

European railway industry deals with around EUR 1 Billion for research and innovation

[by Elena Ilie]

The budget proposed for SHIFT2RAIL in the financing period 2014-2020 is EUR 920 Million, EUR 450 Million of which will be allocated by the European Union and EUR 470 Million will come from the railway industry partners involved in the development of the research and technological innovation initiative. For research and innovation, of the EUR 450 Million allocated by the EU, EUR 180 Million will be allocated to the associated members and the rest of EUR 180 Million will be attributed to other partners. This objective seeks to attract the SMEs and the research institutes into the project.

Recently, on 12 February, the European Commission, through the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (DG ITRE), proposed the transfer of EUR 42.5 Million from the funds of the COSME and "Horizon 2020" programmes to the European Investment Fund (EIF) to facilitate the access of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to the European financing funds. The proposals include the allocation of EUR 52 Million to SHIFT2RAIL, the new EU Technological Initiative aimed at encouraging the competitiveness of the railway network infrastructure and that of the specialized industry products.

This package will be financed through the "Horizon 2020" programme until the technological initiative will be fully operational. The amendments, which will not affect the total amount of the EU budget for 2014, will have to receive formal approval from the European Parliament and the Council.

At the initiative of the Hellenic Presidency of the EU, decision makers and transport leaders from the EU institutions, executives from the European rail sector, Greek rail stakeholders, research centres and academia gathered in Athens at the middle of February to officially present the Commission's proposal to establish SHIFT2RAIL Tech-

nological Initiative. This research and development initiative has been declared priority by the Greek Presidency.

"SHIFT2RAIL is one of the top transport priorities of the Hellenic Presidency, it will move rail transport forward, and help the market grow. The European Rail Industry should remain the leader of the global market and SHIFT2RAIL is the instrument to achieve this", declared Michalis Papadopoulos, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks for the Hellenic Republic.

"Rail is facing significant competition from other transport modes and, from other regions of the world; in order to combat this SHIFT2RAIL combines a significant amount of EU and sector R&D resources with a long-term vision that will produce tangible results that contribute to the EU's ambitious transport goals", pointed out Olivier Onidi, Director for the European Mobility Network at the European Commission.

Henri Poupart-Lafarge, President of Alstom Transport and Chairman of UNIFE, highlighted why the sector needs such dedicated funds to invest in rail R&D to increase the attractiveness of the rail mode and the competitiveness of the European rail indus-

try, which accounts for 50% of the world market for rail supplies and services.

"We are confident that with the dedicated resources and organisation around the SHIFT2RAIL initiative the sector will move even closer towards the EU's transportation goals and an even more competitive European rail sector and transport mode on which millions of Europeans rely every day", underlined Philippe Citroën, Direct General of UNIFE and coordinator of the SHIFT2RAIL initiative.

The Technological Initiative SHIFT2RAIL refers to the whole European railway sector, especially to innovation and large scale competitiveness and to the consolidation of the European industry to face international competition considering the strong competition from the Asian transport market. ■

Европейская железнодорожная промышленность владеет суммой около 1 млрд. евро для исследования и инновации

Бюджет предложен для SHIFT2RAIL на период финансирования 2014 – 2020, составляет 920 млн. евро, с которых 450 млн. евро будут обеспечены Европейским Союзом, и 470 млн. евро будут предоставлены партнёрами в железнодорожной промышленности, вовлечённые в данный проект технологического исследования и инновации. В названную сферу, из суммы 450 млн. евро предоставленной ЕС, 180 млн. будут в наличии членом - основателями SHIFT2RAIL, 180 млн. евро будут предоставлены ассоциированным членам, и остальные 180 млн. евро будут распределены иным партнёрам. Данная цель намерена привлечь в проект малые и средние предприятия и Исследовательские Институты. ■

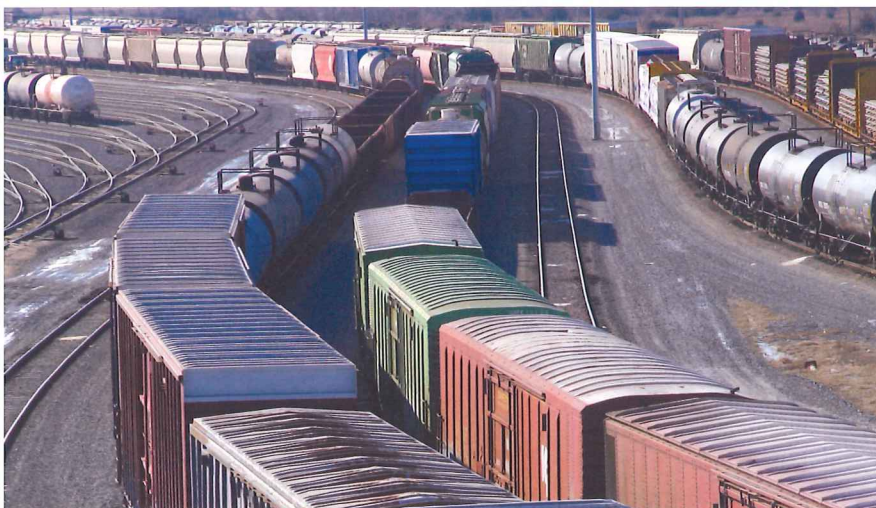


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