



Deliverable D 12.1

Dissemination and Promotion Activities Review I

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1. Executive Summary

This summary describes the communication and dissemination activities in the DACcord WP12 from project month M1 to M24.

The stakeholder management plan made in WP9 have set the way for WP12 throughout the first two years of the project. The plan included analyses of the stakeholder environment, the position of the stakeholders towards DAC and what they need to know in order to achieve the project objectives (support for roll-out and for funding/financing DAC deployment in Europe). The stakeholder management group have therefore also continuously managed the communication activities to achieve a maximum of coherence in messaging and material used.

For this purpose, participants in WP12 have put together standardised material as graphical communication assets, visual sample-based guidelines and wording guidelines to make communication from all participants easier and to make the quality of all communications better.

During the first two years, communication activities have been many for the DACcord project team. The type of events has varied from conferences, webinars, workshops and demonstrations where topics have varied based on the target audience. An important communication output was the publication and handover of the "DAC Sector Statement" to EU decision-makers, urging the Commission and Member States to establish the necessary political, budgetary, and legal framework for coordinated European DAC deployment.

Big highlight events were TRAKO in 2023, the DACcord event on the Connecting Europe Days in 2024 and InnoTrans 2024 where DAC was represented in a very good way and reached many important stakeholders with good messages. The live demonstration at the CED event in front of the highest-level EC, Member State Ministry and Sectoral C-level representation, really showcased the sector's interest and involvement in the DAC deployment.

Special attention has been given to the CSEE-countries to ensure that also the decision makers of these countries, who are not a part of the development of DAC, also receive consistent news updates.

The objective of the WP12 has been fully achieved and all tasks have been successfully performed.

WP12 has effectively implemented its communication and dissemination strategy, laying the groundwork for continued efforts in WP13 in the project months M25 to M36. Going forward the DAC Fora meetings will continue to be important for continuous and close contact with the stakeholders, also the upcoming demonstrations and tests will be important to disseminate.

This work will be continued in the DACcord WP13 in the project months M25 to M36 and be summarised in the deliverable D13.1.

2. Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
CBA	Cost-Benefit Analysis
CER	Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies
CSEE	Central and South-Eastern Europe (countries)
CTO	Chief Technology Officer (of a company)
DAC	Digital Automatic Coupler
EDDP	European Digital Automatic Coupler (DAC) Delivery Programme
EIM	European Rail Infrastructure Managers
ERA	European Union Agency for Railways/ European Railway Agency
EU-Rail (JU)	Europe's Rail (Joint Undertaking)
FP	(EU-Rail) Flagship Project
IM	Infrastructure Manager
NCP	National Contact Point (in ministry)
PM	Programme Management
PMO	Programme Management Office
RU	Railway Undertaking
SH	Stakeholder
SM	Stakeholder Management
TSI	Technical Specification for Interoperability
UIC	Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer
WA	(EDDP) Work Area
WP	Work package

3. Background

The project DACcord provides management competencies to support the EU-Rail JU for the continuation of the professional management of the activities of the European DAC Delivery Programme (EDDP), enabled by the EU-Rail JU and established in the EU-Rail JU work programme, in which European Rail Freight Sector and manufacturers are united to strive for the Europe-wide introduction of the Digital Automatic Coupler.

The present document constitutes the **Deliverable “D 12.1 Dissemination and Promotion Activities Review I”** of the DACcord project’s **WP12 “Dissemination and Promotion I”** in the framework of the European DAC Delivery Programme within Flagship Area 5 as described in the EU-RAIL MAWP, and contributes as well indirectly to the Flagship Project 5 TRANS4M-R (see Graphic 3-1).

DACcord Beneficiary **Trafikverket, together with its affiliated entity Lindholmen Science Park**, was in charge of this work package, supported by the DACcord project partners and further sector stakeholders forming the EDDP / DACCORD stakeholder management core group within DACCORD WP9 and WP10.

For easier referencing, the identification of the areas and activities of the overall DAC programme has been set to the following nomenclature:

Work area	Activity	Title/content
A	A1	EU-Rail Flagship Project 5 TRANS4M-R, “Full Digital Freight Train Operations”
	A2, 3	FP5 FDFTO “Sounding Boards” for FP5 Technology and Operational Rules
B (EDDP & Stakeholder management)	B1	EDDP programme / risk management
	B2	EDDP Stakeholder management (<i>this area includes dissemin./communic.</i>)
C (Migration)	C1	Fleet analysis and retrofit engineering
	C2	Retrofit Capacity (workshops, workforce, components)
	C3	Migration strategies & retrofitting plan (incl. traffic analysis etc.)
	C4	Infrastructural and IT adaptations
	C5	Placing into service plan/measures (for operations/staff)
D (Economics)	D1	Funding & financing plan (for DAC pre- and full deployment)
	D2	Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) incl. updates
	D3	Investment plan & procurement framework plan
	D4	Other regulatory & legal framework plans (e. g. GCU)
E (EC and ERA-related)	E1	Efficient & suitable authorisation process/requirements; preparing draft TSIs
	E2	TSI revisions
F (EU-Rail System Pillar)	F	Standardisation of Technical and Operational Rules, preparing inputs to TSI drafting, driving EU standardisation
G	-	the (planned) Pioneer DAC Trains project



D = Work Area
3 = Activity

All DAC-related work areas and activities



Graphic 3-1 Dissemination/Promotion within EDDP Stakeholder management



4. Objective/Aim

The main objective of the DACcord WP12 “Dissemination and Promotion I” is **to implement the project’s dissemination, communication and cooperation strategies in conjunction with the WP9-10 stakeholder management** for the months 1-24 (cf. Grant Agreement).

For doing this, the project works closely with EDDP members and stakeholders to set up the overall task list in the actions defined by the EDDP. Alignment on the DAC/EDDP objectives throughout Europe is key to achieve consensus on objectives and specially to unlock the necessary funding for such a sector-wide transformation.

The project’s communication and dissemination strategy actions were defined in close cooperation with the leaders of DACcord WP9 and 10 (stakeholder management) and coordinated with and submitted for validation to the EU-Rail JU. WP12 supports the EDDP and advises the EU-Rail JU Communications to implement the technical dissemination and communication of results, based on the stakeholder management plan developed in DACcord WP9/10.

Work package 12 tasks (cf. Grant Agreement):

To achieve the EU-Rail JU/EDDP stakeholder management objectives as set out in para 1.1, the WP will ...	Status	Chapter
Publish minimum 1-2 DAC articles per year via various channels, defined in conjunction with WP9/10, to improve DAC understanding in to-be-determined regions.	Achieved	5.1
Support EDDP stakeholder management team members in presenting DAC at minimum at 1-2 major external events per year.	Achieved	5.2
In order to reach out to relevant stakeholders, address DAC deployment in Middle/Central, East and South European countries , both the EU and non-EU countries, by minimum 4 meetings per year, of which 1 can be an own DACcord event.	Achieved	5.3
organise 2 dedicated (virtual) workshops per year – subjects decided together with WP9/10 - for important EDDP progresses. Highlight will be put on findings, results as well as outlook for future deployment for relevant stakeholders being directly or indirectly affected by the DAC migration roadmap.	Achieved	5.4
Additional dissemination/communication actions stemming from EDDP Stakeholder Management Plan (WP9/10)	Achieved	5.5
Evaluate the effectiveness of 2 years of work and set-up recommendations for the future work	Achieved	5.6

WP12 and WP9/10 “stakeholder management” were permanently aligned, ensured by the nearly identical representation of persons/beneficiaries in both WPs. WP12 communication actions were derived from WP9/10 actions only and aligned with the EU-Rail JU.

5. WP12 achievements (Month 1-24)

This chapter details the results resp. state of play of the different major WP12 tasks from the WP12 task list. It includes the articles published, a description of overall external events representation and major external events like TRAKO 2023, the Connecting Europe Days 2024 and InnoTrans 2024. Activities for the deployment of DAC in Middle/Central, East and South European countries is also specifically highlighted as well as dedicated workshops for EDDP progress. Finally, additional communication and dissemination activities as well as actions from the EDDP Stakeholder Management Plan are presented.

5.1. Publication of articles

1) EDDP article in Revue Générale des Chemins de Fer

As one example for the general communication activities and before the full media programme is set-up, the Revue Générale des Chemins de Fer (RGCF) published EDDP's contribution on the introduction of DAC in its [April 2024 issue](#). The DACcord Stakeholder management team knows from previous actions taken in France and from various direct contact with French stakeholders that the position towards DAC is still "mixed", making French publications a natural place for providing factual updates on the DAC development, The RGCF was chosen as being a (the) leading railway magazine in France. The article illustrates the journey of the DAC4EU demonstrator train to Strasbourg. In doing so, EDDP has sent an important signal to the professional public in France.



Graphic 5.1-1 EDDP article in Revue Générale des Chemins de Fer

There are no metrics available on the outreach and/or the multiplication of the article in other channels, but DACcord has chosen a/the leading magazine for maximum visibility. No feedback



was received on the article, which would be unusual for such kind of information-oriented publication.

2) Two angles on DAC for specific audiences in railfreight.com

Hugo Tabouret, along with UNIFE (the European association of rail suppliers) communication team, contributed to two articles on Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) by providing insights on the technology and the position of the industry, here aligned with DACcord's position, through two different interviews. The first article published in the Global Railway Review (international specialized press), summed up the general benefits to be brought by DAC and particularly highlighted the transformative potential of DAC in revolutionising rail freight safety, efficiency and interoperability across Europe. The second piece on [railfreight.com](https://www.railfreight.com), translated in three other languages than English, was also promoting DAC, and was additionally answering a specific question about future full digital freight trains data exchange between rail freight stakeholder companies. By translating to multiple languages, Polish, Spanish and Chinese, the article was available for a broader audience than usual.

The Global Railway Review is one of the leading sources of information and analysis in the rail sector. Articles featured are unbiased, non-marketing led and written by senior heads from end-user companies on subjects that they think their readers need to know about which gives the site high editorial integrity. Covering all the new technologies, developments, trends and challenges within the rail sector,. The site railfreight.com is one of the well-known (and not so many) internet publication places for news and is especially interested in electronic technology news. There are no metrics available on the outreach and/or the multiplication of the articles in other channels, but DACcord has chosen them in their known role, for maximum visibility. No feedback was received on the article, which would be unusual for such kind of information-oriented publication.



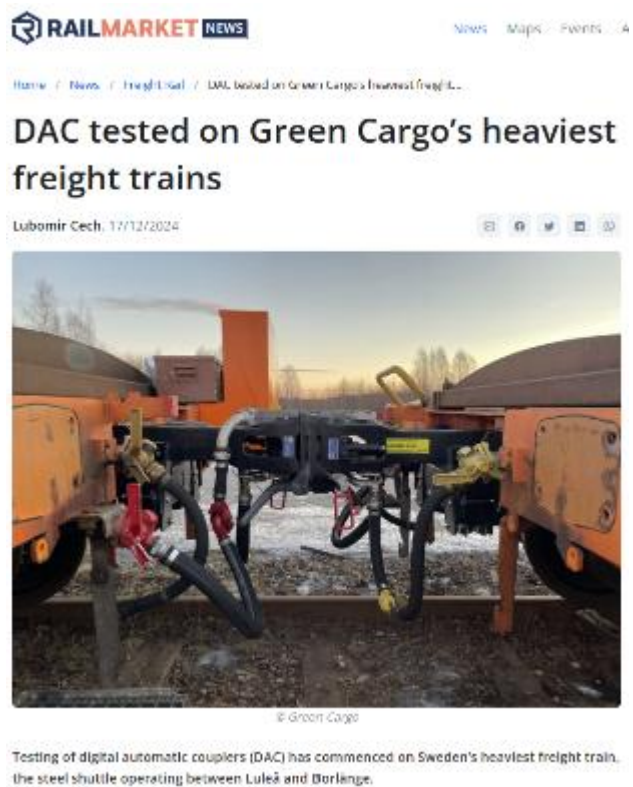
Wprowadzenie cyfrowego automatycznego sprzężenia (DAC) w Europie pozostaje jednym z najbardziej dyskutowanych tematów dotyczących kolejowego transportu towarowego. Pomimo bardzo ambitnych planów wdrożenia na dużą skalę do 2030 r., nadal pozostają pewne pytania, zwłaszcza dotyczące cyfrowego komponentu DAC. RailFreight przeprowadziło rozmowę z Hugo Tabouretem, kierownikiem ds. technicznych w UNIFE (europejskie stowarzyszenie dostawców kolejowych), aby omówić niektóre z tych kwestii.

Graphic 5.1-2 EDDP interview on DAC in railfreight.com

In order to demonstrate the strong liaison between all the DAC-related activities, we quote further the media articles around the Swedish DAC pilots. Already reported as FP5 TRANS4M-R communication activity, it underlines the recommendation that the WP10+12 group made together after the evaluation of the work done: shape the DAC communication “out of one hand” (see D10.1).

3) Sweden Launches Digital Automatic Coupling Pilot to Modernize Rail Freight

The start of the two demonstrator trains in commercial traffic in Sweden, co-ordinated by Trafikverket and Lindholmen Science Park, were big news for both Swedish and European media. The articles included information about the couplers, the demonstrations and collaboration projects leading up to the demonstrators. In Sweden the news of the first demo start was disseminated eleven times by rail-, logistics-, and infrastructure related media reaching a broad audience showing that Sweden is highly interested and invested in these types of innovations. The news of the second demonstrator train, Swedish steel, was then spread nine times in rail and logistics media all over Europe leading to a higher sense of readiness level for rail stakeholders. The reach of the articles was satisfactory and led to the invitation from Railfreight ,com to attend the Rail Freight Summit mentioned in the list of activities 2025.



Graphic 5.1-3 DAC testing start in Sweden articles

Overview of spread "start of DAC demonstration on intermodal train". Monthly viewers is from the webtool <https://pro.similarweb.com> where marketing insights is shared. The number represents the total amount of viewers on that specific media per month.

Platform	Link	Audience	Monthly viewers*	Interactions
Dagens logistik	https://dagenslogistik.se/lindholmen-testar-digitala-godstag/	Logistics actors	14 000	90
Transportnytt	https://transportnytt.se/har-testas-morgondagens-tag/	Goods owners and transport buyers	15 000	part of newsletter sent to 9500 in the transport industry
Järnvägsnyheter.se	https://www.jarnvagsnyheter.se/20240923/16620/framtidens-digitala-godstag-testas-i-sverige	Rail industry	100 000	Not available
Transportochlogistik.se	https://www.transportochlogistik.se/20240923/19886/framtidens-digitala-godstag-testas-i-sverige	People in warehouse, transport and logisitcs industry	48 000	Not available
Järnvägar.nu	https://jarnvagar.nu/digitala-godstag-testas-i-sverige/	Rail industry	37 000	527
DagensNäringsliv.se	https://www.dagensnaringsliv.se/20240923/272705/framtidens-digitala-godstag-testas-i-sverige	Swedish industry and business actors	4 000	Not available
INFRASTRUKTURnyheter.se	https://www.infrastrukturnyheter.se/20240923/30515/framtidens-digitala-godstag-testas-i-sverige?page=%2C9	Swedish actors in transport and infrastructure development	26 000	Not available

Overview of spread "start of DAC demonstration on steel train" in European media.

Platform	Link	Audience	Monthly viewers	Interactions
Rail market	https://railmarket.com/news/freight-rail/27597-dac-tested-on-green-cargo-s-heaviest-freight-trains	European rail industry	75 000	Not available
Railfreight.com	https://www.railfreight.com/technology/2024/12/18/digital-automatic-coupling-trial-to-start-in-sweden/	Rail industry	74 000	Not available
Railway supply	https://www.railway.supply/en/sweden-launches-digital-automatic-coupling-pilot-to-modernize-rail-freight/	International railway industry	569 000	Not available
International Railway Journal	https://www.railjournal.com/freight/heavy-haul-harsh-weather-dac-trial-starts-in-sweden/	International railway industry	531 000	Not available
Rail Target	https://www.railtarget.eu/technologies-and-infrastructure/sweden-dac-testing-steel-freight-9927.html	European rail industry	15 000	Not available
Rail Target	https://www.railtarget.eu/freight/sweden-dac-testing-digital-rail-future-9910.html	European rail industry	15 000	Not available
Railway Gazette	https://www.railwaygazette.com/freight/heavy-steel-train-tests-digital-automatic-couplers-in-real-world-conditions/68089.article	International railway industry	264 000	Not available
Transportjournal.com	https://www.transportjournal.com/en/home/news/artikeldetail/swedens-heaviest-freight-train-tests-dac.html	Supply chain & logistics managers	4 000	Not available
SCI Verkehr	https://www.sci.de/en/data-trends/sci-raildata/article?nid=154283&cHash=dc75d7bae867967271e479ec391a515c	Operators, public and private transport companies, and public administrations	4 000	Not available
Jarnvagar.nu	https://jarnvagar.nu/automatkoppeltestas-i-staltagen/	Rail Industry	37 000	4147

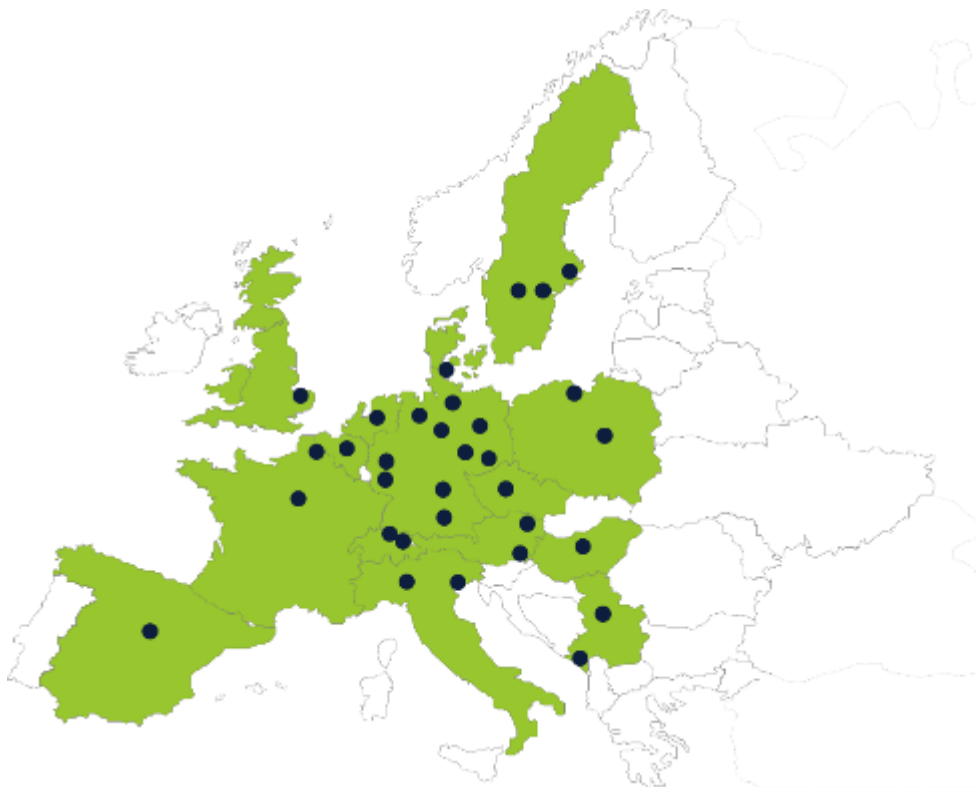
5.2. Presenting DAC at major external events

During the first 24 months of the project the DACcord team has been actively involved in co-organizing and supporting the organisation of numerous stakeholders' events, workshops, and meetings across Europe. The primary goal of these communication efforts has been to raise awareness of the European need for this innovation and how crucial further financing is for its development. Activities have therefore focused on disseminating key benefits/aspects of DAC, including technical specifications, framework discussions, financing options, and deployment strategies. Furthermore, these platforms have also served to promote participation in EDDP workstreams, fostering collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders in advancing DAC deployment. These activities are a result of the stakeholder management strategy to reach the identified stakeholders with content that is relevant to them, according to the actions and content defined in the Stakeholder Management plan.

The following subchapters give an overview on the overall event representation and special/outstanding events organised or enabled by DACcord WP12 in 2023 and 2024.

5.2.1. Overall external events representation

EDDP/DACcord members presented DAC in a huge number of external events. Activities were held all over Europe to create awareness, interest and a common understanding of the collective need for joint efforts in this innovation. In combination with the physical events, represented below, many of the events have been held online to facilitate for all interested parties to join.



Graphic 5.2-1: Dots represent all places where events were held. Multiple events may have taken place in the same place but are only represented one time.

All DACcord, EDDP, related activities are listed from the 1st of April 2023 to the 31st of March 2025.

Date	Event (organiser)	Venue	EDDP contribution	Audience	Participants
2023					
25.-27.04	Train & Rail	Stockholm	Bergstrand	Swedish rail actors	Up to 250
25.04	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
26.04	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Lipka, Lochman, van Balen, SNCF	Rail freight experts from CZ and SK	Up to 25
02.05	EDDP SM / DACcord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
03.05	DAC – gamechanger for rail freight in Europe (BMDV)	Brussels	DAC panel (EC, EP, DBC, HUPAC, RLE, BASF, Voith)	Representatives of EU institutions, MS, Brussels based organisations and companies involved in DAC project	25 to 100
09.-12.05	Transport Logistic (trade fair)	Munich	EDDP/DB event with shippers (Arcelor, BASF, IKEA, VTG)	Representatives of shippers and companies involved in DAC project, European rail freight experts	25 to 100
16.-17.05	SmartRail Europe (Railway Gazette)	Brussels	Gilles Peterhans (UIP)	industry leaders, policymakers, infrastructure managers, passenger rail operators and technology specialists	More than 100
30.05	Rail Transport Day 2023 (EC, SE, RNE, ERJU)	Stockholm	Digitalisation panel (Zocco)	Representatives of EU institutions, MS, Brussels based organisations and European rail freight companies	More than 100
01.06	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
21.-22.06	General Assembly (vpi)	Dresden	Gilles Peterhans & Matthias Knüpling (UIP)	Wagon keepers, workshops, shippers	More than 200
27.06	EDDP SM / DACcord meeting	Brussels	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
29.06	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
18.07	EDDP SM / DACcord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25

29.07	120 years mar shalling yard (DB)	Nürnberg	-	General public	More than 100
22.08	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
05.09	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Lipka, Van Balen, DB / CZ presentations	Rail freight experts from CZ and SK	Up to 25
06.-07.09	Railway Forum (DB)	Berlin	DAC panel (DB, Engelmann, GATX, KB, Voith)	German procurement and rail freight experts, representatives of companies involved in DAC project	25 to 100
06.-07.09	RailFreight Connects (RailFreight)	Bremen	DAC panel (Lipka, UIRR, ZNPK)	European rail freight and digitalisation experts	25 to 100
11.09	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
12.09	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
13.09	System Pillar Task 4 & Sounding Board (FP5)	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
13.-14.09	Space for Innovation in Rail (EC, ERJU, ERA)	Madrid	Oral link to DAC by ERJU (Travaini)	European innovation and rail freight experts	25 to 100
14.09	DAC4EU (Transport Community)	Belgrade	Presentation / DAC panel (Lochman)	Rail freight experts from TC member countries	25 to 100
15.-16.09	Tag der Schiene (DB)	Berlin-Spandau		General public	More than 100
17.-19.09	Schienenfahrzeugtagung	Graz	RF panel (TU Graz, supplier)	Rail vehicle and rail freight experts from the DACH region, representatives of academia	More than 100
19.-22.09	TRAKO (trade fair)	Gdansk	19.: ZNPK panel (Lochman, Travaini), „Meet the DAC experts for individual Q&As“ (Engelmann, Lipka, Lochman),	Polish and Czech rail freight experts Visitors of TRAKO fair Representatives of suppliers	25 to 100 25 to 100

			DAC reception (Travaini, Tabouret) 20.: Rail Target Panel (Travaini)	and companies involved in DAC project	Up to 25
20.-21.09	Digital Rail (GRR)	London	DAC panel (DB, Engelmann, Green Cargo, ÖBB)	European rail and digitalisation experts	25 to 100
21.09	DAC4EU (RCG)	Budapest	Presentation / DAC panel (Topal, Lochman)	Hungarian rail freight and innovation experts	25 to 100
04.10	DAC: the chance to revolutionize European rail freight transport (Mercitalia, Wabtec)	Milano	Travaini and Tione presentations	Italian freight rail and innovation experts	25 to 100
04.10	DAC4Stakeholder (OEBB)	Vienna	Foerst, Memic	Austrian rail freight and innovation experts	25 to 100
04.10	Rail Conference (AFRA)	Paris	RFF video on DAC	French rail freight experts	25 to 100
10.-12.10	Nordic Rail Conference (ELMIA)	Jönköping	Trafikverket (Bergstrand)	Swedish rail actors	25 to 100
16.10	Sounding Board on Technology (FP5)	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
17.10	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Brussels	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
25.10	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
25.-26.10	Digital Mobility Services (ERA)	Hamburg	Knuepling	European rail freight and technical experts, representatives of ports	25 to 100
13.11	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting (focus on MFF potential actions)	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
14.11	Future of Rail Freight in E.	Brussels	RFF presentation (Nikutta)	MEPs, representatives of the Commission, ERA and ERJU,	25 to 100

	(Rail Forum Europe)			representative of Brussels based organisations	
16.11	Symposium (VPI)	Vienna	Knuepling (UIP)	Wagon keepers, workshops, shippers	More than 100
21.11	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
27.11	Renew (UIP, VPI)	Online	Peterhans & Knuepling (UIP)	industry leaders, policy makers, infrastructure managers, rail operators, wagon keepers, shippers	More than 100
28.11	Journee Fret Ferroviaire (Objectif OFP)	Paris	Rothey	French rail freight experts	25 to 100
29.11-01.12	Rail Live (TERRAPINN)	Madrid	DAC panel (Ibanez de Yrigoyen, Memic, Zocco, Rothey, Marxen, Lochman).	European rail experts	25 to 100
06.12	CER UIC HL Freight Meeting	Brussels	RFF presentation (Nikutta)	European Rail Freight CEOs, representative of CER and UIC	Up to 25
12.12	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
12.12	Sounding Board (FP5)	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50

2024					
09.01	Symposium (VPI)	Hamburg	Knuepling	Wagon keepers, workshops, shippers	More than 300
15.01	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
17/18.01	Transportforum	Linköping	Björkman, Eriksson Bergstrand	Swedish transport researchers and public sector	30
25.01	CER State Aid event (DG COMP, DG CLIMA)	Online / Brussels	de la Haye (funding & financing needs based on DAC Investment Plan)	Representatives of CER members and the Commission	25 to 100
30.01	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25

31.01-01.02	Forum Rail Freight Transport (BME / VDV)	Berlin	Knuepling	railway undertakings	More than 100
05.02.	FP 5 FDFTO Sounding Board on DAC Operational Procedures & on DAC Technology	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
06.02.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
14.02.	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
05.03.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
13.03	NSA Network	Valencienes	Engelmann (D), Erpenbeck	ERA, National Safety Agencies	30
18.03.	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Engelmann	Rail freight experts from CZ and SK	Up to 25
02.04.	CED DAC event (EDDP, ERJU)	Brussels	Travaini, Topal, EC, HL sector	Representatives of MS, the Commission, ERA and ERJU, representatives of Brussels based organisations, representatives of companies involved in DAC project	More than 100
04.04.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Brussels	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
09.04.	Renew (UIP, VPI)	Online	Peterhans	Industry leaders, policy makers, infrastructure managers, rail operators, wagon keepers, shippers	More than 100

18.04	Rail Freight Conference (Navigator Vilag)	Budapest	Engelmann (D)	Hungarian transport actors	100?
24.04	Triple F Spring conference	Stockholm	Åkerman	Swedish transport actors	Up to 100
25.04.	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
25.04.	ERA ERTMS conference: DAC workshop (ERA)	Valencienes	van GILS (EU-Rail)	European rail technical experts, representatives of the Commission, ERA and ERJU	25 to 100
30.04.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
30.04	DACH declaration (BMDV/BMK /UVEK)	Online	-	Representatives from DACH transport ministries (incl. transport ministers)	Up to 25
06.05.	FP 5 FDFTO Sounding Board on DAC Op. Procedures & FP 5 FDFTO Sounding Board on DAC Techn.	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
07.05.	Forum Gueterverkehr (VAP)	Zurich	Peterhans	Policy makers, industry leaders, policy makers, infrastructure managers, rail operators, wagon keepers, shippers	More than 100
16.05	FP5 Midterm Plenary	Online	Engelmann moderation	EU-Rail FP5 project partners	80
22.05	DAC Webinar (Rail SE)	Online	Björkman, Engelmann, Stuhr	Swedish and German rail actors	55
22.05	Side-event at ITF	Leipzig	Lochman	Representatives from DACH transport	Up to 25

	(BMDV, UVEK)			ministries (incl. transport ministers), rail freight experts	
22.-24.05.	International Transport Forum (OECD)	Leipzig	Bannholzer	Ministries / government level, railway stakeholders	200
28.05	EDDP SM / DACcord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
29.-30.05	Keepers' Summit (UIP, ASSOFERR)	Venice	Topal, Peterhans	Policy makers, government representatives, wagon keepers, rail operators, shippers, infrastructure managers, national safety authorities	More than 100
11.06	TCT Technical Committee (Transport C.)	Podgorica	Lochman	Rail freight experts from TC member countries	25 to 100
12.06	NCP Kick-off (MG MOVE)	Online	Engelmann	National Contact Points from MS ministries, EC, EDDP	30
Q2/24 18.06	DAC Forum Germany (VDV)	Online	Engelmann	German rail freight experts	25 to 100
19/20.06	Get together/Technical information (VPI)	Düsseldorf	De la Haye, Lipka, Radke	Wagon keepers, workshops, shippers	More than 300
25.06.	EDDP SM / DACcord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
26.06.	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
27.06	DAC Day (Knorr Bremse, Prose)	Wallisellen	Vaerst	Policy makers, government representatives, wagon keepers, rail operators, shippers, infra managers,	25 to 100

03.07.	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
23.07.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
20.08.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
12.09	Public Port Railways (VDV)	Koblenz (DE)	Engelmann (D), Stuhr	Infrastructure Managers from ports	30
17.09.	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
17.09.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
24.-27.09.	InnoTrans	Berlin	All	European rail freight, innovation and technical experts	More than 100
03.10	Annual Rail Summit (Hungrail)	Budapest	Mondvay-Nemeth	Hungarian transport actors	100
07.10.	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	DAC country team, Engelmann, NN	Rail freight experts from CZ and SK	Up to 25
07.10.	FP5 FDFTO Sounding Board on DAC Op. Procedures & FP5 FDFTO Sounding Board on DAC Tech.	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
14.10.	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
15.10.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
21.10	DAC4EU event	Amersfoort	-	Representatives of NL and DE Transport	Up to 25

	(BMDV/lenW)			Ministries, representatives of companies involved in R&D projects	
11.11.	FP5 FDFTO Sounding Board on workers' & trade unions' perspective		Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
21.11	Information event 2024 (VPI)	Vienna	Bannholzer	Wagon keepers, workshops, shippers	More than 100
21.11	ERJU GA	Brussels/ Online	Topal	European railway stakeholders, EC, EU-Rail	> 200
26.11.	EDDP PB	Online	EDDP	EDDP PB representatives	Up to 25
Q3/4	DAC4EU event (BMDV / lenW)	NL		Representatives of NL and DE Transport Ministries, representatives of companies involved in R&D projects	Up to 25
03.12.	EDDP SB	Online	EDDP	EDDP SB representatives	Up to 25
12.11.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
10.12.	EDDP SM / DAccord meeting	Online	DACcord consortium and EDDP partners	Project partners, representatives of Brussels based organisations	Up to 25
12.12	Railway Development Potentials	Paris/Online	Doric / Telese / Engelmann	UIC railway members & sector actors	50

2025					
14.01	Symposium (VPI)	Hamburg	Engelmann, Radke	wagon keepers, railway undertak., workshops etc.	350
28.01	National DAC JF (BMDV)	Berlin	Engelmann	German rail freight experts	25 to 100
10.02	FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	Online	Bannholzer, Engelmann, FP5 members	project partner, external stakeholders	up to 50
12.02	Working Group on RUs (VDV)	Online	Engelmann	German rail freight experts	Up to 25
20.02	Working Group on Infrastr. (VDV)	Online	Engelmann	German rail infrastructure experts	Up to 25
26.02	Meeting with Western Balkan NCPs (TCT)	Prague	Lochman	Rail freight experts from TC member countries	Up to 25
06.03	DAC Forum FR (Railenium)	Online	Railenium, Engelmann, Stuhr, Ebrart, Gohel	French rail freight experts	25 to 100
07.03	Working Group on RUs (VDV)	Online	Engelmann	German rail freight experts	Up to 25
13.03	Working Group on Infrastr. (VDV)	Online	Engelmann	German rail infrastructure experts	Up to 25
18.03	Conf. of Ch. of Commerce (WKO)	Vienna	RCG	Industry/Bussines partners	90
18-19.03	European Rolling Stock Summit	Warsaw	TRV, Travaini	Operators, maintenance and rail actors mainly from East Europe	120
24.03	Nordics NCPs	Online	TRV	Nordic infrastructure managers	12
08-09.03	Rail Freight Summit	Gdansk	Tabouret, Lochman	Rail freight experts from CSEE countries	25 to 100
18-03	European rolling stock summit	Warsawa	Travaini, Eriksson	Rail freight experts from CSEE countries	25 to 100

5.2.2. DAC on TRAKO 2023

On the TRAKO fair in Gdansk, Poland in September 2023, EU-Rail Executive Director ad interim Giorgio Travaini and EDDP CSEEE DAC Ambassador Libor Lochman represented EDDP/DAC in a panel discussion organised by the Polish association ZNPK in order to engage closer with the CSEE audience (<https://www.znpk.org/debate-digital-automatic-coupling/>).

A group of EDDP experts stood ready for discussion at the Dellner stand (for programme management, authorisation, technology issues and experience from DAC in Switzerland).



Graphic 5.1-2 impressions from TRAKO 2023

5.2.3. DAC on Connecting Europe Days 2024

Already fully in-line with the objectives of the stakeholder management plan and actions, DACcord successfully coordinated a DAC-focused event organised by EDDP and EU-Rail during the EU's Connecting Europe Days on 2 April 2024. This has already been mentioned in D9 as it also held great importance for the stakeholder management. The event, titled [The Future of Rail Freight – see how it works in the 21st century!](#) at Train World, Brussels (BE), gathered a high-level audience and sector stakeholders, including speakers from Member States, European Commission, EU-Rail and sector representatives.

- Georges Gilkinet (Belgian Council Presidency / Belgian Deputy PM and Minister of Mobility)
- Volker Wissing (German Minister of Digital Affairs and Transport)
- Kaspars Briškens (Latvian Minister for Transport)
- Magda Kopczyńska (Director-General, DG MOVE)
- Kristian Schmidt (Director for Land Transport, DG MOVE)
- Giorgio Travaini (Executive Director a.i., EU-Rail)

- Mark Topal-Gökceli (CTO, ÖBB)
- Sigrid Nikutta (CEO, DB Cargo / President, Rail Freight Forward (RFF))
- David Zindo (CEO, Strem Group / President, International Union of Wagon Keepers (UIP))
- Paolo Pagliero (Vice President of Transit Engineering, Wabtec Corporation)
- Peter Füglistaler (Director, Swiss Federal Office of Transport (BAV))



The speakers highlighted several key points during the event:

- The importance of DAC for the future rail freight and the joint streamlined efforts from the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking EU-Rail.
- DAC's potential to significantly increase the efficiency of rail freight and improve logistics through digitalization.
- The strong support from the rail sector and supply industry stakeholders
- Achievements in DAC technology development and migration planning
- The need for an EU financing programme for large-scale deployment



Magda Kopczyńska (DG MOVE) encouraged Member States to discuss gradual investment scheme possibilities during the CED events. A transformational project of this scale requires thorough support from the EU and Members States, including coordinated deployment and budget allocation. Lessons learnt from ongoing ERTMS deployment underscore the importance of a centralised approach.

Füglister (BAV) stressed the importance of DAC for the future rail freight, highlighting the Swiss government's view of DAC as an investment rather than a subsidy for a transport mode.

Nikutta (DB Cargo / RFF), Topal-Gökceli (ÖBB), Zindo (Strem Group / UIP) and Pagliero (Wabtec) highlighted the sector's and industry's needs and challenges, emphasizing the joint streamlined efforts at EU-Rail.

5.2.4. DAC on InnoTrans 2024

The Digital Automatic Coupler was strongly represented at the biggest trade fair for transport technology from September 24th to 27th 2024 in Berlin. 170 000 people visited the fair with almost 3000 exhibits plus events that pulled people's attention.

As Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking hosted an exhibition of the Flagship Projects development, four coupler developers from FP5-TRANS4M-R jointly showed their latest versions. The suppliers also showed DACs or hybrid DACs in their own exhibits which is why tours were hosted, in the framework of the EU-Rail Innovation Tours, to make it easier for the public to see all DAC related exhibits. The guided tours, organized by the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking, started in the EU-Rail exhibit and then went on to the booths of Dellner, Knorr-Bremse, Voith and Wabtec as industry partners and concluded at ÖBB as a railway undertaking. The tours were organised two times per day and more than 60 people joined the tours on both Tuesday and Wednesday. Data on other guided tours at InnoTrans is not available, but from experience it can be said that the number of participants was considerable in view of the massive amount of information and exhibitions offered on the entire fair.



Europe's Rail also organized two sessions revolving DAC in their speaker's corner, "DAC & Full Digital Freight Train Operations: System Pillar developments" and "D&D - Digitalisation and DAC". These activities approached more research interested audiences that are affiliated to the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking.

Two panel discussions were organized by DB Cargo, the first on Wednesday 25th "Digitalization and automation: How we best coordinate the rollout of ETCS, DAC and FRMCS?". The discussion revolved around the synergies that could be used between the different projects and how deployment could be optimally coordinated. The second, "DAC: Laying the foundation for the future of rail freight transport in Europe" where, FP5-TRANS4M-R Project Coordinator Dr. Patrick Seeßle and the Head of DAC

programme at DB Cargo, Dr. Armin Günter, together with Giorgio Travaini, Executive Director Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking talked about the importance of the DAC and the importance of cooperation in Europe for the whole DAC initiative. The DAC applications and functionalities were also further highlighted digitally at the SBB- and PROSE booths.

During InnoTrans there was also an excursion made possible by the FP5-TRANS4M-R to the Train Test Lab in Spandau. The event with participants from highest EC Director, Ministry and Sector CEO level gave a possibility to see live demonstrations and hear more about the practical testing activities in the project. This activity was very much appreciated and a great way to use the physical presence of the rail sector in Berlin.

As this event was only a one-time event by invitation it may have reached a smaller, and more well known, audience than preferred, opening up for "drop-in" visitors could really make this a great opportunity to reach new stakeholders. There is a great value in demonstrations as tangible, concrete examples of the DAC's potential that help to illustrate the technology's benefits and build confidence among stakeholders.



Media coverage from DAC at the fair:

www.railtarget.eu/technologies-and-infrastructure/the-future-of-rail-freight-exploring-digital-automatic-coupling-at-innotrans

www.railtarget.eu/freight/digital-automatic-coupling-rail-freight-future-innotrans.

The Future of Rail Freight: Exploring Digital Automatic Coupling at InnoTrans 2024



03 / 10 / 2024



At InnoTrans 2024, the spotlight was on Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC), a groundbreaking technology set to boost efficiency and sustainability in European rail freight. Industry leaders highlighted DAC's potential to increase rail capacity, enhance safety, and support the EU's climate goals amid a decline in rail freight's market share.

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5.2.5. DAC on European Rolling Stock Summit 2025

Opening the conference, the participation in the European Rolling Stock Summit in Warsaw from 18-19th March 2025 was to talk about the challenges and opportunities with the adoption of the Digital Automatic Coupler (DAC).

A keynote on the development of DAC was held by Niklas Weidert, Voith. Afterwards the moderator, Giorgio Travaini, Executive Director of Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking, held a panel discussion on stage with Petr Jindra from ČD Cargo, Jonas Eriksson from Rail Sweden at Lindholmen Science Park and Marten Strotkoetter from SBB Cargo. There was a high engagement from the audience with a big interest in the train functions and the basic package that enable increased capacity and time savings for rail freight.

Other topics of interest was the migration plan, the financing of the installation and the couplers themselves, which is a high focus topic in the European DAC Delivery Programme (EDDP).



Graphic 5.1-2 DAC on European Rolling Stock Summit 2025

5.3. DAC deployment in Middle/Central, East and South European countries

In accordance with the stakeholder management, the Central, South and East Europe (CSEE) regions were given special attention for future DAC deployment, to inform and engage relevant stakeholders.

In the **Baltic** region (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), stakeholders were kept updated on DAC development, despite their rail freight services operate on the 1 520 mm gauge and thus being incompatible with the DAC (1 435 mm) network. In addition, contacts were established with RB Rail AS to explore DAC use cases for the Rail Baltica project.

In the **Central** region (Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia), efforts were made to address challenges posed by stakeholders questioning the EDDP strategy. Meetings and workshops were organized to foster collaboration and coordinate positions among member states on the level of National Contact Points.

The Central region is relatively well knowledgeable about DAC technology (the DAC4EU train has been tested there). The workshops and conferences therefore focused mainly on the projected benefits of DAC when integrated into future digitalised / automated rail freight services (FDFTO). It naturally became discussed in connection with the use cases that might bring the highest value. In that respect the DAC Basic package has not been seen as sufficiently comprehensive, whether due to the missing technology like electropneumatic brake or doubtful savings of trackside personnel.

For the **Southern** region (Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia), stakeholder management involved building upon existing contacts, namely through SEESARI - South-East Europe Strategic Alliance for Rail Innovation. On that basis the first meetings supported by the NCPs took place in 2025 allowing to discuss DAC implementation

Specifically in SI and HR the rail freight is characterised by prevailing port to hinterland block train services. The exchange with stakeholders therefore had to be adjusted to this business model. That concerns also the use cases discussed, mainly those relevant for terminal and port handling.

It shall be noted that there is a potential to engage local industry to support future migration activities, whether as subcontractors for manufacturing of components or in the retrofitting of vehicles.

In the **Eastern** region (Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Turkey), communication focused on raising awareness about DAC technology and its development status, with plans for DAC Forums and meetings with stakeholders. The kick-off DAC Forum took place in May 2025 in Athens, supported by the NCP and attended by the representatives of the Transport Ministry as well as the operating sector - infrastructure manager, national carrier and port.

National rail freight is very limited, operated by obsolete vehicle fleet. The stakeholders have therefore been interested in the future legal obligations concerning DAC deployment on one hand and the opportunities to obtain a funding supporting the wagon replacement on the other (e.g. via a scrapping scheme).



For the **Western Balkan** region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo (TCT-countries)), communication involved regular engagement with the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community to coordinate cooperation and provide updates on the DAC programme. Thanks to that, several rounds of meetings took place in 2024 and in the beginning of 2025 on the level of the operating sector (infrastructure managers and rail freight RUs) as well as NCPs.

Western Balkan countries are outside of the EU, though heavily interested in retaining compliance with the EU regulation and technology. However given almost no investment in rail, results in the necessity to finance a complete system overhaul. That concerns DAC deployment as well – instead of wagon retrofitting the purchases of new DAC equipped wagons must be planned. Consequently also use cases discussed related mainly to the future services of transit, international services – i.e. allowing compliance with EU services in future.

The communication activities led to increased stakeholder engagement and information sharing across different regions regarding DAC implementation. This resulted in the preparation for DAC Fora to further discuss implementation strategies and address specific regional needs.

These activities are the first ones orchestrated and run by the EDDP on a structured basis with stakeholders in, if possible, national language. It also revealed (again) the difficulty to engage with stakeholders who have no close contact with real-life DAC experience, as no technology demonstrator is operating yet and can be shown. As soon as the TRANS4M-R / FP5 project demo trains (Austria, Italy, Germany, Sweden) will operate in 2026 and potentially first Pioneer Trains in 2027 (to be seen where they would operate), stakeholder visits to these trains could be organised and captured video material from these trains could be presented in all countries.

5.4. Dedicated workshops for EDDP progresses

In this chapter specific, dedicated events organised by DACcord/EDDP with focus on findings, results as well as outlook for future deployment for relevant stakeholders will be presented.

5.4.1. DAC Fora

As already laid down in D9.1 and D10.1, the stakeholder management team concluded that regional/national groups needed to be formed as different countries/region have individual technological readiness, acceptance for change and specific processes and therefore need different types of information.

Exchanges would therefore take place through a meeting concept called **DAC Fora** to transfer knowledge between EDDP and region/country (group). These groups would also be used to gather national contributions to DAC workstreams. The fora are orchestrated by appointed **EDDP Ambassadors for country groups** (table 5.4-1) and involve National Contact Points (Ministry NCPs).

EDDP country groups, NCPs & main ambassadors all set-up

Groups	Sub-Groups	NCPs	EDDP ambassadors (group)
EU	EU Institutions + groups + OTIF	--	EU-Rail & EDDP PM (EU-Rail & Mark Topal/Jens Engelmann)
FR	FR	Henri Vichard	Railenium (Danijela Doric); KB (Victorien Thenault); Wabtec (Laura Ghiringhelli)
DACH	DE, AT, CH	Jan Schöning (DE) Petra Defforian (AT) René Sgrist (CH)	DB Cargo (Michael Sünder); UIP (Lisa Gruber); ÖBB (Sarah Bimingsdorfer, Boglarka Mondvay-Nemeth) VAP (CH) most likely to be added
Benelux	BE, NL, LU	Functional contact (BE) Marcel Thijs (NL) Pierre Gierens (LU)	BREFE (Frédéric de Backer) TBC
Central	CZ, PL, SK	Pavlina Tomkova (CZ) Andrea Neuschlova, Peter Klamo (SK) Maciej Sofinski (PL)	DACcord (Libor Lochman) supported by Michael Sünder (DB Cargo)
Southern	HU, SI, HR	György Lengyel (HU) Daimir Bukvić (HR); Substitute: Mario Pavić Aleksandar Dobrijević (SI)	RCG (Boglarka Mondvay-Nemeth) / DACcord (Libor Lochman)
Eastern	BG, RO, EL, (TR), (MD), (UA)	Ivan Cholakov (BG) Giorgios Dantas (EL)	DACcord (Libor Lochman)
W-Balkan	RS, BA, MK, ME, XK (TCT-countries)	Matej Zakonjšek	DACcord (Libor Lochman) supported by Railenium (Danijela Doric)
Baltics	FI, EE, LT, LV	Ville-Veikko Savolainen (FI) Kristjan Kaunisäär (EE) Tomas Bieksa (LT) Māris Aizrauts (LV)	DACcord (Libor Lochman)
Nordics	SE, DK, NO (FI)	Christer Löfving, Bo Olsson (SE) Paula Ottenberg (DK) Ole Skovdahl (NO) Ville-Veikko Savolainen (FI)	Trafikverket (Jan Bergstrand)
Iberian	ES, PT	Jesus Coloma Pérez, Roberto Marín Escribano (ES) Amélia Areias (PT)	CER (João Sarmento) + NN Spain
IT	IT	Carlo Prischich	UIIC (Giancarlo De Marco Telese); Mercitalia / FERROCARRI (NN); ASSOFERR TBC
IE	IE	Donnacha Stackpoole	ERFA (Conor Feighan) TBC
IMs	IMs		EIM (Bardo Schettini) + CER (Marcel de la Haye) + Trafikverket (Jan Bergstrand)



The **DAC Fora** brings together the country NCP, country EDDP Ambassador, relevant experts from FP5 and EDDP (SPOCs) with national stakeholders – operators, infrastructure manager, wagon keepers, safety authority, wagon manufactures, DAC component suppliers and sector associations and are the tool ("**how**"/**channel**) stakeholders shall be managed in alignment with the objectives.

Priority topics for DAC Fora differ based on the stakeholder actions defined per stakeholder / country but generally include:

- DAC technology development status
- overall benefits and cost / benefit case studies, lessons learned
- developments on funding / financing options
- fleet analysis and upgrade information and further migration topics
- status of pre-deployment trains in the region

Additional value and outcomes expected from DAC Fora are:

- engaging with final customers in and outside the region
- exploring regional funding opportunities, with a focus on non-EU states
- addressing human resource challenges, including re-skilling shunting personnel and staff shortages (with potential trade union engagement in discussions)
- addressing regional manufacturing and workshop capacity
- developing customised used cases for stakeholders in the region, considering wagon fleet and locomotive structures
- fine-tuning migration strategies in the region

A detailed report on DAC Fora implementation can be found in D10.1 "Summary II on Stakeholder Management activities".

5.4.2. Transport Logistics fair 2023

“DAC4Customers – how shippers benefit from rail freight automation through DAC”

In a separate event at the Transport Logistics fair in Munich (Germany) from 9-12 May 2023, DB Cargo and the European DAC Delivery Programme (EDDP) invited rail customers from different sectors and regions to present what they expect from DAC and rail freight automation. In the panel were Dr. Thorsten Bieker (Vice President Bulk Logistics & Site Services, BASF), Arnaud Desmonts (Head of Multimodal Design, Arcelor Mittal Europe), Sara Udvari (Global Category Manager Logistics, IKEA Europe) and Matthias Knüpling (Head of Industry Lobbying & Associations, VTG Rail Europe).

Dr. Armin Günter, DAC Project Manager at DB Cargo, and Dr. Jens Engelmann, EDDP Programme Manager, discussed with the customers. The European institutional perspective will be delivered by Javier Ibanez de Yrigoyen, Senior Programme Manager of Europe’s Rail Joint Undertaking.



Further DAC pictures from the Transport Logistics Fair:



5.4.3. Rail Sweden Lunch Webinar online 2024

"Technological progress and migration plan for DAC"

This online meeting on 22 May 2024 focused on technical progress, implementation plan and the financial aspects which will make DAC the European standard. The implementation work is multifaceted and requires several European actors to synchronize both in terms of migration and technical development. Representing the EDDP Jens Engelmann spoke of the future of rail freight - the next steps in the European DAC Delivery Programme, and Helge Stuhr, DB Cargo who focused the attention to the migration plan. Molley Williams, Europe's Rail Flagship Project Manager, gave an update and status of FP5 TRANS4M-R. All moderated by Rail Sweden's Anna Björkman.

More information on the event, a recording and the ppt-presentation is available here: <https://railsweden.lindholmen.se/en/news/watch-video-and-presentations-dac-lunch-webinar>.



Aiming at reaching out to the Nordic rail actors the event was attended by 55 people with all from infrastructure managers to rail tech developers mainly from the Nordic markets but also with some appearances of German actors. This event was followed up by the first DAC Fora in March 2025 connecting the infrastructure managers of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden to spread knowledge and aligning on a way forward. Norway and Sweden are highly engaged, Denmark, as a transit country is following the development and are willing to assist when needed. As Finland does not share the gauging profile, it is not a part of the open rail system in Europe, however, they are very interested in the project when it gets of higher TRL and when the digital parts will be included in demos. A follow-up, with a broader audience is scheduled September 2025.

5.4.4. EDDP/FP5 Sounding Boards

The close collaboration between DACcord/EDDP and FP5 is also illustrated by the number of the so called "FP5/EDDP Sounding Boards" on DAC Technology and Operational matters, jointly organised by FP5 and EDDP for free access to information for a broad European stakeholder audience. These Sounding Boards will continue to exist during the whole lifetime of FP5 and EDDP.

FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	24.03.2023
FP5 Sounding board (Tech & OPE)	13.09.2023
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	16.10.2023
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	11.12.2023
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	05.02.2024
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	06.05.2024
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	07.10.2024
FP5 Sounding Board (Tech & OPE)	11.11.2024
FP5 sounding board (Tech & OPE)	10.02.2025

5.4.5. Further dedicated workshops

For specific stakeholder groups with special interest in DAC, dedicated workshops were organised which will be replaced in the future by the DAC Fora.

2023

Date	What	Where	EDDP contributors	Audience	Outcome
26.04	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Engelmann, Lipka, Van Balen, Lipka & Stuhr, Williams	CZ representatives from stakeholder organisations and national transport ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intensive discussion on Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) assumptions/conclusions as well as their transfer to the level of Member States and companies. - call for experts to help solve open issues on migration on the CZ and SK rail freight markets. - active participation, with attendees requesting more details and challenging some of the presented assumptions made and / or set by EU legislation.
05.09	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Engelmann, Lipka, Van Balen, Williams	CZ and SK market participants and representatives of a CZ stakeholder association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alignment before the TRAKO trade fair in Gdansk. - Transparent dialogue of topics chosen by the audience. - The request for experts was repeated.
10.-12.10	Nordic Rail Conference (ELMIA)	Jönköping	Trafikverket (Bergstrand)	Nordic rail infrastructure and maintenance stakeholders	Better stakeholder information

2024					
18.03.	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Engelmann, Lipka, Van Balen, DB / CZ representatives	Representatives of a Czech sector association and Czech and Slovak sector representatives and NCPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogue regarding analysis by a CZ sector association that detailed open points for DAC implementation, some stemming from 2022 test runs - The CZ National Contact Point announced the forthcoming publication of a Czech CBA - CZ and SK sector representatives once again promised to nominate experts for the migration activities.
11.06	TCT Technical Committee	Podgorica	Lochman	Rail freight experts from TC member countries	Better stakeholder information
07.10.	CZ & SK Workshop (EDDP)	Online	Engelmann, Lipka, Van Balen, DB / CZ representatives	Rail freight experts from CZ and SK	The workshop was cancelled due to a meeting with senior officials from DG MOVE (scheduled for 21.10.2024) and that none of the promises given in recent workshops (CBA, migration) had been kept. Also in response to inquiries, the CZ and SK sector representatives did not react.

5.5. Additional dissemination/communication actions

WP12 performed actions in addition to the actions foreseen in the work plan in the months 1 to 24 of the DACcord project.



5.5.1. DAC Sector Statement

To show the commitment and support that the DAC has among the industry, the DACcord team in dialogue with other stakeholders prepared a DAC Sector Statement in 2023. The statement was co-signed by 9 sector bodies and 39 CEOs of railway undertakings, infrastructure managers, wagon keepers and rolling stock lessors, manufactures, and national associations.

Outlining the sector's commitment and preconditions to make DAC a reality to facilitate more efficient logistics in Europe, providing benefits to society, environment and economy. Preconditions for success were: a single, non-discriminatory EU funding scheme for the whole DAC deployment due to the sector's low margins and societal benefits; continued EU-Rail work on technology, harmonisation of operational procedures and standards; and streamlined authorization processes.

The statement was presented to EU decision-makers on July 11, 2023, coinciding with the Commission's Greening Freight Transport Package announcement, urging the Commission and Member States to establish the necessary political, budgetary, and legal framework for coordinated European DAC deployment.

After the hand-over the statement was widely spread by the signing organisations, likely having a significant positive impact on building momentum and influencing key decision-makers within the rail sector and beyond. It served as a powerful signal of industry unity and provided a clear roadmap for the necessary steps to make DAC a reality. The actors most strongly influenced were those directly involved in policy-making and funding decisions at the EU and national levels, as well as potential investors who would have seen a reduced risk and clearer market direction.

After delivery in July two additional support letters were received, from CEIT and VPI, making it 41 actors who signed. In view of the huge pre-coordination effort and with the most important sector participants represented, the number of signatories can be regarded as final.



DAC Sector Statement

Brussels, 10.07.2023

Rail freight automation and digitalisation is an important enabler for the transport sector to meet the EU's greening targets

There is a common understanding of the need to strengthen rail freight in Europe, which is in decline today. It is nine times better in terms of CO₂ emissions than road transport and will help Europe in achieving its Green Deal and decarbonisation targets. Electrification of road transport is far from being mature and cost-effective and will still consume seven times more energy than freight transport on rail.

Automation and digitalisation will enable rail freight to become more efficient and attractive for logistics service providers and shippers and will bring relevant benefits for European society in general. It will increase the still underestimated growth potential for single wagonload traffic and strengthen the role of intermodal transport, both strategic segments for the modal shift. Especially, together with future ERTMS developments, they will contribute to increase infrastructure capacity. Their implementation will also increase safety at work and counter the predicted labour shortage in the sector by replacing outdated, mostly manually-operated technologies of the past, especially the coupling of freight wagons.

The rail sector stakeholder signatories of this paper are convinced that rail freight automation and digitalisation as well as a better, more modern and safer working environment are key to the viability and long-term prospect of this sustainable mode of transport in Europe.

However, the market alone cannot bear such a transformation, and no single company will be able to gather alone the necessary capital investments for such an endeavour, because it is first and foremost a European scale type of investment. Should social and economic benefits materialise, substantial public support is therefore urgently needed, especially for the introduction of the Digital Automatic Coupler (DAC) and its associated automation and digital technology.

We are fully committed to achieve the deployability of this technology through intensive testing campaigns and we are ready, under a clearly pre-defined EU strategy and with fulfilment of the below preconditions, to the successive deployment of DAC and its automation and digital technology at European scale. A challenge of this dimension would indeed require the support from the European Commission and the Member States, to ensure that all the necessary investments are properly coordinated and that obvious market failures are addressed by the policy-makers, such as the imbalanced distribution of costs and benefits among actors, and counter-balanced with appropriate funding and financing measures.

Where we are today

Progress has been made so far by the rail sector in developing state-of-the-art DAC technology, including with the support from the European Union and Member States. The rail freight sector from both EU and non-EU countries and the European supply industry are fully engaged and have already invested significant resources to develop a European state-of-the-art DAC including its automation and digital technology.



- The sector has united forces in the European DAC Delivery Programme (EDDP), enabled by Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking (EU-Rail JU), and supported strongly by the European Commission (EC) and the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA). EDDP has specified the basic DAC technology, developed a draft migration plan and elaborated the initial versions of the DAC Cost-Benefit-Analysis (CBA).
- 71 partners are engaged in the DAC and automation technology development within EU-Rail JU's Flagship Project 5 (FP 5-TRANS4M-R) with a total project cost of around € 95 million, a major part of which is raised by the sector.

This intended and unprecedented transformation impacts the entire rail freight system, including its customers. As rail freight is largely international and essential for the realisation of the Single European Railway Area, careful planning, scoping and good coordination are key to master the deployment of European DAC including its automation and digital technology.

The historical situation of the European rail freight vehicle fleet needs to be taken into account in an intelligent way in order to minimise the transformation challenges and to optimise the need for public funding. The following preconditions are currently being worked out by the sector and will have to be implemented under a clear EU deployment strategy. They must be fulfilled before DAC deployment can start:

- DAC, its automation and digital technology and operational procedures have to be clearly defined and harmonised (single operational, mechanical, electrical and digital European DAC system).
- Clear evidence has to be available through successfully completed tests and validation in real operation, demonstrating that the final DAC and its automation and digital technology will deliver the expected benefits. All essential requirements (in particular reliability, availability, maintainability and safety, under all relevant climatic and operational conditions) have to be met. This evidence, including on maintenance cost, forms the basis for the final update of the CBA and the revision of the relevant Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs) and standards.
- A single, non-discriminatory, European funding and financing scheme, set up jointly by the EC as well as EU and non-EU countries, has to be guaranteed for the whole DAC migration period to cover the upgrading of existing wagons and locomotives and other asset-related and operational expenditure related to the DAC introduction. The funding rate must avoid any deterioration of the competitiveness of the European rail freight sector in general and its individual members. It should also reflect the time lag between investments and the full realisation of benefits.
- In coordination with the European Union Agency for Railways, suitable DAC authorisation provisions need to apply in Europe without compromising safety. With the help of the sector, authorisation risks for wagons and locomotives have to be mitigated (including availability of relevant documentation) in order to avoid negative impacts on the fleet availability during the (re-)authorisation process.
- A sound, realistic migration plan has to be set up, agreed by all actors, backed up by legal provisions and coordinated at EU level in close cooperation with EU and non-EU countries. It must guarantee effective DAC deployment in Europe, based on substantial funding, established



capacities for production, the feasibility of upgrading of wagons and locomotives and for their (re-)authorisation, staff training and availability of the necessary infrastructure and IT adaptations.

- The plan must allow a certain limited flexibility for the transitional coexistence of screw coupler and automatic coupler, for dealing with freight wagons from non-EU countries and with the fully separable parts of the European wagon fleet, e. g. wagons used in block-train and intermodal production systems only. It must minimise shortages of rolling stock impacting railway operators and customers during migration, risking a reverse modal shift. It shall determine for the vehicle keeper an economic and technical optimum between screw coupler, DAC and automation/digital technology upgrading and the scrapping/renewal of rolling stock, in particular locomotives and intermodal wagons. The integration of fleets/vehicles, mainly operated on networks functionally separate from the rest of the Union rail system (e. g. different gauge), must be subject (and conditional) to a case-by-case CBA, considering traffic flows and national specificities and lead to a positive outcome.

Such a plan will allow for a maximum positive impact of DAC and its automation and digital technology on European rail freight, ensuring the highest level of interoperability possible under the given economically reasonable circumstances, whilst requiring minimised transformation cost and optimised public funding. It will ensure the buy-in of all sector actors to fully endorse such transformation.

What needs to be done now

The European rail freight sector is working continuously on fulfilling the above-described DAC deployment preconditions on its side.

In parallel, the signatories of this paper, who are already engaged and committed to work jointly on the solution to address the challenges described to make such transformation happen, would like to collaborate with the European Commission and the Member States to ensure that DAC implementation is aligned with national as well as EU strategies, and in particular with the next European Multi-Annual Financial Framework, so that preparation for the migration of the DAC and its automation technology could start in 2028.

We call on the European Commission and Member States to jointly start the work on shaping the political, budgetary and legal framework conditions for a coordinated European deployment of DAC and its automation and digital technology, ensuring substantial public support for the upcoming phases, in full complementarity with the necessary ERTMS and infrastructure investments:

1. **DAC Legal Package** *from now until ca. 2028*
Creation of the **legal & budgetary framework** for DAC Deployment including authorisation and for the DAC Deployment Management Entity on the EU and Member State level.
2. **DAC Pre-Deployment** *2025 to ca. 2028 | total costs ca. € 210 million*
Funding of a large-scale testing phase across Europe for DAC based technology with around 100 pre-deployment trains to prepare a successful migration and to start DAC industrialisation.



Setting up of a Pre-deployment Management Entity.

- 3. DAC Deployment *as of ca. 2028* | total costs ca. € 13 billion (2021 price base)
Funding of full-scale DAC deployment in Europe and the Deployment Management Entity.

We are convinced of the need to set up a centralised European Deployment Management Entity, for the necessary coordination at European level, as described in the EU-Rail JU's EU DAC Investment Plan study. We recommend that the European Commission proposes a suitable implementation plan for this. A European benchmark could be the Joint Undertaking for the Single European Sky Air traffic management Research (SESAR).



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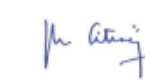
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29. TOUAX
30. TWA
31. UIC
32. VAP
33. VDV
34. Voith
35. VPI
36. VTG
37. Wabtec
38. WASCOSA
39. ZSSK Cargo

Graphic 5-1 DAC Sector Statement

5.5.2. Further Communication/Promotion actions

To complement the actions from the EDDP Stakeholder Management Plan and to support the general communication activities, several additional communication/promotion actions had been carried out by WP12. These are as follows:

Communication media standard library (Sharepoint with consolidated media assets, aligned and shared with FP5 TRANS4M-R) => depository for basic communication assets with individual / demand-based accessibility
Update of the EU-Rail website (EDDP part)
Creation of graphical communication assets and visual sample-based guideline on how to use them
A wording guideline for various fields of use
Recommendation of a media -and content strategy for all future communication measures of the project, beyond usual participation in common sector events
DAC and EDDP logo proposals
Collection of specific media contacts (work in progress) due to no media budget
Visual language guideline (proposal)
A micro campaign for all future trade shows proposed ("DAC in 30 seconds" / activation cards & landing page / ready to roll-out)
DAC Wiki (FAQ / Q&A)

5.6. Communication & Dissemination effectiveness evaluation

As stipulated in the WP10 and WP12 tasks, an evaluation of the effectiveness of 2 years of work of Stakeholder Management and Communication & Dissemination should be carried out and recommendations for the future should be given.

The DACcord WP10 and WP12 participants (EDDP/DACcord Stakeholder Management Core Group) assessed jointly in a hybrid workshop in Brussels on 18/02/2025 the current achievement of the overall Stakeholder Management objectives and the state of completion/achievement of the different actions from the EDDP Stakeholder management plan and communication/dissemination activities.

Regarding the overall Stakeholder Management / Communication objectives achievement, the group considers the objectives as only partially achieved, despite all the WP12 tasks have been achieved, as still many stakeholders are reluctant or sceptical towards DAC. This insight was gained by compiling all feedback from the events and stakeholder interactions listed in especially chapters 5.2-5.4 of this document, with a tendency of a rather more favourable position in Western European Countries and a rather cautious, partially sceptic position in Central and Eastern European Countries. Therefore the action plan foresees “real life experience” through Demo and Pioneer DAC trains, as soon as available, wherever possible and especially in CSEE, in order to let the product speak for itself. This will be facilitated by producing videos from those train operations which can be easily broadcasted everywhere.

The consolidated recommendation from the group for follow-up is to maintain the just really established stakeholder management team and activities, as one common exchange platform for all DAC and Rail freight related issues among the sector participants and associations has proven to be very effective and efficient.

Furthermore the group would consider beneficial to shape the communication around DAC more “out of one hand” in order to establish a “one DAC initiative” recognition, and it also recommends to pursue the just started DAC Fora as main single-source stakeholder relation tool/channel.

The details of the evaluation and recommendations are laid down in D10.1 “Summary II on Stakeholder Management activities”.

6. Conclusions

In the DACcord project months M1 to M24, it was possible to establish a communication/promotion plan in line with the objectives of the stakeholder management plan developed in WP 9/10.

As the activities list show the first two years of the project have resulted in consistent presence at different conferences to spread knowledge about the coupler and possibilities connected to it, how the migration should work and the financing related to it.

These activities have focused on disseminating key beneficial aspects of DAC, including technical specifications, framework discussions, financing options, and deployment strategies. The primary goal of these communication efforts is to raise awareness of the current development status of DAC and highlight the ongoing needs in this crucial area. Furthermore, these platforms serve to promote participation in EDDP workstreams, fostering knowledge sharing and encouraging broader engagement in advancing DAC deployment.

Lessons learned is among much else that targeted communication strategies for prioritized stakeholders that address the specific interests and needs of each stakeholder group are much more efficient in creating engagement. For example, the sector statement created engagement from important stakeholders which in turn created a second wave of dissemination to those stakeholders. Tailored language also helps targeting audiences that are on a more local level reaching the target audience in a good way. When possible, more materials could therefore be translated into other languages than English to greatly increase the amount of people that can be reached.

Leveraging major industry events that provide valuable visibility platforms, giving the possibility to engage on site with many key stakeholders at the same time and showcasing DAC technology to create a feeling of "readiness". The value of demonstrations is great as it gives tangible, concrete examples of the DAC's potential. These demonstrations help to illustrate the technology's benefits and build confidence among stakeholders.

In the project it has become apparent that some geographical areas need further support to address the specific challenges and opportunities in these regions. Tailored workshops and meetings were organized as it is crucial that all European nations are aware at this stage of the development to, in the long run, be ready for deployment. DAC Fora will institutionalise this exchange on country/region level.

The close collaboration between WP12 (Dissemination and Promotion) and WP9/10 (Stakeholder Management) is important to communicate the right message, at the right time and at the right place. For further dissemination and to portray a collective strategy in communications the collaboration between different project is, and will be even more, important. During month 12-24 the collaboration with the FP5-TRANS4M-R communications team had been further developed, which results in joint efforts for better communication and disseminations. Going forward this collaboration, also including the new projects as DACFIT and other, will be very important to ensure consistent and effective communication. Coordination with the EU-Rail JU is also essential to reach the right stakeholders.



The effectiveness of the communication and dissemination has so far been based on the strategic plan of the stakeholder management group. This has resulted in attendance at important events all over Europe to spread knowledge of DAC and information on topics as financing and migration to depending on stakeholders.

The **next steps** of the DACcord Communication/Promotion are:

- Further performing the actions from the Stakeholder Management plan
- Further organisation of media and event representation
- Continuation of the DAC Fora - Specific meetings with country/regional groups

The type and number of publications, events etc. will be defined and adapted to the future needs in project month 25/26, following the evaluation of the previous 2 years of communication work.

The work will be continued in the DACcord WP13 in the project months M25 to M36 and be summarised in the deliverable D13.1 "Dissemination and Promotion Activities Review II".