



10th MEETING OF THE EUROPE'S RAIL SRG

9 October 2024

09:30 – 12:30

Hybrid meeting

1. Introduction The Chair welcomed the participants and reminded everyone that filling in the declarations of non-conflict of interest were compulsory before every meeting.	09:30-09:35
2. Approval of Agenda and previous MoMs The secretariat checked that the quorum for decisions had been reached. The proposed agenda was approved without any changes. The minutes of the SRG and SRG/SSG meetings of 14 May were approved without any changes. The Chair gave the floor to the NL representative, Marcel Tijs, who will change position in the Dutch administration and will therefore no longer be a member of the SRG as of the 1st of November. The Chair and ED thanked Marcel for his great contribution to SRG work and for being an active member for so many years. All members joined them in wishing Marcel all the best for the future.	09:35-09:40
3. Update on EC activities linked to mid-term evaluation EU-Rail and FP10 Mihaela Williams, from DG MOVE, informed on the latest developments regarding the interim evaluation of the EU-Rail JU and on-going FP10 discussions. She explained that the interim evaluation of the JU is part of a more comprehensive exercise which is the evaluation of the Horizon Europe programme. DG MOVE's plan is to finalise the interim report before the end of the year for its adoption in Q1 2025. The interim evaluation is one of the inputs, together with other reports, which will serve for the preparation of the future research programme, FP10. DG RTD, which is leading the entire exercise, set up a High-level expert group to help in the reflection on FP10. Other inputs for the preparation of FP10 are the opinion of the expert group setup by the Commission under the Partner Knowledge Hub, with Member States involvement; and the ERRAC report on FP10.	09:40-10:00

Regarding the next MMF, the preparation of the impact assessment has already started, but for the whole programme, not specifically concerning partnerships, as for Horizon Europe.

Action: DG MOVE to summarise the above information on a slide. The Chair opened the floor to questions from members.

The AT representative asked whether it was time to discuss the JU successor. DG Move replied that even though for the time being we do not know how the instruments will look like, given that the reflections on FP10 are not concluded, it is indeed the right moment to address the future of the JU, content wise and in terms of involvement of actors and Member States.

The Chair asked DG MOVE whether it would be possible to coordinate the flow of information, because SRG is very fragmented and members have different Ministries in charge, so there is no unique channel to receive information. In particular, he asked whether it would be possible for the EC to provide info through the JU, such as updates on documents for Member States input that could be posted on CIRCABC platform.

DG MOVE said that it was always possible to update members in the SRG meetings in the framework of the SBA. But document distributed by other services of the Commission in the framework of dedicated expert group with Member States involvement, cannot be shared because of the different procedures in place (including conditions for sharing documents in accordance with the respective groups RoP).

The DE representative proposed to have a dedicated meeting on FP10 and the next JU, to share information and discuss a common approach. Both the Chair and the ED welcomed the proposal. The ED shared a few links in the chat on the different groups looking at FP10:

- Expert group on interim evaluation of Horizon Europe : https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/expert-group-interim-evaluation-horizon-europe-kicks-its-work-2023-12-05_en
- Partnership hub: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3783&fromMeetings=true&meetingId=26959>
- ERAC: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/european-research-area-and-innovation-committee-erac/>

Action: EU-Rail to organise a dedicated SRG meeting on FP10 to be organised (including on how the SRG can contribute to the future of R+I activity after the JU – see point 7).

4. Update on EU-Rail's on-going activities - InnoTrans feedback The ED emphasised the success of the programme organized by the JU for the InnoTrans fair held in Berlin during the last week of September. All feedback received from different stakeholders was positive. He was very satisfied with the attention gathered by a joint stand, for the first time, with the Commission and ERA. A train trip was organised from Brussels to Berlin at the beginning of the week. On board there was the Transport Minister from BE and at the stand the Transport Minister from DE joined. He thanked the SRG members for their support in making this happening and he is looking forward for further similar collaborations. It was also the first time that innovation tours were organized by EU-Rail, which were a great success. The tours consisted on visiting the stands of JU members who had implemented solutions into products that they were showcasing during the fair, which is the best way to measure the impact of the solutions and that not only remain on paper. The ED also highlighted the dedicated High-level meeting on DAC held in Spandau to show a testing and new solutions that have been developed, gathering the attention also of decision makers as seeing in first-hand the real innovation. The Chair, who was at InnoTrans, also expressed his satisfaction with the organisation. - Report on System Pillar (SP) work Ian Conlon, from the EU-Rail JU, presented the outcome of the last SP-STG meetings and the summary progress report. He highlighted the main terms of decision and progress on the main issues. <i>(See presentation for details)</i> The Chair asked the JU about the link to telematics TSIs in the context of telematics, CCS and the operational rules for Europe. The JU replied that on the telematics side, there is some activity within the TMS/CMS domain linking to the update of telematics, and also a link on the side on the cybersecurity work. On the operational rules side, he said that essentially the full analysis of CCS link operational rules will be completed under the current period; then in the next two-year period there will be a close interaction between the teams involved. In general, they were making good progress, but it should be taken into account that it is a massive task. The goal is clear, which is to be associated with the 2027 TSI revision. He highlighted the good cooperation with all actors involved and with the Agency. The AT representative asked in relation to the floodings disturbing train functioning, as it happened in the summer. It seems that the digital components were not able to deal with this catastrophe, so the question is how to ensure with digitalisation that the infrastructure will be resilient. A second question was about the SP-STG whether this was the Core group or another form. Regarding the flooding, the JU said that they would take note for future SP work and that some efforts were done in the Innovation Pillar in particular the Flagship Project 3	10:00-10:40
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(FP3) is addressing how to monitor flooding in some extent and in the FP4 is looking at adaptability to climate change.

The European Commission also informed that climate resilience is included in the TSI mandate by the Agency.

The AT representative added that it is important for SRG members to know where the members come from in the whole SP work, to better understand the dynamics of this group. It would make it more transparent and understandable for them.

Action: More information on the geographic distribution of the teams within the SP will be provided by the JU.

- Outcome 2024 Call

The ED presented the results of the 2024 call, covering 3 topics. the ED highlighted a good representation in terms of geographical distribution.

The ED also presented a country breakdown for the previous call of 2023, as it was not presented in the previous meeting.

The UK representative suggested presenting a separate column for the UK/associated countries, using in the case of the UK the values as in the original proposals from the UK partners. The ED agreed with this proposal.

Action: EU-Rail to add a separate column for Associated Countries to be included in country breakdown.

Action: EU-Rail to updated presentation including these slides to be replaced on CIRCABC meeting folder. *DONE*

The PT representative asked for the statistics on 2024 call results, to which the ED replied that on top of the PowerPoint for the SRG that will be shared with country statistics of the applicants, the GB decision would be shared with members with the minutes: https://rail-research.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Annex-1-Ranked-lists-HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01_revised.pdf

- Report on the FPs 1st year review

The Senior Project Managers of EU-Rail JU presented in detail the 6 Flagship projects. *(See presentation for details)*

There were some questions from SRG members on FP5 in particular.

The DE representative addressed a question on the DAC regarding the budget for funding and the number of trains supported and start date of the trains operating.

Javier Ibáñez, Senior Programme Manager, replied that the initiative on the pioneer trains is addressed through the EDDP activities and in that sense all progress and outcomes of FP5-TRANS4M-R are going to be aligned, but FP5-TRANS4M-R is not directly linked in terms of funding with the pioneer trains as such. Thus, the pioneer trains are a parallel and linked activity to EDDP, but not directly funded by the JU.

In terms of number of trains, based on the request for interest from members circulated early this year, the JU informed that there had been a series of webinars and meeting informing of the purpose and based on the feedback received, the figure on the foreseen pioneer trains is being updated.

The NL representative asked whether there was a meeting foreseen for national contact points (NCP), as DAC is included. The JU replied that this meeting is directly managed by DG MOVE and that the date for the next meeting will be circulated to the SRG members for information.

The Chair explained that all these topics had been moved to the NCP group managed by the Commission. He asked whether the Commission could provide information on those discussions to see the evolution.

Action: EU-Rail to liaise with DG MOVE and provide members with information on next NCP meeting and outcome.

- Update on 100 DAC pioneer trains (incl. national contact points)

The ED continued informing on the novelties on this project. A lot of expressions of interest were received. The Commission published a Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) call, which gives the possibility to entities and companies to apply until the 21 January. The AT representative asked for the budget for the 40 DAC test trains and their complementarity.

The JU indicated that it will be up to consortium responding to the CEF call to provide a demonstration of such complementarity and concerning the budget this is part of the envelop of 640M€ call with other topics to be covered (i.e. no assigned budget to the pioneering trains). The evaluation will also not be managed by the JU but by CINEA.

The ED emphasised that the reason why the JU is not involved it is because they are real pre-deployment activities, which today are not in the mandate of the JU and therefore to close the innovation gap other instruments and bodies need to support. This is something for the SRG could reflect about in view of the next MFF.

- Status of Deployment Group (DpG) setup

The ED explained that the 3rd group meeting will be held on 21 October and that a first dedicated subgroup was already operational to work on FRMCS. The remit part for the work on FRMCS deployment will be made available as soon as it is approved in the next DpG meeting.

Action: the remit paper for the work on FRMCS deployment to be uploaded by the JU on CIRCABC meeting folder.

The Chair of the DpG was elected (Director EIM) and two vice-chairs (EC and EU-Rail). UIC and ALE representative are the last members joining the group.

- Upcoming communication and dissemination activities

The ED explained the most immediate activities, such as the JU participation in different workshops of Rail Live 2024, and an event together with other JUs in the European Parliament in March 2025. Before that the JU will hold its General Assembly on 21-22 November, to which only the beneficiaries of EU-Rail grants are invited. SRG will be able to present its activities. The ED also informed that the JU website had been revamped and a new Newsletter launched. - Planning for 2025 The ED presented the long-term calendar of meetings for next year including the proposed dates for SRG meetings, asking members to check if they were convenient. <i>(See presentation)</i>. The main element is the incorporation of the associated members in terms of selection and inclusion of the work they will be doing in the Work Programme 2025-26 and in the Multi-Annual Work Programme.	
5. Report from the SRG - Update on national research projects/activities: <i>Information from MS / Decision about deadline for preparing the report according to Art. 20.10 SBA</i> The Chair asked if all members had provided their national research activities. Two additional countries contributed recently, UK and Luxembourg. <u>Action:</u> For pending countries, SRG representatives to send their lists of national R+I activities by the 1st of November. The ED explained that the national lists will be part of the presentation of the SRG to the General Assembly. He reminded that the objective is to create links between EU-Rail projects and national activities, so beneficial for both the JU and the countries. He also requested those who had contributed last year to recheck if there were any updates, to ensure the information presented at the General Assembly is accurate. - Transport policy study – Summary of current development and SRG decision The Chair said that together with ED met with Keir Fitch, from the European Commission, during InnoTrans to discuss on the content of the study. The SRG is waiting for the proposal of enlargement of topics proposed by the European Commission in that meeting. The DE representative informed the other members about the Commission's suggestion broadening the focus of the study and also including an analysis of the competitiveness of the European rail industry. The terms of reference of the study should then be revised in order to integrate that, and then re-discussed internally within the SRG.	11:00-11:10

The Chair asked the ED if this study needs to be presented to the General Assembly. The ED replied that it would depend on the progress by then, and that in the end it is something that will probably be discussed in the Governing Board of 2025. The DE representative believed it is important to address it at the General Assembly in November, with a brief information on the matter, showing that the Member States' support for the uptake of innovations. The Chair agreed with that and asked DG MOVE representatives to provide feedback on the scope enhancement before the 2nd of November. <u>Action:</u> DG MOVE to provide the details of the topics to be included in the Transport policy study.	
6. Points for SRG opinion (<i>in preparation of next GB meeting</i>) - Amendment of Work Programme 2024 The ED explained that this amendment referred mainly to some budget adjustments including the IKAA plan updates, and there were no content changes. As such it will be provided for transparent information the SRG members at the same time as the GB, requesting the opinion. - Work Programme 2025-2026 The Chair said that more time was required for studying such a long document. The CZ comments were ready, but he had not received any comments from members yet. He proposed to focus on the description of the SRG activities in 2025 and joint activities with the SSG. The ED explained that the information on the two groups in the Work Programme is just indicative, and that both SRG and SSG meetings are always back-to-back, so it is easy to coordinate meetings, i.e., there is no need to mention how, or in which format the meetings will be held in the Work Programme. The ED explained the main part of the document and focused on the calls, which is the main part of the budgetary implementation. The proposal is to finance: - the 2nd wave of the Flagship projects - 4 (or 5) exploratory and other activities/topics (<i>see presentation</i>) – the fifth one of them depending on whether there is synergy with SNS JU for exploiting 6G in autonomous mobility. All those topics are also based on the topic the SRG already provided. The ED stressed that all documents need to be sent to the Governing Board on the 23rd of October (20 days in advance of the meeting, according to the Governing Board rules of procedure). Any comments from the Member States received before that can still be integrated as much as possible into the final draft. For the overall SRG opinion, the Chair can also provide it during the meeting.	11:10-12:00

In the interest of efficiency, the GB decision would be drafted as if the SRG would have given a positive opinion; if then it is not the case when confirmed by the Chair, it will be changed. The Chair advanced that as an entire document there would not be a negative opinion, but some improvements could be done. The Chair asked members to send him their comments (not track-changes) by the 18th of October to have few more days for revision and provide an opinion to the JU. - Amendment of Multi-Annual Work Programme for inclusion of Phasing-out plan The ED explained that there is no legal obligation in the SBA for the SRG to provide an opinion, although the JU finds it useful. He suggested the same approach as for Work Programme 2025-26, so that any comments and overall opinion are welcome by the same deadline. <u>Action:</u> SRG members to send their comments, if any, on the above documents by the 18th of October. <u>Action:</u> The Chair to revise comments and send overall SRG opinion on them to the JU as soon as possible and latest at the GB meeting.	
7. AoB and closing remarks - Letta, Draghi reports The Chair invited members to read the reports. The ED proposed to take the opportunity of the dedicated meeting proposed by the DE representative to also discuss how the SRG can contribute to the future of R+I activity after the JU. The Chair agreed. - Proposal for collaboration with the SSG The Chair reiterated that an enhanced collaboration with the SSG should be reflected in the Work Programme. He informed members that he presented his proposal to the SSG meeting held on 26 September in Berlin. - Presentation of DE survey results The DE delegation conducted over the summer a survey with SRG members on group functioning and presented the consolidated results. <i>(see presentation)</i>	12:00- 12:30

The aim of the survey was to get an insight into SRG needs and improve collaboration. It was an anonymous survey. The results were distributed two days ago internally. There were 17 questions with an excellent report rate. In total 55 participants replied to the questions and 34 had full answers.

The Main findings are as follows:

Regarding the level of involvement in the JU activities, most members had a neutral position. The SRG members expect mainly information from the JU for different purposes. There is margin for improvement in this respect. Some efforts have been made in this last meeting, which is appreciated. Some members think the information received is too technical and detailed.

Regarding the annual reporting on national research activities by members, certainly not many members reported to the JU. What could be optimised is to have some more guidelines on the format of reporting.

Regarding the future collaboration, members identified as the topics with strongest interest: ATO, FRMCS, and defining top priorities and policy issues. There are some additional suggestions (see presentation).

The presentation of the flagship projects in this last meeting is a good step. Keeping this format for the next meetings is welcome, but perhaps focusing on only 2 flagship projects every time.

The Chair thanked the DE delegation and all members for taking up in the survey.

The ED also welcomed the initiative and said that all improvements the JU can make will be done.

Dates of the next SRG meetings:

The proposed dates for 2025 meetings are: 19 February, 14 May and 22 October.

The Chair will submit a doodle for finding out if the dates are convenient. He proposes that the first meeting of 2025 is hybrid, and the second fully presential.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and concluded the meeting.