



Rail Freight Corridor
North Sea – Baltic



The RFC Network
User Satisfaction
Survey

2022

**Report for
RFC North Sea - Baltic**



RFC USER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2022

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01 SURVEY DESIGN

HOW THE SURVEY WAS SET UP

SURVEY DESIGN



- 7 respondents || 7 evaluations
- Computer Aided Web Interviews (using the online tool Survio)
- Contacts (e-mail address) delivered by RFCs
- 39 e-mail invitations sent
- Field Phase: 19th September to 10th November 2022

SATISFACTION & PARTICIPATION

7
evaluations

This is a decrease of 41% compared to the previous year (12 evaluations in 2021).

7
participants

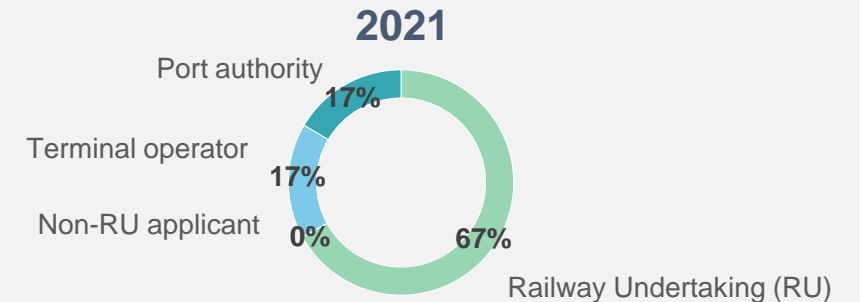
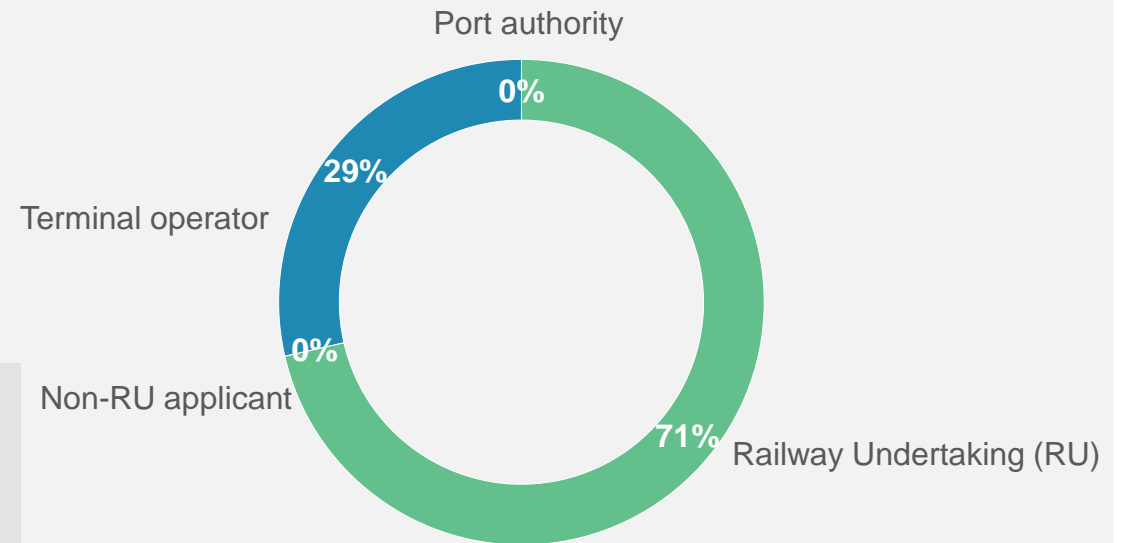
This is a decrease of 41% compared to the previous year (12 participants in 2021).

Customer satisfaction



**Answers given were very satisfied, satisfied and slightly satisfied. This is an increase of 16% compared to the previous year.*

Participant groups in % of 2022



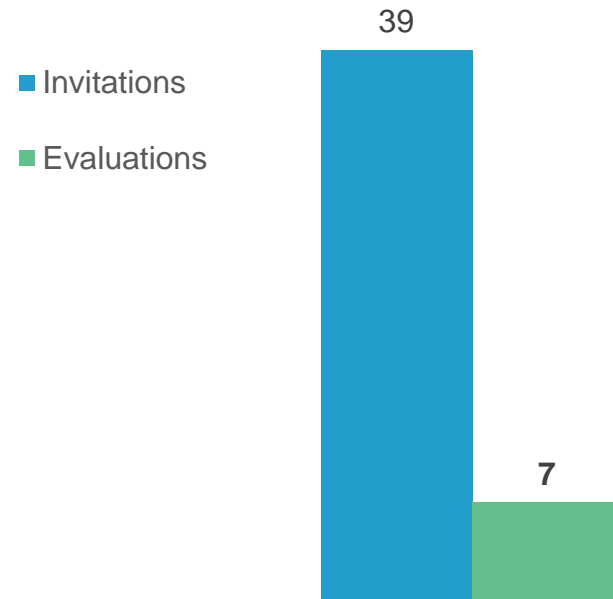
RESPONSE RATE

Compared to the previous year

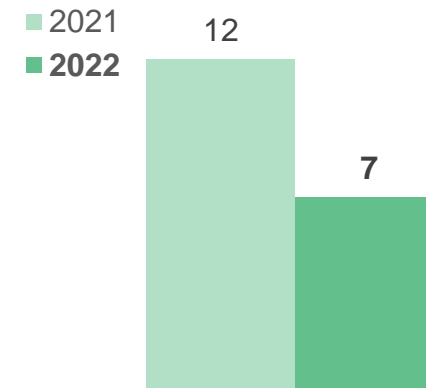


Total	7	(-5)
RUs/non-Rus	5	
Terminals/Ports	2	
Invitations sent	39	(-4)
Response rate overall	18%	(-10%)

Invitations vs. Evaluations ratio



Number of evaluations 2021 vs. 2022



02 SATISFACTION WITH RFC NS-B

INTRODUCTION

The RFC USS 2022 is based on the relaunched version from 2021, which was optimized to better suit the needs of the invitees and the RFC Network. While the annual and RFC-specific questions were updated to focus on current issues, the general questions covered the same topics as previous years, to stay comparable to past surveys.

Though this survey does focus on concrete proposals for improvement, the participants could answer each topic with 'generally satisfied' and/or would appreciate improvement in ... (select certain concrete measures). Also, in the survey each topic offered the opportunity to give an open answer under 'other'. Therefore, participants were able to communicate their opinion even better to the RFC

Network. Additionally for the first time participants could also choose to be directly interviewed via MStTeams.

The percentage indicates the number of participants who think that a specific topic needs improvement. Figures are rounded without comma.

Other comments are available on the last slide 20 of the report.

SATISFACTION WITH RFC NS-B

- » Overall, how satisfied are you as a user of the RFC?
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » sample size = 7

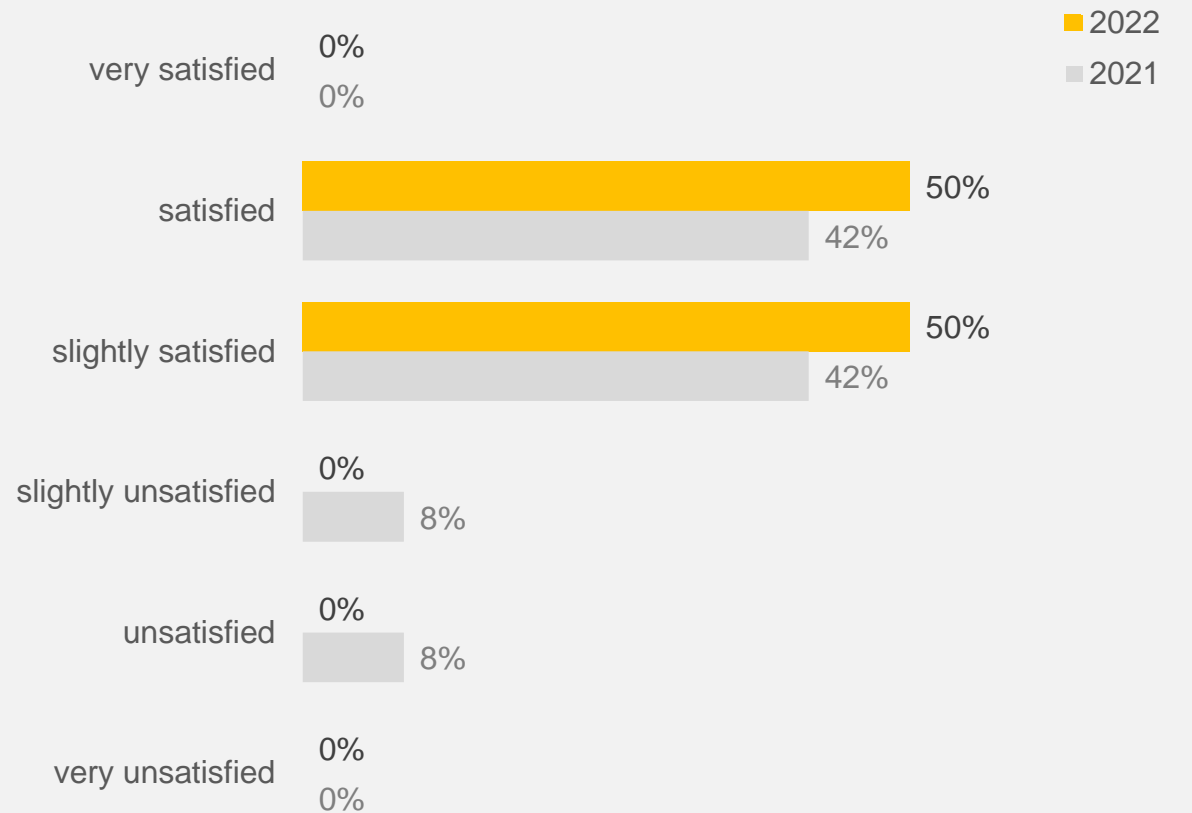
100%

Generally satisfied

**Answers given were very satisfied, satisfied and slightly satisfied.*

16%

Increase of satisfaction



WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Priority areas

- » Which topics related to RFC Infrastructure are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » sample size = 7
 - 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

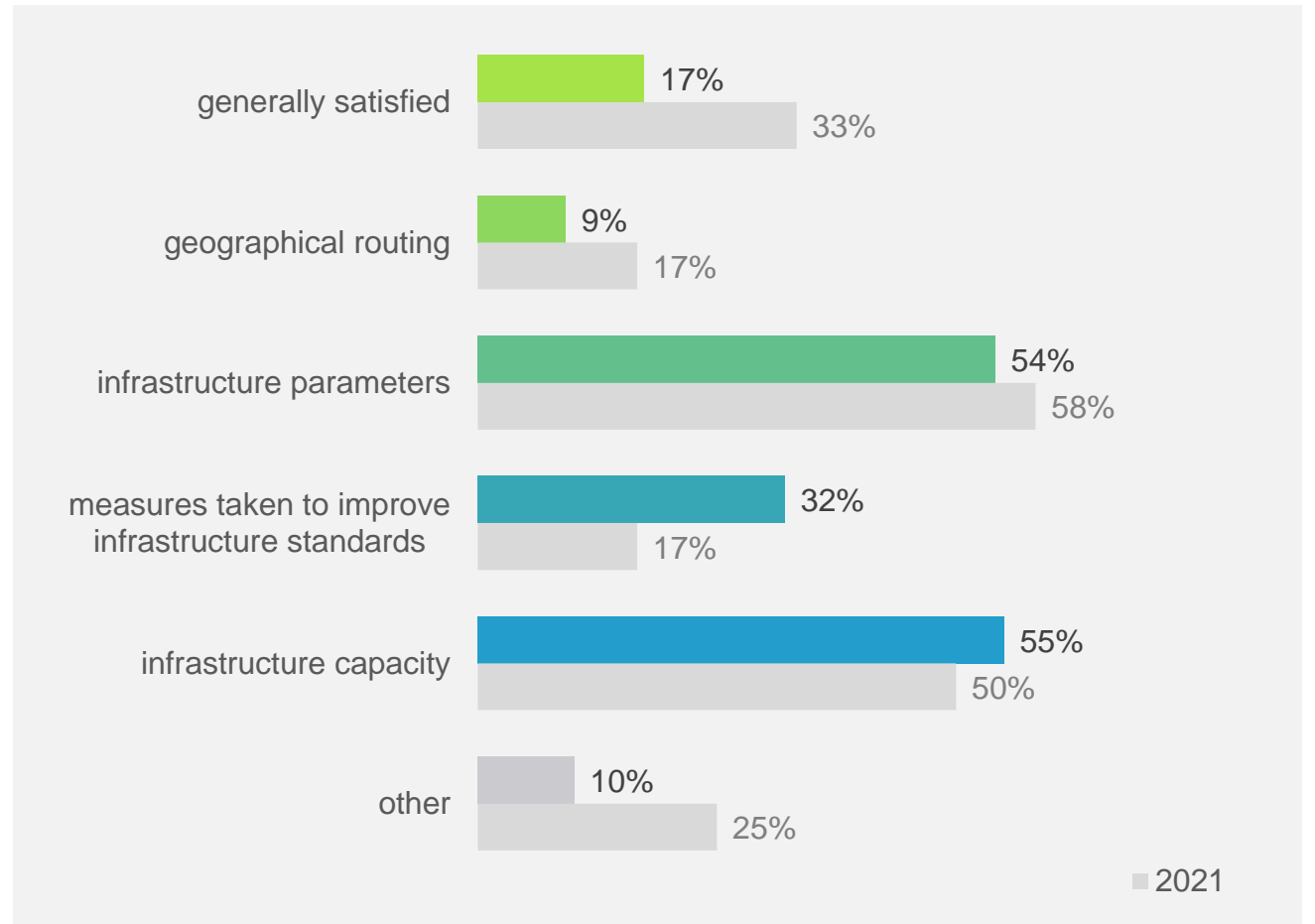
17%

Generally satisfied

*This is a 16% decrease in satisfaction compared to last year.
Sample size 2021: 12*

Focus on

- 1 Infrastructure capacity
- 2 Infrastructure parameters
- 3 Measures to improve infrastructure standards



WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN TCR

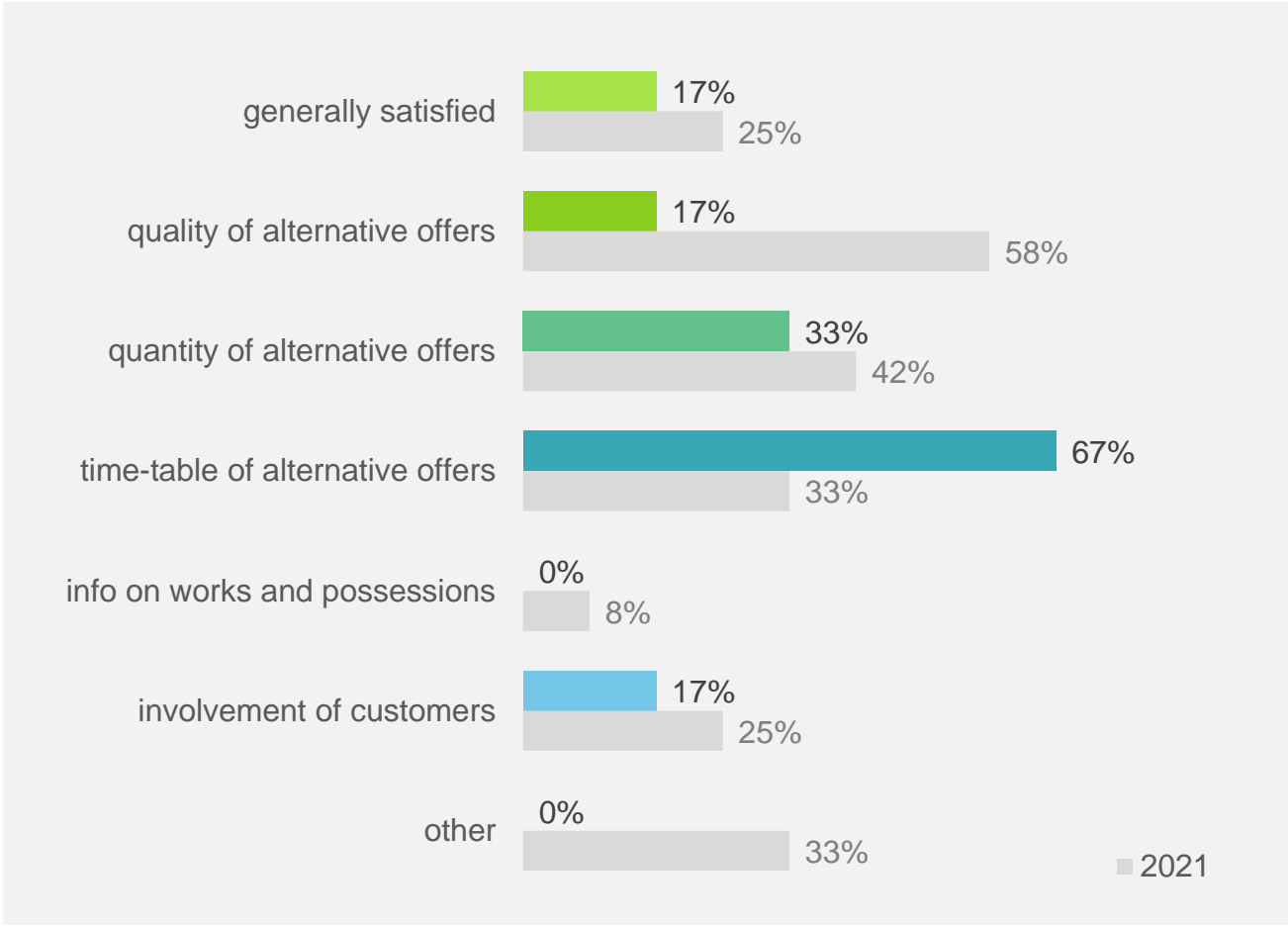
Priority areas

- » Which areas of the coordination of planned temporary capacity restrictions (TCR) on the RFC are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
 - » sample size = 7
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

17%
Generally satisfied
*This is a 8% decrease in satisfaction compared to last year.
 Sample size 2021: 12*

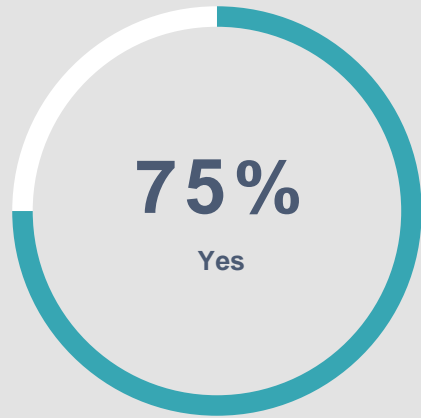
Focus on

- 1 time-table of alternative offers
- 2 quantity of alternative offers
- 3 involvement of customers
 quality of alternative offers



INVOLVEMENT IN CAPACITY REQUESTS VIA THE C-OSS

Capacity request via C-OSS



Compared to the past year it has been a 13% decrease.

COMMENTS

Too little flexibility. ..

Reasons for not ordering via the C-OSS:

- » Were you involved in a request for corridor capacity via the C-OSS as a leading or participating applicant/RU?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-Rus
 - » sample size = 5
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN RFC COMMERCIAL OFFER

Priority areas

- » In the current RFC commercial offer, which are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
- » Answered by: RUs/non-Rus
- » sample size = 5
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

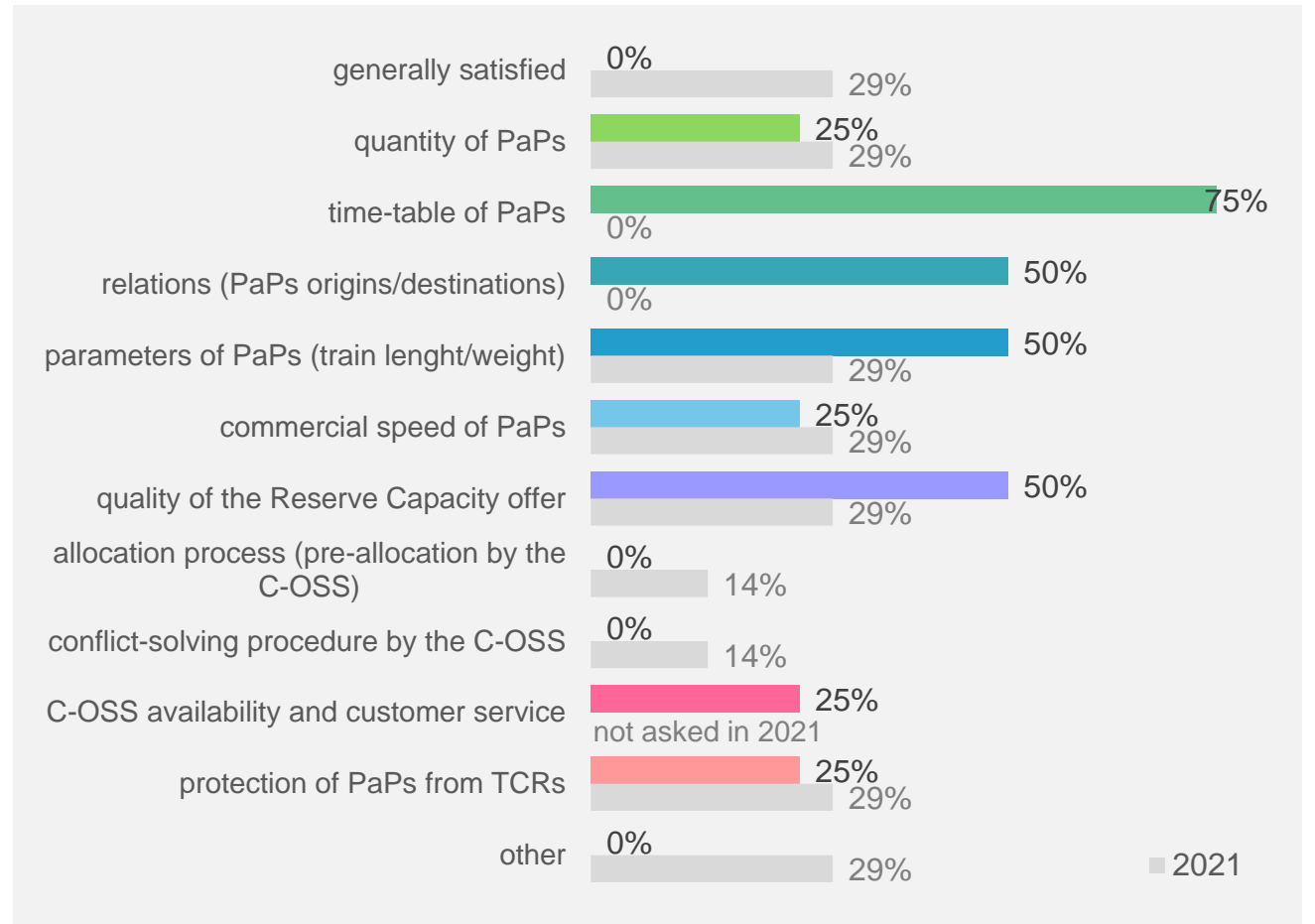
0%

Generally satisfied

*Compared to the past year it has been a 29% decrease.
Sample size 2021: 5*

Focus on

- parameters of PaPs
- protection of PaPs from TCRs
- 3 time-table of PaPs



WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN TPM

Priority areas

- » Which aspects of the Train Performance Management (TPM) activities are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » sample size = 7
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

29%

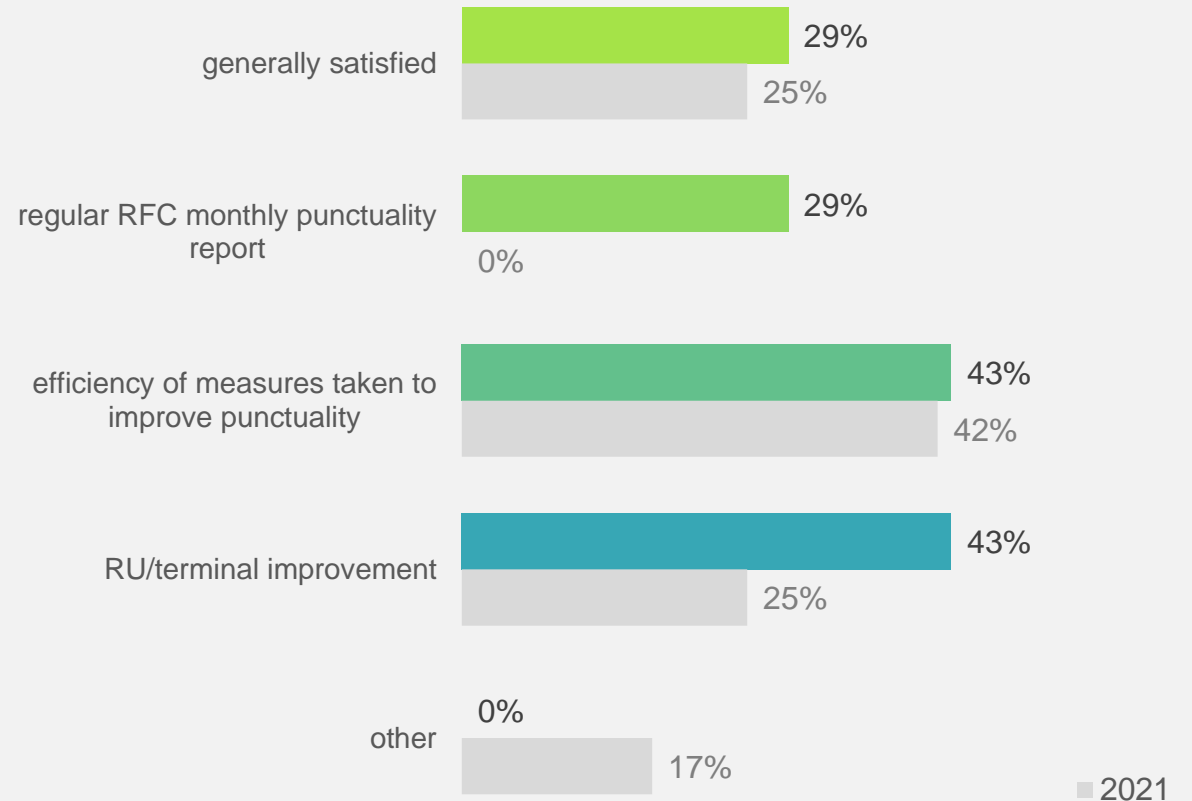
Generally satisfied

This is a 4% increase in satisfaction compared to last year.

Sample size 2021: 12

Focus on

- 1 Efficiency of measures taken to improve punctuality
- 2 RU/terminal improvement
- 3 Regular RFC monthly punctuality report



WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN ICM

Priority areas

- » Regarding the implementation of the process outlined in the International Contingency Management (ICM) handbook which are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs
 - » sample size = 5
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

50%

Generally satisfied

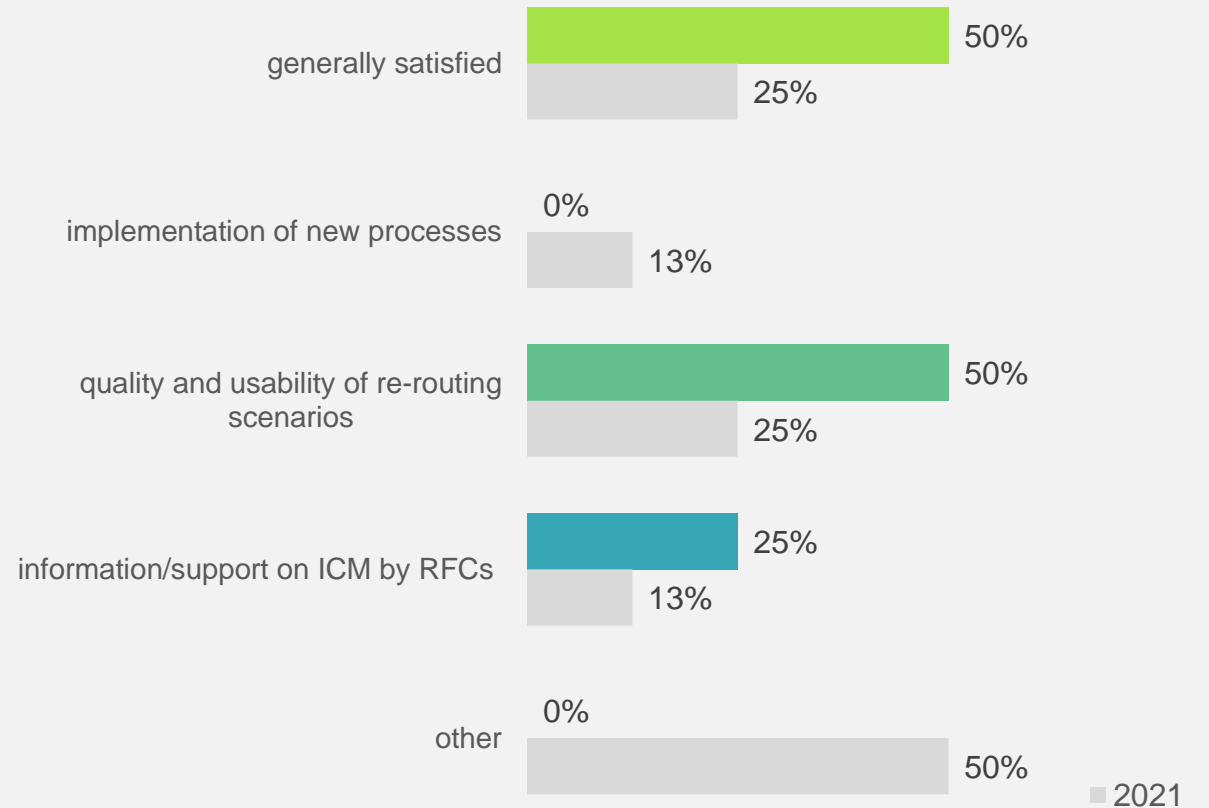
This is a 25% increase in satisfaction compared to last year.

Sample size 2021: 12

Focus on

1 Quality and usability of re-routing scenarios

2 Info/support on ICM by RFC



WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN RU/TERMINAL ADVISORY GROUP

Priority areas

- » Which aspects of the RU Advisory Group/Terminal Advisory Group (RAG/TAG) are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
 - » sample size = 7
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

14%

Generally satisfied

This is a 11% decrease in satisfaction compared to last year.

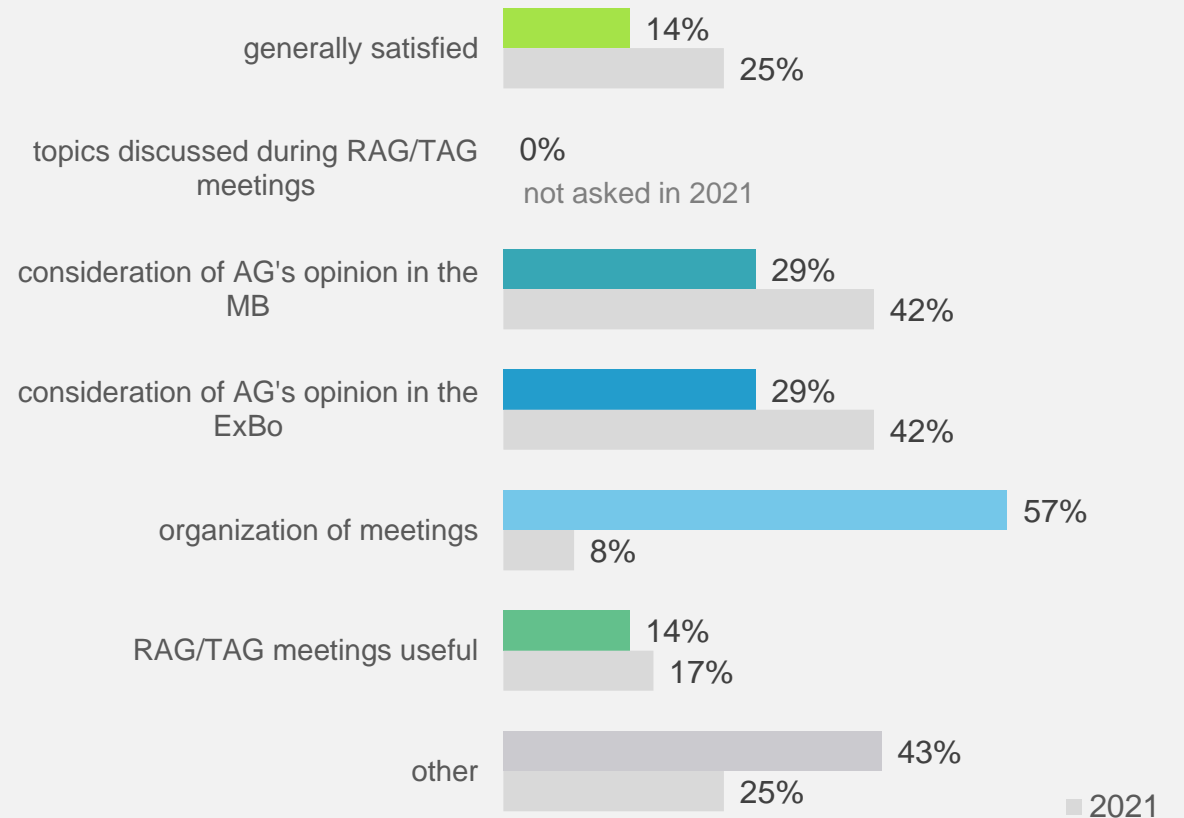
Sample size 2021: 12

Focus on

1 organization of meetings

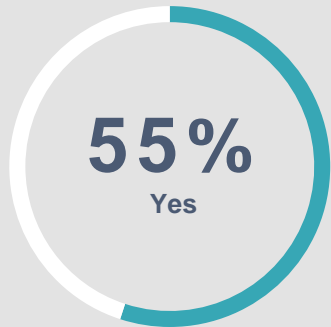
consideration of AG's opinion in the MB

consideration of AG's opinion in the ExBo



COMPANY PARTICIPATION IN RAG TAG MEETINGS

Participation in RAG TAG meetings



Compared to the past year it has been a 3 % decrease.

- » Does your company regularly attend RAG/TAG meetings?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
 - » sample size = 7
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Priority areas

- » Which of the following statements on the communication services of the RFC are the priority areas for improvement according to your opinion?
 - » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
 - » sample size = 7
- 1 interview from DB Cargo (see attachment)

14%

Generally satisfied

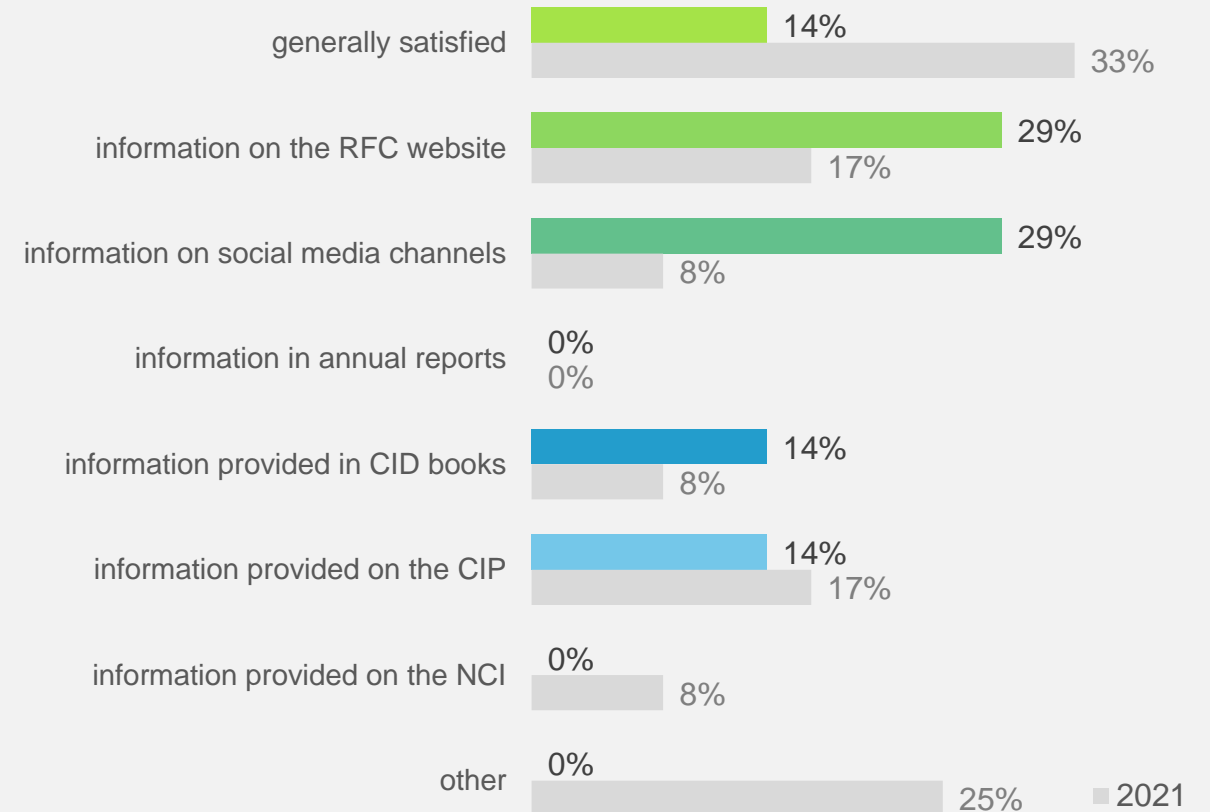
This is a 19% decrease in satisfaction compared to last year.

Sample size 2021: 12

Focus on

information on RFC website

information on social media channels



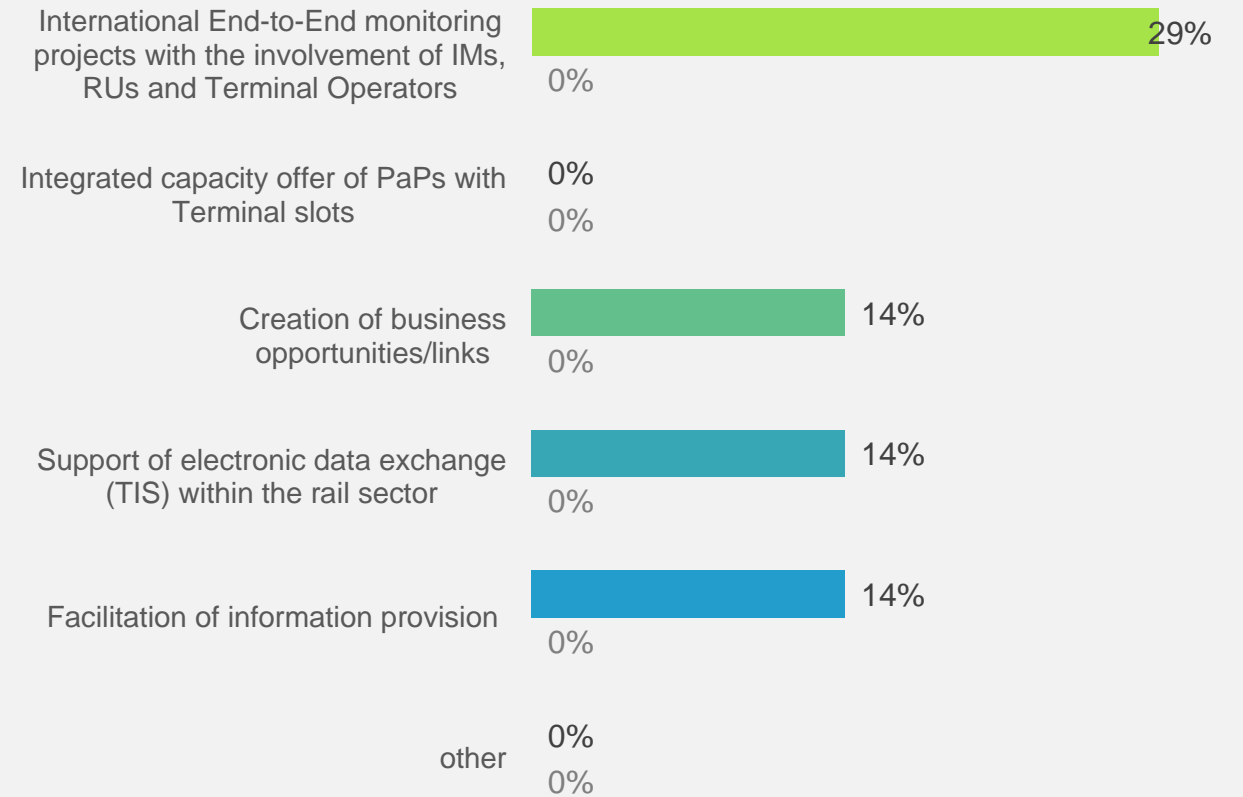
WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN RAIL-RELATED PERFORMANCE

Priority areas

- » Which topics would your company be interested in for the RFC to improve your rail-related performance?
- » Answered by: Terminals/Ports
- » sample size = 2

Focus on

international End-to-End monitoring projects with the involvement of IMs, RUs and Terminal Operators



OTHER COMMENTS:

SATISFACTION WITH RFC 8:

- Especially high satisfaction with PaPs through the Elbe valley, which were requested by our German subsidy RCC-Germany (on behalf of which I answer here).
- CLIP terminal is a Railway Undertaking, terminal operator and logistics center developing on several Corridors: Baltic - Adriatic, North Sea - Baltic, and far distances like Poland - Spain, so a single choice is not reflecting the true picture.

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE:

- A general shortage of capacity in the Elbtal section south of Dresden.
- IMs are mostly renewing existing tracks and not getting more tracks and space at stations/borders.
- Rentability of a train IT in its length, weight, and speed, lack of capacity on rail and delayed and prolonged repairs cause withdrawal of customers, and therefore economic losses.

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN RFC COMMERCIAL OFFER:

- There was some issue that due to TCRs offered PaPs times could not be fully allocated (further issues to be clarified with RCC-Germany).

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN TPM

- The market faces a lack of KPI fulfillment due to poor performance on rail and lack of involvement of terminals. It's essential to know the real reason and react.

WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN RU/TERMINAL ADVISORY GROUP

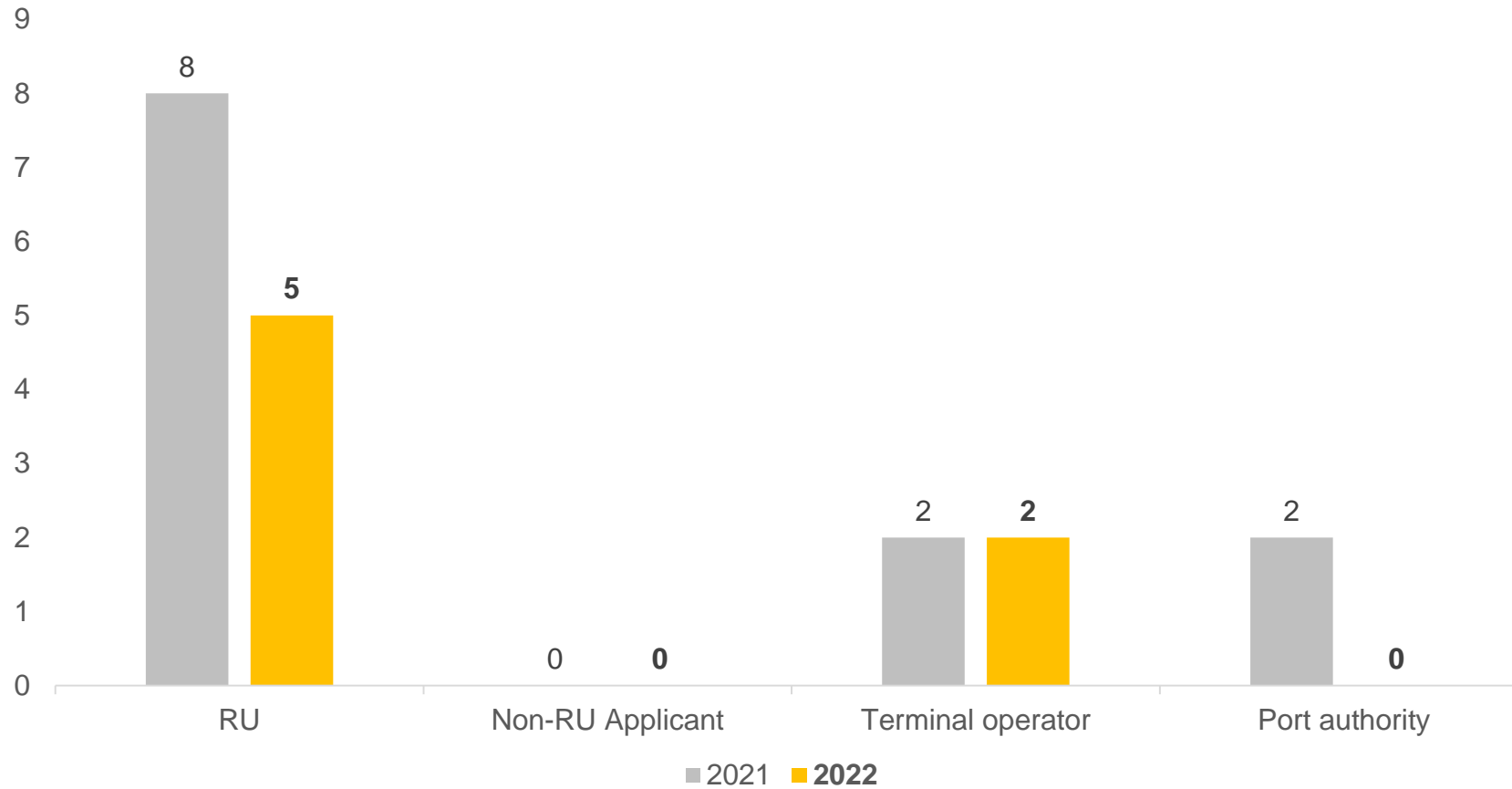
- One user friendly meeting, time and place, for example Wien or Ljubljana (with FTE meetings). It was proposed the last time.
- Meetings closer to the users (easy to attend), more point-to-point seeking for solutions, and get them done (first borders than border stations and so on).
- I would appreciate if the option of online access was available.

03 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION



SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Target group



- » "To which of the following type of target groups does your company belong?"
- » sample size = 7;

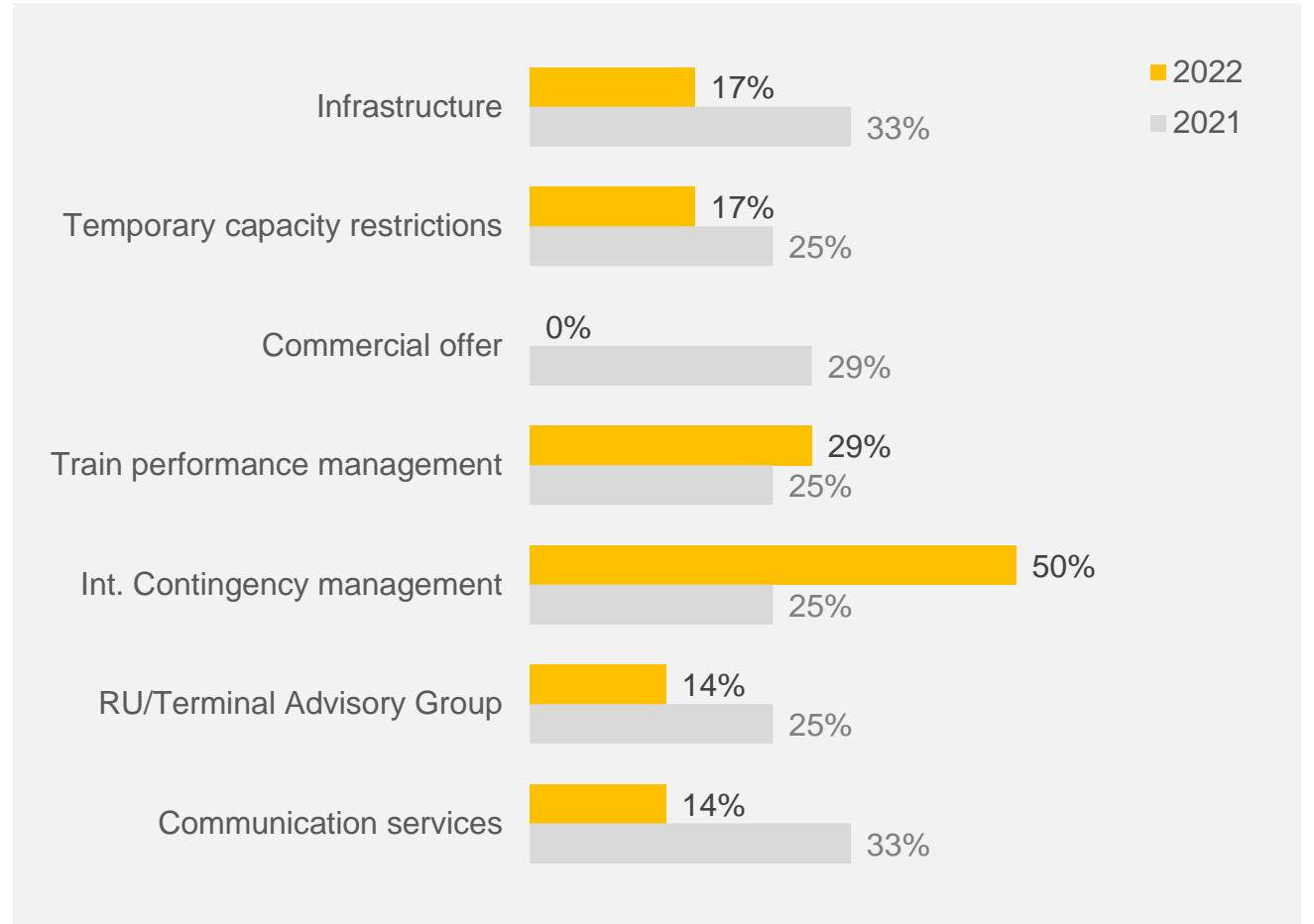
04 SUMMARY



SUMMARY – SATISFACTION RATING

All respondents

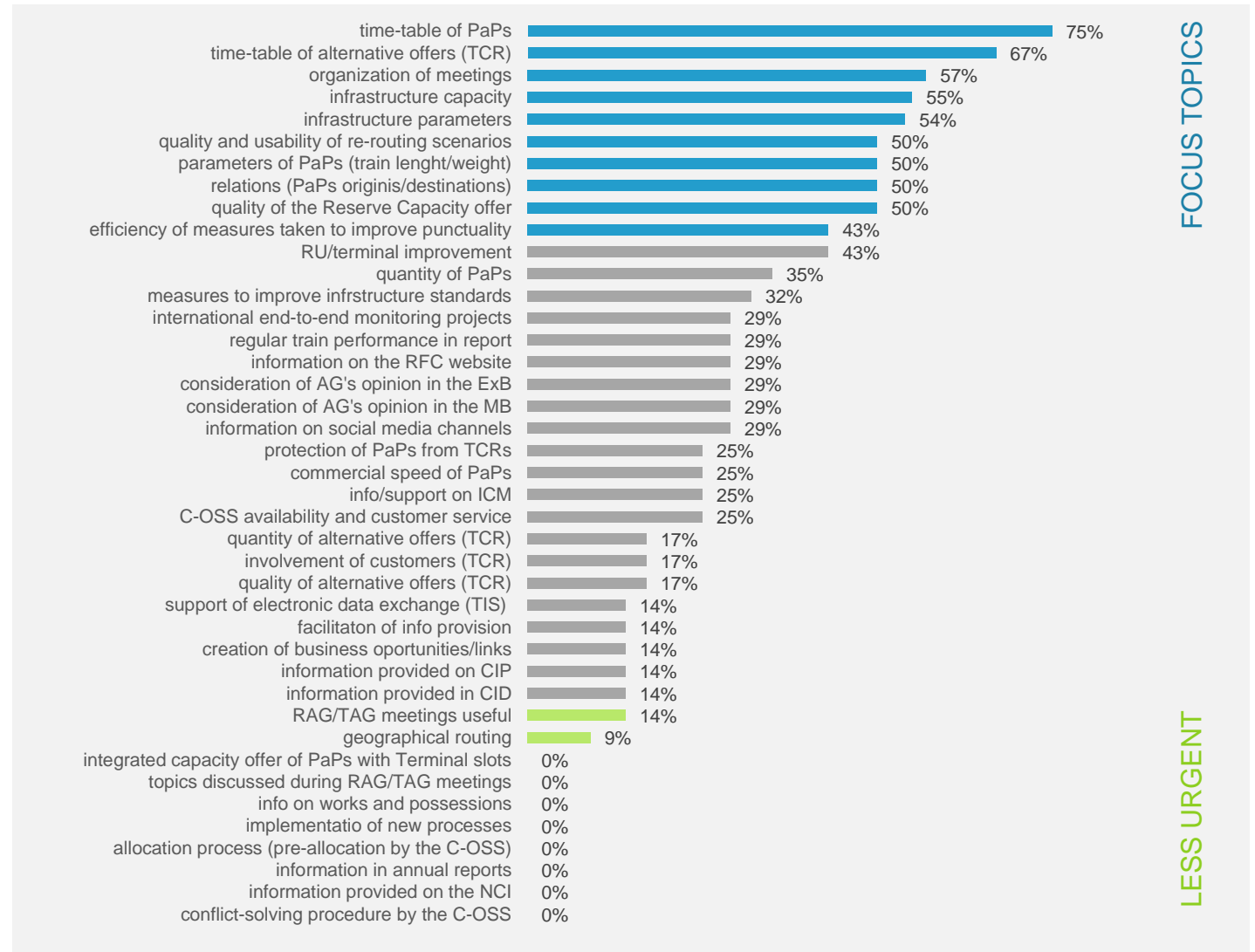
- » General satisfaction
- » This question was not asked in all topics of the survey
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » Different sample sizes on every topic



SUMMARY – WISH FOR IMPROVEMENT

All respondents

- » Focus topics chosen
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » Different sample sizes on every topic, there



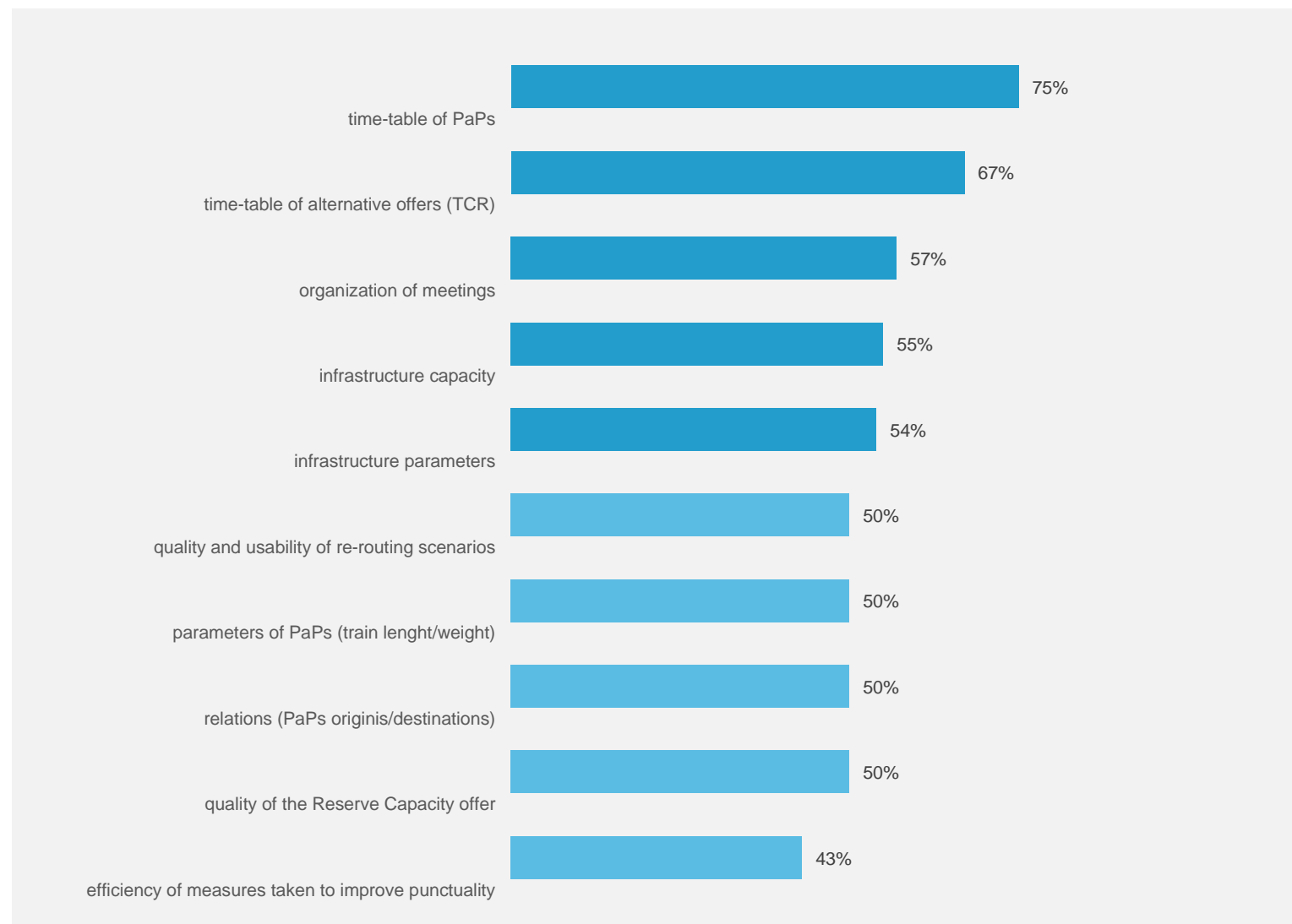
FOCUS TOPICS

LESS URGENT

SUMMARY – TOP 10 FOCUS TOPICS

All respondents

- » 10 topics of the survey which the participants had the most wish for improvement. They were least satisfied with these 10 topics and the RFCs will focus on improving those.
- » Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports
- » Different sample sizes on every topic, there



ATTACHMENT: DB CARGO

DB CARGO

Timetable / PaP offer

- DB Cargo Schweiz (RFC 1) informed us that the PaP offer is not really relevant for them. They rely on their direct connections with the IMs and feel that this works better for them.
- **DB Cargo Nederland (RFC 1, 2, 8) told us that they use the PaPs currently only for a few specific trains. At the moment its use is limited, mostly because the amount of offered paths is limited.**
- **DB Cargo Polska (RFC 5, 8, 11) was very satisfied with the quality of tailor-made products on all the RFCs they operate.**
- DB Cargo Italia (RFCs 1, 3, 5, 6) pointed out some that the 3 IMs operating on the southern RFC 1 (DB Netz, SBB Infrastruktur and RFI) have different capacity allocation processes and priorities. Consequently, DB Cargo Schweiz did not get the same path that was assigned to DB Cargo Italia. This generated a negative correspondence at the border station Domo 2. The RFC does not support. Furthermore, the path offers on the borders Luino and Domo 2 are not harmonized: different number of paths on the 2 sides of the borders, in particular in case of paths for PC400 loading gauge.
- DB Cargo Headquarters: Different ways for limitation of parameters in PaPs (max./recommended weight and/or length of trains or/and carriages set) for different IMs/RFCs is a big

obstacle for requesting PaPs. In some cases (e.g. in the northern part of RFC 3) PaP-parameters have been unnecessarily limited, because in the later discussion with involved IMs/ RFC-managers exceeding of parameters was agreed and possible for the operation, but not anymore for requesting PaPs (technically blocked by PCS). For these cases a manual work-around has been implemented (entering wrong parameters for the request of PaP, but adding the correct parameters in comments). In almost all cases this workaround hasn't worked in PCS, because of not considering comments by IMs. This issue has been already placed in the C-OSS-community meeting.

Another general problem is deviating timetable data in PCS and in the national system because PCS is not the "single point of true"-system and there are different national processes. Therefore, data in PCS are not reliable, analysis and harmonization of timetable often does not make sense.

Furthermore, we have been faced also this year with the problem of delayed or missing path offers in PCS. Some of path offers have been provided in PCS on 10th October, some are still missing. So, in order to enable further national processes (deadline 2. NEP of DB Netz 28th September) also here a workaround was implemented: we asked IMs with the ready path offers to provide an extract from the national system in PDF-format, which was sent via e-mail and accepted

via e-mail, too (completely outside of PCS).

Additionally, the following shortcomings have been identified in path offers:

- Border time not harmonized
- Some requested days missing in the offer
- Deviating times and parameters in the offer (compared to the request).

Quality of operations

- DB Cargo Schweiz (RFC 1) found that the quality in the north of Switzerland is no longer sustainable. The reasons are manifold. Construction sites, capacity, etc. They do not expect things to improve in 2023.

Supporting activities (Working Groups to solve specific problems etc.)

- DB Cargo Schweiz (RFC 1) relied on their direct contacts with IMs to solve specific problems. Cooperation with the Swiss IMs was regarded as very good and constructive, with RFI (Italy) as OK; DB Netz, however, was hard to catch.

DB CARGO

- **DB Cargo Nederland (RFC 1, 2, 8) welcomed the “QCO Bad Bentheim” on RFC 8 and participated in that working group set up to solve serious operational problems. However, as just a few RUs participated – but not the RUs which probably have caused the problems – the effect of the effort was not satisfactory. Our Dutch colleagues concluded that there would probably be a need of some changes in the infrastructure at this border station; this topic was, however, not yet addressed.**
- **DB Cargo Polska (RFC 5, 8, 11) emphasised the very good initiatives on RFC 8, namely “QCO Oderbrücke”, the collaboration with the Polish IM (PKP PLK) on the matter of “Solidarity Lanes” and an attempt to develop possible transport routes for Ukrainian wagons. On RFC 5 and 11, however, no comparable initiatives/working groups were noticed by our Polish colleagues.**
- **DB Cargo Headquarters: QCOs are a good instrument to analyse problems and to start a dialogue about finding solutions. RFCs are neutral coordinators and a welcomed platform to organise this exchange. Sometimes RFCs should have more power to force adaptations to reach an added value for international operation even if it is not the optimum for each national stakeholder. Perhaps this international thinking and evaluation will be implemented with the revision of 913/2010.**

TCR coordination

- **DB Cargo Schweiz (RFC 1) saw one of the biggest levers of improvement in a timely transmission of the adapted timetables (“fplo”). In most cases, construction sites were known at an early stage, but too much time passed before our Swiss colleagues officially received the “fplo” – usually less than a week before the event. This led often to the fact that our colleagues had to cancel trains or waste costly resources.**
- **DB Cargo Nederland (RFC 1, 2, 8) criticised that the TCR information on RFC 1 was not always in time (3 weeks before execution). According to ProRail they did not receive the information on time from DB Netz, so they could not plan and inform the RUs in The Netherlands according to the deadlines.**
- **DB Cargo Polska (RFC 5, 8, 11) found that the international TCR coordination would not work at all on all three corridors. Information usually came at too short notice and thus caused stress.**
- **DB Cargo Italia (RFCs 1, 3, 5, 6) states that the construction works planned by the IMs are often overlapped although this has been pointed out for years.**
- **DB Cargo Headquarters: TCR coordination should be improved on all RFCs. It is the key more capacity on the existing network. Coordination**

should include the aspect of planning how to carry out the TCR itself as well as planning and organising re-routing concepts during the TCR-phase. The published TCR xls-sheets are often not as up to date as national systems. One common TCR-tool – in the best case linked to national systems – should be implemented. RUs should be involved in a user group to further develop the system in a customer friendly way. The implementation of Annex VII should be supervised by the RFCs to push forward the national implementation.

Other critical issues

- **DB Cargo Schweiz (RFC 1) mentioned the occurrence of uncoordinated construction activities between DB Netz, SBB Infra and RFI. As a result, capacity needs and provision of capacity did not fit together.**

Final remarks from DB Cargo Headquarters

As already stated above, the RUs of the DB Cargo group – including our main RU in Germany – currently operate on 10 out of 11 corridors but will start observing the activities on the last missing one (RFC 10: Alpine – Western Balkan) soon.

DB CARGO

Even if we do not submit the expected questionnaires, this will not mean that we do not value the RFC activities, initiatives, and progress. We just think that the User Satisfaction Surveys as they are conducted today are not the appropriate means to reflect the quality of the RFC work.

Based on our experience in the past years, the most critical issue on all corridors was and continues to be (at least in the short and medium term) the capacity situation and the reliability of the capacity offers in the RU planning process. This includes international TCR coordination, which is logically part of “the overall capacity issue” and is complicating the problem that capacity is already scarce even without any maintenance and construction works on given line sections.

On all RFCs, we see a willingness to cope with that problem and deliver a decent quality for running freight trains on the rail network that is available. Yes, we may occasionally (sometimes even more often...) “blame” the one or other infrastructure manager for not being able to solve a problem the way we think it should be solved, but we do not criticise the RFC organisations as such. On the contrary, we see the limiting framework within which they operated, thus we want to strengthen them and give them the power to go beyond the limits of that framework. The existing

framework is in many respects still national-oriented rather than Europe-minded (above all what concerns financing and investment planning) and the willingness for changing this is in some Member States rather low.

What we would expect from RFCs in the future is at least to acknowledge that the root of the current capacity problems is the discrepancy of what is politically communicated since decades in the EU and what is actually done in many (not all) Member States. Since the start of railway liberalisation in the late 1990s, the development of the rail network in Europe has obviously not kept pace with the growth of transport (both freight and passenger). And even when problems are finally acknowledged (e.g. relief of particular bottlenecks through infrastructure development) and urgent action is announced, their actual solution takes “ages” (i.e. usually 10 years and longer...), due to not at all harmonised and sometimes very tedious planning and financial procedures in Member States.

Squeezing out the maximum capacity from an existing network, and this is what we observe today in some “crucial” countries, makes it vulnerable, less resilient and thus will be a catalyst for cascading operational problems even if only small irregularities occur. The substantial negative effects of TCR on the operation of

freight trains on certain main routes are a strong indicator for lacking capacity on appropriate alternative routes or even their unavailability at all. Although the current draft of a revised TEN-T Regulation proposed by the EU Commission addresses this issue, the readiness of some Member States to really support this and turn words into deed, which may include changing and reprioritising specific projects within their national transport investment programmes, however, leaves room for scepticism.

Hence, what we would like to add to the RFC task list for the future, is to put a focus on medium and long-term infrastructure development (including cross-border ERTMS migration) by not only communicating what each Member State is planning (this, however, is an important first step, and we appreciate the corresponding activity of RFC 7/9 in this respect), but also to draw conclusions, how these national plans can be harmonised or adapted accordingly in order to generate the highest (and ideally fastest possible) effect for freight train operation on the RFCs.