

Rail Transport Markets Continue Their Long-Term Growth Trend

[05.06.2009] Rail transport markets worldwide are continuing their long-term growth trend and, by the year 2019, will achieve average annual growth of around 2.6 % (rail passenger transport), 1.5 % (local city transport (on rail)) and 3.6 % (rail freight transport). These findings are the results of the latest Multi Client Study “Worldwide Rail Transport Markets 2009-2019” by SCI Verkehr GmbH.

The total transport performance in rail passenger transport worldwide in 2009 amounted to 3.2 billion passenger-kilometres. By far the largest share, 91 %, was accounted for by passenger transport by conventional railway. Local city transport (on rail) accounts for 9 %. Worldwide transport performance for rail freight transport is 9.5 trillion tonne-kilometres. The drivers behind transport performance are, in particular, economic development, extension of infrastructure as well as the potentials for increased productivity by rail transport carriers. In Western Europe, the opening up of the domestic markets and a harmonisation of infrastructure has strengthened the competitive position of the railways compared to other transport modes.

The effects of the economic crisis are causing a significant drop in the transport performance of rail freight transport. Countries affected the most by the crisis are those whose transport system is dependent on raw materials, for example, Russia, Brazil or Australia, which in some cases have had to accept a drop of up to 20 % for the year 2009 compared to the previous year. The fact that the drop is not more severe is linked to the fact that the economic crisis had already led to reduced transport performance figures at the end of 2008, thus ending last year at lower levels than had been expected. The results of the “Worldwide Rail Transport Markets 2009–2019” study show, however, that the trend will once again turn to growth and continue into the long term. Thus, the world market region Asia alone will increase its transport performance by the year 2019 from its current figure of 3.2 trillion tonne-kilometres to 5.5 trillion tonne-kilometres (+ 69 %).



The transport performance for rail passenger transport in Western Europe will increase by 16 % by 2019. Also, as a result of new development and upgrade projects for infrastructure, transport performance for local city transport (on rail) will increase further, despite strong competition from private motor vehicles. In the CIS, local city transport will have to reckon with a continuation of the recent downward trend, since a lack of infrastructure investment gives no reason to expect a trend reversal. By contrast, thanks to its extensive infrastructure investment programme, China’s transport performance will quadruple.

Further information: [Worldwide Rail Transport Markets 2009–2019](#)