PRIME — Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe

PRIME

Work Programme 2021

Context

In 2020, PRIME activities were focused on the following:

- On financing, discussions focused on economic impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak
- On charges, members exchanged information on charging related measures in view of the COVID-19 outbreak and continued exchanges on cancellation charges in case of Force majeure
- The third PRIME benchmarking report was presented, for a first time in an internal and a public version.
- The new PRIME Subgroup on digital solutions for European rail capacity and traffic management in support of European cross-border rail traffic took up work.
- PRIME members have continued sharing practices on safety culture, in particular on track worker safety culture

Working Priorities 2021

PRIME's work in 2020 was naturally dominated by the COVID-19 outbreak, its practical implications and economic effects on the rail sector and economic relief measures, including adaptations to track access charges. Work on these topics will continue to take an important place.

A deep dive study on charging and funding of infrastructure managers in being carried out in cooperation with the KPI, finance and charging subgroups. The aim is to gain an overview and a better understanding of the different charging and funding models and to identify possible best practices and deficiencies in the legal framework.

The EC has proposed to make 2021 the European Year of Rail, in order to support the delivery of the European Green Deal objectives in transport. A series of events, campaigns and initiatives in 2021 will promote rail as a sustainable, innovative and safe mode of transport. This is a strong opportunity for the railway sector to deliver concrete actions in order to become the backbone of the transport system, and PRIME will continue to support IMs regarding these challenges.

For the following topics the work will be supported by PRIME subgroups

Key Performance indicators and benchmarking:

PRIME KPIs Subgroup is building on work developed since 2014, consolidating a Global Framework of KPIs with an overview on major business areas. At this time, we have 26 IMs engaged in benchmarking, along with EC and Observers (ERA and CER).

Main topics under the scope for current season are:

- **Data, Definitions and KPIs** – Improve data collection process, enhancing IT Tool to increase functionality, flexibility and usability for the benefit of IMs users. Work on a wider set of definitions and make them more robust. A revised edition of PRIME KPIs Catalogue is expected in June.

- **Data Quality and Comparability of Results** – Implement a 4 Step Quality Gate to promote gains in comparability and benchmarking usability. These 4 Steps are:

  1. Data entry checked by IM's representative

  2. Plausibility checking phase by external consultant (civity)

  3. First review by peers over a lean draft report prepared by external consultant

  4. Final review by peers after a final complete draft prepared by external consultant

- **KPIs Reporting** – PRIME KPIs Subgroup has always been innovating and delivering new ideas to report its results. Annual reports have been evolving and the subgroup will explore possible work on the KPIs Dashboard available in PRIME IT Tool in order to deliver 'Global European Network' trends. A global KPIs Report based on 2012/19 data is expected to be ready in March, following an internal KPIs Report prepared exclusively for benchmarking among participants.

The pandemic is impacting the way this subgroup is working and several initiatives are ongoing to mitigate disadvantages of not having meetings requiring presence. More frequent web meetings and one-on-one contacts are put in place, particularly with new members, in order to promote active membership, commitment and cohesion for an expanding subgroup.

Resulting from cooperation with PRIME Finance and Charges subgroups, PRIME KPIs Subgroup will cooperate with the delivery of a thematic report on "Funding and Financing of IMs".

New Digital Subgroup: the subgroup will contribute to the following issues:

- **Digitalization of Capacity Management (TTR):** Digitalisation requirements and solutions for the Redesign of the European timetable process. IMs need a European wide capacity strategy and a digital capacity model including already capacity restrictions. Available capacity should also be offered on short term European wide. Based on the Timetable Redesign Project (TTR) project.
- **Digital Train Information**: Starting from the daily timetable all relevant information have to be made digital available and shared between all partners. The train tracking and tracing information as well as reliable forecast information have to be combined with the train composition to include locomotion, wagon and container movements. All information have to be based on common reference date (location, lines, etc.) and have to include first and last mile information like Terminals and other rail facilities.
- **Digital Infrastructure Information**: To check interdependence between European Reference Files as RINF, TAF and TAP TSI and Rail Facility Portal. Using the same digital Infrastructure Information from planning to operation – from building to maintaining.
- **Vision and IT architecture including financial needs**: A vision paper on digital opportunities will be developed by mid of 2021. For the selected areas, a necessary digital architecture based on the existing digital solutions will be designed. Based on harmonised and standardised IT architecture.

Charging: In 2021, the Subgroup will work on:

- open dialogue regarding COVID 19 measures
- contributing to and follow up on the deep dive study on charging and funding
- identifying charges related obstacles to international traffic with a special focus on a common approach for coordinating reservation/cancellation charges in case of force majeure
- discussing in its first meeting in 2021 the topic of differentiation of charges due to the domestic market opening process

- following up on the topics of cooperation in relation to charging systems on more than one network (mark-ups and performance schemes) and assess which kind of cooperation and association mechanism is practicable "to coordinate the charging or to charge for the operation of" international rail services and the "appropriate procedures" to establish that mechanism
- if time allows and the group supports, the topic of reservation charges and congestion/scarcity charge could be discussed

Financing:

- Subgroup will act as an 'intermediary' between the Commission and rail infrastructure managers concerning financial products and instruments to promote / facilitate **rail investments and EU funding programmes**. The subgroup contributes to this work by sharing experiences, providing feedback and by ensuring that the guidance takes into account the particularities and specific needs of the rail sector/rail projects. The subgroup will explore whether specific tools (e.g. newsletters, information platforms) can contribute to this objective.

- Specific attention will be paid to **ERTMS Funding**. Existing tools and funding options will be explained and explored. The infrastructure managers will be encouraged to provide feedback on the accessibility and effectiveness of the EU and national funding programmes, come up with ideas for improving the existing support instruments, inform about any planned national support schemes, as well as to provide data on costs per investment category.

- The subgroup will make an analysis of the impact of **COVID 19** on rail infrastructure managers and will exchange views and input on the design and implementation of rail reforms and investments financed under the national recovery and resilience plans.

- The subgroup will continue to provide feedback to the Commission on **sustainable finance**, in particular when it comes to the other environmental objectives besides climate change mitigation (which was addressed in 2019), in particular climate change adaptation and the operationalization of the "Do not significant harm" principle, and on the development of Green bonds. The subgroup will assist the Commission in implementing the guidance on climate and sustainability proofing in the context of EU funding programmes (CEF II, RRF, ESIF and InvestEU) to be published by the Commission by year end.

- The subgroup will contribute to the **PRIME deep-dive charging and financing,** specifically to the financing part of the study. Infrastructure managers will be stimulated to contribute and (preliminary) findings will be shared and discussed

Safety Culture:

- **Rules project** – result expected in the first half of 2021 – description on how to write rules effectively and clear. What should be done before writing a rule, how should rules be written, what is important to take into account, what are perfect processes to develop rules and to implement them, and how can we improve the acceptance of rules by the "rule users". This document will present different approaches and different methods to write rules. So every reader can find the "best approach for the own Company" and adapt the document for the own use. It should be a "guide" to support companies to develop a new way to do it.

The group will deal with the following topics after the COVID-19 pandemic in three personal meetings per year. In between exchange of information and discussions planned by Skype meetings.

- **Safety leadership program** – new start (managed by ADIF instead of Network Rail) – it means all the safety culture topics for leaders. What is a leader, how can a leader foster safety culture, what are the important behaviours of leaders to increase the safety culture awareness, how to improve the safety culture in the company, and how to implement the Agency's programme for safety culture in the European railway companies.

- **Track worker safety** – it is a program in two steps. First step is to collect all the "best practice methods" of the participants of the PRIME subgroup about the safety measures and all measures to foster safety culture. All participants deliver descriptions and we discuss all these topics in the group and in small working groups. Then we have a good description of all these measures with the background. Second step is to develop additional measures to help all companies to implement effective measures to have a good safety culture for the operational employees.

- **Serious games** – to foster the awareness and the understanding of safety culture, PRORAIL from Netherlands is developing a game that is able to support safety culture. In addition, the PRIME subgroup will test the game and improve it in working groups that it could be a help for all companies. People who will play this game would understand the advantage of safety culture and should "feel" safety culture while playing the game.

- **Safety Culture measurement and monitoring** – how can we monitor Safety Culture, how can we measure it? Is a benchmark possible and sensible? What are the different methods? Can we find best practice examples? Do we have examples they failed? This topic will be a constantly development with all the different approaches in different environments in the European Union.

Young Professional Programme: Young people value learning and development opportunities and feel a need for mobility and international experience. The mission is to set up a framework allowing this type of exchanges to take place between the IM's for specific profiles. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and related travel restrictions, the programme is currently on hold.

Implementing acts: The Subgroup remains in stand-by and will work, when called, on the draft EU legislation.

Cooperation with external forums

PRIME will continue to cooperate with other bodies, including RU Dialogue, Regulatory Bodies and Rail Freight Corridors, focussing on concrete topics.

The European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) and industry associations (CER, EIM, RNE, VDV) participate directly in PRIME work as observers.

PRIME Plenary meetings are planned for **24 June** (hosted by Infrabel in Brussels) and **18 November** 2021 in Brussels.