

# **BULLETIN III/2008**

## **Editorial**

*This year's General Assembly marked the end of the three-year mandate of President Bernd Menzinger (CH). During his presidency, the UECC introduced several organisational changes designed to improve its flexibility and impact. For example, the working groups can now independently adopt resolutions and position papers within the framework of the guidelines set down by the Executive Committee. This will enable the UECC to react more quickly to ongoing developments.*

*The working groups also selected members to monitor and prepare responses to the progress of those transport projects that are of major interest to the UECC. The UECC can thus make better use of its capacities and the potential expertise provided by its more than 70 member Chambers. Finally, the new name "Union of European Chambers of Commerce and*

*Industry for Transport" emphasises the association's main focus on transport policy. The UECC would like to thank Bernd Menzinger for his great commitment and dynamic leadership.*

*The General Assembly elected Michael G. König, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of Frankfurt and former chairman of the German national group, as its new president. His experience as a shareholder and CEO of a logistics and forwarding company will give the UECC valuable advice and encouragement in its efforts towards an efficient European transport policy that pays sufficient attention to the needs of the business community.*

*Dr. Rainer Füeg  
Secretary General*

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## **September 2008**

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## Annual report 2007/2008

### Main topics

The UECC's Executive Committee held three meetings in 2008, in Straubing (D), Stuttgart (D) and Basel (CH). The main topics of discussion were structural changes within the association and ways to improve its external impact and public perception. To this end, the UECC defined a number of new work processes and competences.

On the top of the UECC's agenda in 2008 were also the Danube waterway between Straubing and Vilshofen, the traffic ban for trucks on the motorway in the Inn valley in Austria, the new EU directive on the quality of air and clean air for Europe and plans to improve the (northern) access routes to the transalpine rail axes.

At a hearing with the EU coordinator in Straubing, the UECC presented its arguments for an upgrade of the waterway directly to the authorities concerned. In various meetings with EU officials in Brussels, the chairman of the Austrian national group and the UECC president underlined the need for an injunction against the sectorial traffic ban in the Inn valley.

The UECC adopted four resolutions on the above mentioned topics in 2008. It also sent position papers and letters to national and EU institutions on the following subjects: the EU's Green Paper on urban transport, the high-speed Rhine-Rhone railtrack, Germany's new directives for freight transport, funding for TEN projects and EU guidelines for supply chain safety.

### Public relations

In May 2008, the UECC published a new brochure in English which summarises its aims and activities with regard to European

transport policy. The layout follows the lines of the UECC website that was updated last year.

In connection with the reorganisation of the work processes, the UECC expanded its public relations activities – particularly concerning specialised journals – and every national group was asked to designate a representative responsible for contacts with the media. The first publication of a press release on the Stuttgart 21 project during the Executive Committee meeting in Stuttgart was very successful.

### Executive Committee

C. de Graaff (NL), A. Müller (A) and J. Küttel (CH) resigned from the Executive Committee during 2008 or at the General Assembly. D.A. van der Plas (NL), M. Tromp (CH) and Ch. Moser (A) were elected as new members.

### Membership

The organisation of the Dutch Chambers of Commerce was restructured in 2008, and for a time it remained unclear which Chambers would be represented in the UECC in future. On 1 August, 2008, the chairmanship of the Dutch national group was transferred from Rotterdam to Centraal Gelderland. The umbrella organisation of the Dutch Chambers of Commerce joined the UECC in May, bringing the number of Dutch Chambers up to ten. The UECC will therefore have 69 full members and five associated Chambers as from January 1, 2009.

### Finances

For the UECC, the 2007 financial year closed with a profit of EUR 464.46. There were no major changes in the balance sheet compared to last year.

## New president of the UECC



Michael G. König

At its General Assembly in Basel, the UECC elected Michael G. König, shareholder and CEO of a Frankfurt-based logistics company, as its new president.

He replaces Dr. Bernd Menzinger (CH) who led the UECC since 2005.

Michael G. König is also vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of Frankfurt and chairman of the forwarding and logistics association of Hessen/Rheinland-Pfalz.

## **Reactions to UECC resolutions**

### **Northern access routes to the New Railway Link through the Alps (NRLA) – Wisenberg tunnel**

In his reply to the letter from the UECC, the Swiss Federal Chancellor Moritz Leuenberger pointed out that current plans for the future development of the railway network (ZEB) include the expansion of capacities on both the east-west and the north-south axes. However, according to today's forecasts for freight traffic, another tunnel through the Jura mountains will not be required until 2030. On the other hand, investments are planned for the Basel area. A second package of planning procedures (ZEB 2) will investigate the need for an additional extension of the railway network in the longer term and then also review the question of a new tunnel through the Wisenberg. He added that funding must also be secured for further upgrades. ZEB 2 will be discussed in parliament over the next few years.

### **Directive of the European Council and Parliament on the quality of air and clean air for Europe**

Dr. Reinhold Görden of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, said in his response to the UECC's position paper that his country had already initiated the procedures to transpose the directive into national legislation. A first draft of the new law is expected for autumn 2008.

According to Stefan Moser of the General Directorate for the Environment of the European Commission, a proposal for the

implementation of article 20 of the directive will be submitted to the Member states as soon as possible. The document should be published in 2009.

### **Truck traffic ban in the Inn valley**

Andreas Krautscheid, the Minister for Federal Affairs, Europe and Public relations of the German state of Northrhine-Westphalia, thanked the UECC for its efforts in this issue. At a conference of the German transport ministers on April 16/17, 2008, Northrhine-Westphalia, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Saarland and Thuringia stated that sectorial traffic bans were not compatible with the principle of a free exchange of goods and services. They called upon the federal government to continue its opposition against such traffic bans on a European level and to demand the initiation of infringement proceedings.

Ms. Ruth Hieronymi, member of the European Parliament is of the same opinion as the UECC and has also contacted Günter Verheugen, the vice president of the European Commission, to this effect.

At a meeting with Ghyslaine Guisloppe of the European Commission's General Directorate for Enterprises and Industry, UECC president Menzinger and Harald Bollmann underlined the European significance of the problem. Attempts to issue similar bans in other regions must be avoided. The sectorial traffic ban will probably be discussed by the European Commission in October this year.

## **External costs will increase truck road tolls**

An update of the road pricing directive (eurovignette) was presented to a wider public in the summer of 2008. It now proposes to make trucks pay for their external costs as well. Supplements for air pollution range from 2 cents/km for Euro 5 class trucks in rural areas and 16 cents/km for EURO class 0 trucks in urban centres.

The costs for noise vary between 0.13 cents (during the day) and 2 cents (at night). For congestion costs, supplements may reach 65 cents. The directive is mandatory only for those member States that already apply or will introduce road pricing tolls that are calculated according to the distance travelled.

## ***EU Commission debates new measures against train noise***

The European Commission has proposed to base the prices charged for the utilisation of dedicated railtracks on the noise the wagons make. At the beginning, a bonus system will be used, which will later be replaced by a bonus-malus system, where

quiet freight wagons will be billed less while noisier railcars will have to pay a supplement. The new rules will be introduced in connection with the forthcoming update of directive 2001/14/EC.

## ***Functional Airspace Block Central Europe (FAB CE)***

The EU initiative for a common European airspace "Single European Sky" aims to combine the currently more than 60 air traffic control areas in Europe into only a few so-called functional airspace blocks. Flight routes will be optimised independently of national frontiers. Kerosene consumption and CO2 emissions should thus be substantially reduced. All in all, these measures should make European air transport more economic, more efficient and less damaging to the environment.

At a conference in June 2008, the transport ministers of Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia Hercegovina gave the green light for the creation of a joint airspace block.

As Austrian air navigation service provider, Austro Control will be in charge of operative management.

The objective is to define airspace blocks according to traffic flows and the shortest possible routes. Mutually agreed prices, joint management of training programmes and an optimal use of operative installations and infrastructures are other advantages of the project.

Implementation is to begin in 2008, and the new system should be ready for a preliminary launch by 2010. For further information: [www.fab-europe-central.eu](http://www.fab-europe-central.eu).

## ***Alpine transit exchange: one step at a time***

On September 18, 2008 the Swiss national council, the larger chamber of the parliament, paved the way for the introduction of an alpine transit exchange by adopting new legislation on the modal shift of traffic from the roads to the railways. The council authorised the Swiss government to nego-

tiate terms for such an exchange with the European Union. However, the target date for cutting back the number of trucks passing through Switzerland to 650'000 per year has been postponed to 2019, two years after the expected opening of the Gotthard base tunnel.

### **How does the exchange work?**

An upper limit for the number of trucks crossing the Alps will be defined at the beginning of the year. The relevant transit rights will then be auctioned off. Road haulage companies can buy and sell these transit rights in a free market. In order to prevent trucks from taking alternative routes through other countries, the exchange, and its rules, should cover the entire Alpine region as far possible. Special regulations will be found for local and short distance traffic.

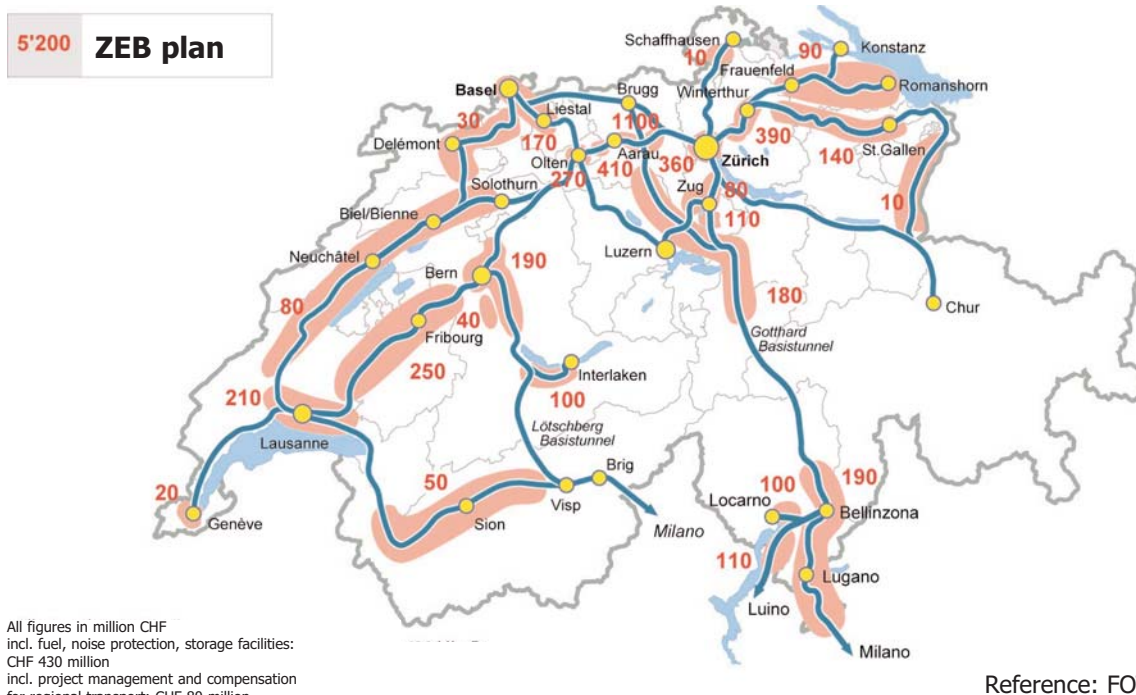
In the meantime, the model has caught the interest of the European Union as well. On the initiative of Federal Councillor Moritz Leuenberger, the European Commission and the transport ministers of the Alpine countries have commissioned an international study on an Alpine transit exchange. First results are expected to be available by the end of 2008.

## Basic principles of Swiss transport policy

At the General Assembly of the UECC in Basel on September 25, 2008 Dr. Jürg Marti, deputy director of the Swiss Federal Office of Transport (FOT), presented the basic principles of Swiss transport policy. The FOT provides the infrastructures, organisation and legal framework for a continual improvement of the quality, productivity and competitiveness of public passenger and freight transport services. It also encourages the shift of freight traffic from the roads to the railways and implements the necessary measures to achieve this end. In Switzerland, passenger traffic is expected to grow by 24% by 2030, and freight traffic by as much as 54%.

The FOT's longterm strategy focuses on the following major projects to be completed over the next twenty years: the new Rail Link through the Alps NRLA (EUR 10.6 billion), rail 2000 (EUR 3.8 billion), measures to reduce the noise caused by rolling stock and the rail network (EUR 1.5 billion) and connections to the European high-speed rail network (TGV and ICE, EUR 700 million). Current plans for the development of rail infrastructures (ZEB) are expected to result in a major improvement of the services by 2030, for which investments of EUR 2-3 billion are budgeted.

### ZEB: planned investments



### New tunnel through the Alps

Opened in June 2007, the 34.7 km long Loetschberg tunnel is exceeding expectations. About 40 passenger and 80 freight trains pass through the tunnel every day. Three million passengers were transported within a period of three months, 30% more than expected.

More than 70% of the 57 km long Gotthard base tunnel has already been broken out, the tunnel should be completed by 2017, followed by the Ceneri Basistunnel in 2019.

### Linking up with the high-speed networks

**In the north and east:** Germany and Switzerland will coordinate and expand capacities on the Offenburg-Basel section, between Karlsruhe and Offenburg work on the new line has already begun. Several alternatives for an upgrade of the Stuttgart-Zurich route are currently under review. 2.15 hours is the planned target for this connection. In the direction of Munich, electrification of the line, a new through

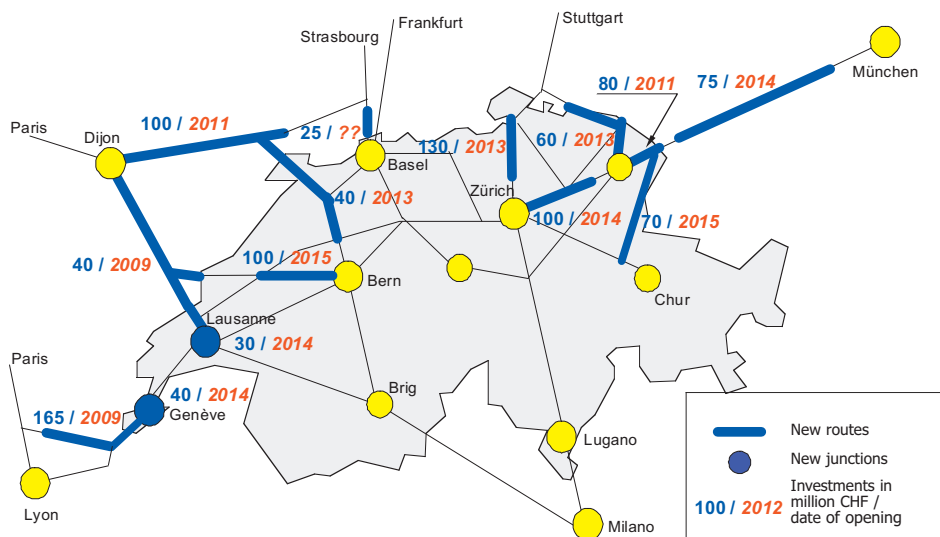
station in Lindau and the deployment of tilting trains should considerably reduce travelling times.

**In the south:** In the short term, the construction of a new link from Mendrisio will improve services within the Lugano/Como/Varese triangle and connections to

Milan's Malpensa airport. Long term plans include the continuation of the Gotthard line from Lugano to Milan.

**In the west:** The regional line near the TGV route Lyon-Paris in Haut-Bugey (France) in order to speed up travelling times between Geneva and Paris by 25 minutes to three hours.

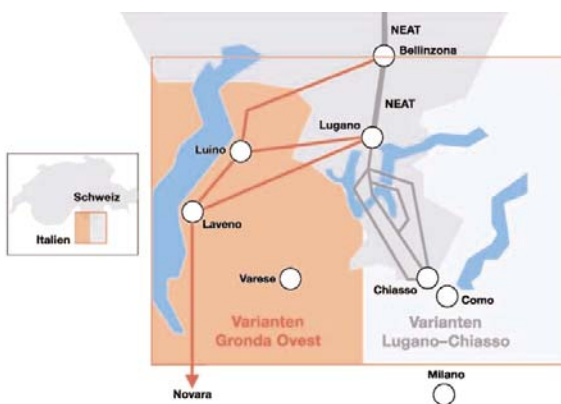
**Plans for high-speed links and reduced travelling times**



Reference: FOT

Genf – Paris 3:30 / 3:10 / 2:30	Zürich – München 4:15 / 3:10 / 3:15
Genf – Lyon 1:50 / 1:50 / 1:15	Zürich – Stuttgart 2:45 / 2:25 / 2:15
Lausanne – Paris 3:50 / 3:30 / 3:00	Zürich – Ulm 3:40 / 3:10 / 2:50
Bern – Neuchâtel – Paris 4:50 / 4:10 / 3:30	Basel – Frankfurt 2:50 / 2:40 / 2:15
Basel – Paris 4:30 / 3:20 / 2:50 <sup>1)</sup>	Current service, some tilting trains As from 2015, with upgrades Agreed target

1) TGV-Est bis Strasbourg



Reference: FOT

**Calendar 2008/2009**

**Executive Committee:**

15 May 2009 France  
2 October 2009 Austria

**General Assembly**

15 Mai 2009 France

**Working group "transport":**

6/7 November 2008 Bolzano/Bozen (I)