

# Rail Freight Corridors: a European network for competitive rail freight

## What are Rail Freight Corridors (RFCs)?

A set of routes over which EU Member States must facilitate international rail freight. The framework was agreed in the 2010 RFC Regulation aiming to create a European rail network for competitive freight traffic.

## RFCs were established to meet three sets of challenges:



**Strengthening cooperation** between infrastructure managers on path allocation, deployment of interoperable systems and infrastructure development.



**Striking the right balance** between freight and passenger traffic along RFCs, while securing adequate capacity and priority for freight and ensuring common punctuality targets for freight are met.



**Promoting inter-modality** by integrating terminals into corridor management and development.

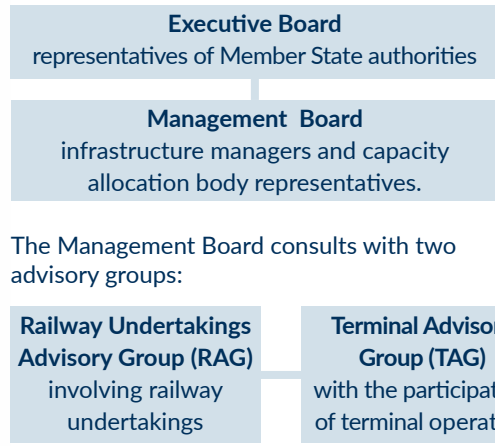


## The 11 Rail Freight Corridors (RFCs)



## RFC Governance

Each rail freight corridor has a two-tier governance structure:



The Management Board consults with two advisory groups:

- Railway Undertakings Advisory Group (RAG)** involving railway undertakings
- Terminal Advisory Group (TAG)** with the participation of terminal operators

## Corridor-One Stop Shops (C-OSS)

Each RFC has a joint body of its infrastructure managers, acting as a single contact point for customers on requests regarding infrastructure capacity for international trains along the corridor.

## RFCs and the EU Green Deal

The European Green Deal calls for a substantial part of the 75% of inland freight carried today by road to be shifted onto rail and inland waterways.

RFCs are the backbone of the sustainable movement of goods across Europe, and are also fundamental for a connected European economy. They help interconnect Europe's infrastructure and implement a centralised platform for all stakeholders.

## An opportunity for modal shift to rail freight

The RFC Regulation (Reg. 913/2010) has brought **positive developments** for European rail freight, such as implementing European interoperability, facilitating communication between rail undertakings and infrastructure managers, creating a platform for cross-border harmonisation and strengthening the focus on international traffic flows.

Even with all these positive developments, market share for rail freight did not increase. The revision of the Regulation therefore is a **key opportunity to make improvements** to ensure modal shift to rail freight happens and the **European Green Deal** becomes a reality:

**Empower RFC Executive Boards** by strengthening their role and responsibility.

**Replace the Corridor-One Stop Shop (C-OSS) by a “Corridor Account Manager” (CoAM)** which would support and coordinate infrastructure managers in offering harmonised international capacity in line with customer needs, while the operational business dealing with concrete train path allocation would be handled by the infrastructure managers.

**Give a clear coordination role to RFCs in the harmonisation of traffic management procedures** and information exchange to meet customers’ needs.

→ A strong pillar for a virtual European Traffic Management network can depend on the know-how and experience of RFCs.

**Provide more and better infrastructure capacity** for freight traffic via

- a sound legal basis for TTR for Smart Capacity on the European Network;
- precise planning of capacity restrictions;
- reciprocal commercial conditions for efficient capacity management;
- and boosting digitalisation in capacity management.

### Smart Capacity Management for more competitive rail

The redesign of the international timetabling and capacity allocation process (a project known as Timetable Redesign (TTR) for short), including Digital Capacity Management, will increase the competitiveness of freight and passenger rail and is a key enabler for modal shift to green transportation. It will bring decisive advantages to applicants, infrastructure managers and governments:

- Better customer responsiveness
  - Higher punctuality
  - Harmonisation of paths at borders
  - Increased capacity
  - Higher speed
  - Lower investments for infrastructure
  - Enabler for an integrated European schedule
  - Cost reduction
  - Customer commitments beyond one timetable period
- There is a need for a sound legal basis for TTR that applies to the entire European network as early as possible.
- Experience has shown that the cost of software development is initially underestimated. Financing possibilities for Digital Capacity Management are crucial for its successful implementation.