

# newsletter



(source: Helmuth Rier)

## An ambitious aim: establishing the first regional transport association in Poland

On 6-8 October 2010 more than 30 public transport experts from Poland, Germany, the Czech Republic and Italy visited the Lower Silesian city of Lubin. They work for the project INTER-Regio-Rail and were there to exchange their experiences and support the municipality in establishing the first transport association in Poland that covers a region with medium-sized and rural cities.

"One ticket - one tariff" is the basic idea that the President of Lubin, Mr Robert Raczyński got to know in Saxony three years ago. Passengers can use the same ticket to ride regional trains, long-distance and city buses or minibuses, and they can change from one to the other without having to buy a new ticket. In addition to this timetables are coordinated.

However, reality looks different today: the last passenger train left the train sta-

tion of Lubin in August 2010, and private minibuses and public buses run in parallel. Raczyński: "Our aim is to create a safe, comprehensive and attractive system of public transport in our city and the whole region. We are going to involve all operators, so each of them can contribute to the success of the system."

Ludger Sippel, coordinator of INTER-Regio-Rail: "We were happy to support the municipality of Lubin in establishing their new transport association. It will help the citizens of the region to use public transport, and it will create the chance to revitalise the regional railway line, which may offer direct connections to Zielona Góra and Wrocław." The aim of the partner meetings of INTER-Regio-Rail is to visit and discuss the partners' pilot projects on the spot. All project partners judged the Lubin meeting to be a very interesting start to their cooperation.

## Editorial

Dear Sir or Madam,

In many European countries the development of regional rail transport has been a success story in recent years. The public Passenger Rail Authorities have started to tender services, launched infrastructure and station development programmes and actively involved passengers in the planning of new services. Each one of the Passenger Rail Authorities has implemented its individual set of ideas in its own region. The effect is stunning: since the creation of the German transport authorities the number of passengers has increased by 45%. It is still necessary, though, to further improve regional rail transport.



This is why we, the German Association Regional Passenger Rail Authorities initiated the European project "INTER-Regio-Rail". During the implementation of this project European Passenger Rail Authorities are learning from each other about different options to improve regional rail transport. And together we are going to lobby for regional rail transport at the EU.

We are inviting you to join us. Two important events are going to take place this year: from 10-12 May we are going to visit good practice examples of regional rail transport development during our study trip to Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland; and in late summer we are going to discuss how to improve the European framework conditions for regional rail transport during an open conference. We would love to see you there!

Yours,

**Bernhard Wewers**

President of the German Association of Passenger Rail Authorities



## Cooperation of passenger rail authorities establishes new connections

*KORID LK, Ltd., the coordinator of regional public transport in the Liberec region, is seeking to improve regional rail services in border areas. Cooperation with foreign partners is proving very inspiring, in particular with the Zweckverband Verkehrsverbund Oberlausitz-Niederschlesien (ZVON). We have managed to establish new connections with railway lines between Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic by cooperating on a bilateral level.*

*We welcome the opportunity to cooperate through INTER-Regio-Rail. We would like to use the experiences of other partners involved in the project. Preparation of future offers for international transport will be facilitated by successful examples of solutions in technical, legislative and administrative areas.*

*The INTER-Regio-Rail project is expected to define the strategy to ensure sustainable development of are sure rail transport in the Liberec region. We are sure that by offering a high quality service our trains will be able to attract more customers and keep them satisfied.*



**Otto Pospisil**  
Deputy Director  
KORID LK, Ltd.  
Czech Republic

# INTER-Regio-Rail regional pilot projects improve services for passengers

## Berlin-Brandenburg: Facilitating the cross-border use of railcars

The demand for cross-border rail transport between Germany and Poland will increase rapidly over the next few years. However, there are only a limited number of railcars approved to run these services.

This situation limits the possibilities for introducing new cross-border connections without the need to change trains that are urgently requested by passengers. The Berlin-Brandenburg Transport Association (VBB) is investigating solutions to this problem. Based on an evaluation of the capacities required, technical solutions will be checked to facilitate the adaptation of railcars. A further focus will be the financing of railcars and possible solutions to the problem of ownership.

## Upper Lusatia-Lower Silesia: Tendering cross border

Due to the structural reforms in the rail sector, regions are assuming more and more responsibility for cross-border rail transport. National operators serve selected point-to-point connections between European centres, and individual solutions have to be found at regional level to enable the efficient organisation of cross-border services.

There are manifold challenges. A crucial issue is the tendering of services, which allows the reduction of costs and requires the close coordination of the responsible authorities. The Transport Federation for Upper Lusatia and Lower Silesia (ZVON) is attempting to develop guidelines for the German-Polish case, clarifying the legal,

political, technical and practical success factors of cross-border tendering.

## Liberec: Developing strategies for the improvement of rail infrastructure

In the Liberec region, including the city of Liberec with its 100 000 inhabitants, there is no quality, fast and comfortable railway link to neighbouring urban areas. Travel times are the same as 70 years ago and, due to low standards of services, depreciated infrastructure and outdated railcars, rail transport cannot compete with other means of transport. In consequence railway transport in its present-day form cannot be maintained.

No investments are being made, as there are no main transport corridors passing through the area. Therefore KORID LK is going to compile a regional investment strategy, which will define the priorities for the future and pave the way for efficient management and maintenance.

## Stuttgart: Reducing barriers for elderly people

How can we help elderly people to use urban rail transport? The Stuttgart region (Verband Region Stuttgart) is looking to answer this question with information-related and personal mobility services, to help increase the quality of life in an ageing society.

Using questionnaires and surveys, the

- 1 *The regional train from Szczecin is arriving in Angermünde. Passengers have to change trains to travel to Berlin (source: VBB)*
- 2 *Modern railcars, out-dated infrastructure (source: KORID LK, Jan Rozensky)*
- 3 *Personal support through guidance in stations (source: Martin Stollberg)*
- 4 *The partners of INTER-Regio-Rail are discussing the perspectives of Lubin station as a future interchange point (source: Municipality of Lubin)*



needs of elderly people will be analysed. Based on the results, targeted offers will be designed and implemented in pilot measures, which are supported by a local network of social organisations and partners. The possibilities for additional services are manifold – handling of ticket machines, provision of guidance for better orientation, or luggage transport services.

## South Tyrol: Increasing the satisfaction of passengers

The activities in South Tyrol, Northern Italy, are focused on the areas of Vinschgau/Val Venosta and Pustertal/Val Pusteria. Both have railway lines which were founded at the end of the 19th century and modernised ten years ago. Today, both lines are counted among the most modern in Italy and are best practice examples for accessibility in Europe.

In order to encourage more commuters and especially tourists to leave their cars at home and to choose regional rail transport, it is not enough to simply solve existing problems. Rail transport needs to be positively differentiated from other means of transport like the car, its direct competitor. Therefore EURAC research will conduct a survey, interviewing commuters and tourists. As a result there shall be precise suggestions as to how regional rail transport in South Tyrol can create additional value for the passengers and thus raise the overall attractiveness and competitiveness of the service.

## Emilia Romagna: Bicycle transport in regional trains

The Emilia Romagna region provides excellent conditions for bicycle tourism – historical cities, a high density of destinations and attractions, and beautiful landscapes. But so far it is not possible to include regional rail in the itineraries of cyclists. Therefore the regional rail authority is looking for so-

lutions to increase the usability of trains for passengers with bicycles without limiting the “regular” transport function of regional rail transport. To begin with field trips will be made to develop applicable offers for cyclists, and subsequently technical solutions for the flexible adaptation of trains to different types of demand will be developed.

## Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship: Railway station development

The Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship is a very interesting region in terms of tourist attractions. Most of the interesting places can be reached by train. In the frames of the project, the Region is planning to create the railway stations’ development program. It will include all objects – those of main importance for the passengers, as well as those situated on the lines that are to be revitalized. The first stage of the project will be creation of the analysis of the condition of all railway stations and stops in the region. They will be classified according to their potential and possibilities to interconnect with other means of transport.

The document will serve the voivodeship, local governments and carriers for the long-term planning of the railway stations’ revitalization. Based on the analysis, four pilot objects will be selected to be modernized in the first place in the cooperation with local authorities and private partners.



## Cooperation makes the voice of passenger rail authorities heard in Europe

*For the Emilia Romagna region cooperation with other railway authorities is of great importance. We can profit from sharing information with other railway authorities. Internationally we often face similar problems. Seeing how others have solved these problems and how their solutions have worked can be extremely helpful for our work, and our regional partners can benefit from learning about our experiences. This is also true for our INTER-Regio-Rail project.*

*The reform of public transport in Italy began in the late 90s but is still incomplete, particularly in regional rail transport. We are in a common legislative framework on the European level, but high common standards are difficult to reach. We believe that the regions should have a role both in improving the European cohesion on its territories and in ensuring a better quality of life for their citizens.*

*For example, we are currently trying to improve our railway service for bicycle tourists, which is our pilot project. Good international relations with other railway authorities that have faced the same situation may provide us with good suggestions, and comparing the different solutions will help us to find the best one.*



**Alfredo Peri**  
Regional Minister for  
Territorial planning and development,  
Mobility and Transport  
Emilia Romagna Region

(source: Hans-Peter Leu)





## Good reasons for cooperation

### Regional passenger rail authorities need good ideas to organise regional rail transport

In the past 15 years the regions of several European countries have gained the competence to organise and finance regional rail transport.

Experience shows that in many regions new concepts have been implemented, and some of them have been very successful. Some regions have focused on tendering good-quality regional rail services, others have specialised in improving the railway infrastructure and stations, and in improving the connections between rail and bus transport. It is important that all regions learn from each other and that good examples of improving regional rail transport are transferred to other regions – for the benefit of citizens.

### Regional rail transport increasingly depends on European legislation

Rail transport authorities have to lobby together for good framework conditions for regional rail transport.

There is a wide variety of topics worth to discuss with political decision makers in Brussels: the framework for calling for tenders, regulations concerning the use of railway infrastructure, passenger rights and the design of stations and vehicles for the benefit of persons with reduced mobility.

It is not about reinventing the wheel. But in the past all kinds of actors have been discussing these issues, and regional rail transport authorities have not really been involved, despite that fact that European regulations have a growing impact on their work.

**THE PARTNERS OF INTER-REGIO-RAIL ARE DISCUSSING THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND WILL JOINTLY WORK FOR BETTER FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR REGIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT.**

## Facts about regional rail transport

Regional rail transport is used by passengers for short trips of a distance of up to 100 km. Each year passengers travel around 190 bill. kilometers on a net of 217000 km. This saves 14 Mio. tons of carbon dioxide annually compared to travelling by car. Also access roads to cities would be congested if these passengers were not using public transport as a mode for travelling. **Europe cannot survive without regional rail transport.**

In Europe fare revenues do not in general cover the expenses of regional rail transport, which is therefore in most cases subsidised by the national state. Rail transport authorities are responsible for organising and funding regional rail transport. **Good and competitive regional rail transport needs sufficient funding.**

Many regional rail transport services in Europe have already been tendered in competition, and several operators compete for a good quality. **The right framework conditions are required for fair competition.**

Infrastructure managers are responsible for maintaining and developing the rail infrastructure. In most cases, they depend on government funds. **Attractive regional rail transport needs high quality rail networks and passenger-friendly stations.**

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CENTRAL EUROPE is a European Union programme that encourages cooperation among the countries of Central Europe to improve innovation, accessibility and the environment and to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of their cities and regions.

CENTRAL EUROPE is investing 231 million EUR to provide funding to transnational cooperation projects involving public and private organisations from Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The programme is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and runs from 2007 to 2013. Interested partnerships are invited to propose their projects following public calls for proposals, which will be widely publicised.

For more information:  
[www.central2013.eu](http://www.central2013.eu)