



# YEARLY ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDOR

October 2015



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**Lőrinc Czakó**

Chairman of RFC7 Management Board

## FOREWORD BY CHAIRMAN

Within the framework of establishment and continuous development of the internal market of the European Union it is an inevitable strategic goal to strengthen and broaden the cross-border, international rail freight transport. In this context, on 22nd September 2010 Member States adopted a regulation in order to promote a competitive alternative with other modes of freight transport and to increase the modal share of rail freight transport vis-à-vis other transport modes on the long term. This initiative is aiming also to contribute to the achievement of Europe's goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions, achieving energy security, and relieving congestion as rail is one of the most environmentally friendly transport mode compared to the others. With the creation of the Rail Freight Corridor concept a new service model has been established which is an effective step towards to turn the White Paper's objectives into reality. That is to shift 30% of road freight over 300 km to other transport modes by 2030, and more than 50% by 2050, for example by the motivation of freight businesses to use rather rail in case they deal with long-distance international cross-border businesses, via ensuring of an interoperable, safer, reliable, seamless, good quality and sufficiently financed railway infrastructure. Rail freight can offer a proper basis for operating and ensuring high quality services (e.g. commercial speed, journey times, train length, loading gauge or axle load).

In order to reach this goal the European Union designated 9 international rail freight corridors (RFC) in the EU rail network. Two days before the deadline set in Regulation 913/2010, on 8th November 2013 at 12.00 o'clock the Rail Freight Corridor 7 became operational as first among 6 rail freight corridors (RFCs) to be established by 10 November 2013.

RFC7 follows the route of the Prague-Vienna/Bratislava-Budapest-Bucharest-Constanta and – Vidin-Sofia-Thessaloniki-Athens axis. 7 European countries, namely the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece with their 8 members (railway Infrastructure Managers and a Capacity Allocation Body) established a corridor in order to build an essential connection between Central Europe and South-East Europe and form a link to Asia through the Black Sea and Aegean Sea ports offering a good, reliable service based on harmonised technical and procedural conditions.

In order to fulfil the requirements and expectations described in the regulation, the participating railway companies of RFC-7 implemented a number of measures to be able to operate the corridor.

Thanks to the harmonised work during the 2 years of setting up of the corridor, the international freight undertaking - Prvá Slovenská Železničná – could have been provided with the 1st designation of pre-arranged path on 8th November 2013 between Czech Republic and Hungary, from Prague to Curtici (Romania) by interoperable capacity allocation IT tool (PCS) by RNE presented on the spot of the opening ceremony of our corridor. It was a historical moment and with this act the corridor started its real operation.

After the launch of the first corridor offer and gathering first experiences we had several consultations with the market stakeholders and business partners in order to collect their opinions, proposals. In 2014 thanks to the customer oriented management of RFC7 we could make a more proper offer harmonising and adapting the region-specific needs in this business environment. From the first experiences learnt from the needs of our customers we have developed overtime even a newer product category on the corridor which is the flexible Pre-arranged Path offers. This reflects the fact that RFC7 gradually adopts to the own specific aspects which have to be taken into account in the operation of a corridor around 7.500 km long.

RFC7 is one important transport artery in the corridor network of the EU. We are committed to the network approach which is reflected by our cooperation with the stakeholders, representatives of the respective Ministries of Transport, concerned Regulatory Bodies and with representatives of the European Commission as well. Our working method is based on the constructive, consensus-oriented approach.

We had a lot of tasks in 2014, we have some results as well, but we have a lot of challenges still ahead. We are ready to find good, pragmatic solutions! I do hope you can learn it from our summary!



Lőrinc Czákó

Chairman of RFC7 Management Board

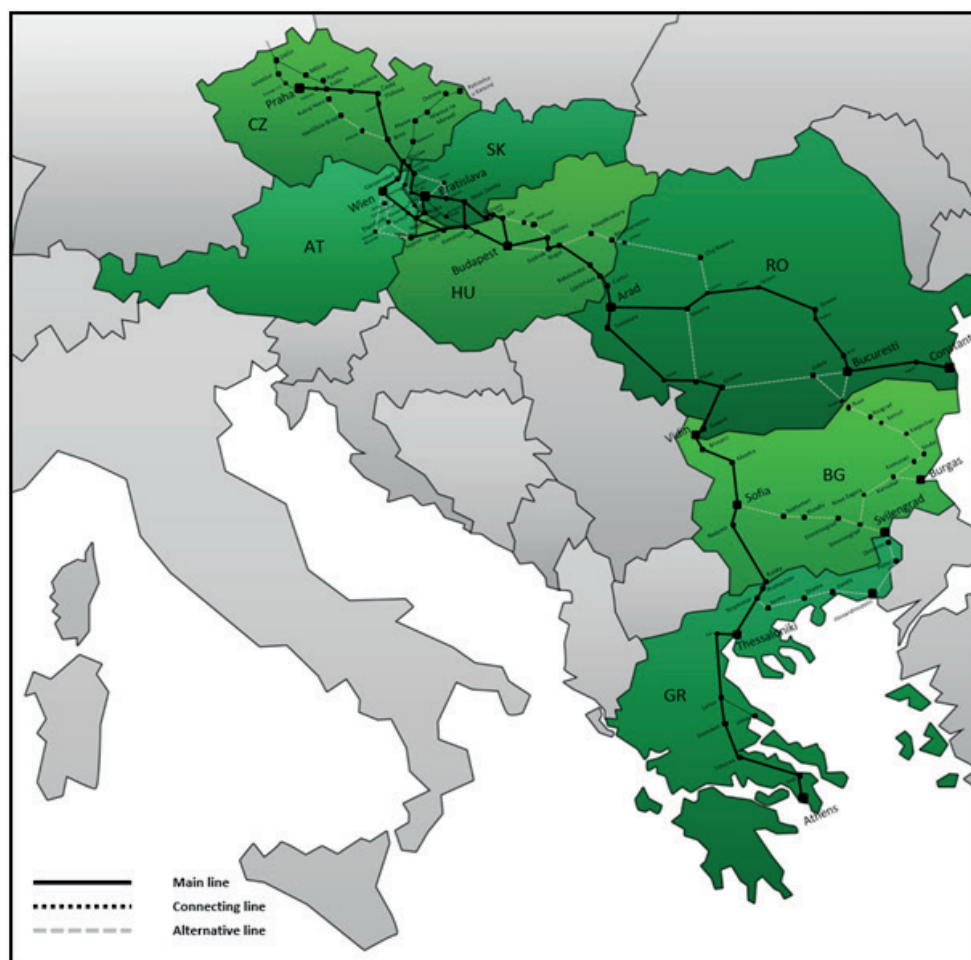
## THE VISION

Regulation 913/2010 EU concerning a European network for competitive freight entered into force on 9 November 2010. It was elaborated for the purpose of making international rail freight more attractive and improve the efficiency of the system thus contribute to the modal shift from road to rail as well on the long term. With the objective of improving the conditions for international rail freight Regulation 913/2010 aims to reinforce cooperation at all levels along selected rail freight corridors (RFCs).

The long term vision with the RFC-concept is the creation and setup of international market-oriented rail freight corridors, with a view to strengthen cooperation between rail infrastructure managers as regards both investments and the management of capacity and traffic. The appropriate treatment of international freight trains shall also be achieved in terms of capacity allocation on lines designated to the corridor that also cater passenger trains.

Last but not least, a very important aspect is to support and allow the development of multimodality, in particular with the concerned ports. In case all the measures of Regulation 913 are going to be tackled and exploited on the right way, implicitly with further regulatory provisions arm-in-arm, the increase of the competitiveness of rail transport vis-à-vis other transport modes will be significant.

All the parties involved into the setup and operation of RFC Orient/East-Med will work hard to achieve the targets of the RFC-concept, serve the demands of the market in its best way possible therefore try to contribute to the long term vision of the creation of a Single European Rail Area.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 WHO ARE WE?

Rail Freight Corridor Orient/East-Med (hereinafter referred to as "RFC7") according to Regulation 913/2010/EU links Central-Europe with the Eastern- and South-Eastern parts of Europe running until the Greek port of Pireas. Among all RFCs, Corridor Nr. 7 calls the most Member States for an international cooperation according to the requirements of the Regulation, namely: Czech Republic, Austria, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, between the cities of Prague-Vienna/Bratislava-Budapest — Vidin-Sofia- Thessaloniki-Athens- as well as Budapest — Bucharest-Constanta.

RFC7 follows mostly the path of the ERTMS Corridor E which runs from Dresden to Constanta (common line from Prague to Constanta). The deployment of ERTMS contributes to remedy the lack of technical compatibility, a major obstacle for the development of international rail traffic.

The designation of RFC7 was also identified on the basis of previously defined European corridor concepts, such as:

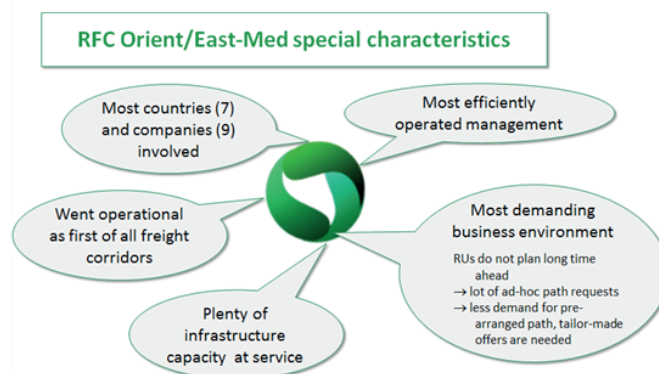
- the TEN-T priority axis 22, which runs from Nürnberg and Dresden to Constanta and Athens (common line from Prague to Constanta and Athens),
- RNE corridor 10, which runs from Hamburg to Budapest (common line from Prague to Budapest) and RNE corridor 9, which runs from Vienna to Kulata and Constanta as well as to Varna, Burgas and Svilengrad (common line from Vienna to Constanta and to Kulata).

This Orient – East – Mediterranean corridor is one the most important transport artery connecting the centre of Europe with South-East part of the Union. These strategic transit routes also allows to build up connection towards Turkey, with an important boosting economic area from where more and more traffic flow can reach the RFC network.

## 1.2 SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RFC7

With the cooperation of seven countries and their respective infrastructure managers and an allocation body, RFC7 went operational as first of all freight corridors on 8 November 2013. Since then the corridor tries to serve a very demanding business environment with an outstanding flexibility taking into consideration the needs of the market. Due to the fact that plenty of capacity is available on lines involved into the corridor, Railway Undertakings do not plan long time ahead when it comes to reservations of capacity for the operation of their freight trains. Therefore path requests happen rather on a short notice basis then in forms of "Pre-arranged Paths" (see details in section 1.4) the special product introduced by the RFC-concept. As there is sufficient capacity available therefore the cost-sensitivity of the region could even result in more ad-hoc path requests of customers who can sometimes reassess their business routes, even if time-wise it is not the fastest way to proceed.

Thanks to the efficient management of the RFC7 and the continuous consultation process with the stakeholders of the market the flexible approach developed over-time which tends to serve better both the needs of our customers and the duties stemming from the regulation as well.



Most countries in the South-East European (SEE) region experienced high political and economic instability in the 1990s, while economic recovery and transition related economic reforms have been generally slower than in Central Eastern Europe. Therefore the governance of RFC7 have to take into account different levels of development also when it comes to the provision and requirement of rail related services. The RFC7 management believes that there are big potentials for the development of rail freight business in the SEE region on the long term but to achieve the targeted results requested by the Regulation is still a challenging task for the corridor.

The fact that six of the involved Member States rely still intensely on EU Cohesion Funds also suggest that the RFC Orient/East-Med differs in its features and characteristics from the other RFCs of the system where rather the operational measures remain still problematic.

At the same time the access to the Cohesion Fund also can be seen in a positive light, enabling the Member States and Infrastructure Managers concerned the possibility to use substantial European funds with high co-funding rates to modernize the railway infrastructure and adapt it to the needs of today's and tomorrow's freight market, under the condition that the political priorities favour such investments.

The SEE region currently experiences the implementation of "hard" measures, i.e. the focus rather lies upon the upgrades and refurbishments of rail infrastructure, the proper implementation of the TEN-T minimum measures in particular electrification, the introduction of at least 740m train length, 22,5 t axle-load and ERTMS on the entire core network for freight latest by 2030. This will give a boost in capacity, efficiency and competitiveness of freight. The adequate development of intermodal terminals and last-mile infrastructure are also crucial points which have to be tackled as regards of the current bottlenecks of the network.

Apart of the proper implementation of infrastructural measures, a major emphasis has to be put also on the harmonisation of operational procedures as well, which still means one of the biggest challenges within the frame of Regulation. The infrastructure managers

involved into the works of the corridor have to find a "common denominator" when it comes to the harmonisation of operational rules, terms and conditions for the usage of infrastructure. To ensure the interoperability on cross-border sections and train handling procedure in border stations is one of the priorities tackled during the harmonisation. And last but not least one of the hardest "nuts to be cracked" are at the level of traffic management where a possible way of coordination and harmonisation of processes has to be found, concerning e.g. the common procedure of the harmonisation of works and possessions in order to secure the burden-free traffic for the users of the corridor.



## 2. RFC7 CORRIDOR GOVERNANCE

Rail Freight Corridor Orient/East-Med is established by cooperation of the transport ministries, infrastructure manager companies and allocation bodies of seven countries.



The setup of Rail Freight Corridor Orient/East-Med organizational units are illustrated in this schematic picture:



**2.1 EXECUTIVE BOARD:** The Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Executive Board and containing the implementing measures of RFC7 was signed in Luxembourg on 16 June 2011. The Executive Board is the body responsible for supervision of corridor activity and for defining the general objectives and the framework for capacity-allocation along the corridor. The Executive Board is addressed in case of issues beyond the competence of Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies or when a conflict of interest arises between them.



**2.2 MANAGEMENT BOARD:** The Infrastructure Managers' and Capacity Allocation Bodies' obligation is to set up the Management Board based on the Regulation 913. In early 2011 the concerned Bodies had their first meeting on RFC Orient/East-Med related matters. The body was officially established in September 2011 by the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding by the eight infrastructure managers and one capacity allocation body of the corridor, namely

- ÖBB-Infrastructure – ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG - IM, Austria
- SŽDC – Railway Infrastructure Administration, State organisation (Správa železniční dopravní cesty, státní organizace) - IM, Czech Republic
- ŽSR – Railways of the Slovak Republic (Železnice Slovenskej republiky) - IM, Slovak Republic
- MÁV – Hungarian State Railways Company Limited by Shares (MÁV Magyar Államvasutak Zrt.) - IM, Hungary
- GYSEV – Raab–Oedenburg–Ebenfurter Eisenbahn AG (Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurti Vasút Zrt.) - IM, Hungary & Austria
- VPE - Hungarian Rail Capacity Allocation Office (Vasúti Pályakapacitás-elosztó Kft.) - AB, Hungary
- CFR – National Infrastructure Manager of Romania (Compania Nationala de Cai Ferate) - IM, Romania
- NRIC – National Railway Infrastructure Company, State Enterprise (НКЖИ (Национална компания железопътна инфраструктура) - IM, Bulgaria
- OSE – Hellenic Railways (Οργανισμός Σιδηροδρόμων Ελλάδος) - IM, Greece

The Management Board is the main operative body of the corridor, its members have to make fundamental decisions, so they hold meetings more frequently, yearly 4-5 sessions are convened since 2011. The Management Board makes its decisions on the basis of mutual consent of its members.



The MB has decided to set up six Working Groups and a Secretariat to support its work.

Decisions of the Management Board are usually based on the proposals and background material compiled by these organizations.

**2.3 THE SECRETARIAT:** The Management Board of RFC7 have analysed the conditions of possibly forming an EEIG for the purpose of corridor management, but the Management Board decided to choose a representative governance model, i.e. to operate a Secretariat, which provides the appropriate administrative support to enable the MB to carry out its work, ensures that the tasks of the MB are properly co-ordinated, and organises all other associated aspects of corridor activity.

At the MB meeting on 15th November 2011 the members agreed that MÁV Co. shall fulfil the tasks of the Secretariat until no independent legal organization is set up for the corridor. Taking into account that RFC7 Secretariat activity is of common interest of every Party, its cost is covered jointly by the MB member IMs and AB.

Responsibilities of the Secretariat are listed in the Internal Rules and the Secretariat Agreement.

## **2.4 CORRIDOR ONE-STOP-SHOP (C-OSS)**

According to Article 13 (1) of the Regulation, the management board for a freight corridor shall designate or set up a joint body for applicants to request and to receive answers, in a single place and in a single operation, regarding infrastructure capacity for freight trains crossing at least one border along the freight corridor – hereinafter referred as corridor one-stop shop (C-OSS).

RailNetEurope (RNE) has proposed three different options for the set up:

(1) IT OSS, a coordinating IT-tool standing alone.

(2) Representative OSS, one IM or AB in a corridor acts on behalf of all IMs in that corridor supported by a coordinating IT-tool.

(3) Dedicated OSS, a joint body set up or designated by a corridor organisation supported by a coordinating IT-tool.

Analysing the three possibilities and taking into consideration the special characteristics and cost-sensitivity of the region members of the Management Board came to a decision to apply the 'Representative' model. Thus on 1st October 2012 the parties agreed that one employee in full time will carry out the tasks of C-OSS of RFC7. The Hungarian Allocation Body (VPE) undertakes the role of being 'representative C-OSS' of RFC 7 on the basis of the C-OSS Agreement which was initially signed for period of 2 years, and later, it was prolonged with an amendment until 1st April 2018.

The operation of the C-OSS started in April 2013 in test mode and continues from 8 November 2013 in real operational mode.

The role and the characteristics of the C-OSS is elaborated in section 3.1.

## 2.5 WORKING GROUPS:

The MB identified the basic structure of activities, and systematically divided the tasks to the expert groups most competent in the particular fields. As a result, six Working Groups have been established, each composing of expert members from every MB member company, to deliver the required measures.

Each Working Group's work is co-ordinated by a Head of WG designated by the Management Board therewith possibly each infrastructure manager can direct one WG. The head of WG is responsible for the organization and co-ordination of the work in the respective WG according to the decisions and expectations of the MB and according to the aims and rules set out in the Regulation.

Every WG keeps a record of the activities, documents, consultations and decisions made by the WG. Heads of WGs inform the MB about the activity of the WG via the Secretariat for every MB meeting, or take part in the MB meeting upon request of the MB.

The following Working Groups are set up and operated:

1. Marketing WG
2. Traffic Management WG
3. One-Stop-Shop WG
4. Infrastructure Development WG
5. Interoperability and ERTMS WG
6. IT Tools WG

The tasks of each WG are included in the Internal Rules and Procedures, and they are also governed by the necessity arising in the process of corridor work. Though the topics of WGs overlap, their main fields of competence are summarized in the below table.

Marketing WG	transport market study, satisfaction survey, performance objectives and monitoring, definition of pre-arranged paths and reserve capacity, authorized applicants
Traffic Management WG	coordination of works, harmonization of traffic management btw IMs & w Terminals & in case of disturbance, priority rules, performance objectives and monitoring,
One-Stop-Shop WG	C-OSS operation rules, corridor information document, definition of pre-arranged paths and reserve capacity, coordination of capacity-allocation btw C-OSS & IMs & Terminals, authorized applicants
Infrastructure Development WG	investment plan, inventory of projects and financial resources, harmonization of investments along corridor
Interoperability and ERTMS WG	accelerating the establishment of better interoperability along the corridor and enhancing ERTMS deployment, ensure consistency with ERTMS E corridor
IT Tools WG	identification of necessary IT tools, facilitating their introduction by every involved IM and AB

Leaders of RFC7 Working Groups are:

Working Group	Company	Name of WG leader
Marketing WG	GYSEV	Andrea Mosóczy
Traffic Management WG	MÁV	Attiláné Mucsi
One-Stop-Shop WG	VPE	László Pósalaki
Infrastructure Development WG	SŽDC	Petr Kolář
Interoperability & ERTMS WG	ÖBB-Infrastruktur	Nina Doppler
IT Tools WG	CFR	Dorina Mironescu

## 2.6 THE RAILWAY UNDERTAKING ADVISORY GROUP (RAG) AND THE TERMINAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG):

The Advisory Groups were created as a platform for railway undertakings (Railway Advisory Group - RAG); managers and owners of terminals (Terminal Advisory Group - TAG) to facilitate the exchange of information, recommendations and mutual understanding in a non-discriminatory way with the Management Board of the RFC.

Since October 2012, the MB has consulted AG members at AG meetings and in e-mail circular letters. AGs' opinions were asked in respect of the content of the Transport Market Study, the Implementation Plan, the C-OSS Operational Rules and Priority Rules as well.

During the drafting period of these documents the Management Board together with the RFC7 Working Groups discussed all of proposals of AGs and the acceptable ones were included into the documents.

AG members have also been informed about the IT tools that shall be applied in the framework of operating the rail freight corridors.

In 2014 the first AGs' meeting was held in Sopron, where our partners received the latest information about our development plan towards to be able to provide as user friendly services as it is possible. Furthermore the representative of RAG presented the first package of their suggestions which would make RFC7 more attractive, inter alia they needed new alternative routes and PaPs in Bulgaria (Ruse - Sindel-Razpredelitelna – Junak – Karnobat – Nova Zagora – Simeonovgrad) as there are significant bottlenecks on the main line.

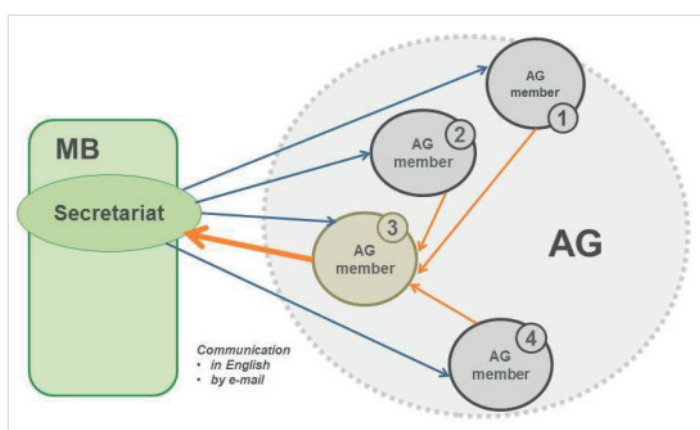
The Management Board after an analysis made by the C-OSS accepted the implementation of the new alternative lines on 29th September 2014.

On the 14th October in Bratislava during the second AGs' meeting of the year the new FlexPaP concept were introduced, which according to RFC7's expectation would be much more attractive to potential business partners than the previously offered, strictly fixed PaPs.

FlexPaP concept can be the optimal solution for both RUs and IMs needs providing guaranteed but adjustable travel times thus ensuring better usage of the capacity. In addition the RUs and Terminals provided further suggestions in connection with our services.

As it can be concluded after the corridor became operational (8th November 2013) representatives of RUs and Terminals were able to highlight such issues which can only arise during the real operational phase.

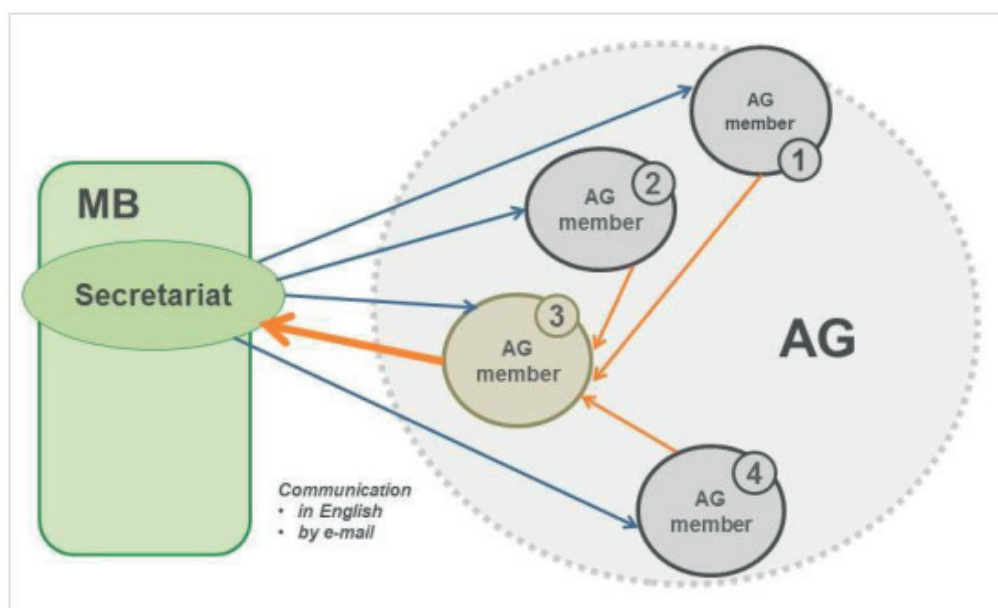
To improve our services is essential to get inputs from the market stakeholders, from our partners as the Management Board is always waiting for their expectations, suggestions and take them under consideration as soon as possible and tries to provide answers and possibly solutions at the next AGs' meeting at the latest.







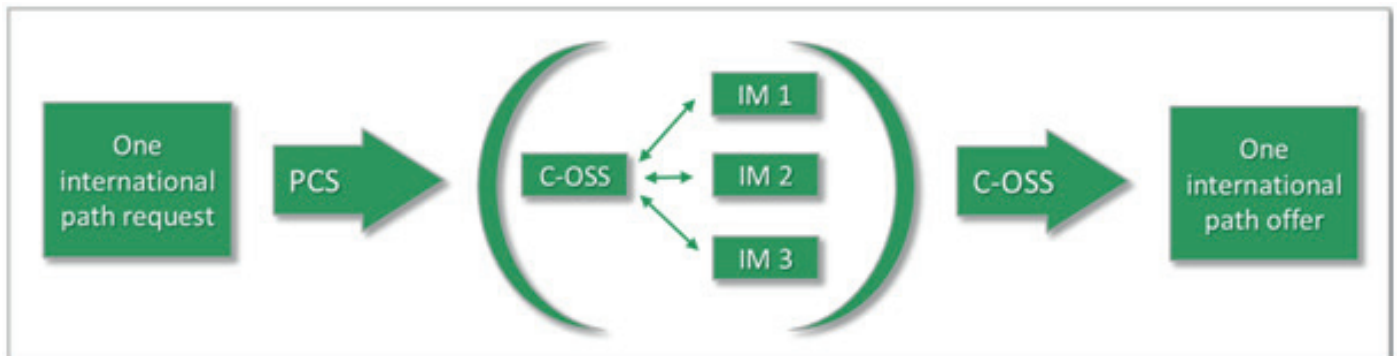
As principally Secretariat acts as a single channel of communication between MB and AGs, it spreads material for consultation to every company registered as AG member, and receives feedback from the Leaders of the two AG only, which contains the opinion of all AG members:



### 3. THE RFC7 OFFER

#### 3.1 CORRIDOR ONE-STOP SHOP

Regulation 913/2010 has introduced a new 'player' to the rail freight business. As a unique contact and co-ordination point the Corridor One-Stop Shop – hereinafter: C-OSS – simplifies and standardise the process of international capacity planning, application and allocation using the common European IT tool Path Coordination System (PCS) developed by RailNetEurope. All available path product of the corridor are registered in PCS and can be easily booked via this system. C-OSS will manage the request through the whole phase providing maximum 'care' as a single service provider acting as one IM on behalf of all involved IMs.



C-OSS also works together with C-OSSs of other RFCs to handle multi-corridor capacity allocation in one operation.

#### 3.2 THE PRODUCT: THE PRE-ARRANGED TRAIN PATH

A new product was born with the entry into force of Regulation 913/2010/EU:

Designated capacity in the form of the so-called "Pre-arranged Train Path" (the so-called "PaP") which is periodically offered by the infrastructure managers involved into the operation of the corridor is a new product introduced by the Regulation 913 to be used on the network of RFCs whose principle lines were also defined by the Annex of the Regulation.

PAPS ARE PROTECTED THROUGHOUT ALL PHASES OF THEIR LIFECYCLE:

- Before the allocation of the capacity on the corridor, infrastructure managers of the freight corridor shall jointly define and organise international pre-defined train paths for freight trains (the so-called "PaPs")
- After the allocation of the PaP it is protected from cancellation
- During the use of capacity freight trains are protected against traffic disturbances and handled with the highest priority (where) possible

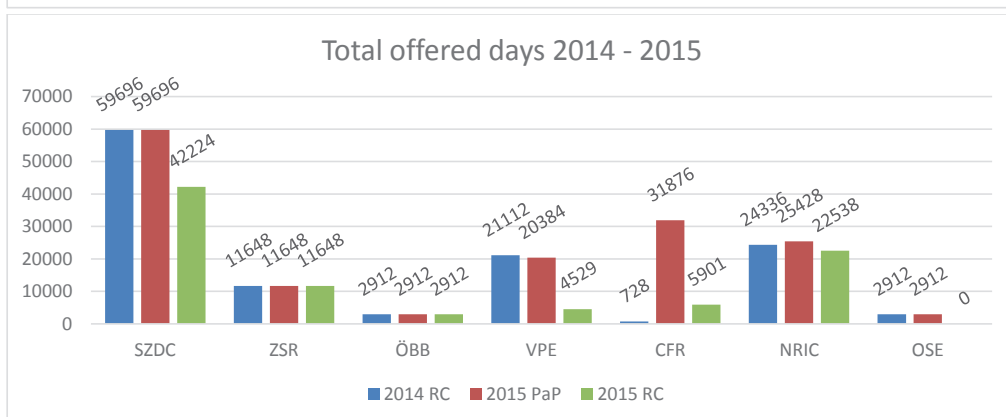
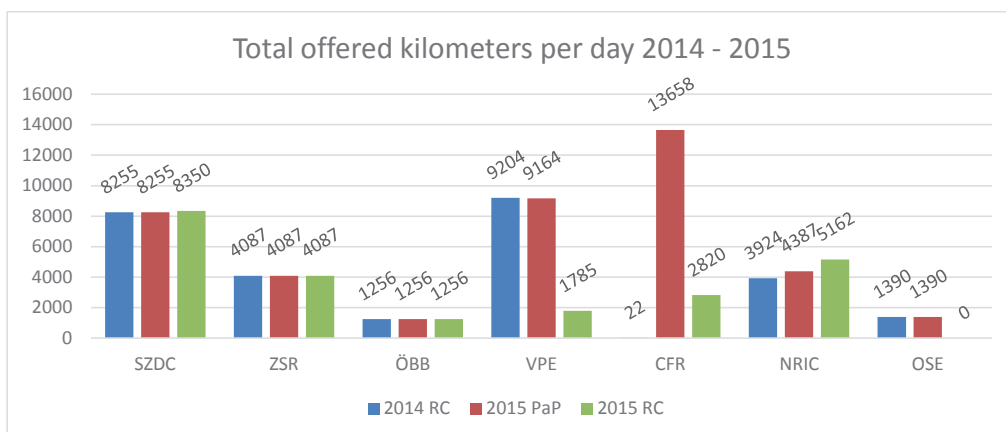
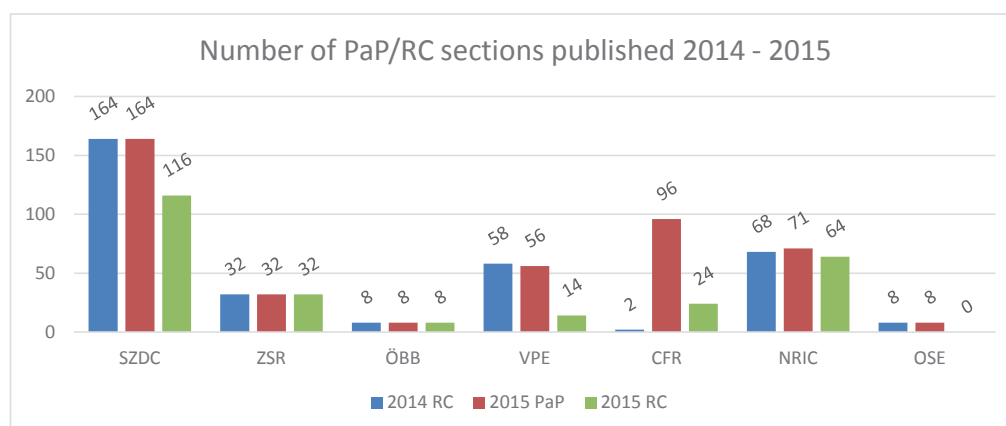


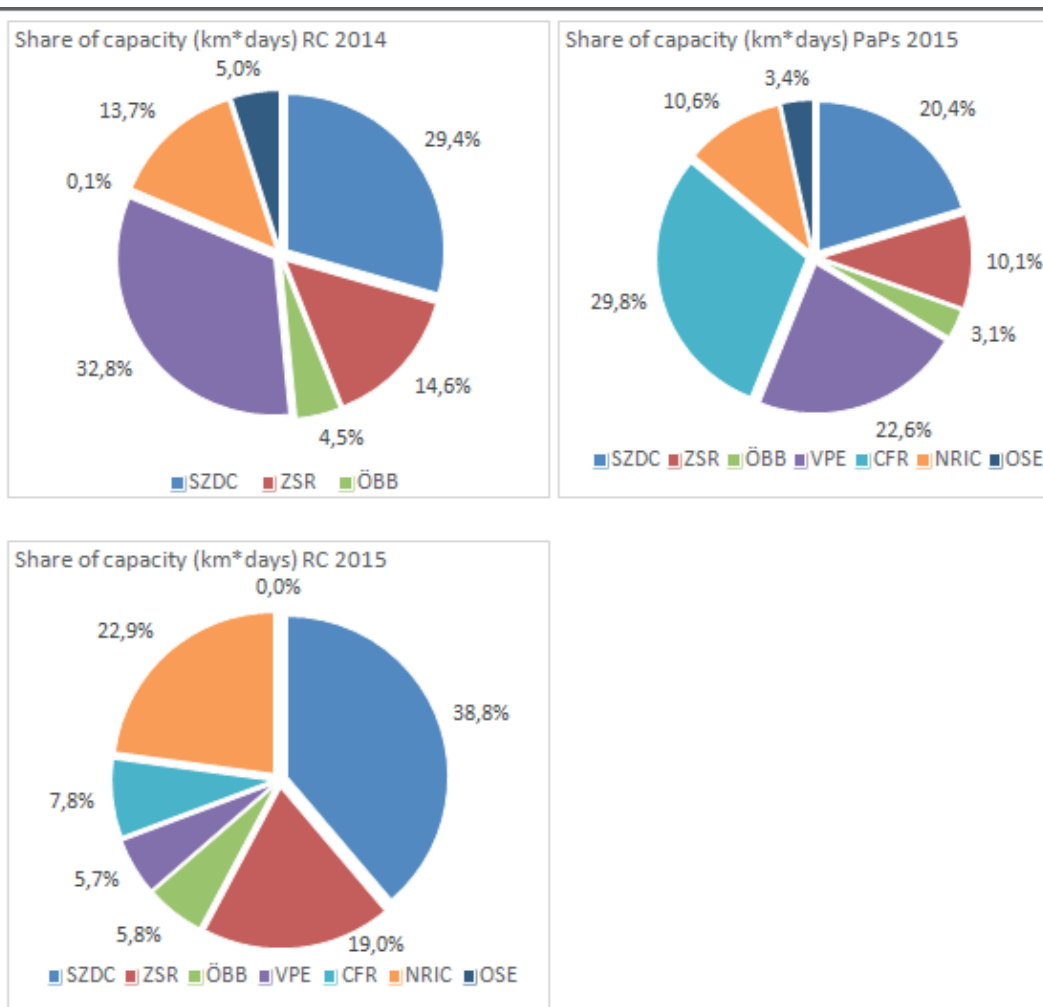
### 3.3. THE OFFER

On 10<sup>th</sup> November 2013 the corridor published its first path catalogue, displaying reserve capacity (RC) for timetable 2014. In line with Art. 14 of the Regulation these pre-arranged path products were dedicated to the corridor and protected from national changes.

Pre-arranged paths (PaPs) for timetable 2015 were announced in 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 with specified geographical sections and train parameters such as load and length according to the overview provided by the Transport Market Study.

Learning from the first experiences our reserve capacity offer published on 13<sup>th</sup> October has already included some elements of a more progressive and market-oriented 'flexible approach', thus for the better capacity management instead of publishing fixed PaPs VPE, CFR and OSE have guaranteed to provide tailor-made solution between borders based on the actual request.

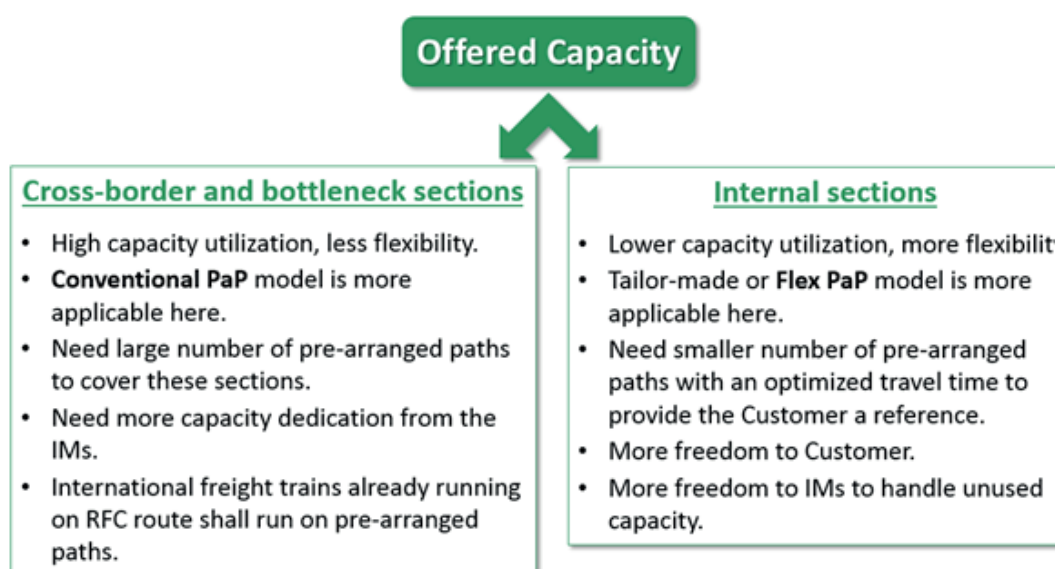




### 3.4 FLEXIBLE APPROACH – NEW PRODUCT HAS BEEN DEVELOPPED

Quickly reacting to the market's feedback the corridor management decided to improve some elements of its offer fitting more to the characteristics of the region. Cross-border/bottleneck approach followed by the implementation of flexible path product 'Flex PaP' can provide much better utilization and customization of the capacity via guaranteed travel times and protected borders within a frame of a pre-arranged path.

With the approved extension from Ruse to Svilengrad from 2015 the corridor will be able to provide fast and reliable connection to Burgas and Alexandroupolis Ports and also towards Turkey.



## 4. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The harmonisation of traffic management rules along the corridor and the harmonisation and coordination of works relating to infrastructure development facilitate the fluent flow of business. RFC7 tends to setup guidelines for the harmonisation of traffic management rules along the corridor with the coordination of the Traffic Management Working Group. The elaboration of proposals and common solutions to deal with the most important measures to secure a seamless functioning for the corridor is ongoing, which involves inter alia the harmonisation and coordination of infrastructure works along the corridor, assessment and harmonisation of border agreements, coordination of terms and conditions, the overall performance monitoring, dealing quality issues and reporting.

### 4.1 COORDINATION OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT REGARDING THE EXISTING IT TOOLS

The current availability of tools supporting the communication and the data collection connected with international rail traffic management has been analysed among the participating IMs of RFC7. The conclusion of the analysis is that no new tool is needed and that the already existing IT tools, namely TIS and TCCCom, are compliant to the purposes of rail freight corridors.

### 4.2 PRIORITY RULES

RFC7 also established common rules regarding priority of trains applicable on corridor level, which are the following:

General principles of prioritization on RFC7 includes:

- Faster train has the priority over slower trains.
- If the corridor train is on time, it has the priority.
- In case of conflict between 2 delayed trains, priority is given to the faster train.
- RUs can give priority to specific train within their trains.

PRIORITY ORDER OF TRAIN TYPES ON RFC7 IS THE FOLLOWING:

1. Emergency trains (breakdown, rescue, fire-fighter trains)
2. High speed passenger trains and long distance passenger trains
3. Passenger trains, priority freight trains (including corridor trains) – faster trains have principally priority to slower trains
4. Other freight trains
5. Service trains

### 4.3. MONITORING OF CORRIDOR (TRAIN) PERFORMANCE

The performance of the corridor is composed of two parts:

- capacity performance, which is under the management of the C-OSS and it is assessed through the indicators defined in the FCA
- operational performance (punctuality), which is under the management of the Traffic Management Working Group

In order to assess the train performance of RFC7, the Managing Board decided to use the 30 minutes threshold for the running freight trains on the corridor.

The thresholds generally relate to the punctuality - measured as a percentage of on time arrivals at specified monitoring points.

According to the Implementation Plan of RFC7, the punctuality of corridor trains shall be min. 75% in the first year of operating the corridor. The process for monitoring performance is described in RNE Guidelines for Punctuality targets. Delay codes follow the UIC coding system.

Planned common IT tool for monitoring of quality is TIS, however in the first stage (until full implementation of TIS by all members of RFC7) the quality reports will be compiled from national IT systems. Because of the missing working TIS in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary the Traffic Management Working Group decided to use the available national tools for the analysing of the train performance of corridor trains.

The following indicators of performance shall be monitored:

- number of corridor trains
- number of the border crossing allocated/used path corridor trains
- length path

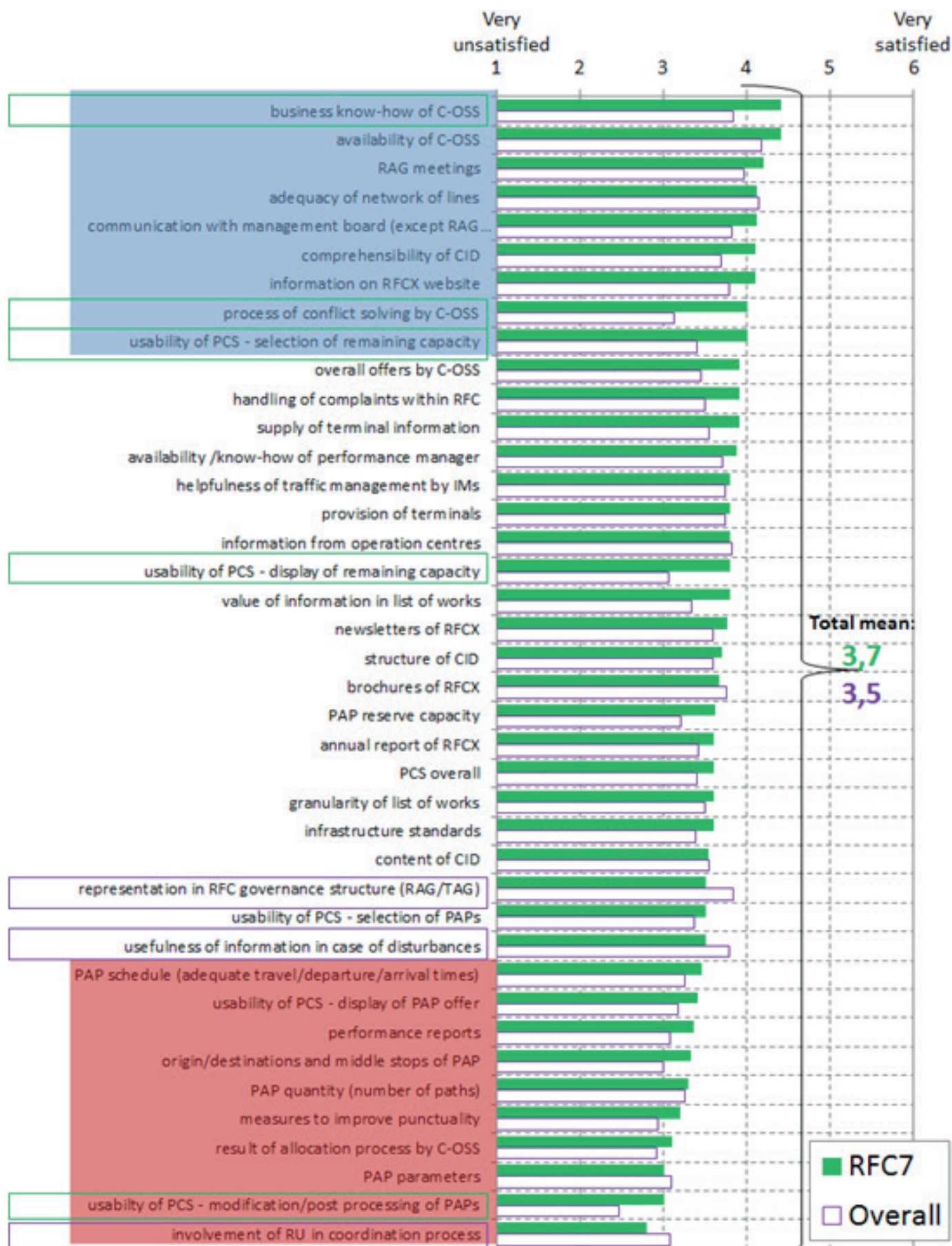
Starting from the opening of the corridor by the end of 2013 and over 2014, RFC7 has been committed, in cooperation with its members and RNE to define a harmonised procedure for the start of the performance monitoring activity. The first results are expected by the first half of 2015.

## 5. SATISFACTION SURVEY

Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 requires Rail Freight Corridors' (RFC) Management Board to measure the satisfaction level of their users yearly and publish the results of the survey. The aim is to provide detailed picture of users' opinion and experience regarding the services and products of RFCs, and to reveal motivations of potential users for the further development of rail freight corridors. RNE has launched a project to create a common platform of Corridor Satisfaction Survey for all RFCs willing to participate, in order to make the results more comparable, to ease the answering for respondents and to ensure a modern research technics for the survey series. The MB of RFC7 decided to join RNE Satisfaction Survey Platform, which works with a harmonised questionnaire developed by RNE and Satisfaction Working Group and is conducted by an independent market research institute (marketmind) with the help of CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview) system.

The first wave of the survey was conducted in 2014. Because of the small sample size (19 respondents concerning RFC7) and the high rate of 'do not know/no answer' category we can analyse the results of RFC7 with indicative value only. However according to these indicative results RFC7 already has some 'pre-strengths' (business know-how of C-OSS, availability of C-OSS, RAG meetings and process of conflict solving by C-OSS), and its total mean is somewhat higher (only indicatively, not significantly!) than the overall performance average of all participating corridors.

Based on the experience of first wave the research methodology was modified to make it more effective. The results of the second survey can provide possibilities to reveal our development not only in European framework but compared to our own starting state as well.





## 6. NEXT STEPS

Along with the aspiration for continuous adaptation to the various market needs, the corridor also constantly strains after strengthening the cooperation among the involved stakeholders.

Thus, exchanging best-practice on our consultative Advisory Group meetings can provide a great input to future challenges such as:

- Harmonization of regulations
- Harmonization of technical, operational and administrative rules to enhance greater interoperability
- Corridor-level performance regimes
- Improvement of IT systems
- Improvement of planning, coordinating and forecasting infrastructure works in order to minimize traffic disruption.
- Elimination of bottlenecks

Overall, our goal is to increase rail freight market share of the European transport via providing our customers the conditions for easier faster and more reliable transport through the borders. Extension of the Corridor to Germany and further extensions to be achieved

Following the modification of the principal route as defined by the Annex of Regulation 913/2010 EU, the corridor will be extended towards Germany and also towards South of the corridor, in Bulgaria and Greece. Germany will be the 8<sup>th</sup> Member State to be involved into the operation of the Corridor, as the Annex II of Regulation 1316/2013 declares it. Further extensions of the principal routes have also been laid down as it can be studied in the below extract of the aforementioned legislative provision:

"Orient/East-Med"	CZ, AT, SK, HU, RO, BG, EL, DE (*)	<p>— București-Constanța</p> <p>Bremerhaven (*)/Wilhelmshaven (*)/Rostock (*)/Hamburg (*)-Praha-Vienna/Bratislava-Budapest</p> <p>— Vidin-Sofia-Burgas (*)/Svilengrad (*) (Bulgarian-Turkish border)/ Promachonas-Thessaloniki- Athina-Patras (*)</p>	By 10 November 2013
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Applies to the OEM RFC

(1) (\*) means alternative routes. In line with the TEN-T guidelines, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean corridors should in the future be completed by the Sines/Algeiras-Madrid-Paris freight axis which crosses the central Pyrenees via a low elevation tunnel.

(2) Routes marked with + shall be included in the respective corridors at the latest 3 years after the date of establishment set out in this table. Existing structures defined under Article 8 and Article 13(1) of this Regulation shall be adjusted with the participation of additional Member States and infrastructure managers in the respective corridors. These inclusions shall be based on market studies and take into consideration the aspect of existing passenger and freight transport in line with Article 14(3) of this Regulation.

(3) Routes marked with \* shall be included in the respective corridors at the latest 5 years after the date of establishment set out in this table. Existing structures defined under Article 8 and Article 13(1) of this Regulation shall be adjusted with the participation of additional Member States and infrastructure managers in the respective corridors. These inclusions shall be based on market studies and take into consideration the aspect of existing passenger and freight transport in line with Article 14(3) of this Regulation.

(4) Until the realisation of a Rail Baltic line in 1 435 mm nominal track gauge, the specificities of different track gauge systems shall be taken into account in the establishment and operation of this corridor.

(5) The creation of this corridor shall be based on market studies and take into consideration the aspect of existing passenger and freight transport in line with Article 14(3) of this Regulation. The section "Čierna and Tisou (Slovak/ Ukrainian border)-Košice-Žilina-Horní Lideč-Praha" shall be established by 10 November 2013."

