

**PRIME-RUD Meeting  
19 November 2020**

**Information point:  
Update on the Evaluation of the Rail Freight Corridors Regulation**

*From: EC*

***– For Information –***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The European Commission is currently evaluating Regulation 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight<sup>1</sup>. The Regulation is a key policy instrument to improve the competitiveness of rail freight transport in the EU. Its importance relates to the strong cross-border dimension of freight: approximately 50 % of rail freight traffic is cross-border, as opposed to less than 10 % for passenger traffic.

## **2. PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

DG MOVE will share detailed results of the evaluation with sector stakeholders at various occasions during this winter (e.g. the Rail Freight Day on 10 December) and in the evaluation report (publication planned in early 2021).

In general terms the conclusion of the evaluation is that the Regulation has resulted in a significant improvement of dialogue and cooperation across borders and within the various stakeholders groups involved. However, the results are more modest in terms of actual improvements in terms of performance. This is due to a combination of two factors: firstly, the Regulation has been implemented by the addressees mainly with a view to formal compliance with insufficient focus on achieving the objectives, i.e. the potential of the tools and measures required in the Regulation has not been used in full. Secondly, the Regulation suffers from a number of shortcomings hampering its effectiveness, notably tools and measures not always fit for purpose, that become more and more apparent in the ten-year period of implementation.

Therefore, achieving the Regulation's overall objective – making rail freight transport more competitive vis-à-vis other modes – will therefore require additional efforts. A thorough impact

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<sup>1</sup> Despite referring to a "rail network" in its title, the Regulation adopts a pure corridor approach in all of its rules on governance, rules, tools etc.

analysis of possible options to improve the effectiveness of the Regulation will be carried out in a two step approach:

- A first step will be closely linked to the revision of the TEN-T Guidelines (Regulation 1315/2013), planned for September 2021.<sup>2</sup> This phase will focus on strengthening the synergies and the consistency between the Rail Freight Corridors and TEN-T policy, notably the Core Network Corridors, in particular:
  - improving the geographical alignment between the TEN-T and the RFC network to ensure that infrastructure policy and measures to improve infrastructure use are fully complementary;
  - supporting the implementation of high quality, interoperable infrastructure for international freight traffic: This can cover the practical implementation of the existing TEN-T infrastructure requirements (ERTMS, 740 m, axle load, electrification etc.), new parameters such as the loading gauge for intermodal trains (P400) or smaller investments to eliminate local bottlenecks with corridor-wide impacts;
  - strengthening the cooperation between the governance structures of RFCs and the Core Network Corridors.
- The second step (in 2022) will address the core areas of action of the Regulation, namely capacity planning and traffic management. The analysis will take a broader perspective, i.e. it may go beyond the scope of the current RFC Regulation and may assess complementary changes to the Single European Rail Area Directive (EU/2012/34). Preparation for an impact assessment will start soon. The first step will be the publication of an inception impact assessment, which will outline the scope and main issues.

### **3. THE ROLE OF INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGERS**

Infrastructure Managers play a key role in the evaluation and revision and have been consulted extensively as part of the evaluation study. Their input will continue to be valuable throughout the different steps of the process.

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12532-Revision-of-Regulation-on-Union-guidelines-for-the-development-of-the-trans-European-transport-network-TEN-T->.