

1st MEETING OF THE EU-RAIL JU SRG

14 January 2022

Remote connection

1. Introduction – Roundtable

The meeting was initially chaired by Carlo Borghini, Executive Director (ED) of the EU-RAIL JU. He introduced the meeting informing everyone that not all nominations of representatives from the Member States have been formalized yet, although the deadline was 3 December as per DG RTD letter to the Permanent Representations of the Member States.

The Executive Director made a quick recap of the points on the agenda for the meeting and asked participants if anyone had any other point to add. The agenda contained the following:

- To present and, possibly, adopt the Rules of Procedures
- To appoint the Chair and Vice Chair (considering the urgency of the adoption of the below documents, I would propose to carry over the Chair and VC of the former S2R SRG for the next 6 months and run a new vote in the second half of 2022)
- To present for opinion the draft Master Plan of Europe's Rail, that most of you have already commented as member of the SRG of S2R (available here https://shift2rail.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/20211216-Master-Plan_agreed-in-princ_clean.pdf), that should be adopted at the GB meeting on 1 March
- To present for opinion the MAWP (available here https://shift2rail.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/20211222_mawp_v1_agreed-in-principle_clean.pdf), that should be adopted at the GB meeting on 1 March
- To inform you about the AWP preparations and the process for its adoption at the same GB meeting of 1 March
- To inform you about the setting up of the System Pillar
- AoB.

Miroslav Haltuf (CZ) asked to add a point regarding Czech Presidency of the Council's events and developments in regard to R&I activities in Europe's Rail to be discussed as AoB.

The Executive Director asked the participants to introduce themselves and the institutions they represent. The ERA observer (Torben Holvad) attended the meeting as well as representatives from the European Commission, Wawrzyniec Perschke and Ian Conlon (DG MOVE).

Afterwards, the Executive Director communicated to the participants that the Rules of Procedure will be distributed as soon as available and put in consultation to allow the members to make any comments before formal adoption.

A second meeting of the SRG will be organized in February in view of the presentation of the AWP 2022 and it will possibly be the occasion for the adoption of the Rules of Procedure. He also highlighted to the participants the role of the SRG, and the additional tasks foreseen in the new JU, in particular art. 95 of the SBA, the relation with the SERA Committee and the Programme Committee under Horizon Europe.

Regarding the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair the Executive Director proposed that, in the absence of formal adopted Rules of Procedure, the Chair of the former S2R SRG, Ms. Sarah Bittner-Krautsack, and the Vice-Chair, Miroslav Haltuf, would be reconsidered to act respectively as Chair and Vice-Chair for the current meeting and till when the election will be run.

No Member States challenged the proposal of the Executive Director, Ms. Sarah Bittner-Krautsack took over from the Executive Director in chairing the meeting.

2. Content of the draft Master plan of Europe's Rail

The Chair gave the floor to Ian Conlon (DG MOVE) who gave an introduction on the overall Master Plan and more specifically a presentation of the System Pillar by giving a quick overview about the steps taken in the past months, the context of the new JU in the European Green Deal and the critical part of rail in meeting the objectives set out by the Commission in its current term also in regard to the digital agenda. He described what is the role and nature of the Master Plan for the JU and explained the new structure of the JU based on the System Pillar and the Innovation pillar along with how the JU's focus is on more impactful solutions in research and innovation should be at the European level and not simply at local or national level, this aspect is essential to make a true mark and harmonize the overall European approach for rail industries.

Wawrzyniec Perschke followed by describing the priorities of the Innovation Pillar such as traffic management and how a major breakthrough is expected from the JU which would develop technologies for traffic management at EU level. He referred also to the end-goal of full automation and digitalization to increase efficiency and lifecycle of both assets and human resources. The environmental aspect is also one of the strong points that was underlined as positive impact as well as resiliency and cost-reduction. He addressed some of the comments provided by some Member States in the preparation of the Master Plan and asked the representatives to address any comments on critical/blocking specific points in bilateral meetings. The Commission will present the Master Plan to the European Parliament's TRAN committee on 25 January so there is a small window of opportunity to make any other comments until 24 January. Afterwards the document will be in the Commission's approval pipeline that should be concluded early February. The Executive Director complemented the information given on the point and reminded also that the Europe's Rail GB Members have to receive the document twenty days before the GB meeting.

The Chair thanked both representatives from the EC and opened the floor for comments.

Miroslav Haltuf (CZ) raised a question on clarification of some parts of the Master Plan about high-speed train development parameters and what figures were available to show progress in

regard to this specific aspect. A second question pertained to which type of data models (common or conceptual data model) are used in the document.

The Executive Director answered for the first question that the matter pertains to the Sustainable Smart Mobility Strategy which mentions only high-speed services and not to the Master Plan document as such. For the second question the Executive Director informed the SRG that the JU is working on the conceptual data model and the discussion is fully open regarding this aspect. Ian Conlon specified that on the second point a reference will be corrected in the document.

The chair raised a point as Austrian representative about multi-modal aspect of the transport system that will be covered in cluster 5, saying that there is not much focus on rail in cluster 5 as it is and if there is any other detail about this specific point.

The Executive Director replied that in the Multi Annual Work Programme the multimodality is set to keep the rail as starting point and interface it with other transport modes, especially in Flagship Area 1 so these parts are mostly developed in that sense and assured that a strictly coordinated approach with the Commission is foreseen also to avoid any overlaps with other policy areas. If there are any pending issues not highlighted so far for the Master Plan, anything new should be indicated by next week.

3. Multi Annual Work Programme (MAWP)

The Executive Director made a short introduction and overview of the MAWP describing the overall structure of the document, the division in 7 Flagship Areas and underlined the multimodal aspect in FA1. He also described what the different parts of the document contain as to expected goals, planned demonstrations, how these results will be achieved and also explained how the KPI will give an indication of progress and impact of the developed technologies. This document is the basis upon which the Members have signed the letters of commitment. He also showed how the indicative budget is distributed among every Area.

France, Czech Republic and Portugal representatives supported and emphasized the importance of multimodality and underlined how this aspect must be well addressed under the Horizon Europe framework either in the scope of the JU or cluster 5 or other clusters.

André Bissen (LU) asked if there is some flexibility between the different Flagships Areas and the Executive Director confirmed that there may be some flexibility between FAs, the current figures are indicative and there are a lot of interdependencies between them, underlining also the interconnection between topics of different Areas.

Miroslav Haltuf (CZ) added a comment to the MAWP regarding the cooperation with other continents and institutions outside the EU and asked if it is possible to include a cooperation with Japan given some interesting technologies developed in that country. He also stated that on behalf of the Czech Republic they will green light both documents (MP and MAWP) once he receives answers on how the comments are dealt by.

Helder Cristovao (PT) shared a concern voiced before by the Portuguese in regard to the need for the launch of a call for Associated Members.

The Executive Director answered, regarding cooperation with Japan, that as much as there is an interest at technical/operational level, the institutional cooperation is more complex. The JU is working with the European Commission on this but progress shall still to be achieved.

He also replied to the Portuguese representative stating that all calls of EU-RAIL will be open; consequently, the status of member or non-member is not relevant for the participation to the calls and the involvement into projects. The Executive Director indicated that during its life, the JU will have to launch a call for Associated Members; the moment of the launch of the call and its scope will have to be decided taking into account the evolutions of the Programme.

Hanna Vuorinen (FI) asked if there is a PowerPoint presentation available on the MAWP, the Executive Director answered that a document to fully present and summarize the MAWP will be made and shared with all representatives, as soon as the MAWP is adopted. Afterwards he also asked representatives to provide comments, if needed, on the Flagships Areas that are most interesting to every Member State and the chapter on synergies in the MAWP by the 4 of February.

Marcel Tijds (NL) asked how much margin there is for comments given the advanced state of the document and how the representatives should approach this.

The Executive Director explained that the Member States may focus in particular on the objectives of each flagship area as well as on synergies with national/regional/European research and innovation programme, including in other fields.

Henri Vichard (FR) asked if projects about intermodality can be truly fostered in FA1 if there is no success in doing so in cluster 5.

The Executive Director stated that all work in EU-RAIL should be driven with the multimodal approach in mind and that catering to this aspect is essential not only from the rail perspective but also in the opposite sense when implementing policies pertaining to other modes of transport.

The Chair reminded Members that they have three weeks to comment on objectives and synergies between programs.

4. Annual Work Plan (AWP) preparations and setting up of the System Pillar

The Chair invited the Executive Director to present the progress of the work on the AWP 2022.

The Executive Director indicated that the AWP is expected to be ready by the end of January and that the comments of the SRG will be consolidated along with those of the GB in order to have sufficient time to process them. Representatives will have indicatively one month to provide comments.

He continued saying that the AWP is an extract from the MAWP that covers what needs to be done to reach specific targets that should be attained in the first years of the JU so until 2026 and in preparation for the second half of the JU's life through 2031.

For the System Pillar, the selected approach will be to make use of public procurement, the notice is under publication in the OJ.

Pierre Pacaud (FR) commented on the System Pillar sharing the concern that it shall not slow down the process of the Innovation Pillar. Henri Vichard (FR) also inquired as to how the input from the System Pillar would feed into the Innovation Pillar, since the timetable for calls in relation to the Innovation Pillar were as early as March 2022. Since the System Pillar feeds into projects of the Innovation Pillar, the structuring of the projects must be made in a very efficient and smart way because, by definition, the System Pillar generates mostly high-level intellectual work that needs to be translated into more practical sense making it difficult to integrate the two Pillars.

The Executive Director replied by stating that the JU has already started to accelerate the phase in of the system pillar a) leveraging the work of the Linx4aRail projects dedicated to system architecture and conceptual data model, b) making use of resources available in the 2021 budget of the JU to set up an initial core group for the system pillar and finally preparing for the call for tender to be launched once the AWP 2022 will be adopted. This will allow the initial set up of the System Pillar content that will feed the Innovation Pillar projects expected to start towards Nov-Dec 2022. So, this approach will facilitate the integration with the Innovation Pillar and will reduce the risk of delays in the ramp-up phase. In order for tenderers on the Innovation Pillar calls to take into account as much as possible input from the System Pillar, teams working on the System Pillar assignments will make themselves available to meet in person with the tenderers, inter alia during the period prior to the final financial support decisions made by the JU re Innovation Pillar calls' submissions in 2022.

Ariane Boehmer (DE) has underlined the importance of the integration between the two pillars to steer the projects and she asked about the measures to do so.

The Executive Director replied that the leadership of the governance of the System Pillar will be managed directly by the JU via specific contracts under the supervision of the JU's Programme Managers, a small unit inside the JU will be established for the purpose of steering such activities. Both Programme and Project Managers will work closely to ensure that the objectives are reached.

During the meeting the Executive Director also made proposals for the next meetings of the SRG. The representatives agreed to meet on 11 February in the morning at 9.00, on 18 May at 10.00, and have the third and final 2022 SRG meeting on 9 November, starting at 9.30.

The Chair also indicated to consider the possibility of an additional meeting at InnoTrans 2022 during the week of 19 September in Berlin.

5. Closing remarks and AoB

Miroslav Haltuf (CZ) informed the SRG about the activities during the Czech presidency and the priorities for EURAIL JU. The list of the main events includes:

- Conference on the Synergies in Research and Innovation Funding (SYNERGIES) - 7 – 8 July 2022 in Prague
- Informal Meeting of the EU Competitiveness Council – Research (COMPET) - 21 – 22 July 2022 in Prague
- European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) - 18 – 19 October 2022 in Brno
- International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI) - 19 – 21 October 2022 in Brno
- IRFC 2022 (International Rail Forum & Conference) – 5 – 7 October 2022 in Prague
- TTE - Informal Council of the Transport Ministers – 20 – 21 October 2022 in Prague

In addition, one meeting is planned to take place in Brussels under the umbrella “Rail Forum Europe” (indicatively planned for end of May or beginning of June) to introduce priorities of the Czech Government.

Marcel Tijds (NL) asked about the different types of professionals in the SRG, referring to the different choices Member States make regarding the level of knowledge to participate in the SRG and when it is logical to have experts involved in the meetings.

The Executive Director replied that the SRG is not a technical advisory group and the role has changed compared to S2R. How the experts are involved depends on the Member States structure. He proposed to go over the functions of the SRG in EU-RAIL at the next meeting in May so to clarify the different aspects of the new partnership’s advisory bodies.

The Chair asked a question regarding scientific advice and how it will be organized in the EU-RAIL JU.

The Executive Director replied that in order to adopt the AWP, there is a need to have scientific advice; in accordance with Article 174(12) of the Single Basic Act, the EU-Rail GB re-adopted the S2R GB decision appointing the S2R Scientific Committee. Consequently, the former S2R Scientific Committee acts as EU-Rail Scientific Committee till such a moment the EU-Rail GB will decide on a new set up in relation to the scientific advice. This is expected to take place during the first half of 2022.

Miroslav Haltuf (CZ) asked how the JU will publish its new documents in their website and what the new logo will be.



The Executive Director showed the separation on the website's upper menu between S2R and EURAIL activities and informed **the representatives about the EU-RAIL launch event in Paris scheduled on 21 Feb 2022**. During this event the new logo of the JU is expected to be revealed.

The chair thanked the JU and all the representatives for the work done and closed the meeting at 11.50.