



Council of the
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INFORMATION NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
Subject:	Presentation of the second Progress Report of the Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport (IRP) – Information from the Dutch and Austrian delegations

Delegations will find attached an information note prepared by the Dutch and Austrian delegations on the above-mentioned subject for consideration under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 2 June 2022.

Background document Transport Council 2nd of June 2022

AOB: Presentation of the second Progress Report of the Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport (IRP)

Information from the Dutch and Austrian delegations

The 2022 Progress Report of the Ministerial Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport (IRP)¹ sets forth the progress made regarding the initiative of the Ministries of Transport of 25 EU Member States, Switzerland and Norway. During the Transport Council on the 4th of June 2020, these European countries embraced the initiative to foster and support, with relevant stakeholders, the improvement of international rail passenger transport. The countries agreed to work together on a European agenda for international rail connections. As a result of the political declaration, a joint platform of Member States (all EU MS (minus Cyprus and Malta) + Norway and Switzerland) was set up with the aim of further developing international rail passenger transport in the EU. The platform is supported by sector parties and the consumer organisations. It also involves representatives of the European Commission, European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), EU-Rail and the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF).

The platform comprises the following four subgroups:

- Subgroup A – Customer experience & digitalisation
- Subgroup B – Defining a network of International Passenger services
- Subgroup C – EU Green Deal
- Subgroup D – Regulatory framework

¹ [2022 Progress Report of the Ministerial Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport | Publication | The Netherlands at International Organisations \(permanentrepresentations.nl\)](#)

The purpose of presenting the IRP progress report to the EU Transport Council is to underline the need to have international rail passengers transport recognised as an EU priority. The publication of the Commission's action plan is an important step in this regard. The progress report also shows the first results of necessary wider European cooperation between EU Member States, European Commission and the railway sector. The progress report will also support the communication on this priority.

The present progress report sets forth the progress made over the last year. The members of the IRP invited the European Commission, ERA, EU-Rail, sector parties and other stakeholders to consider the findings of this report in the conduct of their works, in particular in view of the European Commission's action plan on international railway passenger transport.

The platform presented its first report² during the Year of Rail kick-off event in March 2021. The presentation of the first report was accompanied by the publication of a sector statement, showing a vision and commitments from sector and consumer organisations on international passengers rail³. During the EU Transport Council on the 3rd of June of that same year, the Member States presented an Integrated Progress Report⁴, detailing the results of the discussions among the members of the platform. The document provided an inventory of barriers for the further development of international railway passenger transport. It also identified shared scenarios and options on solving the existing impediments, and indicated a workplan for addressing the barriers.

Against the background of the COVID-19 crisis affecting railway passenger transport, and the economic recovery thereafter, the momentum for progressing on the European agenda for international railway passenger transport remains strong. This was shown by the high commitment and motivation of all partners to work in the platform. This report reflects this momentum and suggests a further agenda and action points for the MS and other parties.

² See [Report of the Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport | Publication | The Netherlands at International Organisations \(permanentrepresentations.nl\)](#)

³ See <http://cer.be/publications/latest-publications/sector-stakeholder-statement-international-rail-passenger-services>

⁴ See [Better rail connections for Europe's passengers | Publication | The Netherlands at International Organisations \(permanentrepresentations.nl\)](#)

The progress report is the result of the discussions among the members of the platform, and between the platform and the aforementioned stakeholders. The report provides an inventory of progress made, and identifies an action agenda for the Member States and other parties in order to make the improvements that are necessary for international railway passenger transport. Not all action points or solutions will fit or can be applied in all regions across Europe. Neither does the document include legal or financial obligations.
