



2nd MEETING OF THE EUROPE'S RAIL SRG

11 February 2022

9h00 – 11h30

1. Introduction

*Welcome by the Chairperson and introductory speech from the EC
Declarations of conflict of interest based on the Agenda items*

Sarah BITTNER-KRAUTSACK, the Chairperson of the SRG welcomed the participants to the second meeting of the SRG. She proposed to perform a tour-the-table with a short introduction of new representatives and their companies.

The representatives of Austria (Sarah BITTNER-KRAUTSACK, Nina AVRAMOVIC, Michael LUCZENSKY, and Florian SUPE), Belgium (Audrey DEVOS and Caroline AVAUX), Bulgaria (Lyudmil IVANOV), Croatia (Darjan KONJIC), Czech Republic (Miroslav HALTUF), Denmark (Niels SELSMARK and Adnan JELIN), Finland (Hanna VUORINE and Tom WARRAS), France (Henri VICHARD and Pierre PACAUD), Germany (Ariane BOEHMER and Gabriele GRIMM), Greece (Nikolaos ATHANASOPOULOS and Athanassios ZILIASKOPOULOS), Ireland (Bob FLYNN), Italy (Paola MELLONE and Pierluigi COPPOLA), Luxembourg (Raphaël ZUMSTEEG and Andre BISSEN), the Netherlands (Marcel TIJS), Portugal (Helder CRISTÓVÃO and Luis MAIA), Slovakia (Peter KLAMO), Spain (David PELLO), Sweden (Märta GHAJAR AMIRNEZAMI), Norway (Henrik STAUBO and Lise JOHANSEN), and Turkey (Serhat MELIK and Ipek ÜÇÜNÜ) attended the meeting.

From the EU institutions' side, the representatives of DG MOVE (Ian CONLON, Wawrzyniec PERSCHKE, and Ana-Maria FIMIN) and ERA (Torben HOLVAD) participated in the meeting, as well as the Executive Director of EU-Rail (Carlo BORGHINI), supported by Secretariat.

On behalf of the Commission, Ian CONLON (DG MOVE) provided a short introduction. He briefly overviewed the process of launching the EU-Rail programme and its activities. He informed that the discussions on the EU-Rail Multiannual Work Programme came to the final stage with the adoption expected at the 2nd EU-Rail Governing Board meeting on 1 March 2022. The Governing Board is also expected to adopt the Master Plan and the Work Programme 2022-2024. In terms of

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<p>communication, he reminded the event launching EU-Rail has been scheduled for 21 February 2022 during the European Railway Summit.</p> <p>The Chairperson congratulated the Executive Director and EU-Rail team on the European Rail Award 2022.</p>	
<p>2. Approval of the meeting agenda and previous MoM</p> <p>The Chairperson informed the participants that minor changes had been introduced to the minutes of the first SRG meeting. The changes were based on the comments received from the representatives of Czech Republic and France. The minutes with changes have been already circulated among the SRG.</p> <p>The participants adopted the minutes with no further comments.</p>	9:10-9:15
<p>3. Adoption of the SRG Rules of Procedure</p> <p>The Executive Director, Carlo BORGHINI introduce the Rules of Procedure for the EU-Rail SRG. As stressed, the document had been circulated before the meeting, and the representatives of States delivered their comments to the JU. The comments and changes have been introduced to the text in track changes.</p> <p>The Executive Director comments on questions and issues raised by SRG in writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 2(7) – the changes were introduced to reflect the provisions of the Article 16(7) of the SBA. • Article 3(3) – with regard to the question about the information of the SP work, it has been agreed that a proper setup is necessary for further communication between two bodies. The Executive Director informed that Head of Unit of the System Pillar could attend the SRG meetings and provide an update of its work without prejudice to information supply as planned in the Single Basic Act. As stressed, the process of information exchange should be clear and transparent. • Article 3(3) – with regard to the tasks and role of the SRG, the Executive Director will share after the meeting a presentation with slides referring to the SRG tasks foreseen in the Single Basic Act (SBA). • Article 3(3) – with regard to liaising and representing, it has been clarified that “representing” refers to the attendance to the meetings, whereas “liaising” describes broadly also other types of communication. • Article 3(3) – with regard to the distribution of the GB minutes, the Executive Director underlined that the JU follows a good practice of publishing adopted GB minutes on its website. Therefore, it would be allowed to distribute the GB minutes also to the SRG once they were adopted. • Article 4(1) – the wording has been clarified to reflect representatives’ right to nominate one person per each position. • Article 7 – reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation has been added. The Executive Director explained that at this stage it is unlikely to make use of the 	9:15-9:30

Article 22(5) of the Horizon Europe Regulation. Such provision may be trigger under specific conditions (e.g. for strategic relevance and security issues).

- Article 8 – wording has been corrected and clarified. A provision allowing for informal meetings has been added.
- Article 9 – reference to the Programme Office has been added.

Henri VICHARD (France) asked about Deployment Group and the representation of the SRG in the body. Carlo BORGHINI stressed that Deployment Group would be expected to be established in third quarter of 2022. Although the SBA does not foresee presence of the SRG in Deployment Group, it can be expected that SRG Chair and/or Vice Chair will be requested to attend its meetings. The Commission will have to consider it in the final set up of the Deployment Group.

Henri VICHARD (France) asked about the election of the SRG Chair and Vice Chair. He asked about the date of the election. The Executive Director reminded that according to the agreement at the previous SRG meeting, the current Char and Vice Chair positions are interim solutions. The formal elections will follow provisions stipulated in Article 4 of the SRG RoP. The voting is planned for the next SRG meeting on 18 May 2022. Henri VICHARD (France) asked for possible extension of the interim period and postponement of voting until the 4th SRG meeting in November, subject to the incumbent Chair and Vice Chair’s concurrence on the longer interim period. The representatives of Norway, Germany, and Italy supported the proposal to postpone the elections to November meeting with extension of interim period for incumbent Chair and Vice Chair.

Both the Chair and the Vice Chair, expressed their willingness to continue in current positions if requested by other SRG. The Chair stressed that the elections have to be formalized. She also pointed to the workload related to the position of the Chair and necessity of cooperation with the JU Programme Office, Vice Chair, and other parties.

In terms of the workload, the Executive Director commented on the additional communication activities. As stressed, the JU has been inviting the Chair to be present at the major events (e.g. [TRA](#), [InnoTrans](#), [WCCR](#)).

The Chair informed the participants that she would contact the representatives for short discussions in smaller circles (3-4 countries per meeting) to gather the inputs and expectations related to the work of the SRG. The invitations will be distributed shortly and are expected to take place in March and April 2022.

In terms of the SRG meetings, the participants discussed the possibility of convening informal meetings between smaller groups of SRG. Both representatives of France (Henri VICHARD) and Portugal (Helder CRISTÓVÃO) were in favour of adjusting the RoP so that informal contacts between the Member States’ representatives can occur handily, in preparation for the full-fledged SRG meetings. Such informal meetings should not occur without all Member States’ representatives being at least able to participate or being informed of. The Vice Chair commented on the proposal. He expressed his favour towards it under the condition that other States’ representatives

would be informed about the informal meetings. The representative of Norway (Henrik STAUBO) also suggested to extend the information to the associated members. The Executive Director paid attention to the risks associated to too many parallel meetings. He suggested that informal meetings should be of preparatory nature, but the formal meetings with participation of all representatives should be a principle in terms of channelling information.

In terms of the conflict of interests (Article 12 of the SRG RoP), the Executive Director commented on the issue. He underlined that the major risks would emerge in situations when the members of the SRG would be in close relations with applicants to the call for proposals (e.g. family relations). He referred to the conflict of interest as a situation where a person involved in the decision-making process or providing advice would be perceived to be in conflict of interest. As stressed, such perception has to be assessed at personal level. The Executive Director informed the participants that the EU-Rail Governing Board would adopt a revised decision regarding conduct and conflict of interest in June 2022.

The members of the SRG discussed the dissemination of information. Helder CRISTÓVÃO (Portugal) asked for clarification what types of documents cannot be disseminated in Member States due to confidentiality principles. He also pointed out that some information is of interest for the Member States' entities, and therefore, they should be properly informed. Henri VICHARD (France) added that some of the national entities have been already included in the setup of the EU-Rail as Founding Members. He asked for clarification about the types of information that can be exchanged, discussed, and consulted between the Member States' representatives and the Founding Members. The Chair also asked about the differentiation between the JU and non-JU members in terms of exchange of information and discussions.

The Executive Director referred to the wording of Article 12 of SRG RoP. He underlined that any publicly available documents could be discussed with other entities. He confirmed that the Founding Members, as members of the JU, were invited to contribute to the content of the work programme. In addition, both the SRG and Scientific Committee have been asked for the opinions on work programme in accordance with the SBA provisions. He also reminded that the final draft of work programme would be prepared by the JU and further distribute to the Governing Board, a final decision-making body, under confidentiality clause. As the JU will work in open calls scheme, it is a good practice to publish a draft of the work programme on website to ensure transparency of the text call as soon as possible. The Executive Director underlined that the final text would be adopted by the Governing Board.

The Executive Director also stressed that the participants would be informed formally and explicitly about any documents that should remain strictly confidential with the necessary identification on the documents themselves.

Helder CRISTÓVÃO (Portugal) expressed reservations towards limiting the possible discussions and consultations to the Founding Members. He reminded that some Member States do not have entities in the JU. The Executive Director clarified that if

not classified as confidential, the members of the SRG would be allowed to consult documents with all interested parties and entities. He also pointed out that confidentiality of documents would be limited to the external parties (e.g. not concerning the Members States' administration).

The Executive Director summarized discussion. He informed that the agreed version of SRG RoP would be dispatched after the meeting (in track changes) for further comments. If no comments are received in 2-3 weeks after reception, the SRG RoP will be considered as adopted (written procedure).

He also noted the agreement of the State Representatives' Group to postpone the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair at the end of 2022 meeting, to allow all members becoming acquainted with the SRG proceedings.

4. Presentation of the EU-Rail Work Programme 2022-24 in view of the SRG Opinion

9:30-10:30

The Chair introduced the discussion on the Work Programme 2022-2024. She reminded that the document had been dispatched on Tuesday (8 February 2022) to collect the comments of SRG before its adoption by the Governing Board. The deadline for comments is on 23 February 2022.

The Executive Director delivered a short presentation on the work programme with focus on the structure of call, call conditions, tender procedures, and budget foreseen. He highlighted that the call would be conducted in an open scheme with no limitations to participation of the JU members. The presentation will be sent out to the members of the SRG after the meeting.

He reminded that the first call for proposals would be launched for six flagships areas (FAs), and the FA7 will be launched later in 2022 along with the exploratory research (second call). The first call for proposals will be launched on 10 March, subject to adoption of work programme 2022-2024 by the Governing Board. He briefly discussed the participation of third countries to the consortia, with a focus on the UK and Switzerland's situations.

- For Switzerland, there is no association agreement with the EU expected. The Swiss entities may participate to the consortia, but they receive funding from the Swiss government, and not from the EU
- For the UK, the funding will depend on the conclusion of association agreement. If the association agreement with the EU is concluded before the signing of grant agreement (expected in November 2022), then the UK entities will be eligible to receive funding from the EU. If there is no association agreement by the time of signing grant agreement, the UK entities should finance their participation from their own/UK resources.

The Executive Director referred also to the Article 10(2) of the SBA

The amount of the Union contribution specified in Part Two may be increased with contributions from third countries associated to Horizon Europe in line with Article 16(5) of the Horizon Europe Regulation and provided that the total amount by which the

Union contribution is increased is at least matched by the contribution of members other than the Union, or their constituent or affiliated entities.

He stressed that there has been no clear information if the top-up of the Commission for covering the participation of the third countries would be equal to the funding requested.

Serhat MELIK (Turkey) asked about the call for tenders and the eligibility of the associated countries to participate in such calls. He also asked about the info days for call to be organized by the JU. Finally, he requested information if 60% funding ratio would also apply to the public entities and universities.

The Chair followed the discussion on 60% funding ratio. She underlined that it could be a barrier for some SMEs to participate in the call. She also asked about the contact points per FAs in order to facilitate the exchange of the information between the JU and the interested SMEs/universities.

The Vice Chair asked about the relations between two calls to be launched in 2022. He asked if the entities who apply in the first call as, for instance, affiliated entities can participate to the second call as separate entities (main beneficiaries).

Henri VICHARD (France) asked for a standard information package related to the calls that could be used for communication purposes vis-à-vis stakeholders.

Hanna VUORINEN (Finland) referred to the Horizon Europe Regulation and the funding ratio for research organizations and universities of 100%.

The Executive Director answered the questions.

In terms of participation of the associated countries in tender procedure, the JU would double-check with legal team.

In terms of the info day, the Executive Director confirmed the organization of thereof planned for 16 March 2022 in a digital form. The invitation will be open to interested parties, including members of the SRG. It has been also confirmed that once the work programme is adopted, the package of information would be prepared, including information about the call procedures and topics.

In terms of the funding rate, the Executive Director informed that the Horizon Europe Regulation has foreseen the funding rate of 70% for innovation and action calls. **The JU has decided to lower the funding rate to 60%, in with the requirement of the SBA; this means that the funding rate for Founding Members awarded with a grant would be 45%, as they need to provide IKAA in addition to IKOP.** As stressed, it has been the only alternative to materialize the level of contribution requested by the SBA creating a leverage effect of more than 2. The Executive Director also confirmed that the 60% funding ratio would be applied to all entities, including research organizations and universities or other non-profit organizations. He commented that other approach would result in substantial inequalities **(100% without leverage effect versus 45% [or 41% considering the FM contribution to running costs])** among beneficiaries, including of the same nature.

Nevertheless, the Executive Director will bring the matter to the attention of the GB for final decision

He also added that in the call for exploratory research and FA7 to be launched in the second part of the year, the JU intends to implement Horizon Europe funding rates, considering that nature of the activities.

The Executive Director also reminded that the JU would make use of the lump sum grants' approach in the calls.

In terms of the eligibility criteria for participation in separate calls, the Executive Director stressed that any entity may answer to the JU calls – given the general eligibility criteria of Horizon Europe are fulfilled. He only reminded that in the same action, an entity cannot be both a direct beneficiary and a subcontractor.

Tom WARRAS (Finland) asked about the budget allocation per years. He also asked about the lump sum approach. The Executive Director explained the table presented. He also confirmed that the lump sum would be used in EU-Rail for all calls, as aligned with the Horizon Europe rules. He stressed that lump sum approach has been better designed to monitor delivery of programme per work packages.

The Vice Chair, Miroslav HALTUF asked about the potential cooperation with other JUs. The Executive Director confirmed that the synergies with other JUs and missions have been foreseen for the entire duration of the EU-Rail programme.

The Executive Director informed the participants that the JU would launch an info-call mailbox for Q&A related to call. The SRG members will be informed accordingly.

The Chair reminded the participants to deliver their comments to the Work Programme by 23 February 2022.

The JU will distribute the presentation with information about the Work Programme, and the tasks of the SRG after the meeting.

Marcel TIJS (the Netherlands) asked for suggestions on which part of the Work Programme the Member States should focus. The Executive Director encouraged the participants to go through the entire text and focus particularly on Annex 7 which contains the text of the call for proposals and the relevant conditions.

Henri VICHARD (France) asked for a document or report summarizing the work done in Shift2Rail JU. As stressed, the information about the Shift2Rail results would allow to better understand the EU-Rail programme and monitor the work in projects.

The Executive Director stressed that the Shift2Rail JU programme would go through the evaluation process, and the SRG will be informed about the outcome; such process is expected to take place in 2024 or immediately after. He also invited participants to attend the InnoTrans in 2022 which would display the results of Shift2Rail projects. The JU will also prepare a catalogue of solution summarizing results of the Shift2Rail projects that will be presented at InnoTrans 2022 in September.

<p>Wawrzyniec PERSCHKE (DG MOVE) commented on the expected results of the EU-Rail programme. He pointed to the important role of the SRG and Deployment Group in implementation of the EU-Rail results.</p>	
<p>5. Role of the SRG in the EU-Rail Joint Undertaking</p> <p>The discussion has been postponed to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair reminded she would invite the representatives to discuss the countries' expectations from the SRG meetings, and potential inputs of the group to the EU-Rail programme. The results of the discussion will be presented at the next SRG meeting in May 2022.</p>	10.30-11.00
<p>- AOB</p> <p>No further points have been raised by participants.</p>	11.00-11.15
<p>6. Closing remarks</p> <p>- dates of the next meeting</p> <p>The 3rd meeting of the SRG is planned for 3 June 2022. The Agenda will be distributed before the meeting.</p> <p>The 4th meeting of the SRG is planned for September 2022.</p>	11.15-11.30

Action no.	Action	Related Topic	Due date	Action Owner
1	SRG comments on draft Work Programme 2022-2024	Item 4	23 February 2022	SRG
2	SRG comments on Rules of Procedure	Item 3	Up to 15 calendar days after reception	SRG