Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe

26th Plenary Meeting

20 November 2025

Warsaw and online

Summary Record

Co-Chairs: Alain Quinet, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Strategy & Corporate Affairs, SNCF Réseau & Kristian Schmidt, Director Land Transport, DG MOVE

1. Welcome

Alain Quinet welcomed the participants and opened the meeting by highlighting two key focus points for discussion:

- The European Commission's High Speed Rail Master Plan
- The transition phase from PRIME to ENIM

2. Adoption of agenda and approval of the summary of the 25th meeting

The PRIME Plenary adopted the agenda and approved the summary of the 25th meeting.

3. Ongoing Commission initiatives

Kristian Schmidt, Director Land Transport, DG MOVE

Kristian Schmidt presented the ongoing Commission initiatives.

- **High Speed Rail**

Member States and Infrastructure Managers are invited to go beyond the TEN-T design speeds, when carrying out investment projects. This will not make sense line by line, but from a cross-border network perspective: creating a high-speed market in Europe with enough volume to justify investments. The implementation of this vision will be realistic if implemented as one across Europe.

- **Adoption of Telematics TSI**

TSI Telematics (Technical Specification for Interoperability – Telematics) was adopted by the RISC Committee on 13 November. With this, an important step in applying EU standards for interoperable data exchange has been achieved. These standards are the enablers for the implementation of the upcoming Regulation on rail infrastructure capacity management, efforts in ticketing and the digitalisation of rail freight.

- **Agreement on Capacity Regulation**

On 19 November, an agreement was reached in the trilogue on the Capacity Regulation, which will apply as of timetable 2031. In this regard, the PRIME Plenary will soon (i.e. in 2026) have to take formal decisions on the constitution of the Rules of Procedure and leadership of ENIM.

- **European Railway Agency (ERA)**

On 7 November 2025, the European Commission published its Staff Working Document on the evaluation of the European Railway Agency. Work has commenced to consult on revising the Agency's mandate.

- **Adoption of Military Mobility package**

On 19 November, the Military Mobility package was adopted, which shall simplify the procedures for cross-border military movements. The package introduces the concept of an emergency situation, and calls for resilient infrastructure with key transport corridors, upgraded to dual-use standards, and re-enforced cyber security. Members States have reacted with strong support and a sense of urgency.

All these developments require sufficient financial resources. The European Commission has proposed to increase the funds in the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). This will now be subject to negotiations with Member States.

More developments are foreseen for 2026, such as a proposal on ticketing and the revision of the Train Drivers Directive (Directive 2007/59/EC). Finally, there might also be a transport simplification omnibus, delivering fast-moving simplification in all transport modes, potentially entailing legislative changes to ease the burden on citizens and SMEs. Infrastructure Managers are welcome to come forward with ideas on quick wins for simplification.

Kristian Schmidt passed the co-chairing of the rest of this meeting to Kathrin Obst on behalf of the European Commission.

4. Strategic discussion on high-speed rail

Introduction by Kathrin Obst, DG MOVE

The long-term vision for high-speed rail is to establish an integrated European high-speed rail network connecting capitals and major cities by 2040, delivering significantly shorter travel times and offering affordable, competitive, sustainable alternatives to short-haul flights. The strategy also aims to strengthen Europe's global leadership in the rail industry.

Key deliverables include setting binding targets for infrastructure projects (covering speeds, funding and financing); mobilising investment through a new EU financing strategy and a "High-Speed Rail Deal" by 2026; enabling innovative financing for rolling stock and ensuring fair access to service facilities; strengthening rail competitiveness through increased interoperability, standardisation and safety via an updated ERTMS deployment plan and revised ERA Regulation; and proposing passenger-focused legislation in 2026 to simplify ticketing and strengthen protections for multi-operator trips.

The initiative is overarching in scope, addressing not only infrastructure but also the services operating on it, with a strong focus on the passenger experience.

The plan aims to accelerate rollout of national and cross-border infrastructure, building on the TEN-T corridor plans and focussing on streamlining permitting processes (Streamlining

Directive for TEN-T). Furthermore, resilience and reduced environmental impact of construction are to be considerations in the design of infrastructure projects.

The Commission has begun developing a European financing strategy that will form the baseline for the High-Speed Rail Deal in 2026. This work follows the strategic dialogue held in 2025 with Member States, industry representatives, investors, national promotional banks and institutions, and the EIB. While the required investments will be substantial, they are expected to generate larger societal benefits.

Panel Discussion moderated by Alain Quinet:

- *Piotr Wyborski, PKP PLK*
- *John Voppen, ProRail*
- *Aldo Isi, RFI*
- *Miguel Cruz, IP*

Panellists discussed how HSR can be a driver of innovation, competition and traffic growth, and interoperability.

Innovation

- In Portugal HSR is still at the project level but expected to be a strong vector of innovation (benefitting also the conventional network) in three main areas: **digital and operational** (capacity planning, real-time data exchange, harmonised operational rules); **industrial innovation and asset management** (development opportunities due to project scale (simpler construction standards, data-driven predictive maintenance, use of AI, climate resilience); **modal integration** (simplified ticketing, integrating information and interfaces; generally a higher level of service and added value for citizens).
- Targeted investments in (domestic) bottlenecks: In the Netherlands, capacity for HS trains is available, but investments are needed in certain stations or line sections, as well as yards and service facilities, which are bottlenecks for international HS lines; yet those investments are often excluded from CEF funding.

Competition

- In Poland, an integrated railway project is underway involving the Ministry of Infrastructure, CEUTP, CPK and PLK to develop a long-term national timetable concept (2030 – 2050 horizon) based on planned (HS) infrastructure development (new lines built by CPK and existing lines modernised by PLK). It is expected that the resulting high-quality infrastructure will drive passenger growth and attract new operators.
- Newcomer operators want to use international HS lines, e.g. however, (international) framework agreements are needed to guarantee future capacity for operators to be able to invest in rolling stock. Problem: capacity guarantee is needed in all countries on the international line while financing is not guaranteed. Striking the right balance is a challenge.
- Consensus: Increased HS offers will attract more competitors, enable higher service frequencies, lead to lower prices and thereby shift transport from air and road towards rail.

Interoperability and cross-border cooperation

- Cohesion between HSR and conventional networks is very important, not least with a view to democratic legitimacy of investments.
- In Portugal, support for HSR investment is due to the planned integration of the HS network into the existing network. Benefits of higher level of service, improved mobility

and saved time can spread to the entire network; overall network resilience is strengthened by additional lines.
- In Italy there is a complex system of new HS lines combined with upgraded existing lines, serving major territorial hubs, focussed on optimising interconnection of major nodes, also major national roads. Efforts to enhance interchange nodes include integrating service planning, synchronising timetables between HS and regional trains and extending punctuality measures from the HS network to the main conventional network to minimise interference.
- Seamless connections with international airports are very important to shift traffic towards rail.
- For some HS connections, e.g. Amsterdam – London, there is added complexity due to security and border control measures; bottleneck is not track capacity but terminal capacity.
- During the ongoing developments in Poland, nodes and future interconnections with HS lines are included in plans, e.g. the new Warsaw West Station is already prepared for direct connection of the future high-speed line between Warsaw and airport.
- Cross-border coordination, e.g. in Italy, involves harmonising infrastructure, signalling, ERTMS and technical standards, and aligning on timetables, network development, and work site planning.
- Bottlenecks must be addressed first in the development of cross-border HS lines, e.g. HS connection on the Warsaw–Poznán–Berlin line where speed at border is only 80kmh.

Conclusions

HS lines entail high investment costs and high benefits. Before investing in new infrastructure, the use of existing capacities should be optimised. Benefits: HSR can be a true gamechanger, driving innovation, competition, and modal shift.

The best way for rail to compete with road and air transport is to increase the speed of rail traffic.

5. Capacity Management

- <u>Presentation of the work of the PRIME task force capacity management to prepare PRIME/ENIM for tasks under the future Regulation; *Alfred Pitnik, OeBB Infra, Linda Thulin, Trafikverket* – presented by *Linda Thulin*</u>

The preparations in PRIME for implementation of the Capacity Regulation (CR) is progressing rapidly; following the launch in January 2024, the Task Force - currently comprising 22 PRIME members - has made substantial advances within an ambitious timeline. As the CR introduces a fundamental transformation of capacity management, strong sector-wide coordination is essential, including the establishment of ENIM, the appointment of the Network Coordinator (NC), and the reallocation of certain RFC tasks to ENIM, the NC, and the ETCs. The governance structure will build on existing organisations, with PRIME evolving into ENIM and RNE designated to take on NC responsibilities. IMs were encouraged to participate actively in the ongoing work to ensure shared commitment on ENIM's Rules of Procedure and the preparation of the ENIM work programme. Close cooperation with RNE, clear communication with all IMs to be involved in ENIM —including those not currently in PRIME—and sustained stakeholder engagement will be crucial.

The PRIME Plenary endorsed the proposed roadmap.

- Advancement of activities of RNE to prepare network coordinator tasks under the future Regulation; *Elisabeth Hochhold, RailNetEurope*

RNE has spent the past two years analysing the implications of the new Capacity Regulation and preparing for a potential role as Network Coordinator, identifying required tasks, timelines, and resources, and developing a draft work programme to be presented at the ENIM founding plenary. RNE recognises that the new regulatory environment requires streamlined decision-making, revised statutes, and strong engagement from members to ensure timely delivery. The association aims to maintain participation from third-country members and to integrate IMs that will join ENIM but are not yet part of RNE. A central challenge is the preparation of the three European Frameworks on capacity management, traffic management, and performance review, all subject to tight deadlines and complex substantive issues that will require pragmatic compromise. RNE will keep ENIM informed of emerging challenges and seek support where needed. IMs are encouraged to ensure they are appropriately represented in RNE structures, as the coming year will be critical and success will depend on the active commitment of all members.

Furthermore, RNE is taking over tasks of the PRIME Secretariat. The PRIME website has hence moved, and PRIME contents are now available at: https://enim-rail.eu/prime/.

6. PRIME activities - work programme 2026

- KPI and benchmarking - *Raymond Geurts van Kessel, ProRail, Jude Carey, Irish Rail* - presented by *Jude Carey*

The internal KPI report has already been drafted, with the full report planned for 2026. In 2025, the focus was set on four areas: analysing the impact of inflation on funding; advancing the topic of network condition by identifying 22 KPI input IDs covering asset failures, maintenance levels, and remaining asset life; addressing the issue of maintenance backlog, which poses long-term risks to railway performance and requires a robust measurement approach; and coordinating with ERA on aligning the KPIs with RINF and future capacity-performance data to maximise coherence and avoid duplication. Data collection and validation for network condition is still ongoing.

To improve future reporting, the following **new process was proposed for the adoption of the external KPI report**: the PRIME Secretariat seeks agreement on external KPI reports via email to the Plenary Members, with a deadline to reply of four weeks**. If the deadline passes and a simple majority of IMs participating in the report have confirmed approval, and no IMs have objected, tacit approval will be assumed of the remaining IMs and the report will be published.**

The PRIME Plenary agreed to the revised written approval process for external KPI reports.

- Charging – *Maria Alvarez Cuadrado, ADIF, Antoine Lowagie, DG MOVE* – presented by *Antoine Lowagie*

In recent months, the Charging Subgroup has been primarily monitoring the work undertaken by the SERAF Subgroup on charging. For 2026, the subgroup's main focus will be to examine the implications of the Capacity Regulation proposal for track access charges. Although the proposal does not directly address charging, several of its provisions nonetheless have an impact on charging practices, and the subgroup will provide a forum for members to raise questions and discuss how these elements should be implemented. Beyond this, no extensive agenda is expected for 2026, as most major charging topics and legal provisions have already been thoroughly explored in previous years.

- Digital – *Harald Reisinger, RailNetEurope, Joachim Lücking, DG MOVE* – presented by *Yann Seimandi (DG MOVE) and Harald Reisinger*

Full participation of IMs in the subgroup is essential for shaping interoperable data-sharing measures and supporting the Capacity Regulation. PRIME members who are not yet represented in the subgroup are encouraged to nominate a representative.

The subgroup's **three-year work programme** is structured around three main pillars:

- **Digital Infrastructure Information**, based on RINF as single European data hub for infrastructure information
- **Digital Capacity Management (DCM)**
  - steering the implementation of digital systems supporting the implementation of the upcoming Capacity Regulation
  - providing a framework for IMs to contribute jointly to the harmonisation of technical and legal requirements applicable to those digital systems
- **Digital Traffic Management (DTM)**
  - Digital Train Information (DTI) – real-time and forecast position of trains, and train composition via common European system (RNE TIS)
  - Digital Operational Communication (DOC) – facilitate common approach to development of driver-signaller communication across borders

A recent key milestone was the adoption of Telematics TSI to enable integration of national systems into common European digital tools.

2023 – 2025 over 50% of IMs reported on their implementation of digitalisation projects. This percentage is expected to increase within the 2026-2028 work programme, with a focus on implementation monitoring of Regulations on the use of railway infrastructure capacity, on TSI Telematics and on common specifications for RINF.

Further, it was emphasised that European-level applications depend on accurate IM inputs (national-level data quality and interoperability), as well as the securement of adequate funding for developments, for which IMs also expect contributions from the EU. (Once developed IMs are expected to be autonomous in financing tool maintenance.)

- PRIME Work Programme 2026

The PRIME Plenary endorsed the work programme for 2026.

7. Extension of the mandate of the PRIME industry co-chair

The PRIME Plenary agreed to the extension of the mandate of the PRIME industry co-chair Alain Quinet up until the founding plenary of ENIM.

A decision on the co-chairing of ENIM, under the requirements of the new Capacity Regulation, will be taken at the founding plenary. Johann Pluy, ÖBB and John Voppen, ProRail, announced their availability and interest to jointly lead ENIM on equal footing.

8. Overview of Commission proposals for the next funding period

Eric von Breska, Director Investment, Innovative and Sustainable Transport, DG MOVE

Eric von Breska presented a short overview of the Commission's Military Mobility package. Infrastructure Managers discussed the latest developments related to military mobility.

9. Other Business

PKP PLK S.A. was thanked for hosting this PRIME Plenary meeting.

The PRIME Plenary meetings 2026 will take place on 25 June (Brussels), and 19 November (location tbd).