UIC statistics for the first half of 2008

Passenger rail traffic grows by 3% in Europe, but a 2% drop for freight. Increase of 1.4% passenger traffic and 6.6% for freight in Russia. American rail freight grows by 2%.

(Paris, 19 September 2008). The International Union of Railways (UIC), the world organisation for railway cooperation, has recently published provisional statistics for rail traffic during the first half of 2008. These results concern only the passenger and freight rail traffic carried by UIC members.

In Europe (European Union and EFTA countries), the results show a 3% growth in passenger traffic, expressed in passenger-kilometres, relative to the same period in 2007. This development reflects a change in traveller behaviour, in particular due to increasing fuel prices. Freight transport in Europe in tonnes-kilometres shows a 2% drop, attributable to the global economic slowdown.

Passenger rail transport in Russia, measured in passenger-kilometres, grew by 1.4% in comparison with the first half of 2007, while freight traffic experienced sustained growth, with a 6.6% rise in tonnes-kilometres.

UIC’s provisional results also show a 2% rise in the volume carried by the North American freight railways (class 1) members of the AAR (Association of American Railroads).

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