



Rail Freight Corridor  
North Sea – Baltic



Annual **Report** 2015



Co-financed by the European Union  
Connecting Europe Facility

## Annual Report 2015

### Table of Contents:

<b>Foreword</b>	3
<b>Introduction</b>	5
<b>1. Governance</b>	6
1.1 Executive Board	6
1.2 Management Board	8
1.3 Advisory Groups	10
<b>2. Main activities</b>	12
2.1 Elaboration of Corridor Information Document	14
2.2 Corridor offer for 2016 and 2017	17
2.3 Corridor One-Stop Shop	19
2.4 Extension of the Corridor	20
2.5 Possible revision of the Regulation	20
2.6 Framework for capacity allocation	23
2.7 Customer Information Platform	24
<b>3. European Funding</b>	24
3.1 TEN-T	24
3.2 CEF	25
<b>4. Cooperation with other organizations</b>	26
4.1 RNE	26
4.2 RFCs	27
4.3 European Commission	28
4.4 CNC North Sea – Baltic	29
4.5 OSJD	30
<b>5. Activities planned for 2016</b>	30
5.1 Study on capacity improvement	30
5.2 EEIG	31
5.3 Launching event	32

## Glossary:

AB – Allocation Body  
AG – Advisory Group  
CEF – Connecting Europe Facility  
CER -Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies  
CID – Corridor Information Document  
CIP – Customer Information Platform  
CNC – Core Network Corridor  
C-OSS – Corridor One-Stop-Shop  
EC – European Commission  
ECCO - Efficient Cross Corridor Organization  
EEIG - European Economic Interest Grouping  
EIM - European Rail Infrastructure Managers  
EU – European Union  
ExBo – Executive Board  
GA – General Assembly  
IM – Infrastructure Manager  
INEA - Innovation and Networks Executive Agency  
IP – Implementation Plan  
KPI – Key Performance Indicator  
MB – Management Board  
OSJD - Organization for Cooperation between Railways  
PaP – Pre-arranged Path  
PCS – Path Coordination System  
PIM – Project Implementation Manager  
PMO – Project Management Office  
RAG – Railway undertaking Advisory Group  
RC – Reserve Capacity  
RFC – Rail Freight Corridor  
RNE – Rail Net Europe  
RU – Railway Undertaking  
SERAC - Single European Railway Area Committee  
TAG – Terminal Advisory Group  
TCCCom -Traffic Control Centres Communication  
TEN-T – Trans-European Networks – Transport  
TIS - Train Information System  
TMS – Transport Market Study  
TT – Time Table  
UIC - International Union of Railways  
UIRR - International Union for Road- Rail Combined Transport  
WG – Working Group

## Foreword

Dear Reader,

2015 was an important year for our corridor. It marked the official opening of our Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic and the launch of our first corridor products to the market. To get to this point a number of important milestones had to be achieved, a tremendous amount of work had to be delivered and a lot of intelligent solutions had to be found.

The Corridor Implementation Plan was finalized by the Management Board, approved by the Executive Board and published together with the Corridor Information Document in November 2015. At the same time also the first offer – Reserve Capacity for adhoc traffic in 2016 - of the Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic was published and the Management Board decided already about the first Pre-arranged Path offer for timetable 2017. As requested unanimously by our Management Board and Executive Boards the European Commission approved the extensions to the South of Poland and to the Czech Republic in July 2015.

Now, our corridor is operational, but the real work has just started. Together with the other eight rail freight corridors and RailNetEurope we will develop our corridor products further to match market requirements as far as possible. This, of course, will only be able in close cooperation with our customers.


European rail freight does not only move along individual corridors but rather has to cross seamlessly from one corridor to the other. Therefore, the Management Boards of all nine rail freight corridors started working on common solutions and harmonized processes in 2014 in the so-called RFC Talks supported by RNE. In 2015, this grew into a true corridor community as an important step towards an integrated network for competitive rail freight. Based on this common vision, the RFC Talks defined and agreed on a common sector position for the development of the corridors which was promoted by the large sector organizations CER and EIM to the European Commission. Our corridor played a vital role among RFCs in coordinating this work. Also, the Executive Boards of the RFCs contributed in 2015 strongly to the emergence of this increasingly integrated European network by agreeing on one common Framework Capacity Agreement for all nine corridors.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all involved persons in the Railway Undertakings' Advisory Group, in the Terminal Advisory Group, in the Working Groups of our corridor, in the Project Management Office, at RNE, in the EU Commission, in the Executive and in the Management Boards for the work done and contributions given to our corridor in 2015 and sincerely hope for their continued support in the future.



Oliver Sellnick

Chairman of the Management Board



Jakub Kapturzak

Director of the Office

## Introduction

Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight<sup>1</sup>, further referred as ‘the Regulation’, provides for the implementation of corridors allowing freight trains to benefit from high quality routes, offering better services (in terms of punctuality and journey time) than at present. The principal guidelines specified by the Regulation focus on:

- establishing a Corridor One-Stop-Shop;
- closer cooperation and harmonization between Infrastructure Managers / Allocation Body and Member States both for the operational management of the infrastructure and for investments, in particular by putting in place a governance structure for each corridor;
- increased coordination between the network and terminals,
- providing the reliability of the infrastructure capacity allocated to international freight on these corridors;
- close cooperation with clients.

Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic currently runs through 6 EU Member States: starting in the North Sea ports of Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Wilhelmshaven, Bremerhaven and Hamburg spreading into central Germany through Aachen, Hannover, Berlin to Warsaw, Terespol and Kaunas and with a branch from Falkenberg to Prague and Katowice. It is intended to gradually extend RFC North Sea-Baltic by 2020 to Estonia, Latvia and the Polish – Ukrainian border.

RFC North Sea-Baltic consists of:

- 3280 km of principal lines,
- 2384 km of diversionary lines,
- 441 km of connecting lines,
- 171 terminals,
- 6 sea ports.

---

<sup>1</sup> Published in the Official Journal of the European Union on the 20 of October 2010 L 276/ page 22.

## **1. Governance**

The governance structure of RFC North Sea-Baltic is divided into three levels. The Executive Board, the Management Board and the Advisory Groups are working together to develop the rail freight corridor for competitive freight.

### **1.1 Executive Board**

The Executive Board of RFC North Sea-Baltic, as referred to in Article 8 of the Regulation, has been established 20 March 2012 by the Mission Statement. Its existence has been recognized by the signatory Ministers to the Agreement concerning the Executive Board of RFC North Sea-Baltic of 8 October 2014, signed on the margin of the European Transport Council held in Luxembourg.

The Executive Board takes its decisions on the basis of mutual consent of the representatives of the authorities of the Member States. The Executive Board takes decisions which are provided for by the Regulation; these decisions are legally binding and directly applicable. They are signed by all the members of the Executive Board and shall be published.

The Executive Board is composed of the following representatives of authorities of the Member States concerned:

- Joannes PEETERS, for the Minister for Mobility of the Kingdom of Belgium;
- Jindřich KUŠNÍR, for the Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic;
- Wolfgang KÜPPER, for the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Germany;
- Saulius GIRDAUSKAS, for the Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Hellen VAN DONGEN, for the Secretary of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- Maciej GŁADYGA, for the Minister of Infrastructure and Construction of the Republic of Poland.

The abovementioned members can be represented by their alternates or by proxies.

In 2015, the Executive Board has been chaired by Poland.

Meetings in 2015:

- January, Frankfurt am Main (DE);
- March, The Hague (NL);
- June, in Prague (CZ);



- September, Frankfurt am Main (DE);
- October, Warsaw (PL).

The general responsibility of the Executive Board is to implement the Regulation. There were a couple of areas of activity in 2015, mainly:

- Extension to the Czech Republic;
- Input to the Common Statement of Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic on implementation experiences 2011-2015;
- Adoption of Implementation Plan;
- Adoption of a Framework for Capacity Allocation for TT 2017;
- Launching event;
- Coordination with CNC;
- Cooperation with OSJD;

After a positive decision taken by the Member States in Single European Railway Area Committee (SERAC), the European Commission issued its Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/1111 of 7 July 2015 on the compliance of the joint proposal submitted by the Member States concerned for the extension of the North Sea-Baltic rail freight corridor with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, confirming that the Czech Republic became a member of RFC North Sea-Baltic.

The Executive Board cooperated with the Management Board on preparing a common input for the European Commission on the experiences from the period of the practical implementation of the Corridor. Even though RFC North Sea-Baltic was not required yet to present to the Commission the results of the Implementation Plan under Article 22 of the Regulation, the Boards wanted to share their experiences in implementing the Corridor since 2011. The Commission will take the content of this document into account while preparing a report for the Council and the European Parliament on the basis of art. 23 of the Regulation. Upon this basis, the Commission will evaluate whether a revision of the Regulation is desirable.

The progresses realized by the Management Board in terms of developing the Implementation Plan has been monitored and the plan has been adopted.

The Executive Board adopted a Framework for Capacity Allocation for timetable 2017. The FCA is a common version for all other operational Rail Freight Corridors in the EU in order to streamline the processes of the Prearranged Paths construction and capacity allocation across the EU (see also 2.6).



In 2015 the Executive Board collaborated with the European coordinator of the Core Network Corridor North Sea – Baltic and her staff. The coordinator and her chief advisor have attended an Executive Board meeting. It is said that RFCs are to be the rail freight backbone of the CNCs, therefore investments on the Corridor are discussed by means of the RFCs-CNCs cooperation.

A meeting with the Organization of Cooperation Between Railways (OSJD) has been organized by the Executive Board. Views have been exchanged and initial contacts for possible future cooperation have been given. It was agreed that the basis for cooperation should be the development of business opportunities. On the basis of mutual knowledge, both organizations will examine possible ventures for useful collaboration.



## 1.2 Management Board

The Management Board is the decision making body of the Corridor. In 2015, Mr. Oliver Sellnick from DB Netz was the Chairman of the Management Board and which met 8 times. The activities of the Management Board performed in 2015 are further described in chapters 2-5).

In 2015 the Czech Infrastructure Manager, SŽDC, officially joined the Management Board of the Corridor, after having been an observer since 23 April 2013. From that moment the following six Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Body are gathered together and represented by the following persons as the Members of the Management Board of RFC North Sea-Baltic:



**Guus de Mol**

**ProRail**



**Michel Geubelle**

**INFRA/ABEL**  
Right On Track

(Photo: Infrabel - Frédéric Sablon)



**Oliver Sellnick**

**DB NETZE**



**Radek Čech**

**SZDC**  
Správa železniční dopravní cesty



**Edyta Jaszczuk**

**PKP POLSKIE LINIE KOLEJOWE S.A.**



**Donatas Kalvaitis**

**LIETUVOS GELEŽINKELIAI**



**Antanas Dubikaitis**

**VALSTYBINĖ GELEŽINKELIO INSPEKCIJA  
PRIE SUSISIEKIMO MINISTERIJOS**

In order to facilitate the work of the Management Board, the Project Management Office was created. It consists of the RFC North Sea-Baltic Office (Director, who coordinates the work, the

permanent staff) and of the representatives of all Infrastructure Managers and the Allocation Body, the Project Implementation Managers (PIMs). The PMO met 9 times in 2015.



**Jakub Kapturzak**  
**Director**  
**of RFC North Sea - Baltic Office**  
74 Targowa St.  
03-734 Warsaw  
Phone: +48 22 473 35 17  
Mobile: +48 797 305 679  
jakub.kapturzak@rfc8.eu

### 1.3 Advisory Groups

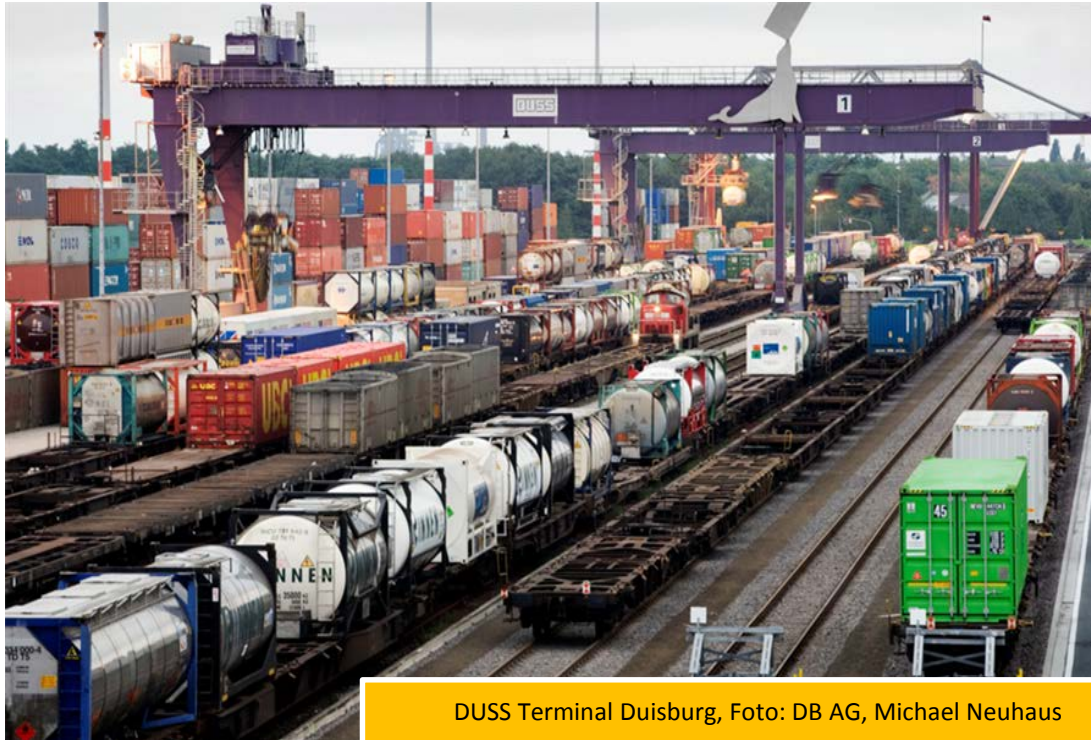
In accordance with the Regulation, two Advisory Groups were created as a platform for railway undertakings (RAG) and managers and owners of terminals and port authorities (TAG) to facilitate the exchange of information, recommendations and mutual understanding in a transparent way. The groups are open to all interested railway undertakings or terminal operators and port authorities, if relevant to the Corridor. Each AG elected a spokesperson.



**Andreas Pietsch**  
**RAG Spokesperson**  
Captrain Netherlands



**Jörg Schulz**  
**TAG Spokesperson**  
Eurogate GmbH & Co. KGaA, KG



DUSS Terminal Duisburg, Foto: DB AG, Michael Neuhaus

In 2015 the Management Board organized two Advisory Groups' meetings:

- 4 March in Utrecht, the Netherlands and
- 14 October in Warsaw, Poland.

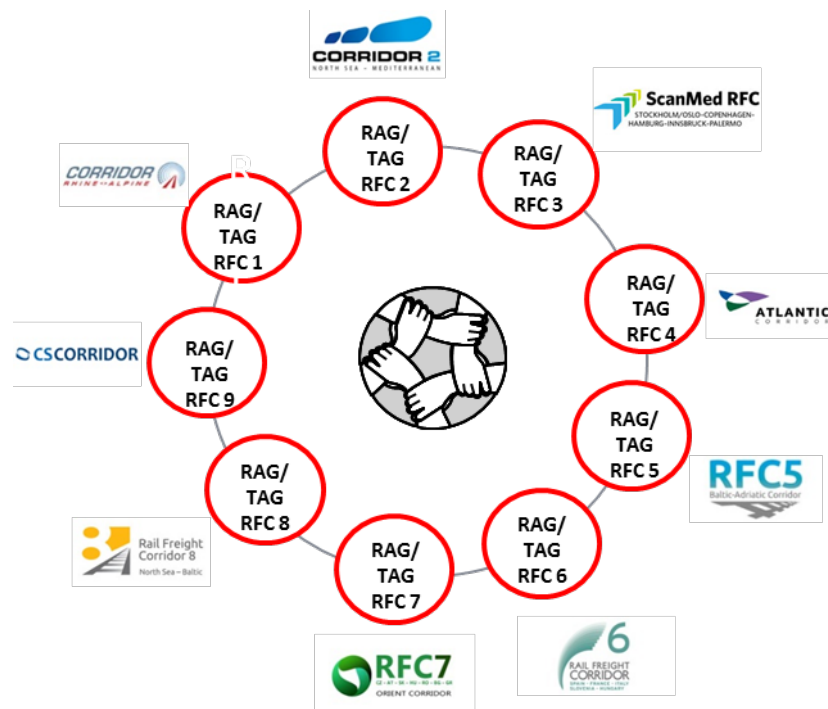
The summaries and the documents of the above meetings can be found on the Corridor's website: <http://rfc8.eu/rag-and-tag/railway-undertaking-advisory-group>.

Over 40 representatives of Railway Undertakings and Terminals took part in those meetings. The aim of the meetings was to present developments on the Corridor and discuss matters of importance to the customers. In 2015 the discussions focused especially on the draft of the Implementation Plan. At the first meeting in March the consultation of the Draft Implementation Plan was launched (see chapter 2.1). Attention was also given to the topic of cross-border interoperability including language requirements for train drivers in cross-border operation, as this problem was pointed out by the RAG members.

During the second meeting the C-OSS Manager presented the first Corridor's offer: Reserve Capacity for TT 2016 and Pre-arranged Paths for TT 2017. The Management Board, apart from the general progress report, presented also the outcomes of the Implementation Plan consultation and gave a brief information about PCS Next Generation.

During the year also a discussion regarding the establishment of the common RAG and TAG platforms took place.

For creation a common RAG meeting an UIC initiative – ECCO was used. Later UIIR proposed to do the same for the TAG spokespersons.



In 2015 three common RAG meetings were organized in which the Spokespersons of each Corridor RAG and representatives of RFCs took part. The common TAG meeting is planned to be organized under the umbrella of UIRR.

The aim of these common meetings was to find a pragmatic way forward and agree on an efficient cooperation to progress on key issues of harmonization needed for the development of international rail freight such as the definition and publication of Pre-arranged Paths, the coordination of construction works, cross-border interoperability, C-OSS, PCS and performance management were discussed by both parties and a way forward was identified.

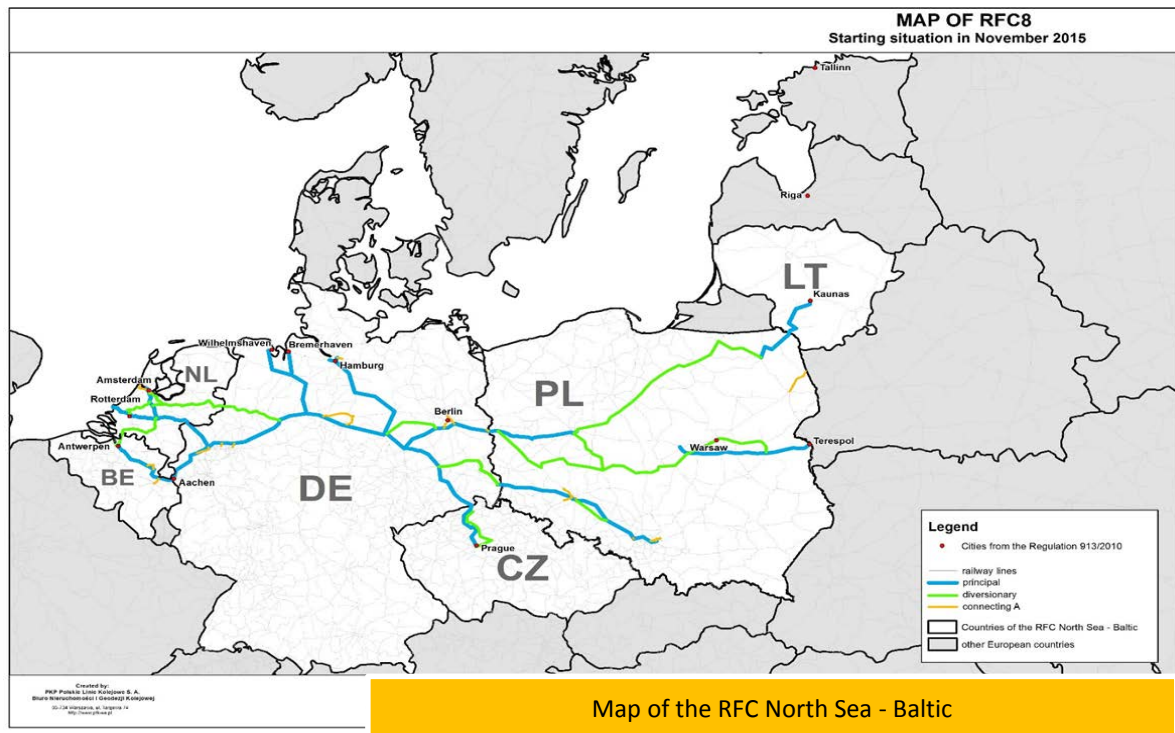
## 2. Main activities

In 2015 activities of the Management Board focused first of all on preparing the Corridor to go live on 10<sup>th</sup> November and preparing the first offer – Reserve Capacity for Timetable 2016. Among other issues this means that the Corridor Information Document for TT 2016 was elaborated and so that from 10 November 2015 the Corridor One-Stop Shop was operational.



Our aim is to boost rail freight by providing a seamless and good quality path offer along the Corridor as well as to raise the attractiveness and efficiency of rail freight compared to other modes of transport. Together with eight other Rail Freight Corridors, RFC North Sea-Baltic is part of the European rail freight network for competitive freight created on the basis of the Regulation.

The following map shows the Corridor North Sea - Baltic at the start – on 10 November 2015.



The Management Board was also involved inter alia in

- developing position towards the possible revision of the Regulation,
- establishing the Customer Information Platform,
- delivering the Final Report for TEN-T Funding Action 2011-EU-95090-S,
- the application for CEF Funding,
- cooperation between RFCs and between RFCs and CNCs,
- elaboration of the EEIG Statutes.

Together with the Executive Board, the Management Board was also involved in the elaboration of the new Framework for Capacity Allocation. More details about activities are available in this chapter of the Annual Report.

During the year Working Groups continued providing inputs to the Corridor activities e.g. to elaborate the Corridor Information Document.

## 2.1 Elaboration of Corridor Information Document

According to Article 18 of the Regulation the Management Board has to elaborate a Corridor Information Document (CID). Therefore the Management Board focused in 2015 on the elaboration of the first Corridor Information Document for TT 2016 and the update for TT 2017.

The aim of elaborating the CID is to present information on the rail infrastructure of the entire corridor, in particular as regards commercial and legal access conditions, in order to facilitate the applicants' business in international rail freight transport.

The CID is prepared following the RNE Guidelines. The advantage of following the RNE common structure is to elaborate the document in a structure similar to the one of the other corridors. In such case the applicants can get access to similar documents along different corridors and in principle, as in the case of the national Network Statements, to find the same information at the same place in each one.

The CID consists of five Books:

- **Book 1:** Generalities
- **Book 2:** Network Statement Excerpts
- **Book 3:** Terminal Description
- **Book 4:** Procedures for Capacity and Traffic Management
- **Book 5:** Implementation Plan

Book 5 of CID consists of the Implementation Plan.

The Regulation foresees that the Management Board shall draw up an Implementation Plan at the latest 6 months before making a freight corridor operational and shall submit it for approval to the Executive Board. In the meantime it should be also a subject of consultation with other stakeholders.

Therefore in the beginning of 2015, the Management Board continued elaboration of the Implementation Plan which is Book 5 of the CID. The draft Implementation Plan in accordance with the Regulation was a subject of consultation with stakeholders which took place in March 2015.

During the consultation process 6 entities sent in total 67 remarks out of which 19 were accepted. Remarks were sent among others by: RAG, City of Bremen/Bremische Hafeneisenbahn, HHLA Container Terminals GmbH, PKP Cargo S.A. and ŁKA Sp. z o.o.

10 remarks regarded the routing, 11 remarks regarded TMS, 9 remarks regarded Indicative Investment Plan and 14 ones regarded deployment of ERTMS

As a next step in elaboration of the Implementation Plan, the Management Board analyzed remarks received.



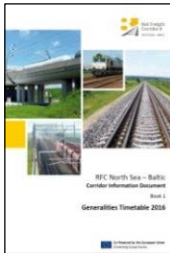


Archive SŽDC

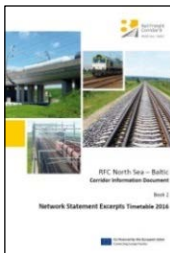
The Management Board decided to accept remarks regarding inter alia: the deployment of ERTMS, the cross-border interoperability as operational bottleneck, the list of terminals and the status of the Iron Rhine in the Indicative Investment Plan. The Management Board decided to take into consideration remarks regarding the Transport Market Study when elaborating the update of the TMS. The Executive Board adopted the Implementation Plan on 13th October 2015.



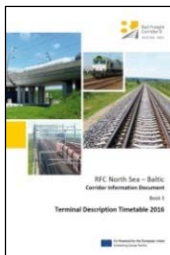
AB "Lietuvos geležinkeliai



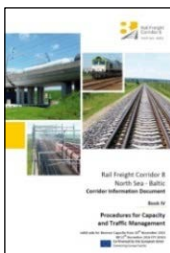
In **Book 1** an introductory information, inter alia brief description of content of all Books, general description of the Corridor and contact details are presented.



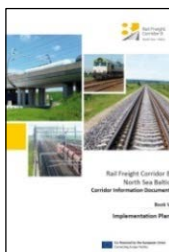
In **Book 2** links to relevant parts of Network Statements of the Corridor IMs are delivered.



In **Book 3** links to information on the characteristics and access conditions of the terminals and marshalling yards along the Corridor is provided.



In **Book 4** descriptions of the procedures for capacity allocation by the C-OSS, traffic management and coordination of works. are described. All definitions concerning applicants, the usage of the C-OSS and its products and how to order them are explained..



In **Book 5** descriptions of the characteristics of the Corridor, essential elements of the TMS, objectives of the Corridor, indicative investment plan, measures to implement art. 12-19 of the Regulation are included.

The CID for TT 2016 was published on the website at the start of the Corridor on 10th November 2015 and is available on the website. The CID TT 2017 was prepared to be published together with the 1st PaP catalogue in January 2016.

## **2.2 Corridor offer for 2016 and 2017**

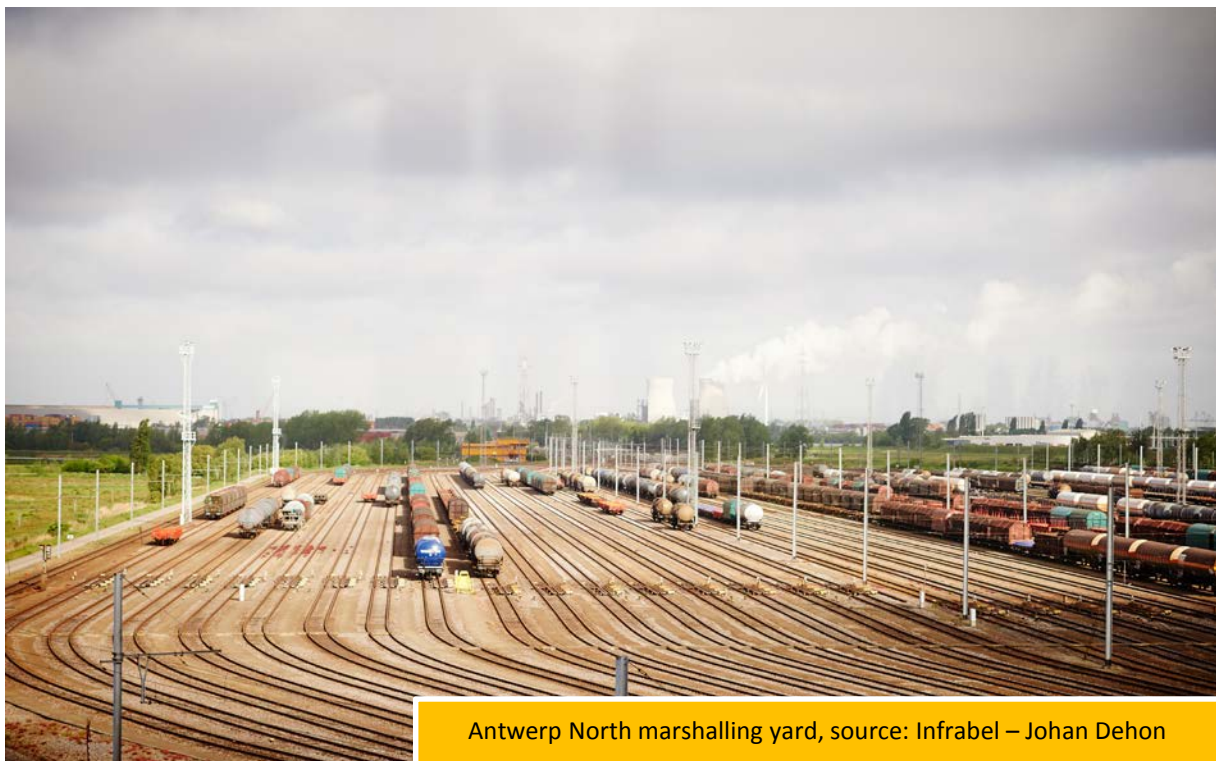
Rail Freight Corridor North-Sea-Baltic prepared two products:

- Reserve Capacity for timetable 2016
- Pre-arranged Path for timetable 2017

On 10 November 2015 the Corridor published Reserve Capacity for the first time through its Corridor One-Stop-Shop for timetable 2016. The offer was published in PCS as well as an overview of the available capacity on the Corridor website.

On RFC North Sea-Baltic Reserve Capacity was published and offered as capacity slots per day and Corridor section with standard journey times instead of detailed paths along the Corridor. Those capacity slots can be requested via the Corridor One-Stop-Shop until 30 days before the train runs. Furthermore, the offer is based on standard parameters for rail freight.

WG TT/C-OSS prepared the Corridor Information Document Book IV Procedures for Capacity Timetable 2016 which is also published on the Corridor website.



Antwerp North marshalling yard, source: Infrabel – Johan Dehon

The Corridor Information Document Book IV Procedures for Capacity Timetable 2017 was also prepared in 2015 together with the offer of PaP to be ready for publishing early 2016.

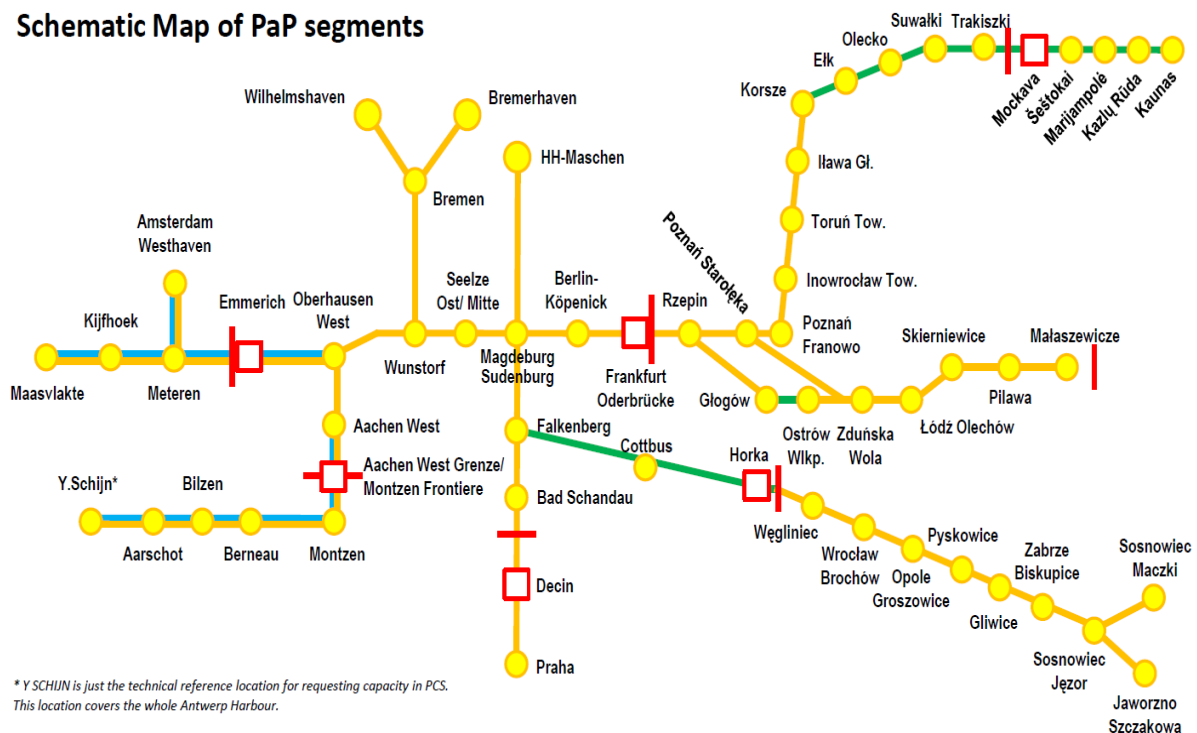


On 11 January 2016 the C-OSS will publish Pre-arranged-Paths for the first time. PaPs are based on standard parameters for rail freight and previously coordinated between the IMs/AB to enable attractive running times. Furthermore, they are an assembly of several PaP sections and not just only an entire path along the Corridor.

For the timetable 2017, the WG TT/C-OSS defined the exact PaP quantity per Corridor segment based on the results of the Transport Market Study as well as on the IMs experiences with existing and previous traffic. The foreseen PaP offer for the timetable 2017 was agreed on by the Management Board and acknowledged by the Executive Board.

As regard the PaP offer in Belgium, Germany (western part of the country) and the Netherlands there is a common offer with RFC Rhine-Alpine.

### Schematic Map of PaP segments



\* Y SCHIJN is just the technical reference location for requesting capacity in PCS.  
This location covers the whole Antwerp Harbour.

- Border
- Common offer with RFC Rhine-Alpine
- Not electrified section
- Handover Point  
→ Fixed Times
- Intermediate Point  
→ Stop and feeder/outflow-connection possible

Schematic map of PaP segments

## 2.3 Corridor One-Stop Shop

The most recent event for RFC North Sea-Baltic was the operational start of the Corridor One-Stop Shop (C-OSS) on 10 November 2015 where applicants can order Corridor capacity via a single point of contact.



**Florian Müller**  
**C-OSS Manager**  
Mainzer Landstraße 201-203  
60326 Frankfurt am Main  
Germany  
Phone: +49 69 265-26778  
Mobile: +49 160 97429893  
Fax: +49 69 265-30503  
coss@rfc8.eu

The WG TT/ C-OSS contributed to setting up the C-OSS with the input from other WGs.

The main tasks to set up the C-OSS were:

- Description of tasks of C-OSS
- Choice of C-OSS model
- Contractual phase of C-OSS and making C-OSS operational
- PCS Test Phase
- Specification for number of Pre-arranged-Path
- Finalization Book 4
- C-OSS Website

In the C-OSS the following IMs and AB are working together:



## 2.4 Extension of the Corridor

The European Commission adopted on 7 July 2015 the Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/1111 for the extension of the RFC North Sea-Baltic as proposed by the Executive Board. In accordance with this Decision the Corridor was implemented on 10 November 2015 already with the following extensions:

- the Czech Republic (Hannover – Falkenberg – Prague),
- the Southern branch of the Corridor from Legnica to Katowice (Silesia Region),
- the ports of Amsterdam, Wilhelmshaven and Hamburg.

Following the same Decision, the intention of the Management Board is also to further extend the Corridor from the Silesia Region in Poland to the Polish-Ukrainian border (Medyka) in perspective of 2020 after conducting relevant market analysis. By 2020 the Corridor will be extended also to Latvia and Estonia. The following map shows the map of the Corridor to be after five years.



## 2.5 Possible revision of the Regulation

The European Commission started in 2015 the process related to consultations with stakeholders regarding a possible revision of the Regulation. The Management Board took an active role in preparing its position towards this revision. Several discussions took place both with the Executive Board, together with all Rail Freight Corridors as well as organizations such

as CER and EIM. As an outcome of those discussions the common position papers were elaborated. Apart from those, the Management Board and the Executive Board prepared together a separate document that contributed to the discussion about implementation experience.



## Position Paper

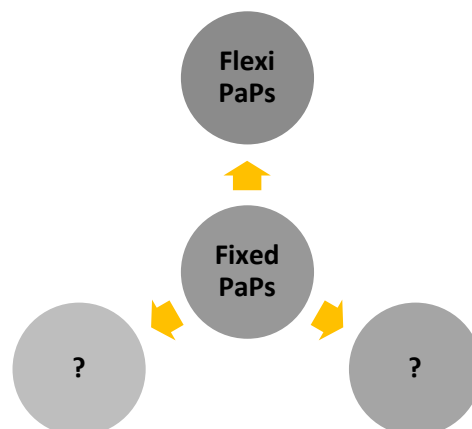
In the Position Paper (the document is available at the [website](#) ) that was signed by both Chair of the Executive Board and the Chair of the Management Board the following issues were mentioned:

- **voting procedure should remain unanimous:** the decision-making process of the Executive Board and the Management Board right now is based on mutual consent of the partners concerned;
- **stronger role of the Executive Board for further traffic development:** the Executive Board and related Ministries would like to focus more on the harmonization, standardization of national laws that are relevant for international rail freight transport and not only on supervising as it is written in Article 8 but have an active role in bringing instruments to the Corridor. For that reason the Executive Board should be advised by the Management Board and Advisory Groups to take away these barriers and should work together with National Safety Authorities, Regulatory Bodies, without prejudice to their independence;
- **role of the terminals:** the Regulation specifies the Management Board tasks relating to the terminals but does not clearly determine their role;
- **future development of the organizational framework:** the RFC North Sea-Baltic holds the view that there is no need for additional organizational structures on the Corridor; what is more, a clear division of competences and indication of areas of cooperation



between the Core Network Corridor and RFC groups is required to avoid repeated and/or contradictory work;

- **harmonization of the corridors:** experiences with the cooperation on Rail Freight Corridor level at RNE, RFC Talks, RAG/TAG and Executive Board level show that harmonization between the individual corridors bring an added value to their work;
- **rerouting of the corridors:** the RFC North Sea-Baltic finds it particularly helpful if the revised Regulation had a provision on the rules governing the possible rerouting of the principal routes corridor lines based on sound reasoning, TMS results and/or on request of the MB;
- **investment Plan:** RFC North Sea-Baltic would like to focus on the identification of bottlenecks and barriers along the routes as an input to the work of CNCs and the European Deployment Plan of ERTMS;
- **flexibility of the corridor products development:** the MB and the ExBo should be provided with more freedom and flexibility in defining the corridor products in relation to the characteristics of the given corridor, the goal to remove barriers for international rail freight;



- **traffic management:** RFCs are part of the national railway network therefore separated traffic control rules and instruments make an efficient use of network impossible. We would rather continue to enhance communication between Infrastructure Managers in case of disturbances on RFCs.

The Chairs of the Executive Board and the Management Board received a letter from the European Commission who thanked for submitting the document. The European Commission considered it as a valuable input and information that could be used on the on-going evaluation of implementation of the Regulation and report from the EC to the Council and Parliament on the same issue.



PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe S.A., Inowrocław-Jabłonowo Pomorskie section on the railway line 353, Photo: NDI S.A.

## 2.6 Framework for capacity allocation

The Regulation „towards a competitive network for international freight” requires in the Article 14 the Member States represented in the Executive Board of the rail freight corridors to define and adopt a Framework Capacity Allocation (FCA) – a document defining basic rules and principles for capacity allocation dedicated to the infrastructural capacity on rail freight corridors using non-discriminatory approach in accordance with Community law.

The first FCA was adopted by ministers of RFCs Rhine-Alpine and North Sea-Mediterranean on 20 December 2012. With slight modifications, the FCA text and rules were adopted also on other rail freight corridors including the RFC North Sea-Baltic. RFC North Sea-Baltic nevertheless recognized all the modifications as a potential risk and source of confusion for customers. Therefore, in 2014 the executive boards of all rail freight corridors started a procedure of FCA harmonization for the benefit of international rail freight. In 2015 for the first time all rail freight corridors agreed on a fully harmonized version of the FCA. The common FCA for RFC North Sea-Baltic was endorsed in line with internal rules of procedure on 10 January 2016 via written procedure.

The FCA itself will be applicable from timetable 2017 onwards for standard Pre-arranged Paths as well as for Reserve Capacity. In the timetable 2016 only Reserve Capacity is on offer on the RFC North Sea-Baltic based on the decision of the Corridor Executive Board of 12 January 2015 and the Corridor specific FCA which will be replaced by a common version.

The intention of the harmonized FCA is to have a stable version for a longer period, especially for the priority rules included in Annex 2 of the FCA. Therefore it was decided to have an evaluation of the priority rules in 2018 in a structured way. The RFCs will discuss annually the

experiences with the application / functioning of the FCA. In this way the corridors may learn from their practice and may also amend the FCA in a harmonized way if urgent changes are needed.

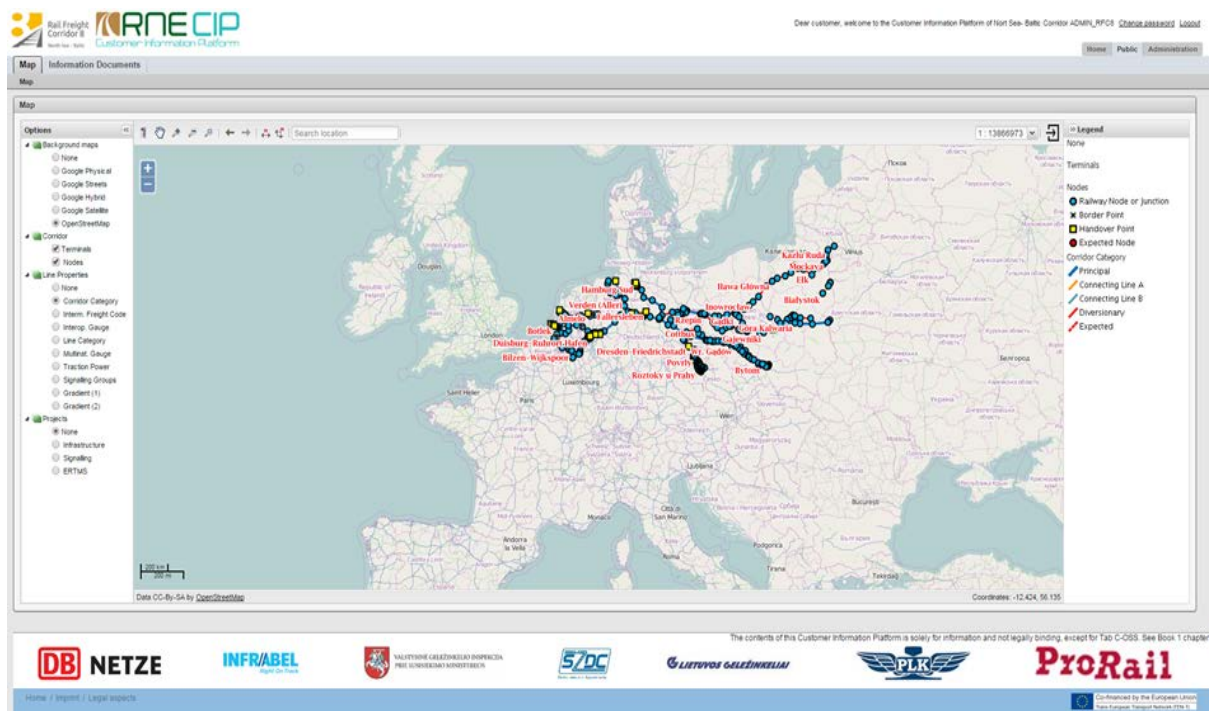
## 2.7 Customer Information Platform

The Customer Information Platform is an interactive information tool. CIP will provide information about the exact corridor routing, corridor terminals, and basic track properties.

The most RFCs have committed to join this initiative and offer their corridor information through CIP. In order to assure that the whole process is conducted in a harmonized way, RailNetEurope took over the operation of CIP <http://www.rne.eu/>

The tendering process took place and Fichtner IT Consulting AG was awarded the contract.

In 2015 significant progress has been achieved in the preparation of the Customer Information Platform (CIP) for 5 additional corridors (apart of RFC Rhine-Alpine already using CIP). It may be assumed that in 2016 CIP will be a tool used by customers of 6 out of 9 freight corridors making it able to obtain necessary information about the Corridor.



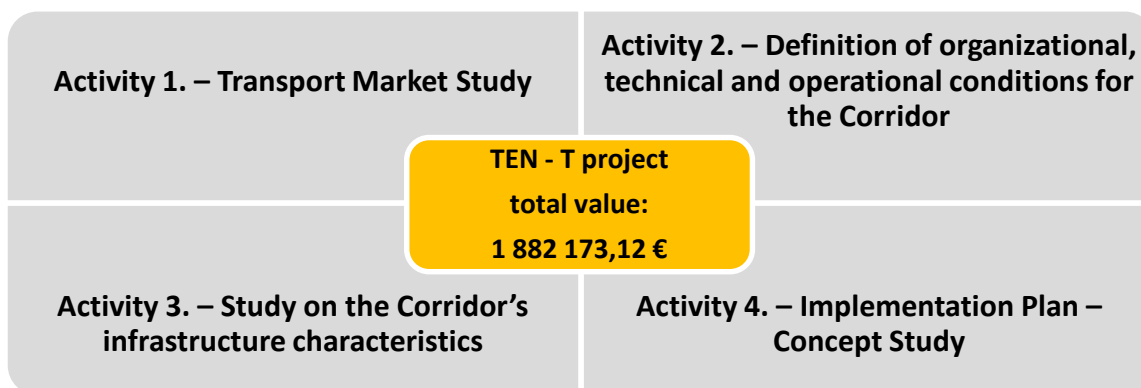
## 3. European Funding

### 3.1 TEN-T

In 2015 the Management Board elaborated the Final Report on the implementation of the action "Preparatory studies and activities of the organizational structures of Rail Freight

Corridor 8 Bremerhaven / Rotterdam / Antwerp - Aachen / Berlin - Warsaw - Terespol (Poland – Belarus border) / Kaunas) 2011-EU-95090-S” which aim was to elaborate a study documentation contributing to the successful implementation of the provisions of the Regulation.

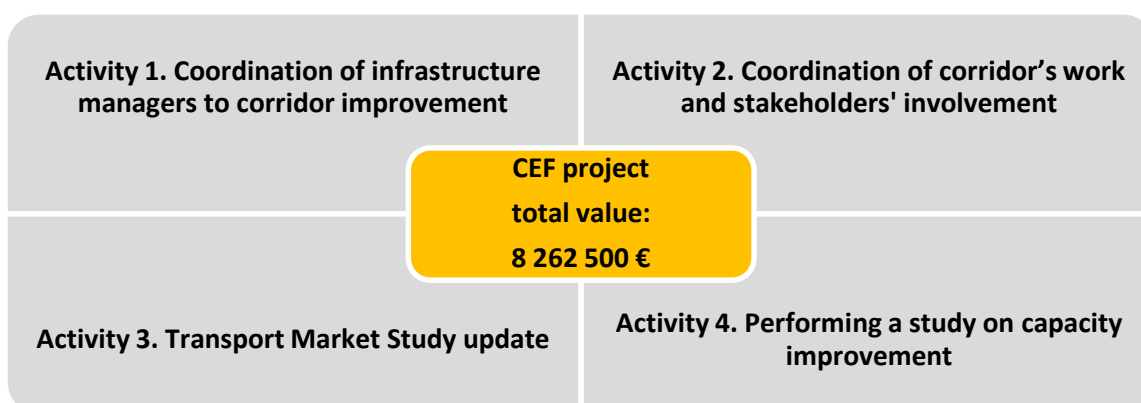
The Final Report describes completing of 4 activities:



The Final Report was submitted by PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe S.A. who acted as the Coordinator to INEA in December 2015 after approval of the Management Board and validation of all Ministries. The actual cost of the project amounted to: EUR 1 882 173,12.

### 3.2 CEF

Infrastructure Managers involved in RFC North Sea-Baltic applied again for European funds and received a CEF grant for the project ‘Establishment of Rail Freight Corridor „North Sea-Baltic” and its further development aiming at improving conditions for international rail freight transport, no 2014-EU-TM-0217-S’. The project is a continuation of the previous TEN – T project and runs from January 2015 until December 2020. The project consists of 4 activities:

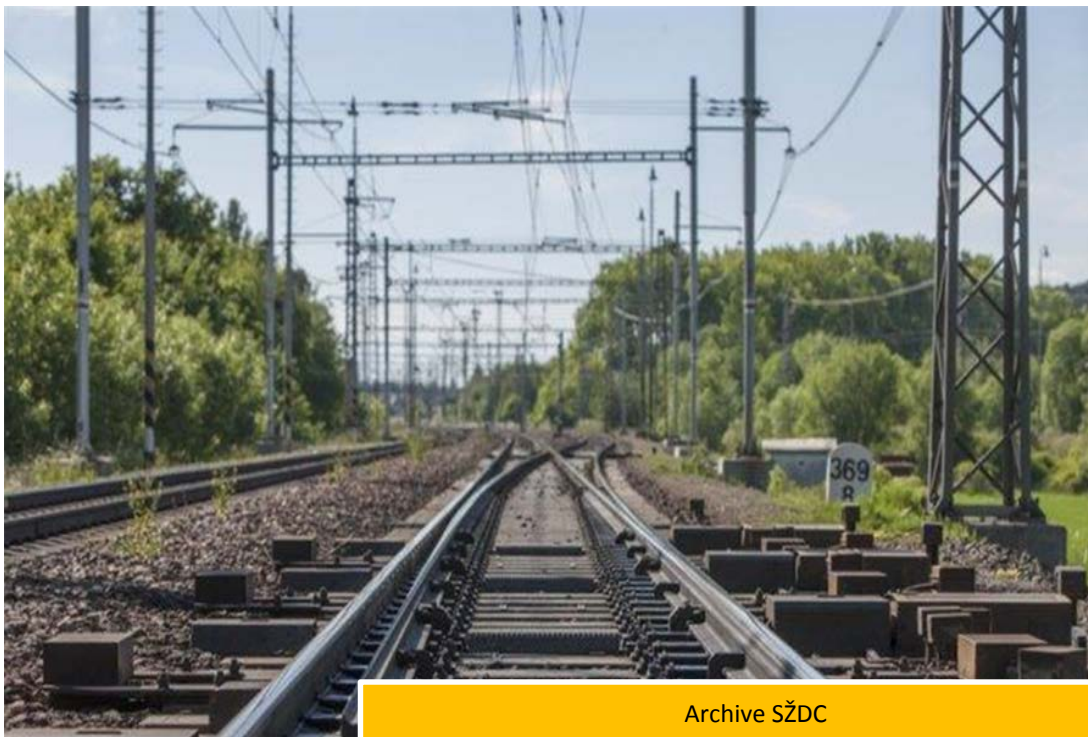


The expected benefits and results are:

- information and know-how required for decision-making and initiating the implementation of the Regulation;

- an operational RFC North Sea – Baltic constantly improving the conditions for customers;
- a way to communicate with customers and provide them with all the necessary information about the Corridor;
- comprehensive knowledge of the transport market demand and the flow of traffic volumes after the first year of the Corridor's implementation;
- an insight into stakeholders' needs in order to implement coordinated measures that meet customer needs;
- additional information regarding improved infrastructure parameters, that for instance will allow longer trains to run on the Corridor.

The CEF Grant Agreement was signed on 27 November 2015 by the European Commission (INEA) and in the name of all six beneficiaries by the Coordinator PKP PLK S.A. In accordance with this document till the end of the year the first prefinancing payment was transferred to all beneficiaries of the project.



#### **4. Cooperation with other organizations**

##### **4.1 RNE**

In 2015 the cooperation of all RFCs with RailNetEurope in a form of recurring meetings of RNE/RFC High Level Group was continued. As in previous years, this effort was aimed to develop common procedures and IT tools in order to bring closer the creation of a genuine single European railway market.

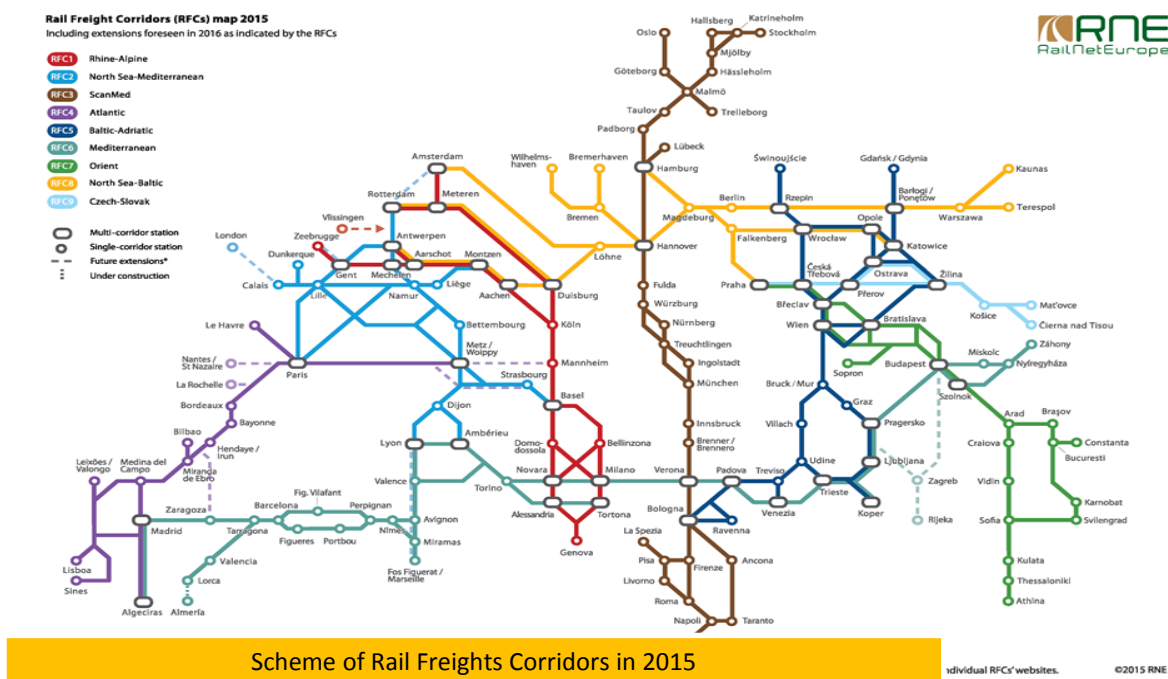
A cooperation between RFCs and RNE is oriented to create an offer of a network of RFCs (see



map below).

At the request of RFCs RNE has developed several guidelines and projects aiming at harmonization among RFCs.

At the end of 2015 also a joint motivation letter of RNE, RFCs and UIRR (International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport) concerning the Train Information System (TIS) data exchange was signed and distributed. With this letter its signatories wanted to encourage railway undertakings to allow the sharing of information gathered in TIS with terminals.



In 2015 there were four RNE/RFC High Level Meetings organized (attended by RNE representatives, chairpersons of Management Board and managing directors of all RFCs).

## 4.2 RFCs

The meetings of RFC Talks (platform for cooperation of all Rail Freight Corridors) are organized in the same days as the RNE/RFC High Level Meetings. In 2015 this forum discussed among others:

- review of the Regulation,
- questions concerning CEF applications,
- 2015 User Satisfaction Survey,
- reports required from ExBo on the basis of the Regulation,
- cross-border interoperability challenges,
- the draft of Framework for Capacity Allocation,
- traffic management issues (which functions if any to be transferred to the RFCs),
- opinions about definition of a corridor train,

- procedure to monitor PaPs' usage after the publication of a TT etc.,
- development of CIP.

The RFC Talks served also to exchange experiences e.g. on harmonization among the different C- OSSs for cross corridor dossiers (harmonization in CID Book 4 regarding overlapping sections with a discussion on usage of Network PaP), on Flex PaPs and differences of definition of the concept, on time limit for reserving RC.

An important part of every RFC Talks meeting is taken by discussion held to reach a common position in relation with other bodies: the EC, CNCs (there was a discussion on cooperation model between CNCs and RFCs), Independent Regulators' Group – Rail, ECCO.

On 1 July for the first time a special strategic RFC Talks meeting was held in Stockholm. Participants discussed how to meet market demand and what tools should be used to offer awaited flexibility for applicants. In the second part of the meeting representatives of RFCs planned their work on a paper concerning the revision of the Regulation.



AB "Lietuvos geležinkeliai"

### 4.3 European Commission

The main platform for the EC to communicate with RFCs is the SERAC Working Group on Rail Freight Corridors. In 2015 the meetings of the WG were held on 8 May and 10 December. The discussions focused on:

- the Implementing act of the EC on framework agreements,
- publication of the revised Handbook,
- the evaluation and revision of the Regulation,
- the EC policy document on reduction of railway noise,
- short distance interoperability & language requirement,
- RFCs – CNCs coordination model,
- report to the EC: structure and timeline,



- feedback on the allocation process for TT 2016 and use of reserve capacity for TT 2015 (in particular application of the Network PaP rule and flex PaPs),
- ERTMS & operational rules,
- results of the User Satisfaction Survey.

During the first meeting of the Corridor Group (chaired by Mr Karel Vinck) in 2015 on 26 January the discussion focused on ‘the ERTMS breakthrough initiative proposed by the European Commission’. The second meeting on 23 March was used by RFCs: Rhine-Alpine and North Sea-Baltic to draw the Commission attention to RUS’ problems resulting from EU law (safety certificates and language requirements). The third meeting took place during TEN-T Days and in October it was announced that the Corridor Group will not continue its activities. The group leader Mr Vinck noticed that a comprehensive monitoring of ERTMS deployment shall be carried out by the Core Network Corridors when the Rail Freight Corridor issues can be discussed in the meetings of the SERAC Working Group on RFCs.

In 2015 RFC North Sea-Baltic took active part in two promotional events organized by the European Commission: 2015 TEN-T Days and the 2nd EU Rail Freight Day. The TEN-T Days were arranged by the EC and Latvia which held the presidency of the EU Council. In 2015 for the first time the EU Rail Freight Day was organized by the EU and RNE together.

#### 4.4 CNC North Sea – Baltic

The representatives of RFC North Sea-Baltic participated in the Forum Meetings of Core Network Corridor North Sea-Baltic under the lead of the European Coordinator – Ms. Catherine Trautmann. There were two North Sea-Baltic Core Network Corridor Fora in 2015. During the last meeting the forum was informed about the state of development of this Core Network Corridor and RFC North Sea-Baltic.



Ms. Catherine Trautmann,  
Coordinator for the CNC North Sea -Baltic visiting  
stand of RFC North Sea - Baltic during TEN-T Days  
2015 in Riga

It was emphasized that the Rail Baltica investment project is the main flagship project for CNC North Sea – Baltic and a synergy between operation of Rail Baltica project and RFC North Sea-Baltic will be needed.

#### 4.5 OSJD

There were several meetings with OSJD representatives in 2015. First, 18-19 June the EC organized a seminar in Brussels – The 2nd seminar in the framework of the cooperation between EU RFCs and OSJD corridors. Then possibilities of potential cooperation, challenges and opportunities were discussed during the panel in the margin of Trako Fair in Gdańsk on 23 September. That day it was strongly underlined by a representative of RFC North Sea-Baltic that before start of any cooperation parties must have a clear common goal. The third meeting took place on 13 October when OSJD Corridor 1 delegation were guests of ExBo and MB and held a presentation on OSJD and its corridors.



Mr Zurab Kozmava, Expert of the OSJD Commission for Transport Policy and Strategy Development, Warsaw 13 October 2015

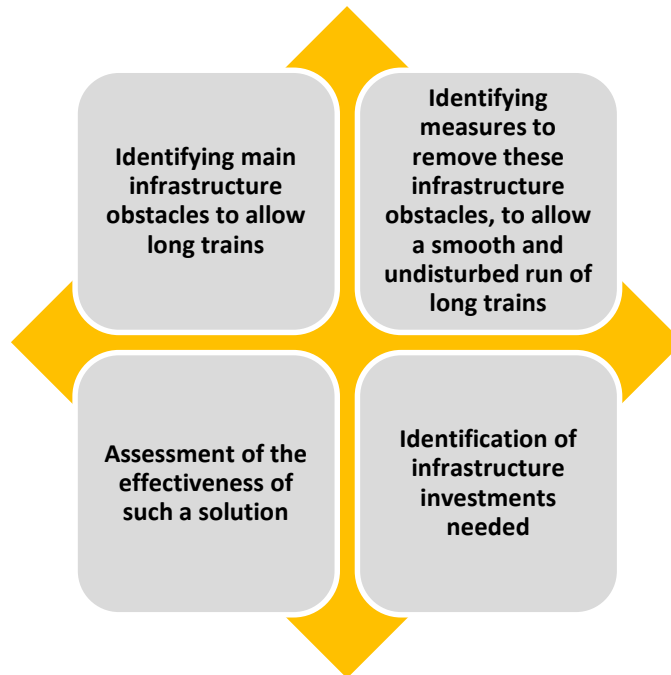


Joint meeting of the Executive Board and Management Board with special attendance of OSJD Corridors, Warsaw 13 October 2015

### 5. Activities planned for 2016

#### 5.1 Study on capacity improvement

Taking into consideration the outcomes of the Study on Infrastructure Characteristics the Management Board included in the CEF application the study concerning inter alia long trains aimed at:



As a final result it is expected to identify measures to improve infrastructure parameters that for instance will allow longer trains to run on the Corridor.



## 5.2 EEIG

In order to provide a legal body for the Corridor in 2013 the Management Board took a decision to establish a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) in accordance with Regulation (EEC) 2137/85. In 2015 the EEIG Statutes were adopted by the Management Board. The EEIG will be founded in early 2016 in Warsaw, under the Polish law.

It was also agreed that the Lithuanian Allocation Body- Valstybinė Geležinkelio Inspekcija prie

Susisiekimo Ministerijos will sign a partnership agreement with the EEIG.



### 5.3 Launching event

On 10 November 2015, three RFCs: Scandinavian-Mediterranean, Baltic-Adriatic and North Sea-Baltic were launched. Additionally RFC Atlantic was extended to Germany.

After intensive preparatory work, it is an occasion for those Corridors to organize a joint launching event in the beginning of 2016 and gather the stakeholders in order to share experiences and exchange visions for future development of international rail freight transport.

The event will take place on 23 February 2016 in Vienna.





## **Co-financed by the European Union**

---

### **Connecting Europe Facility**

Project "Establishment of Rail Freight Corridor „North Sea – Baltic“ and its further development aiming at improving conditions for international rail freight transport" number 2014-EU-TM-0217-S is co-financed by the European Union's CEF program.

The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.