



Efficient digitalisation to support European rail capacity management – RUs´ position on IT in capacity management

Railway Undertakings – organised in FTE, ERFA and Allrail – consider efficient handling of the capacity management process as key to improving quality and reducing costs. With increasing traffic volumes and TCRs, the increased data flow requires modern, customer-oriented IT support across Europe.

RUs need to be able to work practicable and efficient in the planning. **The goal** of RUs therefore is to have efficient backing by the IT landscape of IMs, aligned across Europe, making no difference between national and international traffic, covering all capacities and all process steps using end-to-end standards.

Therefore, **the RUs ask policymakers and IMs for**

- the same standardised IT-technical access to rail infrastructure capacity all over Europe, for all capacities.
- the use of existing TAF and TAP TSI standards with the necessary additions to cover the full capacity management lifecycle, i.e. early planning, TCRs etc.
- the provision of all relevant master-/reference data by IMs in the common way and with improvements in data quality, allowing immediate use by RUs.
- adding legal enforcement mechanisms for TAF and TAP TSI to ensure that implementation is at ambitious, common timelines and with common standards. This should be supported by an IM-independent escalation and decision-making entity. Additional steering mechanisms may potentially be added, e.g. conditions to access the EU funding that this may only be paid if the common standard is reached until a specific time and so forth.
- the massive reduction (and ultimately abolition) of national specific parameters, complementing the alignment of processes, as these lead to the fact that interfaces and applications cannot be used interoperably. As long as national specifics exist, RUs would still need to invest in IT for every IM they operate on.
- the offer by IMs of technical interfaces and user interfaces resp. web browser application, respecting different sizes and IT abilities of RUs.
- the availability of capacity usage data, allowing applicants to identify available residual and blocked capacity (without the need to reveal the company details). This shall facilitate finding potential suitable capacity for additional traffic.

- market-oriented response times for path requests (and subsequent changes).
 Passenger and freight customers require clarity on transport times “asap” to make an educated choice on the transport mode. Competing transport modes can do this in seconds, rail currently needs weeks to months just to set up the timetable. This may require significant modernisation of IMs internal planning systems but then shall benefit all planning stages in time and quality, including TCR plans.
Creating ad-hoc offers in cross-border should be a matter of minutes.
Creating TCR scenarios, even in cross-border situations, should be a matter of hours to a maximum of a few days.
Creating longer-term timetables, i.e. path offers in the annual timetable and for multiannual planning, should be a matter of no more than some weeks.
- not imposing large, centralised IT or any intermediate actor like RFCs or RNE by law. Instead, each IM shall be directly responsible to handle capacity in such standardised ways also with other IMs. It then should be left to the IMs how to fulfil these responsibilities (which can of course, be using its associations like RNE). Thus, IMs can choose service providers and make architectural choices over time, but always remain directly in charge and the only contact for Applicants.
- a European solution – recent technology should enable common solutions for domestic and cross-border.

European frameworks shall support these requirements as a legal minimum. The legal framework shall not hinder further development or additional structures. Concretely, the legal framework shall not specify one architecture. While specifying standards for inter-system-communication it shall also not hinder the existence of other approaches like common systems for RUs and IMs. Such systems shall be able to co-exist and communicate to other elements of the rail sector IT landscape according to the common standard.

When such mechanisms are in place, RUs expect to have a sufficiently stringent legal framework to achieve common European state-of-the-art IT support without hindering developments in an area with relatively faster developments. Combining a legal framework with a common enforcement mechanism and the required flexibility for different market scenarios and further developments, RUs expect that the European rail capacity IT will contribute to reaching the Green Deal goals.