IN THE REVISION OF PRM TSI RULES

INTER REGIO RAIL

RAILTEAM SURVEY – OVER A HUNDRED REPLIES TO OUR RAILTEAM SURVEY SO FAR

TALKING TRAINS, TRAMS AND BUSES IN DEBRECEN

POLISH SHIFT OF FUNDS FROM RAIL TO ROAD?

COMPARING URBAN TRANSPORT

INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYPLANNER

EPF SPEAKING ...

CONTACTS WITH INTERNATIONAL – OR BETTER INTERSTATE – TRAIN OPERATORS : MEETING WITH

THALYS

TRIREGIO – A NEW CO-OPERATION PROJECT FOR BETTER CROSS-BORDER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

EPF IS HOPEFUL ABOUT THE RECENT INITIATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO DEVELOP FURTHER

"EASY TRAVEL" BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGHOUT THE EU

A NEW PLAYER IN THE EUROPEAN RAILWAY FIELD: THE "INDEPENDENT REGULATORS' GROUP – RAIL"

SALZBURGER VERKEHRSTAGE 2011

FOR YOUR DIARY



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the ninth bulletin of the European Passengers' Federation.

How does one make international train journeys easier and attract more customers? We have continued our work to this end - for example by our questionnaire for travellers who take Rail Team high speed trains. We have begun to analyse the results.

How does one plan an international multi-modal journey? Our Federation has sent its comments on the subject of a "Journeyplanner" to the European Commission.

As for cross-border journeys between regions, we bring you some news, including a report of the recent conference at Debrecen, near the Hungarian/Romanian border.

Our members have taken part in a growing number of conferences, seminars and meetings to express views and discuss topics such as high speed trains, passengers' rights and station improvements.

Our annual conference took place in Barcelona and as usual was an interesting combination of presentations, discussions and experiences of public transport.

In this bulletin you can read reports concerning these topics and a little of our future plans (for example a comparative study of urban public transport in Europe). I hope that you will also visit our website and those of our member associations to learn more about our activities and our views.

Trevor Garrod, Chairman

INTRODUCTION

Bienvenue dans le neuvième numéro du bulletin d'activités de la Fédération Européenne des Voyageurs.

Comment rendre plus faciles les voyages internationaux par le train et attirer plus de clients? Nous avons continué nos efforts vers ce but , par exemple avec notre questionnaire de RailTeam pour les voyageurs qui prennent les trains à grande vitesse . Nous avons commencé à faire une analyse des résultats.

Comment préparer un voyage international et multimodal? Notre Fédération a transmis ses observations au sujet du "Journeyplanner" à la Commission européenne.

Quant aux voyages transfrontaliers entre des régions, nous vous en donnons des nouvelles, y compris un rapport du congrès récent à Debrecen, près de la frontière hongaro-roumaine.

Nos membres ont pris part à un nombre croissant de congrès, de séminaires et de réunions internationaux pour exprimer des opinions et discuter des thèmes comme les trains à grande vitesse, les droits des passagers et l'amélioration des gares.

Notre congrès annuel eut lieu à Barcelone et comme d'habitude ce fut une combinaison intéressante de conférences, de débats et d'expériences des transports publics.

Dans ce bulletin, vous pouvez lire des rapports concernant ces thèmes et un peu de nos plans pour l'avenir (par exemple une étude comparative des transports urbains en Europe). J'espère que vous visiterez aussi notre site web et ceux de nos associations adhérentes pour apprendre plus de nos activités et de nos opinions.

Trevor Garrod, Président

EINLEITUNG

Herzlich Willkommen zur neunten Ausgabe dieses Bulletins des Europäischen Fahrgastverbandes (EPF).

Wie können internationale Bahnreisen leichter gemacht werden und dadurch zusätzliche Kunden gewonnen werden? Wir haben unsere Arbeit zur Erreichung dieses Ziels fortgesetzt - zum Beispiel mit unserem Fragebogen für Reisende mit den Hochgeschwindigkeitszügen von Rail Team. Wir arbeiten derzeit an der Analyse der ersten Ergebnisse.

Was ermöglicht es uns Kunden, eine internationale und gleichzeitig

verkehrsträgerübergreifende Reise zu planen? Unser Verband hat der Europäischen Kommission seine Stellungnahme zum Thema "Journeyplanner" geschickt.

Sie finden in diesem Bulletin auch Informationen zu grenzüberschreitenden Reisen zwischen benachbarten Regionen. Sehen Sie dazu unter anderem den Bericht zu einer Tagung in Debrecen an der ungarisch-rumänischen Grenze.

EPF-Vertreter haben auch an einer wachsenden Zahl internationaler Tagungen, Seminare und Kongresse teilgenommen, um die Perspektive der Fahrgäste und Kunden zu vertreten. Hochgeschwindigkeitsverkehr, Fahrgastrechte, fahrgastfreundliche Gestaltung von Bahnhöfen und Haltestellen sind nur einige der Themen.

Unsere jährliche EPF-Konferenz fand 2011 in Barcelona statt mit wiederum hochkarätigen Vorträgen und Diskussionen zu allen Fragen des öffentlichen Verkehrs.

In diesem Bulletin können Sie Berichte über diese Themen und etwas über unsere Zukunftspläne lesen - zum Beispiel eine Vergleichsstudie des Großstadtverkehrs in Europa. Ich hoffe, dass Sie unsere Webseite und diejenigen unserer Mitgliedsverbände besuchen werden, um mehr über unsere Tätigkeit und unsere Meinungen zu erfahren.

Trevor Garrod, Vorsitzender

2011 BARCELONA CONFERENCE OF EPF - THE BIGGEST SO FAR

More than 80 people attended the European Passenger Federation's 9th annual conference, on March 12th in Barcelona. It was our biggest such event so far and our first such event in Spain. Our colleagues in Barcelona worked hard to provide a most impressive and enjoyable programme.

In the morning we learned about public transport developments in the city and region and the work of our Catalan member association PTP (Promoció del Transport Públic).

In the city, 30% of journeys were by public transport, 24% by car and 46% by foot or bicycle. Interestingly, 60% of the cars in the city belonged to people who did not live there. The City Council adopted a Mobility Plan every six years with the objectives of sustainability, safety, efficiency and social equality; reduction in accidents and reduction in emissions. Congestion had been reduced by 16% and EU funding helped the City Council to implement these policies.

We also had a fascinating presentation by the Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya - local and regional railways on how they had improved capacity and

attractiveness of services and also how they measured customer satisfaction.

A project was also under way to redesign bus services in Barcelona to improve both speed and interchange between services.

PTP has been campaigning for nearly two decades to improve and promote public transport. A major success had been the integrated fares agreement and another had been the creation of one single transport authority, as in London. They were lobbying for more capacity for commuter services in the Barcelona area; and in this respect it was important to decide first what services were required, then build the infrastructure to match - not vice versa.

A speaker from the Spanish National Railways (Renfe) described the development of the country's high speed rail network since 1992. Customer care had been an important element in this project, right from the start, with compensation for late running and other deficiencies. It was also important to integrate high speed lines into the rest of the network. In 2010 Renfe had a positive balance for the first time as its trains attracted passengers from cars and airlines.



In the afternoon our conference theme moved from the local, regional and national to the European perspective, with an address by Mrs Meglena Kuneva, special adviser to Siim Kallas, the EU Transport Commissioner.

Mrs Kuneva welcomed the gradual extension of passenger rights to all modes and said it was now important to

ensure that the legislation was applied effectively and consistently in all Member States. It was also important that passengers should know their rights and so Vice-President Kallas had launched an information campaign. Leaflets and posters about this campaign were available in many languages at our conference. Our speaker appealed to all EPF member associations to work with the Commission to get this information across the EU citizens, saying, "An informed citizen is a competent citizen who can make smart choices."

Mrs Kuneva went on to set out the Commissioner's vision of "a system of seamless multimodal travelling and integrated ticketing which would result in an overall better travel experience for citizens." The Commission would encourage the development of national and regional multimodal journey planners and links between existing planners "with the ultimate aim of building a Europe-wide service." It was important to remember that the technology was there "to provide services for real people with real needs."

EPF Vice Chairman Christopher Irwin, in his presentation, stated, "a modern public transport system is not an optional luxury. It is essential to the twin challenges of enabling economic growth while reducing deadly emissions of carbon and greenhouse gases." Priorities for EPF over the coming year should be pressing for consistency and improved levels of enforcement of passengers' rights; enabling rail passengers to obtain impartial information and to buy a ticket between any pair of stations regardless of

operator; and continuing work with the European Railway Agency to achieve reliable end-to-end journey information across all modes for timetables, ticketing and journey characteristics.

Our final speaker, from the Foundation Safe and Sustainable Mobility, showed how modern technology could provide public transport users with information when preparing a journey, real-time information during the journey and how to assess the journey afterwards.

A full report of the conference, including discussions, is available on the EPF website or on paper from [Trevor Garrod](#), 15 Clapham Rd South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ, Great Britain. The full presentations of the speakers can also be viewed on our website.

This year's conference also included a very informative Friday afternoon seminar on cross-border rail links between France and Spain, which is summarised in the report and is also on the website. The programme also included two tours of Barcelona by public transport and a Sunday excursion by train to the famous monastery of Montserrat, including a ride up the mountain on a recently rebuilt and very impressive cogwheel railway.

Next year's EPF conference will be on March 10th in Salzburg, Austria.
Please note the date.

NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION 'TRANSPORT WHITE PAPER 2020'



Over two years of conferences and discussions culminated in the publication on March 28th of the European Commission's new White Paper on Transport. Entitled "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area - Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system", the document looks ahead to 2050 and also contains 40 initiatives for implementation during the coming decade.

Its starting point is the unsustainable nature of transport at present, with its heavy dependence on oil. It also assumes that curbing mobility is not an option. There must however be coherent policies at EU level. Otherwise easy travel between member states would be more difficult.

The White Paper makes some particular proposals:

- Carbon emissions from transport should be cut by 60% by 2050.
- Conventionally fuelled vehicles should be excluded from cities by 2050 and there should be greater emphasis on public transport, cycling and walking, demand management and land-use planning.
- Greater integration, with airports, seaports, railway, metro and bus stations transformed into "multimodal connection platforms for passengers."
- Greater use of buses and coaches, rail and air (sic) transport for passengers over intermediate distances, with consolidation of flows into large volumes for transfer.
- This trend should be helped by online information and electronic booking and payment systems integrating all modes, accompanied by a comprehensive set of passengers' rights.

The rail industry should undergo structural change to enable it to compete more effectively and take a "significantly greater" share supported by "considerable investment" to expand and upgrade capacity and new rolling stock with silent brakes and automatic couplings. Public transport must be of good quality, reliable and accessible. Better use must be made of measures such as road pricing and the internalisation of external costs with an emphasis on "polluter pays" and "user pays."

The European Commission identifies the need for over 1.5 trillion Euros of

investment up to 2030, including some 215 billion for the removal of bottlenecks. This will help a modal shift of 30% of freight over 300km to rail or waterborne transport by 2030 and over 50% by 2050. The European high speed rail network should be completed by 2050 with connections to all core network airports and seaports and "a dense railway network maintained in all Member States." This will ensure that the majority of medium-distance transport uses rail by 2050.

Many of the proposals in the White Paper reflect points made by the European Passengers' Federation in recent years and we need to refer to them in our dialogue with decision makers at national and European level.

For more information: [2011 White Paper](#)

SHOULD THE EU STRIVE TO DOUBLE THE MARKET SHARE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE WHOLE UNION?

In Sweden a united public transport sector has decided to try to double the market share of public transport on the long not already determined term, and between 2011 and 2020 to double already the volume of travel with the public transport system.

The UITP has now adopted this idea of doubling public transport, but UITP has chosen the goal to be achieved in 2025.

The Swedish Public Transport Association (Svensk Kollektivtrafik) underpins its doubling project as follows:

"A doubling of the public transport market share produces major benefits for society. The goals are to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions and to increase energy efficiency throughout the entire transport system. A doubling will also give better road safety, less congestion and a transport system that offers equal opportunities. Public transport also contributes to growth and regional development."

More information about this remarkable project can be found on:

www.svenskkollektivtrafik.se/

EPF will follow up the Swedish doubling project. It will try to integrate this "doubling"-ambition in its discussions and positions.

PASSENGER RIGHTS IN PRACTICE – EXPERIENCES TOLD BY TREVOR GARROD

In the last Bulletin (number 8) I told of my unsuccessful attempt to obtain compensation from Eurostar following a severely delayed journey from Berlin to Lowestoft at the end of February 2010. I subsequently contacted the National Enforcement Body for the UK and just before Christmas Eurostar agreed to refund me £52 because of an extra taxi fare which I incurred. The refund was in the form an electronic voucher giving a fare reduction for a future Eurostar journey.

On March 16th 2011 I was on a Eurostar from London to Brussels which was running over an hour late because a shuttle train had broken down in the Channel Tunnel. I was pleased to hear on this occasion announcements over the train's public address system that passengers could claim compensation by going on to the Eurostar website. Several passengers were worried about missing their TGV connections from Lille to various destinations in France and it was good to see the train staff coming along the train to check and advise them of alternatives and suitably endorse their tickets. This surely is how it should be done when things go wrong.

On March 10th/11th several of us were travelling from Paris to Barcelona on the sleeper train which was delayed because of engineering work in the Toulouse area. The train arrived 90 minutes late in Barcelona, which affected our arrangements for the morning. However, we asked the train staff about claiming compensation. They were very helpful and advised us to report to the Station Manager at Barcelona Estació de França. We did so and within 20 minutes he had endorsed our tickets and instructed the ticket office staff to refund part of our fare - which they then did in cash! Here again is a good example of prompt customer care and application of EU rules.

I live 40 km from Norwich International Airport - a small regional airport which I occasionally use and which is handy as a feeder into Amsterdam Schiphol. On April 13th I arrived to check in at 07.45 for the 09.50 flight to Amsterdam to be told that the flight was overbooked and

that I and four other passengers had been put on a waiting list. "I don't believe it," was my initial reaction, since my ticket had been booked and paid for in January! The young lady said that it was quite common for KLM flights to be overbooked, but that I could go on the 17.30 flight that evening.

After I explained that I had an onward flight to Budapest and then a 2-hour train journey to my final destination and an important conference the next day, she consulted with a colleague and said that I would be top of the waiting list and should return to the check-in at 09.20. The final decision on whether I could travel would rest with the crew. I asked for a form to claim possible compensation under EU air passengers' rights, especially as I would then also be incurring extra expense, and was advised that I could do this on the KLM website.

At 09.20 I was told that I could indeed board the 09.50 flight and so my problems were over. There has however since been correspondence in our regional daily newspaper about passengers being refused boarding on KLM flights to and from Norwich and I have written to the Chief Executive Officer of the Airport, urging him to raise these issues with the airline.

WELCOMES AND THANKS

We welcome two new members of the EPF Council, elected at our Annual General Meeting in Barcelona on March 12th:

Jean-Marie Tisseuil now represents the Fédération Nationale des Associations d'Usagers des Transports (FNAUT) and Maurice Losch represents the Association luxembourgeoise des Amis du Chemin de fer (ALACF).

Jean-Yves Bouffet was the FNAUT representative and remains deputy to Jean-Marie. Jean-Yves' professional work means that he is less able to travel to meetings, but we hope that he can still contribute to our work and thank him for all that he has done since 2008.

Albert Lambert was ALACF's representative and remains deputy for Maurice. Albert was one of the founders of EPF and his wide knowledge and experience has contributed greatly to our work. He remains responsible for our Long-distance Trains Expert Group and we look forward to his continued productive input in the future.

Welcome to Vlaamse Reizigersbond as a full member of EPF. You can learn more about Vlaamse Reizigersbond (or REBO) on its website www.reizigersbond.be. The association is active in the whole of Dutch-speaking Belgium and focuses its activities on advocating high quality public transport, and this especially from the viewpoint of the passenger. Accessibility to everybody and public transport as a public service are

fundamental in the vision of the association.

Bram Vandenbulcke has left TreinTramBus this summer for a new job. Part of his work while at TTB has been as Administrator for EPF - a task which he has performed with great efficiency and enthusiasm. We wish him every success in his new job and look forward to continued productive co-operation with the staff of TTB. We welcome as Bram's successor Stijn Lewyllie.

You can contact Stijn at secretariat@epf.eu, at the new address of TreinTramBus at Kortrijksesteenweg 304 in 9000 Ghent (Belgium).

JOURNEYS WITHOUT BORDERS

EPF continues to monitor improvements - or otherwise - in cross-border services; and especially those featured in our report issued in October and the list on our website.

The Dresden - Wrocław service is continuing to attract good numbers of passengers but sometimes has capacity problems. This is because sometimes only one Desiro unit is available as the Polish side has to pay for strengthening the train with a second unit. There are reports of trains between Legnica and Wrocław sometimes being "hopelessly overloaded."

Between Sebnitz and Dolní Poustevna on the German/Czech border the long awaited cross-border link is still not in immediate prospect. Autumn flooding of the track between Děčín and Sebnitz led to suspension of services though trains are running again now. The franchisee (Sächsische Städtebahn) is however having to cope with a 7% cut in subsidy this year and so cuts in service on a number of secondary lines on the German side are feared. In these circumstances, the reconstruction of the cross-border link has dropped down the priority list.

At the south-western corner of Germany there is brighter news, however, with the start of work on the Basel tram extension to Weil. The 2.8 km new line should be ready by the end of 2013.

The EPF report "Journeys without Borders" is available on our website or in paper copy from [Trevor Garrod](#).

Einige Exemplare der deutschen Version "Reisen ohne Grenzen" sind auch noch vorhanden.



USEMOBILITY PROJECT – PROGRESS MADE

EPF is a partner in the USEmobility project, which is studying ten regions to find out why people decided to switch from pure car use to public transport within the past 5 years. We receive some project funding from the EU for this work.

The project has chosen ten regions to study, the main criterion being an innovative and successful framework for eco-friendly multimodal mobility. The study will focus on "swing users" - people who have changed their mode of transport in recent years. The regions chosen all have regional rail as a backbone for other transport modes and swing users who commute daily and they represent a mix of regions - rural, suburban and urban.

The regions chosen after preliminary studies are:

- Germany - Metronom in Niedersachsen; Breisgau S-Bahn in Baden-Württemberg and Region

Rhein-Neckar / Heilbronn / Karlsruhe also in Baden-Württemberg

- Croatia - the city of Zagreb and the Varaždin-Međimurje region
- Austria - S-Bahn Steiermark and S-Bahn Salzburg - the latter being a cross-border region
- Hungary - Budapest and Komárom-Esztergom
- Belgium - Brussels capital region.
- Netherlands - Gelderland specifically the Amersfoort - Barneveld - Ede - Wageningen route.

The study will continue through 2011 and 2012 and we hope to report further in future bulletins. You can also read more on www.usemobility.eu

EPF PARTICIPATES IN THE REVISION OF PRM TSI RULES

The Technical Specifications for Interoperability or TSI rules for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) were introduced only a year ago. However there have occurred new conditions, which mean that the PRM TSI have to be put under revision. The new European Disability Strategy for 2010-2020 was decided on 15 November 2010. The UN Convention on the rights of passengers with disabilities has now been ratified, and this means it will become part of the EU legal order.

EPF has received an invitation to participate in the revision of PRM TSI. The EPF Administrative Council decided to participate in this process. The PRM topics are often very related to

passengers in general, and the working party being formed should include a representative from EPF. The Administrative Council decided Kurt Hultgren to be the representative of EPF with Josef Schneider as a substitute.

The start-up meeting of the PRM TSI Revision work took place in the ERA premises in Lille, where all participants were present. The group consists of 33 delegates, two thirds of them being from the different national safety authorities (NSA of eight countries). The rest of the delegates are representing CER, UITP, UNIFE, EIM, EPPTOLA, European Disability Forum - EDF, AGE Platform and EPF. The users are in a very notable minority, and the EPF presence is actually quite important for the future work. The passenger perspective is needed in the discussions with transport authorities, train manufacturers, infrastructure managers and rolling stock owners.

The revision process is intended to go on during 2011 and 2012 with the end in October 2012.

INTER REGIO RAIL

This is a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund to promote the development and usage of regional rail transport. It is of interest to all countries but is particularly concentrating on Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic and Italy. You can read about it (also in German, Polish, Czech and Italian) on www.interregionrail.eu

In Germany, the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Aufgabenträger des SPNV (BAG), representing regional rail passenger authorities, is involved in the project and Trevor Garrod and Matthias Kurzeck had a very useful discussion



with two of their officers, Thomas Mayer and Ludger Sippel, in Berlin in late February. Pau

Noy and Kurt Hultgren have also sent them information about the position in Spain and Sweden respectively. Christopher Irwin had addressed BAG's seminar in Kassel in 2010.

The BAG hopes to bring together authorities and operators from various countries to learn from each other and lobby at EU level for regional rail transport. Like us, they are also in contact with UITP, which brings together local and regional public transport operators worldwide.

We explained to Herr Mayer and Herr Sippel the work of EPF, particularly in promoting passenger rights, easy public transport and the spread of good practice.

We also explained how, in some countries such as Great Britain, regional rail operators could work successfully with users' organisations and local councils, from initial consultation through to passenger surveys and feedback. We stressed the importance of constructive dialogue between users' organisations, operators and local authorities. For more information about BAG, go to www.bag-spnv.de

RAILTEAM SURVEY – OVER A HUNDRED REPLIES TO OUR RAILTEAM SURVEY SO FAR

Thank you to members and website readers who have responded to the survey on Railteam high speed trains on the EPF website. We had received 111 reactions by mid April and these results have been forwarded to the Directors of Railteam.

The internet proved to be the most popular method of buying a ticket for our members: 63% booked in this way. However 20% used a ticket office, 2% booked by phone, 4% used an automatic ticket machine and 14% booked through a travel agent. (Figures are rounded up) 79% were satisfied with the service given when booking their ticket. Among the fairly small number of complaints made were that the internet ticket was not valid on local trains.

The most popular station for changing trains was Brussels Midi/Zuid and Cologne Hbf the second most popular. Just over half of respondents said they found no information on the platform about their connecting train. Some 72% of those who replied said they found it easy to get from the arrival to departure platform when changing trains. Some passengers did not use a Railteam hub station to change trains, however. A few used Köln Deutz for example and some walked from Paris Gare du Nord to Paris Gare de l'Est.

Members were asked if information about connections was given out on the high speed train's public address system,

57% said it was but the remainder said they did not hear any announcements.

At the connecting station, when they changed from one high speed train to another, 72% said facilities were easy to find and use. That still leaves a sizeable minority who did not find the changing easy.

It is worrying that in 53% of responses a train was late or cancelled. Many of these journeys were made in the winter, of course, but there is still much scope for some operators to do better.

Furthermore, only 29% said they were given any alternative travel information or general help when disruptions occurred.

Asked about the railway staff with whom they came into contact, however, 64% said that they were helpful. One member said "the staff wanted to be helpful but lacked adequate information with which to provide me the best onward travel advice. I showed them my Cook's Continental Timetable." Other members also complained of lack of information on which train to catch for their onward journey. On other occasions, the comment was that staff could have used their mobiles to find out what was happening. Explanations about delays were not always given (but did the on-train staff know?). There were a few reports of staff being "hidden" or "invisible"; but balanced against these were comments about staff being "visible", "polite" and "friendly".

Finally an open-ended question was asked, "How could your journey be made better?" Replies included:

- Better handling of requests for compensation.

- More announcements and more visible staff.
- Announcements at stations used by international trains should as a matter of course be in three languages - the national language, English and the language of the foreign country that is nearest or most frequently served.
- A multilingual European database for journey preparation including all train timetables and access to public transport websites.
- Better on-train catering facilities.
- Better and more consistent on-train announcements.
- Reservations should not be compulsory.
- Bicycles should be allowed on all high speed trains.



Some clear patterns are emerging from the first three months of our survey and it is continuing. Therefore we welcome all responses on our website (in English, French, German or Dutch) - so please continue to use this quick and simple method to [report](#) on your Railteam journeys.

TALKING TRAINS, TRAMS AND BUSES IN DEBRECEN

Debrecen is Hungary's second city, an attractive university city and rail hub at the eastern end of the Great Plain, and was the venue for a very interesting conference on April 14th. The Debreceni Regionális Közlekedési Egyesület (Debrecen Regional Transport Association), or DERKE, brought together 35 speakers and delegates from Hungary, Romania, Sweden and Great Britain to discuss local and regional public transport.



Mr Miklos Volgyi of the National Infrastructure Authority explained how EU money was helping to improve the transport infrastructure of Hungary. It was planned to upgrade main lines to 160 km/h where possible and some additional was proposed, including to Esztergom. A train-tram interchange at Miskolc station was planned, as were improvements for multi-modal freight on the Hungarian/Ukrainian border.

Mr Istvan Koi of the national train operator MÁV spoke of the growing interest in re-establishing links across the Hungarian/Romanian border since 1990.

A direct rail link between the cities of Debrecen and Oradea had been built in stages between 1894 and 1911 but was cut in 1920 when the new border was drawn and Transylvania became part of a larger Romania. The cross-border section was reinstated for four years in World War II and then demolished on the Romanian side in 1945.

Economic and cultural links between Hungary and Romania had been improving, with the creation a Euregio Hajdú-Bihar / Bihor and Romania was expecting to join the Schengen zone shortly.

The 52 km of single track from Debrecen to Nagykeréki are used by 8 passengers trains a day. Extension across the border to Oradea would link two cities of over 200,000 population each and provide new travel-to-work possibilities, especially as new industrial parks are being developed on each side of the border. Detailed feasibility studies were needed.

A spokesman from the Romanian state railways, CFR, said that they had a backlog of repairs that were needed to their infrastructure, partly because of Government spending cuts. They needed to seek EU funding, but local authorities and businesses could also be involved as better rail services could boost their economies. EU funds were already being used to help rebuild stations at Oradea, Timișoara and New Arad. They also sought to divert as much freight traffic as possible to rail.

Referring to the Oradea - Debrecen line, he said that the trackbed on either side of the border was owned by the respective national governments and had not been built upon. There was also potential for more tourism in the region and both cities have international airports.

In his presentation to the conference, Trevor Garrod outlined the work of EPF, particularly in encouraging better cross-border links by rail and sometimes other public transport, particularly by encouraging the spread of good practice. The EPF chairman pointed out improvements in Euregio Maas/Rhein, on the Polish / German border, between Luxembourg and its neighbours, in the Basel area and the Rhaetian Triangle between Austria, Italy and Switzerland. However, Trevor Garrod also referred to some problems and ways of tackling them, as explained in EPF's report "Journeys without Borders."

Mr Gunnar Wulf, CEO of Öresundståg, then described the process which led to the building of the rail link between Denmark and Sweden, opened in July 2000 and the steady growth in passengers in and between the regions on either side of the water. As operators they were "governed by customers' needs and preferences" and the challenge was to cater for a variety of different markets – commuters, leisure travellers and those going to and from Copenhagen's Kastrup Airport.

The conference then heard from Mr Laszlo Labancz of the public transport authority in Oradea, who said that

165,000 people used their services every day. They hoped for more and better services across the border once Romania joined the Schengen zone - such as a commuter service on the main line across the border to Biharkeresztes. At the moment it was almost as quick to go from Oradea to Budapest as from Oradea to Debrecen.

In the Oradea area there was a trend for people to live and work further from the city centre and so a more polycentric transport system was required. They were changing from normal buses to minibuses and about 70% of all passengers used trams rather than buses. The city was planning to have six "transfer stations" or interchanges, each handling 4 to 5000 passengers per day. It was expected that local government or the private sector would provide the funding and that the transfer stations would pay back their costs within 7 to 8 years.

At the moment there were 12 different companies providing bus services into the city on a commercial basis. These services were not yet properly integrated into the system.

Attention then turned to public transport in Debrecen itself with Mr Janos Paskuj of DKV, the urban transport operator, describing the work just started on building a second tram line, some 4 km long, to supplement the existing 8,8 km route through the city. A new control and ticket office would also be built and a new timetable developed based on passenger demand. For these and other public transport improvements, EU funding was contributing between 85% and 90% of the cost.

Mr Tamas Dobrocsi then described passenger volume monitoring on the various modes of transport and the proposal for an intermodal junction at the main railway station. Householder surveys had so far covered 50 % of people in the urban area, showing 28 % using private transport, 34 % public transport and the rest walking or cycling. Within the city, 55 % of all travel was by public transport, with up to 220.000 passenger movements on DKV trams, trolleybuses and buses each day Monday - Friday and about half that number on a Saturday.

Public transport improvements were needed to the southern side of the city (and the airport, on its southern outskirts), possibly by bus initially and later by tram. The existing bus station would be moved to the railway station as part of the intermodal junction project. Creating commercial space around (or even above) the railway station was seen as a way on obtaining some private funding to improve public transport.

Mr Zoltan Szotak commented on the "Tram-Train" idea first suggested in Debrecen in 2006, which he said would depend on the decision about the new interchange at the railway station. Professor Laszlo Kazinczy of Budapest gave a presentation on the good and less good aspects of train-tram systems in other European countries and suggested that 20 km was the maximum length for such a journey to be attractive to passengers.

DERKE has suggested a short extension of the existing tram line to link up with a

freight railway, serving a pharmaceutical factory, enabling some of the city trams to continue northwards to serve communities within the Debrecen commuter area.

Many thanks are due to János Vincze for translating from Hungarian into English and vice versa and for all the hard work which he and DERKE Chairman Zoltán Jónás put into organising the event.

AND THERE WAS MORE...

On the day after the conference, a party of us took the train to Nagykereki - the last station in Hungary on the line which had originally continued to Oradea. A comfortable 40-year-old train consisting of three coaches and a diesel locomotive, working as a push-pull, took us southwards then eastwards across flat fields and sometimes past wetlands noted for their fauna and flora, calling at small town and village stations, all of them unstaffed except for the crossing place of Sáránd. We returned in a rather more modern Czech-built diesel multiple unit which is about to replace the older train sets. It was also interesting to compare and contrast how rural rail services in other European countries are ran. To reach its full potential this line has to be upgraded and continued across the border to Oradea.

In the village of Nagykereki we strolled to a fascinating manor house built for the Grand Dukes of the Bocskai family and now housing a library and small museum. Here we had our lunch in the meeting room, met a councillor from Oradea and enjoyed a film on the past, present and future of the line.

POLISH SHIFT OF FUNDS FROM RAIL TO ROAD ?

EPF was contacted in February by a group of NGOs in Poland, including our associate member Zielone Mazowze. They were concerned at reports that the Polish Government was considering diverting EU money, awarded to it under cohesion funding, from rail to road. The money was intended to promote environmentally friendly transport and included expenditure on the roads from Warsaw to Radom and Białystok and the Warsaw - Rembertów - Tłuszcz - Sadowne project.

Poland's Prime Minister had indicated that funds could be diverted from the rail projects because of savings in their post tender procedures and all scheduled rail projects would still be completed. The money saved would help construct the S3 and S17 express roads.

EPF's Chairman therefore wrote to several MEPs and to DG-MOVE at the European Commission, expressing concern at the reports, especially in view of the deteriorating condition of much of the Polish rail infrastructure. The matter was taken up by Mr Michael Cramer MEP (Green) who, with his staff and colleagues, has been very supportive. The European Parliament's Transport Committee has made representations to the Commissioner.

It was established that funds can only be moved from one project to another if there is a change in the national Operational Programme, which must be approved by the European Commission.

The latter publicly stated that it would not support a shift of funds towards more environmentally-harmful transport modes, as this would undermine its strategy of greening transport.

We await further developments.

COMPARING URBAN TRANSPORT

This summer EPF is undertaking a comparison of transport in some 20 European cities. We propose to study London, Madrid, Berlin, Athens, Rome, Paris, Hamburg, Warsaw, Budapest, Vienna, Barcelona, Milan, Munich, Prague, Sofia, Cologne, Naples, Birmingham, Glasgow, Turin, Marseille and Valencia. Other possibilities are Copenhagen, Bucharest and Dublin.

Our survey will consider service levels, cleanliness and safety, connectivity with the suburbs and the region, fares and ticketing, accessibility (including information, PRM access and interchange) and calculate a score out of 100.

We hope to publish a report by the end of the year. We hope it will contribute towards the spread of good practice and give information and ideas to public transport campaigners in many cities.

The project is being co-ordinated by Pau Noy, and other members of our Urban Transport Expert Group are also participating. Other member associations of EPF have also started work on it. If YOU can help with information about one or more cities in the list - either because

you live there or because you visit it frequently - contact [Pau](#)

INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYPLANNER

For a few years, EPF has put the case for a "public transport sat nav" - or an electronic journeyplanner which passengers can use when deciding if and how to make an international journey by public transport.



Now the European Commission has launched a consultation on a Multi-modal Journey Planner for Europe. EPF Vice-Chairman Christopher Irwin submitted a response after consulting with other Council members.

Our response starts by calling for "multi-modal public transport to be made as easy for a consumer to organise as it is to plan and execute a journey in a private vehicle." We need to find ways of making end-to-end journeys easier (especially those involving different operators and different modes). Both public authorities and commercial operators need to be involved. Increasing the share of journeys taken by public transport can bring social, economic and environmental benefits, even though these may be in conflict with the short-term commercial interests of individual operators.

It is unrealistic to expect such a journeyplanner to appear overnight. It may be necessary to roll-out different

elements incrementally. Thus a start could be made by studying existing national systems of journey planning data and base a pan-European system on what is already there; then developing ways of capturing near-time planned disruptions and then real-time information. "Near-time" information should be given on roadwork or rail maintenance which may affect bus and train timetables.

One party ought to be responsible at European level for developing the project and this would give minimum opportunity for "passing the buck" or blaming others if things go wrong. Lessons can also be learned from the air sector, which has found it possible to secure agreement on centralised data integration.

Which languages to use? It is important to meet the needs of all significant language groups and indeed major non-European languages such as Mandarin and Japanese. To remember that the journey planner could also have global export potential.

At present legal issues may form a barrier to the development of a pan-European journey planner. We believe that the use of information and ticketing should be in the public domain and free of copyright limitations.

A type of public-private partnership would probably be the best way of developing the European travel planner.

Impartial information should be the initial aim of the planner; with

reservations and ticketing as a second stage.

When ticket options are included, the cheapest option must be clearly identified. There should also be information on journey times, facilities, mode combinations and obstacles that might be encountered by Persons with Reduced Mobility.

We suggest that developing an end-to-end on-line booking system could be done in five years.

EPF SPEAKING ...

Providing speakers or panel members at professional conferences and seminars is an increasing part of EPF's work. It enables us to present and discuss our views with transport professionals and decision-makers.

On February 9th-10th Willy Smeulders represented EPF at the INTERMODES congress in Brussels and at the European Railway Awards reception.

On February 18th Kurt Hultgren spoke about barriers at stations at the HERMES seminar in Berlin.

On February 23/24th Trevor Garrod spoke on distribution and high speed rail at Eurorail 2011 in Berlin. Meanwhile Willy Smeulders was in Brussels representing EPF at a seminar on "Unlocking innovation in high speed rail - short distance services around Madrid" organised by Regions of Connected Knowledge.

On March 8th Willy Smeulders was a panellist at the EESC conference in

Brussels on "Social aspects of EU transport policy."

March 16th saw Trevor Garrod in Brussels as panellist at the Marketforce conference on "The Future of European Rail".

The following day Willy Smeulders gave a presentation at the UIC Next Station conference, also in Brussels.

On March 27th Kurt Hultgren gave a presentation at the Passenger Terminals Conference in Copenhagen.

On April 15th Rian van der Borgt and Josef Schneider participated in the twice-yearly Customer Liaison Meeting of the Community of European Railways.

On May 10th Josef Schneider attended the first meeting of Rail Forum Europe in Strasbourg. EPF applied as an associate member.

On May 25th, Trevor Garrod spoke about cross-border services, passenger rights and improved ticketing/information to the Community of European Railways meeting in Brussels.

On May 27th Rian van der Borgt participated in the first meeting of the TAP-TSI Steering Committee.

May 31st saw Christopher Irwin in London speaking on and discussing "Improving the Passenger Experience" at the European Civil Aviation Conference.

On June 20th Christopher Irwin spoke at a European Commission workshop on "Towards a European Multi-modal Journey Planner."

On June 21st Willy Smeulders organised a meeting with the MEP's Said El Khadraoui, Gesina Meissner and Michael Cramer; they were accompanied by four members of their staff and of the staff of MEP Brian Simpson. EPF was

represented by Trevor Garrod, Christopher Irwin and Kees Smilde. On June 27th, Willy Smeulders attended in Brussels the meeting "Fitness check – Stakeholders meeting". This event dealt with air. But we don't forget that regulations are often inspired by each other; and they appeared in the following order : air, train, bus and coach, maritime.

On October 3rd/5th Trevor Garrod is due to participate in the Salzburger Verkehrstage and a few weeks later to speak at the Marketforce Conference in Brussels on November 21st and 22nd. Willy Smeulders is due to be a panel member at the Rail Stations and Terminals World Europe 2011 in Amsterdam November 8th/10th.

CONTACTS WITH INTERNATIONAL – OR BETTER INTERSTATE – TRAIN OPERATORS : MEETING WITH THALYS

EPF has regular and useful dialogue with the international train operator Thalys. The most recent meeting took place on May 10th in Brussels, with representatives from Belgian, Dutch and German member associations meeting the Quality Manager and deputy CEO of Thalys.

We were informed of plans to run a daily return service from Essen (Germany) to Paris from August 29th but advised that extra stops of Thalys trains in Germany, such as in Köln-Deutz, were difficult

because of pathing problems. No significant timetable changes are proposed in December. Shortly after the meeting however, we learned that Thalys wants to eliminate two services on both Saturday and Sunday. Asked about an additional train to Amsterdam, the Thalys managers said it was too early to introduce this. They needed to monitor the present occupancy rate and the effects of the future Fyra services (Amsterdam - Brussels via the High Speed Line.)

Our members raised the issue of connections between Thalys and Eurostar and were advised that every year Thalys looked at improving these but it was not easy.

When you are waiting for a Thalys on the platform at Brussels-Zuid/Midi, it is not easy to know where to wait for your carriage. For four years Thalys has been asking Infrabel to install screens showing the train composition and these should now be provided in June/July.

EPF raised the question of fares, saying it was more difficult to find cheap fares and to do so passengers had to book longer in advance. Thalys said this was because of better occupancy rates and that the quotas of low-price seats had not changed.

We drew attention to several other ticketing and fare issues. The Thalys managers said they would look into reports that Paris metro tickets were being sold in the Thalys bar at 2,50 Euro instead of the 1,70 Euro face value. They were also concerned to learn that the SNCF website does not offer a Thalys

ticket with the "any Belgian station" option, which means that a passenger from France wanting to travel beyond Brussels has to pay the full fare for the extra journey.

Punctuality has improved in the first four months of 2011 but is still not satisfactory. We were advised of four reasons for delays:

1. Congestion around Brussels and between Schiphol and Amsterdam.
2. Maintenance backlog due to the installation of ERTMS equipment.
3. Breakdowns of Fyra trains ahead of Thalys.
4. High speed line restrictions in France and Belgium (but not in the Netherlands) in winter conditions.



However, the commissioning of ERTMS Level 2 on the high speed line north of Rotterdam this summer will help and the maintenance backlog will be dealt with.

Thalys would like passengers to report to them any problems of cleanliness, for example in toilets.

They are reviewing their procedures in the event of severe disruption - such as on February 18th when two trains from Amsterdam were stuck in Brussels and only arrived in Paris the next day, with 13 and 14 hour delays.

TRIREGIO – A NEW CO-OPERATION PROJECT FOR BETTER CROSS-BORDER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In the corner made by the borders of France, Germany and Switzerland, with the city of Basel as a centre, the "Eurodistrict Trinationale de Bâle / Trinationaler Eurodistrict Basel" was founded in January 2007. This cross-border co-operation organism goes back to the "Association pour le Développement durable du territoire de l'Agglomération Trinationale de Bâle" that was created in 2002. In 2007 the action area was largely broadened. About 850 000 people live in this region that spreads over 3 countries.

Transport and its infrastructure belong to the actual working domain of the Basler Eurodistrict. This made that in 2008 the Basler Eurodistrict launched a project to stimulate the development of the cross-border public transport. The project which is structured in three stages, is co-financed by the EU Interreg IV – programme (European Regional Development Fund).

In a first stage the cross-border tariff system was analysed for being optimised. The actual popular season tickets (RegioCardPlus, Distripass, AlsaPlus) and day tickets (TicketTriRegio) are considered as already very well adapted to the needs of the passengers. The simple tickets still show some gaps in the tariff system.

In the second stage of the project the “triregio”-brand was launched half of 2010. All cross-border tickets were listed with their price and were published in a brochure. All information is also available on a website:
www.triregio.info.

EPF thinks it’s a pity that the information exists only in German and in French. To be understandable for all Europeans information would better also be offered in English. Why shouldn’t this become a new general custom in public transport information all over the EU ?
A simultaneous information campaign attracted the attention of the target groups on the existing offer.

During the third stage that started in 2011 internet based cross-border route planners will be developed and put online.

The important passenger numbers travelling with the cross-border public transport in this Eurodistrict convince the initiators that a combination of well-thought tariffs, lines, information distribution and modern vehicles is a key for successful cross-border public transport.

EPF thinks this is a good example of a begin of cross-border co-operation. The authorities have understood the necessity of action. To offer real “easy travel” further simplification and integration of the system is needed.

Source and further information:
www.eurodistrictbasel.eu
www.triregio.info/aktuell/

EPF IS HOPEFUL ABOUT THE RECENT INITIATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO DEVELOP FURTHER “EASY TRAVEL” BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGHOUT THE EU

EPF believes in the power of multimodal travel to help resolve some problems in the transport system. By multimodal travel we understand using different types of transport for one journey. EPF thinks multimodality should not mean running away from clear decisions pro certain transport modes and contra other modes. Policies must decide. In the transport system one cannot let all means develop as they wish and can. Effective multimodality will make a complementary use of different modes in order to maximise all advantages and to minimise all disadvantages.

EPF hopes the Commissioner will go further in his striving to go further in the realisation of “easy travel” in the EU.

In Brussels on March 31st 2011, Commissioner Kallas called on Member States to work together on travel information (see press release [IP/11/393](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/press/2011/03/31/11393) of 31/3/2011).

The European Commission has encouraged Member States to work together to make it possible for passengers to buy a single ticket for a journey in Europe regardless of the countries or transport modes involved.

During the March 31st transport council, Vice-President Siim Kallas told the

ministers that the technology already exists to make seamless multimodal travel possible but that their help was needed to remove the remaining barriers, for example by improving the availability and quality of data. Vice-President Kallas said: "With today's technology, there is no reason why passengers should not be able to access travel information or even buy a single ticket for their journey at the click of a mouse. Buying a single ticket online should be a matter of minutes, whether you change from planes to trains, or from roads to ships for your journey. Even though the technology is there, we will need the Member States to work with us to get things moving."

The [roadmap to a Single European Transport Area](#), published on Monday March 28th, highlighted the importance of having integrated multimodal travel services across the EU. To encourage people to travel more and make use of the advantages each transport mode has to offer, all travel information will need to be easily accessible. Member States can assist by encouraging travel operators to cooperate (for example by sharing data), enhancing the availability and quality of data, and improving the business case for a European solution. This will make it possible for passengers to access all information online to better plan their journeys, as well as reserve and purchase a single ticket regardless of the number of EU countries involved or the number of transport modes.

The EU has already taken the lead to address these issues, notably by encouraging innovation in Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) through initiatives such as a [directive on the](#)

[deployment of ITS](#) as well as an [action plan](#) containing specific targets.

A NEW PLAYER IN THE EUROPEAN RAILWAY FIELD: THE "INDEPENDENT REGULATORS' GROUP – RAIL"

On the 9th of June 2011 a group of national independent rail regulators signed an agreement to ensure closer co-operation, and this as they say, to meet the needs of passengers and freight customers.

This new co-operation forum will seek to:

- promote the interests of passengers and freight users in Europe;
- encourage sustainable and effective competition in the provision of passenger and freight transport;
- promote a consistent approach to the European regulatory framework for railways;
- speak with a strong and common voice at Community level.

EPF welcomes this new structure to strengthen European co-operation. At the same time – as a federation of passenger associations – we pricked-up our ears when passenger matters were clearly mentioned as a working aim of the new co-operation forum.

The Independent Regulators' Group should become an ally in our defence of passengers' rights.

EPF hopes that the independence means impartial advice about conflicts between different interests, but this independence should not prevent these referee

organisations from discussing policy (as opposed to party politics). EPF continues to believe in the importance of well-founded policies to steer the systems of public transport, and consequently in administrative bodies and operators that obey the directives of this policy.

For more information: www.irg-rail.eu
 And more specifically the recent [press release](#)

SALZBURGER VERKEHRSTAGE 2011

From 3th to 5th October 2011 the Salzburger Verkehrstage will be held in the Austrian town Sankt-Wolfgang under the general theme "Joys and burdens of our mobility"



This international congress dealing with topics about regional rail will already be organised for the 9th time.

For more information: www.salzburger-verkehrstage.org

FOR YOUR DIARY

- 3 bis 5 Oktober Salzburger Verkehrstage. Thema "Lust und Last der Mobilität." Information: www.salzburger-verkehrstage.org
- Saturday October 22nd : EPF Council meeting in Luxembourg. EPF and ALACF representatives will meet the Luxembourg Transport Minister the previous day.
- Saturday January 14th 2012: EPF Council meeting in Milan.
- Saturday March 10th 2012: EPF Conference and Annual General meeting in Salzburg
- October 18th 2012: Tenth Birthday of EPF - we are starting to plan how to celebrate it!

The NEXT EPF BULLETIN is due to appear in December. Trevor Garrod and Marc Broeckaert will be pleased to receive material by the beginning of November.

COLOPHON

*Contributors to this bulletin include:
 Marc Broeckaert, Trevor Garrod, Pierre Havelange, Kurt Hultgren, Stijn Lewyllie, Josef Schneider, Willy Smeulders, Jürg Tschopp, Rian van der Borgt ...*