

EVALUATION ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to share any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	Rail Freight Corridors Evaluation
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	Directorate General for Mobility and Transport Unit C3 - Single European Rail Area
INDICATIVE PLANNING (PLANNED START DATE AND COMPLETION DATE)	Q1 2019 – Q2 2020
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/infrastructures/rail_freight_oriented_net_work_en

The Roadmap is provided for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the document, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, purpose and scope of the evaluation

Context

Boosting rail freight transport is an essential pillar of the European Union's long-term policy to make transport more sustainable by cutting greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonising the sector ⁽¹⁾. Despite its potential to improve the sustainability of transport, the growth of rail freight is held back by its lack of competitiveness, compared to other transport modes and in particular road. Improving the quality of rail freight in terms of commercial speed, punctuality and reliability is crucial to addressing this shortcoming. The Rail Freight Corridors (RFCs), established on the basis of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight ⁽²⁾ (hereafter 'the Regulation'), constitute one of the key instruments of the Commission's policy to reach the objective of facilitating the operation of rail freight traffic along the main European transport corridors. Since the end of 2015, the nine initial RFCs are fully operational, and since 2017 freight trains can use corridor dedicated capacity on the complete RFC network. In 2017 and 2018, two further Rail Freight Corridors were established ⁽³⁾ and they must become operational by 2019 and 2020, respectively.

According to the report of the Commission on the application of the Regulation ⁽⁴⁾, the full potential of the RFC network has not been exploited so far. The report concluded that the establishment of the RFCs has contributed to enhanced cooperation across borders, however in some key areas addressed by the Regulation, results are mixed or modest so far, for instance as regards dedicated RFC capacity, coordination of works or coordination of traffic management.

Gaining experience, the RFCs and the sector have developed new concepts and solutions, some of which are currently tested, that should also be considered in the evaluation.

In 2015, the Commission launched the evaluation to assess the implementation and effects of the Regulation. It conducted a comprehensive consultation process including an open public consultation ⁽⁵⁾, which delivered substantial insight from various rail sector stakeholders on the impacts of the Regulation. However, after the completion of an initial internal analysis, the Commission concluded that some of the important impacts had not

⁽¹⁾ See the Communication from the Commission: A Clean Planet for all; A European strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral economy (COM(2018) 773 final of 28 November 2018) and the in-depth analysis in support of the Commission Communication.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32010R0913>

⁽³⁾ Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) 2017/177 and 2018/500.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0189>

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/consultations/2016-european-rail-network-for-competitive-freight_en

yet materialised to a degree allowing a reliable assessment. In accordance with Article 23 of the Regulation, the Commission produced an implementation report ⁽⁶⁾.

In addition, an important milestone to be considered is the Rotterdam Ministerial Declaration and Sector statement initiated by the Dutch Presidency and endorsed during the TEN-T DAYS in June 2016, whereby the sector has committed to act in a number of important fields in the course of 2017 and 2018 to further boost international rail freight. Therefore, the Commission decided to postpone the evaluation until 2019.

Purpose and Scope

In the present evaluation, the Commission will assess the implementation and impacts of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 on the transport of goods by rail. The evaluation will cover the period from the entry into force the Regulation until 2019 and will cover all countries involved in the RFCs, i.e. those Member States with a rail border with another Member State, as well as European third countries, whose railway lines are part of a rail freight corridor. It will assess the effects of the Regulation at the level of individual RFCs and at the level of the entire network of RFCs. It will attempt to assess the induced improvement on the EU mobility of goods by rail.

The evaluation will cover all provisions of the Regulation, including the purpose and scope of the RFCs, the geographical definition of the RFCs, the rules governing the establishment of new and the modification of existing RFCs, their governance structures, the studies, plans and measures for establishing and developing the RFCs, the need to consult applicants, the provisions on investment planning, obligations regarding coordination of works, the provisions regarding the corridor one-stop shop and capacity allocated to freight trains, the measures for traffic management, including in the event of disturbances, the provision of information on the conditions of use and on the quality of services, on the compatibility of performance schemes and on the monitoring of competition and regulatory supervision.

In addition, the evaluation will take into account activities related to the RFCs going beyond the provisions of the Regulation, addressing for instance technical and operational interoperability along the RFCs, the harmonisation of commercial conditions and others. Furthermore, the evaluation will cover activities of the rail sector undertaken in the period of analysis and contributing to the objectives of the Regulation even if not primarily carried out within the context of the RFCs. This includes actions to implement the commitments of Member States and the rail sector in the 2016 Rotterdam Ministerial Declaration and Sector Statement.

The evaluation will follow the standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and EU value-added.

The Commission will assess the interaction and coherence with other relevant pieces of legislation, including in particular Directive (EU) 2012/34 on the Single European Railway Area ⁽⁷⁾, Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 on the TEN-T guidelines ⁽⁸⁾, Regulation (EU) 1316/2013 on the Connecting Europe Facility ⁽⁹⁾, the Combined Transport Directive 92/106/EEC (as amended) ⁽¹⁰⁾ and EU legislation on rail interoperability and safety (e.g. the Interoperability Directive ⁽¹¹⁾).

The results of the evaluation will feed into any future possible revision of the Regulation.

B. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

The objective of the consultation is to collect feedback of the general public and experts on the key issues addressed in the evaluation, as well as specialised input in the form of data, information and analysis.

The main stakeholders include ministries of transport, infrastructure managers and rail path allocation bodies, rail freight corridor governing bodies, regulatory bodies, railway undertakings and other applicants, operators of intermodal terminals (including ports), logistics providers such as intermodal operators and freight forwarders and shippers as end-customers of rail freight transport.

⁽⁶⁾ COM(2018) 189 final of 16 April 2018.

⁽⁷⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012L0034&from=FR>

⁽⁸⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R1315>

⁽⁹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:348:0129:0171:EN:PDF>

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:01992L0106-20130701>

⁽¹¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2016/797 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the interoperability of the rail system within the European Union (recast) (OJ, L 138, 26.5.2016, p. 44).

The main consultation activities will take place in 2019. The Commission envisages the following consultation activities: a 12-week public consultation, translated into 23 EU official languages (allowing for replies in any EU official language), which will be accessible via the Commission's central public consultations page ('Have your say' ⁽¹²⁾); a targeted stakeholder consultation; discussions in the executive boards meetings of the RFCs where DG MOVE representatives participate as observers; discussions within the Single European Rail Area Committee, including its working group on RFCs, and discussions in informal coordination networks established by the RFCs stakeholders ⁽¹³⁾. Intermediate results of the evaluation will be shared at events related to rail freight organised by DG MOVE.

All information related to this evaluation, including a summary of consultation activities, will be published.

Data collection and methodology

The evaluation will be based both on quantitative and qualitative data and methodologies and will be supported by a study by an external contractor.

The main sources of information will be the implementation plans of the RFCs, the conditions of use of the freight corridor, the reports of the executive boards and RFC-related reports provided on a voluntary basis, such as Annual Reports of the RFCs, progress reports of sector stakeholders on the implementation of the sector statement and various position papers related to rail freight. In addition any other documents of rail freight relevance e.g. reports by the European Court of Auditors (in particular its report on rail freight published in June 2016 ⁽¹⁴⁾), network statements of national infrastructure managers, national legislation and policy documents and the grant agreements concluded between the RFCs and the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) will also be considered.

Quantitative information will be collected from relevant databases and IT platforms, such as the Corridor Information Platform, the Path Coordination System and the Train Information System (TIS) provided by RailNetEurope and equivalent national systems, as well as from European and national statistics.

Information from all these sources will be complemented by feedback from the open public consultation and the targeted stakeholder consultation.

The methodology for analysis will combine quantitative elements, including the calculation of indicators and indices as well as descriptive and inferential statistics, with qualitative ones, such as case studies and interpretation of texts and statements.

⁽¹²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say_en

⁽¹³⁾ Including e.g. the Network of Executive Boards (ministries of transport), the RFC Network (infrastructure managers) as well as relevant coordination platforms of railway undertakings (applicants), terminal operators and other stakeholders.

⁽¹⁴⁾ https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR16_08/SR_RAIL_FREIGHT_EN.pdf