

Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking (EU-RAIL)

**16th MEETING
OF THE EU-RAIL GOVERNING BOARD**

24 June 2025

09:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Hybrid connection

PRESENT:

European Union, represented by the European Commission	SCHMIDT Kristian, DG MOVE	Chair
	LUECKING Joachim, DG MOVE	Observer
	WILLIAMS Elena Mihaela, DG MOVE	Observer
	PERSCHKE Wawrzyniec, DG MOVE	Observer
	KRAAK Suzanna, DG RTD	Observer
	GENTILI Andrea, DG RTD	Observer
	RODRIGUES Helena, DG RTD	Observer
	GIANNIKOPOULOU Eleni, DG RTD	Observer
ADIF	VILLALMANZO David-Ibán	Alternate
ALSTOM	FRENCH Richard	Representative
AZD	KAMPIK Vladimir	Representative (remotely)
	PAVEL Michal	Alternate (remotely)

ANGELRAIL consortium led by MER MEC	INZIRILLO Francesco	Representative (remotely)
CAF	DE CASTRO Jorge	Representative
CD	ILLIK Jan	Representative (remotely)
CEIT	MELÉNDEZ Juan	Representative (remotely)
DEUTSCHE BAHN	LIANOS Manuel	Alternate (remotely)
DLR	MEYER ZU HÖRSTE	Alternate (remotely)
European Smart Green Rail Joint Venture (eSGR JV)	JIMÉNEZ Noemi	Representative
FAIVELEY TRANSPORT	PAGLIERO Paolo	Alternate (remotely)
FREQUENTIS	GRAF Guenter	Alternate (remotely)
FSI	PIFFERI Davide	Alternate
HITACHI RAIL	TROMBETTA Antonella	Representative (remotely)
INDRA TALGO	GONZÁLEZ Alfredo	Alternate (remotely)
	MERLE Leyre	Alternate (remotely)
INFRASTRUTURAS DE PORTUGAL – leader of the PT Alliance	FIGUEIRA Patricia	Representative (remotely)

	PINTO Margarida	Alternate (remotely)
Norwegian Rail Directorate	SAETHRE Preben	Representative (remotely)
KNORR-BREMSE	ERTL Martin	Alternate (remotely)
KONTRON	MIKULANDRA Michael	Representative (remotely)
ÖBB	STROHMEIER Flora	Alternate (remotely)
PKP	ZBIGNIEW Jancewicz	Representative (remotely)
NS/PRO RAIL	CAYET Julien	Alternate (remotely)
SIEMENS MOBILITY	KAMINSKY Ralf	Alternate
SNCF	CHERON Christophe	Representative
STRUKTON	SAMSON Henk	Alternate
TRAFIKVERKET	CAROLIN Anders	Representative
VOESTALPINE	OSSBERGER Uwe	Representative (remotely)
XLAB	NEJC Bat	Representative (remotely)
	BLAZ Jemensek	Alternate (remotely)
	MENÉNDEZ Manuel	Observer

European Union Agency for Railway (ERA)	GHERGHINESCU Oana	Observer
ERRAC	BERBINEAU Marion	Observer
	FOJUD Artur	Observer
Chair of the SRG	HALTUF Miroslav	Observer
EU-Rail	TRAVAINI Giorgio	Executive Director
	FURIO Nicolas	Observer
	CONLON Ian	Observer
	GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA Isaac	Observer
	TORRES Anna Maria	Observer
	HRETU Andrei	Observer

LIST OF DECISIONS:

The following decisions were taken by the Board:

- GB Decision n° 02/2025 on the amendment n°1 of the Work Programme 2025-2026
- GB Decision n° 03/2025 on the revised Multi-Annual Work Programme
- GB Decision n° 04/2025 on the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024
- GB Opinion n° 05/2025 on the Final Accounts 2024
- GB Decision n°06/2025 on the High-level Paper on *“A future policy based public private partnership for rail”*
- GB Decision n° 07/2025 on the award of Call 2025-01

OVERVIEW OF DISCUSSIONS:

INTRODUCTION

The 16th meeting of Europe's Rail Governing Board (GB) was chaired by Mr. Kristian SCHMIDT (European Commission, DG MOVE). The Chair welcomed the participants to the meeting, which was held in a hybrid form with in-person and digital presentation. The Chair thanked in particular all the participants who came to Brussels.

1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair started by giving the floor to the new Executive Director of ERA, Ms. Oana GHERGHINESCU, who introduced herself.

The Chair also welcomed the new Governing Board representatives, in particular the associated members as new JU members, who are:

- Mr Meike JIPP, as main representative of DLR
- Mr Javier BONILLA, as main representative of ACCIONA (new Member)
- Mr Michael HOLZBAUER, as main representative of FREQUENTIS (new Member)
- Mr Guenter GRAF, as alternate of FREQUENTIS (new member)
- Ms Patricia FIGUEIRA, as main representative of INFRAESTRUTURAS DE PORTUGAL – leader of the PT Alliance (new Member)
- Ms Margarida PINTO, as alternate of INFRAESTRUTURAS DE PORTUGAL – leader of the PT Alliance (new Member)
- Mr Michael MIKULANDRA, as main representative of KONTRON (new Member)
- Mr Ulrich GEIER, as alternate of KONTRON (new Member)
- Mr. Nejc BAT, as main representative of XLAB (new Member)
- Mr. Jemensek BLAZ, as alternate of XLAB (new Member)
- Mr Ismael SÁNCHEZ, as alternate of XLAB (new Member)

On the Commission side, the Chair informed that DG RTD is will be from now represented by Ms Joanna DRAKE (main representative) and Ms Jane AMILHAT (alternate), Acting Director and Head of Unit respectively at DG RTD. In this Governing Board meeting, Ms Suzanna KRAAK and Mr Andrea GENTILI will ensure the representation of this DG.

The Chair presented the draft Agenda for adoption precisising that the topic for discussion had changed from data interoperability to high-speed technologies innovation, which both the Executive Director and himself considered an important topic to address at this stage. Data interoperability will be addressed at a future meeting.

The Agenda was adopted without any changes.

1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA <i>Declarations of conflict of interest based on the agenda items</i>	9.30-10.30
2. INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION	
3. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 15 th GB MEETING OF 5 FEBRUARY 2025	10.30-10.35
ITEMS FOR DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD	
5. DECISION ON AMENDMENT N°1 OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026	10.35-11.20
6. DECISION ON REVISED MULTI-ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME	
7. DECISION ON CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2024	
8. OPINION ON FINAL ACCOUNTS 2024	
9. DECISION ON HIGH-LEVEL PAPER ON "A FUTURE POLICY BASED PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR RAIL"	
10. DECISION ON THE AWARD OF CALL 2025-01 (under embargo)	
ITEM FOR DISCUSSION ON CONTENT	
11. RAIL HIGH-SPEED TECHNOLOGIES INNOVATION	11:20-12:25
ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
12. AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> INDICATIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE OR AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE OF THE NEXT GB MEETING: 2 DECEMBER 2025, FOLLOWED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE AFTERNOON AND ON 3 DECEMBER 2025 MORNING 	12.25-12.30

2. INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

The Chair started by informing the Members that the formal proposal on the EU long-term budget "Multi-annual Financial Framework" (MFF) is scheduled to be presented in July 2025. The discussions and negotiations will start at that moment, which shall lead to its adoption before the end of 2027. The MFF must be adopted by unanimity by the 27 EU Member States in the Council, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament. The next MFF will start in 2028 and cover the EU budget up until 2034.

The Chair continued saying that the Commission is looking forward to an ambitious MFF, both in size and design. The objective is that the budget is fit for purpose and resources are used efficiently. It should be more focused, simpler with greater impacts, more flexible and delivering on the EU priorities.

The Commission also calls for modernising the revenue side and advocates the introduction of new own resources.

The Chair also indicated that it is probable that a Competitiveness Fund will be proposed, as part of the package, with programmes designed to successfully contributing to competitiveness. Horizon Europe as a fund will survive (FP10), but probably with major simplification. Some other existing programmes will likely disappear.

With regard to other topics under discussion at the moment, the Chair mentioned the Master Plan for high-speed rail network to help connect EU capitals, which is expected to be announced before or after the summer break. This initiative is set to redefine long-distance travel across the continent, promising enhanced connectivity and sustainability.

He also referred to the TEN-T network comprising railways, inland waterways, short sea shipping routes and roads linking urban nodes, maritime and inland ports, airports and terminals-, which is not fully completed. Thus, the Commission is looking at how to find cost efficient business, and address issues such as interoperability, technology introduction, etc. There is a need for greater level of cooperation in the rail sector on rolling stock. All to be addressed when discussing interoperability.

The Chair continued informing Members that there is an agreement on rail capacity regulation, reached in trilogue (with the EU Council and European Parliament) a couple of weeks back, towards a conclusion of negotiations in September under the Danish EU Presidency. That will lead to great cooperation with the JU on traffic management.

Another item is military mobility, the Commission expects to present a package this year with a proposal including strategic objectives, harmonising national procedures and enhancing infrastructure resilience. These measures will streamline military mobility in Europe. In the package, there will be an omnibus regulation, which is a horizontal regulation across all sectors, adapting existing laws, to ensure transport equipment does not stop at the border. Investments will go into civilian transport as well for dual use purposes.

The Commission is also waiting for the Connecting Europe Facility Fund. Work continues also on the TSI, ticketing regulation and lots of other initiatives.

The Chair gave then the floor to the DG RTD representative Ms Suzanna KRAAK, who complemented the information from the research policy perspective. She said that the MFF will provide more clarity in relation to the future FP10 and Competitiveness Fund. The aim is that both instruments facilitate innovation, reduce strategic dependencies, enhance autonomy, ensure that SMEs and start-ups can benefit, while the collaboration with national initiatives is strengthened. She also referred to the EU Start-up and Scale-up Strategy published on 28 May to promote start-ups at EU level, to simplify better finance the best talent support and set up an innovation friendly regulation.

In the context of the Chose Europe initiative launched by the Commission at early May, a new funding instrument ("super grants") could be created for the European Research Council (ERC). Those grants would aim at reinforcing Europe's role as a global hub for scientific excellence.

She concluded saying that FP10 remains under discussion for now.

The Chair thanked Ms KRAAK for her comprehensive summary and emphasised the important moment in EU-Rail's life, currently in its second period and almost looking at the 3rd period, which means that results in terms of innovation and development are expected. He then opened the floor to any questions.

Mr HALTUF, Chair of the SRG, commented that the railway sector is often viewed as part of research, but it is more about monitoring research into innovative solutions. So, it is different from pure research, which makes rail specific in the research field. One of the specificities is the application in dual use, because what is applied to military is also of civil use. He added that it is important to collect and share information on research on digitalisation and AI, so that it is possible to monitor, analyse and find innovative solutions for railway.

Regarding the point on dual use, the Chair said that it is important to note that part of the 5% of the military expenditure that is being currently discussed could go to transport mobility, which is positive.

Mr DE CASTRO, representative of CAF, also commented that military mobility could have an impact on the rail sector, and it would be beneficial to have a better and common understanding of the next steps.

The Chair took note of the comments received for a possible topical discussion in a next Governing Board. In his opinion, there are a number of hotspots in terms of infrastructure that would need to be addressed. It is also a question of allocation of resources, giving priority for trains.

3. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The ED started his presentation referring to the status of the on-going Flagships.

The two FP1 projects (MOTIONAL and Travel Wise) are progressing adequately, attention should be put on the usual interaction between the different FPs, System Pillar and the RNE activities related to traffic planning.

However, FP2R2DATO is on a yellow status as there was an issue on the availability of rolling stock for testing. There has been a reallocation of activities to other WPs which is reflected in an amendment which is about to be finalised. The alignment with FP2-MORANE 2 is also to be handled.

FP3 and 4 are in good progress, whereas FP5 TRANS4M-R is in yellow status due to the need to deliver all specifications and requirements. A 2nd amendment on this project is being accepted. Two DAC trains are running for tests in Sweden. The other FP5 project DACTIVATE is progressing according to the planning.

FP6 is also in green status with just a point of attention for the planning of the integrated demo. Flagship Area 7 related projects are also in green status and progressing well.

Regarding the exploratory research projects, the batch of projects signed in October last year have been positively accepted. The projects signed in 2023 are currently under assessment; there are only minor delays in deliverable submission and a point of attention to the societal KPI output of Academics4rail.

The ED continued explaining the status on the System Pillar (SP) work, starting with the last decision taken by the SP Steering group on the “Specification release B4R4 of the Trackside assets Control system (TACS)”. The revised “Standardisation and TSI Input Plan (STIP) version 2.0” and the “EU-Rail report on FRMCS v2 and v3” are under finalisation and their approval is expected soon. The items for information at the last SP meeting were the strategic direction of the next contract/3-year perspective; the train CS domain and link to OCORA; the draft document about safety in SP defined system (PRAMS); and the transversal CCS.

The expected outcomes on SP for this year are numerous.

The ED continued providing a state of play regarding the High-Level Deployment Group. He highlighted that the FRMCS subgroup started its activities and the first analysis about operational deployment alignment between major railway transition programmes is ongoing.

He also presented the NetZERo Logistics Study, which was conducted by EY and for which a webinar will be held on 30 June. The study provides the economical evidence that investing in rail makes sense, because greater integration of rail freight delivers significant reduction in CO2 emissions and externalities such as congestion and accidents, while also generating long-term energy savings and socio-economic returns.

The ED continued informing on the conclusion of the Letters of Commitment with the new EU-Rail Associated Members. He also welcomed their representatives present to this GB meeting for the first time. The ED explained the negotiation process following the GB mandate and informed that there has been as well a voluntary in-kind contribution of about 3,5MEUR from the ongoing project contribution.

The ED also informed about the confirmation of the date of termination of the membership of THALES in EU-Rail, which will be on 24 July 2025 (resulting from HITACHI RAIL's acquisition). HITACHI RAIL STS SpA will take over all IKAA obligations for the running grants during 2022-2025. There has been a private membership redistribution of the future IKOP/IKAA commitments from THALES LoC to several other members (in accordance with Article 28.2 of the SBA). The ED presented the results of such IKOP/IKAA commitment to the GB Members.

With regard to the IKAA report for 2024, the ED explained that the submission was slightly delayed because of technical issues already solved with the EC reporting systems. The ED presented to the GB the certified amount of IKAA for the year and cumulatively, confirming that the report is overall aligned with the estimations.

The ED presented the ongoing public procurement tenders' calendars, notably on the Locomotive fleet retrofit and engineering solution for DAC (and ERTMS), Strategic Advise to EU-Rail and Multi-Project Collaborative Tool.

The Scientific Steering Group (SSG) continued its work with two meetings since the last GB meeting. A positive advice was provided in the last meeting held on 13 May to the topics for decision of the current GB meeting.

The States Representatives Group (SRG) held three meetings since the last GB meeting, in its last meeting of 14 May, equally contributed and provided a positive opinion on the topics for decision of the current GB meeting.

The EU-Rail is already starting the preparation of the programme of the General Assembly to be held in December 2025, the point for open strategic discussion is kept open and it will be discussed with the Chair, possibly it will relate to the next JU and MFF.

The ED concluded his presentation with an overview of the main communication and dissemination activities recently organised, among which he highlighted a hearing in the European Parliament's TRAN Committee. He also highlighted the current work with the SRG in the organisation of regional benchmarking events in Poland and perhaps also in the UK. Lastly, the ED referred to the launch of new podcasts series, including recent ones with the GB Chair and a private member of the GB.

The Chair thanked the ED for his comprehensive report and congratulated the entire team and the Members for their continued commitment to move forward on the Flagship Projects. The Chair welcomed in particular the momentum gained on deployment due to its importance as it needs to show its progress and be aligned with the different strands.

The Chair opened the floor for any comments/questions.

Ms GHERGHINESCU, ED of ERA, intervened to highlight the importance of FRMCS, as highlighted in the ED presentation. ERA relies on the timeliness and maturity of the input from the relevant entities involved in the definition and testing. Such input is key for ensuring mature specifications, which would be ready to be included in the TSIs. It is key to keep a close monitoring on whether the intermediate milestones are respected. ERA is also exploring on how to best support deployment with streamlined authorisation process for massive retrofitting linked to FRMCS. An internal group has been set up for that purpose. She also highlighted the importance of the collaboration with EU-Rail on the STIP, in view of ensuring that mature solutions are proposed before including specifications in the TSIs.

Mr HALTUF, Chair of the SRG, took the floor to say that the SRG is ready to introduce an idea of testing phase for FRMCS.

Mr CHERON pointed that in France FRMCS could cost from 5 to 7 billion EUR.

The ED emphasised that a lot needs to be done by the sector all together and there is a need common attention on all our activities if we want to deliver good results in the expected timeframe.

The Chair asked that in case of any problems, they shall be immediately escalated for arbitration because of its strategic importance.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 15th GB MEETING OF 05 FEBRUARY 2025

The Chair invited participants to provide any further feedback on the draft minutes of the last GB meeting, which were distributed on 22 May. All received comments were acknowledged and incorporated accordingly.

The Europe's Rail Governing Board adopted the minutes without any further changes.

ITEMS FOR DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

After confirming that the required quorum for any decision to be taken was granted, the Chair opened the decision section.

5. DECISION ON THE AMENDMENT N°1 OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

Before the adoption of the decision, the Chair gave the floor to the ED to present the main changes submitted to the decision of the Members.

The ED focused on the main highlights of the draft amendment of the current WP in terms of budget. On the revenue side, there had been the introduction of 397.354,89EUR of unused commitment appropriations stemming from de-commitments made for the years 2022-2024. On the expenditure side, there had been a transfer of 42.523.485,48EUR of operational unused commitment appropriations to the operational part of the budget to cover the launch of the foreseen 2025-02 call for proposals; of 198.453EUR of administrative unused commitment appropriations; of 28.712.521,3EUR of operational unused payment appropriations to the operational part; and of 888.012,5EUR of administrative unused payment appropriations to the administrative part.

The proposed amendment includes the budget for the call for proposals 2025-02 (Horizon-JU-ER-2025-02), which will cover the 2nd wave of Flagship area projects. This call is planned to be opened on 8 October and until 11 February 2026.

The ED continued presenting the main changes on the technical and operational content in the draft amendment. In particular, there has been an adjustment of TRL for the technical enablers in the Flagship Areas; some brief descriptions of the new Flagship projects were added; the activities of the dedicated FRMCS Deployment Subgroup have been highlighted; new open tenders were added (Multi-Project Collaborative Tool, Specialist support on the development of European Harmonised Rulebook and Strategic Advice to EU-Rail); and lastly there have been a few updates on the Call 2025-02.

The Chair submitted the document and approach for adoption. It was adopted without any objections.

Decision

GB Decision n° 02/2025 on the amendment of Work Programme 2025-2026

6. *DECISION ON THE REVISED MULTI-ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME*

The Chair invited the ED to present the main purpose of this revision.

The ED explained, first, that new topics/technical enablers linked with the area of expertise of the new associated members had been included; second, there had been some adjustments of TRLs for Flagship Areas Waves 1, 2 and 3 based on the work progress of the projects in Wave 1; third, there was a review of the technical enablers per Flagship Area; fourth, adaptations were made to the Rolling Stock part of Flagship Area 6. Additionally, changes have been made for a better reflection of interaction between the Flagships Areas and System Pillar.

The Chair thanked the ED for taking into account the EC comments provided after the inter-services consultation.

The Chair of the SRG and ERA also commented that they were pleased that their comments had also been included.

The revised version was adopted without any objections.

Decision

GB Decision n° 03/2025 on the revised Multi-Annual Work Programme

7. *DECISION ON THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2024*

The ED explained that the 2024 provisional annual accounts had been transmitted by the EU-Rail Accounting Officer to the European Court of Auditors, the Commission's DG BUDG and the external auditors on 28 February, and then forwarded to the GB Members. All comments from the Members had been considered and the Final Accounts were now ready for adoption.

The last certification of in-kind contributions for the S2R Programme was integrated into the draft Annual Activity Report (AAR) of 2024. The draft AAR was also sent to the Members for comments on 21 May 2025, as well as to the SRG, as foreseen in Article 20 of the SBA.

The ED explained the main highlights.

The Chair submitted the Final draft version of the Consolidated AAR 2024 to the vote of the Member. It was adopted without any objections.

Decision

GB Decision n° 04/2025 on the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024

8. *OPINION ON THE FINAL ACCOUNTS 2024*

The ED continued explaining that the Final Accounts were submitted to the Members on 19 June 2025 for comments. They differ mainly from the provisional annual accounts with regard to the in-kind contributions provided in implementing additional activities (IKAA), in order to take into account the updated amounts submitted by the current EU-Rail private Members by 31 May 2025, and the accounting estimates linked of the amendment of FP5 (TRANS4M-R).

The Chair submitted the Final Accounts for 2024 for adoption, which was adopted without any objections.

The Chair congratulated the JU team for it.

Decision

GB Opinion n° 05/2025 on the revised Multi-Annual Work Programme

9. DECISION ON THE HIGH-LEVEL PAPER ON “A FUTURE POLICY BASED PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR RAIL”

The Chair invited once again the ED to give the background information and present the outcome of this consultation exercise.

The ED started by thanking all Members for their time and dedication on the preparation of the draft High-level Paper since the end of last 2024. He also thanked the SSG and SRG for their contributions.

As a follow-up of the consultation process, the draft High-level paper has been further improved since its presentation in the last GB, and an additional draft Annex has been elaborated in order to describe three Flagship initiatives. This latter has been sent to the GB Members for information purposes only and will be considered a living document, in the sense that it will continue to be amended until finalisation. Dedicated working groups will undertake the work between June and October 2025, for any possible decision and adoption at the next GB meeting scheduled for 2 December 2025.

The Chair encouraged Members to continue working on the Annex. He informed Members that the DG RTD had also endorsed the paper because it highlights the key priorities and links with the Competitiveness Compass, thanking RTD colleagues for their contribution on the mission orientation.

The Chair submitted the draft High-level Paper on “a future policy based public private partnership for rail” for adoption. It was adopted without any objections.

Decision

GB Decision n° 06/2025 on the High-level Paper n “A future policy based public private partnership for rail”

10. DECISION ON THE AWARD OF THE CALL 2025-01

The Chair gave the floor to the ED to present the results of the first call for proposals of the year (HORIZON-JU-ER2025-FA7-01: *Further Technological Development of Maglev-derived Systems*). He reminded that considering the confidential nature of the topic, the GB Members were invited to consider any possible conflict of interest. In that case, they should abstain from voting, if any.

Three members declared being in conflict of interest: FSI, DLR and Infraestruturas de Portugal - leader of the PT Alliance.

The ED explained that the call had been launched on 26 February 2025 and was closed on 7 May. It is an Innovation Action with an expected TRL of 5/6 and an expected EU contribution of 3MEUR. Only one project could be awarded.

The evaluation of the only proposal received was conducted according to the rules on submission and evaluation of proposals laid down in the EU-Rail WP 2025-2026. The outcome was favourable to that proposal, so the ED recommendation to the GB Members was to finance the proposed activity.

The ED also explained the possible circumstances which lead to have just one proposal as the call topic is very much requiring specialised and not widely available expertise on maglev type of solution. He added that for the next call for proposals consisting of the 2nd wave of Flagship projects and exploratory topics, the expectation of broader participation is higher.

The Chair submitted the call award decision to the approval of GB Members. It was approved without any objections.

Decision

GB Decision n° 07/2025 on the award of the Call 2025-01

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

“RAIL HIGH-SPEED TECHNOLOGIES INNOVATION”

The Chair gave the floor to the ED to make an introduction before opening the discussion.

The ED first referred to the definition of high-speed which can be found in Directive (EU)2016/797. He referred to the work conducted under the former S2R JU, in particular the KPIs versus the System Platform Demonstrators (SPD) in terms of LCC, capacity and punctuality. He went on presenting the work conducted with EU-Rail for Flagship Areas 1 to 4. Clearly, EU-Rail is contributing with technology applicable to high-speed, but without a specific platform/Flagship. High-speed could also be a good vehicle to achieve harmonisation. He emphasised the relevance of the System Pillar work for high-speed, in particular the development of a European system architecture for ETCS Level 2 without line side signals. Important outcomes in this respect include: the operational harmonisation, cybersecurity and traffic CS design.

The Chair thanked the ED for his introduction. In his opinion, there are good examples of global leaders of high speed in Europe. What is needed is taking a further step to co-creation, of course using the JU as a safe harbour from the competition policy point of view. But Europe is not alone, and it is not a secret that on the global market Europe is facing strong competition overall, so just seat and wait is not an option.

There is a total of 12 000km from the EU network but only in a few countries. There is therefore a future scenario where high-speed can grow thousands of km to connect cities. Considering high-speed is 160km/h, the target is a four-hour journey to be a real alternative to planes. But this requires the sector to step up. He wonders whether there is enough cooperation and to what extend GB Members consider high-speed is a sector apart for which a dedicated high-speed programme/flagship is needed.

The Chair gave the floor to the ED who thanked the Chair for having set the scene, explaining what the challenges are and how the Members can contribute to the discussion. Looking back in the history, largely the European sector exported the technology to China. However today, if Europe wants to compete, it cannot be achieved without innovation. It is not always possible to play safe because to deliver innovation sometimes there is a need to take risks. And it is also an opportunity, because it is possible to create a flagship where we can create a framework, with a harmonised process, aimed of creating a truly European network. The ED also recalled that EU-Rail did a report on high-speed rail in Europe, connecting main cities and capitals, a few years ago.

The Chair opened up the discussion to the Members.

Mr SAMSON, representing STRUKTON, started the debate referring to the Draghi report, when considering the European wide rail network being too expensive. On this topic, economy of scale is really important, because if every country is building its own high-speed, there will not be any company interest in investing. Therefore, for building and maintaining infrastructure there is a need of harmonisation of the systems. Additionally, with the defence issue in the background, it is essential to have stock of rail components and standardisation is key if countries would need to support each other.

Mr VILLALMANZO, representing ADIF, referred to other additional high-speed challenges apart from track models (e.g. ballasted vs ballast less). For instance, when talking about aerodynamics there is a tendency to think only about rolling stock when there are phenomena related to the infrastructure assets or the interfaces of both subsystems. If the maximum speed should be upgraded in the future to 350 kph, other recurring technical problems will have to be overcome again via research and innovation (wheel-rail contact, bridges dynamic behaviour...), also questions about soils. Capital costs (CAPEX) and later the operational costs (OPEX) shall be controlled or reduced in the current state of play for high-speed rail, as well as its future progress based on these actions.

Mr HALTUF, SRG Chair, pointed to the need of a strategy. For him, high speed network is much needed for connecting cities in situations without and with an emergency. So, there is no other option, investment in high-speed is twice needed. It is a matter of coming up with the right solution, together with the EC, and having a look at interoperability as well. This should be not only on paper but in reality, this meaning no national specifics, no national rules, one

European rule, and including a study on the impact on financing and costs. If the question will be taken to the SRG, the group is prepared for opinion on those first steps.

Mr CHERON, representing SNCF, highlighted the costs of new infrastructure construction. He also highlighted that there is nothing very specific on the signalling system then applying ERTMS. On the rolling stock work on modular interior is important, taking up the results of S2R and EU-Rail. On the infrastructure/rolling stock interaction we should see if the 17 tons per axle limit can be increased, in particular in a dual use scenario.

The Chair asked Mr CHERON whether, now the French high-speed is entering in Italy, if they are looking at rolling stocks, and how much are these technologies are converging to a common platform. He asked for what would be needed for that. Mr CHERON replied that this is more an economic topic. He confirmed that the model of Airbus with one big supplier does not seem to be needed in the rail sector.

Mr VILLALMANZO contributed by saying that with five suppliers, the market is liberalised in Spain. He fully agrees with what Mr CHERON said. At the moment, it is more about trying to solve bottlenecks, trying to solve legacy systems problems, and keep concentrating on those issues.

Ms GHERGHINESCU, representing ERA, intervened to say that she would like to add another dimension to the coordination, updating the concept of climate resilience, and discussing how to upgrade infrastructure, because it is not possible to have it in rounds. The important discussion should be how the sector would expect infrastructure to evolve. In some countries it is possible depending on topography, in others not. It is also about managing investments and what will come from the new MFF. She added that ERTMS is key for driving success, but there is no interoperability for the moment. And it is important to follow up on that, and in addition national rules need to disappear to avoid trains stop at borders.

Mr CAROLIN, representing TRAFIKVERKET, commented that there are, in his opinion, two positive points. On the one hand, high speed is developed according to existing regulations up to 150, 160 and 170 km/h; on the other hand, existing lines have been upgraded. The problem is that upgrading existing lines to 250 or 300km/h implies that low speed capacity is being removed. This is not recommended because there is also a need to increase the capacity of the remaining lines. We should not create new problems by solving one.

Mr. KAMINSKY, representing SIEMENS, pointed the many differences between the countries, e.g. some have additional requirements for technical topics, on fire safety in Italy for instance, others not. The reality is that there is a fragmented landscape of requirements still in Europe, so it is time to develop solutions based on standards applied as much as possible in Europe. Eliminate the specific ones would be the first step, and in a second step, reducing costs for all procedures coming along for homologation. Infrastructure in the Member States is prioritised on country needs. Traffic is mainly looked at single Member States level with national budgets, so investment is allocated on that specific need. Overall, there is a need to shift to a European approach.

Mr PIFFERI, representing FSI, referred to another type of example to have an overview of the problems encountered when designing a new high-speed line. The high-speed line between Naples and Bari is under construction. As it goes through mountains and there are often

earthquakes, therefore infrastructure costs (building and maintenance) are high and specific. Technology help to address some costs reduction for example with the use of digital twin and BIM. The digital representation of future lines also helps to build stakeholders acceptance. The procurement timing is another issue, as in the moment the works start a new technology may be available (e.g. FRMCS). Other example of technical solutions to support investment because of costs decrease is the use of drones for inspections.

Mr HALTUF, Chair of the SRG, referred to the Japanese diagnostic train, which replaced the technology installed in each rolling stock unit, so it means there is a permanent measurement. He considers that these technologies should be used in Europe. Regulation is, according to him, the main obstacle to install new technologies, reason for which it is essential to analyse the regulatory framework and only regulate what is needed, in order to remain competitive.

Mr VILLALMANZO brought the point of application of Regulation EU n°402/2013 for Common Safety Methods (CSM), and the risk assessment approach to be applied for innovations especially considering high-speed operation conditions can be perceived as an important constraint for further developments. Specifically, in Member States where there is no test track available to emulate high-speed conditions, perhaps a study on a certain type of specifications to draft specifications and requirements for test beds and sandboxes to foster high-speed technologies would be useful for the sector in the foreseeable future.

Mr DE CASTRO, representing CAF, added that in developing new high speed technology and solutions in Europe, it would be important to look at cost reduction, how to address the risk of social exclusion of the areas which are not covered, and the energy consumption. R&I should try to overcome all those issues.

The ED intervened to say that he took note of all the elements that Members brought forward, including possible research ideas to be developed. It is about bringing forward the value of high-speed, for which collaboration with ERA is essential. He took note that another important part emerging from the discussion is the alignment of deployment investments and plans across Europe. An example is the DAC delivery programme. So, it is about research on new technology for high-speed, but probably EU-Rail should contribute as well with additional harmonisation and deployment activities.

The Chair concluded recognising the fragmented situation in Europe of rail high speed. The EC objective and common aspiration is that the sector could go high-speed also across borders, including central and Eastern Europe. It is clear from the comments that were made that the cost of constructions is an issue to address and ERTMS should also be the common basis.

In conclusion, the Chair ask the JU to think of all the issues brought forward, and also consulting further with the Member States on high-speed specific research areas and outcomes of common interest and application.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

INDICATIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE OR AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING

- Decisions by written procedure (tbc):

- Prevention of and fight against psychological and sexual harassment
- Governing Board Meeting of 02 December 2025:
 - Work Programme 2026
 - Possible amendment of Work Programme 2025-2026

DATE OF THE NEXT GB MEETING:

- Governing Board Meeting: 02 December 2025 (morning)
- General Assembly: 02 December 2025 (afternoon), with a possible participation of CEO level + 03 December 2025 (morning)

Additional point by the Chair of the SRG on EU testing lines network for EU-Rail innovation and SP activities:

The Chair agreed on the request during the meeting of Mr HALTUF for an Any Other Business to present his proposal for launching a CEF funded project to build one regional cross-border line between the Czech Republic and Germany. He highlighted the involvement of DB InfraGo and Správa železnic. (*See his presentation for further details*).

He asked for the support of GB Members to his proposal, which is open for any other States willing to collaborate.

The Chair reacted saying that FRMCS is important, but funding is not clear. FRMCS testing is ongoing already with EU-Rail project FP2-MORANE2.

The ED said that this topic was not yet discussed, and he agreed to identify possible links with the activities of EU-Rail. It would be important to – insofar as possible – align national testing activities of FRMCS with the FP2-MORANE2 project, something that for example happened with Poland. Therefore, coordination work is very much welcome, and also with other MS wishing to work on it.

Mr HALTUF agreed that it makes sense to see how it would fit into the project FP2-MORANE2, and that testing could for instance also be proposed in Spain, on high-rail lines in places with tunnels and mountains.

The Chair thanked Mr HALTUF for his proposal. He then concluded the GB meeting by thanking all Members and Observers for their participation.

Done in Brussels, on 24 June 2025.

Signed:



Magda KOPCZYNSKA

Chairperson of the Governing Board

