

ISSUE 1 FEBRUARY 2023

ERA NEWS

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION
AGENCY FOR RAILWAYS



2023 CRUCIAL YEAR FOR RAIL COMMUNITY

Dear readers,

I am pleased to welcome you to our first newsletter of 2023, which promises to be a crucial year for the railway community. As we all know, the most important task for us this year is to **continue our trial to decarbonise the European transport sector**, as we aim to shift towards a more sustainable future. With rail being the most sustainable mode of mass transportation, it is essential that we work towards achieving a modal shift to rail to reach the targets of the European Green Deal.

The advantages of rail are undeniable, from **the low friction at the wheel-rail interface** to the **economies of scale generated through the bundling of traffic** - both for passenger and freight. However, we are already facing obstacles in reaching the targets for modal shift set out in the Green Deal. The carbon crisis is imminent, and we **can no longer afford to miss the annual growth targets**.

In addition to our sustainability efforts, we are proud to support the **European Year of Skills in 2023**. As a sector, we strive to demonstrate

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that we offer **jobs that are modern, challenging, and flexible**, in an industry that **truly contributes to decarbonising the economy**. ERA as European authority is committed to communicating this message throughout the year.

ERA has issued its [work programme from 2023 until 2025](#), and we are excited about the highlights for 2023, which include further **process improvement of the authority tasks** of ERA, **optimization of workload forecasts**, and the improvement of the **One-Stop-Shop online tool**. We also hope to achieve **a positive vote in the RISC** for the Technical Specifications of Interoperability (**TSI package**) that ERA proposed in 2022. A key focus will be **cleaning up national rules** for vehicle authorisation and safety. Additionally, we have created a **new unit for operational data management** to advance our digital capabilities.

As we continue to work towards a sustainable future, we are **mindful of the ongoing war in Ukraine**. We remain committed to supporting Ukraine in its efforts to **get people and goods in and out of the country** and help them accede to the Single European Railway Area through their EU membership candidacy.

We hope that you find this newsletter informative and engaging as we strive to keep you updated on the latest developments in the railway community. We look forward to **your continued support and engagement**.

Best regards,



Josef Doppelbauer
ERA Executive Director

ERA'S STRATEGY TO MAKE DATA FINDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, INTEROPERABLE, AND RE-USABLE

The European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) recognises the urgent need for data harmonisation and interoperability in the railway sector. To address this need, ERA has created the **Operational Data Unit (OPD)**, which will combine all the registers that ERA is responsible for, as well as the work on Telematic Applications for Freight and Passenger (TAF/TAP), and the work on interoperable data previously accomplished.

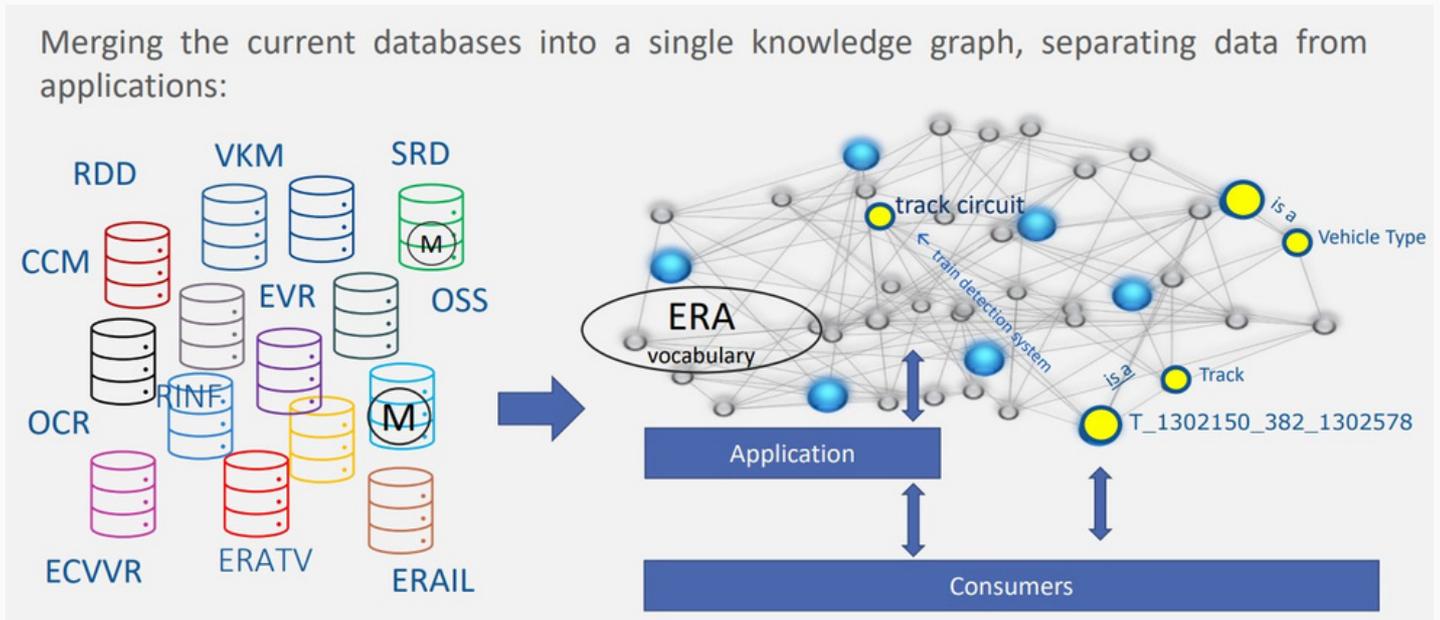
In the current world, data and information exchange has become an essential part of supporting an effective and sustainable railway system. The ERA strategy aims at facilitating data exchange between different organisations within the European rail sector, but also among citizens and consumers. ERA is in a unique position as a neutral, non-commercial entity to **support both sector and citizens**.

ERA's strategy is built around the **concept of FAIR - findable, accessible, interoperable, and re-usable data**. ERA is in the process of switching the way it uses internal data to use the FAIR concept. Here are some examples of how ERA is implementing the FAIR concept:

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Findable Data: ERA assigns globally unique and persistent identifiers (URI) to data and metadata. Rich metadata describes the data and is indexed for efficient search. This ensures that data is easily discoverable and accessible to those who need it.



Change in the way ERA's registers and IT platforms interact

Accessible Data: ERA shares data across the railway sector, across modes and businesses, and publicly to support innovation. It is also published in the EU mobility data space. This makes data easily accessible to those who need it.

Interoperable Data: ERA uses open web semantic standards, an extendable knowledge graph, published controlled vocabulary, and direct feeds to OntoRail. This ensures that data is interoperable, meaning that it can be used across different systems and platforms.

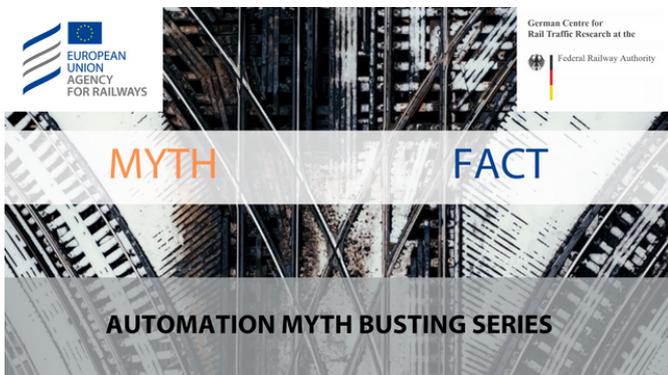
Reusable Data: ERA's data can be reused for route compatibility checks, the Route Book, capacity management, investment planning, TEN-T, and automation. This means that the data can be repurposed for different applications, making it more efficient and cost-effective.

By creating the OPD and implementing the FAIR concept, ERA is facilitating data exchange and harmonisation in the European rail sector, making it more efficient, effective, and sustainable. The European Union Agency for Railways **seeks to make its data transparent and visible** in the most effective but also cost-conscious way to better serve citizens, businesses, and railway organisations across the EU.

ERA will seek dialogue with the sector to develop **a common understanding of concept**, so we speak with one language and can rely on **high-quality, consistent data** when it is exchanged.



AUTOMATION MYTH BUSTING SERIES



The European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) has launched a **series of papers aimed at busting myths surrounding the impact of automation in the railway industry**. These papers, produced in partnership with the **German Centre for Rail Traffic Research (DZSF)** at the Federal Railway Authority, address common misconceptions and offer practical advice for integrating human and organisational factors (HOF) to maximise the benefits of automation while minimising the risks to safety performance.

One of the main myths addressed in the series is **the idea that automation will eliminate humans from the socio-technical system** in railways. While automation can streamline processes and increase efficiency, it cannot completely replace the role of humans in the industry.

The human contribution is not removed, but rather transformed to a greater or lesser degree depending on the level of automation employed. In all but fully autonomous systems, humans will still be involved in monitoring during normal operations and operating during degraded modes. There is also human input throughout the system lifecycle, from design and certification through maintenance and regulation.

In fact, the **integration of Human and Organisational Factors (HOF) will still be necessary**, regardless of the level of automation used. HOF takes into account the social and organisational context in which automation is implemented, and the impact it has on people and their work. It ensures that automation is designed and implemented in a way that is safe, efficient, and effective, while minimising the risks to safety performance.

The ERA-DZSF Automation Myth Busting papers aim to dispel these myths and **offer practical advice for integrating HOF into the design and implementation of automation** in the railway industry. The papers outline the key factors that should be considered when introducing automation, including the design of human-machine interfaces, training and competence requirements, safety management, and the role of human factors in safety assurance. They also provide case studies and examples of best practice from across the railway industry. ■

Please [click here](#) to access the myth busting series. They are also available in DE, EN and IT

WOULD YOU LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE?

Everything you need to know about ERA's safety regime including **human and organisational factors (HOF), safety culture, common safety methods (CSMs), and safety management systems (SMS)**

[Click here](#)

SNCF RÉSEAU RENEWS ITS COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE A POSITIVE SAFETY CULTURE



On 18 January 2023, SNCF Réseau renewed its **firm commitment to a positive safety culture** by re-signing the **European Rail Safety Culture Declaration**. Represented by their CEO Matthieu Chabanel, SNCF Réseau showed leadership in promoting a positive safety culture and to raise awareness among European rail stakeholders.

The declaration is one of the tools developed by the European Agency for Railways within the [Safety Culture Programme](#). Its aim is to help railway undertakings and infrastructure managers to promote behaviour and attitudes that will enable them to **develop a safety culture and achieve operational excellence**.

"The companies of the SNCF Group and SNCF Réseau have been cooperating with the Agency since the programme was launched in 2017," says Josef Doppelbauer. For Matthieu Chabanel, "Continuous safety improvement is in SNCF Réseau's DNA. Re-committing ourselves to the programme of the European Union Agency for Railways means promoting our role on a European scale, but also with our employees, partners and customers."

In 2022, SNCF Réseau contributed to the Agency's safety culture peer review pilot project, organised in cooperation with CER, Trenitalia, ÖBB and SBB CFF. After a week at the Infrapôle Indre Limousin, a team of European experts was able to diagnose the elements that contribute to the development of the safety culture and identify concrete ways to improve it. According to Josef Doppelbauer, **if deployed on a wider scale within the European Union, this initiative will enable companies in the sector to significantly improve their safety performance.**

Read the full story [here](#) and/or the [press release](#)

ERA RECEIVES THE EU AGENCIES CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE



In 2021, a group of dedicated ERA colleagues conducted a speed networking initiative, through which they connected with young female students and professionals to give them useful career advice, and to encourage them to consider a career in European railways. This was done via online meetings, as the Agency was still working under restrictions due to COVID-19, and it received a lot of positive feedback from the 20plus participants.

Now this ERA initiative got official recognition through the network of the Agencies of the European Union (EUAN), which in its diversity and inclusion programme gave an award for outstanding activities in the field. [Read more](#)

JOSEF DOPPELBAUER ASSUMES PATRONAGE OF RAILWAY CHALLENGE



The Railway Challenge provides a **unique opportunity for students and apprentices to develop and test their skills**. Using a defined set of published specs, teams will compete and eventually **build a model locomotive**, and run it together on a test track.

The 'continental edition' of the challenge will take place in Bad Schussenried (near Bodensee) in Germany, and **teams from all over Europe are invited to participate!**

Interested? Find more info on the Railway Challenge (continental edition) [here](#) or sign up directly to the challenge [here](#)

UPCOMING ERA WEBINARS



MARCH 8, 12.00-13.00 (CET)
[ERA ON TRACK TOWARDS MORE DIVERSITY](#)

MARCH 16, 14.30-16.00 (CET)
 MAINTENANCE

ERA PUBLISHES STUDY ON CROSS-BORDER RAIL

Despite better European rail connectivity through improved infrastructure, many **European cross-border points function like a patchwork reflecting different national systems**. The technical and operational barriers between countries keep rail from realising its potential. In this context, ERA presents its [Cross-border Rail Transport Potential Report](#), as well as targeted recommendations to strengthen rail transport – both for rail freight and passenger transport.

Watch the press event for its release below:



VACANCIES AT ERA



[CHECK OUT THE CAREER SECTION OF THE ERA WEBSITE](#)