

News Release

UNIFE participates in the Berlin High-level Dialogue on implementing Rio+20 decisions on sustainable cities and urban transport

Berlin 20 June 2013

Following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – better known as Rio+20 – in June 2012, a comprehensive outcome document entitled “The future we want” was adopted by Heads of State and Government. Among other messages, the document called upon governments to “support the development of sustainable transport systems, including energy efficient multimodal transport systems, notably public mass transportation systems.”

The Berlin High-level Dialogue on implementing Rio+20 decisions on sustainable cities and urban transport took place on 19-21 June, thereby coinciding with the first anniversary of the Rio+20 conference. Via exchanges of experience and best practices among experts and policy makers worldwide, the event focused on tackling challenges faced by urbanization and the consequential increase in transport demand so that the commitments made are followed through with real actions.

As a major promoter of sustainable solutions for public transport, UNIFE was invited to give a presentation in the framework of a roundtable featuring high-level speakers. Judit Sándor, UNIFE Sustainability and Environment Manager, explained the role that rail transport has in an integrated mass transit system. She highlighted that rail is the backbone of sustainable urban transport, not only from an environmental aspect (CO2 emissions, noise, air pollution...), but also from a socio-economic point of view (e.g., congestion mitigation, job creation). This has become all the more relevant as increased urbanization is expected since developing countries are experiencing strong growth and, as a result, dealing with the new challenges such growth poses.

Several solutions were presented by a variety of transport modes, and it was clear that the rail industry continues to contribute to the realization of a sustainable intermodal transport system. Furthermore, the conference concluded with the common understanding that actions have to be taken to achieve such a transport system, so the challenges faced can be realistically tackled.

UNIFE will continue to follow up on the implementation of the Rio+20 commitments, as well as on the forthcoming COP19 (Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) negotiations due to take place in Warsaw from 11 to 22 November.

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About UNIFE

UNIFE represents the European Rail Industry in Brussels since 1992. The Association gathers more than 82 of Europe's leading large and medium-sized rail supply companies active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems and related equipment. A further one thousand suppliers of railway equipment partake in UNIFE activities through 17 national rail industry associations. UNIFE members have an 80% market share in Europe and supply more than 50% of the worldwide production of rail equipment and services.

UNIFE represents its members' interests at the level of both European and international institutions. On the technical side, UNIFE works on the setting of interoperability standards and coordinates EU-funded research projects that aim at the technical harmonisation of railway systems. The association is one of the supporting bodies of the European Railway Agency.

UNIFE. Promote rail market growth for sustainable mobility.

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