

EUROLINK: CAPACITY CONCEPTS FOR A BETTER EUROPEAN RAIL NETWORK FOR PASSENGERS AND FREIGHT

Cross-border rail transport in Europe can be substantially improved. How?

In EuroLink, European rail Infrastructure Managers (IMs) in RailNetEurope join forces and design new capacity concepts with a European outlook.

Your help as stakeholder is needed to unlock the full potential.

Why EuroLink?

We recognise the need for improved, cross-border optimised, infrastructure capacity. Market-based for all rail segments (open access, PSO, passengers and freight, regional, national and international). Solutions that work in practice.



Growing numbers of passengers, transporters and train operators expect rail to deliver better quality and connectivity in a stronger Europe.



Contribute to more sustainable mobility throughout Europe.



Combined national networks are now used suboptimally. Investments are patchy and insufficiently aligned cross-border. Better European solutions are possible – first optimal usage, then smart & targeted growth.

Origin: Eurostar London – Amsterdam high-speed train

- Optimal route through 4 countries and 5 IM domains proved impossible to find without borderless long-distance design first.
 - Start: 4h16, national paths not aligned
 - Today: various improvements lead to 3h57 travel-time, only once a day.
 - Potential: alignment and reconfiguration of timetables enable travel-time under 3h50, every hour.
- ➔ *Alignment and configuration of a European wide timetable for freight and passenger traffic, for national and international.*



What does EuroLink do?

We design proposals for a better European network and timetable >7 years into the future.

Substantial improvements in capacity management require co-operation without borders, creative-thinking and preparation time.

- We **offer non-binding, medium to long-term capacity concepts**. These are ideas how to organise cross-border traffic flow into a network of “rough” potential train paths in a systematic timetable structure.
- Current focus is on the **2035 time-horizon** to optimise capacity on existing infrastructure plus expected new projects, by improving existing national strategic planning frameworks with an approach of European added value.
- We are preparing for a long-term **2045-2050 time-horizon**, that will go beyond and include infrastructural needs from a European perspective.

How do we work?

This kind of European endeavour is new and works, voluntarily, in the spirit of the proposed new EU regulation. It is learning-by-doing.

- Close cooperation between the experts of European infrastructure managers.
- Working group of 21 IMs and growing. Topical taskforces for timetable design, market demand analysis, stakeholder involvement.
- Strong link to the European Transport Market Study commissioned by EU and undertaken by RNE in parallel. Build fully new passenger market demand forecasts (including open market dimension and policy options), translate existing freight forecasts to trains, routes and paths.
- Direct involvement of market and stakeholders to build the case for better rail, challenge and improve capacity concepts, and raise support.

We need your help to design the best solutions that work in practice. How can you contribute?

1. Via a regular channel, RU umbrella organizations FTE, AllRail and ERFA are involved in the overall project and work approach. And through them all of their members, indiscriminately any train operator.
2. Contribute to concrete designs topics through stakeholder sessions per sub-part of the European network. Here, as train operator, ministry and PSO body, you can be informed, contribute suggestions and offer quality feedback.
 - Capacity concepts (work in progress) will be presented.
 - You are invited to offer feedback and suggestions through standardised webforms. This input can be used to improve the design (re-iterations).
3. Offer consultation response to draft end-products (expected in course of 2027).

What's in it for you?

- Have a voice in the capacity concepts proposed by EuroLink. The output will be used in IM strategy-making, advice to governments and TTR capacity strategies, capacity models and capacity supplies (as non-binding input, not blueprint). [MM7.1]
- For RUs: Pre-planning offers the best chance for optimal capacity in volume and quality in the later formal capacity allocation processes. Even if your business outlook is short-term, we need to safeguard sufficient capacity and know your interests.
- For MoTs & PSO bodies: Pre-planning offers the best use of expensive infrastructure and will also show where new investments might be needed and what benefits these bring. The European outlook shows (potential for) synergies between national strategies.
- For EU and other stakeholders: EuroLink can contribute to fulfilment of European policy challenges and legislation.
- To all: Contribute to a much better European rail network in the medium and long-run. With the most value to passengers, transporters, train operators, IMs, governments and wider society

More information?

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