

# NEWSLETTER

December 2020

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## Editorial



Dear Reader,

It is impossible to talk about the year 2020 without talking about the COVID-19 pandemic, and yet there is so much more to talk about.

We witnessed in 2020 the historic shift in rail policy when on 31st October 2020, the final deadline passed for the transposition of the technical pillar of the Fourth Railway Package into national law. In the years to come, railway customers will be able to reap the fruit of what was sown today – with more competitive, better interconnected, innovative rail products being placed on a common market. In order to

prepare for this new age, the Agency has completed a process of fundamental internal transformation, with many colleagues assuming new roles and tasks.

In close collaboration with the applicants, and the support of our colleagues at the different National Safety Authorities (NSAs), the processes of EU-wide vehicle authorisation, safety certification, and ERTMS trackside approval have been filled with life. It is thanks to the excellent collaboration with our most trusted stakeholders that we were able to successfully introduce the new tasks, and my wholehearted thanks goes out to all the people involved – in the rail sector, in the NSAs, and at the Agency.

The revolutionary change that comes with the Fourth Railway Package is underway, and we will continue to lay the groundwork for the railways of the future. From our data and digitalization strategy, through which we will make our data safe and dynamic to laying the regulatory foundation for the digitalized age of railways, in which operations are connected across national borders, with other modes of transport, and safe at the same time – the Agency will contribute to making railways fit for the future, and use our resources as European authority to create consensus within the sector on these issues.

In early December, the European Commission issued its visionary Sustainable and Smart Mobility

Strategy. Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans stated upon its release that this strategy will completely change the way we move goods and people in the EU, combining different modes of transport in a single journey, with ambitious targets such as that collective journeys under 500km should be carbon-neutral, that the volume of high-speed rail traffic will double by 2030, and that of rail freight double by 2050. We as a sector now have a political mandate to make a major contribution to the EU Green Deal by making transport in Europe sustainable, smart, connected, and resilient.

With this in mind, it is quite appropriate that 2021 has been declared the European Year of Railways – and certainly, the Agency will do its utmost to put our activities, and that of our partners in the sector, before the public eye on this occasion. One of our core competencies, railway safety, will be on the forefront – with the release of the European Rail Safety Climate Survey (ERSCS), at the Rail Safety Days in June 2021 in Porto (see article below). In October 2021, ERTMS and rail digitalization will be our focus with the traditional ERTMS conference in Valenciennes.

We can take pride in what we achieved in 2020, and look forward to what is coming in 2021. Thank you for the excellent cooperation, and let us keep going!

*Josef Doppelbauer*  
Executive Director

# Partnership Programme for European Rail Safety Climate Survey (ERSCS) Launched

Large-scale survey to improve safety in the European Year of Rail offers opportunities for rail organisations for a free and state-of-the-art analysis of staff perception on safety



In June 2021, the Agency will launch a large-scale survey about safety perception of all rail professionals in Europe: the European Rail Safety Climate Survey (ERSCS).

The survey targets every railway employee in the European sector including rail companies, manufacturers, public institutions and rail-related organisations. It is a product of fruitful collaboration among rail and safety experts, conducted under the Agency's Human and Organisational Factors Network, and represents a milestone for enhancing safety awareness for railways in Europe. The questionnaire is aligned with the European Railway Safety Culture Model that is now available in all EU languages on our website.

While targeting individual employees all over the European continent, **the Agency offers exclusive partnerships to railway companies, manufacturers, service providers, and public institutions**, where they will receive **scientifically sound insight into the safety perception in their respective organisation for free**. At the same time, such partnerships will increase the response rate of the ERSCS.

The global results of the ERSCS will be used to improve safety in the Single European Railway Area and serve as reference for future policies, so it is a joint responsibility of the Agency and the sector to provide a good data input.

All partner organisations of the ERSCS will be assigned a contact

person from ERA, who will help customise the survey. Furthermore, a communication toolkit will be provided in order to help spreading the message to the individual staff members. The survey will be accessible on any electronic device in most different EU languages.

If you are interested in becoming a partner to the ERSCS, please fill in our [web form](#).

[ERSCS partner basics and benefits](#)

[ERSCS cooperation protocol](#)

[Webinar: Enhancing Rail Safety in 2021](#)

Any further questions: [safetyclimatesurvey@era.europa.eu](mailto:safetyclimatesurvey@era.europa.eu)

## Safety Performance: Where we stand in Europe

The approaching end of the year invites us to look back and take stock of the progress and achievements made, so that pertinent resolutions could be taken on the brink of the New Year. This cannot be different for all organizations dealing with railway safety, which as an integral part of their safety management systems continuously monitor relevant safety outcomes and report, through their respective National Safety Authorities, to the Agency, so called Common Safety Indicators (CSIs). Thanks to a concerted effort of all NSAs and the Agency, the safety

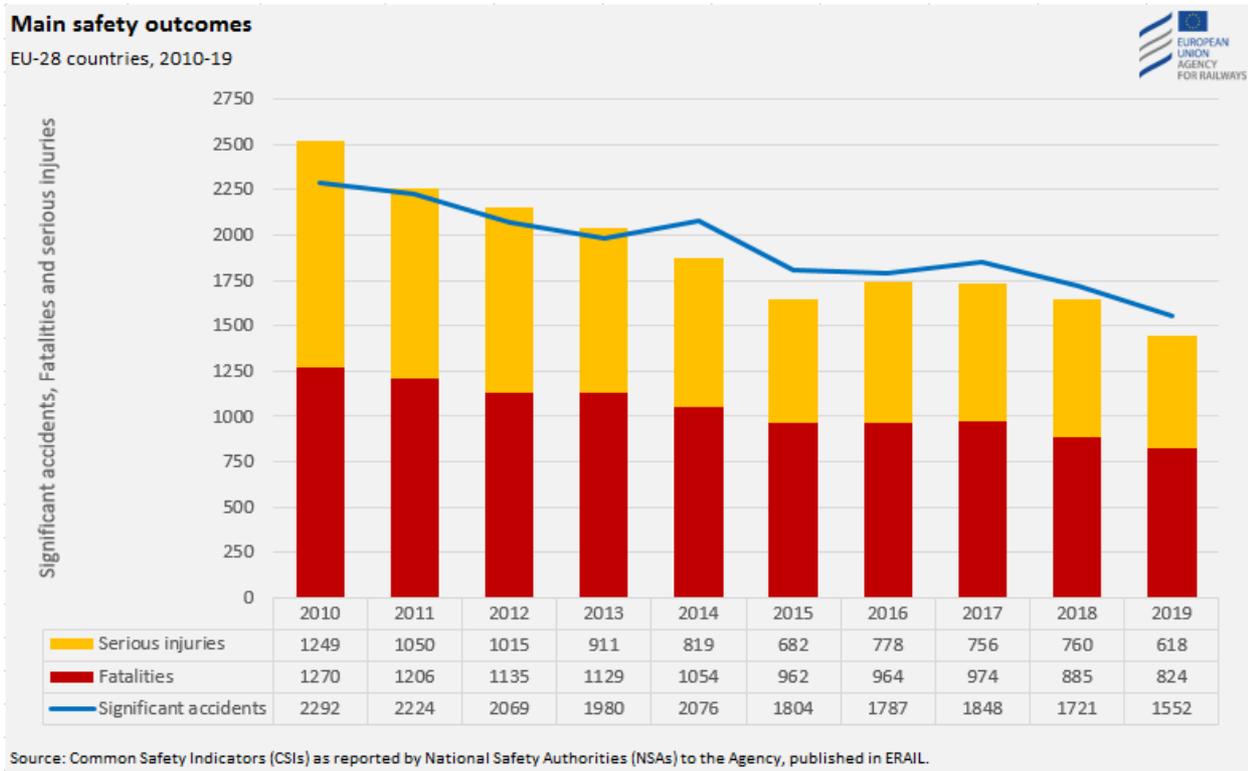
metrics for the Single European Railway Area (SERA) in 2019 were consolidated in November. They provide a high-level picture of the development of railway safety with the view to assure public and inform policy-makers. The published 2019 data confirm an overall positive (decreasing) evolution at the EU level. Specifically, both significant accidents and resulting fatalities were decreasing by 4% annually on average during the 2010's. With 1,552 significant accidents and 824 fatalities (suicides excluded), the year 2019 was the safest year ever.

However, this YoY reduction was largely driven by the drop in accidents to persons and resulting fatalities (16%). Besides, the overall toll of railway accidents remains high: the significant accidents alone represent the economic costs of about 3.5 MEUR per annum. Despite an overall decrease in significant accidents since 2010, the "internal" accidents (collisions, derailments and fires in rolling stock) are stagnating. The progress has also been very uneven across the EU Member States, with the variance in safety levels remaining high. These facts urge us all to continue to work

relentlessly and tirelessly to improve railway safety. The Agency is looking forward to continue its collaboration

with all the railway stakeholders to ensure that. Neither in 2021 can we afford to be complacent about it!

[Biennial Report on Progress with Railway Safety and Interoperability in the EU](#)



## International Activities in 2020



In 2020, the Agency organised three dissemination events, and a steering committee as part of the EUMedRail project activities.

A seminar on the implementation of the SMS at the Algerian railways (SNTF) took place in Algiers, on 25 and 26 February. Organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the event gathered Mr. Farouk Chiali, Minister of Public Works and Transport, SNTF management

among other officials and representatives of the sector. The discussions focused on the EU common approach to safety, including good practices from SNCF, the tasks of the French national safety authority (EPSF), experiences in managing and improving safety at level crossings with UIC. The steps identified for the implementation and improvement of the SMS included the setting-up of a multidisciplinary task force, the revision of safety indicators, and amendments to internal procedures on accident/incident investigation.

On 2 and 3 March, ERA together with OTIF and the Serbian Directorate for Railways coordinated a seminar on the legal requirements and the risk-based approach applied to national and international transport of dangerous goods by rail.

The event was attended by representatives from Jordan, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia who also exchanged with rail authorities, operators, contractors and suppliers from Serbia as well as international experts from the Western Balkans. A technical visit of the Pančevo oil refinery, operated by the Naftna Industrija Srbije (NIS Group), finalised the event with a practical approach to TDG.

More recently, the Agency organised two online meetings. First a seminar on EU railway legislation, from 19-21 October, focusing on the implementation and continuous improvement of SMS, the existing framework to supervise, improve and monitor safety, the process of technical harmonisation and digitalisation of railways. The event was followed by more than 150

participants from the region. Last, on 24 November, the Agency conveyed its annual steering committee in the context of the preparation of the regional transport action plan 2021-2027. Focal points and other representatives provided feedback on the implemented activities, informed about their expectations and needs, and discussed the work packages of the action plan 2021-2022. In the framework of the IPA-Project two Webinars were organised for the project beneficiaries: One Webinar in September (in cooperation with Shift2Rail JU) focused on innovation in rail and a second one in December

about rail freight. A new IPA-Project Assistant took up duty at the EU Agency for Railways in October 2021.

From January 2020, the cooperation with OSJD continues under renewed updated Memorandum of Understanding. ERA-OSJD Contact Group finalized the comparative analysis of requirements for the "Noise" subsystem. The analyses for subsystems TAF and ENE are in the concluding stage. The agenda included further relevant topics for exchange of information and experience in accordance with the annual work plans. ERA experts were

invited to OSJD meetings on the topic of coding and informatics.

Taking this opportunity, we are glad to draw kind attention of our international partners worldwide to the Agency's regular free webinars on different topics (please consult the rubric of events on the Agency's website). Previous webinars are available for replay on the Agency's YouTube channel.

As soon as the COVID-19 crisis will ease up, activities will restart at full scale.

## Happy New Year from ERA



Making the railway system work better for society.

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