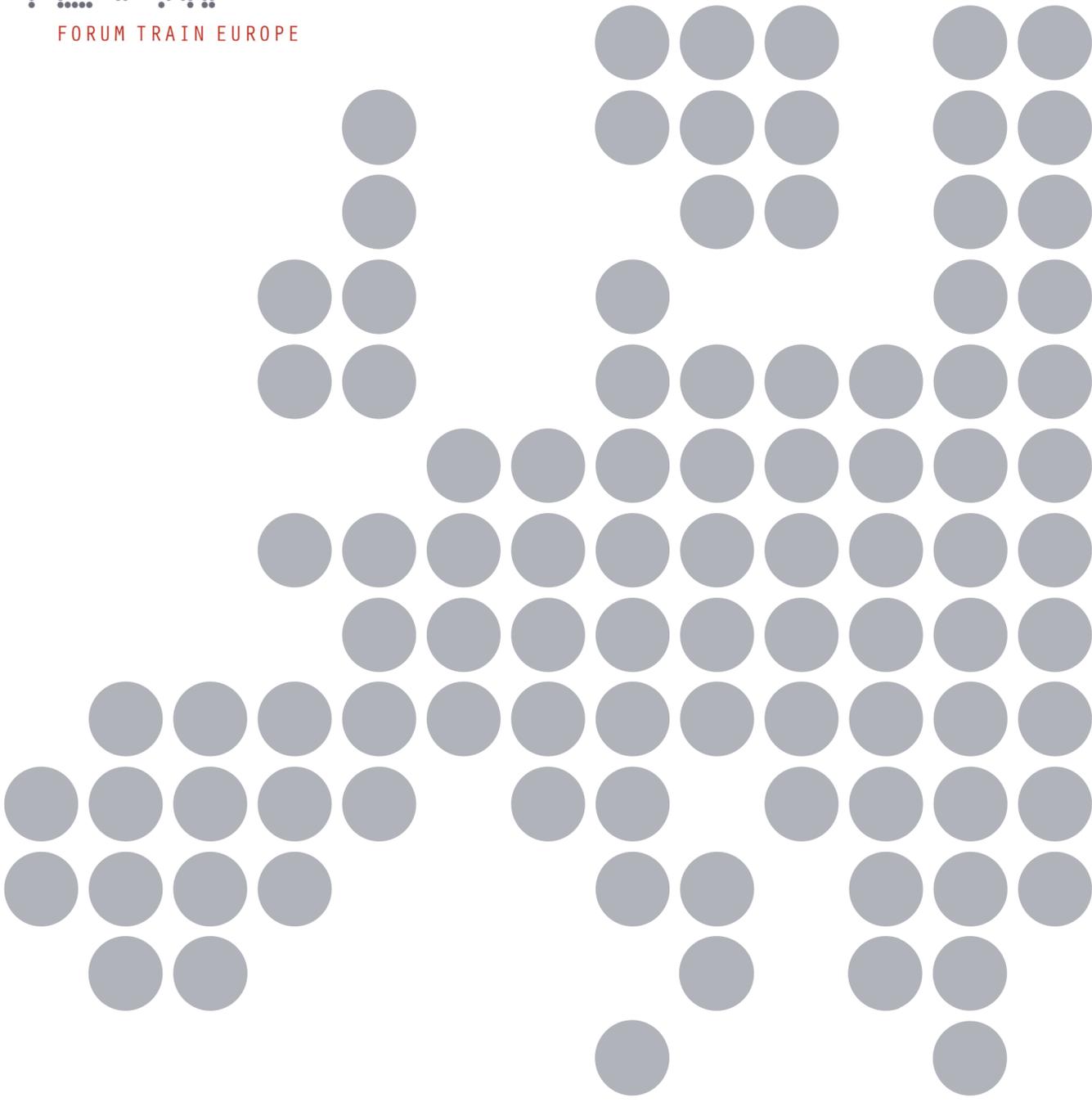




FORUM TRAIN EUROPE



The New Executive Board of Forum Train Europe

On 7 June 2023, the FTE Plenary Assembly elected new members of the Executive Board. Discover more about these new board members, who will lead FTE in the upcoming years.

The Executive Board

The Executive Board (ExBo) is FTE's operational and strategic management body. The ExBo prepares resolutions and strategies for the Plenary Assembly and is responsible for their implementation. The ExBo entrusts the FTE Office with the execution of individual tasks. Moreover, the body monitors the budget/accounts and may decide on expenditures within the given mandate. The ExBo is comprised of the President, the Vice-President, the Heads of the Commissions, Board Members, and the Managing Director in an advisory role.

Continuing Executive Board Members



Maurizio Capotorto

Chief Executive Officer and Country Manager at Hellenic Train

An FTE executive board member should be a manager who has in the past been part of an association like FTE and has always been concentrated on the business activities of freight or passenger railways. They should have especially focused on the core activity of timetabling. The main focus of FTE and the ExBo should be supporting members in the best possible timetable production, focusing especially on punctuality and reliability. To facilitate this support, it is important that we at FTE

connect railway companies together and that we also facilitate connections between railways and rail connected facilities.

At FTE we have achieved very much, and this is demonstrated by the remarkable unity seen today in the voting and discussions at the Plenary Assembly. Members feel well supported by the organisation, and it is crucial that we continue to facilitate this unity. With the inherent differences between freight and passenger this is a challenge, thus we should listen to all our members needs and make sure all aspects of our membership are supported.

Wolfgang Fritz

Department Manager RCG Traction / Support (Rail Cargo Group)

For me, it is simply important to discuss the many topics openly and together with my colleagues. For us as a Board, it is important to work together with the FTE-team to agree on the direction of work for the coming months and to set the right priorities for the many fields of action. Years of experience in the logistics sector and especially in rail transport are certainly helpful in this respect, although we are of course also very happy to take on any input from our members.



We as FTE need active input from our members in order to be able to represent their interests in a targeted manner. Therefore, we need your active participation in the working groups and also your feedback and input in order to be able to further develop the rail transport system in the interest of the rail transport companies.



Laurent Beaucaire

Train Paths and Production Performance Director at SNCF Voyageurs

First, I would like to underline that I have been very warmly welcomed in the FTE community since I have joined the Board a year ago. FTE and its Board are a very enthusiastic place with a strong team spirit. As an FTE Board member, I focus on keeping as much as possible the big picture for our sector and our companies to well-function. In addition, working in an international environment implies obviously to manage the cultural differences and sometimes the language barrier. This

environment and the commitment of FTE office and members makes it very special.

With the European legal framework being adjusted, we are entering a period which is both thrilling and crucial for our companies. We need the energy and commitment from all FTE members to make our voice heard. I therefore encourage all of FTE members to step in the different working groups!

New Executive Board Members

Philipp Mäder

President FTE, Director of International Services and member of the Management Board Passenger Services Markets at Swiss Federal Railways SBB



The Plenary Assembly is over now, and you will travel back to focus on your main responsibilities within SBB. Can you give us an idea of what tasks and challenges are currently on your table?

My team and I are responsible for the management of SBB's international passenger services, i.e., our cross-border long-distance day and night trains. We coordinate the cooperations with our partner railways as well as we design the further development of international distribution and customer orientation. We set strategic goals for cross-border transport and the incoming travel business and are responsible for the strategic management of our subsidiaries Lyria, Rheinalp, Swiss Travel System and Switzerland Travel Centre. Our main goal is to connect Switzerland with numerous

European destinations (and the other way around) and to increase passenger rail's international market share.

The level of involvement of FTE members is quite varied, with some being active in groups and others only joining the conferences. What can be done to motivate the less active members to join the table and work on future solutions?

It is normal that some FTE members have more resources to be active. On the other hand, we see FTE as an important platform for joint development and co-design, therefore we encourage every member to join the table to shape the future. We can also learn a lot from each other and use synergies.

Is there any specific message you would like to give to the staff of FTE members?

I would like to thank everybody for her and his valuable work in the past and future. Even if we might be competitors in daily operations, we should put this aside within FTE and work together to make international rail transport more competitive. I'm looking forward to it!

Richard Herrmann

Head of Single Wagon Service at DB Cargo Germany



You have experienced the work of FTE from all possible angles, namely as a conference participant, working group member, working group chairman, and now you've reached the highest position, the Executive Board. How do you feel about that? Do you see this experience as your advantage for the ExBo mission?

I am honoured to have been elected to this position and would like to thank you once again for the trust you have placed in me. I think that I can contribute some experience from the various activities and perspectives in order to actively participate in the further shaping of FTE.

Some stakeholders say that passenger and freight members have different and conflicting interests. However, FTE has always consisted

of both, and the Executive Board is represented by a mix of members. How do you think the FTE community can cope with that?

That is correct. In certain areas we have different positions because of the different requirements of our end customers. In the end, however, we all use the same infrastructure and must face the same problems here, for example with a view to availability and restrictions due to construction works. Also, especially in freight transport, many of the members are already in a competitive and cooperative situation at the same time. Nevertheless, we should try to jointly develop the rules for access to the infrastructure and the processes behind it. Therefore, for fundamental issues, we need a strong, joint position of passenger and freight that we can and must represent to other stakeholders.

New Executive Board Members

Robert Groiss

Business Development Manager at Metrans



What are the topics in the area of capacity management that you think the FTE community should focus on in the upcoming years?

Railway harmonising and digitalisation within Europe. And maybe finally create a little bit of a transport strategy within Europe. Not only the single proclamations.

You have become the first Executive Board member to come from a solely private company in the modern FTE era, how do you feel about that? Do private RUs have the same goals in capacity management as publicly owned companies?

Yes of course. Every day we have the problem that we cannot run all of our trains and we hope we can together with the other members in FTE reach a

better situation that rail can grow with enough capacity, and we think that the private RU have even a higher motivation to bring the railways in to the future. This is the goal that we are fighting for day by day.

Metrans is also playing a role in the lead of UIRR. Do you see there any synergies and common goals?

You never can lobby enough. So of course, UIRR is important for combined transport – other main business. But for further success of our own railway undertakings needs FTE contribution too. And the goal should be that all the associations, which are fighting for common goals should cooperate more closely that they are now. On the national, but also on the international – European level.

Karol Martinček

Chief Commercial Officer and member of the Board of Directors of Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko (ZSSK)



You are the first executive board member from behind the former iron curtain in more than a decade. Why do you think there has been so few, and how do you feel you can serve this region as an FTE ExBo member?

I think that for many years it has been largely western countries which have defined the problems with the railway sector and thus the solutions have naturally very often best fit the characteristics of those countries. I believe that now as a member of the FTE executive board I can help to define problems and solutions which will better fit the needs of the east.

Are there any topics that you see as being of especially high priority for railway operators in Eastern Europe that are less of a priority for

FTE members operating in the west?

The answer to that question is most certainly infrastructure quality. In Slovakia and indeed many other eastern countries the biggest issue is the antiquated and deteriorating infrastructure. This prevents increases and improvements in service and leads to many daily issues such as temporary capacity restrictions. A secondary issue is that of rolling stock, both the availability and quality of rolling stock is a challenge for us and many other operators.

Do you have any message that you would like to give to our colleagues within the FTE membership?

I would like to say that the true added value in the rail sector is created on the RU side. RUs are the market and thus, their voice most important in communication with ministries of transport and even Brussels for creating a strategy of mobility for the whole of Europe. Of course, it goes without saying that railways are the best option that we have for mobility in the face of the energy crisis and in helping the environment, not to mention rail's benefits on a country's economy and GDP. RUs must remember this and understand the positive impact that we can make by speaking together.