

PRESS RELEASE N°9 / 2010

UIC DIOMIS CONFERENCE IN VIENNA

Growing Intermodal Rail Freight Traffic in the Central and Eastern European Countries

(Paris, 29.03.2010) As part of its rail freight project “Developing Infrastructure use and Operating Models for Intermodal Shift” (DIOMIS) the International Union of Railways held a conference on 25 March in Vienna.

Under the motto “*Growing Intermodal traffic in the Central and Eastern European Countries*”, key stakeholders met to discuss the growth potential of combined transport and to share their experiences on the challenges and opportunities for combined transport in that particular geographical area.

The conference was opened by *Mr Macher*, CEO of Rail Cargo Austria (RCA) who stressed the strategic importance of the region. He explained RCA’s aim to run a successful multimodal network along key corridors together with long lasting partners in the industry.

One of the key findings of the UIC study is the positioning of hinterland traffic as the growth segment for the near future. The study foresees a traffic shift from the North-South axis to the East-West and anticipates an average growth rate of 8% providing some important conditions are met.

In that respect, representatives of the industry gave their views on the conditions needed to ensure further modal shift to rail through concrete business cases. Infrastructure investments and improvements to accommodate longer and heavier trains, coordination of terminal development, equipment availability (wagons and units), cross border interoperability, non-discriminatory access to terminals, service reliability and infrastructure charging were mentioned as priorities to ensure the forecast growth takes place. On this last item, the representatives of the Slovak Ministry of Transport officially announced a drastic reduction of infrastructure charges in the very near future.

Oliver Sellnick, UIC Freight Director, concluded that despite its negative impact on the 2009 results, the economic crisis has served as an opportunity to rethink the business. Signs of recovery are tangible and the confidence in the extraordinary growth of combined transport, especially hinterland traffic, seemed to be shared by all actors.

Note to the editor:

The UIC DIOMIS project seeks to improve the competitiveness of international rail freight transport and encourage modal shift towards rail. To this end, it helps identify ways and means of decongesting the network of rail infrastructure and terminals and make them more attractive to shippers for international transport operations.

A key question addressed by this project is how to absorb the anticipated growth in combined transport volumes in the years ahead, on a rail network shared between different types of traffic and already highly congested.

For more information, please visit [the DIOMIS website](http://www.uic.org/diomis/spip.php?article8) <http://www.uic.org/diomis/spip.php?article8>

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