

## IBS to be a partner in the International Rail Forum and Conference

The International Rail Forum & Conference (IRFC) is a notable event in the international railway sector's calendar, bringing together top managers, railway and logistics experts, customers, prominent politicians and institutions from across Europe. The 7th IRFC will be held in Prague from 1 to 3 April 2020 (Wednesday to Friday) at the Clarion Hotel Prague with the motto: "Let's build a new generation of railways together".

The main themes of the upcoming conference will be projects and trends that are hotly debated of late.

IRFC 2020 will be kicked off by the conference organiser, i.e. an OLTIS Group representative, by the vice-chair of the European Parliament Mrs Dita Charanzova, European institutions representatives, and representatives of the Czech Chamber of Deputies as well as those of the Czech government.

Session 1 - Transport in the EU after 2021 - this session will be moderated by the CER executive director, Mr Libor Lochman. Individual speakers will cover fulfilment of the 4<sup>th</sup> railway package, liberalisation of European railways, but most notably visions and challenges for the European railway sector until 2030. These topics will then be discussed in a panel debate.

Session 2 - ERA as a European Authority - will be moderated by the executive director of European Union Agency for Railways Mr Josef Doppelbauer. Presentations will focus on short summary of the most significant change in railway interoperability and safety, that being the transformation of ERA into a European system authority. The presentations as well as the panel discussion will include views on ERTMS implementation and its new attributes, on a new way of vehicle authorisation, and on development in this field in the upcoming framework period.

Session 3 - Research and Innovation after 2021 - Motivation for Countries from Central and Eastern Europe - this session will be led by Mr Carlo Borghini, the executive director of the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking. Speakers are going to share their views on the matter of research and innovation in railway from points of view of international organisations and EU member states. Some will also mention the topic of further development in institutionalised partnerships within Horizon Europe - Shift2Rail2. This is expected to be followed by a debate on greater involvement of EU13 countries into research and innovation activities.

Session 4 - Future High Speed Rail Network within the CEE - the session is focused on the field of high speed rail transport within the Central European area. This is a priority topic for the Czech Republic, thus moderating of this session was given to the vice-chair of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Mr Martin Kolovratnik. Presentations will examine development of HS rail in the Eastern part of Europe, and its inclusion into TEN-T as well as on comparing individual HS rail concepts across Europe and the world.

Session 5 moderated by the TEN-T coordinator Mr Matthieu Grosch will concentrate on the idea of connecting the European TEN-T network with the initiative known as "New Silk Road". Presentations and the following discussion will focus on different fields where these connections should emerge in order to ensure continuous flow of goods from the East to the West, from Asia to Europe. The discussion will also go through political as well as business intentions, but also legislation concerning these kinds of transports.

The TAF/TAP TSI forum will be inserted between session 4 and 5 and will be moderated by the CER senior advisor on ERA and research-related issues Mr Yann Seimandi. Presentations and discussions of representatives of the rail sector will focus particularly on implementation of both TSIs in challenging areas, which means small and medium-sized railway undertakings. ERA representatives will also introduce the TAP and TAF TSI revision processes to the guests, and panellists are going to be able to engage with their experience and views on future development in this field.

**Take advantage of Early Bird special conference fee valid until 30 November 2019 and register online directly on the conference website <https://irfc.eu/en/registration/>**

Don't miss this extraordinary railway event in 2020 and meet the Euro-Asian rail freight world in the heart of Europe.

[www.IRFC.eu](http://www.IRFC.eu)