

The world of rail under the patronage of the Czech EU Presidency in Prague in October

The International Railway Forum & Conference (IRFC) takes place in Prague from 5th to 7th October, 2022, with the patronage of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU. Organisations and companies have the opportunity to present themselves in the exhibition area of the conference in Clarion Congress Hotel in Prague, Vysočany. You can already register for the conference [here](#), and for those interested in having a display or a stand in the exhibition is the information [here](#).

The conference is going to be started off by the executive director of OLTIS Group, Miroslav Fukan, followed by opening speeches by the Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic, Martin Kupka, and the Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean. There is also going to be a speech from a representative of Sweden who is going to take over a symbolic presidential torch from Czechia.

The conference is divided into five expert technical sessions and it is going to offer the opportunity of a technical visit with a very intriguing programme.

The technical sessions are focused on the most important areas for the rail sector from strategic, technical, R&I, and infrastructure points of view. Each session includes a moderated discussion at the end. Every participant can therefore expect a rich programme from 5th to 7th October, 2022, and the opportunity to meet with notable representatives from the rail sector of Czechia and the EU.

The first session “Rail Sector Contribution to the EU Green Deal” moderated by Libor Lochman is going to be opened by the Czech Minister of Transport, Martin Kupka, and Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean. Their presentations are going to tell us what are the priorities of rail transport in the upcoming years in Czechia as well as in Europe, and how rail is able to affect reaching the goals of the European Green Deal. We are also going to hear more about this topic from Rosalinde van der Vlies from DG RTD of the European Commission. Then the executive director of CER, Alberto Mazzola, director general of UNIFE, Philippe Citroën, and director general of UIC, François Davenne, are going to add the position of the rail sector. The Czech rail sector is going to be represented here by the chairman of the board of directors and the general director of Czech Railways, Michal Krapinec, and the general director of Správa Železnic, Jiří Svoboda.

The second session moderated by Josef Doppelbauer, the EU Agency for Railways executive director, is called **“Railway Interoperability and Standardization”**. Main topics in this session are TSI revisions in the 2022 revision cycle, ERTMS and its further development, and the Digital Automated Coupler (DAC). These individual areas are going to be addressed by Keir Fitch from DG MOVE, Matthias Ruetten from DG MOVE (European ERTMS coordinator), the chairman of the board of directors of ČD Cargo Tomáš Tóth, and other distinguished speakers from the industry sector and national safety authorities.

The first day of the conference is going to conclude with a gala dinner at the conference venue.

The second day of the conference is going to begin with **“Breakfast with Carlo Borghini”** who is also going to moderate the **third session** of the conference, **“EU’s Research and Innovations in Globalized World”** following the breakfast. This session is going to introduce EUROPE’s Rail JU, which manages funding of rail research and innovations within the EU. Key speakers in this session are Helena Langšádlová (Minister for Science and Research), Rosalinde van der Vlies from DG RTD, and representatives of EUROPE’s Rail JU founding members from the Czech Republic (Czech Railways, AŽD Praha).

The fourth session “High Speed Rail System as a Mobility Driver” is going to be moderated by the general director of Správa železnic, Jiří Svoboda, and its content is focused on the development and building of high speed rail in Central and Eastern Europe. Speakers in this sessions are a representative of Czech Ministry of Transport, Kristian Schmidt from DG MOVE, Andreas Boschen from CINEA, and Martin Švehlík from Správa železnic. Representatives from SNCF, and ÖBB are going to introduce their development and technological plans for high speed rail. We are also working on arranging a presentation to introduce the business model of high speed rail in Japan.

The fifth and the last session “TEN-T - Transcontinental Resilient Network” is going to be moderated by Herald Ruijters from DG MOVE. The session is focused on the development of European transport networks, and fulfilling multimodal principles as well as legal frameworks on these networks. Presentations are going to cover topics such as the future of military mobility and specific responses to the current geopolitical matters. Key speakers are Peter Hrapko from the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, Erik Evtimov from CIT, a representative from the Czech Ministry of Defence, and Radek Čech from Správa železnic.

The technical part of the conference is going to conclude at 17:00, followed by a “Czech dinner”.

Third day (7. 10.) – technical visit to the Plum line where visitors are going see presentations of new technologies in development and later are going to be able to experience some varieties of Czech wines.

Do not hesitate to take advantage of this unique opportunity to meet key experts of the rail world!

You may find up-to-date information about IRFC 2022 at www.IRFC.eu .
