

PRIME Meeting 15

18 November 2019, BRUSSELS

Item 7.1 - Feedback on PRIME Young Professionals Program

Chair: Bart Vandeputte (INFRABEL)

– For information and discussion –

Context for the Subgroup

The Platform for Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe (PRIME) has identified the need for the creation of an international exchange program for young professionals as a means in confronting the challenge of attracting and retaining young talent during the PRIME Plenary meeting of November 2018. Infrabel was confirmed as lead for this program in the PRIME Plenary of June 2019.

Mission

Young people value learning and development opportunities and feel a need for mobility and international experience. The mission of the program is to set up a framework allowing this type of exchanges to take place between the IM's for specific profiles.

Status of work

- All PRIME-members were invited to participate in a kick-off meeting organised at Infrabel premises on 16/10/2019.
- Interested participants received a survey in advance in order to identify the major objectives to achieve by the program.
- Based on the outcome of the survey, 3 main objectives were identified:
 - Retention
 - Exchange of best practices: Hard Skills
 - Development of Soft Skills & Collaborative culture
- Possible overlaps and complementarity with other initiatives such as e.g. the study on the feasibility of creating a Virtual European Rail Academy (VERA) by the UIC or the Erasmus+ initiative of the European Commission are identified in order to delimit the scope of the program.
- During the kick-off meeting, it was determined that the focus should be put on highly educated co-workers (Master-level) such as engineers, ICT-profiles but also specific 'niche' profiles in e.g. the domains of procurement, supply etc. The main target group would consist of people with a seniority of between 2 and 8 years.
- Possible formulas were identified:
 - Long term exchanges (1 year) focused on technical skills and best practices
 - Medium term exchanges (some months) focused on soft skills
 - Short term exchanges (up to 1 month) supported by virtual exchanges on concrete projects

- The project group decided to start with some 'proof of concepts' (POCs) with relatively short exchanges of up to 1 month. The participants establish concrete proposals by end of 2019 in order to start with the POCs in Q1 2020.

Next steps

- Identification of the different POCs by end of 2019.
- Follow-up project team meeting with IMs end of January-early February 2020.
- Progressive launch of the POCs starting Q1 2020.
- Follow-up project team meeting with IMs to draw the conclusions of the POCs in September 2020.
- Reporting on the outcome of the POCs and proposals for the next phase in the project on the PRIME Plenary meeting of November 2020.