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Submissions & Contributions

Railtalk Magazine Xtra, a magazine written by the Enthusiast for the Enthusiast. So why not join the team. We are always looking for talented photographers and writers to join us at Railtalk. Be it though pictorial submissions or via a written article featuring an event or railtour, we greatly appreciate any contributions to the magazine however big or small.

Photographic Contributions

All Photographic contributions should to be sent to us via email, post or via the members section page on our website. Contact addresses are provided above.

All images should be provided at a resolution of at least 2400px x 1700px at 240dpi.

Welcome to Issue 241Xtra

Many more stories coming out of Innotrans this month as the show closed it doors after another successful event....

CELEBRATING its 30th anniversary, InnoTrans 2026 filled its 42 halls for the first time with 3190 exhibitors from 59 countries taking part, 200 more than in 2024. There were 750 first-time exhibitors in Berlin and 180 world premieres with the exhibition attracting 175,000 trade visitors from more than 120 countries. Messe Berlin's COO, Dirk Hoffmann, says is this an increase of more than 5000 visitors compared with 2024. "These figures make us very proud and demonstrate the influence InnoTrans still wields 30 years after its debut," Hoffmann says.

InnoTrans is only exhibition where visitors can see trains from around the world side-by-side. This year, there were 113 vehicles from 17 countries. These included: CRRC hybrid locomotive and prototype metro train; Stadler's hydrogen-powered narrow-gauge train and high-spec inter-city train for Norway; Siemens Mobility's Vectron X locomotive and new Piccadilly Line train for London; Hyundai Rotem's 320km/h high-speed train; Hitachi Rail's latest generation of Frecciarossa high-speed train; Alstom's new 200km/h inter-city EMU for Trenitalia, and several new LRVs, freight wagons, locomotives, and track maintenance machines.

AI was a key topic of conversation during the exhibition with the inaugural "AI on Track" AI hackathon and the AI Mobility Lab. New AI applications for rail transport were also on show including Alstom's AI assistant "Talk to my train," which is designed to help maintenance teams identify and repair problems on trains more quickly.
"Over the past two years, AI has evolved from a trending topic into the single most dominant topic of conversation," says InnoTrans director Kerstin Schulz. "With InnoTrans 2026, artificial intelligence has become a widespread reality across the industry."
Messe Berlin says a representative survey of InnoTrans participants revealed satisfaction ratings of more than 90%. "The high satisfaction ratings show us that we are striking a chord with our visitors through this programme while also providing our exhibitors with the ideal conditions to showcase their innovative strength," Schulz says.

However all could be not good for German rail freight operators as....

A ruling by the Cologne Administrative Court has seriously hindered attempts to assert control over German rail's operational costs. Rather than limiting infrastructure manager DB InfraGO's capacity to generate track access charge (TAC) revenue, it has paved the way for an explosion in costs. The court case centred around DB InfraGO's total cost ceiling. This determines the maximum amount of TAC that the infrastructure manager can charge. While the Federal Network Agency had earlier set this limit to around €7.3 billion in June, the Cologne court has now reversed that decision. The result: the total cost ceiling is now around €8.2 billion. This will allow DB InfraGO to raise TACs even further (by some 12.5% at least in the standard segment), but rail freight costs are expected to grow much more than that. The financial impact of the ruling is aggravated by a reduction in TAC subsidies planned for the next timetable year. Germany will reduce those from €345 million to €200 million. When the timetable changes in December, rail freight can expect to pay 75% higher track access charges compared to the current timetable year, believes branch association Die Güterbahnen.

"This decision reflects a systemic failure: Despite promises, the federal government has failed to reform the track access charge system, forcing political disputes to be settled in court", reacts the association's Managing Director Neele Wesseln.

"The Federal Network Agency at least attempted to limit the enormous cost increases of InfraGO and thus the jumps in track access charges, but current legislation prevents this. As a result, ever-increasing federal funds and sharply rising track access charge revenues are disappearing into a black hole of personnel and construction costs, without railway companies receiving any improvement to the network", Wesseln added. If Germany takes no action to reform the TAC system, traffic will decrease further and exacerbate the problem, she warns.

Until next month... **David**

This Page

ÖBB Class 1116.052 arrives on time at Hamburg Altona with the previous evening's combined Nightjet train No. NJ492 from Wien Hbf and NJ40420 from Innsbruck Hbf on September 18th. *Andy Pratt*

Front Cover

CD Class 754 044 passes Komín hauling train No. OS9066, 15:47 Čerčany - Praha hl.n. *Laurence Sly*

H-Start Class 418.309 approaches Tapolca hauling train No. 19784, the 13:55 from Balatonfured on August 13th.
Laurence Sly

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You just get lucky sometimes! At Inveralochy on the Canberra branch, a spectacular storm with rainbow and sunset light highlights empty garbage train No. 2122 returning from Crisps Creek back to Sydney behind Nos. 8218 and 8227 on September 7th. *Mark Bennett*

On September 8th, Pacific National's 3NY3 Newcastle to Whyalla steel train is seen in the Cullerin Ranges in southern NSW behind No. NR122, NR26 and brand new No. 9423. The NR's have been stalwarts of the Australian interstate freight task for 30 years, and the 94's are the latest updated version from manufacturer UGL, featuring AC traction and other more modern features. *Levi Bennett*

Australia

Having lost a major aggregates and cement contract with construction materials company Boral, one of the last tasks SSR performed for them was collecting a few leftover wagons still containing product that required emptying. Here on September 9th, SSR's No. 602 and CLP12 top the grade on the Berrima Cement Works branch with a few random wagons still loaded with limestone that had been repaired but still required tipping of the product. *Levi Bennett*

At Telegraph Point on September 20th, the 7SB3 freight heads north to Brisbane with Nos. NR13, NR69, NR65 and 8117.
Levi Bennett

On September 26th, Pacific National's container train No. 6BM4 runs through Pembrooke on the NSW North Coast line behind Nos. NR119, NR84 and NR26. This express freight runs from Brisbane to Melbourne, stopping only for crew changes. *Levi Bennett*

It was bound to happen! Despite their best efforts, eventually the 'candy' XPT set got split up! No. XP2006 in retro colours, leads the Casino-bound XPT service from Sydney with the usual blue carriages and rear power car XP2017 following along at Kundabung on September 26th. *Levi Bennett*

On September 18th, train No. 6623 the Wauchope to Grafton cement shuttle service runs through Telegraph Point behind Pacific National's No. 8140. *Mark Bennett*

The late running Brisbane to Sydney XPT service with power cars Nos. XP2003 and XP2005, takes to the loop at Telegraph Point to cross the Casino-bound XPT on September 18th. *Mark Bennett*

Running late on September 18th, is SCT's train No. 5BM9 Brisbane to Melbourne freight with Nos. CSR019 and CSR016 at the helm. *Mark Bennett*

Austria

Siemens to supply Signaling X for Austria's rail infrastructure

Siemens Mobility has been awarded a contract worth approximately €1.3 billion by ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG to digitalize Austria's interlocking technology. The contract was awarded as part of a long-term framework agreement with a total volume of €2.6 billion. This agreement forms the basis for the phased, nationwide rollout of digital interlockings (DSTW) in Austria, starting with a pilot project in the fourth quarter of 2030. At the heart of this modernization is Signaling X, Siemens Mobility's integrated technology platform for the digital transformation of signalling and control systems.

The software-based, cloud-ready architecture integrates interlockings, the ETCS train control system, and cybersecurity applications on a common technological foundation. As such, Signaling X creates the necessary conditions for the step-by-step modernization of the ÖBB rail network. By consistently decoupling software and hardware, the technology enables greater operational flexibility, significantly increases capacity, and strengthens the digital resilience of the rail network.

"We are proud to partner with ÖBB in shaping the future of Austria's rail network. At the heart of this transformation is Signaling X, our software-based and cloud-ready technology for the next generation of signalling and control systems. It intelligently moves interlocking logic into centralized data centres, thereby digitalizing rail operations from the ground up," said Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility.

"What we successfully began in 2020 with the pilot project in Achau, we are now bringing this solution or "it" into nationwide application together. By doing so, ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG is taking an international pioneering role and creating the foundation for increased capacity, maximum reliability, and a sustainable and more resilient rail operation in Austria."

"Digital interlocking technology is a key technology for the railway of the future. With this contract award, we are setting the course for the comprehensive digitalization of our signalling systems and creating the foundation for making rail transport in Austria even more efficient, robust, and high-performing. In doing so, ÖBB is also setting new international standards in digital traffic management," said Johann Pluy, Member of the Board of ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG.

The framework agreement covers the entire spectrum of modern interlocking technology: from indoor systems, where the safety-critical logic based on Signaling X runs on standard IT servers, to outdoor equipment. Here, state-of-the-art object controllers are used to ensure the precise control of signals, switches, and other critical infrastructure elements. The contract is set for a term of at least ten years and is supplemented by a comprehensive service agreement. This ensures technical support, maintenance, and maximum system availability over the entire 25-year system lifecycle.

The implementation of this major project will follow a structured, multi-stage process. Following the planned commissioning of the first pilot project in the fourth quarter of 2030, further pilot phases will follow to optimally adapt the technology to the entire network. Once this phase is successfully completed, the nationwide rollout will begin with the long-term goal of replacing all existing interlocking systems with the new digital generation.

About Signaling X

Signaling X is Siemens Mobility's innovative, software-based, and virtualized architecture for digital rail infrastructure. The system provides an integrated technology platform that brings together previously separate functions - such as interlocking technology, the ETCS train control system, diagnostic systems, and cybersecurity applications - in a digital and cloud-ready environment.

By consistently decoupling safety logic from proprietary hardware, Signaling X enables the use of standard IT components (Commercial Off-the-Shelf, COTS) and the centralization of control in modern data centres. For infrastructure operators, this means significantly greater flexibility, simplified maintenance, and a substantial increase in rail network capacity and reliability - all while maintaining the highest safety standards through an integrated Zero-Trust cybersecurity model.

Pioneering work as the foundation for the nationwide rollout

The now-finalized rollout builds on a successful technological history: As early as 2020, Siemens Mobility smoothly commissioned a digital interlocking as a pilot project in Achau, just outside Vienna, proving the technology's practical viability. This pioneering work, combined with the ongoing deployment of ETCS Level 2 across the entire ÖBB rail network by 2038, forms the basis for digital transformation.

By combining ETCS and digital interlockings based on Signaling X, ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG is taking an international pioneering role and creating one of the most modern and high-performance rail networks in the world.

New wagons for automotive transport

With 70 additional Laaers car transport wagons, the ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG) is expanding its offering for the transport of finished vehicles.

More capacity on rail: RCG is adding 70 new car transport wagons to its fleet. The new-generation, double-deck wagons, with a loading length of 30.07 metres, are specifically designed for electric vehicles and increase available capacity – particularly during production peaks, seasonal fluctuations or short-term demand. The procurement of a further 130 car transport wagons is planned for 2027.

Precision logistics for the automotive industry
Reliable and precisely timed supply chains are crucial in the automotive sector. “Just in Time” and “Just in Sequence” require components to arrive exactly where they are needed, while finished vehicles must reach customers and export ports on schedule. RCG has many years of experience in this field, transporting around one million finished vehicles each year as well as approximately 600,000 tonnes of components such as engines, wheels, doors, body shells and batteries for more than twenty international locations. By expanding its fleet, RCG is systematically strengthening its end-to-end offering for the automotive industry and is one of only two rail logistics providers on the European market to operate its own car transport wagons with its own locomotives.

The climate benefits of rail
Today, around 60% of all new vehicles in Europe are already transported by rail. A single car train can carry up to 256 vehicles, replacing up to 37 truck journeys on the road. In addition, rail transport generates more than 20 times less CO2 emissions than road transport * – a key component of climate-friendly supply chains for companies with ambitious sustainability targets.

Strong connections for the mobility of the future
As the share of electric vehicles grows, so too do the requirements for automotive logistics and safety. RCG offers multimodal door-to-door solutions for electric vehicles as well as batteries and components, connecting production sites, suppliers, OEMs and logistics providers. This creates stable and sustainable logistics solutions for the mobility of the future.

* ÖBB rail freight: 3.11 g CO_2e/tkm; road transport comparison: 75.3 g CO_2e/tkm (average according to the German Environment Agency (UBA), 2024/NHB25). (Footnote: Calculation excludes vehicle manufacturing.)

New automotive route from Rijeka

The Port of Rijeka is taking on a new role in vehicle imports from Asia. ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG) is providing the hinterland transport using its own traction and car-carrier wagons.

New transport options are emerging via Rijeka for automotive traffic to Central and South-Eastern Europe. Since August, RoRo vessels (roll-on/roll-off ships) from Asia have been calling at the port. These vessels are specifically designed to transport rolling cargo such as electric cars. This is giving rise to a new freight flow for vehicle imports, particularly between China, Rijeka and European destinations.

Once the vehicles arrive at the port, they must be transported onwards into the European hinterland by rail or road.

RCG secures hinterland transport
RCG is establishing an early presence on this new corridor and is handling an important share of the onward transport from Rijeka. The vehicle transports are handled using tailor-made rail solutions, its own locomotives and its own car-carrier wagons. As freight flows grow and new entry routes into Europe emerge, efficient rail-based hinterland transport plays a key role in moving large volumes efficiently to their destinations.

Rijeka as an important hub
With new freight flows for the automotive industry, the port is further strengthening its role as a gateway to Central and South-Eastern Europe. For RCG, Rijeka is already an important hub in the northern Adriatic. TransFER connections to Budapest and Belgrade link the port directly to the RCG network.

Austria

ÖBB Rail Cargo Group continues to drive the future of multimodal transport forward with Transporeon

ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG) has given a positive interim assessment of its collaboration with Transporeon, a Trimble company: since the official launch in December 2023, nearly 10,000 additional shipments have been processed via the Transporeon platform.

Digital platform makes multimodal shipments more accessible

Since 2023, RCG has been the first railway logistics provider to be represented on the Transporeon platform. This marks the first time that rail and multimodal shipments have been integrated into a digital environment where shippers already plan, book and track road shipments. In multimodal shipments the main leg is by rail, whilst the first- and last mile carriage is organised by truck This makes it easier for customers to combine the sustainability of rail with the flexibility of trucks for the first and last mile.

“If we want to move more freight by rail, we must make it as easy as possible for customers. This is precisely where our collaboration with Transporeon comes in: we combine the strengths of rail with digital processes, transparency and ease of booking. The figures clearly show that the solution is being well received by the market and that multimodal logistics is becoming part of everyday industrial practice,” emphasises Christoph Grasl, Member of the Board of ÖBB Rail Cargo Group.

This development demonstrates that digital interfaces are a key lever for integrating multimodal logistics solutions more closely into the industry’s existing transport processes. Companies gain easy access to more sustainable logistics – without having to compromise on transparency and predictability in the door to door process.

Our multi-year collaboration with ÖBB Rail Cargo Group demonstrates how digital processes can help integrate rail and multimodal transport more easily into existing supply chains. With Transporeon Visibility, customers can, for example, track and manage their rail transports,” says Philipp Pfister, Vice President Transporeon.

International awards confirm innovative strength

The cooperation between RCG and Transporeon has already received several awards. In June 2024, the companies were awarded the Austrian Logistics Prize, followed in October 2024 by the international Supply Chain Excellence Award in the category “The Digital Transformation Award”. The joint solution was recognised because it brings together rail, road and multimodal transport on a single platform for the first time, thereby setting a new standard for digital and sustainable supply chains.

More round trips between Villach and Treviso

ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG) is increasing the frequency of its service between Austria and northern Italy. With two round trips per week, the connection offers additional transport capacity for wagonload freight and containers.

In response to growing demand, RCG is doubling the frequency of its TransFER Villach–Treviso to two round trips per week from the end of September. The connection forms part of TransFER Villach–Italy. Villach South marshalling yard serves as a key hub for freight flows to Italy and onwards to South-Eastern Europe. Individual wagons and groups of wagons are consolidated there to form block trains.

Direct access to the Veneto economic region

Treviso provides attractive access to the highly industrialised Veneto region. Its proximity to producers, shippers and consignees, combined with good road and rail connections and short first and last mile distances, provides efficient links to key national and international transport routes towards Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Short transit times and comprehensive logistics solutions

The transit time between Villach and Treviso is just one day. Customers benefit from end-to-end logistics solutions, including first and last mile services, as well as the handling of conventional wagonload and container traffic. A range of additional freight forwarding services is also available. These include outdoor cargo handling, the distribution of goods such as timber, paper reels and palletised freight, as well as warehousing logistics.

HZPP Class 2044.004 stands at Kloštar station on September 24th while working train No. 985, the 13:20 Zagreb Gl Kol - Osijek service. *Andy Pratt*

HZPP Class 1142.014 departs Zagreb Gl Kol on September 24th with train No. 743, the 13:05 to Vinkovcih. *Andy Pratt*

CD Class 754.076 departs Český Šternberk hauling train No. Sp1599, 08:01 Praha hl.n. - Zruč nad Sázavou. *Laurence Sly*

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.075 departs Namest nad Oslavou hauling train No. R656, 13:44 Brno - Ceske Budejovice. *Laurence Sly*

CD Class 754.018 crosses the viaduct at Kralice nad Oslavou hauling train No. R653, 06:02 Ceske Budejovice - Brno. *Laurence Sly*

CD Class 754.060 approaches Velke Svatonovice hauling train No. R925, 10:14 Praha hl.n. - Trutnov. *Laurence Sly*

Class 754.044 passes Komín hauling train No. OS9066, 15:47 Čerčany - Praha hl.n.
Laurence Sly

CD Class 363.248 passes Česká Třebová with a loaded car transporter. *Laurence Sly*

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.043 approaches Studenec hauling train No. R652, 17:44 Brno - Ceske Budejovice.
Laurence Sly

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.030 passes Velke Svatonovice hauling train No. R924, 14:42 Trutnov - Praha hl.n. *Laurence Sly*

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.044 crosses Žampach Viaduct hauling train No. OS9057, 09:15 Praha hl.n. - Čerčany. *Laurence Sly*

Czech Republic

CD 754.064 passes Komín hauling train No. OS9068, 16:47 Čerčany - Praha hl.n.
Laurence Sly

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.064 passes Komín hauling train No. OS9068, 16:47 Čerčany - Praha hl.n.
Laurence Sly

CD Class 754.076 departs Cisov hauling train No. Sp1599, 08:01 Praha hl.n. - Zruč nad Sázavou.
Laurence Sly

Vectron Class 1293.205 approaches Dlouhá Třebová hauling train No. RJ1014, 09:05 Warsaw Wsch - Praha Zahradnií Město.
Laurence Sly

Czech Republic

CD Class 750.711 departs Namest nad Oslavou hauling train No. R654, 15:44 Brno - Ceske Budejovice. *Laurence Sly*

CD Class 754.064 crosses Žampach Viaduct hauling train No. OS9055, 08:15 Praha hl.n. - Čerčany. *Laurence Sly*

CD Class 754.075 approaches Namest nad Oslavou hauling train No. R655, 08:02 Ceske Budejovice - Brno. *Laurence Sly*

Czech Republic

Former DSB NoHab No. MY1138 runs around it's train at Ledečko before propelling the short distance to Rataje nad Sázavou Zastávka station during the Festival Parnych Lokomtiv weekend on September 20th. *Andy Pratt*

ČD Vectron Class 193.963 arrives at Tábor station on September 20th with train No. R321, the 07:46 Praha hl.n. - Wien Franz-Josefs-Bahnhof. *Andy Pratt*

Rail System's Class 749.262 stands at Písek Město on September 19th with train No. R10340, the 06:55 Boršov nad Vltavou - Benešov u Prahy, an additional working to the Benešov Festival Parnich Lokomotiv weekend.
Andy Pratt

Czech Republic

Former DB Ludmilla Class 242.001 is a long way from home at České Velenice on September 20th as it is uncoupled from it's train before running round and returning to Benešov u Prahy. *Andy Pratt*

ČD Class 754.066 sporting it's original number T478.4066 departs Blížejov on September 22nd with train No. Os7418, the 15:16 Plzeň hl.n. - Domažlice Město. *Andy Pratt*

Former DR VT 175 unit No. VT18.16.07 stands resplendent in the morning sun at Benešov u Prahy on September 20th. The unit operated a special service to the Festival Parnych Lokomotiv event on September 18th. Unfortunately it was failed on Saturday and it's working ro České Velenice caped. On Sunday morning it departed ECS towards Praha. *Andy Pratt*

ČD Class 754.086 departs Stod with train No. Os7416, the 14:16 Plzeň hl.n. - Domažlice on September 22nd. *Andy Pratt*

Czech Republic

ŠKODA GROUP LAUNCHES PRODUCTION OF NEW TRAINS FOR ARRIVA
FIRST CAR BODY ALREADY PAINTED

Production of the new generation of electric multiple units for Arriva has reached another major milestone. Škoda Group has completed the design and technical preparation of the project and launched production of prototypes of both variants of the new train at its Ostrava plant. The first two car bodies have been completed in their basic welded form, and the first of them has already been painted. Assembly of the prototype vehicles will begin during September.

Škoda Group signed the contract with Arriva in July 2025. The contract, worth more than CZK 7 billion, covers the production of at least 22 low-floor electric multiple units from the new Škoda 26Ev platform – 16 three-car and 6 four-car units. With a maximum speed of 200 km/h, the trains are scheduled to enter service from December 2028 on the Ex6 Prague–Pilsen–Cheb and R16 Prague–Beroun–Pilsen–Klatovy / Železná Ruda routes.

“Since signing the contract, we have completed the design and technical preparation of the project and moved on to production of the first vehicles. The first painted car body is an important and, above all, highly visible milestone. At the same time, we are continuing to test key components and prepare the traction and control system. The project is therefore gradually moving from the development phase into physical production,” says Tomáš Ignačák, Vice Chairman of the Board of Škoda Group, adding: “I would also like to highlight the significant role that Czech industry will play in the production of these new trains. We expect domestic suppliers to account for approximately 80% of deliveries.”

Prototypes are being built in Ostrava

The Ostrava plant is currently producing prototypes of both unit variants, referred to in the project as EMU200 and EMU300. The basic welded structures of the first two car bodies have been completed, with additional car bodies expected to leave the production line at approximately two-week intervals. Prototype assembly will begin during September, with bogies, traction equipment, control systems, interiors and other equipment to be installed progressively. “It is great to see the train, which until now we have known mainly from technical drawings and visualisations, turning into a real vehicle.

The new units will offer passengers higher speeds, a comfortable interior and modern onboard services. Today’s presentation of the new car bodies brings us closer to deploying them on routes from Prague via Pilsen to Cheb and Klatovy,” adds Daniel Adamka, CEO of ARRIVA CZ.

Component testing is already under way

In parallel with prototype production, type tests of individual components are under way to verify compliance with the required technical and safety parameters. In cooperation with the RICE research centre at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Škoda Group is beginning testing of the traction system. Development and verification of the vehicle software will take place at Škoda Digital.

Testing of the complete prototype trainsets is scheduled to begin in spring 2027. This will be followed by the tests required for approval of the new vehicle type and preparations for series production.

A new platform for long-distance transport

The units for Arriva are based on the Škoda 26Ev platform designed for interregional and long-distance transport. They will be dual-system units, capable of operating on lines electrified at 3 kV DC and 25 kV AC, while they can also be modified for operation on 15 kV AC systems, for example in Germany. The maximum operating speed will be 200 km/h. The trains will meet stringent requirements for passenger comfort, pressure tightness and fire safety, enabling them to operate on high-speed lines and in tunnel sections longer than 5 km.

The three-car units will offer 224 seats, while the four-car units will provide 315 seats. Both variants will also include first class. Equipment will include air conditioning, Wi-Fi connectivity, power sockets, passenger information and CCTV systems, and an accessible toilet. The trains will also be equipped with the European Train Control System (ETCS), remote vehicle diagnostics technology and an Automatic Train Operation (ATO) system, which enables the units to operate in the most energy-efficient mode available at any given time. It regulates speed according to the timetable and the line gradient profile and optimises braking.

Based on real-world operating data from comparable Škoda units in the Baltics, the system can reduce energy consumption by up to 15%.

Czech Republic

Arriva accelerates growth in Czechia with contract success and fleet modernisation

Arriva is accelerating its growth in Czechia, building on two decades in the country to expand its rail operations and invest in a new generation of lower-emission trains. The company has been selected to operate a 15-year contract to run rail services connecting the western city of Pilsen with surrounding towns. The deal includes the operation of new fleet of battery-electric trains to replace existing diesels on the line – providing cleaner and more reliable journeys for passengers.

It underlines the scale of Arriva's continuing growth in Czechia – 20 years on from the group's entry to the country's public transport market Already one of Czechia's leading transport providers, Arriva operates 2,000 buses and more than 100 trains, providing 15,000 connections every day and carrying more than 115 million passengers a year.

Its rail presence is set to grow further through new contract wins and significant investment in modern electric and battery-electric trains.
Earlier this month, the first of a new fleet of modern long-distance electric trains manufactured by Škoda for Arriva reached a major milestone, with completion of the first train body shell. The trains will enter service from December 2028.

New €291 million contract win
Arriva Group had been selected as the preferred operator for a new battery-electric rail contract worth €291 million. The contract – starting in 2030 in the Pilsen region – will include a fleet of brand-new battery-electric trains, with six entering service in 2030 and a further six in 2033. The new fleet replaces existing diesel trains operating on the line, cutting emissions because the new trains will be able to switch from overhead wires to battery power where no electric tracks are present. The contract runs for 15 years up to 2045. It is the third Pilsen contract that Arriva has been awarded.

Milestone in delivery of new intercity electric train fleet.
Arriva is also investing in a modern train fleet to operate on intercity services, with the production of a brand new fully electric Škoda fleet which will enter service in Czechia from December 2028.
This investment followed a €750 million contract award by the Czech Ministry of Transport for long-distance rail services connecting Prague, Pilsen and Western Bohemia – one of the country's busiest transport corridors.

Škoda Group has now completed the design and technical development phase of the project and has begun production of prototype vehicles for the new fleet. The first train body shell has now been manufactured, with prototype assembly having started in September.

Gianfranco Sgro, CEO of Arriva Group, said: "The Pilsen contract win and Škoda production milestone are both strong examples of how we are investing for the long term across Arriva. Growing operations and modernising fleets is central to improving the passenger experience, making our services more accessible and efficient, while also supporting the transition to more sustainable public transport across Europe.

"Our growth in Czechia rail validates our ambition to be a trusted, long-term partner to transport authorities across Europe. By combining investment in modern fleets with smarter technology and our operational expertise, we can deliver better journeys for passengers while helping the regions we serve meet their connectivity and sustainability ambitions."
Petr Novotný Chief Executive Officer, Škoda Group, said: "This milestone reflects the strong partnership between Škoda and Arriva and our shared commitment to investing in the future of rail in Czechia. The completion of the technical design and production of the first carriage body shell marks an important step towards delivering 22 modern electric trains that will support Arriva's growth plans and provide passengers with a fast, comfortable and sustainable travel experience."
The investment in Czechia forms part of Arriva Group's wider growth strategy across Europe – cementing the company's position as one of the biggest and most respected pan-continental public transport operators. Arriva currently operates in 11 European countries including the UK, Netherlands and across eastern and southern Europe.

ČD Cargo returned to profit

The ČD Cargo Group achieved a pre-tax profit of CZK 385 million in the first half of 2026 and transported a total of 27.8 million tons of goods. The improved performance was significantly influenced by the effects of the company's streamlining efforts from previous years and by an active commercial policy.

The transport volume of 27.8 million tons is significantly higher than the company planned and in recent months has been approximately at last year's level. Compared to the plan, solid fuel transport was successful, which is closely related to the crisis in the Middle East and the rising price of oil. We transported significantly more wood and grain year-on-year. Intermodal transport and the automotive segment also recorded an increase. In both cases, the company's foreign expansion strategy launched in previous years is having a positive effect.

Thanks to cooperation with the German branch, for example, the first train with a ČD Cargo locomotive reached the Danish border crossing station of Padborg. The company does not focus only on traditional commodities, but is preparing a number of projects for the transport of new commodities, such as car batteries, biomass or solid alternative fuels, etc.

" Higher transport volumes mean efficient use of ČD Cargo's capacities, which has been reflected in a positive economic result, " says Radim Ječný, Chairman of the Board of Directors of ČD Cargo. The efficiency of operations has been maintained despite the demanding lockout activities affecting the operation of freight trains not only on railway lines in the Czech Republic, but also, for example, in Germany. " I would like to thank all business partners for their trust and our employees for the quality of work they have done.

The results achieved are positive, but this does not mean that our industry has entered a period of certainty. Market developments remain very dynamic and we must be prepared for the fact that next year will bring new challenges, " says Radim Ječný and concludes: "Right now is the right time to focus on efficiency, quality of services and the search for new opportunities. These are the areas that will determine how successful we will be in the years to come. "

SNCB Class 1800 No. 1857 stands on the blocks at Paris Gare du Nord on September 17th. The loco is ready to drop onto the Ouigo stock forming train No. 0TC69, the 19:27 to Bruxelles Midi. *Andy Pratt*

France

Alstom celebrates the commissioning of the first two battery-powered regional trains in France

On September 1st, Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, celebrated the entry into service of the first two battery-powered regional trains (TER) in France, as part of a 41-million-euro national program funded by five regions (Occitanie, the Sud Region, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Hauts-de-France and Nouvelle-Aquitaine), SNCF Voyageurs and Alstom.

The Occitanie Region's battery-powered train is in service on the Nîmes–Vauvert line

On Monday August 31st, Jean-Luc Gibelin, Vice-President of the Occitanie Region responsible for Mobility and Transport Infrastructure, representing Carole Delga, President of the Occitanie Region, Gaël Barbier, Regional Director of SNCF Voyageurs Occitanie, and Olivier Delecroix, Vice-President in charge of Marketing and Sales at Alstom France, attended the launch of Occitanie's first battery-powered train on the Nîmes–Vauvert line.

This prototype liO train marks a new stage in the efforts of the Region and its partners to decarbonise transportation, develop solutions tailored to non-electrified lines and strengthen rail transport provision across the region.

With this trial, Occitanie is positioning itself at the forefront of innovation and the energy transition. Already involved in trialling a trimode (electric, diesel, battery) Régiolis hybrid train on the Toulouse rail network and soon to be equipped with hydrogen-powered Régiolis trains on the Montréjeau–Luchon line, the Occitanie Region is the first region in France to trial three technologies aimed at reducing the use of diesel in rail transport: hybrid, battery and hydrogen.

The Sud Region battery-powered train is in service on the Avignon–Carpentras line

Since July 28th 2026, the Sud Region first battery-powered regional train has been operating commercially on the line between Avignon and Carpentras. Operated by SNCF Voyageurs TER Sud, this train runs on electric power on sections of the line equipped with overhead lines, then switches to battery power at Sorgues station to run on its batteries as far as Carpentras, on the non-electrified section of the line.

Committed to ever more sustainable mobility, the Sud Region is continuing its strategy for the ecological transformation of regional rail transport by investing in innovative solutions. The introduction of this battery-powered train marks a new step in this ambition by providing a concrete response to the challenges of decarbonising lines that are not fully electrified.

The first two 100% battery-powered TER trains operating in France

These two launches form part of a national program involving five regions (Occitanie, Sud Region, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Hauts-de-France and Nouvelle-Aquitaine), SNCF Voyageurs and Alstom, which aims to trial the first generation of battery-powered rolling stock on a national scale. These first two trains in service are intended to test the performance of this technology under real operating conditions and to identify the conditions for its deployment on non-electrified regional lines.

More energy-efficient than previous rolling stock and with no direct CO2 emissions, these trains offer a complementary solution to take the decarbonisation of rail transport – already one of the most environmentally friendly modes of transport – a step further. Created by converting two existing high-capacity railcars (AGC), the battery-powered regional trains brought into service in Occitanie and in the Sud region have been fitted with lithium-ion batteries to replace their diesel engines, offering a range of over 80 kilometres. Energy generated during braking is also recovered and stored in the batteries, enabling energy savings of up to 20 per cent. This development also offers passengers greater comfort on board thanks to a quieter train.

This programme to develop battery-powered regional trains represents a total investment of over 41 million euro:

- 30 million euro provided by the five partner regions,
- 6 million euro from SNCF Voyageurs
- and 5.5 million euro by Alstom.

Partners firmly committed to decarbonising rail transport

"Together with Occitanie, the Sud Region and SNCF Voyageurs, we are taking a significant step forward in the development of more sustainable rail solutions. These two battery-powered regional trains demonstrate that it is possible to transform and modernise existing rolling stock to reduce its environmental footprint, whilst meeting passengers' mobility needs. This innovation provides a concrete example of how the rail sector can continue its transition towards ever more efficient and energy-efficient transport," said Frédéric Wiscart, President of the France BeLux region at Alstom.

"In the Occitanie Region, we have chosen rail and we are committed to innovation. This battery-powered liO train is further proof of this: alongside our partners, we are experimenting, investing and preparing today for the railway of tomorrow. With hybrid, battery-powered and soon, hydrogen-powered trains, Occitanie is the only French region to be testing three technologies to reduce the use of diesel in our regional trains. And this innovation goes hand in hand with a very concrete ambition: to develop the public rail service. On the Nîmes–Vauvert line, this new train will therefore increase the service with two additional return journeys on weekdays. Cleaner, more comfortable and more frequent transport for everyday life: that is the train of tomorrow!" said Carole Delga, President of the Occitanie Region.

"SNCF Voyageurs is proud to support the Occitanie Region in realising its ambitions for more frequent and sustainable regional transport. Together with the Region and Alstom, we are today putting France's first battery-powered train into service in Occitanie. On the non-electrified section of the Nîmes–Vauvert line, this innovation will enable trains to run without using diesel and therefore without emitting CO2. The introduction of two additional return journeys by the Occitanie Region as part of this trial supports the tremendous growth in liO train traffic resulting from our partnership, which benefits both passengers and the different regions of Occitanie," said Gaël Barbier, Regional Director of SNCF Voyageurs TER Occitanie.

"With this first battery-powered train, the Sud Region is turning innovation into a reality for the benefit of passengers and our regions. We are tangibly reducing CO2 emissions whilst maintaining the same quality of service. It is a practical, more efficient and quieter solution for building the regional train of the future," said Renaud Muselier, President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (Sud) Region and Deputy President of Régions de France.

"With this first battery-powered train now in service in the Sud Region, we are demonstrating that innovation is a practical means of accelerating the rail sector's green transition. This project, carried out in partnership with the Sud Region and Alstom, illustrates the SNCF Group's ability to advance technologies in the service of more sustainable mobility, without compromising on the quality of service offered to passengers.

By putting this train into commercial service today, we are paving the way for the railways of tomorrow: a public transport system that is ever more efficient, lower in carbon emissions and better tailored to the needs of local communities," said Delphine Couzi, Regional Director of SNCF Voyageurs Sud and Regional Coordinator of the SNCF Group.

Photo: The first battery-powered regional rain to enter service in Occitanie, photographed on August 31st 2026 at Nîmes-Centre station (© Fabienne Boccard – Alstom S.A. 2026)

Railpool's Class 188.140 is ready to depart Paris Gare du Nord on September 17th with the 18:03 European Sleeper service to Berlin, train No. ES475. *Andy Pratt*

Georgia

A Chinese built EMU for Georgian Railways, VMK No. GRT 002 is seen at Tbilisi (GE). *Gerard van Vliet*

Georgia

Alstom Prima ADY loco No. AZ4A0009 is seen at Tiblisi with the daily night train by Azebydzjan Railways (ADY) Baku (AZ) to Tbilisi (GE). *Gerard van Vliet*

Georgia

Coaches for the daily night train by Azebydzjan Railways (ADY) Baku (AZ) to Tbilisi (GE) were built by Stadler, seen here at Tiblisi. *Gerard van Vliet*

DB Class 218.421 running 25mins late at Weiden (Oberpf.) with train No. RE2.4867 is passed by 218.419 in TEE livery with an on time RE2.4861, 15:40 München Hbf - Marktredwitz on September 21st. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

Siemens receives first major order for 100 Vectron X locomotives from RAILPOOL

Major order for 100 Vectron X locomotives, with 80 units firmly ordered at contract signing
Vectron X: The latest locomotive generation featuring a connected driver's cab, app-based digital functions, and standardized interfaces
RAILPOOL becomes the first customer for selected digital functions of the Vectron X and Vectron X Dual Mode
RAILPOOL enters the European Dual Mode market and expands its fleet with the Vectron X Dual Mode

RAILPOOL, one of Europe's leading rail vehicle leasing companies, and Siemens Mobility have signed an order for the delivery of 100 Vectron X locomotives at InnoTrans 2026, the world's leading trade fair for the rail industry. This marks the first major order for Siemens Mobility's new locomotive generation. The order includes a firm call-off of 30 Vectron X and 50 Vectron X Dual Mode locomotives, with an option for a further 20 units. With the Dual Mode locomotives, RAILPOOL is expanding its Vectron fleet for the first time to include vehicles for combined use on electrified and non-electrified lines, creating additional flexibility for its customers.

At the same time, RAILPOOL will be the first customer for selected digital functions of the Vectron X. These include the "Core" digital basic package and the bundle for standardized APIs, which allow for the connection of additional applications and services. In the coming months, Siemens Mobility and RAILPOOL will work together to integrate these functions into RAILPOOL's existing systems and operating processes. This brings RAILPOOL's total Vectron fleet to 325 locomotives. The first vehicles are scheduled for delivery in 2027. Since 2010, the company has already taken 209 Vectron locomotives from Siemens Mobility into operation. Siemens Mobility introduced the new locomotive generation in the middle of this year.

"With RAILPOOL, we have gained a long-standing partner for the first major order of the Vectron X and the Vectron X Dual Mode. We are very pleased with the trust placed in our new locomotive generation. We are proud to accompany RAILPOOL's entry into the Dual Mode market and, at the same time, are bringing selected digital functions specifically into the leasing business for the first time. Standardized interfaces and software-based applications create additional value for RAILPOOL's customers and enable significantly more efficient operation and flexible maintenance based on various digital enhancements on our platform," says Andre Rodenbeck, CEO Rolling Stock at Siemens Mobility. "Having been the launch customer for the Vectron locomotive in 2010, it is particularly special for us to now also become the first customer for the new Vectron X generation. We are delighted that, in addition to the Vectron X AC locomotives ordered, we are also including Vectron X Dual Mode locomotives in our range for the first time, opening a new chapter in the rail vehicle leasing industry: Our customers will benefit from the most modern and reliable 'Locomotive as a Service' offering on the market. The platform product with hybrid drive for all freight and passenger applications, combined with maximum flexibility in homologation packages and the RAILPOOL service package, will open up completely new possibilities for our customers," says Torsten Lehnert, CEO of RAILPOOL.

Vectron X is Siemens Mobility's new software-defined locomotive platform for rail freight and passenger transport. For the first time, Siemens Mobility is bringing an App Store to the driver's cab, enabling operators to expand the locomotive's capabilities with app-based applications. Vectron X transforms the locomotive into an open digital platform and the driver's cab into a connected workplace. Through the App Store, operators can use applications from Siemens Mobility and third-party providers directly on the integrated Smart Screen. Digital functions such as Remote Start, Vectron Eco Cruise and Trainplay, as well as the provision of structured vehicle data via standardized interfaces, condition monitoring and maintenance coordination, support more efficient operations, higher availability and predictive maintenance.

The Vectron X locomotive is designed for cross-border operation in Europe and has been manufactured at the Siemens Mobility plant in Munich-Allach since its market launch in 2010. The locomotives are approved in 20 countries and are the only ones with approval for up to 230 km/h in passenger service. The multi-system capability and the large number of country approvals make the Vectron the standard choice for international cross-border rail transport. The Vectron X Dual Mode is based on proven components of the Vectron platform. The locomotive has a track gauge of 1,435 mm, a service weight of 90 tons, and is designed for the 15 kV AC power systems. It delivers a power output at wheel of max. 2,400 kW using catenary supply and max. 2,000 kW using diesel mode. The diesel tank has a capacity of 2,600 litres, and the maximum operating speed is 160 km/h. A train power supply is available. A version of the locomotive that supports both 15 kV and 25 kV AC systems is also available.

On September 5th, No. 50.2988 is seen at Fützen with the 11:35 Weizen to Zollhaus Blumberg on the Sauschwänzlebahn. *Steve Chapman*

A DB Class 1440 EMU is pictured on the Ravenna Viaduct on September 7th heading down to Freiburg. The Höllentalbahn climbs 607 metres in the 25km from Freiburg to Hinterzarten. *Steve Chapman*

DB Class 1440.678 approaches Hinterzarten having climbed up from Himmelreich and over the Ravenna Viaduct. The gradient on the Höllentalbahn on this section reaches 1 in 18. *Steve Chapman*

Class 211.041 is seen at the Dreiseenbahn museum at Seebrugg on September 6th. *Steve Chapman*

BayernBahn Class 139.314 waits at Titisee on September 6th with the 10:44 departure for Seebrugg as part of the Dreiseenbahn vintage train weekend. *Steve Chapman*

Raildox No. 2019.331 is pictured at Donaueschingen on September 5th with a southbound log train.
Steve Chapman

On September 5th, No. 50.2988 runs round its train at Zollhaus Blumberg, passing the preserved signal box. *Steve Chapman*

Germany

SBB Class 501.029 arrives at Freiburg on September 10th with a service for Milano. *Steve Chapman*

Class 139.314 waits at Aha station with the 15:32 service from Seebrugg to Titisee.
Steve Chapman

DB EMU No. 1440.182 departs Titisee with its service to Seebrugg on September 6th.
Steve Chapman

Preserved No. E44.1170 is pictured under cover at the Dreiseenbahn museum at Seebrugg.
Steve Chapman

Germany

SEL Class 234.242 passes through Köln Hbf on September 10th hauling Class 120.143.
Steve Chapman

DB Class 218.421 awaits departure at Marktredwitz on September 21st with train No. RE2.4867, the 17:07 to München Hbf. *Andy Pratt*

DB Class 218.421 has dropped onto the stock of RE2 train No. 4854 at Regensburg Hbf to work it forward to Marktredwitz on September 23rd. The service normally runs to Hof Hbf but the line beyond Marktredwitz was closed for engineering works. *Andy Pratt*

TRI Class 111.227 departs Stuttgart Bad Canstatt with train RE90 No. 89686, the 12:33 Nürnberg Hbf - Stuttgart Hbf, on September 23rd. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

TINA for Rostock: Innovative vehicle technology meets the highest standards of passenger comfort

Stadler has presented a new generation of tram at InnoTrans. The globally unique TINA (Total Integrated Low-Floor Drive) vehicle concept offers passengers significantly more space, panoramic windows and level boarding, combined with innovative bogie technology, high energy efficiency and a maintenance-friendly design. What makes TINA special is located where passengers can hardly see it: all traction, braking and running gear components are fully integrated beneath the vehicle floor. This creates a continuous, step-free interior without technical equipment or raised platforms above the drives.

"We wanted to rethink the tram – consistently from the perspective of the people who use it everyday," says Dr Ansgar Brockmeyer, Executive Vice President Sales & Marketing at Stadler. "TINA demonstrates how technological innovation can directly translate into a better passenger experience. The spacious interior is not simply a design feature - it is the result of our unique vehicle architecture."

Step on board and feel the difference

The three-section TINA for Rostock is around 32 meters long and can accommodate up to 216 passengers, including 75 seated passengers. High ceilings, large panoramic windows, and four spacious multifunctional areas create a bright and open interior. The completely step-free interior makes access easy for all passengers, regardless of age or mobility. Airconditioning, Wi-Fi, USB charging facilities and modern passenger information systems further enhance comfort. Four multifunctional areas provide space for pushchairs, bicycles, and wheelchairs.

"Today, our passengers expect more than simply getting from A to B," says Yvette Hartmann, Executive Board Member for Commercial Affairs at RSAG. "They want a pleasant atmosphere, plenty of space, good information and modern equipment. That is exactly what TINA offers. In particular, the high ceilings and large windows create a sense of spaciousness that our passengers can immediately appreciate."

Innovation beneath the vehicle floor

At the heart of TINA is the newly developed bogie from Stadler. Four specially designed TINA bogies help reduce wear on wheels and rails. At the same time, the vehicle concept integrates traction, braking, guidance, and suspension in an innovative way. Safety and the working environment for drivers have also been consistently enhanced. Modern driver assistance systems, including a collision protection system, support drivers in their daily operations. An ergonomically designed driver's cab, together with a maintenance-friendly vehicle design, contributes to safe and efficient operation.

A tram for the mobility of tomorrow

For Stadler and RSAG, TINA is a prime example of public transport that combines technology with an outstanding passenger experience. A modern tram should not only operate reliably – it should also encourage people to choose public transport willingly and regularly.

"With TINA, we are investing in more than new vehicles," says Jan Bleis, Executive Board Member for Market and Technology at RSAG. "We are investing in innovative technology, passenger comfort and an attractive, future-oriented public transport system."

Twelve of the 30 TINA vehicles ordered are already in service in Rostock. The remaining vehicles will be delivered in stages.

From now on and without changing trains: ICE connects Cologne with Brussels Airport and Antwerp.

This new service provides Brussels Airport with its first direct connection to the ICE network . Additionally, the science city of Leuven is now directly linked to Germany every day. The flagship of the ICE fleet, the ICE 3neo, is operating on this cross-border route. These state-of-the-art and innovative trains from Deutsche Bahn are characterized by exceptional comfort and reliability.

Dr. Michael Peterson, DB Board Member for Long-Distance Passenger Transport: "Direct to Antwerp, direct to Brussels Airport – and all with our most modern trains: This is how we are making international rail travel even easier and more attractive for passengers. We are connecting two important transport hubs with ICE services: Cologne as a hub for cross-border long-distance transport and Brussels Airport as an international hub for onward travel by plane."

DB is responding with the new offer to the sharply increased demand for rail travel between Germany and Belgium: Between 2019 and 2025, passenger numbers on cross-border ICE trains between the two countries increased by around 18 percent .

The trains depart Cologne Central Station at 06:11 and 14:38, arriving at Antwerp Central Station at 08:58 and 16:57. In the opposite direction, trains depart at 11:01 and 19:01, arriving in Cologne at 13:24 and 21:24. The journey time between Cologne Central Station and Brussels Airport is approximately two hours. For optimal connections to Brussels Airport's attractive long-haul flights, the morning train arrives at Brussels Airport at 08:29.

The new connection between Cologne and Antwerp

can be booked on bahn.de, in the DB Navigator as well as in the DB travel centers and DB agencies.

Passengers transferring to a Brussels Airlines flight at Brussels Airport benefit from a joint codeshare offer: they can purchase a combined train and flight ticket in a single booking step . The codeshare offer already familiar from Lufthansa ("Lufthansa Express Rail") has been extended in cooperation with Brussels Airlines to include the new connections from Cologne via Aachen and Liège to and from Brussels Airport.

Germany

German-Polish friendship in action: Berlin-Warsaw Express celebrates its anniversary

The Berlin-Warsaw Express is celebrating an anniversary: For a quarter of a century, the trains operated by Deutsche Bahn (DB) and PKP Intercity have connected the two capital cities by rail. Since its launch, around ten million passengers have used these cross-border connections. The anniversary is being celebrated with the second edition of the Berlin-Poznań-Warsaw cultural train and the planned German-Polish Friendship Pass.

“For 25 years, the Berlin-Warsaw Express has stood for living German-Polish friendship. The cross-border trains bring people together quickly and comfortably. This is driving a boom in international long-distance travel. That’s why, together with our cooperation partner PKP Intercity, we have massively expanded the service between Germany and Poland in recent years – most recently by 50 percent in December 2025,” says Dr. Michael Peterson, DB Board Member for Long-Distance Passenger Transport .

Steffen Bilger, Federal Minister of Transport: “The close connection between Germany and Poland is evident on many levels: in cross-border rail transport, in cultural exchange, and in encounters between people. The 25th anniversary of the Berlin-Warsaw Express represents a quarter-century of successful cooperation on the railways. The Culture Train creates spaces for dialogue and mutual understanding. With the German-Polish Friendship Passport, we are offering young people in particular a new opportunity to discover our neighbouring country in a climate-friendly and uncomplicated way. Together, with these initiatives, we are sending a strong signal for mobility, cultural ties, and European friendship between our two countries. Our goal is to further develop these success stories and strengthen German-Polish connections in the future.”

When the Berlin-Warsaw Express launched on September 30th, 2001, there were three trains per direction daily, with a journey time of approximately six hours. Now there are eight connections in each direction, running every two hours and taking about five hours.
In addition to the service on the Berlin–Warsaw main line, both railways also opened up further destinations: In June 2012, a direct connection from Berlin to Gdynia on the Polish Baltic coast was added. At the end of 2020, a daytime connection between Berlin and Krakow was introduced. Currently, three train pairs (round trip) operate on this route every four hours, two of which even continue to/from Przemyśl near the Polish-Ukrainian border. Since the last timetable change at the end of 2025, Wroclaw and Krakow have also been directly connected from Leipzig by two train pairs – perfect for a city break. One of these two train pairs also continues to/from Przemyśl.

German-Polish cultural train as a highlight of 2026
A key project in the anniversary year is the second edition of the Berlin–Poznań–Warsaw Culture Train. Following its successful premiere in February 2025 with six trips, the service will be significantly expanded in 2026: a total of 16 Culture Train trips between Berlin and Warsaw are planned between the end of September and mid-November. An additional cultural carriage will be added to regular Eurocity trains – passengers do not need a special ticket, a regular train ticket is sufficient.

In the cultural carriage, passengers can expect a multilingual German-Polish program featuring readings, concerts, discussions, workshops, and other events. This transforms travel time into a cultural experience, fostering dialogue between people from both countries and opening new avenues to understanding each other’s societies. The project builds on the tradition of earlier cultural trains, transferring the concept of a traveling cultural platform to international long-distance travel. Further information regarding operating days, timetables, etc., can be found at [website address].eab-berlin.eu/kulturzug.

HHPI Expands Fleet with a Second Euro9000 from ELP

The successful cooperation between European Loc Pool (ELP) and Heavy Haul Power International (HHPI) continues to grow. With the signing of a contract for an additional Euro9000, HHPI’s fleet leased from ELP increases to a total of eleven locomotives. At the same time, this marks the company’s second Euro9000.

HHPI’s renewed decision to lease a locomotive from ELP underlines the long-standing and trusted partnership between the two companies. Over the past years, HHPI has continuously expanded its fleet and today operates a total of nine EuroDual and two Euro9000 locomotives from ELP.

With the second Euro9000, HHPI is adding another state-of-the-art, powerful six-axle locomotive to its existing fleet. The Euro9000 offers up to 9 MW of electric power and a starting tractive effort of up to 500 kN. Two diesel engines with a combined output of approximately 1.9 MW provide additional flexibility for operation on non-electrified sections as well as for shunting and last-mile operations. The Euro9000 is therefore particularly well suited for demanding freight corridors and heavy-haul operations, offering railway undertakings a high degree of flexibility in cross-border European Rail Freight transport.

The cooperation, which now comprises eleven locomotives, demonstrates the long-term development of the partnership between HHPI and European Loc Pool. In addition to providing modern locomotives, ELP’s Full-Service Leasing concept also includes comprehensive service and maintenance solutions aimed at ensuring high vehicle availability throughout the entire operating period.

“We are very pleased that HHPI has once again chosen to expand its fleet with a Euro9000 from ELP. Eleven locomotives are a strong sign of the trust that has developed between our companies over many years. We are proud to continue supporting HHPI in its demanding Rail Freight operations,” says Willem Goosen, CEO of European Loc Pool.

About HHPI
Heavy Haul Power International GmbH (HHPI) is one of the leading private railway undertakings in Germany. Founded in 1999, HHPI focuses on medium- and long-term transport projects involving bulk goods such as construction materials, as well as timber and wood products and hazardous goods of all kinds.
Together with its customers, HHPI develops tailored transport solutions designed to meet their individual requirements and characterised by productivity, the highest levels of reliability and state-of-the-art equipment. HHPI not only offers its customers competitive freight rates but also places strong emphasis on good working conditions for its employees and on the sustainable overall development of the company.

Leidenschaft für Zugkraft Passion for Traction

Alstom signs launch order with Northrail for its new Traxx Shunter Platform

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, and Northrail, one of Europe's leading rolling stock leasing companies, announced the signing of a framework agreement at the InnoTrans trade fair in Berlin. The agreement covers the supply of up to 100 Traxx Shunter locomotives. Reflecting Northrail's confidence in Alstom, this order paves the way for the production of a new generation of shunting locomotives. It also represents a landmark of several years of research, innovation and development efforts by Alstom along customers' needs. Northrail is majority-owned by RIVE Private Investment through RTAIF (RIVE Transportation Assets Income Fund), an infrastructure fund dedicated to assets that contribute to the decarbonisation of transport.

The firm order of Northrail includes Traxx Shunter locomotives (which feature both a pantograph and diesel propulsion) as well as 10 years of maintenance services, amounting to just under 100 million euro1, for deployment in Germany. The locomotives will be designed and assembled at Alstom's Belfort centre of excellence in France, with deliveries scheduled to begin from the end of 2029.

The total value of the framework agreement may reach up to 700 million euro and provides for the activation of options for additional locomotives, including for deployment in France, and up to 20 years of maintenance. "We are particularly proud to announce the world's first order for the next-generation Traxx Shunter locomotives. Beyond its significance for our French sites, this contract demonstrates the confidence placed in our customer, Northrail, by rail operators. It also confirms the relevance of our solutions in meeting the growing demand of all stakeholders for greener transportation," said Frédéric Wiscart, President of Alstom France, Belgium and Luxembourg.

"With the new Traxx Shunter, we are bringing a modern flexible mid-cabin locomotive to the market that closes the gap between conventional shunters and dual-mode mainline locomotives. For operators, the benefit is compelling: lower energy and maintenance costs, high availability and substantial CO_2 savings translate into lower total operating costs from day one. Together with Alstom, we are combining proven rail expertise with a future-ready, modular platform that can evolve with our customers' needs, including the option to replace the Diesel module into a battery one at a later stage." said Dr Volker Simmering, Chief Executive Officer of Northrail.

"Shunting is the largest stronghold of ageing diesel traction in Europe, and operators need a credible path to renew these fleets. As Northrail's shareholder and its partner in rail for close to a decade, we are backing this new Alstom platform because it gives operators a modular answer that can evolve with their needs. Financing that renewal is precisely what our transportation fund RTAIF is built for, as a critical solution to decarbonise the European economy," said Camille Brunel, Partner at RIVE Private Investment.

Next-generation Traxx Shunter locomotives

Thanks to its modular and scalable design, the Traxx Shunter locomotive platform offers operators a flexible solution to perform to a wide range of shunting, track works and mainline operations. Capable of combining multiple energy sources, it helps reduce the environmental footprint of operations wherever a more sustainable alternative can be implemented.

The pantograph-diesel Traxx Shunter locomotive selected by Northrail delivers high power and tractive effort for medium to heavy-duty shunting operations, including on mainline networks. This variant provides the greatest operating autonomy through the use of liquid diesel fuel, which can also consist of HVO2 or biodiesel. The Traxx Shunter is designed to operate safely at speeds of up to 120 km/h.

Furthermore, Alstom's shunting locomotives can be more easily integrated into mainline railway traffic and operations. In addition, the traction power enables them to haul longer and heavier wagon consists and to accelerate efficiently through curves and hilly sections, thanks to their sophisticated adhesion control system.

Driver comfort and safety

The driver's cab has been designed to meet operational requirements, offering excellent visibility, quick changes of driving direction, and ample space for both the driver and additional personnel on board. It can be accessed from either the front or the rear via walkways and is equipped with multiple cameras, as well as comfortable platforms at both ends for shunting operations. The locomotive is fitted with the modular Onvia ETCS system and can accommodate national signalling systems whenever required.

High-quality FlexCare Perform services over the lifecycle Traxx Shunter leverages Alstom's long-standing expertise in optimising total cost of ownership. Equipped with HealthHub, Alstom's digital condition-based and predictive maintenance solution, these locomotives deliver additional information to optimize operational management, reliability and availability. In addition, the locomotives will benefit from Alstom's maintenance service network, providing customers with first-class support whenever they need it.

The broadest locomotive portfolio in the industry

Alstom's Traxx locomotive portfolio is the broadest in the industry, covering most global markets for electric and hybrid locomotives. The range spans from shunting and passenger locomotives to multi-purpose and heavy-haul freight applications, designed to operate under a variety of climatic conditions and comply with different national standards and regulations. Environmentally friendly and cost-effective, Traxx locomotives deliver high availability through extended maintenance intervals, a maintenance-friendly design, and condition-based and predictive maintenance solutions. In addition, several locomotive types can be equipped with hybrid functionality, such as last-mile operation for mainline locomotives, enabling more sustainable and efficient operating concepts. Alstom has more than 200 years of experience in locomotive design and manufacturing, with over 6,000 units sold worldwide since the year 2000. Alstom also has over 30 years of experience providing services for locomotives and maintains over 2,450 locomotives globally.

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Germany

Distributed Power System: Up to 30 per cent more freight on the same route

Remote-controlled shunting locomotive increases train utilisation and creates additional capacity on the existing network

With the Distributed Power System (DPS), DB Cargo is increasing rail transport capacity and making more efficient use of existing infrastructure. The technology enables the operation of significantly heavier freight trains, controlled by just one train driver. This allows up to 30 per cent more freight to be transported per train without the need for additional train journeys. For customers, this means greater capacity, improved predictability and better utilisation of existing train paths.

DPS connects the locomotives at the front and rear of the train via radio data transmission. The locomotive at the rear of the train is remotely controlled by the leading locomotive. Unlike with conventional dual traction, the tractive force is distributed across the entire length of the train. This allows heavier loads to be hauled, whilst at the same time reducing the strain on rolling stock and materials.

The technology is currently in use on services operated by the Austrian steel and technology group voestalpine between Linz and Germany. For LogServ, voestalpine's logistics service provider, DPS creates additional capacity on shuttle services carrying steel products. Greater transport volumes per train help to maintain stable supply chains even under challenging conditions. "The new technology is particularly demonstrating its added value during the corridor renovation works in Germany. Due to the steeper gradients on the diversion route, trains without DPS can only carry around 2,400 tonnes. With DPS, it is still possible to carry more than 3,300 tonnes per train," says Markus Schinko, Managing Director of LogServ. "This helps to ensure a reliable supply of raw materials to our sites and the delivery of our products to our customers."

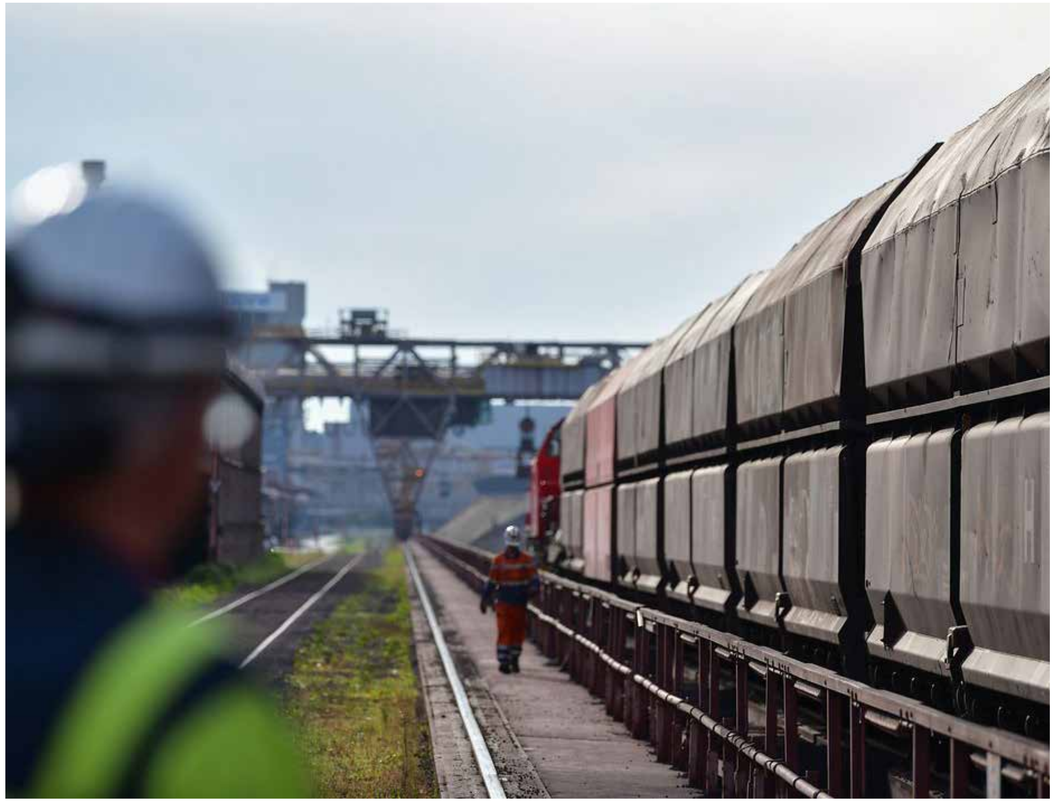
This increases security of supply for industrial and logistics customers. Transport operations remain predictable even in the face of infrastructural constraints, whilst capacity on heavily congested corridors can be utilised more effectively. As larger volumes can be transported using fewer trains, the need for additional train paths is reduced at the same time.

Markus Micken, Head of the Steel Business Unit at DB Cargo, describes the practical impact of this: "Where four trains were previously required, three can now transport the same volume of freight. Thanks to our innovation-driven customer and digitalisation, we are achieving greater transport capacity with the same staff and the same infrastructure."

Cross-border operations between Austria and Germany demonstrate how additional transport capacity can be tapped within the existing network. Customers benefit from higher freight volumes per train, more reliable

planning of their logistics chains and additional capacity on heavily utilised routes. Following these positive results, DB Cargo is exploring the use of DPS on further routes and for additional customers.

25 years of LogServ: A partnership for reliable transport services



From raw material trains from seaports to award-winning shuttle concepts: the collaboration between DB Cargo and LogServ is shaping industrial supply chains by rail.

25 years of LogServ represent a quarter of a century of industrial logistics, steel transport and close partnerships along the supply chain. A key part of this development is the collaboration with DB Cargo. Together, the partners have established transport concepts that today reliably move large quantities of steel, scrap, coal and ore by rail.

DB Cargo regularly transports steel products for LogServ. Through the collaboration with CargoServ, extensive transport operations for coal and ore are also carried out. Over the years, these transport flows have given rise to established logistics concepts that go far beyond traditional individual shipments.

From individual shipments to the shuttle concept

One example is the jointly established shuttle services to Bavaria and south-west Germany. These ensure predictable processes along the supply chains and consolidate large volumes by rail. In 2021, the partners received the German Logistics Award for the jointly developed Bavaria Shuttle.

The collaboration is not limited to transport. Over the years, joint innovations in freight wagons have emerged and operational processes have been further developed. This includes the introduction of the Distributed Power System (DPS) in cross-border traffic between Austria and Germany. By using DPS, heavier trains can be operated whilst utilising the same resources.

Practical solutions also play an important role in day-to-day operations. During construction phases, the partners support one another through a shared pool of train drivers. This makes it easier to compensate for staff shortages and ensure transport services are maintained. For 25 years, LogServ, CargoServ and DB Cargo have been working together to develop transport solutions for the steel and raw materials sectors and to ensure reliable rail supply chains.

Reliable transport services for industry

Over the years, this collaboration has given rise to efficient transport and shuttle concepts. These connect seaports with industrial and production sites, ensuring that raw materials and intermediate products arrive reliably where they are needed.
The partnership between DB Cargo, LogServ and CargoServ stands for transport solutions that are continuously being developed. Joint shuttle concepts, new operational approaches and close cooperation in day-to-day business help to ensure that steel and raw material shipments are reliably transported by rail.
Here's to the next 25 years!

DB remains committed to High Speed Grinding

DB InfraGO has extended its framework agreement with Vossloh for preventive rail maintenance by another year. Since 2023, around 40 000 kilometres of track on Deutsche Bahn's heavily trafficked railway network have been machined using High Speed Grinding (HSG) and measurements taken – without a single track closure. That's the significant contribution this intelligent preventive maintenance is making to track availability on Germany's rail network.

"Good health requires regular care and that's also true for rails", says Imke Kellner, Board Member for Track Infrastructure at DB InfraGO. "Vossloh's rail maintenance machines help us avoid disrupting railway operations, and that's why it's essentially all the passengers and freight customers using the railway who benefit from this framework agreement."

The work can be done entirely within the normal train timetable. Consequently, over 4800 hours of additional network capacity have so far been gained through the use of HSG technology.

"High-speed grinding has proven its value in the demanding conditions of Germany's rail network," says Oliver Schuster, CEO of Vossloh AG. "We are pleased by DB InfraGO's continued trust and will further develop the technology together to sustainably enhance the reliability of the network."

Practical experience has shown that a rail's lifespan can be extended by up to 100% with regular preventive machining. Rail defects are prevented from progressing beyond their early stages, future construction and the speed restrictions required are significantly reduced and noise emissions are lowered by up to ten decibels, as measured on the dB(A) scale adjusted for the human ear. The work carried out under this contract will be accompanied by an extensive range of Vossloh's in-house digital developments. They enable partially automated planning, preparation, analysis, and documentation of maintenance services. These integrated technologies include transverse profile monitoring and correction, longitudinal profile measurements using laser sensors, crack detection using eddy current probes, live schedule views and detailed evaluation to create an information-based, integrated maintenance system.

Chemical transport for Röhm: Reliable by rail

DB Cargo Liquids & Bulk secured production supplies for Röhm in Wesseling during pipeline modernisation

In the first half of the year, DB Cargo Liquids & Bulk transported a chemical raw material for Röhm GmbH from Rotterdam-Botlek to Cologne-Godorf. The transport was required while an existing pipeline, normally used to supply the raw material, was being modernised. During the construction phase, which has now been completed, rail ensured reliable and predictable supply to the Wesseling Chemical Park site.

Each week, eight tank wagons were moved from Rotterdam-Botlek to Cologne-Godorf in the single-wagonload network. From there, a regional partner in the chemical park handled the last-mile delivery. Röhm's own tank wagons were used and kept in continuous circulation. DB Cargo Deutschland and DB Cargo Nederland worked hand in hand to manage the transport.

Well-established processes for sensitive goods

The material transported was classified as dangerous goods, meaning that the requirements for safety and process quality were correspondingly high. DB Cargo's Liquids & Bulk business unit specialises in this segment. With extensive dangerous goods expertise, it plans and manages transport operations according to clearly defined standards, ensures seamless monitoring and provides 24/7 emergency management.

Preparations had been under way since mid-September 2025. Two test shipments in autumn, together with close coordination with Röhm and the supplier, ensured a smooth start. Throughout the operation, Röhm received detailed tracking-and-tracing updates twice a day, including monitoring of the final mile.

Security of supply for industry

For Röhm, known for the PLEXIGLAS® brand and as a leading manufacturer in the methacrylates sector, the Wesseling site remained fully operational throughout the construction phase. Production continued without interruption – making an important contribution to customers in the automotive, construction and medical technology sectors.

"The rail link enabled us to ensure the supply of production materials to our Wesseling site at all times, even whilst the pipeline was being modernised," emphasises Thiemo Koob, Category Manager Logistics at Röhm. "Transparent communication and close coordination gave us the necessary planning certainty."

Network strengthened, climate protected

For DB Cargo, the project also strengthened the international single-wagonload network. "With the additional volumes, we were able to increase capacity on the route to the Netherlands and stabilise utilisation," explains Patrick Hollerbach, Senior Account Manager at DB Cargo BTT. "This shows how flexible and efficient our system is, even when responding to temporary market requirements."

The importance of rail becomes particularly clear when compared with road transport: moving the same volume would have required around 24 lorry journeys per week. Rail therefore relieved pressure on infrastructure and the environment – while supporting the decarbonisation of chemical logistics.

Rail as a strategic resilience option

Following completion of the construction work, regular pipeline supply has resumed. For DB Cargo Liquids & Bulk, this marks the end of the temporary rail operation, which at the same time shows the potential of rail as a resilient alternative in the event of infrastructure work or supply bottlenecks.

DB Cargo Liquids & Bulk has thus once again demonstrated its role as a reliable partner for the European chemical industry, supporting stable industrial value creation through safe, efficient and cross-border rail freight services.

Germany

Construction start Hannover – Berlin: DB InfraGO begins the extensive construction work

Construction teams will combine the renovation of the slab track, the section-by-section electrification of the Lehrte main line, and the corridor renovation between Lehrte and Berlin until the end of 2027. The renewal of 52 kilometres of slab track is particularly complex and time-consuming. Long-distance trains will run continuously via Braunschweig and Magdeburg. Efficient replacement bus services will be provided for cancelled regional trains.

DB InfraGO will begin extensive construction work along the east-west axis between Hanover and Berlin on October 2nd. Over the coming months, the slab track on the high-speed line east and west of Stendal will be renewed – this work is the most complex and time-consuming.

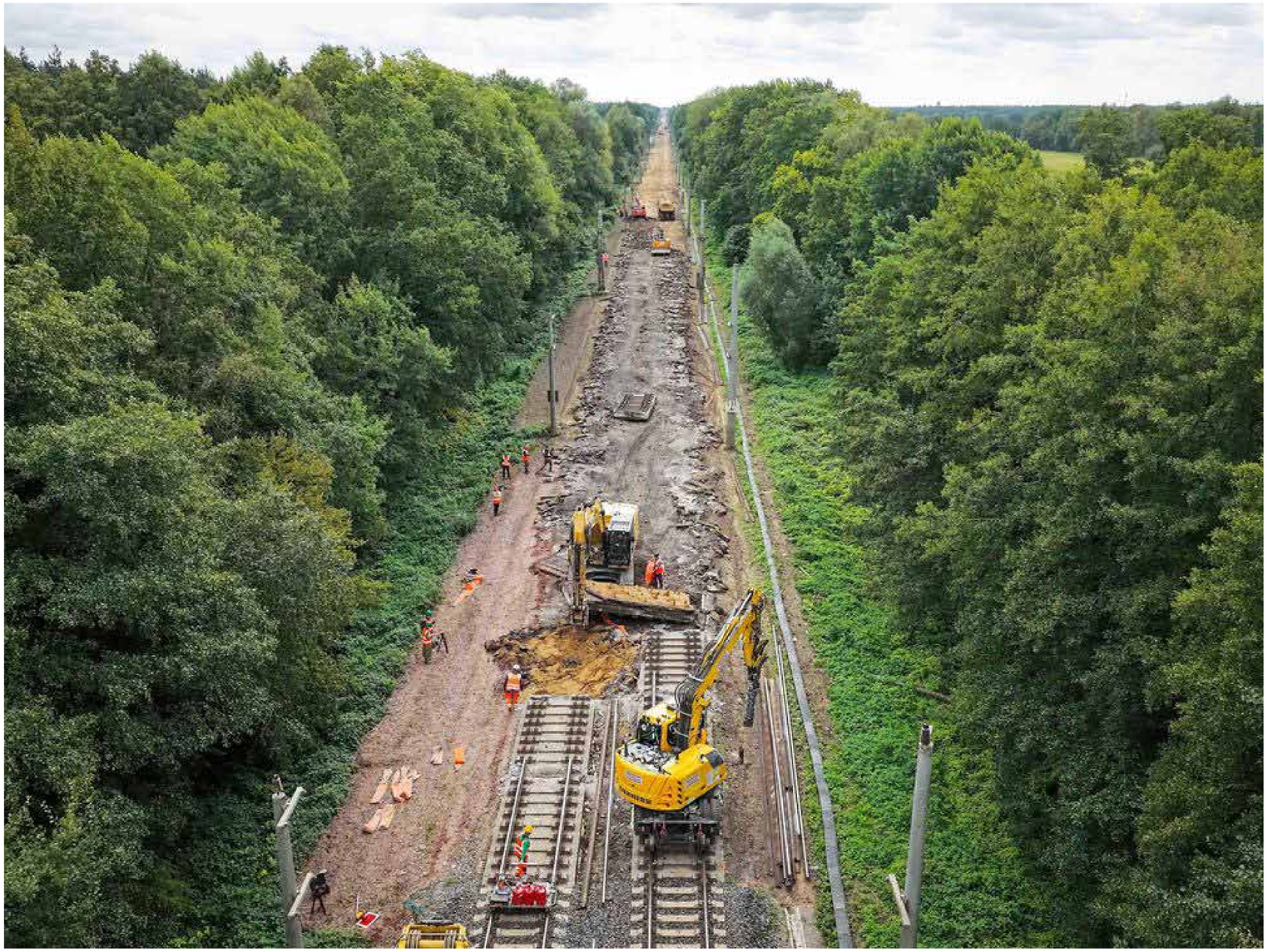
Simultaneously, construction teams will continue the electrification and further expansion of the parallel Lehrter Stammbahn railway line and implement the corridor renovation in the Lehrte – Berlin section.

Wolfgang Weinhold, program manager for corridor refurbishment at DB InfraGO: “We are really tackling the Hanover – Berlin line: tracks, switches, concrete roadway, overhead lines, signal boxes and stations are being renewed or modernized in a coordinated manner. This is a huge task, but an investment that will pay off: for more quality, reliability and stability on one of the busiest east-west rail connections in Germany.”

By December 2027, DB InfraGO will replace or rebuild a total of more than 214 switches, approximately 357 kilometres of track, 100 kilometres of overhead lines, and 13 kilometers of noise barriers. Along the route, 25 train stations will also be modernized and some will be made accessible.

Over a length of 52 kilometres, experts are undertaking a complex process to renew the slab track installed in the 1990s on the high-speed rail line. After approximately 30 years of intensive use, it requires a complete overhaul. This is the only way to ensure the line’s continued reliable and efficient operation. The process begins with the old concrete track being dismantled piece by piece using specialized equipment. Following this, the subgrade is prepared, and 16,000 new track slabs – each 6.5 meters long and weighing 10 tons – are laid. Unlike conventional track construction using ballast, sleepers, and rails, the slab track is mounted on prefabricated concrete slabs.

As part of the Hanover–Berlin rail line upgrade, construction crews have been electrifying sections of the parallel Lehrter Stammbahn line since summer 2025, building five crossover connections, and modernizing six signal boxes. Furthermore, DB InfraGO aims to implement all necessary measures ahead of schedule during the construction phase, which has been extended until December 2027, to increase the line speed to 160 km/h.



Dismantling of the existing fixed track in a comparable construction project.
After the Hamburg-Berlin corridor, the 227-kilometer Hanover-Berlin route is the second longest axis on which DB InfraGO is consolidating and modernizing the infrastructure across all trades. Over the past few months, DB InfraGO has prepared the diversion route via Braunschweig and Magdeburg for the additional strain through a comprehensive maintenance program, investing approximately 50 million euros. For travellers using local and long-distance transport, the adjusted timetables for October to mid-December 2026 are already available in the information media.

Long-distance transport with adapted services
Three long-distance trains run between Hanover and Berlin in each direction every two hours, along with additional individual services. The adjusted route provides hourly connections to the long-distance rail network for Braunschweig and Magdeburg on the east-west axis. Magdeburg will have more long-distance train stops than usual during the construction period.

Travel time between Hanover and Berlin will increase by approximately 80 minutes. Options for long-distance train stops in Stendal and Wolfsburg are currently under review.

Basic service in local public transport
A reliable basic public transport service will remain in operation during the construction phase. Where trains cannot run, efficient replacement bus services will be provided. Further details about the public transport service can be found in the attached overview.

Freight traffic is also being diverted via Halle – Eichenberg Freight trains will be diverted primarily via Braunschweig and Magdeburg during the corridor renovation. From the end of January 2027 at the latest, an additional second diversion route via the Halle (Saale) – Eichenberg line, which is currently being modernized, will be available for freight trains.

Germany

For greater security: DB takes consistent action against violence and attacks

Approximately seven months have passed since the violent and fatal attack on DB employee Serkan Çalar on a regional train. On Friday, September 18th, family, friends, and DB colleagues, along with CEO Evelyn Palla and Federal Minister of Transport Steffen Bilger, commemorated him on the “Day of Respect.” They unveiled a memorial plaque near his workplace at Mannheim Central Station.

DB Chief Human Resources Officer Martin Seiler: “The news of Serkan’s death has deeply shaken us all. His death must not be forgotten. It obligates us to protect our employees and passengers in the best possible way. Many colleagues have told us how deeply this event has affected them. We are listening carefully to them, taking their concerns seriously, and working consistently to further strengthen security on-site – as demonstrated by the numerous measures we have implemented.”

Deutsche Bahn has significantly expanded its employee protection measures in recent months:

- DB is empowering its employees with safety-oriented personnel concepts and improved protective equipment.

Equipment including bodycams and training:

- All employees with customer contact can wear a body camera. Over 90 percent of DB Regio employees have received body camera training. DB introduced body cameras in long-distance trains and passenger stations this summer.

- DB Regio Mitte will test the audio recording capabilities of the bodycams starting October 5th with the aim of a timely group-wide rollout.

- De-escalation training is mandatory for all DB employees with customer contact. DB Regio also offers a module on “Assertiveness on the Train,” and DB Fernverkehr offers “Self-Defense Training.”

Improved protective equipment:

- DB Security is testing the use of protective helmets by the Mobile Support Group (MUG) until the end of 2026. This group provides support in special security situations at train stations and on trains.

- Since July, customer service representatives at DB Regio have been testing the wearing of stab-resistant vests under their company clothing.

Pilot projects with responsible bodies for increased staffing:

- DB Regio will test the use of double staffing of customer service representatives and the deployment of teams consisting of a customer service representative and a security guard on selected routes until the end of 2026.

- DB Regio is piloting the use of inspection teams, in which six to eight customer service representatives jointly carry out full checks on the trains.

DB creates a safe environment for employees and passengers

- Nationwide alcohol ban: The new rule will be gradually implemented at 5,400 DB train stations across Germany by October 15, 2026. Pilot projects have shown that the ban helps to reduce violent crime, conflicts, and altercations under the influence of alcohol. DB is thus increasing safety at train stations. •Introduction of the video security cloud: The Federal Police will receive nationwide, standardized digital access to live and recorded video data from selected DB Regio trains. This will support evidence gathering and swift prosecution.

- New GemeinsamSicher app: Starting September 18, DB employees can voluntarily support their colleagues on DB Regio trains via the GemeinsamSicher app until DB Security and the police arrive. The rollout to long-distance services is in preparation.

- Respect campaign #morerespect: In May 2026, the German Federal Ministry of Transport (BMV), the Association of German Transport Companies (VDV), and Deutsche Bahn launched the nationwide respect campaign #morerespect to promote greater consideration, decency, and respect for railway staff.

- Strengthening legal protection: Deutsche Bahn (DB) has explicitly endorsed the draft legislation that aims to strengthen legal protection for employees in public transport. This would allow for better prosecution of attacks on DB employees.

From summer 2027: new direct connections from Munich via Innsbruck to Milan and Rome will start

Germany, Austria, and Italy will soon be even more closely connected by rail: Starting in summer 2027, Trenitalia's state-of-the-art Frecciarossa high-speed trains will transport European travellers from Munich to Milan and Rome in a relaxed, climate-friendly, and direct manner. These connections are made possible by a new cooperation between Deutsche Bahn (DB), the Italian Trenitalia (FS Group), and the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB). Numerous popular holiday destinations along the route in Austria and Italy can be reached directly with these new services.

During the InnoTrans trade fair in Berlin, DB board member for long-distance passenger transport, Dr. Michael Peterson, Trenitalia CEO Simone Gorini and Dr. Sabine Stock, board member of ÖBB Personenverkehr AG, celebrated both the cooperation and a Frecciarossa train exhibited on site.

Dr. Michael Peterson, DB Board Member for Long-Distance Passenger Transport: "Our cooperation aims to make it even more convenient to connect Italy and Austria, particularly popular holiday destinations, to Germany by rail. International long-distance transport is a team sport. We already offer over 300 European connections with our partner railways. Our new route from Munich to Milan and Rome will provide an even greater boost. And the backing of EU policy further encourages us to continuously expand our services for our passengers with strong new connections across Europe."

Simone Gorini, General Manager of Trenitalia: "It is a great pleasure for us to bring the Frecciarossa to Germany and, together with Deutsche Bahn and ÖBB, to launch a new phase of our international expansion. Having already been appreciated and used by millions of passengers in France and Spain, the Frecciarossa will soon also be available to German and Austrian travellers, offering them the opportunity to discover and experience a new way of traveling that combines comfort, quality, and speed. The connections to Munich represent a further step in Trenitalia's international growth and confirm our commitment to making the know-how and experience we have developed in the field of high-speed rail in Italy available to European passengers."

Dr. Sabine Stock, Member of the Management Board of ÖBB Passenger Transport : "The Frecciarossa brings attractive tourist regions in Germany, Austria and Italy even closer together and makes cross-border travel easier and more comfortable. This new service shows what is possible when railway companies join forces: Together DB, Trenitalia and ÖBB are creating a strong European connection from which travellers, regions and tourism all benefit equally."

New direct connections

With the launch of the Munich–Milan/Rome route, the second of ten pilot projects supported by the European Commission to promote new cross-border rail connections is now operational. These new connections are among the selected projects through which the EU Commission aims to overcome obstacles in international rail transport, improve market conditions, and develop attractive, sustainable mobility in Europe. Deutsche Bahn (DB) is involved in three of these EU Commission-supported pilot projects: the new cross-border connection Prague–Berlin–Copenhagen recently commenced operation. The third project is a new direct connection from Hamburg via Copenhagen to Oslo, scheduled to begin service in mid-2028.

From summer 2027, the introduction of two train pairs (round trip) on the Munich–Milan and Munich–Rome routes is planned, covering a distance of approximately 600 and 900 kilometres respectively .

The most important intermediate stops on the Munich–Milan route are: Innsbruck, Bolzano, Trento, Rovereto, Verona, Brescia. On the Munich–Rome route: Innsbruck, Bolzano, Trento, Rovereto, Verona, Bologna, Florence.
From December 2028, the connections from Munich–Milan and Munich–Rome are to be extended to Naples and Berlin respectively.

The Frecciarossa is currently being prepared for its future service. Test runs with the first retrofitted train have been taking place in Germany since mid-June 2026, and in Austria since the end of August 2026. A technical prerequisite for the start of services is successful and timely certification by the manufacturers Hitachi Rail and Alstom.

All details about the vehicle:

- The train used will be the Frecciarossa (ETR 1000), the high-speed train of Trenitalia, which has been operating in Italy since 2015 and is now also running in France and Spain.
- As part of the cooperation, a total of nine vehicles will be converted by the Hitachi/Alstom consortium and newly approved for the German and Austrian rail networks, as well as for the Italian rail network.
- The 200-meter-long trains have eight carriages and 462 seats in three classes (Trenitalia refers to them as service levels): Standard/Premium (2+2 seating), Business (2+1 seating), and Executive (1+1 seating, catering included in the fare). Infotainment and the entertainment portal "Portale FRECCE" will also be available in German and supplemented with further target-group-specific content. Wi-Fi is included.
- For Business Class passengers: complimentary welcome service.
- There is an on-board bistro.

Class 628.310 passes Lesenceistvand hauling train No. 19696, 17:25 Keszthely - Szombathely on August 13th. *Laurence Sly*

Class 418.126 passes Kutvolgy hauling train No. 7703,16:45 Bekesesaba - Szeged on August 12th. *Laurence Sly*

Class418.309passesLesencetomajhaulingtrain No. 19775, 09:02 Szombathely - Balatonfured on August 13th. *Laurence Sly*

On August 12th, Class 431.261 departs Szeged hauling train No. 7013, 15:11 Szeged - Kiskunfelegyhaza. *Laurence Sly*

Hungary

MAV No. 1504 passes Abrahamhegy hauling train No. 19797, 09:38 Tapolca - Balatonfured on August 14th. *Laurence Sly*

Class 418.320 passes Janoshaza hauling train No. 19787, 07:02 Szombathely - Balatonfured on August 13th. *Laurence Sly*

Class 418.115 passes Kutvolgy hauling train No. 7732, 09:28 Szeged - Bekesesaba on August 12th. *Laurence Sly*

On August 12th, Class 418.166 approaches Telekgerendas hauling train No. 7700, 06:28 Szeged - Bekescsaba. *Laurence Sly*

On August 10th, No. 2M62-0718 is seen in the loop at Albertirsa. *Laurence Sly*

On August 14th, No. 430.326 approaches Kemenespalfa hauling train No. 9517, 06:51, Zalaegerszeg - Celldomolk. *Laurence Sly*

On August 13th, Class 628.319 passes Uzsa hauling train No. 19697, 08:02 Szombathely - Keszthely. *Laurence Sly*

Class 418.304 departs Tapolca hauling train No. 19795, the 13:38 to Budapest Deli on August 13th. *Laurence Sly*

On August 13th, Class 418.320 approaches Nemesgulacs Kisapai hauling train No. 19773, 14:47 Tapolca - Balatonfured. *Laurence Sly*

Class 418.320 passes Abrahamhegy hauling train No. 19787, 07:02 Szombathely - Balatonfured on August 14th. *Laurence Sly*

Lithuania

Class 730ML-004 is seen at Kaunas on September 16th with a service to Mockava. *Mark Armstrong*

LTG Link DMU No. 630MiL-006 is seen at Kaunas on September 16th. *Mark Armstrong*

On September 16th, DMU No. 620M-017 is seen at Kaunas. *Mark Armstrong*

Lithuania

Nos. EJ757-006, 620m-021 and DR1AM94929002891 are seen lined up at Vilnius on September 14th. *Mark Armstrong*

The Alekosta Funicular Railway in Kaunas. *Mark Armstrong*

An overview of Vilnius Yard on September 17th, full of old 2M62s and other withdrawn loco's. *Mark Armstrong*

Lithuania

On September 14th, DMU No. 620Mc 021 is seen at Vilnius on an airport service. *Mark Armstrong*

EMU No. EJ757.009 stands at Vilnius station on September 14th. *Mark Armstrong*

Nos. CEM3.6756 and CEM3.6757 are seen outside the works at Vilnius on September 14th. *Mark Armstrong*

DMU No. DR1AM.92245003186 is seen at Vilnius on September 14th working a service to Varena. *Mark Armstrong*

Lithuania

A look at some of the exhibits on display at the railway museum adjacent to Vilnius station on September 14th. *Mark Armstrong*

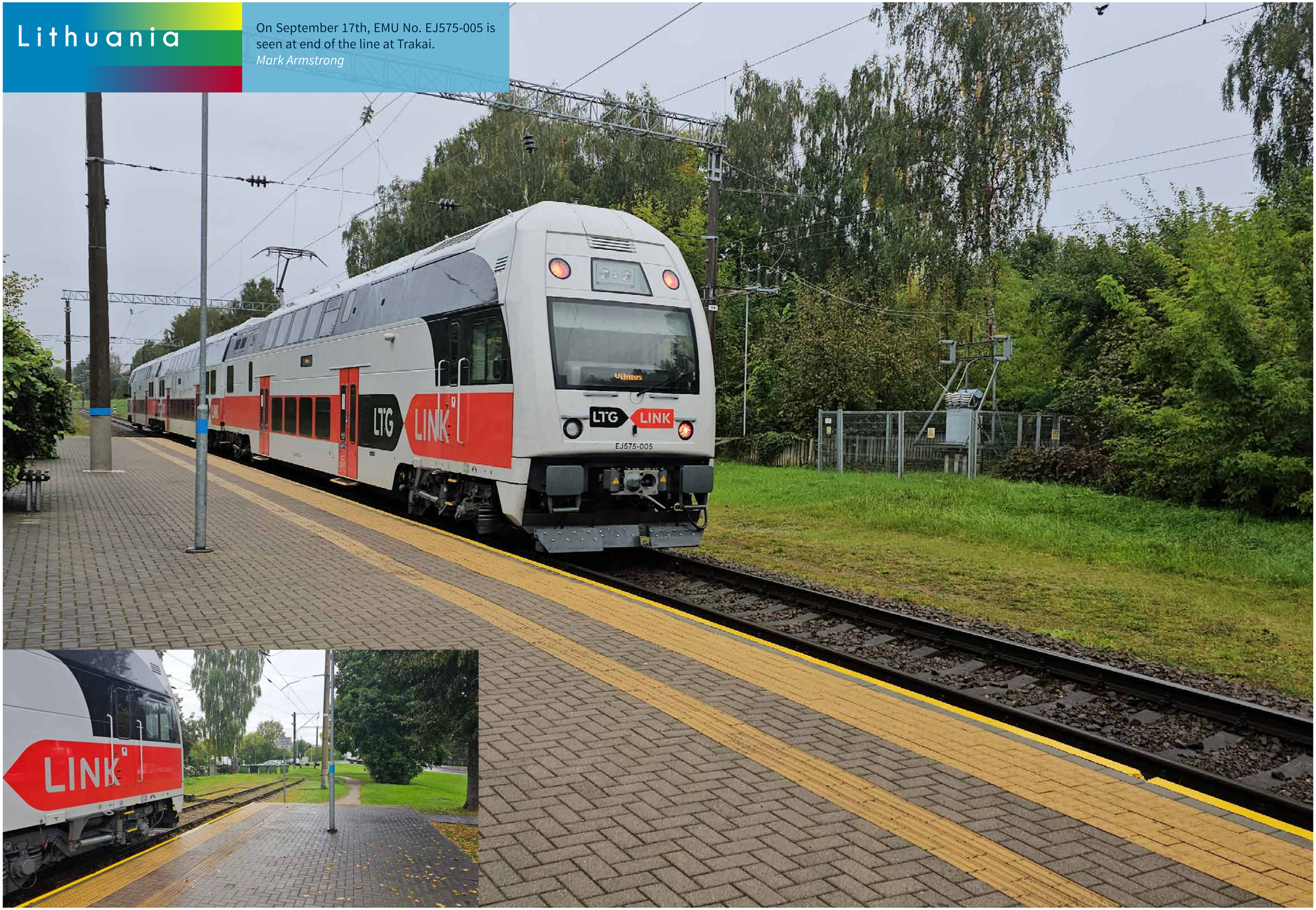
Lithuania

A look at some of the exhibits on display at the railway museum adjacent to Vilnius station on September 14th. *Mark Armstrong*

On September 14th, Siemens Eurorunner No. ER20-038 is seen at Vilnius station.
Mark Armstrong

Lithuania

On September 17th, EMU No. EJ575-005 is seen at end of the line at Trakai.
Mark Armstrong



No. Di4.655 pauses at Fausk with train No. REG471 07:49 Trondheim Sentral to Bodø, on August 3rd. *Mark Pichowicz*

On August 4th, LKAB operated IORE locomotives Nos. 126 and 129 pass through Narvik station with a train of iron ore heading for the nearby docks. *Mark Pichowicz*

No. Di4.651 stands at Trondheim Sentral after arriving with train No. REG46212:27 from Bodø on August 2nd. *Mark Pichowicz*

On August 11th, No. 60.0676-6 runs light engine through Valea lui Mihai.
Laurence Sly

On August 10th, No. 64.0922-6 approaches Valea lui Mihai hauling train No. IR366 07:54 Brasov - Budapest Keleti. *Laurence Sly*

On August 10th, No. 418-163 departs Valea lui Mihai hauling train No. IR366 07:54 Brasov - Budapest Keleti. *Laurence Sly*

On August 11th, No. 418-163 approaches Valea lui Mihai hauling train No. 6822, 08:15 Debrecen - Satu Mare. *Laurence Sly*

On August 11th, No. 60.0676-6 passes Moftinu hauling train No. 6822, 08:15 Debrecen - Satu Mare. *Laurence Sly*

On August 11th, No. 60.1197-2 approaches Valea lui Mihai hauling train No. 6813, 12:40 Satu Mare - Debrecen. *Laurence Sly*

On August 11th, No. 418-177 departs Valea lui Mihai hauling train No. 6813, 12:40 Satu Mare - Debrecen. *Laurence Sly*

On August 11th, No. 60.0544-6 departs Sarmasag hauling train No. 366, 07:54 Brasov - Budapest Keleti. *Laurence Sly*

At the border station of Salonta, several times a day, an MÁV Bzmot railcar provides a connection to Békéscsaba. On the Romanian side, Desiro railcars run several times daily towards Oradea and Arad. Here on September 7th, Nos. 117.385, 96-2553 and 96-2117 works train Nos. Sz37644, R3115 nd R3516 respectively. *Thomas Niederl*

From Salonta there is a connection to the capital, Bucharest, in the form of through-carriages running between Oradea and Bucharest. On September 7th, the train consisted of eight carriages instead of the usual three; this was because the season's final train from Mangalia on the Black Sea had arrived in Oradea that morning, and the carriages were being returned to service. This is No. 64-1013 working train No. IR-N 1744. *Thomas Niederl*

Heading south from Sibiu, there is a railway connection through the Olt Valley to Craiova via Râmnicu Vâlcea. This line branches off the main Sibiu–Brașov route at Podu Olt. While the road route sees extremely heavy transit traffic, the railway leads a shadowy existence. There are only seven pairs of trains on weekdays, and even fewer on weekends. There is no freight traffic whatsoever. Three of the train pairs are R-E (Regional Express) services between Sibiu and Craiova, operated by Desiro railcars. On September 9th, unit No. 96-2573 is seen working train No. R-E 2012 at Lotru. *Thomas Niederl*

Heading south from Sibiu, there is a railway connection through the Olt Valley to Craiova via Râmnicu Vâlcea. This line branches off the main Sibiu–Brașov route at Podu Olt. Three of the train pairs are R-E (Regional Express) services between Sibiu and Craiova, operated by Desiro railcars These connections are supplemented by three locomotive-hauled regional trains. On September 9th, loco No. 60-0652 with train No. R2064 arrives at Lotru. *Thomas Niederl*

Heading south from Sibiu, there is a railway connection through the Olt Valley to Craiova via Râmnicu Vâlcea. This line branches off the main Sibiu–Brașov route at Podu Olt. Three of the train pairs are R-E (Regional Express) services between Sibiu and Craiova, operated by Desiro railcars These connections are supplemented by three locomotive-hauled regional trains. On September 9th, loco No. 62-0888 working train No. R2063 is seen crossing the river at Lotru. *Thomas Niederl*

One service heading out of Lotru is operated by two-axle Malaxa railcars dating back to the 1930s. On September 9th, railcar No. 77-0917 working train No. R2066 is seen at Lotru. *Thomas Niederl*

The Olt Valley is the perfect place for anyone wishing to experience old-fashioned rail travel featuring Romanian diesel locomotives amidst beautiful scenery. However, one should not be in a hurry, nor should one be deterred by gaps in the schedule lasting several hours. On September 9th, loco No. 82-0385 working train No. R2067 is seen departing Lotru. *Thomas Niederl*

The Olt Valley is the perfect place for anyone wishing to experience old-fashioned rail travel featuring Romanian diesel locomotives amidst beautiful scenery. However, one should not be in a hurry, nor should one be deterred by gaps in the schedule lasting several hours. On September 10th, diesel loco No. 60-1386 with train No. R2064 calls at Cornet Hm. *Thomas Niederl*

The Olt Valley is the perfect place for anyone wishing to experience old-fashioned rail travel featuring Romanian diesel locomotives amidst beautiful scenery. On September 10th, loco No. 62-0888 with train No. R2070 is seen at Turnu Roșu. *Thomas Niederl*

On September 10th, train No. IR1621 Bucuresti - Brasov - Sibiu hauled by 64-0925 is seen at Podu Olt. The right track is the line from Craiova, Ramnicu Valcea. *Thomas Niederl*

The village of Răşinari, was served by an interurban tram line from Sibiu until 2011. Following the cessation of regular operations, plans were made to use the railway for tourism starting in 2017; to this end, No. ET26.111—previously used on the Attergau Railway—was purchased from Stern & Hafferl. Operations came to an end with the onset of coronavirus restrictions. Since then, both the rolling stock and the track have been left to fall into disrepair as seen here on September 11th. *Thomas Niederl*

On August 2nd, RC6 No. 1408 stands at Duved ready to work train No. NZ71 19:30 to Stockholm C. *Mark Pichowicz*

On August 4th, RC6 No. 1334 pauses at Björkliden with train No. IC99 14:35 Narvik to Luleaa Central. *Mark Pichowicz*

Green Cargo Nos. RD2.1126 and Td359 are seen stabled at Boden Central on August 4th. *Mark Pichowicz*

MUTZ units Nos. 515007 and 515031 pass Schüpfen with a Belp to Biel/Bienne S3 service on August 10th. *Mark Pichowicz*

Switzerland

Rail freight through the Alps: What Switzerland does differently

Rail freight transport does not operate in the same way everywhere. Geography, infrastructure, political framework conditions and the organisation of operations all shape how goods are transported by rail. This is precisely why it is worth looking beyond one's own national borders: other countries have developed different solutions, which also open up new perspectives on European freight transport. Switzerland is a particularly interesting example in this regard. Around seven out of ten goods crossing the Swiss Alps are transported by rail. Behind this high share of rail transport lie decades of political decisions, massive infrastructure investment and an operational system tailored to the geographical conditions.

However, the Swiss model is not a sure-fire success. In 2025, the rail share of trans-Alpine freight transport stood at 68.6 per cent, down from 70.3 per cent the previous year. The FOT cites, amongst other things, numerous construction sites and the strained economic situation as reasons for the decline. This makes Switzerland an interesting case study for a key question in rail freight transport: what is the point of a consistent modal shift policy if the framework conditions are changing at the same time?

A transit country between North and South

Its geographical location makes Switzerland a vital link between the economic regions of northern and southern Europe. Freight trains from Germany, France and the Benelux countries cross the Alps on their way to Italy and further south. Switzerland's north-south axes are thus part of a European transport network. The shift of freight transport from road to rail has been a political priority in Switzerland for decades. Since 1994, the Swiss Federal Constitution has included a mandate to shift trans-Alpine freight transport from road to rail. A key instrument is the performance-related heavy goods vehicle charge, or LSVA for short. It has been levied since 2001 on heavy goods vehicles and is a key element of Switzerland's modal shift policy.

A flat railway through the Alps

The most visible result of this policy lies deep beneath the mountains. With the New Rail Link through the Alps (NEAT), Switzerland has fundamentally expanded its north-south connections. The base tunnels at Lötschberg, Gotthard and Ceneri form an efficient low-gradient railway through the Alps and bring the economic regions north and south of the Alps closer together. The NEAT is not, however, purely a freight transport project. The base tunnels are also used by passenger trains. Switzerland therefore secures train paths for both types of traffic in the long term through its network utilisation concept and network utilisation plans. On the Basel–Gotthard–Chiasso route, for example, four freight train paths per hour in each direction are allocated for freight traffic. This is intended to prevent freight traffic from being displaced by further expansion of passenger services.

For freight transport, however, it is not just the additional capacity that is crucial. The gentler gradients enable heavier freight trains to be transported through the Alps more economically and increase the capacity of the north-south corridors. According to the FOT, up to 260 freight trains per day can run through the Gotthard Base Tunnel. At 57 kilometres, the Gotthard Base Tunnel is the longest railway tunnel in the world. It was opened in 2016 and has been in operation since December of that year.

Four metres through the Alps

Swiss infrastructure is designed not only for crossing the Alps, but also to meet the requirements of combined transport. One example is the 4-metre corridor. Since 2020, semi-trailers with a corner height of four metres have been able to be transported by rail on the Gotthard axis. To this end, tunnels, platform canopies, signalling systems and traction power systems, amongst other things, have been adapted. To ensure the corridor can be used without interruption, the Italian infrastructure has also been adapted. Switzerland has invested 120 million Swiss francs in the expansion of the Luino line. A further 148 million Swiss francs has been earmarked for expansion south of the Simplon. A total loan of 990 million Swiss francs is available for the 4-metre corridor. The transport chain must be designed to meet the requirements of freight transport across national borders. Alongside SBB Cargo and BLS Cargo, DB Cargo Switzerland – the Swiss subsidiary of DB Cargo – is also active in the market and forms part of the European DB Cargo network.

When the corridor stalls

Despite massive investment in infrastructure, rail is currently losing market share. By 2025, rail's share of transalpine freight traffic had fallen from 70.3 to 68.6

per cent. The FOT attributes the decline, amongst other things, to construction works and the strained economic situation. International feeder lines also remain a crucial factor. The Rhine Valley Line between Karlsruhe and Basel is the most important northern feeder line to the NEAT. Its upgrading has not yet been fully completed. Even the most modern infrastructure can only be effective if the neighbouring networks are also sufficiently capable.

What lessons can be learnt from Switzerland?

Due to its size, topography and unique transit location, Switzerland cannot be compared directly with Germany. Nevertheless, the Swiss system offers a number of insights that are also of interest to the German rail freight sector.

- Long-term infrastructure planning: The NEAT was developed over decades with a view to creating a key European north-south link.
- Guaranteed capacity: Freight transport is allocated train paths on the key north-south axes that are guaranteed in the long term.
- International corridors: The expansion of the Italian feeder lines demonstrates that infrastructure beyond a country's own borders can also form part of a transport strategy.
- Political support: The modal shift mandate, the LSVA and infrastructure investments together form the political framework of the Swiss model.

For shippers, this means above all that the Swiss north-south axes combine high infrastructure standards with long-term guaranteed capacity for freight transport. At the same time, current developments show that even high-performance corridors remain dependent on construction works, the economic situation and neighbouring networks.

A system rather than a single project

It is not a single structure that makes Swiss rail freight transport special. Switzerland combines political objectives, targeted infrastructure investment and operational concepts to form a comprehensive system. What is decisive here is not so much a single project as the interplay of all the components.

At the same time, current developments show that even this model has its limits. Infrastructure creates opportunities, but does not guarantee a growing share of rail freight. The economic situation, construction works and the capacity of international feeder lines also influence rail freight transport. Perhaps this is precisely the most interesting insight from Switzerland:Rail freight transport does not follow a single, uniform formula.Geography, infrastructure, transport policy and operations together determine which solutions work.

And as soon as a freight train crosses the border, a national system becomes a European transport chain.

Sweden

Västtrafik reaffirms confidence in Alstom with 35 additional Avelia Stream Nordic trains, bringing fleet to 80

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has received an order from Västtrafik to deliver 35 additional Avelia Stream Nordic X80 trains through an option worth approximately €350 millions1 exercised under the existing frame contract. With this new order, Alstom will deliver a total of 80 trains to Västtrafik.

The option exercise follows the successful entry into service of the first Avelia Stream Nordic trains and reflects Västtrafik's continued confidence in Alstom's ability to deliver a modern, reliable and sustainable regional fleet.

By exercising this option, Västtrafik is further investing in a platform already operating on its network and supporting its long-term ambition to increase capacity, improve punctuality and promote sustainable mobility across western Sweden.

"With these 35 new trains, we are taking another step towards more modern, spacious and comfortable public transport for our passengers. The trains will also reduce our energy consumption and replace our older rolling stock," said Bijan Zainali, Chair of the Västtrafik Board.

"This order marks an important new step in Västtrafik's fleet modernisation programme and illustrates how Alstom supports customers throughout the entire lifecycle of their assets, from train delivery to long-term maintenance and operational performance. Together, we are helping deliver greater capacity, reliability and sustainability for passengers across western Sweden for decades to come," says Maria Signal Martebo, Managing Director of Alstom Sweden.

High-speed regional service with sustainable trains adapted to Nordics winter conditions

With a top speed of 200 km/h and 270 seats distributed across three cars per train, the train improves the passenger experience through step-free boarding, dedicated spaces for wheelchairs, strollers and real-time information systems.

In 2025, the Avelia Stream Nordic X80 trains received the prestigious Red Dot Award, recognising its cutting-edge design, which combines contemporary interiors and Nordic functionality with advanced technology and a strong focus on sustainability.

The trains are equipped with energy-efficient systems, including regenerative braking that recovers energy during braking and contributes to lower energy consumption during operations. Avelia Stream Nordic is designed for tough environmental conditions and offers the highest level of winterisation. The train can operate through 80 cm of snow and is reliable in temperatures down to -40°C.

Delivering and maintaining the next-generation Avelia Stream Nordic

The first Avelia Stream Nordic trains were delivered in spring 2026 following several months of testing on the network and are now operating on the regional rail network in Västra Götaland. Additional deliveries of the fleet will continue over the coming years. Alstom is also performing maintenance of Västtrafik's train fleet, currently comprising both the new trains and older generation rolling stock, ensuring high availability and long-term operational reliability across the region. Once all 80 new trains have been delivered, they will form the backbone of Västtrafik's regional rail services.

Avelia Stream Nordic is part of Alstom's Avelia high-speed train platform which covers maximum operating speeds between 200 km/h and 320 km/h. A wide variety of configurations and architectures are available to provide best fit to customer needs; single-deck or double-deck, concentrated or distributed traction. More than 2,200 high-speed trains with Avelia technology are operating in 25 countries, crossing 20 borders.

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Photo: Avelia Stream Nordic trains are operating on the regional rail network in Västra Götaland. ©ALSTOM SA. Samuel Unéus

Panama

Alstom signs contract for long-term maintenance of the Panama Metro

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has signed a US$90 million contract (approximately 80 million euro) with Metro de Panamá S.A. (MPSA) to provide long-term maintenance services for the Metropolis trains operating on Lines 1 and 2 of Panama City's metro network. Covering 235 metro cars, the agreement will help maintain a safe, efficient, and reliable service for the hundreds of thousands of passengers who depend on the network every day.

Under this contract, Alstom will carry out major maintenance services and long-term overhaul activities for the Metropolis train fleet operating on Lines 1 and 2. The scope includes scheduled maintenance interventions at five-, six-, eight-, ten-, and twelve-year intervals, covering critical systems and components such as bogies, traction equipment, brake systems, pneumatic systems, wheels, auxiliary equipment, and other assets critical for operational safety. These activities are designed to maximize the fleet's reliability, availability, and performance, while extending the service life of the trains.

"This contract reinforces the trust that Metro de Panamá places in Alstom's technology, expertise, and long-term commitment to the country. For more than a decade, Alstom has supported the development of modern, efficient, and sustainable mobility solutions in Panama. We are proud to continue contributing to the reliability and performance of a metro system relied upon by millions of passengers every year," said Bernard Peille, Vice President of Alstom for Latin America.

The agreement further strengthens the strategic partnership between Alstom and Metro de Panamá and reflects the company's commitment to the continued growth and modernization of the country's urban mobility infrastructure. The contract will help ensure the long-term reliability, availability, and performance of the fleet, enabling Metro de Panamá to continue delivering the highest quality transportation services for residents and visitors alike.
Today, Metro de Panamá carries approximately 400,000 passengers per day, playing a vital role in the country's economic and social development. As demand for urban mobility continues to grow, the reliability and availability of the system are essential to connecting communities, supporting economic activity, and improving quality of life for the population. The contract also highlights the ongoing cooperation between Panama and France in infrastructure, innovation, and sustainable transportation, reflecting a shared commitment to developing efficient and resilient mobility solutions.

Alstom Panama
Alstom employs approximately 150 team members in Panama, supporting engineering and maintenance activities. The company has played an active role in the development of the country's urban transportation system since 2010 and has participated in strategic projects for Metro de Panamá, including the development, construction, and implementation of the integrated rail systems for Lines 1 and 2.
Since 2014, Alstom has also provided maintenance services for both lines and introduced an innovative train driving simulator. In addition, the company supplied a total of 47 Metropolis trains, including 26 for Line 1 and 21 for Line 2, helping to strengthen one of the most modern and reliable metro systems in Latin America. With this new contract, Alstom reaffirms its long-term commitment to Panama by fostering local talent development and supporting the evolution of increasingly sustainable, efficient, and safe mobility for millions of passengers.
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Saudi Arabia

Alstom and Saudi Arabia Railways deepen long-term partnership to enhance freight rail performance across the Kingdom

Alstom, a global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has signed a €22 million[1], five-year contract with Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) to support the reliability and day-to-day performance of its North Freight fleet operating along the Kingdom's North–South corridor.

The North–South corridor is a key rail link for Saudi Arabia, carrying approximately 13.5 million tons of freight annually on the northern line. The corridor connects mining sites to processing facilities and export points, playing a central role in supporting the Kingdom's industrial and logistics activities.

To help maintain reliable freight operations across the North-South corridor, Alstom will provide FlexCare Perform maintenance services to support for the critical onboard systems installed on SAR's locomotive fleet. These systems are essential for daily operations, monitoring train performance, managing speed, and enabling communication with signalling infrastructure to ensure safe, efficient and reliable movement of freight across the network.

Alstom will also introduce a more proactive maintenance approach, combining real-time monitoring with enhanced spare parts availability to improve fleet readiness and reduce response times. The scope also includes system upgrades, maintenance documentation, digital tools, and targeted workforce training. Together, these measures will support more efficient day-to-day maintenance, strengthen operational performance and support the long-term reliability of SAR's freight services.

"Our partnership with SAR is built on a shared ambition to strengthen rail performance and support the Kingdom's long-term transport objectives," said Mohamed Khalil, Managing Director Middle East. "Through this collaboration, we are enhancing reliability, supporting local talent development, and creating long-term value for Saudi Arabia's freight sector."

Beyond operations, the initiative will contribute to developing local capabilities. Training and knowledge transfer will support Saudi engineers, technicians, and operators, enabling the progressive localisation of technical expertise and reinforcing the Kingdom's rail ecosystem.

By supporting a critical freight corridor and strengthening local expertise, this initiative contributes to Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 ambitions to build a more efficient, resilient, and competitive logistics sector.

Alstom is the market leader in rail services, supporting customers over the entire asset lifecycle with the broadest portfolio of services solutions. Alstom's FlexCare Perform maintenance services are tailored to customer needs and operational requirements, from technical support with spares to fully outsourced maintenance solutions. Alstom maintains over 36,000 vehicles worldwide, including over 2,450 locomotives, and is a trusted partner for servicing both Alstom and non-Alstom rail assets.

Alstom in Saudi Arabia
Alstom continues to expand its local footprint in Saudi Arabia through long-term investment in people and capabilities. The company has established its Middle East regional headquarters in Riyadh, launched multiple local trainings and knowledge-transfer initiatives, and is actively supporting the development of local expertise in transport systems and mobility technologies. Present in Saudi Arabia since 1951, Alstom remains a trusted partner in the Kingdom's transport development journey. From the first gas turbine to today's fully automated metro systems, the company continues to support the country's goals for innovation, sustainability, and smart infrastructure.

*1 This order will be booked in the second quarter of Alstom's fiscal year 2026/27.

Italy

Alstom and Italo celebrate the strength of their innovative partnership

On September 23rd, Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, and Italo, Italy's first private high-speed rail operator, unveiled the next chapter of a collaboration that has been driving the evolution of Italian high-speed rail for nearly twenty years, during InnoTrans 2026. During a talk hosted at the Alstom stand, Gianbattista La Rocca, CEO of Italo, and Michele Viale, Managing Director of Alstom Italy, spoke of the 12 new Avelia Stream high-speed trains currently under construction for Italy at Alstom's facilities in Savigliano, Sesto San Giovanni and Bologna.

A Partnership That Goes Beyond Trains

The collaboration between Alstom and Italo began in 2008, when Italo selected Alstom as its industrial and technology partner for the supply and maintenance of the fleet that would launch Italy's first private high-speed rail operator. Since then, the relationship has evolved alongside Italo's growth, becoming a long-term industrial partnership that has contributed both to the operator's expansion and to Italy's emergence as one of Europe's most competitive high-speed rail markets.

Over time, the partnership has expanded well beyond the supply of rolling stock. Today, Alstom acts as the Entity in Charge of Maintenance (ECM) for Italo's entire fleet, delivering a fully integrated, 360-degree model that encompasses maintenance, fleet management, technical support, modernization programs and digital innovation throughout the trains' lifecycle.

Every day, more than 220 Alstom professionals work across maintenance depots to ensure fleet availability, reliability and service continuity. At the heart of this ecosystem is the Nola Digital Depot, where 24/7 operational control rooms, real-time data and digital solutions such as HealthHub, TrainScanner and TrainTracer leverage advanced algorithms and AI-powered analytics to anticipate potential issues, optimize maintenance planning and maximize fleet availability. Innovative technologies, including the 3D printing of selected components, also help improve spare parts availability and accelerate maintenance interventions.

The partnership also extends to enhancing the passenger experience through Nomad Digital, an Alstom Group company that supports Italo in the development of next-generation connectivity solutions and digital services. Among these is the pioneering deployment of a hybrid connectivity platform integrating 5G networks and Starlink satellite technology, providing passengers with a more reliable and higher-performing internet connection, even along the most challenging routes.

"The strength of partnership with Alstom and Italo lies in the trust we have built over time and in our ability to evolve together. It is founded on shared responsibility and a common determination to turn every new challenge into an opportunity for progress and innovation. Behind every milestone of this journey are our people, whose expertise, passion, and commitment help turn vision into reality and shape the future of high-speed rail." said Michele Viale, Managing Director of Alstom Italy.

"In 2008, we chose Alstom to embark on this unique journey. Thanks to the launch of Italo, Italy became the first European country to introduce competition to the high-speed rail sector, setting an example for others to follow. With Alstom, we share a forward-looking vision of shared and sustainable mobility. Our goal is to continuously innovate to provide passengers with safety, reliability, and comfort. We started with 25 AGV trains and chose Alstom once again when we invested in 26 EVO trains. Most recently, we placed an order for 12 additional Alstom Avelia Stream trains tailored for the Italian market. These will begin service at the end of next year, bringing our total fleet to 63 trains." said Gianbattista La Rocca, CEO of Italo.

Built in Italy and developed on the foundation of Alstom's more than 40 years of high-speed rail expertise—supported by over 2,900 high-speed trains delivered worldwide—Avelia Stream trains reaffirm the central role of Italian railway expertise in the development of the Group's high-speed solutions. The new train will be officially unveiled in the coming months at Alstom's Savigliano facility, in the province of Cuneo.

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France

Railpool's Class 188.144 stands on the blocks of platform 19 at Paris Gare du Nord having brought the ECS in for the European Sleeper service to Berlin, train No. ES475, the 18:03 departure on September 17th. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

FS Logistix: Greenbrier Europe to produce the NIK handling system for TX Logistik

TX Logistik AG, a company of FS Logistix, and Greenbrier Europe, part of The Greenbrier Companies, a global rail industry leader, have signed an agreement for the production and leasing of NIK (Neutral Intermodal Key, formerly NiKRASA). Greenbrier Europe will manage the production and leasing of the handling platform, while TX Logistik will continue to lead the commercial development and sales activities. The agreement, which includes an initial order of 50 platforms, was signed by both companies at the Innotrans railway trade fair in Berlin.

This close collaboration is intended to help shift even more freight from road to rail in future. The cooperation partner, Greenbrier Europe, is convinced of the potential of the solution, which also encompasses possible further developments. “The handling platform is an excellent fit with our product range in the intermodal sector and expands the range of services we offer our customers,” says William Glenn, President of Greenbrier Europe. Gian Paolo Gotelli, CEO of TX Logistik AG, emphasises: “Together with our new production and leasing partner, we want to make it easier for shippers to access rail transport. This strengthens combined transport and benefits the entire market.”

The NIK handling platform enables non-craneable semi-trailers – which currently account for around 80 percent of European truck fleets – to be loaded onto rail quickly and easily. Using the system requires no changes to existing standards at terminals, on wagons, or on the rail network. This makes the system a powerful lever for changing the modal split in favour of rail freight transport in the long term, especially since it operates without changes to existing terminal processes. In addition to semi-trailers, silos and trailers with fixed bodies, mega trailers, trailers without bodies and container chassis can also be placed onto the rails. If the platform remains empty in the wagon, swap bodies and containers can still be loaded as usual without the systems interfering with each other.

This partnership also lays the foundation for the commercial development: in future, NIK is to be opened to the market and might be further developed in collaboration with partners from industry and logistics. The service is available to all market participants and can be accessed through purchase, various leasing models or partnerships. The more units that can be moved to eco-friendly rail transport using NIK, the more intermodal transport contributes to sustainable logistics and the achievement of climate targets in Europe.

Slovenia

SŽ Class 363.016 glistens in the low morning sun at Ljubljana. It has just dropped onto the stock to form train No. IC247 Citadella, the 09:15 to Budapest on September 24th. *Andy Pratt*

Vietnam

VinSpeed and Siemens Mobility sign a Turnkey contract, deepening cooperation on High-Speed rail development in Vietnam

VinSpeed High-Speed Rail Investment and Development Joint Stock Company (a member of Vingroup) and Siemens Mobility GmbH have announced the signing of a turnkey contract for the Hanoi–Quang Ninh and Ben Thanh–Can Gio high-speed rail lines. The agreement marks a new milestone in VinSpeed's journey toward developing its high-speed rail capabilities, while progressively building modern, international-standard transport infrastructure in Vietnam.

Valued at up to 1 billion euros, the contract builds on the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation and Technology Transfer Agreement signed by the two parties in December 2025, translating the strategic partnership between VinSpeed and Siemens Mobility into concrete projects and implementation.

Under the contract, VinSpeed will be responsible for project development, track construction and civil works. Siemens Mobility – a global leader in high-speed rail technology and solutions – will serve as the technology partner, providing advanced rail systems and the necessary technical expertise.

Specifically, Siemens Mobility will deliver 10 Velaro Novo trains for two rail lines, including the 121-km Hanoi - Quang Ninh line with four stations and the 54-km Ben Thanh - Can Gio line with two stations, together with communications and electrification. This will be executed in phases.

Velaro Novo is Siemens Mobility's next-generation distributed-power electric multiple unit (EMU), with speeds of up to 350 km/h. Each 200-meter-long trainset comprises seven cars with 760 seats and is designed to optimize energy efficiency and passenger capacity. With its wide body and "empty tube" structural design, Velaro Novo offers at least 10% more passenger capacity than previous generations, enhancing operational efficiency for operators.

In addition, the trainsets will feature Automatic Train Operation (ATO) technology integrated with a European Train Control System (ETCS) Level 2 signalling platform, enabling automatic optimization of train spacing while improving precision and energy efficiency through intelligent control of speed, acceleration and braking. Notably, this will mark the world's first deployment of ATO over ETCS in a national high-speed rail network, marking a new step toward a safer, more efficient and environmentally-friendly future for the rail sector.

With Siemens Mobility's high-speed rail expertise and state-of-the-art technology, the company is positioning itself as a leader in defining high-speed rail standards in Vietnam, laying the groundwork for this future long-distance network.

Mr. Pham Thieu Hoa, CEO of VinSpeed, said: "The signing of the contract with Siemens Mobility marks an important step in realizing VinSpeed's high-speed rail lines in Vietnam. The combination of VinSpeed's project implementation capabilities with Siemens Mobility's advanced rail technology and global experience will provide a foundation for bringing modern, efficient and sustainable operating solutions to the new rail lines, while laying the groundwork for the development of an integrated high-speed transport system in Vietnam."

Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility, said: "Vietnam is entering an exciting new era of mobility, and we are proud to contribute to this transformation. With our Velaro Novo trains, which consume 30% less energy than previous models and offers more than 10% additional passenger capacity, combined with state-of-the-art ETCS Level 2 signaling and advanced electrification systems, we are providing Vietnam with a truly sustainable and efficient transport solution. This partnership highlights our commitment to helping countries modernize their transport infrastructure while supporting economic growth and environmental protection."

As part of Vingroup's Infrastructure pillar, VinSpeed was established with the mission to pioneer the development of high-speed rail and modern transport infrastructure projects in Vietnam, applying leading standards of technology, efficiency, and sustainability. VinSpeed aims to become a driving force in the transformation of transport infrastructure, shaping the future of Vietnam's rail industry in line with international benchmarks.

Image: Velaro Novo is Siemens Mobility's next-generation distributed-power electric multiple unit (EMU), with speeds of up to 350 km/h. ©Siemens Mobility

Sardinia

Stadler unveils the world's first narrow-gauge hydrogen train

In the field of alternative propulsion systems, Stadler has presented the world's first hydrogen-powered train designed for narrow-gauge lines at InnoTrans 2026, in collaboration with three transport companies from southern Italy. Tailor-made for sustainable rail operations in Sardinia, Calabria and Sicily, ten hydrogen-powered trains will save more than 2,100 tonnes of CO_2 per year compared to diesel trains.

Built at Stadler's headquarters in Bussnang, eastern Switzerland, the new trains will soon provide zero-emission rail services under the Italian sun. Stadler is currently producing a series of 21 new trains for Sardinia's Azienda Regionale Sarda Trasporti (ARST), Ferrovie della Calabria (FdC), and Ferrovia Circumetnea (FCE) in Sicily. The first train was built for ARST under a framework contract covering the design and development of a total of ten vehicles. Nine trains for FdC and two for FCE are also in production. In the future, these trains will be used on regional and local services.

Tailored to each region

Each train has been specifically designed to meet the needs of different lines and operators, from the coastal routes of Sardinia and the mountain tunnels of Calabria to the steep gradients that characterise the Etna Nature Park in Sicily.

"Thanks to close collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and the railway operators ARST, FdC, and FCE, Stadler has developed a modular solution capable of adapting to the diverse requirements of Italy's narrow-gauge railway networks. All the trains are based on the same technological platform and combine a compact profile, lightweight mechanical structures, and an innovative hydrogen propulsion system. This integration ensures high standards of performance, innovation, reliability, and sustainability," says Maurizio Oberti, Stadler's Sales & Marketing Director for the Italian market.

Aristide Vercillo Martino, Sole Director of FdC, emphasises: "The collaboration between Stadler and Ferrovie della Calabria has continued successfully for around twenty years. This journey began with the first vehicle developed specifically for Italy's narrow-gauge railways and designed for FdC. It has been strengthened over time through the experience gained with several generations of railcars now successfully in service. This long-standing partnership has laid the foundations for the development of a new generation of trains, designed to meet the company's operational needs while offering passengers ever-higher standards of comfort, accessibility, and travel quality. This achievement forms part of the wider investment programme promoted in collaboration with the Calabria Region to upgrade railway infrastructure and accelerate the digital transformation of the regional transport system."

Reducing CO_2 emissions by more than 2,100 tonnes

The distinctive feature of the new trains is their environmentally sustainable propulsion system, based on fuel cells and hydrogen tanks installed in the central carriage (Power Pack), which operate in conjunction with traction batteries. These batteries are recharged using energy generated from hydrogen. Thanks to this technology, the trains can run efficiently, sustainably, and without interruption on non-electrified lines. Compared with diesel vehicles, ten hydrogen-powered trains will save up to 2,100 tonnes of CO_2 per year, equivalent to approximately 450 trips around the world by car.

Hydrogen produced using solar energy

The trains will be fuelled by green hydrogen produced entirely by using solar energy. ARST, FdC, and FCE are strongly committed to developing their power stations, which are currently under construction.

"These vehicles, developed in collaboration with Stadler, are a central element of the decarbonisation strategy for the narrow-gauge network. We are immensely proud to bring the world's first narrow-gauge hydrogen train onto our lines," explains Carlo Poledrini, Director- General of ARST. "For ARST, this project represents the first step in the company's evolution from a transport operator into an energy company."

Enhanced travel experience

Compared with diesel trains, hydrogen-powered trains are significantly quieter, providing a further tangible benefit for both local residents and passengers. Travellers will also enjoy bright interiors and large panoramic windows. Low-floor access ensures that passengers with reduced mobility can board the train with ease.

"The landscapes surrounding Mount Etna are among the most picturesque in Sicily. Our aim is to offer passengers the most pleasant travel experience possible. Thanks to the introduction of the new hydrogen-powered trains, we can enhance comfort while making a tangible contribution to more sustainable transport. We are delighted to have Stadler by our side as a reliable partner and to make this extraordinary route even more attractive to our passengers," says Salvatore Fiore, Managing Director of FCE.

Image: Hydrogen-Train-Rendering_FCE

Croatia

643-027 sold to SKINEST

Following the sale of 643-037 to an Austrian customer – with the locomotive successfully serving its function at a company in Croatia for more than five years – a purchase deal was arranged with a buyer from Estonia for the same kind of locomotive thanks to the good reference from the previous sale.

For this project, we decided to completely refurbish the 643-027, a diesel locomotive already entered in the European Vehicle Register, which is the requirement for obtaining the vehicle authorisation. The extent of refurbishment work and the purchase details were agreed with Skinest Railway Serices OU's branch in Croatia, which requested that the unit be completely refurbished and fitted with the equipment necessary to operate on Croatian rail network. The scope of the major overhaul followed the official description of works for major overhauls with a few extra requests, as follows:

- install the ATS RAS 8385 IS automatic train protection system by Altpro Zagred,
- install GSM-R Mesa 26 DUAL MODE,
- install a screw compressor,
- install LED lights,
- build side covers based on the locomotive repowering system for SŽ,
- do a re-paint in the livery of customer's choice.

The works have been completed on schedule. The locomotive is mainly used for shunting purposes in the Zagreb area. We entered into a long-term contract with Skinest for locomotive maintenance both on-site and at our workshop in Maribor. Should the locomotive continue to operate reliably during the warranty period, the customer expressed a wish to buy another locomotive of this type.

Photo: 643-027 ©SŽ – VIT

Switzerland

From concept to reality: EURO DuFour presented only two years after contract signature

Two years after the contract was signed at InnoTrans 2024, Stadler and SBB Cargo Switzerland unveil the first EURO DuFour, a locomotive designed to reduce infrastructure costs by 20%, cut energy consumption by up to 15%, and accelerate the digitalisation of rail freight transport. Some locomotives define an era. In Switzerland, the Re 460, popularly known as the Lok 2000, has symbolised the modernisation of passenger rail transport for more than three decades. Today, Stadler and SBB Cargo Switzerland have presented at InnoTrans 2026 the locomotive set to play a similar role in freight transport: the new EURO DuFour. The story of the EURO DuFour is closely linked to Berlin. It was at InnoTrans in September 2024, that SBB Cargo Switzerland signed with Stadler the contract for a new generation of mainline locomotives. SBB Cargo Switzerland ordered an initial fleet of 36 electric locomotives with options for up to 129 vehicles in total. Just two years later, Stadler presents together with SBB the first completed locomotive. The Euro DuFour will transform the efficiency and competitiveness of rail freight transport.

The locomotive platform is named after Guillaume Henri Dufour, engineer, founder of the international red cross and one of the most influential figures in modern Swiss history. The name reflects innovation, vision and connectivity, values that also define this new locomotive platform.

Euro DuFour: 20 % less track access costs

The EURO DuFour's most significant innovation is its new designed bogie, equipped with a passive self-steering system. This technology optimises wheel-rail interaction, reducing railway infrastructure wear and associated track access costs by around 20% compared with conventional freight locomotives.The locomotive also features a next-generation traction system based on 3-level power converter technology, delivering high traction power while incorporating regenerative braking and advanced energy management. This combination provides outstanding performance and hauling capability, while reducing electricity consumption by up to 15% compared with today's fleet.

"The EURO DuFour represents exactly what the market is looking for today: a locomotive capable of reducing operating costs, increasing efficiency and providing a platform ready to evolve for decades. It is not simply a new locomotive; it is a new technological generation for rail freight transport," said Dr. Ansgar Brockmeyer, Executive Vice President Marketing & Sales at Stadler.

Operational flexibility for more efficient logistics

With a weight of approximately 80 tonnes, the EURO DuFour combines high performance with exceptional operational flexibility. Its low axle load allows operation on infrastructure categories C2, C3 and C4, significantly expanding network accessibility and enabling deployment across a wide range of freight corridors and railway networks. Of the 36 locomotives ordered by SBB Cargo Switzerland, 22 will be equipped with Last Mile battery technology. This capability enables true end-to-end operation, providing access to non- electrified terminals, sidings, and industrial facilities without the need for additional shunting locomotives, thereby simplifying operations and improving productivity.

"The EURO DuFour brings together some of the most advanced innovations developed by Stadler in recent years. We have created a locomotive that is more efficient, more intelligent and more flexible, ready to meet the needs of European rail freight transport for decades to come," said Iñigo Parra, Executive Vice President Division Spain at Stadler.

Locomotive developed together with loc-drivers

The EURO DuFour has been developed in close collaboration with locomotive drivers. Its new cab and driving concept have been designed to enhance ergonomics, visibility and ease of operation, improving driver comfort while reducing preparation time and workload in daily service. The locomotive also features advanced remote monitoring and diagnostics, predictive maintenance capabilities and digital architecture ready for future applications. In addition, it is prepared for the future implementation of Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) and FRMCS (Future Railway Mobile Communication System), the next-generation railway communications standard that will progressively replace GSM-R across Europe. These capabilities ensure that the EURO DuFour is ready to support the ongoing digital transformation of rail freight transport for decades to come.

"The EURO DuFour is more than a locomotive. It is a symbol of the future of rail freight transport in Switzerland. It combines efficiency, operational flexibility and long-term adaptability, strengthening the competitiveness of SBB Freight Services." said Alexander Muhm, Head of SBB Freight Services.

With the unveiling of the EURO DuFour at InnoTrans 2026, Stadler and SBB Cargo Switzerland complete a journey that began at the same exhibition just two years ago. From contract to locomotive. From concept to reality. A new benchmark for rail freight transport in Switzerland and across Europe.

Norway

VR completes first train under its first rolling stock modernisation project in Sweden for Norske Tog

VR FleetCare, the rail fleet maintenance and wagon manufacturer, has launched a modernisation project for the Norwegian rolling stock company Norske Tog. The contract covers a total of 34 Class 72 electric multiple units and demonstrates VR FleetCare's strong position as a rolling stock maintenance expert in the Nordic region.

The Class 72 fleet is used in Norway's commuter rail services and forms an important part of the country's local passenger train network. The modernisation programme includes refurbishment and upgrade measures designed to extend the lifecycle of the fleet and enhance passenger comfort. The first modernised train has now been completed in Tillberga, Sweden.

"We are delighted to deliver this project together with Norske Tog. The contract demonstrates our ability to execute demanding rolling stock projects internationally. The completion of the first train on schedule is an important milestone for the project. It also shows that our new partnership model enables us to launch modernisation projects quickly and deliver them efficiently, even outside our own production facilities," says Peter Guldbrand, Head of Sales and project management at VR FleetCare.

The project will be carried out in phases, with all 34 trains scheduled to be modernised by 2029.

Italy

FS Logistix orders eight Stadler EUROLIGHT Dual Locomotives

The Italian freight operator FS Logistix has selected Stadler's bi-mode locomotive platform EUROLIGHT Dual for its company Mercitalia Shunting & Terminal. The locomotive will enable the company to enhance the efficiency, flexibility and sustainability of its services across the national network. The order further consolidates the success of a locomotive family specifically developed for Italy and represents a further step in FS Logistix's strategy to modernise its assets.

The EUROLIGHT Dual was specifically developed for the requirements of the Italian railway network. Combining 3 kV DC electric traction with a Stage V diesel engine, the locomotive enables seamless operation across both electrified and non-electrified routes. Characterised by high performance, low weight and a reduced axle load of just 20 tonnes, it is suitable for operation on both main lines and secondary lines throughout Italy. The Bo'Bo' locomotive delivers up to 3MW in electric mode and a starting tractive effort of 330 kN, while incorporating ETCS B3R2, SCMT and SSC safety systems to ensure full compatibility with the national network.

Locomotives are of strategic importance

In addition to its operational versatility, the bi-mode concept contributes to more sustainable transport. The locomotive can operate under electric power wherever catenary is available, reducing fuel consumption, emissions and noise. Regenerative braking further improves energy efficiency by feeding energy back into the overhead line. FS Logistix, the logistics company of the FS Italiane Group, is pursuing an extensive transformation programme aimed at developing an increasingly integrated, sustainable and customer-oriented European logistics system. The eight EUROLIGHT Dual locomotives are part of this broader investment plan and will support FS Logistix in improving operational efficiency, service reliability and environmental performance.

A locomotive tailored to the Italian market

"We are delighted that FS Logistix and Mercitalia Shunting & Terminal have selected the EUROLIGHT Dual for their operations," said Iñigo Parra, Executive Vice President Division Spain at Stadler. "The locomotive was designed to meet the specific requirements of the Italian market, combining flexibility, efficiency and sustainability in a single platform. This new order demonstrates the value that bi-mode technology brings to operators seeking to maximise operational performance while reducing their environmental footprint."

Investing in the future

"Renewing our fleet means investing in the future of rail freight and strengthening its role within a more competitive and sustainable logistics system," said Sabrina De Filippis, CEO of FS Logistix. "The acquisition of eight EUROLIGHT Dual locomotives is part of an overall investment programme of approximately EUR 1 billion and will expand our availability of modern, efficient and flexible assets across the Italian network. Through these investments, we also aim to reduce the environmental footprint of logistics operations and make rail and intermodal transport increasingly competitive alternatives to road transport."

"Bi-mode technology will allow to use the same locomotive on electrified lines and on sections without overhead lines, avoiding locomotive changes and simplifying operations. This will improve service continuity, efficiency and reliability while reducing environmental impact," said Livio Ravera, CEO and General Manager of Mercitalia Shunting & Terminal.

Mercitalia Shunting & Terminal is a leading operator in Italy for railway shunting activities at ports, terminals and stations. Through its extensive service network and its own fleet of more than 200 locomotives, the company also provides leasing solutions to meet market demand and support the operations of FS Group companies.

Poland

Alpha Trains completes sale of 11 Talent DMUs for deployment in Poland

Alpha Trains has completed the sale of 11 Bombardier (now: Alstom) Talent diesel multiple units (DMUs) to Public Transport Service (PTS) and Modertrans Poznań (Modertrans). The transaction follows the agreement announced by the parties at TRAKO 2025 in Gdansk and will bring 11 modern Talent trains to the Polish market.

The fleet consists of three-car Talent DMUs with a maximum speed of 120 km/h, air conditioning, wheelchair-accessible toilets and 137 seats. The trains have been in continuous passenger service in Germany and are designed for operation in multiple-unit formations.

The 11 trains will undergo a comprehensive overhaul and be homologated for operation in Poland by PTS and Modertrans. The partners are keeping to their target of having the first vehicles ready for operation in Poland within 18 months. The project responds to the continued demand for DMUs in Poland, where many regional routes are not electrified and operators are looking for cost-effective fleet solutions. Overhauled and homologated vehicles can enter service considerably faster than newly built trains, at a time when new-build DMU capacity is limited.

"This transaction demonstrates the value that well-maintained secondary-market fleets can deliver to operators facing urgent capacity requirements," said Stephan Wegert, Commercial Director of Alpha Trains. "Together with PTS and Modertrans, we are enabling the rapid and cost-effective introduction of modern rolling stock in Poland. We are pleased to have found partners with the technical expertise, homologation experience and workshop capacity needed to bring these trains into service in Poland. The first six Talent units will be handed over in December 2026."

"The Talent units represent another major milestone in PTS's growing portfolio of secondary rolling stock projects," said Robert Karwasz of PTS. "PTS is already delivering several overhaul, modernisation and polonization programmes, and the Talent project is the next step in this development. For this particular programme, we are working together with Modertrans and Alpha Trains to meet the needs of the Polish market and to provide the workshop capacity required in Paterek and Poznań."

The overhaul and modernisation work will contribute to rail industry activity in the Poznań region, where Modertrans operates maintenance and modernisation facilities and already performs work on diesel and electric multiple units for several Polish operators.

With 11 trains, the project represents one of the largest planned deployments of Talent diesel multiple units in Poland. The transaction also highlights the growing role of secondary-market rolling stock in supporting regional passenger transport and addressing near-term fleet requirements.

Looking ahead, Alpha Trains believes additional opportunities exist for the deployment of further Talent units in Poland: Over the coming years, the company could make up to 50 Bombardier/Alstom Talent DMUs available to the Polish market, subject to customer demand and project requirements.

U.K.

Alstom and TransPennine Express sign €1.2 billion contracts for Britain's first mainline battery-electric trains

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has signed contracts worth €1.2 billion with TransPennine Express (TPE) for the supply and long-term maintenance of a new fleet of battery-electric trains. The British-designed and built trains will transform rail travel across northern England and support the delivery of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU).

The agreements combine a rolling stock contract worth approximately €930 million for 29 five-car battery-electric multiple units (BEMUs) with maintenance contracts valued at around €230 million. The fleet will be delivered from 2032 and will support the ongoing decarbonisation of one of Britain's most important rail corridors.

The order represents the first deployment of Alstom's Adessia Stream platform in the UK and will deliver Britain's first mainline battery-electric train fleet, combining high performance, operational flexibility and sustainable mobility.

"This agreement is a landmark moment for Britain's railway, and we couldn't be prouder that the country's first mainline battery-electric trains will be designed and built in Britain. The fleet will transform journeys across northern England while showcasing the very best of British engineering, innovation and advanced manufacturing," said Rob Whyte, Managing Director UK at Alstom.

He added: "Beyond the benefits to passengers, this investment will support more than 350 highly skilled jobs in Derby and over 5,500 roles across our UK supply chain, helping create opportunities, develop skills and drive economic growth in communities across the country. As momentum builds behind strengthening UK industry and regional prosperity, this project is a powerful example of what can be achieved by investing in British design, British manufacturing and British talent."

Devised specifically for the needs of long-distance regional travel, the 121-metre-long trains will operate at speeds of up to 110 mph and provide around 300 seats per train, including a First Class area with catering facilities. As the first new-build trains to be operated by Great British Railways (GBR), they will also offer passengers modern amenities including Wi-Fi, air conditioning, power and USB-C charging at every set, enhanced luggage provision, real-time passenger information systems, CCTV, dedicated cycle storage and quieter, more comfortable interiors.

Level boarding

A defining feature of the fleet is its level boarding design at every door, helping deliver a more inclusive and accessible passenger experience while reducing station dwell times. Each train will also include three dedicated wheelchair spaces, two accessible toilets, family-friendly areas and buggy storage. Furthermore, the trains' battery technology provides emission-free operations on non-electrified sections of railway. Charging infrastructure will be installed by Alstom at Hull, Scarborough and Saltburn, allowing the Adessia fleet to recharge efficiently during normal operations and supporting TPE's ambition to operate a fully decarbonised network. Installation of this infrastructure will be a UK-first on the mainline network and follows a similar successful deployment by Alstom in Ireland.

UK jobs and skills

As the home of the Adessia platform, the new trains will be designed, engineered, built and tested at Alstom's historic Derby Litchurch Lane Works – the UK's only end-to-end train factory. The Adessia rolling stock order from TransPennine Express will support more than 350 highly skilled jobs in Derby and over 5,500 roles throughout Alstom's UK supply chain. Manufacturing is expected to begin in 2028, with the project set to generate at least £360 million in spending with British suppliers.

"I've lost count of the number of times someone has stopped me to tell me about the train that never came. And when that happens, it means missed shifts, missed appointments, and missed opportunities. Today that starts to change," said Prime Minister Andy Burnham.
He added: "These 29 new trains will bring faster, more reliable journeys to the North, and thousands of British jobs for the next generation. It's exactly what Great British Railways is all about – taking back control of the basics and getting Britain believing again."

The maintenance contract – which will support over 100 roles – will run for an initial eight-year period, with the potential for a further eight-year extension, helping maximise fleet availability, reliability and performance throughout its operational life.

Alstom will train at least 36 apprentices and 36 T Level students over the contract, which is also set to benefit over 1,000 community members each year through the company's established local engagement framework.

"This landmark investment embodies how GBR will deliver better journeys for people while backing British business. These ambitious upgrades plans mean passengers can wave goodbye to overcrowded, delayed diesel trains and step onboard faster electric trains which are fit for the future," said Heidi Alexander, Transport Secretary.
She added: "From Alstom's factory floor in Derby to supply chains across the country, this deal will deliver growth, jobs, opportunity and better transport links for generations to come."

The project showcases Alstom's ability to deliver a complete railway solution, combining rolling stock, maintenance, depot provision and charging infrastructure within a single integrated programme.
"This is a transformational £1.2 billion investment in the future of rail travel across the North, delivering new trains for our customers as well as new infrastructure, new jobs and long-term economic benefits," said Chris Jackson, Managing Director at TransPennine Express.
He added: "Britain has a proud railway heritage, and this project puts the UK at the forefront of the next generation of cleaner rail technology."

The new battery-electric fleet will operate on services connecting key destinations across northern England, including Liverpool, Manchester, York, Hull, Scarborough and Saltburn, supporting economic growth and providing passengers with a greener and more comfortable travel experience. The new trains – funded by rail investor Rock Rail – will replace part of TPE's existing Class 185 fleet.

"I would like to thank TransPennine Express, Alstom and the TRU programme for entrusting Rock Rail with funding and delivering this important project," said Mark Swindell, Founder at Rock Rail.

He added: "At Rock we care about improving the passenger experience; we feel strongly this project will deliver a step-change in experience, journey times and environmental benefit."

A three-year research programme and a £35 million investment culminated in the development of Adessia for the UK – the next evolution of the Aventra train platform, proven at scale across England, with fleets already delivering over 18 billion passenger miles.

With flexible traction options and a lightweight design, Adessia Stream trains deliver required capacities while reducing life-cycle cost. Adessia Stream is a train with accessibility built in, enabling unassisted boarding at 85% of existing UK railway station platforms due to level boarding at every door along the full length of the train – reducing the additional investment needed to adapt platform heights.

With more than 20 years' experience in battery technology, Alstom is a pioneer in sustainable rail mobility. Alstom was the first rail manufacturer to have both hydrogen and battery trains in commercial operation and continues to expand its portfolio of battery-powered solutions worldwide. A key milestone was reached in February 2026, when the first Coradia Continental battery-electric train entered commercial service for the operator VMS in Germany, followed by the entry into service in July 2026 of France's first battery-powered trains. These milestones demonstrate how innovative battery technology can accelerate the replacement of diesel trains on non-electrified regional lines.

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Image: Visualisation of Alstom's Adessia Stream for Transpennine Express at York. ©Alstom

When Warsaw picks up speed again after the summer

With the end of summer vacation, everyday life returns to Warsaw. Schools and universities start the new academic year, commuters once again fill the streets, and public transit returns to its usual high volume. At the same time, the transit authority wraps up an intensive summer season during which extensive work was carried out on the tram infrastructure. Service frequencies are increasing again, and the city is returning to normal operations.

The figures show just how important the tram is to Warsaw: In 2025, approximately 249 million trips were taken on the Polish capital's trams. This makes the tram the city's second most-used form of public transportation, after buses.

Expansion and renewal go hand in hand

The tram plays a key role in Warsaw's long-term mobility strategy. With the opening of the line to Wilanów in 2024, the network underwent one of its largest expansions in recent decades. Further projects, including the planned line to Zielona Białołęka, are already in the works. At the same time, the city is investing heavily in its existing network, pursuing a two-pronged approach: expansion where the city is growing, and modernization where the infrastructure is subject to heavy daily use.

Warsaw traditionally uses the summer months in particular for major infrastructure work. This year alone, 36 projects covering nearly 12.5 kilometres of track were on the agenda. The goal is to improve ride comfort, reduce operational restrictions, and ensure the network's long-term performance.

Not every heavily used rail needs to be upgraded or replaced for this purpose. Targeted maintenance measures that restore existing rails to optimal condition make an important contribution to the long-term availability of the infrastructure.

Repair instead of replacement

This is exactly where preventive rail maintenance comes into play. On behalf of the Warsaw Tramway, Vossloh treats particularly heavily loaded track sections—so-called "hot spots"—with the world's smallest rail milling machine, the VTM-compact. It is used for targeted milling operations on defined sections of the network to completely eliminate rail defects and delay rail replacement for as long as possible.

Both vignol and grooved rails are processed. "Grooved rails, in particular, pose special maintenance challenges for tram networks. The fact that we can now process them to a high standard using the VTM-compact is the result of many years of development work and is unique in this form on the market. The machine successfully fills a niche that could not be addressed with previous milling machines," explains Marcel Taubert, Managing Director of Vossloh Rail Services.

Corrective rail machining allows rail defects to be corrected early on, before extensive replacement work becomes necessary. This not only extends the service life of the infrastructure; it also helps avoid disruptions that can significantly impact daily life in a city of over a million people. When grooved rails are replaced, roads often have to be dug up, tracks exposed, and entire sections of traffic temporarily closed. This often affects buses, cars, delivery traffic, and residents as well. Targeted Rail machining, on the other hand, makes it possible to carry out work during short nighttime windows without significantly restricting the city's mobility. In this way, it plays a vital role in keeping Warsaw moving day after day.

When the city sleeps

There is very little time available for this work. As with tram systems worldwide, Warsaw also has only short nightly service breaks available. Each shift allows for about two and a half to three hours to carry out the planned work. That is why the actual work begins long before the first milling pass. Work sites are prepared, the rail sections to be treated are precisely defined, and all processes are coordinated to fit the limited time available.

No sooner has the last tram left the route than the operation begins. A Unimog pulls the VTM-compact from section to section. There, the machine processes the previously defined areas precisely and within the tight time window, performing up to two millimeters of material removal per pass. Removed chips are completely extracted during the milling process and collected in the chip bunker for disposal, eliminating the need for cleanup. This is because the tracks must be fully operational for passenger service again before the city even wakes up.

Ensuring growth runs on strong rails

The importance of such measures grows along with the network. As Warsaw continuously expands and modernizes its tram infrastructure, the strain on many existing lines is increasing at the same time. Efficient mobility therefore results not only from the construction of new routes but also from the continuous maintenance of the existing infrastructure.

The results speak for themselves: By 2025, Vossloh had already worked on more than 13 kilometres of track in Warsaw. This year, another 7.5 kilometres were added. And when the first trams start running again in the morning, passengers should experience one thing above all else: reliable, comfortable, and safe service

Poland

Siemens expands rail service network with first Rail Service Center in Poland

Siemens Mobility is expanding its European rail service network with the construction of a new state-of-the-art Rail Service Center in Gądki near Poznań, Poland. The new depot is scheduled to open in 2027 and will provide comprehensive maintenance services for locomotives operating in Poland and across Central and Eastern Europe. The new 4,300-square-meter facility will accommodate up to seven locomotives simultaneously and will include around five kilometres of electrified tracks, cutting-edge maintenance equipment, including an underfloor wheel lathe and a dropping table, as well as a dedicated testing area. Service operations will be based on Railigent X, Siemens Mobility's suite for applications and services, helping to optimize maintenance processes and maximize fleet availability. The new depot in Poland will become an integral part of Siemens Mobility's European service network for locomotives and further strengthens its global service footprint.

"With our first Rail Service Center in Poland, we are expanding our service network in a strategically important European rail market, to provide best-in-class service based on the latest technologies. With more than 130 service locations in over 30 countries, we combine global expertise with local presence to support our customers and help ensure up to 100% fleet availability. This investment further strengthens our service capabilities, enabling us to provide reliable support throughout the entire lifecycle while creating the foundation for the further development of our service business in Europe," said Elmar Zeiler, CEO Customer Services at Siemens Mobility.

Expanding Siemens Mobility's global service network

Siemens Mobility operates one of the rail industry's largest global service networks. The network supports customers throughout the lifecycle of their rail systems, with the goal of maximizing fleet availability and operational efficiency. As an integral part of the network, the new Rail Service Center in Poland will expand maintenance capabilities across Central and Eastern Europe and provide customers with faster and more flexible access to service capacities. The facility will offer both light and heavy maintenance and cover a broad range of activities, from scheduled inspections and maintenance of safety systems to major overhauls, modifications, accident repairs and mobile service. Sustainability is also a key element of the new facility, which is planned to operate carbon neutrally.

Building on strong service expertise in Poland

Siemens Mobility already has more than 15 years of experience in locomotive maintenance in Poland. Today, a team of more than 60 specialists supports several hundred locomotives annually, including Vectron, Taurus and BR189-F4 vehicles. Maintenance activities are supported by digital solutions including Railigent X, Siemens Mobility's digital platform for rail asset management, as well as digital tools for fleet and spare-parts management. Siemens Mobility has also been ECM-certified in Poland since 2021, providing the framework for maintenance management, engineering support and fleet management. The new Rail Service Center will consolidate and expand these existing capabilities, while increasing the range and capacity of services that can be performed locally.

Local partnerships support long-term growth

The development of the new Rail Service Center is supported by local and regional partners, including Marshal's Office of the Wielkopolska Voivodeship, together with the Municipality of Kórnik and the Zakłady Kórnickie Foundation. The investment is intended to strengthen local rail expertise, support the development of multi-system locomotive maintenance capabilities and contribute to the continued growth of sustainable rail transport in Poland and across Central and Eastern Europe.

Belgium

Siemens and Infrabel expand strategic partnership to strengthen digital rail operations in Belgium

Siemens Mobility, a leading provider of intelligent and sustainable rail solutions, and Infrabel, Belgium's national railway infrastructure manager, have signed a long-term framework agreement to modernize and maintain the country's Operational Control System (OCS) environment; these are the digital systems used to manage rail traffic across Belgium. Over the next 11 years, the partners will ensure the continuous evolution of signalling software and hardware for one of Europe's densest rail networks. This digital transformation will significantly enhance network resilience and safety, ensuring a more reliable and efficient rail service for passengers and freight while preparing the rail operational control centres for the future. The framework agreement has a total order value of approximately €215 million.

"Our long-standing partnership with Infrabel is built on trust and a shared commitment to advancing rail operations in Belgium. With this new 11-year framework agreement, we are taking our collaboration to the next level by jointly modernizing the digital foundation of Belgium´s rail operation control centers. Our digital technology thrives to 100% system availability and introduces open interfaces according to the newest standards," said Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility. "By combining our global digitalization, software and cybersecurity expertise with strong local teams in Brussels, we are helping Infrabel to ensure that Belgium's railway remains innovative, secure and operationally resilient for decades to come."

"This contract goes far beyond software and technology. It is an investment in the future of our railway, but also in Belgium's industrial and economic ecosystem. By partnering with Siemens, we are not only strengthening the safety, reliability and performance of our network; we are also supporting economic activity and jobs in Belgium, while contributing to the development of local expertise in a highly strategic sector. This is how investment in rail infrastructure creates value well beyond the tracks themselves," said Benoit Gilson, CEO of Infrabel.

The long-term partnership will rely on local Siemens Mobility expertise in Belgium, supporting highly skilled employment and helping to further develop the country's capabilities in digital rail systems, software engineering and cybersecurity. This creates economic value that extends well beyond the railway sector itself.

The framework agreement introduces a dynamic governance structure centred around a four-year rolling roadmap. Through an annual alignment process, Infrabel and Siemens Mobility can continuously synchronize strategic priorities with resource allocation. This ensures that the partnership remains flexible and can rapidly respond to evolving requirements over the 11-year term.

A key pillar of the modernization is a rigorous focus on cybersecurity. This includes the appointment of a dedicated security officer and a continuous commitment to the fast-evolving landscape of rail-specific cybersecurity standards like the IEC62443 standard and the ISO 27001 certification standard – the internationally recognized standard for organizational information security management. This ensures that the rail infrastructure is protected against cyber threats.

The modernized OCS environment will be future-proof through an intuitive user interface that enhances operational efficiency for control center operators. This will enable continuous modernization of mission-critical signalling software and operational hardware, while providing enhanced digital resilience through next-generation signalling architecture.

The OCS environment supports the management of one of Europe's most intensively used rail networks, handling thousands of passenger and freight services every day. Reliable and secure operations control is essential for maintaining punctuality, increasing capacity and network resilience across Belgium's rail system.

From the Archives

Bulgaria

The splendid 4-8-2 No. 03.12 stands at Gor na Orjahovica shed on May 4th 2011.
John Sloane

From the Archives

E. Germany

A DR Class 44 three cylinder 2-10-0 blasts out of Saalfeld yard with a northbound freight on November 8th 1980.
John Sloane

From the Archives

E. Germany

DR rebuilt pacific No. 01-0510 simmers after arrival at Leipzig Hbf on November 8th 1980. *John Sloane*

From the Archives

France

No.15001 awaits departure from Strasbourg with the TEE 'Stanislas' express to Paris on April 8th 1972 whilst No. 20212 has arrived at the adjacent platform. *John Sloane*