



Sixth meeting of the Shift2Rail States Representatives Group

21 March 2017
Clarion Congress Hotel Prague, 9:30-14:00

Minutes

10:00 – 10:15	1. Introduction
	<p>The meeting was chaired by Mr Haltuf, Chairperson of the SRG. During the discussion of Agenda items 6 and 7, the meeting was attended by the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure of Malta, Mr Joe Mizzi, currently holding the Presidency of the Transport Council, the Deputy Director General of DG MOVE Mr Matthew Baldwin and the Executive Director of ERA, Dr. Josef Doppelbauer.</p> <p>A list of participants is attached.</p>
10:15– 10:30	2. Approval of the meeting agenda and minutes of previous meeting
	<p>The SRG members agreed on the provisional agenda, which had been circulated on 6 February 2017 (document attached, as updated on 17 March 2017) and they all signed a declaration of absence of conflict of interest and confidentiality.</p> <p>Also the minutes of the previous meeting were approved (document attached).</p>
10:30 – 11:00	3. State of play
	<p>Carlo Borghini, S2R JU's Executive Director, presented the latest developments related to the S2R activities including a short summary of the next steps. In his introduction he emphasised the fact that the JU has less than a year of operational and financial autonomy and during this time has systematically focused on achieving its objectives. Currently there are more than 30 projects running (including the four Shift2Rail Lighthouse projects), which have started delivering preliminary results. In addition, the 2017 Calls for Proposals have been launched on time, confirming that the annual cycle of activities is well established; it is expected to attract a significant</p>

number of proposals given that the visibility and the interest in the S2R activities appears to constantly grow.

The Executive Director briefly referred to the developments since the last meeting of the SRG (see presentation attached) and highlighted the fact that the JU has been entrusted to assist the Commission in the technical evaluation of the first reporting period of the S2R Lighthouse projects, where the preliminary results are very promising for the future.

It was also explained that the JU has launched three tenders on a) Cooperation tool, b) Key Performance Indicators and c) Human capital (the latter not yet awarded).

The Executive Director also noted that so far two audits have been performed on the JU's operations (one from the European Court of Auditors and one from the Commission) without any material remarks.

He noted that the JU will soon publish the post for a Seconded National Expert and asked the authorities of the countries to support their candidates as the JU is in need of such expertise

The Commission noted that the interim evaluation of the JU is still ongoing and the first outcome of the experts' assessment is expected in June 17. Following this, the Commission is planning to send its report to the European Parliament and the Council by the end of the year. This report will be made available to the SRG as soon as possible.

Following AT's request and the agreement of the Commission during the meeting, the Executive Director noted that a summary of the review of the S2R Lighthouse projects will be available to the members of the SRG and will be included in the Annual Activity Report 2017.

Moreover the JU presented some statistical information concerning the allocation of funding per country, for the calls for proposals 2015-2016 (see attached presentation). This information was provided in addition to the detailed information presented during the previous meeting. The Chairman noted that the figures vary considerably among the countries and emphasised the SRG's role towards encouraging the participation of applicants from all countries. He also noted that the figures are not always reflecting the reality as an entity may be established in one country but its activities may be spread geographically.

EL supported by TR highlighted the fact that the selection of topics considerably influence the participation of entities, as the topics may sometimes be considerably demanding both in scope and scale, which may be a disadvantage for (e.g.) SMEs. The Executive Director took note of that point mentioning that certain budget may need to be reserved for addressing specific issues/topics. This may be the recommended approach for the AWP2018.

In reply to questions raised by TR and CZ on a call for associated members the Executive Director explained that the issue is expected to be decided by the Governing Board in June and that a legal analysis is ongoing within the Commission services taking into account the possible alternatives, the resources available (around 5.6 M€),

	<p>the conditions governing the membership (2.5% of the budget of an IP), etc. The Executive Director noted that in any case the process will be public and open and the outcome will be the commitment of the entities to invest in S2R through calls of proposals and not the award of the available budget to them.</p> <p>The Commission expressed the wish to reach a decision on this issue in the Governing Board meeting in June 2017.</p>
11:00 – 11:30	4. ANNUAL WORK PLAN (AWP) 2018
	<p>The latest version of the AWP 2018 was distributed to the SRG members together with the Preliminary Draft Budget 2018, on 1 February 2017. The SRG Chairman collected the comments received so far from the members and this compilation of comments was distributed prior to the meeting. The JU explained that all these comments will be taken into account for the next version of the AWP2018. A selection of comments were presented and discussed during the meeting.</p> <p>A number of comments (CZ, AT, ES, NO) concerned the Open Call topic IPx, where the Executive Director explained that the concept is to have a cross-IP activity (could be part of CCA) to capture the edge of innovation, new concepts and ideas that go beyond the IP structure. NO asked for an increased budget for this topic and the Executive Director explained that this is difficult to achieve at this point, due to budget constraints.</p> <p>On questions raised by ES, the Executive Director noted that the JU will explore the publication of the names of the TD leaders, although it appears more appropriate and helpful to publish the names of the coordinators of the ongoing projects.</p> <p>Concerning the dissemination of scientific papers the Executive Director explained to ES that the Scientific committee can play a role in reviewing them, while for the topics focused on persons with reduced mobility it was noted that this should also include the IT services and applications (e.g. IP4), which should take into account the special needs.</p> <p>The members of SRG were invited to send possible additional comments by 24 April 2017. A revised version of the AWP2018 will be distributed to the SRG members before summer.</p>
11:30 – 12:00	5. Annual Activity Report 2016
	<p>The Executive Director briefly referred to the Annual Activity Report 2016, explaining that it is the first time that the document is made available to the SRG before its finalisation, as formally there is no consultation with the SRG. Nevertheless he invited the members to send possible comments by 24 April 2017.</p> <p>Formally the document will be approved by the Governing Board at its next meeting on 7 June 2017.</p>
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch break</i>

13:00 – 13:30	6. MAAP review
	<p>The discussion was introduced Minister Mizzi. The Minister referred to the importance of rail transport and noted that the Maltese Presidency considers it as a priority, although there is currently no rail network in the country.</p> <p>Mr Baldwin noted that the discussions on the next financial framework are still at their initial stage and that the actual support of the Member States is essential for any discussion concerning the future of S2R.</p> <p>Dr Doppelbauer highlighted that the revised MAAP should reflect the need for continuous and efficient investments in railways and justify the need for the continuation of S2R in the future. He noted ERA’s willingness to work towards this direction.</p> <p>The Executive Director briefly explained the ongoing work for the MAAP review. He noted that the current version of the MAAP has mainly a bottom-up approach and certain aspects require revision. He particularly mentioned the <i>vision</i> for the future railway system, i.e. which direction the system should follow based on the available technologies and the development of <i>building blocks</i>, i.e. the concrete R&I activities that need to be undertaken, in order to reach this vision. He referred to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda2030, where key challenges are included such as the energy efficiency and the zero emissions vision and he presented 12 <i>capabilities</i> (currently under discussion) around which the technological building blocks are developed, focusing on a system approach for railways.</p> <p>On a question raised by AT, the Executive Director replied that the revised MAAP is scheduled to be prepared by the end of 2017. SE noted the need to liaise with the Transport Programme Committee, where railways would benefit from more visibility. The Executive Director noted that the work of S2R has been recently presented to the Committee and that the work to this direction will continue.</p>
13:30 – 13:45	7. Research & Innovation activities beyond 2020
	<p>The Executive Director briefly referred to the public consultation concerning the interim evaluation of all the JUs and noted that the rate of participation for S2R was high, demonstrating the interest for its activities. He clarified that, as mentioned by Mr Baldwin, the discussions related to R&I beyond 2020 are starting; he noted that there is clear evidence and support against the fragmentation of the future Research & Innovation activities in railway. He noted that the future R&I of S2R should be designed around through indicative pillars, one ensuring the broader involvement of the scientific and research community especially at the lowest TRLs, a second with more structured R&I involving the value chain actors (applied R&I) and, a third, specific dedicated to open demonstration activities to accelerate the market uptake of products.</p> <p>On a question raised by DE, Mr Baldwin confirmed that rail continues to be a priority in the EU transport policy and acknowledged the role of S2R against the fragmentation of R&I activities and in favour of accomplishing the Single European Railway Area. He noted, however, that there are also other competing priorities, it is therefore essential for the Member States to strongly support the continuation of S2R. Mr Baldwin also stressed the excellent cooperation between ERA and S2R.</p>

	The Executive Director noted that this discussion will be continued and that the S2R members are considering to provide a concept paper to this extent. He invited the States to provide their views, once this paper is public.
13:45 – 14:00	8. AoB
	<p>In the context of transparency the JU proposed to the SRG members to publish the minutes of the SRG meetings in the JU’s website. All present members agreed.</p> <p>AT proposed the first 2018 meeting of the SRG to take place in Vienna, combined with the TRA conference, which is scheduled on 16-19 April 2018. The Executive Director welcomed the idea and noted that the TRA in Vienna will be one of the key events where the JU is planning to present the progress of its research activities. The ongoing S2R projects have already submitted scientific papers to be presented at the TRA and the JU will be one of the sponsors of the TRA prize to junior and senior researchers. Moreover, the S2R members are organising some physical presence in order to demonstrate some first results (“quick-wins”) of their activities, therefore it would be an excellent opportunity for the SRG members to combines the meeting with some on-site visit.</p> <p>The next meeting of the SRG will take place in Brussel, on 20 September 2017 (provisional date).</p>

Actions for the members:

Members are invited to send their input for the AWP 2018 review and possible comments on the Annual Activity Report 2016, by 24 April 2017 to the Chairperson (miroslav.haltuf@hcomp.eu) and copy to the JU (Georgios.Patris@shift2rail.europa.eu).