

ARRANGEMENT REGARDING THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF RAIL FREIGHT
CORRIDOR
NORTH SEA - RHINE - MEDITERRANEAN

BETWEEN

THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TRANSPORT OF

THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM, THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, THE GRAND DUCHY
OF LUXEMBOURG, THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS AND THE
SWISS CONFEDERATION

Introduction

The executive boards of the Rail Freight Corridors Rhine - Alpine (RFC RALP) and North Sea - Mediterranean (RFC NSM) were established by an agreement from the Ministers of the relevant Members in October 2014. The management boards and executive boards have worked effectively for more than 10 years now. A corridor office and a corridor One-Stop-Shop for capacity allocation for each corridor have been set up. Throughout the years a close cooperation has been achieved with the market (railway undertakings, terminals, ports and operators). Supervisory bodies, National Safety Authorities and Regulatory Bodies have joined forces with the executive board of the Rail Freight Corridors.

The publication of Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network marks the next phase in the corridor cooperation in establishing the new Rail Freight Corridor North Sea - Rhine - Mediterranean (hereafter RFC NSRM), based on the RFC RALP and the RFC NSM.

In this arrangement, the Ministers of the Countries of the RFC NSRM mark the occasion to establish the Executive Board of RFC NSRM. This creates a new corridor, on whose itineraries approximately 50% of the overall rail freight volume in the European Union is carried.

The establishment of the executive board of the RFC NSRM is a first step towards making the corridor operational. The executive board will consist of representatives of the authorities of the Member States of the rail freight corridor. By July 2025, the corridor implementation plan will be published after consultation of applicants and by decision of the Executive Board. It will address inter alia the characteristics and the objectives of the Rail Freight Corridor, including bottlenecks, the establishment of the corridor One-Stop-Shop.

The Ministers, signing the present arrangement,

Having regard to

- Regulation (EU) 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) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network. This last regulation foresees the establishment of ETC NSRM and adds a number of quality objectives to be tackled by the Rail Freight Corridor, under the name of 'rail freight governance';
- The proposal for a Regulation on the use of railway infrastructure capacity in the single European railway area, published on 11 July 2023, and its proposition to repeal Regulation (EU) 913/2010;
- The works and progress achieved by the RFC RALP and NSM, established in 2013;
- The letter sent by the chairs of the Railway Undertakings advisory group and the Terminals Advisory Group of RFC RALP and RFC NSM on 22 November 2024 supporting the establishment of the new corridor;
- The preparations of the Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies on the establishment of the Management Board of the RFC NSRM;

- The decision of Ireland to participate in the Executive Board only as an observer, making use of Article 8(2b) of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 as notified to the European Commission on 23 October 2024;

Taking into consideration the above, come to the following understanding:

- to establish the Executive Board of the RFC NSRM on 1 January 2025;
- to prepare to phase out the agreement regarding the Executive Board of Rail Freight Corridor North Sea Mediterranean and the agreement regarding the Executive Board of Rail Freight Corridor Rhine Alpine signed in Luxembourg on 8 October 2014;
- to entrust the Executive Board with the relevant tasks set out in Regulation (EU) 913/2010, in particular in Articles 8, 11, 14, 19, 20 and 22, and Regulation (EU) 2024/1679.

General provisions on the tasks of the Executive Board

- We, the signatories, cooperate as necessary, and within the framework of Regulation (EU) 913/2010, with the European institutions, the coordinator of the European Transport Corridor North Sea - Rhine - Mediterranean, the National Railway Safety Authorities, and the Regulatory Bodies of its members;
- We cooperate to ensure a better coordination of investments along the itineraries of the corridor without prejudice to the responsibilities of Member States regarding investments;
- We take decisions on general matters of common interest concerning the internal functioning of the RFC NSRM without prejudice to the competence of Member States and Switzerland regarding the planning and funding of rail infrastructure;
- We offer our utmost support to the infrastructure managers and allocation bodies to organise themselves in parallel with the start of the Executive Board on 1 January 2025, in order to start as soon as possible with their Management Board;
- We support the infrastructure managers and allocation bodies in publishing and allocating the capacity for timetable 2027 in line with the routings of RFC NSRM;
- We make our utmost effort to ensure a good cooperation with the European Transport Corridor, ensuring that market needs are taken into consideration in the European Transport Corridor.

General provisions for the functioning of the Executive Board

The working language of the Board is English.

The Executive Board takes its decisions on the basis of mutual consent of all the representatives of the authorities of the Member States and Switzerland.

The Board takes decisions as provided for by Regulation (EU) No 913/2010. These decisions are signed by all members of the Executive Board before their publication.

The Executive Board shall adopt its rules of procedure.

Declaration by the Swiss Confederation

As member of the Executive Board, Switzerland fully accepts all provisions and responsibilities defined in this document. Direct references to the law of the EU cannot create any legally binding character for Switzerland. Switzerland endeavours to undertake all necessary steps to amend the relevant legal provisions to bring them in line with the decisions of the Executive Board whenever possible.

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The present Arrangement will take effect one week after the final signature.

Signatories,

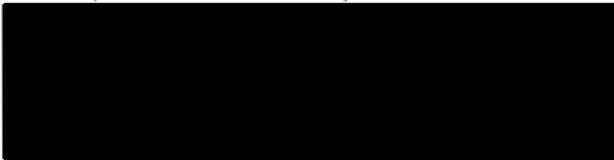
Georges GILKINET,

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility of the Kingdom of Belgium



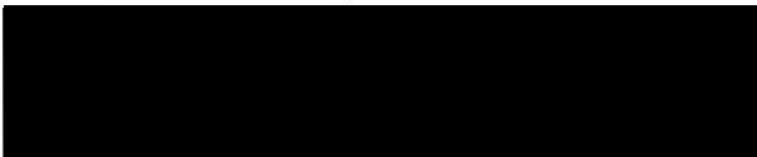
François DUROVRAY,

Minister Delegate to the Minister of Partnership with Territories and Decentralisation, in charge of Transport of the French Republic



Volker WISSING,

Federal Minister for Digital and Transport of the Federal Republic of Germany



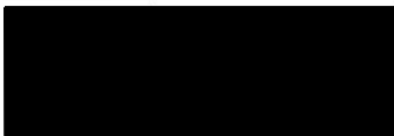
Matteo SALVINI,

Minister of Infrastructure and Transport of the Italian Republic



Yukiko BACKES,

Minister of Mobility and Public Works, of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



Chris JANSEN,

Minister for the Environment and Public Transport of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Albert RÖSTI,

Federal Councilor for the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications of the Swiss Confederation

