

# Shift2Rail, ready to start its research and innovation operations

[ by Elena Ilie ]

*The Council of the European Union officially approved, on June 16th, the SHIFT2RAIL Technological Initiative. The respective final and official approval of Shift2Rail will mark the end of the political procedure and will allow the establishment of the Technological Initiative during this summer, while the activity will begin as of January 2015.*

**T**he 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, out of the EUR 450 Million allocated by the EU, EUR 180 Million will be available for SHIFT2RAIL founding members, EUR 180 Million will be allocated to associated members, and the rest of EUR 180 Million will be attributed to other partners. This objective aims at attracting SMEs and Research Institutes into the project.

Shift2Rail, a technological project launched by the European Rail Industry Association (UNIFE), will play an important role in coordinating and informing stakeholders about the railway research and innovation throughout Europe. The technological project will manage all railway research and innovation actions co-financed by the EU. Shift2Rail will actively promote the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including, for example, manufacturers of railway equipment, passenger associations and beneficiaries of freight

transport, as well as the relevant scientific community.

“The adoption of SHIFT2RAIL Technological Initiative marked the culminating point of preparation conducted over several years by an impressive number of companies in the railway industry and other stakeholders. The final decision on Shift2Rail is an essential success for the future of the specialised industry, as well as the entire railway sector in Europe. The railway industry is prepared to actively participate in research and development projects to be launched by a public-private Shift2Rail partnership”, mentioned Philippe Citroën, Director General of UNIFE.

“The decisions and investments established at European level have a significant impact on the industry in Europe. SHIFT2RAIL Technological Initiative, which is about to start its operations, will have a major impact in the transport sector, with the significant investments and the efforts made by the European Union for the development of ERTMS signalling system”, said Lutz Bertling, the new president of UNIFE.

“SHIFT2RAIL is among the priorities of the Greek Presidency of the EU in the transport sector. It will develop the railway transport and will support the development of the railway market. The European railway industry must remain a leader at the level of the global market and SHIFT2RAIL is the tool necessary for reaching this goal”, declared Michalis Papadopoulos, Greek Deputy Minister for Transport.

The Studies conducted in past years have shown that, in Europe, the Research and Innovation in the railway sector is performed in quite fragmented manner and in order to create a Single European Railway area, coordination is needed not only at the level of the infrastructure management or at the level of freight and passenger transport operations, but also in the railway industry sector, providing equipment and rolling stock.

SHIFT2RAIL Technological Initiative refers to the entire European railway sector, especially to the large-scale innovation and competitiveness and to the consolidation of the European industry in order to be able to compete internationally, espe-

cially given the strong competition coming from the transport market in Asia.

The European Rail Industry Association (UNIFE) launched SHIFT2RAIL Joint Technological Initiative within Horizon 2020 programme, the first of this kind in the railway industry, in the sense of increasing the research and innovation for a greater competitiveness of the European railway sector.

SHIFT2RAIL will develop and implement a new method of approaching the challenges for the innovation in the railway industry. Therefore, the initiative has established two major objectives, firstly to increase the capacity so as to allow railway infrastructure to absorb a greater share of traffic and, secondly, the attraction of the business sector to the railway and the improvement of the efficiency of the railway transport as a whole.

The initiative thus launched will help intensify the overall railway system, will meet the user's transport service needs and at the same time, it contributes to the promotion of the competitiveness of the European industry by implementing the technological innovation. ■



## Shift2Rail готовится к запуску исследовательских и инновационных операций

Совет Европейского Союза 16-го июня официально одобрил Технологическую инициативу SHIFT2RAIL. Окончательное и формальное принятие Shift2Rail обозначит завершение процедуры на политическом уровне и будет способствовать стабилизации Технологической инициативы на протяжении этого лета, а с января 2015 года инициатива будет сдана в эксплуатацию.

Предлагаемый бюджет для SHIFT2RAIL на период финансирования 2014-2020 гг. составляет 920 миллионов евро, из которых 450 миллионов будут выделены Европейским союзом, а 470 миллионов евро будет поступать от партнёров железнодорожной отрасли, принимающих участие в проведении исследовательской инициативы и в технологических инновациях. ■