

## Key positions of European Passenger Rail Authorities

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### Preamble

In order to coordinate rail services of common interest in Europe altogether **186 Passenger Rail Authorities are currently organizing and financing rail transport**. Some of us are working on the level of the national state, others on regional level. In some of our countries there is a dense network of well maintained railways and our inhabitants are used to travelling by public transport, in other countries the situation is less favourable for rail transport. Some of us are the owners of public railway undertakings, others are not.

Despite of these different structures we have many of our **tasks and challenges** in common. We are responsible for organising a passenger-friendly rail transport. We are therefore familiar not only with awarding and managing public service contracts, but in most cases also with topics such as creating links to other means of transport, improving the network and station infrastructure, deciding on the railcars to be used, adapting tariff systems, organizing the ticket distribution and managing tight budgets.

What we furthermore have in common is that we heavily depend on the framework conditions set as well by our national states as by the European Union. Many passenger rail authorities share joint positions on the development of rail transport concerning the latter. We present these **key positions** as follows:

*Which of these positions do you agree with? Please give us your feedback!*

### 1. (Regional) rail transport is an environment-friendly means of transport

Railway transport is the most environmental-friendly means of transport available in Europe. It can contribute in a considerable way to the reduction of greenhouse gases. Rail transport should therefore be supported - for the benefit of our passengers and the environment.

### 2. We need a level playing field for the different modes of transport

Automobiles emit twice the amount of carbon dioxide per passenger-kilometer of trains, airplanes even three times. Yet competition between the different modes of transport is distorted to a large extent. **We therefore consider the inclusion of infrastructure costs and of all external costs including environmental costs for all modes of transport as urgently needed.**

**The development of rail freight corridors should not take place at the expense of passenger transport.** Where necessary additional infrastructure has to be built with external funding by either the national state or the EU.

### **3. Passengers are in the focus of our attention**

The most important aim of our work is to improve the quality of rail transport for our current and future potential passengers. We believe that attractive frequencies, comfort, easy access, reliability of services, and intermodal integration are the main characteristics of service quality.

The EU directive 1371/2007 defines only minimum standards of passenger rights to be implemented in the EU Member States. From our experiences higher standards of passenger rights help to improve our passengers' satisfaction at little extra costs. Yet many railway undertakings are reluctant to do so, underestimating their ability to deliver high quality services to our passengers and the marketing potential of good passenger rights. **The introduction of improved passenger rights should therefore be accelerated.**

### **4. Safety certification of rail transport should not lead to an increase in costs and duration of the certification procedures**

We insist that the harmonisation and supervision of safety certification in Europe **should not lead to an increase in costs and duration of the certification procedures.**

### **5. The market opening of Regional rail transport should be enhanced**

We believe that the market opening of the railway sector in Europe has been a large step forward for the development of rail transport in the European Union and many of its Member States. In many countries competition has improved the quality of service and, at the same time, decreased the level of subsidies. Between 1996 and 2008 German regional passenger rail authorities, for instance, have had the chance to increase the amount of train kilometres by 17 %. As a consequence of the improved offer, the number of passengers has increased by 44% over the same period. **The market opening of passenger rail transport should therefore be enhanced.**

### **6. Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings should be separated from each other**

In many countries infrastructure managers, providers of rail related services and incumbent railway undertakings are still connected with each other. Competition between incumbent and non incumbent railway undertakings is therefore distorted.

**We request a more rigorous implementation of the separation of infrastructure managers, service providers and railway undertakings in the EU.**

## 7. Tasks of the infrastructure managers and service providers have to be refined

We need a reliable **description of the state of infrastructure** in the network statements of the infrastructure managers. The use of an efficient **performance regime** by infrastructure managers to reduce disruptions shall be mandatory. We support the rule "**use it or lose it**" for rail related services to be implemented in a meaningful way.

## 8. We need stronger and more independently working regulatory bodies

The resources and independence of the rail regulatory body is limited in many countries. This precludes effective monitoring of compliance with railway legislation and with non-discriminatory access to the market. **National regulatory bodies should therefore be strengthened, independent and adequately funded.**

## 9. Infrastructure financing has to be improved

The financial architecture of railway infrastructure in many member states of the EU is poor, which prevents or at least delays an expansion according to demand. **Member States should guarantee long term adequate financing** via Multi-Annual Contracts (MAC). Moreover, if there are regional passenger rail authorities, these should be consulted on the infrastructure development strategy. In the context of the future policy related to transport networks in Europe (core and global), regional passenger rail authorities should also be involved in the governance of the various corridors to be set up at EU level.

## 10. Infrastructure charges should be more transparent

The high and non-transparent infrastructure charges in many countries of the EU place rail transport at a disadvantage in relation to road-based traffic and prevent more traffic on railways, in particular on long distance connections. **Costs and charges need to be totally transparent and infrastructure managers should strive to reduce their costs.**

*Please give us your feedback:*

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