

EU-project ECORailS started: Improving regional railway's environmental performance by the development of European eco criteria for awarding

The European regions embody living centres for work, daily life and leisure activities of citizens. Regional rail transport for passengers, establishing almost half of the overall railway transport in Europe, possesses inherent advantages for an efficient energy use and high eco friendliness. However, the last decades showed a decline in these environmental advantages vis-à-vis other transport modes – caused by low information on available advanced technologies, insecurity in the use of legal requirements, and the perception of high investment costs.

The project ECORailS – “Energy efficiency and environmental criteria in the awarding of regional rail transport vehicles and services” – targets at the inclusion of ecological criteria by regional Public Transport Administrations (PTA's). PTA's are normally responsible to set the overall frame for the technologies and services used by railway operators, infrastructure managers and the industry. The focus of ECORailS will be on procurement by awarding, the increasingly used instrument for competitive offers of railway applications.

The ECORailS core product will be guidelines supporting regional decision maker in the awarding process. Among others the guidelines will provide legally secure text modules for environmental awarding, which can be applied Europe-wide. Furthermore, the economical and social benefits of green criteria will be shown and best practice examples presented.

The four regional administrations of ECORailS from Berlin, Øresund (Copenhagen-Malmo-region), Brescia and Timisoara will simulate the guidelines. The project aims at the following results:

- Improvement of energy efficiency: 5% in comparison to current awarding, 10% with regard to the currently used rolling stock, and in the long term system-wide improvement of energy efficiency for regional railway by 15% by 2020.
- Simultaneously to the energy efficiency improvements, ECORailS targets on a reduction of CO2 emissions by 5% in comparison to current awarding, 10% with regard to the currently used rolling stock, and in the long term a system-wide reduction of CO2 for regional railway by 15% by 2020.

On 26th of May 2009, all 14 project partners from six European countries (Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Romania, and Hungary), gathered for the kick-off meeting of the project in Berlin, at the premises of the project coordinator Technology Foundation Berlin (TSB-FAV). The European Commission presented their expectations towards ECORailS, which will have a duration of 26 months (1st of May 2009 – 30th of June 2011) with an overall budget of about 1.4 Million Euro. Based on that, the consortium presented the involvement of further administrative decision-makers, Railway Operators and Infrastructure Manager as external experts. Their involvement will be organised in the ECORailS User Platform, a reference group which will regularly meet during the project to identify expectations and needs, and it shall evaluate the project results, in a user-oriented approach.

Besides the 14 national Public Transport Administrations, Operators, Infrastructure managers and respective associations, represented are the UIC – International Union of Railways, UITP – International Association of Public Transport and the CER – Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies.

The ECORailS consortium consists of the following partners:

1. TSB Innovation Agency Berlin GmbH FAV – Transport Technology Systems Network – Germany (coordinator)
2. Senate Department for Urban Development - Germany

3. Pro Rail Alliance - Germany
4. KCW GmbH - Germany
5. Berlin University of Technology - Germany
6. Trafikstyrelsen - Denmark
7. Transportforskningsgruppen I Borlänge AB - Sweden
8. Province administration of Brescia - Italy
9. Università Commerciale "L. Bocconi" - Italy
10. Università di Roma "La Sapienza" - Italy
11. Integral Consulting RD - Romania
12. Universitatea POLITEHNICA din Timisoara - Romania
13. CFR Timisoara – National Society of Railway Transport - Romania
14. Budapest University of Technology and Economics - Hungary

The work plan for the project contains the following Work Packages (WP's):

- WP1 Management
- WP2 Technologies
- WP3 Legal frames and awarding procedures
- WP4 Pilot applications
- WP5 Evaluation and Validation
- WP6 Communication and Dissemination
- WP7 IEE Dissemination Activities

Contact:

Martin Schipper

Phone: +49-30-46 30 25 77

Email: mschipper@fav.de