

# EU Rail Freight Corridors

## A European rail network for competitive freight

### Efficient and environmentally friendly freight transport

Rail freight transport is **resource-efficient** and **environmentally friendly** and helps **mitigate congestion** on our road networks. Austria and the European Union therefore share the transport policy objective to shift freight transport from road to rail. Rail freight is particularly competitive **for long-distance** transports. However, the competitiveness of rail for cross-border flows is still severely hampered by historic obstacles including, first and foremost, diverging technical, regulatory and operational standards. Up to now, the **liberalization** and **harmonization** of the European rail freight markets were not sufficient to make rail freight **competitive** relative to other means of transport.

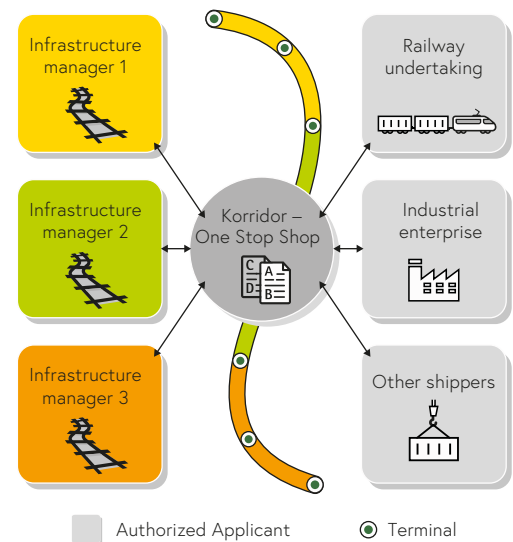
### The concept of Rail Freight Corridors (RFC)

To support the **set-up of a European rail network** for competitive freight transportation, the European Parliament and the EU Council adopted regulation No. 913/2010. The regulation paves the way for the establishment of **trans-European Rail Freight Corridors** connecting at least three EU member states. Moreover, it stipulates the establishment of an administrative structure which engages all stakeholders in extensive **cooperation** and facilitates the **harmonization** of technical, operational and organizational provisions. A **Corridor One-Stop-Shop (C-OSS)** will be set up for each corridor as the **single point of contact**.

## The key stakeholders

The **Corridor „One-Stop-Shop“ (C-OSS)** is the central contact point for the corridor's end users, the so-called "Applicants". The C-OSS **informs** about the available **infrastructure capacities** (prearranged train paths or PaPs), handles PaP **bookings** and allocates PaPs to applicants. The operational coordination of trains running on the corridors as well as the calculation and collection of track access charges remain within the competence of the national infrastructure managers.

- The so-called **"Applicants"** are the **end users** of the corridors. They are enabled to run their trains across Europe **regardless of national borders**. Furthermore, not only **railway undertakings (RUs)** can apply for infrastructure capacity (paths) at the C-OSS, but also **shippers** and **industrial companies**.
- The **infrastructure managers** involved in the corridors are responsible for the **joint establishment** of the corridor and for the provision of the required infrastructure capacity. In Austria the infrastructure manager is ÖBB Infrastruktur AG.
- The **Ministries of Transport** of the member states involved define the **basic rules** for the infrastructure managers and monitor the progress made in corridor establishment and operation. In Austria, the Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) takes over this role.
- The **operators** of terminals and ports along the corridor ensure the **connection** to other means of transport and to the ultimate shippers and consignees. They are, along with the RUs, involved in the corridor activities via **working groups**.



## Geographic overview

There are **eleven rail freight corridors** in the EU, ten of which are currently in operation. Geographically, they largely correspond to the TEN-T core network corridors.

It is planned that a total of **five corridors** will run **through Austria**:

- 3** Scandinavian – Mediterranean (Brenner corridor)
- 5** Baltic – Adriatic (South line incl. north railway)
- 7** Orient /East-Mediterranean (north and east railway)
- 9** Rhine – Danube (Western line incl. east railway)
- 10** Alpine – Western Balkan (Tauern and Pyhrn Schoberachse)

The Rhine-Danube corridor is currently in preparation and is expected to be operational from December 2020. This means that most of Austria's economic centres and all important transit routes are now integrated into the rail freight corridors.

The European Union offers an interactive map of the first nine corridors:

<https://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html#layersTab>

The BMK has compiled an overview map of all eleven rail freight corridors on the back.