



PRESS RELEASE

An unsung hero is celebrating a birthday – the original, the EUR-Pallet is 60 years young!

- **It revolutionised logistics.**
- **Its 11 boards, 9 blocks and 78 nails carry up to 1,500 kg.**
- **Quality-tested and standardised – for 60 years.**
- **Its reusability and exchangeability protect the environment.**

(Paris/Vienna, 12 July 2021). The year 1961 was significant for several reasons. With Yuri Gagarin, we ventured into space for the first time; in Germany, the Berlin wall was built; and in France, the original, the Europallet (EUR-pallet) came into the world. Since then, our lives have changed considerably: space travel has developed further, and the Berlin Wall has disappeared. However, one thing has remained constant over the years, both in body and appearance: with its characteristic dimensions of 800 mm x 1,200 mm x 144 mm, it is one of the unsung heroes of logistics – the Europallet.

Revolution in logistics

The introduction of the EUR-pallet in 1961 revolutionised logistics throughout Europe and beyond. Simply using these pallets halved the time required to load railway carriages. The world of logistics is based around its dimensions – from the dimensions of storage spaces, to transport systems, all the way to storage spaces in HGVs. Thanks to its rapid spread, an international exchange system also established itself from the start. All these factors ensured that the Europallet quickly caught on. Today, 600 million EUR-pallets are in use worldwide.

Worldwide exchange of EUR-pallets protects the environment

The reusability and exchangeability of the EUR-pallet make it a very sustainable load carrier, in addition to the fact that it is primarily made from the renewable resource wood. Depending on its use, one EUR-pallet can be used on average around six or seven times before it is repaired and then used again. The “EUR” symbol on the pallet is a guarantor of its exchangeability.

Quality-tested, durable and protected

A significant success factor in the EUR-pallet’s triumph is the strict manufacturing quality control. Europallets may only be manufactured and repaired by authorised

companies. The use of the correct type of wood with a corresponding maximum wood humidity is decisive for its durability and bearing capacity of max. 1,500 kg. 11 boards, 9 blocks and 78 nails are the fixed components of one EUR-pallet.

The manufacturing and repair quality is checked by the International Union of Railways (UIC). Only pallets which are labelled with the distinctive “EUR” symbol correspond to the quality requirements. UIC (which will celebrate its 100th year in 2022) will continue to reliably carry out standardisation of the EUR-pallets in the portfolio and to issue licences and quality assurance through UIC member RUs. The trademark rights to the EUR-pallet have belonged to ÖBB Rail Cargo Austria since 1961

Rail Cargo Group: ÖBB freight transport

As Europe’s leading rail logistics specialist, we shape the industry. 365 days a year – 24 hours a day. From Europe all the way into Asia. We connect people, businesses and markets – from the first mile to the last. Thanks to our 9,340 employees in 18 countries with 34 nationalities, we are able to bring 460,000 trains safely to their destination every year – that’s around 1,260 trains every day. We transport 95 million net tonnes every year with our efficient end-to-end logistics solutions. Our railways contribute 28.2% to the total volume of goods transported in Austria, making us the frontrunner in Europe and saving around 1.1 million tonnes of CO₂ annually throughout Austria. The controlling company of the Rail Cargo Group is Rail Cargo Austria AG.

ÖBB: Today. For tomorrow. For us.

As a comprehensive mobility and logistics service provider, ÖBB transported a total of 287 million passengers and over 95 million tonnes of goods to their destinations in a climate and environmentally friendly manner in 2020. The electricity for trains and stations is generated entirely from renewable energy sources. ÖBB is one of the most punctual railway operators in Europe, with a punctuality rate of around 97% for passenger transport. With over EUR 3 billion invested annually in railway infrastructure, ÖBB is building the railway system of tomorrow. Across the Group, almost 42,000 bus and rail employees and an additional 2,000 apprentices ensure that around 1.3 million passengers and around 1,300 freight trains arrive safely at their destinations every day. ÖBB is the backbone of Austrian public transport and, as Austria’s largest climate protection company, gets people and goods to their destinations safely and in an environmentally friendly manner. The strategic lead company of the group is ÖBB-Holding AG.

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Wooden pallets are used for carrying goods and form part of the packaging for goods conveyed by all modes of transport, particularly rail.

Since 1961, the provisions and requirements of the 435 series of UIC Leaflets have constituted the basis for the production and repair of pallets. They also set out the requirements for pallet licensing, control and quality systems.

To ensure the general functionality of pallet production and repair and to improve interchangeability, the UIC Working Group is committed to:

- Offering the product with the same high quality to new and existing users in an open, exchangeable pallet pool.

- Revising and updating UIC Leaflet series 435 in accordance with European legislation.
- Classifying existing pallet quality in accordance with trade and industry specifications.
- Maintaining the rules – and particularly the quality system – for UIC/EUR pallets.
- Proposing innovative testing systems.
- Protecting the “UIC + EUR” trademark stamped on pallets, with the help of national authorities.

<https://uic.org/freight/eur-pallet>

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About ÖBB

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About UIC

UIC is the worldwide organisation for the global promotion of rail transport and the collaborative development of the railway system. It brings together some 200 members on all five continents, including rail operators, infrastructure managers, railway service providers, etc. UIC maintains close cooperation links with all actors in the field of rail transport throughout the world, including manufacturers, railway associations and public authorities, and stakeholders in other fields and sectors whose experiences may be beneficial to rail development. UIC's main tasks include understanding the business needs of the rail community, developing programmes of innovation to identify solutions to those needs, and preparing and publishing a series of documents, known as International Railway Standards (IRS), that facilitate the implementation of these innovative solutions.