

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**between the Ministries responsible for Transport of**

**the Republic of Austria,  
the Republic of Bulgaria,  
the Czech Republic,  
the Federal Republic of Germany,  
the Hellenic Republic,  
Hungary,  
Romania and  
the Slovak Republic**

**on the establishment of the Executive Board of the  
Orient / East-Med Rail Freight Corridor**

Considering the following general objectives:

The implementation of a European rail freight network is one of the objectives of the European transport policy. In this policy framework, the goal is to encourage the gradual development of trans-European corridors for competitive rail freight transport, thus enabling higher usage of the railway system with positive effects on modal shift. The gradual establishment of corridors giving a higher level of quality to rail freight transport has to be achieved through improvements in capacity, including the upgrading and the rehabilitation of infrastructure or through the development of traffic management systems and better access to the terminals of the corridor. The improved level of quality offered by rail infrastructure should make it possible to develop rail freight services or create new ones.

Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight (hereinafter referred to as 'the Regulation') came into force on 9 November 2010.

The Regulation lays down rules for the establishment and organisation of international rail freight corridors with a view to the development of a European rail network for competitive freight. It sets out rules for the selection, organisation, management and indicative investment planning of freight corridors. The Regulation applies to the management and the use of railway infrastructure included in rail freight corridors.

The Regulation has set up Rail Freight Corridor No 7 (RFC7) as one of the initial freight corridors. In line with the provisions of the Regulation, it became operational on 8 November 2013.

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The list of initial freight corridors in the Regulation has been amended by Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility. RFC7 has been given a new designation with the name "Orient/East-Med" Rail Freight Corridor. Furthermore, its primary route network has been extended, pursuant to the stipulations of Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013, with a provision to take the necessary implementation measures until 10 November 2018.

Article 8(1) of the Regulation of 2010 stipulates that each rail freight corridor needs an Executive Board, composed of representatives of the authorities of the Member States concerned. As the extended rail freight corridor "Orient/East Med" consists of more Member States than the originally established RFC7, a new Executive Board needs to be established.

The Ministries responsible for transport of the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Hellenic Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic:

- recognise the contribution of rail freight to Europe's socio-economic development and to the environment;
- stress the high potential of rail freight corridors to utilise in a more efficient and effective way the TEN-T Core Network;
- stress the high potential of the rail freight corridors for the relations with Asia, but also for its high potential in terms of multimodality and for its benefits for the global transport;
- share the ambition to continue to work together to develop a network of rail freight corridors by the management of the corridors and their interconnections, but also by the improvement of the interoperability, the removal of bottlenecks, the harmonisation of operational rules and the capacity management;
- wish to increase the involvement of the business community in developing the rail freight corridors;
- acknowledge the work carried out by the initial Member States of RFC 7 based on the Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of rail freight corridor No 7 (Orient Corridor) signed on 16 June 2011;
- take note that the freight corridor has so far been marketed under the brand name 'Orient Rail Freight Corridor';
- consider that the present Memorandum of Understanding is without prejudice to the competence of the Member States regarding planning and funding of the rail infrastructure on their territory;
- encourage the regulatory bodies and national safety authorities to improve their cooperation along the rail freight corridor.

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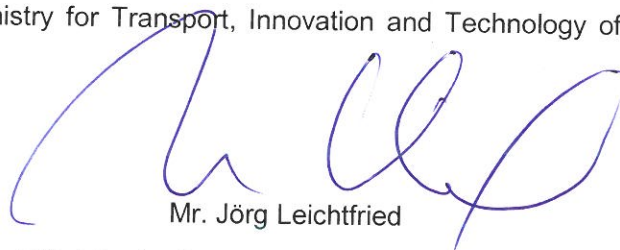
With regards to the above and in order to comply with the provisions laid down in Article 8(1) of the Regulation, the Ministries hereby establish the Executive Board of the Orient/East-Med rail freight corridor which is responsible for defining the general objectives of the rail freight corridor, supervising and taking the measures as expressly provided for in Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No. 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, as amended by Regulation (EU) No. 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of rail freight corridor No 7 (Orient Corridor) signed on 16 June 2011 is replaced by the present Memorandum of Understanding.

The decisions taken by the Executive Board established by the Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of rail freight corridor No 7 (Orient Corridor) signed on 16 June 2011 remain valid for the parties to these decisions only, unless new decisions are taken in accordance with Article 8(4) of the Regulation.

Signed in Brussels on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017, in eight copies in English.

For the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology of the Republic of Austria



Mr. Jörg Leichtfried

Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology

For the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria



Mr. Ivaylo Moskovski

Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications

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For the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic



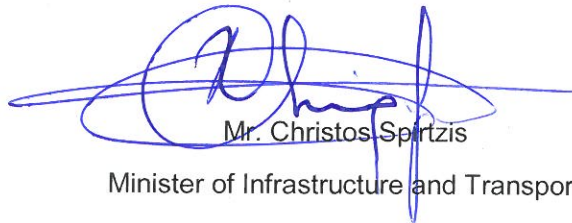
Mr. Dan Ťok  
Minister of Transport

For the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure of the Federal Republic of  
Germany



Mr. Christian Schmidt  
Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure

For the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of the Hellenic Republic



Mr. Christos Spirtzis  
Minister of Infrastructure and Transport

For the Ministry of National Development of Hungary



Mr. Róbert Homolya dr.  
Minister of State for Transport Policy

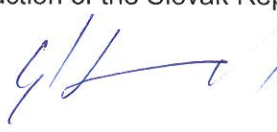
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For the Ministry of Transport of Romania



Mr. Felix Stroe  
Minister of Transport

For the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic



Mr. Árpád Érsek  
Minister of Transport and Construction