

# ANNUAL REPORT

RFC AMBER  
2022

## TIMELINE 2022

11 January	Publication of PaP Catalogue for TT 2023
11 January	Publication of CID Books for TT 2023
10 February	Management Board meeting (22nd) online
10 February	Re-election of positions of the Chairperson, Managing Director, C-OSS manager and Secretariat
19 April	Management Board meeting (23rd) online
2 June	Management Board meeting (24th) online
28-30 June	Connecting Europe Days in Lyon
19 July	Management Board meeting (25th) online
7 September	RFC Amber participates in the DAC Workshop in Budapest
15 September	Launching of the User Satisfaction Survey
27 September	Management Board meeting (26th) online
5 October	Publication of Reserve Capacity Catalogue for TT 2023
6-7 October	Joint meeting with the RFC Amber and RFC Baltic-Adriatic Railway and Terminal Advisory Groups in Prague
18 October	Launching of the User Satisfaction Survey of CIP
13 December	Management Board meeting (27th) online

## MISSION

*Working together for improving the conditions for growing, efficient, competitive, sustainable and reliable rail freight.*

## DEAR READER,

the year 2022 marked the end of an almost two years long period, during which society as well as business in Europe were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the entire team of RFC Amber had – as the entire rail sector – developed flexible solutions to tackle the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, it felt certainly like a relieve, when we during the first months of 2022 gradually could return to “normal” working conditions again.

During 2022 we further intensified our cooperation with other freight corridors, strengthening the network approach in addressing common issues and challenges. One concrete example of this cooperation was the Joint Case Study of capacity allocation rules in case of international disruption (“Joint ICM-Study”), carried out together by RFCs Amber, Baltic-Adriatic, Orient/East-Med and Rhine-Danube, responding to an initiative of the Network of Executive Boards.

An important milestone in our cooperation with other freight corridors was the first joint meeting of the Railway and Terminal Advisory Groups of RFCs Amber and Baltic-Adriatic, which took place on 7 October 2022 in the Czech capital Prague. The meeting was attended by Ms Anne Jensen, Core Network Corridor Coordinator of the European Commission for the Baltic-Adriatic CNC, who also held the keynote speech on the event. The meeting allowed us to establish new contacts and the concept of joint meetings received very positive feedback from all sides. It is also well in line with the envisaged alignment of a future European Transport Corridor (ETC) proposed by the EU-Commission, which would incorporate the key routes of both RFC Baltic-Adriatic and RFC Amber.

Last but not least, we could also during 2022 successfully conclude a new grant agreement with the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), securing EU-funding for the period until 2024. This will support our capabilities to further develop the corridor in line with the objectives of the RFC-Regulation and with the ambition to better respond to customer expectations.

We would like to sincerely thank the entire team working in and for our corridor, the Members of the RAG-TAG and their Spokesperson, Mr András Nyíri, and all other stakeholders for their continued commitment to RFC Amber. We wish all of you a pleasant reading of this Annual Report.



**Dr. Gerhard Troche**  
Managing Director



**Igor Prinčič**  
For the Executive Board



**Andrea Mosóczi**  
Chair of the Management Board

**DEAR COLLEAGUES,**

2022 can, in retrospective, be described as the “year between two crises”: In the early months of the year, we could lay behind us the COVID-19 pandemic – while a new crisis of a totally different nature, with a war in our neighbourhood, would break out soon after its end and dominate our agendas.

Railways are used to tackle crises and have in many cases succeeded to surprise with a performance and flexibility, which contrasts strongly to a still wide-spread perception of railways as sluggish and somewhat reluctant to quickly respond to new situations and demands. Maybe this should inspire and motivate all of us to become more ambitious and courageous in our efforts to further develop the rail freight system – because there is much to do and railways could perform even better and (positively) surprise customers, stakeholders and policy-makers even more often, if we would implement good ideas for improvement quicker and with much more vigor.

This is certainly also true for the Rail Freight Corridors. The RFCs have carefully analyzed the needs for improvement – for RFC Amber in particular the Bottleneck Study delivered important findings here. What will be necessary now, is to follow up these analyses with concrete actions, because we can only reap benefits and achieve a market impact, if improvements are implemented.



The cooperation between Rail Freight Corridors, which increased in 2022, can help to support a positive development in this regard. We therefore highly welcomed, that RFCs Amber, Baltic-Adriatic, Orient/East-Med and Rhine-Danube jointly carried out an ICM-Case Study of capacity allocation rules in case of international disruption in 2022, involving also railway undertakings in it – and hope that its conclusions will lead to a further improved international contingency management in the future. We also highly support the concept of joint RAG-TAG-meetings of RFCs AMBER and Baltic-Adriatic, of which the first took place in Prague in October 2022, since both corridors share many customers, traffic flows – and challenges.

There are many areas and needs for improvement, which deserve attention, and RAG-TAG Members are looking forward to discuss them in the continued exchange with the RFC Amber Members. We remain available to contribute with our views and expertise – and hope, that we can help to jointly give stakeholders and policy-makers more positive surprises in the future.

**András Nyíri**

RAG-TAG Spokesperson



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### ABOUT US

Rail Freight Corridor Amber is a cooperation of the five railway Infrastructure Managers SŽ-I (Slovenia), GYSEV and MÁV (Hungary), ŽSR (Slovakia) and PLK (Poland) and the Hungarian Rail Capacity Allocation Office VPE. These six partners are jointly managing and developing the Rail Freight Corridor in line with EU-Regulation 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight and Commission Implementing Decision 2017/177 with a view on meeting growing customer expectations and improving the conditions for efficient, competitive, sustainable and reliable rail freight.

RFC Amber connects the heart of Europe, a prosperous region in Central Europe comprising the dynamically and fast-growing economies of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia. End-to-end the corridor has an extension of ca. 1.400 km, including different routes. The total length of principal lines is therefore almost the double and including all diversionary and connecting lines the length of the network covered by RFC Amber is more than 3.300 km.

- 2.853 km of principal lines (further 225 km in the future)
- 299 km of diversionary lines
- 206 km of connecting lines
- Connecting with 53 service facilities (terminals, sea ports, marshalling yards)

RFC Amber wants to improve business opportunities and strengthen the logistical competitiveness of its customers and the countries and regions it serves. For this purpose, the countries and railway infrastructure managers are continuously investing into the infrastructure of the corridor. A new rail access to the seaport of Koper is under construction and further improvements are on the way. RFC Amber provides an attractive and flat North-South route East of the Alps ideal for freight trains. Fully electrified from end to end it forms a basis for environmentally friendly green transport and sustainable low emission supply chains. Cooperation with other freight corridors ensures access to all major destinations in Europe.



Republic of Poland



Slovak Republic



Hungary



Republic of Slovenia

The Amber Rail Freight Corridor (RFC I I) is defined by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/177 with the following Principal Route: Koper — Ljubljana —/Zalaszentiván — Sopron/Csorna —/(Hungarian-Serbian border) — Kelebia — Budapest —/— Komárom — Leopoldov/Rajka — Bratislava — Žilina — Katowice/Kraków — Warszawa/Łuków — Terespol — (Polish-Belarusian border).

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

RFC Amber is a beneficiary of the Technical Assistance (TA) of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) under the project name "Promoting an effective implementation of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 by Rail Freight Corridor Amber", project acronym CEF-TA-AMBER.

The Project Management activity is undertaken by GYSEV, as the Coordinator mandated by the Management Board for the conclusion and management of the Grant Agreement. The consortium consists of six cooperating Parties (Beneficiaries), which are the Members of the corridor. The action runs from 1 October 2021 until 31 December 2024. In the Grant Agreement a list of deliverables with criteria is laid down, forming the basis for the EU-funding. The corridor has to prepare the following deliverables:

- D1.1 – Implementation plan [Art 9]; Lead Beneficiary: VPE
- D1.2 – Transport market study [Art 9(3)]; Lead Beneficiary: GYSEV
- D1.3-1.5 – Documents on infrastructure works [Art 12] – 2022, 2023 and 2024; Lead Beneficiary: PLK
- D1.6-1.8 – Documentation on capacity needs & capacity provided / requested [Art 13 and 14] – 2022, 2023 and 2024; Lead Beneficiary: PLK
- D1.9-1.11 – Register of capacity requests [Art 15] – 2022, 2023 and 2024; Lead Beneficiary: PLK
- D1.12-1.14 – Corridor Information Document [Art 18] – 2022, 2023 and 2024; Lead Beneficiary: VPE
- D1.15-1.17 – Document on performance monitoring & user satisfaction [Art 19(2) and 19(3)] – 2022, 2023 and 2024; Lead Beneficiary: VPE
- D1.18 – Further documentation; Lead Beneficiary: GYSEV

Some of the Deliverables have to be elaborated once during the duration of the action, while certain Deliverables have to be produced annually.

### CORRIDOR GOVERNANCE

The Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 defines the corridor governance structure on two levels. The establishment of the RFC Amber organizational structure was a crucial measure for creating the corridor:

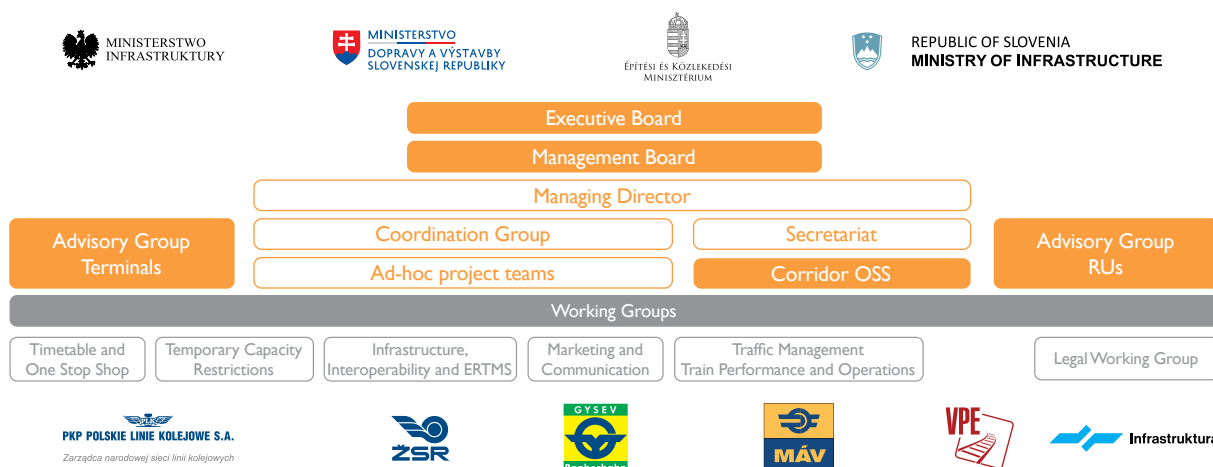
- The Executive Board (EB), which is the highest-level body assigned to the corridor, is composed of representatives from the Ministries.
- The Management Board (MB), which is the main body in charge of operation of RFC Amber and having the responsibility for managing and developing the corridor.

The MB held six meetings in 2022, each of them online due to the pandemic situation. The MB was very active also in written procedure; 13 written decisions were adopted of which there is a detailed register.

Following the establishment of the corridor the role of the Coordination Group was revised. It is now rather focused on the coordination of major activities and tasks not belonging to one sole Working Group (WG), but rather requiring a more complex coordination, e.g. define the budget of the corridor or project planning. The Managing Director leads these meetings and elaborates the project proposals as well as is in charge of the recruitment of foreign Partners for the project proposals.

The working groups met also mostly online. Most of the WGs usually meet two times per year, the TT&OSS WG held two meetings. In case of the Infrastructure, Interoperability and ERTMS WG, the Temporary Capacity Restrictions WG and the Legal WG (this WG was formerly called Legal Task Force) the work is mostly done in written form via email.

Organizational units of the RFC Amber are illustrated in the following schematic graphic:



**CORRIDOR-ONE STOP SHOP (C-OSS)**

The Corridor-One Stop Shop (C-OSS) facilitates train path management for international rail freight along RFC Amber. It is a single contact point to receive information about the use of the corridor and allowing customers to request and receive answers regarding infrastructure capacity for international freight trains along the corridor. For RFC Amber PLK acts as C-OSS and since 2018 Mr Roman Stańczak holds the position of C-OSS Manager of RFC Amber.

All Infrastructure Managers and one Allocation Body along RFC Amber is following a joint process for the provision of dedicated capacity in form of Pre-arranged Paths (PaPs) and Reserve Capacity (RC), based on the already existing and harmonized international rules and using the harmonised documents elaborated by RailNetEurope (RNE).

The C-OSS of RFC Amber works in continuous cooperation with a team of experts (forming the Timetabling and One Stop Shop Working Group) appointed by each Member of the Corridor and is also in closely cooperating with the C-OSSs of other corridors (C-OSS Community).

**The main topics dealt with by the C-OSS in 2022 were:**

- Consulting RUs for preparation of Annual PaP offer (so-called Capacity Wish List)
- Constructing and harmonizing offers for Annual Requests, Late Path Requests and Reserve Capacity Requests
- Elaborating the chapter 4 of the CID with the support of all contributing IMs and AB
- Coordinating and supporting RUs and IMs during the paths ordering phase
- Collecting and analysing customers' international capacity wishes and needs for the annual timetable 2024

The role of the C-OSS is also to follow and contribute to RNE projects related to capacity on the freight corridors:

- Path Coordination System (PCS) Development
- Review of International Timetabling Process (TTR)
- Participating in the "C-OSS community" meetings gathering all C-OSS of all corridors aiming at finding common solutions and processes for all corridors

In order to intensify the close cooperation with applicants and improve the capacity offer, the C-OSS participated in the:

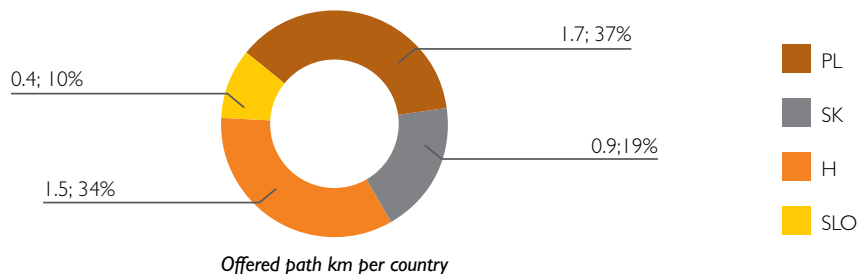
- PCS Trainings
- Forum Train Europe Conference (FTE B)

Due to restrictions in connection with the COVID -19 pandemic, all events took place online.

**CAPACITY OFFER**

The 2023 timetable catalogue of Pre-arranged Paths was published on the 10th of January 2022 offering customers around 4.5 million path kilometres for international traffic coordinated among IMs and AB.

This dedicated capacity was offered and coordinated by the C-OSS.

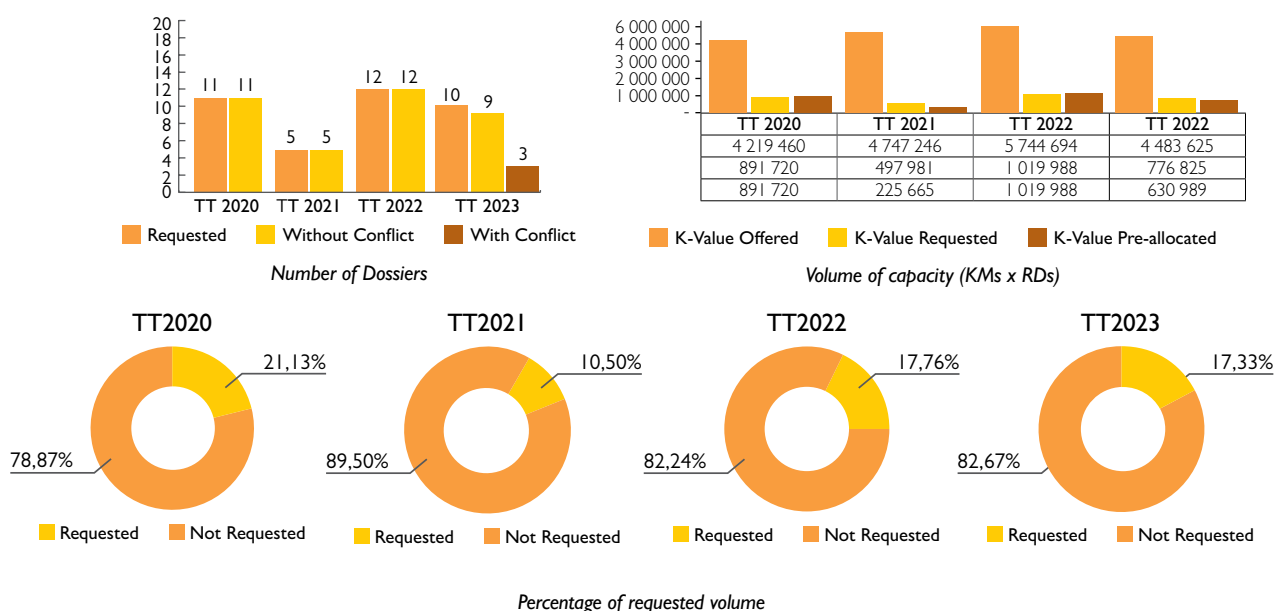


Until **11th of April 2022**, which was the deadline for placing international path requests for TT2023, the C-OSS Manager of RFC Amber had received ten requests, down 16.7 percent, or 2 requests, from the same period last year. Volume of requested PaP capacity fell by 23.9% compared to TT2022 and was 0.78 million path km. In total 17% of the published capacity was requested. Three requests were in conflicts. All conflicts were solved and dossiers were released to Path Elaboration in PCS. C-OSS of RFC Amber pre-booked 0.63 million path km in TT2023 versus 1.02 million path km in TT2022, a drop by 38.24%.



## VOLUME OF CAPACITY REQUESTS & OFFERS

The graphs below show the comparison of the volume of capacity offered, of capacity requested and of pre-allocated capacity respectively the number of requested dossiers.



After the pre-allocation phase, the evaluation started with the goal to identify improvements to be implemented for TT2024. RFC Amber circulated together with all other RFCs in May 2022 a harmonized list for expression of capacity needs ("capacity wish-list") among all potential applicants, with a deadline to fill in the list by **12 August 2022**. Three applicants responded for RFC Amber. On the basis of the experiences obtained from the previous years, and from the information provided in the expression of capacity needs and the analysis of the requests submitted for TT 2023, the elaboration of the offer for TT 2024 started in September 2022. Some of the improvements and novelties which have been introduced and may bring a positive effect on the short-term development are the following:

- In Jaworzno, the PaP from Małaszewicze is connected with the PaP of RFC5 creating multi-corridor PaP enabling access to Česká Třebová
- In cooperation with RFC B-A the PaPs for extra long trains of 660 m from Czechowice Dziedzice to Žilina and to Bratislava are offered again in TT2024. The standard maximum allowed train length on section Czechowice Dz. – Zwardoń is 360 m.
- The offer also includes a route for a 700 m train from Bratislava to Szombathely

Applicants have the possibility to request adjustment of the running times of the published PaP according to their individual needs within a certain bandwidth. The PaP construction was completed on time in December 2022 for publication as a PaP catalogue (DigiCat) for TT 2024 was in the PCS.

## RESERVE CAPACITY

On **10 October 2022** RFC Amber published Reserve Capacity (RC) for TT 2023 through its C-OSS, offering customers 4.6 million path-kilometres of ad hoc paths. The offer was published in PCS and also as an overview of the available capacity on the corridor website.

Reserve Capacity on RFC Amber was offered as a guaranteed contingent of "capacity slots" and international freight paths per day and section (flexible RC approach), which applicants may request up to 30 days before a train run. The applicants received the final offer in time.

[More information about the C-OSS: rfc-Amber.eu/contents/read/about\\_the\\_c\\_oss](https://rfc-Amber.eu/contents/read/about_the_c_oss)





TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & TRAIN PERFORMANCE MONITORING

During the introduction of the commonly applicable KPIs, which are the main results of the Train Performance Monitoring activities, this time we would like to highlight certain specificities of the calculation methodology.

IMs use different national systems, mostly without any data connection among them. This means that in order to build up the complete route of an international freight train in the Train Information System (TIS), we need to connect path fragments from separate systems. Although RNE is trying to handle this issue, currently, no key answer exists that would solve this problem for each train. Since national systems are not able to identify RFC entry and exit points, in order to provide reports about the entire corridor, the issue of train linking should be solved.

**Train linking**

RNE OBI system identifies the RFC trains by inspecting their routing. Point pairs should be defined at each border crossing, and if a train crosses both points, it will be identified as an RFC train and assigned to the corridor to which the border crossing belongs. For example, between Slovenia and Hungary, Hodoš and Óriszentpéter were defined as a point pair. If the fragmented paths are not linked, they only contain one of these points. Consequently, the train will be missing from the list of RFC trains.

With these kinds of point pairs, only the number of linked trains can be measured, not the overall number of trains which causes quite a large discrepancy between IMs' national systems and TIS. Comparing different data, more than half of the trains are not linked, causing deficiency in RFC Amber's raw data, which also gives the basis for the calculation of punctuality KPIs.

Linked train paths, however, do not automatically mean data correctness. The current version of automatic train linking heavily relies on identical train numbers. Nevertheless, in some countries, the validity period of the train paths is at least 24 hours. There may be several trains with the same number on a given day, and this phenomenon produces linked train paths with contradictory routing. Further, RFC entry and exit points could also be incorrect, and the punctuality of freight trains might be measured at improper locations.

Many of the problems could be addressed by the introduction of unique train IDs, which would eliminate anomalies caused by the same train number allocation, and would also provide more accurate and reliable data

Čaňa	22%	Slovenské Nové Mesto	15%	Komárom	44%
Štúrovo	32%	Zwardoń	N/A	Plaveč*	90%
Hodoš	18%	Hidasnémeti	26%	Rajka	29%
Komárno	43%	Szob	32%	Sátoraljaújhely	22%
Muszyna	96%	Óriszentpéter	22%	Skalité**	N/A
Rusovce	32%				

\* only from/to Muszyna

\*\* no freight traffic

Source: RNE OBI

Current ratio of linked trains

**Train numbering and timetabling**

Another affecting factor in the punctuality KPI results from train numbering handled with different flexibility in each country. For example in Slovakia ŽSR assigns train numbers to all cross-border catalogue paths constructed from the remaining capacity after the allocation of the annual timetable. These train numbers are fixed and bound to the catalogue path. In contrast, train number allocation is more flexible in Hungary as they are not bound to any catalogue path. In practice, this means that for an ad-hoc train departing from Szob station at 00:13 the Hungarian traffic control can distribute the same train number, which is on ŽSR network assigned to a catalogue path scheduled 10 hours later. This will result in different running advices on MÁV and ŽSR side, as shown below.

It is also important to mention that not all ad-hoc trains have a real timetable to be compared. In Hungary, if the customers do not accept the catalogue paths offered by the system, they can decide to run their trains operatively. In this case, the IT tool will only provide a basic travel-time diagram, based on the departure time requested by the customer. On RFC Amber, this problem appears at every border crossing.

Szob	26.09.2022	13:50	03:06	+796 min	MÁV	Szob	25.09.2022	00:55	00:12	+32 min	MÁV
Szob oh.	26.09.2022	13:51				Szob oh.	25.09.2022	00:57			
Štúrovo št. hr.	27.09.2022	10:15	03:09	-426 min	ŽSR	Štúrovo št. hr.	25.09.2022	10:15	00:19	+844 min	ŽSR
Štúrovo	27.09.2022	10:28	03:22	-426 min		Štúrovo	25.09.2022	10:28	00:32	-884 min	

Timetable for Train No 44294 on two different days

Štúrovo	23.10.2022	13:35	20:43	+428 min	ŽSR	Štúrovo	17.09.2022	13:35	10:44	-171 min	ŽSR
Štúrovo št. hr.	23.10.2022	13:48	20:56	+428 min		Štúrovo št. hr.	17.09.2022	13:48	10:57	-171 min	
Szob oh.	23.10.2022	23:00			MÁV	Szob oh.	17.09.2022	10:00			MÁV
Szob	23.10.2022	23:01	22:30	-31 min		Szob	17.09.2022	10:01	11:01	+60 min	

Timetable for Train No 44299 on two different days

The changes caused by the lack of timetable adjustment appear on the OBI system as “external reasons” in certain countries like Slovakia. But these delays do not exist in reality. In the reports and diagrams it is not possible to separate the amount of delay caused by real “external reasons” (bad weather conditions, vis major etc.).

It should be noted that since in Slovakia, all delay that arose on a different IMs network appears in the OBI reports under “external reasons”, even without the presented jumps at the border crossings, the amount of delay due to “external reasons” would still be incorrect.

### Delay coding

Each infrastructure manager has its own list of delay codes, and merging these into one code table faces many difficulties. IMs use main and auxiliary codes to define the reason for the delays, and because of this, the information on the delays is very detailed. On the contrary, TIS uses only main codes. Sometimes the code description is vague and does not indicate the real reason for the delay.

Another problem is that the delay codes are often missing, but it cannot be decided whether due to inadequate data quality or national specificity. On the MÁV network, in case a train runs according to a short-term timetable, the signallers don't have to justify the delays. Currently, TIS does not display the type of timetables. Other countries might have similar rules because, many times, hundreds of minutes of delay is not coded in TIS.

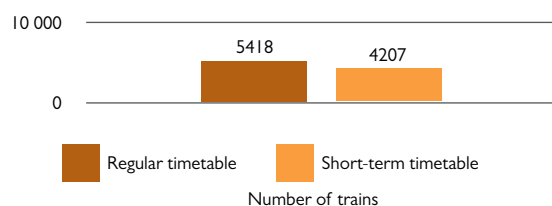
On the MÁV network, approximately 40% of the international freight trains run according to short-term timetables which makes almost impossible to define the reasons of delays. Despite this, they are included in the calculation of the punctuality indicators.

It might also be considered to exclude the freight trains running according to short-term timetables from the calculation of the punctuality KPI. Not only because the signallers don't have to justify the delays but also because these kinds of train timetables can conflict with other train's timetables. So, if every train is running as scheduled, these trains must be delayed. MÁV does not consider these freight trains in the punctuality reports that can be obtained from the national systems.

### Impacts

Most freight trains on RFC Amber are either transit trains or have their origin or destination in Hungary. It follows, that RFC Amber's punctuality KPI value is highly dependent on the special Hungarian regulations/conditions.

The impact of the path validity period on the punctuality of freight trains is also often underestimated. The lower is the validity period, the more the RU is forced to use the dedicated time slot by the timetable which makes the chance higher that the freight train will run according to schedule. In some countries, the path validity is longer (sometimes even exceeding 24 hours) than in others. Worse punctuality values do not necessarily indicate worse performance.



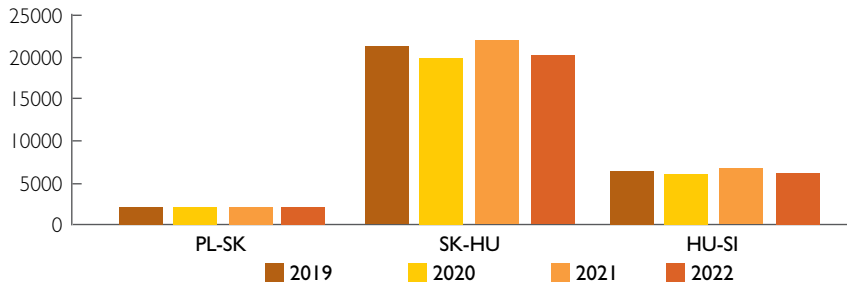
Distribution of international freight trains based on their timetable types on the MÁV network (Source: MÁV PBI)

If the capacity allocation rules were harmonized across Europe, we would see punctuality KPI values for the corridors being much closer to each other. Some corridors would have somewhat lower value than others as poorer infrastructure leads to more failures in the signalling and safety equipment, but not to the extent that would explain the big differences we can observe on the diagrams.

**Commonly applicable KPIs**

Based on the above conditions, the reporting tool OBI indicated a punctuality of **36%** at departure (**RFC entry**) and **26%** at destination (**RFC exit**), calculated by 30-minutes threshold.

The only possibility right now to do thorough investigations is using the data available in the national systems, but these systems cannot provide the RFCs with reports that cover the whole corridor. Border section figures called “number of trains per border” are still stemming from national systems, calculated for calendar year.



Number of trains per border (source: IMs’ national systems)

The rail freight traffic volume (number of trains) on the RFC Amber at the border sections shows a quite balanced picture in the past years. The slight decrease of the traffic flow in 2020 also derives from the reduced volume of transported goods, which resulted from the recent epidemiological period that has negatively affected the entire world economy.

The KPI “**Number of trains crossing a border along the RFC**” as a single value shows the total number of train runs having a running advice on selected pairs of border points. International freight trains crossing a border of an RFC are considered as RFC trains in the calculation. The reporting tool OBI indicated a value of **21 448 trains** in the report of 2022.

Currently the working group leaders have limited options for identifying bottlenecks and monitoring performance, so the presented concerns should be addressed as soon as possible. A crucial role of a TPM Coordinator would be to identify bottlenecks, identify which stakeholder was responsible for the delay, and give suggestions on how to improve the situation. Inadequate data quality in the applicable reports might for some RFCs/countries come with the risk of drawing unfounded conclusions, therefore, deliverables or corridor objectives based on these KPIs might need further explanations.

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

On **10 June 2022**, due to the heavy rainfall a lot of water and mud flowed and washed stones on the tracks about 1000 m long which also affected the road beside the railway track. According to the national rules, all affected train paths were cancelled in Hungary and Railway Undertakings were informed about the incident. Freight trains were rerouted via Rusovce – Rajka and Komárno – Komárom. Furthermore other border crossings were also available. Freight train traffic on one track was allowed from 29 July 2022 and on 19 August 2022 both tracks became operational.

On **10 July 2022** two freight trains collided on line Budapest – Hegyeshalom line between Biatorbágy and Herceghalom stations. The freight cars derailed, blocking both tracks and severely damaging them. On the next day, one track became available but a significant capacity reduction was necessary during this period. On 12 July 2022 the restoration works have been finished, both tracks became operational, however, a temporary speed restriction of 40 km/h along the place of the accident (approximately 100m long) was still applied.

On **25 November 2022** a train derailed between Komárom and Komárno, in Slovakia, damaging overhead lines and the tracks. The route from Dunajská Streda to Komárno was affected. Like in the other cases, ICM has entered into force. Few days later, the operation was re-introduced with diesel traction and since 17 January 2023 trains could run under electricity again.

A Joint Case Study of capacity allocation rules in case of international disruption (“Joint ICM-Study”) was also carried out together by RFCs Amber, Baltic-Adriatic, Orient/East-Med and Rhine-Danube, responding to an initiative of the Network of Executive Boards. The case investigated was a traffic disruption at Bratislava-Petržalka, lasting from 27 January to 7 February 2022. This case was chosen, since it affected all four corridors, was located near several borders and in total four countries were concerned by the re-routing of traffic. In the elaboration of the study even the Railway and Terminal Advisory Groups were consulted and Railway Undertakings directly concerned were involved.

Learn more about ICM under [https://rfc-amber.eu/assets/downloads/traffic\\_management/rfc\\_amber\\_Re-Routing-Overview-2022\\_Infra\\_Parameters\\_final.xlsx](https://rfc-amber.eu/assets/downloads/traffic_management/rfc_amber_Re-Routing-Overview-2022_Infra_Parameters_final.xlsx)

## CIP DEVELOPMENTS

The **entire RFC network** has already been mapped in CIP. The main developments carried out in 2022 are as follows.



### Recent/ongoing developments and activities

- Tabular display of the terminals.
- Keeping the CIP contents (both map and documents) up to date.
- Completing and updating the display of ICM Lines and Re-routing options.
- Supporting the mapping of new RFC routes (e.g. extensions of RFC North Sea-Baltic).
- Stepwise extension of CIP contents towards the entire network of individual IMs.

### CIP usage monitoring 1 July – 31 December 2022

- Overall number of logins decreased in 2nd half of 2022 compared to the 1st half and to the 2nd half of 2021.
- Since the beginning of the year the number of public logins shows a decreasing trend.
- The average of public logins decreased in 2nd half of 2022 to 818 from 1.028 in 1st half of 2022 and from 872 in 2nd half of 2021.
- The peak of public logins was in 2nd half of 2022 recorded in November with 1.139 public logins. November is typically the strongest month of 2nd semesters.
- The average of internal logins also decreased. There was a significant fall of the value in July compared to the same month of the last year.
- Active promotion of CIP is still necessary via various platforms.

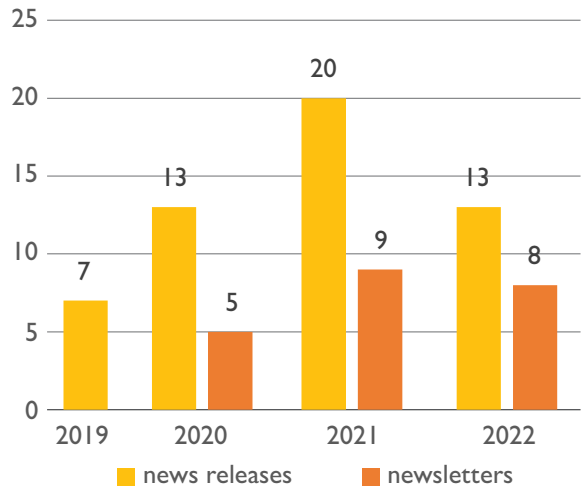
### Main goals and status of Railway Infrastructure System – RIS (formerly DRIIS)

- To replace several existing systems (CCS CRD, Geo Editor, CIP, RFP) by merging their data and functionality into one consistent entity, lowering operational and managing costs.
- To support the creation of a single infrastructure data mobility space along RINF.
- To adapt RNE infrastructure data model to accommodate track information, providing a mesoscopic representation of the European railway network.
- To increase the automation of data supply processes and the use of data exchange formats for connection to other sector systems.
- This system must fulfil all the legal requirements and regulations that are currently fulfilled with the existing systems to be replaced.
- The tender for the development of RNE's Digital Railway Infrastructure Information System (DRIIS) was launched in January 2022 and concluded in the 2nd quarter of 2022. The bid submitted by the Austrian-based company Evolit was based on the evaluation criteria of the tender rated as the best one and accordingly, this company was awarded the contract to implement the project.

CIP is available at [cip.rne.eu](http://cip.rne.eu) website.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

In 2022 the corridor prepared also its third **Annual Report** under the lead of the Marketing WG. Issuing of electronic **newsletters** was also carried out regularly, informing customers and stakeholders about important achievements. In 2022 altogether eight e-Newsletters have been dispatched to Customers, all RAG-TAG members, Executive and Management Board Members and further stakeholders of the corridor. This is almost double the previous year's volume. **Press releases** were continuously prepared in case of achievements which contribute to the successful implementation of the Action and providing information about the development of the corridor.



Number of launched newsletters and news releases



PUBLICITY

On **30 May 2022** Mr Kristian Schmidt, Director “Land Transport” at DG MOVE, addressed a letter to railway Infrastructure Managers in Europe, including RFC Amber Members, on **EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes**. His letter included a map of Rail Freight Corridors, border crossing points and ports, which can be used when considering the export of Ukrainian products by rail. RFC Amber is among the corridors explicitly outlined in this tentative map. Being direct neighbours to Ukraine, and one country – Slovenia – providing a seaport at the Adriatic Sea, it is not a surprise, that RFC Amber is among the corridors used for re-routing of Ukrainian exports and imports. Consequently, RFC Amber is included in the tentative map of routes for Ukrainian agriculture exports. The letter by the Commission calls Infrastructure Managers and Member States to make all efforts to accommodate trains exporting Ukrainian agricultural products, to make best possible use of capacities available and to consider certain

other measures facilitating pragmatic solutions to this urgent issue. The Members of RFC Amber were supporting this initiative by considering, and where possible implementing, any suitable measures, which could help to provide additional transport opportunities for Ukrainian export and import goods and to overcome possible constraints.

RFC Amber was well present at the **Connecting Europe Days**, which took place in Lyon from **28-30 June**. Our corridor participated in the joint stand of the RFC Network and RailNetEurope and the RFC Amber team had many useful talks with stakeholders and Representatives of the European Commission.

The Connecting Europe Days – formerly known as TEN-T Days – brought together politicians, industry representatives and the European Commission to discuss transport and mobility, and their role in achieving the ambitious goals set out in the EU Green Deal. The consequences of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine were among the key topics of the agenda, with the Ministers in charge of transport of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia present in person at the event. This topic is of high relevance for RFC Amber.

The joint stand of all Rail Freight Corridors and RailNetEurope attracted many visitors, including EU Transport Commissioner Adina Ioana Vălean, and became an important and well frequented meeting point for exchange with sector stakeholders and policy decision makers. The team of RFC Amber present at the event comprised the Chair of the Management Board, the Managing Director, the Secretariat and the Chair of the Marketing Working Group. The participation of RFC Amber allowed



for deepening the contact with other freight corridors and some concrete ideas for a closer cooperation were discussed. RFC Amber will follow up on these exchanges in the coming weeks and months.

On **7 October 2022** RFC Amber and RFC Baltic-Adriatic held their first **joint meeting with the Railway and Terminal Advisory Groups** of both corridors. The meeting took place in the Czech capital Prague, in the presence of Ms. Anne E. Jensen, EU-Coordinator for the Baltic-Adriatic Core Network Corridor.

RFCs Amber and Baltic-Adriatic have several overlapping sections and share many stakeholders and customers. It is not uncommon, that trains start on RFC Baltic-Adriatic and switch to RFC Amber and vice versa. Also challenges and critical issues for their development are partly the same. Both corridors are complementing each other already today and the proposal for a revised TEN-T-Regulation, which was addressed in the keynote speech of CNC-Coordinator Ms. Jensen, foresees both RFCs to jointly constitute the basis for one of the new European Transport Corridors.

The meeting served both the purpose to inform customers about recent developments and planned activities in both corridors and to exchange on critical issues, where customers today are facing challenges for the planning and smooth operation of freight services. Several issues were addressed by the RAG-TAG-Spokespersons and Members, i.a. relating to Temporary Capacity restrictions (TCRs), to the use of harmonised tools and to requests by Infrastructure Managers and authorities for operation on cross-border sections. Improvement of capacity offers in form of extra long or extra heavy trains was also highlighted.

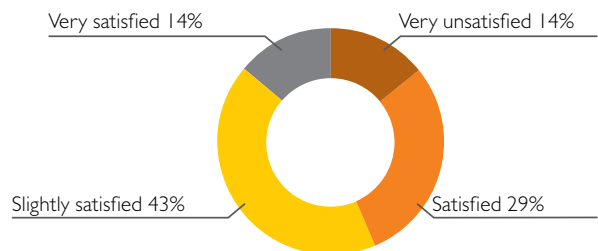
Presentations by RailNetEurope (RNE) about the TCR-tool and the Train Information System (TIS), by UIRR about the Rail Facilities Portal (RFP) and by the European DAC-Delivery Programme Ambassador Mr Lochman about Digital Automatic Coupling for Freight (DAC) completed the agenda of the meeting and were discussed by the Participants. It was also emphasised that corridors have to be recognised as a central function to solve capacity problems and to achieve a seamless rail freight operation.

The concept of joint RAG-TAG-meetings of both corridors was received very positively, supporting the intention to continue with such joint meetings in the future.

## SATISFACTION SURVEY

2022 was the third wave of the new method launched in 2020. The interviews took place between **19 September and 10 November 2022**.

A not favourable decrease can be observed in the number of evaluation compared to 2021 (10): RFC Amber had 7 evaluations in 2022. However, not only disinterest, but “no problem/good work” effect can also be a factor here, because the research is focused on improvements.



Based on the results in **priority areas** for improvement a general satisfaction can be assumed, since only 2 elements were mentioned by the more than half of the respondents: infrastructure parameters and PaP parameters.

RFC Amber could step forward in coordination and communication of planned TCRs, as well TPM and transit time. Slight step backward can be assumed in the effectiveness on involvement of RUs in the PaP preparation, and more focus can be needed on consideration of Advisory groups' opinion and topics discussed on RAG/TAG.

The level of **overall satisfaction** is still high, the convincing majority of our respondents are satisfied. Some issues seem to be worth treating at personal level, such as bilateral discussion with a particular company about their specific issues.

After 2 good years, when the dominance of positive changes could be revealed, in 2022 some slight step backwards could be detected causing a “balance” between positive and negative results. Focusing on the highlighted areas, sometimes at individual company level, RFC Amber can stop and reverse these tendencies.

The **renewal of the research** method has arisen for 2023 again. On the RFC Amber's initiative the RFC Network kept the hybrid version – which combines the online survey and personal in-depth interview solution – with the stipulation to shorten the questionnaire. This version can satisfy both demand: enables to make in-depth interviews, but also can gather those who would not like to participate in a long interview, but tend to answer, so we could reach our partners more widely.

More details under [https://rfc-amber.eu/assets/downloads/other\\_public\\_documents/Summary\\_RFC%20Amber\\_RNE%20RFC%20USS\\_2022\\_WEB.pdf](https://rfc-amber.eu/assets/downloads/other_public_documents/Summary_RFC%20Amber_RNE%20RFC%20USS_2022_WEB.pdf)

## OUTLOOK

If there was one common denominator for our activities in 2022, it was increased cooperation with other freight corridors. While all corridors already had been working together since the entry into force of the Regulation – with the “RFC Network” with its Secretariat at the RailNetEurope office in Vienna as the most important forum to discuss common issues, to develop harmonized procedures and to find joint solutions – the year 2022 marked a starting point for a much of a much more concrete level of cooperation. The joint ICM-Study of RFCs Amber, Baltic-Adriatic, Orient/East-Med and Rhine-Danube have already been mentioned as well as the first joint RAG-TAG-meeting of RFCs Amber and Baltic-Adriatic.

This increased cooperation can partly be seen as a response to market needs – also expressed by the Railway and Terminal Advisory Groups – to strengthen a network approach in many areas. In the concrete case of RFC Amber however, a further aspect needs to be highlighted: The cooperation with other freight corridors, and here in particular our colleagues in RFC Baltic-Adriatic, can also be seen as a pro-active step to prepare ourselves for a new concept of corridors proposed by the Commission, the future European Transport Corridors (ETCs). According to the proposal for a revised TEN-T-Regulation, the main routes of RFCs Amber and Baltic-Adriatic are foreseen to form together the (geographical) backbone of one of these future ETCs. While it is certainly too early to predict (and we definitely do not want to anticipate) the outcome of the legislative process, we want to make sure, that we are well prepared in case these new corridors become reality and that the particular needs of rail freight become a key focus area even in the future ETCs. And if these new corridors should not become reality as envisaged in the proposal, our increased cooperation would in any case benefit our customers and stakeholders.

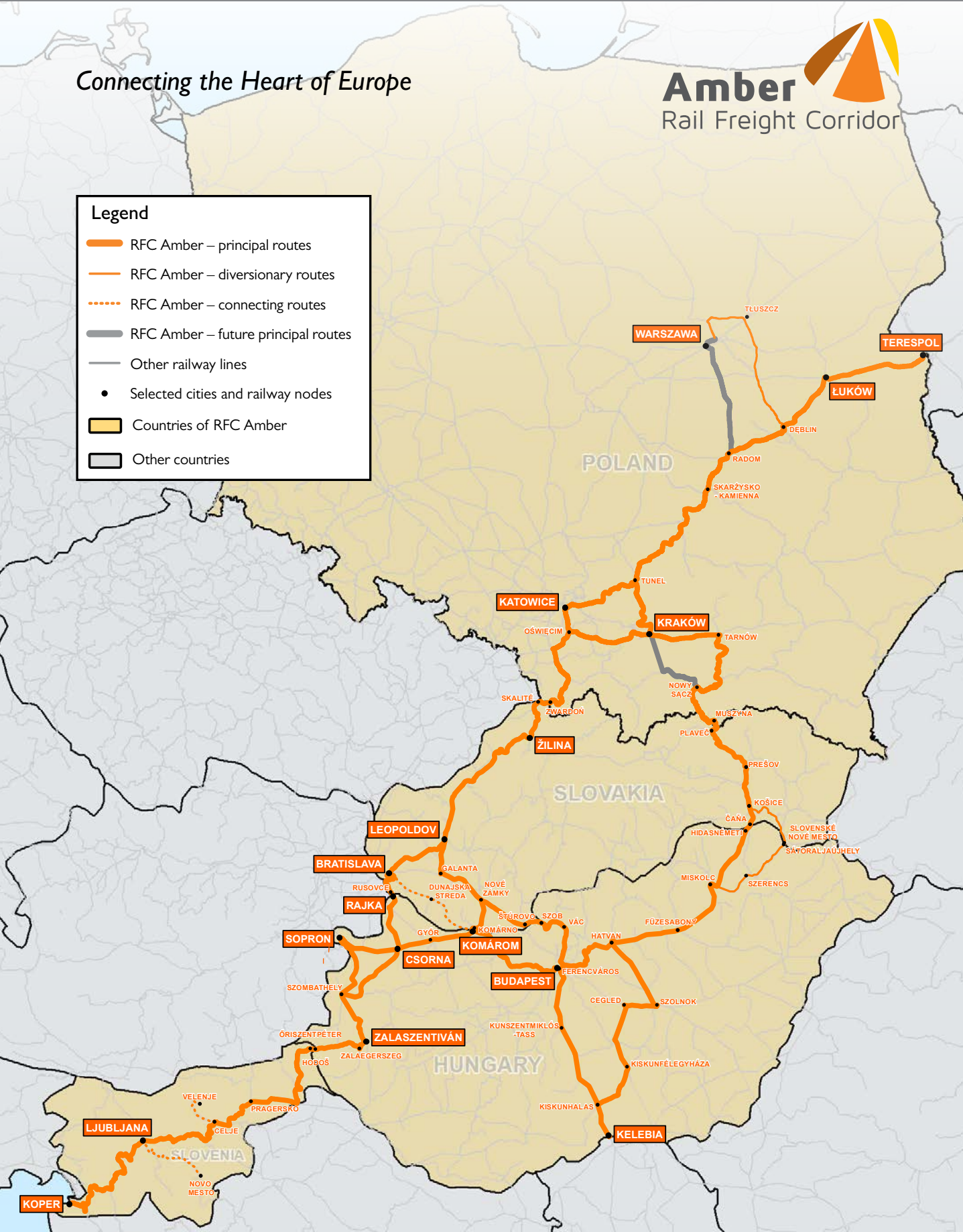
Thus, our aim is to gradually increase cooperation further. We see many areas, where RFCs could create an added value through cooperation – on a general level through an intensified exchange with our RAG-TAG-Members and customers and on a more concrete level through the development and roll-out of solutions and processes, the launching of joint initiatives to address issues at borders and in border sections and to apply a true origin-to-destination-view on international rail freight.

We are looking forward to continue our cooperation with you and we are willing to address “weak points”, which we are well aware do exist today on our corridor. We remain committed to make progress with good cooperation and joint efforts of railway undertakings, terminals, infrastructure managers, allocation bodies and other stakeholders.



**Legend**

- RFC Amber – principal routes
- RFC Amber – diversionary routes
- RFC Amber – connecting routes
- RFC Amber – future principal routes
- Other railway lines
- Selected cities and railway nodes
- Countries of RFC Amber
- Other countries



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