

# KEY FINDINGS D2.1

**Future vision of the rail sector from the point of view of rail operators and infrastructure managers**

**Public version**

**wmp consult and Deutsche Bahn (co-leaders WP2)**

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**STAFFER**  
EUROPEAN RAIL SKILLS ALLIANCE



# AIMS

- Task 2.1 built on results achieved in WP1 for the whole rail sector but adopts the specific perspective of railway operation and infrastructure management.
- Providing an overview of the current state, key trends and current as well as future challenges the railway undertakings in operation and infrastructure management are facing.
- Besides considering trends and challenges identified already in WP1 as relevant and/or specific for railway operation and infrastructure management, task 2.1 looked at current and foreseeable future challenges in three areas:
  - Cross-border rail traffic, with particular reference to EU rail freight corridors.
  - Language and communication issues in cross-border traffic.
  - Skills requirements of railway personnel, including trainers and managers as well as skills and competences of professional profiles affected by digitalisation, big data, cybersecurity as well as environmental policies.



# WORKFLOW

- Constitution of a core team consisting of personnel of the two co-leaders with at least weekly exchange and information meetings.
- Agreement with involved partners (task 2.1: CER and railway operators and infrastructure managers involved in STAFFER plus interested CER affiliates) on objectives and expected results and outcomes of the task, also in context of WP2 as a whole.
- Regular reporting and discussion of interim results in two formats:
  - 6 General meetings of WP 2 until July 202.
  - 6 information meetings for CER affiliates (involved in STAFFER or not) in preparation of the general work package meetings.
- Elaboration of methodological tools as a collaborate process, led by task 2.1 leader but with pro-active involvement of all partners involved in 2.1 as well as the whole WP2 package proved to be very important.
- Besides this, WP2 co-leaders actively participated in exchange with WP1, WP3 and further work packages (WP4 and WP5) as well as general STAFFER coordination meetings.



# APPLIED METHODOLOGIES

- **Desk research**
  - Gathering and evaluation of relevant literature.
  - Compiling a database of 192 EU co-funded transnational projects dealing transnational cooperation in fields such as initial and higher VET, education and competence development, technological and other innovation, etc.
  - Analysis of the ESCO Classification of professional/occupational profiles and identification of 30 railway specific profiles that are defined in the ESCO database.
- **Focus and expert group(s)**
  - Establishing and two meetings of a (German-speaking) focus group of experts in railway undertakings (operation and infrastructure management) in the field of cross-border freight corridors and language and communication in cross-border railways.
- **Online survey**
  - Development and implementation of a comprehensive online survey (covering task 2.1 as well as 2.2) addressing railway undertakings, employer organisations as well as secondary and tertiary education and research institutions.
  - High response rate amongst companies with > 80 valid responses from 19 countries.
- **Accompanying bilateral exchange and communication**
  - with STAFFER partners and experts in railway undertakings.





# MAIN RESULTS

- Task 2.1 is providing an overview and more in-depth evidence as regards major trends, challenges and innovations as well as related needs and requirements from the perspective of railway operation and infrastructure management.
- The research and particularly the survey of railway undertakings, education and research institutions confirm that technological innovation, digitalisation but also trends and challenges that are related to policy demands and strategies in EU policies will impact significantly on all relevant domains and future skills requirements in railway operation and infrastructure management.
- Though the impact of digitalisation, technological innovation and other drivers on future skills requirements in railway operation and infrastructure management are similar to other sectors, the research has shown that there are nuances and differences in relation to the impact on specific occupational profiles and tasks that require further attention in the context of forthcoming research in task 2.2. and the more in-depth research on selected occupational profiles.
- The more detailed analysis of 30 railway specific ESCO profiles has shown that the ESCO approach is generally regarded by company representatives as having a positive impact on a stronger harmonisation of occupational profiles. However, at the same time, survey responses show that the actual knowledge of the ESCO is limited and there seems to be the need for a stronger alignment of the described profiles, skills and competences with practices at company level.
- Task 2.1 results also confirm that the decision to pay special and additional attention to cross-border railways from different perspectives (language and communication requirements, hindering factors to efficient railway operation across borders, rail freight corridors) is highly relevant. Focus groups and survey results strongly showed that there is a need for action, including in relation to the develop of transnational education and training offers and mobility and exchange programmes for different groups of staff.





# EXPECTED BENEFITS FOR RAIL SECTOR

- The research in the context of WP 2.1 complements findings from previous and ongoing research but also provides additional insights and knowledge as regards future skills and competence requirements but also requirements in the context of transnational railway operation from the perspective of experts inside railway undertakings and railway-related research.
- This in particular relates to challenges and needs as regards skills and competences development of railway staff in operations and infrastructure management involved in cross-border rail freight corridors and transnational railways in general.
- All in all, different types of benefits are expected from STAFFER and WP2 for the rail sector:
  - Direct exchange in thematic focus groups and the forthcoming more in-depth analysis of results of the WP2 survey will contribute to the development of adequate and relevant measures in the context of further STAFFER work packages (WP4, WP6) that provide concrete added-value for railway undertakings and the sector.
  - By the focus on different occupational profiles relevant for railway operation and infrastructure management and the specific interest in cross-border railway operation, benefits are expected in fields such as the development of European level offers of skills and competence development as well as transnational initiatives for stronger alignment and cooperation in relation to specific occupational profiles and measures for different groups of staff.
  - It is also expected that the research and further activities in WP2 will contribute directly to the elaboration of a longer term strategy and action plan for the rail sector as foreseen in WP7. Here, WP2 survey results may contribute to a longer term strategy that takes into account also national differences as regards requirements and needs in railway operation and infrastructure management.





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