

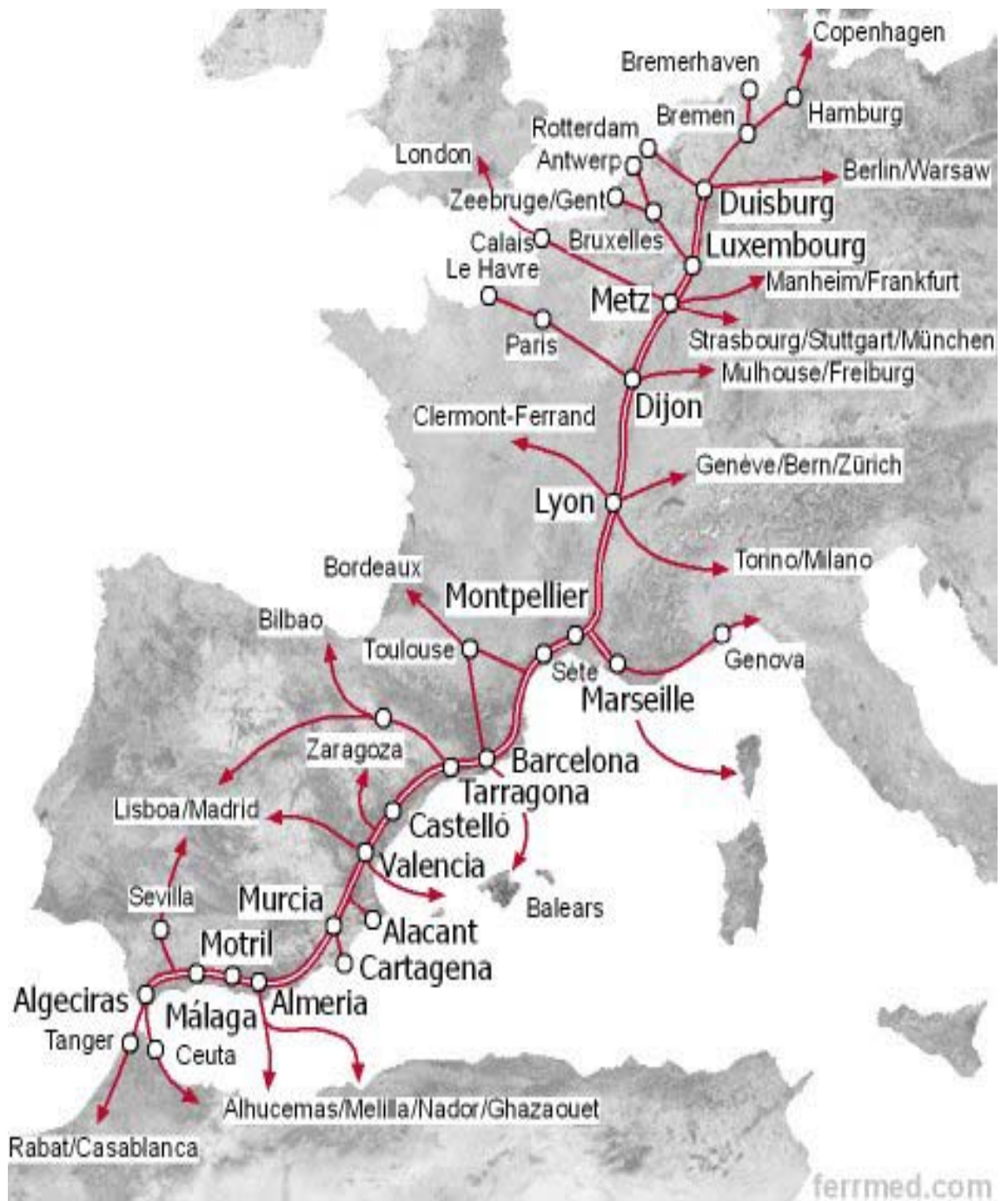
Dear Sir / Madam,

The **FERRMED** association aims at **promoting the railway axis Rhine-Rhone-Occidental Mediterranean** (or FERRMED axis) connecting North and Central Europe with the Mediterranean coast, passing by the Rhone and the Rhine Valley, **for the transport of goods**.

FERRMED welcomes the European Commission efforts to improve transport corridors in Europe but would emphasize that regarding railway projects:

1. **A chain is as strong as its weakest link:** Congratulations for improving the railway situation in Spain and between Lyon and Duisburg but **if the current situation between Lyon and the Spanish border remains the same, the performance of the whole Axis will not be improved.**

2. **In Spain, it would be easier and less expensive to improve the current lines running along the East coast of Spain.** This path is more flat, crosses highly populated regions and links some of the major Mediterranean ports (Barcelona for instance) to the rest of Europe - a key element for the development of short sea shipping. Furthermore, ports of the East coast of Spain are trade gates towards Africa and Asia.



FERRMED

Promotion de l'Axé Ferroviaire de marchandises
Rhin-Rhône Méditerranée Occidentale, ASBL

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Brussels, the 20th of December of 2004

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I. CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION FERRMED

The non-profit association for the promotion of freight railway axis Rhine-Rhone-Occidental Mediterranean, called FERRMED, which principal way links Algeciras and all Occidental Mediterranean ports to Metz and Duisburg, was officially constituted and registered in Brussels last august.

All companies, entities and institutions interested in this project, very important for the Occidental European Union, can incorporate the association.

The initial board of directors will be constituted by:

- AUTORIDAD PORTUARIA ALMERIA-MOTRIL, represented by M. Antonio Bayo Martínez.
- AUTORIDAD PORTUARIA DE LA BAHIA DE ALGECIRAS, represented by M. Rafael Olivares Pabon. (Deputy Secretary General)
- AUTORITAT PORTUÀRIA DE BARCELONA, represented by M. Pedro Pérez Muñoz.
- AUTORIDAD PORTUARIA DE TARRAGONA, represented by M. Joan Borràs i Tous.
- AUTOTERMINAL S.A., represented by M. Jacinto Seguí Dolz de Castellar. (President of FERRMED)
- CELSA, represented by M. Marcos Grau Mancebo.
- COLEGIOS DE INGENIEROS INDUSTRIALES DE ANDALUCIA ORIENTAL; CATALUNYA; COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA y de la REGIÓN DE MURCIA, represented by M. Josep M^a Rovira i Ragué (Treasurer)
- FUNDACIÓ OCCITANO CATALANA, represented by M. Joan Amorós i Pla. (General Secretary)
- NETEX S.A, represented by Mme Marylise Borowy. (Vice-president de FERRMED)
- SEAT, represented by M. Juan-Ramón Rodríguez Gonzalez.
- STVA, represented by M. Jacky M. Henry.

The constitution of the board of directors will change with the incorporation of new members to the Association.

II. SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE PROJECT FERRMED

1. Justification of the project FERRMED

The most important railway axis between the European Southeast and the heart of the continent.

The FERRMED railway axis (Metz-Algeciras) is the most important connexion between the European southeast and the north of the old continent. The total amount of freight traffic along this axis and passing by the Pyrenees was over 40 millions tones in 2002 and, the foresights say that the expected growth is very high, and it could more than double those 40 millions by 2010. All of this without considering the internal traffic between countries and regions that this axis crosses, which is even more important than the traffic interstate. In this scenario, in which there is not a strong railway alternative, the increase in the number of trucks would produce an unsustainable congestion.

This is a fundamental axis for the surface commerce between Catalonia, Valence, Murcia and other areas in Andalusia and western and central Spain. It is also very important on the other side of the Pyrenees for other regions such as Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence, Rhône-Alpes, Bourgogne and Lorraine. The axis represents a key element for the economic relations between Benelux, Germany and the Occidental Mediterranean countries as well. Regarding the maritime commerce, this axis is critic for the development of the Mediterranean maritime ports and the harbour equilibrium between the north and the south of Europe.

This surface freight axis is one of those that drive more traffic in Europe and it has to be the object of creation of the biggest structuring railway axes of the *Trans-European Railway Freight Network* (TERFN). Its economical and logistical importance goes farther than the regions it crosses because it covers other regions in Spain, France and in the whole EU.

A key axis for the economy of the regions crossed.

In the white book of the European Commission about transport policy, it is affirmed that “...*the equilibrium between ways of transportation is the strategy core for the sustainable development...*” at European level. To make it possible, a railway revitalization action is proposed which, concerning the Trans-European network, demands to focus on “...*the suppression of the bottle necks in the railway sector...*” to “...*reinforce the accessibility of the peripheral regions...*” and increase the European Cohesion.

With these statements, and given the traffic volume of the mentioned axis and the future European restrictions for road transportation that will be certainly produced, the lack of an optimum railway solution could increase the character of “periphery” of the covered areas. And even more, if we consider that the enlargement to the eastern European countries moves these areas away from the European economic centre and that it is already promoting less attention in the Southern and Mediterranean European Countries.

To conclude, it remains clear that these regions should not lose competitiveness that the maintenance of an inefficient railway would suppose. This lack of a railway solution would take place in a specially critical scenario for the ports that drive the maritime commerce to other countries: in one part, because we are entering a period characterized by new worldwide east-west maritime traffic opportunities for the Mediterranean and in another part because the Mediterranean ports should play a fundamental logistic role for the economy of their countries.

A railway axis characterized by an important lack of infrastructure

The important limitations in the current lines prevent them from being a true alternative to road freight, which in some sectors is close to breakdown.

In the French side we find bottlenecks in different routes: Narbona - Montpellier-Nimes and areas of Lyon, Dijon and Metz.

In the Spanish side, the problems come from the rail width, the saturations in the areas of Barcelona and Valence, the design of the line, too long in some lines such as the line between Valence and Alicante / Murcia and the lack of a direct connexion between Murcia and Almeria/Granada.

2. An Association to promote the railway freight axis: FERRMED

- We cannot longer admit the prolongation of the situation for this railway axis, when the European tendency strongly bet on the railway transportation.
- In the short term, the countries, regions and ports of the Duisburg-Metz-Algeciras axis need a European competitive railway network as a basic tool to attend to the maritime commerce necessities, in order not to lose business opportunities and to avoid the traffic-jams on road due to the intensive use of roads.
- Without a powerful railway axis such as the one promoted by FERRMED, the economic future of the areas depending on it is in danger, the possibilities of attracting new investments going down and the risk of delocalization of the present activities going up.
- The FERRMED axis is really important for the economic future of the affected areas and its promotion should have the maximum priority, similar to the priority defined in the 0 list of the Van Miert's report, which gathers the European projects to be ended before 2010.
- Because of all of the reasons mentioned above, the non-profit association FERRMED has been constituted in Brussels in order to obtain as soon as possible that this axis has the necessary conditions of continuity, interoperability, capacity and speed, in order to be a powerful tool of economic development and an efficient and effective alternative to road transportation.
- The FERRMED association is open to the incorporation of members coming from the European Union business, unions and institutional world.
(See Chapter IV: list of companies and institutions interested in the FERRMED Project at October 20th).

3. Short description of the FERRMED Axis

3.1. Description of the main trunk of the Axis

The FERRMED axis crosses some of the most important roads of Europe.

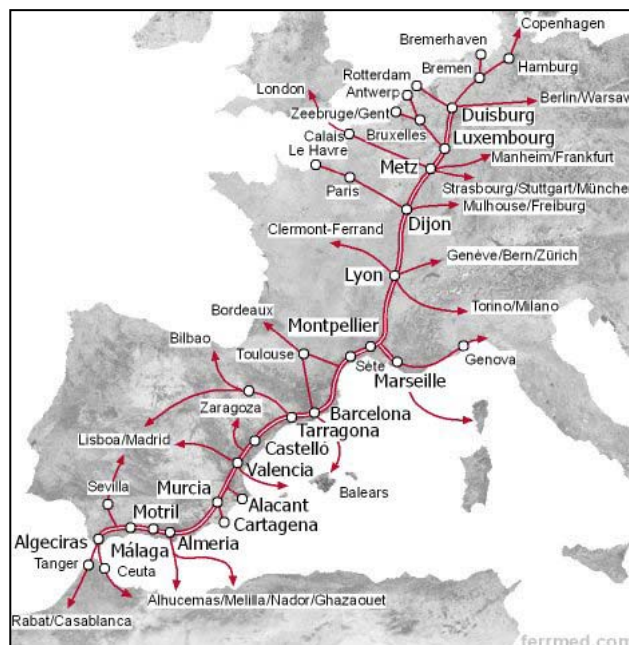
It is the road that, through the Rhine and the Rhone Valleys, through all the Mediterranean coast of the Provence and the Languedoc regions and through the Iberian Peninsula, links the heart of Europe with North Africa.

It is the fastest inter-connexion road between the North Sea and the Occidental Mediterranean.

The whole road does not contain any important geographical obstacle. For this reason, the most important communication ways in Europe pass by this axis since the time of the Roman Empire.

The main section of the line starts in Algeciras and finishes in Metz – Duisburg. It has an approximate longitude of 2.500 kilometres. In its French part, the axis follows the layout of the “Magistrale Eco-Fret”.

In the Spanish sector, the axis passes close to the entire Mediterranean coast from the Detroit of Gibraltar until the Cap of Creus.



In the French sector, the display of the axis is complete even though some important actions are necessary in the development plan of the Magistrale Eco–Fret.

In a first place, the problem of this part of the axis lies in the excessive delays of suitability of the layout and in the elimination of the existing bottlenecks. In a second place, the problem is coming from the capacity of loading authorized for trains that execute the route.

In the Spanish side, the display of the axis present an important discontinuity between Almería and Murcia, a too long section between Valence and Alicante, bottlenecks in the suburbs of Barcelona and Valence and, above all, a rail width that should be converted to the UIC standard.

Moreover, the volume of transport foreseen for 2025 requires new and powerful actions on both parts of the axis.

3.2. Description of the most important branches connected to the axis

The main section of the FERRMED axis along its whole layout comport important branches of interconnection.

Some of them – in the Mediterranean part of the line – are short branches of connexion with the different ports of general interest. Other branches are axes that interlace the main section with other zones.

In the first case, we have to point out the following branches:

- Carthagene
- Fos - Marseille/Toulon (until Genes)

In the second case, the following axes have to be signalled:

- Ceuta and Tangier / Rabat / Casablanca (via “ferry” since Algeciras)
- Seville and Cordoba (until Madrid since the liaison situated in Bobadilla)
- Melilla / Alucemas / Nador / Gazahuet (via "ferry" depuis Almeria)
- Madrid (since the liaison situated in Valence)
- Saragossa (since the liaison situated in Sagunto)
- Saragossa/Madrid/Lisbon and Saragossa/Bilbao (since the liaisons that start in Tarragona and Barcelona)
- Balearic Islands (via “ferry” since Barcelona and Valencia)
- Puigcerdà/Toulouse (since the liaison from Barcelona)
- Toulouse/Bordeaux (since the liaison from Narbonne)

- Corsica and Sardinia (via “ferry” since Marseille and Geneva).
- Clermont-Ferrand (since the liaison from Lyon)
- Geneva – Berne – Zurich (since the liaison from Lyon)
- Turin – Milan (since the liaison from Lyon)
- Paris – Le Havre (since the liaison from Dijon)
- Mulhouse / Freeburg (since the liaison from Dijon)
- Strasbourg / Stuttgart / Munich (since the liaison from Nancy)
- Calais / London; Manheim / Frankfurt am Main (since the liaison from Metz)
- Brussels / Zeebrugge / Gent / Antwerp; Rotterdam (since the liaison from Luxembourg)
- Bremen / Hamburg; Rotterdam; Berlin / Warsaw (since the liaison from Duisburg).

4. Expected Traffic and required capacity for the axis

In a first step, the calculus will be done with the hypothesis of no limitations for the railway transportation on the FERRMED axis, with an annual increase of freight traffic around 5%.

Later, the important role of the Mediterranean ports within the traffic in Asia and North Africa will be taken into consideration and we will consider the objective that railways absorb 35% of the total volume of traffic.

5. Required Characteristics for the Axis

According to the volume of traffic exposed, **an exclusive line for freight traffic** is required and should be complemented, in the most saturated routes, by the present conventional lines properly redesigned.

The characteristics of the exclusive line should be the next ones:

- Width of the line: UIC
- Double line on the whole route.
- Route profile with slopes lower than 12.5‰. Only exceptionally until 15‰.
- For slopes between 12.5‰ and 15‰, Routes until 8 km.
- Within a minimum radius of 4000 meters in bends (exceptionally 3000)
- Electric traction in the whole route (if it is possible, with the same voltage in all the routes).

- Routes and stations suitable for trains 1500 meters long and weighting up to 4000 Tm.
- Signalization suitable for speeds up to 160 km/hour and frequencies from 16 to 20 trains per hour (from 8 to 10 per way).

Through the exclusive line, we obtain reliability in the schedules and ideal average speeds. (Currently, the average speed for an international train for freight in Europe is 17 km/hour)

6. Priority of actions on the main sections of the Axis

In principle, the actions will be structured in three phases, one for 2010, one for 2017 and another one for 2025.

7. Main foreseeable advantages

- Highway and road clearing and better transport flexibility.
The line proposed, with high benefits, is able to handle a traffic equivalent to 20,000 great tonnage trucks daily.
- Greater traffic in the ports.
In the case of Mediterranean ports, there is a possibility of catching new significant volumes (at the moment, more than a third of the World Wide commerce circulates around the Mediterranean sea and only 15% of the goods coming to Europe pass by these ports).
- Costs and time savings, higher reliability and diminution of the stock in transit for the transported goods.
- Energy saving.
- Increasing of the business volume in logistic centres.
- Improvement of the competitiveness for supplying and distribution proceedings of companies, with a better access to the market.
- Increasing of the economic development and in jobs creation in the main regions related to the axis and its main branches (increase of GDP).
- Alignment with the environmental directives of the European Community in energy saving, reduction of CO₂ emanations and respect for the nature.
- Better connectivity between the basic Central European transport network, the Western Mediterranean basin and North Africa.
- Balanced intermodal development between the surface network and the maritime line in the Western Mediterranean basin.

8. Indicative Budget

The required investments in the axis for the period 2005 – 2025 will be detached with the three phases of performance mentioned in section 6.

The amounts of the necessary investments in each of these phases will be considered more accurately when the correspondent technical study is carried out.

9. Action Plan

The principal action lines of the association FERRMED for 2005 are the following:

- Accomplishment of a complete **technical study** of the project, from a preliminary paper, including the indirect economical impact.
- Spreading of the project in all the Western European Union and pick up new ordinary and associated members in all the regions and geographical areas affected by the main way of the axis and its more significant branches.
- Presentation of the project to the European, national and regional institutions affected by the main way of the axis and its more significant branches, so that the pertinent decisions for the achievement of the project are taken.
- To gather, to raise, to defend and to transmit the demands inherent to the project in front of all kind of instances, and to participate in workshops with the different administrations, in order to go ahead in the achievement of the targets and to obtain the inclusion of the FERRMED axis in the national and European programs of maximum priority.

III. DOCUMENTS OF ADHESION

1. Incorporation form to FERRMED association
2. Authorization form for representation among FERRMED

Incorporation to FERRMED Association

 [Name of the entity/company] wants to incorporate the association **Promotion de l'Axe Ferroviaire de marchandises Rhin-Rhône Méditerranée Occidentale**, or **FERRMED** in whereas:

- Ordinary Member (6000 euros per year with the right to vote in the General Assembly)
- Associated Member (1200 euros per year with the right to attend to the General Assembly without the right to vote)

to contribute to the promotion and the development of the Railway Axis Rhine – Rhone – Western Mediterranean which connects the Western Mediterranean regions with the Centre and the North of the Continent.

By this fact the pertinent authorization of representation of our organization is enclosed.

Signed by:

Position in the company:

Print this document on a paper with the logo of the entity

Authorization of representation in FERRMED

ENTITY	Name of the legal entity	
	Juridical form	
	Address of the head office	
	ZIP Number	
	City	
	Country	
	VAT Number	
Legal Representing	Last Name	
	Surname	
	Current Position	
Authorized person	Last Name	
	Surname	
	Date of Birth	
	Place of Birth	
	ID Number	
	Address	
	ZIP Number	
	City	
	Country	

Legal Representative Signature

Stamp of the entity

IV. LIST OF ENTITIES INTERESTED BY THE PROJECT FERRMED

- Aceros Bergara Irestal Group
- AMC Conseil
- APPLUS
- Asociación de Cosecheros-Exportadores de Productores hortofrutícolas de Almería (COEXPAL)
- Asociación Española de Codificación Comercial (AECOC)
- Asociación Española de Fabricantes Azulejos y Pavimentos Cerámicos (ASCER)
- Asociación Grandes Industrias del Campo de Gibraltar
- Associació Empresarial Química de Tarragona
- Association Internationale pour le Tunnel de Salau
- Autoridad Portuaria de Algeciras
- Autoridad Portuaria de Almeria-Motril
- Autoridad Portuaria de Cartagena
- Autoridad Portuaria de Castellón
- Autoridad Portuaria de Valencia
- Autoritat Portuària de Barcelona
- Autoritat Portuària de Tarragona
- AUTOTERMINAL
- Barcelona Centre Logístic (BCL)
- Cámara de Comercio, Industria y Navegación Campo de Gibraltar
- Camara de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Almería
- Cámara de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Cartagena
- Cámara de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Motril
- Cámara de Comercio, Industria y Navegación Valencia
- Cambra de Comerç i Indústria de Girona
- Cambra de Comerç i Indústria de Sabadell
- Cambra de Comerç, Indústria i Navegació de Barcelona
- Centro de Investigaciones para la Transformación (CENIT-UPC)
- CFTA Cargo-Veolia Environnement -Groupe Connex (Francia)
- Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Narbonne-Lezignan-Corbières-Port La Nouvelle
- Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Française de Barcelona
- Chambre Régionale de Commerce et Industrie de Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur et Corse
- Chambre Régionale de Commerce et Industrie de Languedoc - Roussillon
- Col·legi d'Enginyers de Camins Canals i Ports de Catalunya
- Col·legis d'Enginyers Industrials de Catalunya
- Colegio de Ingenieros Industriales de Andalucía Oriental
- Colegio de Ingenieros Industriales de Murcia
- Colegio de Ingenieros Industriales de Valencia
- Colegio Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos de Andalucía
- Colegio Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos de la Comunidad de Valencia
- Comité de Ordenamiento y Expansión de la Moselle (CAPEMM)
- Compañía Española de Laminación, S.L. (CELSA)
- COMSA Rail Transport
- Confederació Empresarial Comarcal de Terrassa (CECOT)
- Confederación Empresarial Valenciana
- Dragados, s.p.l.
- Duisport
- Escola Tècnica Superior d'Enginyers de Camins, Canals i Ports. UPC
- Estudios Montajes y Tendidos Eléctricos (EMTE)
- EUROCEI

- Federación de Empresarios Campo de Gibraltar
- FOMENT DEL TREBALL
- FORD
- Fundación Instituto Portuario de Estudios y Cooperación de la Comunidad Valenciana (FEPORTS)
- FUNDACIÓ OCCITANO CATALANA
- Gonvarri
- Groupement d'Études et de Documentation Ferroviaires
- GRUPO ESTAMPACIONES SABADELL
- ICF Inter Container Interfrigo (Suiza)
- Institut Català de Logística (ICIL)
- Institut Cerdà
- Institut d'Estudis Territorials
- Institut Ignasi Villalonga
- Logística y Transporte Ferroviario, S.A.(LTF)
- MERCABARNA
- MURCIAEmprende
- NETEX
- Petita i Mitjana Empresa de Catalunya (PIMEC)
- Port Tánger
- PRECON
- Servicios de Transportes de Automóviles y Mercancías, S.A. (SETRAM)
- Sociedad Española de Automóviles Turismo (SEAT)
- SOLER Y PALAU
- STVA
- SUN ROLLER
- TERMINAL CATALUNYA, SA
- Terminal de Contenedores Barcelona (TCB)
- Terminal de Contenedores de Algeciras,S.A. (TCA)
- TRANSFESA

The FERRMED axis: a sustainable solution for a competitive rail freight transport

The association **FERRMED A.S.B.L.** (registered in the Moniteur Belge on 5 August 2004) aims at promoting the railway axis **Rhine–Rhône–Occidental Mediterranean** (or FERRMED axis) connecting North and Central Europe with the Mediterranean coast, passing by the Rhone and the Rhine Valley, for the transport of goods. FERRMED brings together companies interested by the development of this axis for the transport of their products, logistic and transport companies, ports and multimodal platforms, chambers of commerce as well as other entities and institutions interested by the transport of goods.

Why promoting the FERRMED axis?

1. A crucial axis: Nowadays, a large part of the trans-European transport of goods is concentrating on roads and highways of the Rhine-Rhone-Occidental Mediterranean axis. These road and highways are about to become saturated.

2. A sustainable solution: Reinforcing the FERRMED axis will allow remedy that problem and face the increasing augmentation of traffic along this itinerary.

3. A reinforced competitiveness: A more efficient FERRMED axis will allow companies and regions of the whole Europe to develop and reinforce their competitiveness.

4. A preserved environment and an increased safety: Railways is the friendliest transportation mode with the environment and the safest. Its revitalisation is at the heart of the European Commission sustainable development policy.



How to promote the FERRMED axis?

By making the development of the FERRMED axis a project of major importance at the European level and by encouraging its incorporation in European and national programmes for the development of transport networks.

For this purpose, **FERRMED** is proposing a two-phase plan:

- To realise a technical study of the project (the accomplishment of the phase 0 of the study, dedicated to the analysis of the present situation, is foreseen for February 2005).
- To present this study to the relevant European, national and regional institutions to ensure they take the pertinent decisions on the matter.

The goal is to obtain a progressive improvement of the FERRMED axis in order to make it totally efficient for 2025.

How to join the FERRMED association?

Your company can become an effective member of FERRMED and beneficiate of the following advantages:

- to be elected member of the Board;
- to participate and vote in the General Assembly;
- to be part of all working commissions and to assist to the operational meetings of the Board.

This would allow your company to participate fully to the development of this project.

The amount of the annual subscription is 6.000 euros by effective member.

If you would like to be less involved in the project, your organisation can also become associate member. Then, it will not be able to be member of the Board. Nevertheless, it will be able to attend the General Assembly, but without voting right. Finally, your company will be allowed to be part of working commissions and operational meetings of the Boards to which it will have been invited.

The amount of the annual subscription is 1.200 euros by associate member.

Another possibility to support FERRMED: Sponsoring

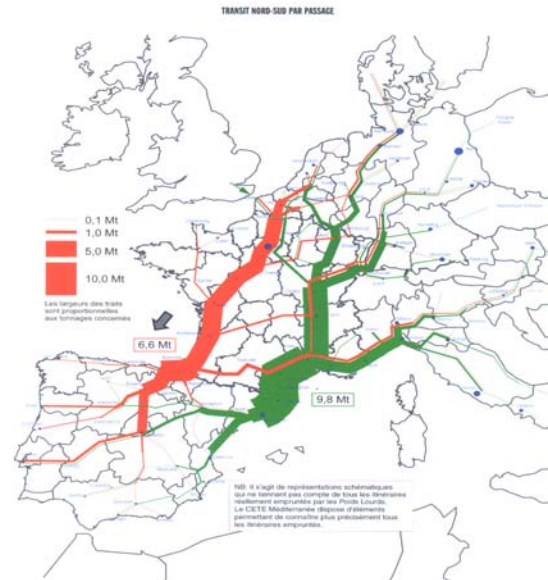
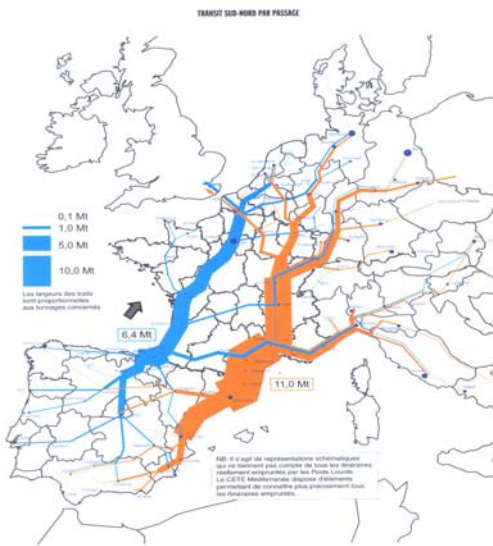
As a sponsor, it is possible:

- to assist, when invited, to the General Assembly, without having the right to vote;
- to participate, when invited, to specific work meetings of the Board.

The amount of the contributions is the lonely decision of the sponsor. Sponsors can make public their support.

1. A CRUCIAL AXIS: Nowadays, a large part of the trans-European transport of goods is concentrating on roads and highways of the Rhine-Rhone-Occidental Mediterranean axis. These road and highways are about to become saturated.

- The Spanish coast and the Rhine and Rhone valleys are forming a whole unity without important geographical obstacles; that is why, for centuries, the most important transport and communication routes of Europe have passed along this axis.
- Ports of North Sea have always been very important economic and commercial poles for Europe.
- Furthermore, given the economic emergence of Asian countries and the proximity of Africa, trade through Mediterranean ports increases every year.
- The axis Rhine – Rhone – Occidental Mediterranean is the fastest interconnection between the North Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.



- This axis connects North and South of Europe and forms a compulsory point for the East-West transport of goods.
- In 2002, the surface transport of goods on this axis through the Pyrenees went over 40 millions tonnes and forecasts indicate that it should more than double from now until 2010.
- Without an efficient railway alternative, the increasing number of trucks on the roads will trigger an unsustainable congestion as well as a series of environmental, economic and safety problems.

2. A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION: Reinforcing the FERRMED axis will allow remedy that problem and face the increasing augmentation of traffic along this itinerary.

- The proposed railway axis, of high standard, has to be able to absorb a traffic equivalent to 20.000 trucks of big capacity per day.
- But, currently, a series of problems are to be solved:
 - Bottlenecks and size limitations along the axis;
 - The lines do not have the same width along the axis;
 - The current lines do not allow to transport a sufficient load all along the axis;
 - Very often, there is a lack of interoperability between railway operators and ports situated on the axis;
 - Coordination between national operators offering a reliable management of goods circulating along the axis is missing.

3. A REINFORCED COMPETITIVENESS: A more efficient FERRMED axis will allow companies and regions of the whole Europe to develop and reinforce their competitiveness.

- A more efficient FERRMED axis will allow:
 - The creation of a favourable environment for the development of companies;
 - An improvement of the competitiveness and reliability of the supplying and distribution processes of companies;
 - An economy, in cost and time, for the transport of goods, a better reliability and a diminution of stocks;
 - A better access to markets;
 - An increasing volume of business in the logistical centres;
 - An economic development and the creation of employment in the areas along the axis;
 - A revalorisation of industrial employments and transport;
 - Mediterranean and North Sea ports, as well as for the fluvial ports, to gain new significant volumes.
- But the economic importance of the FERRMED axis is going further than the zones it goes through – the Mediterranean coast in Spain, the Rhone and Rhine valleys and the North West of Germany. It also supplies numerous regions in Spain, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Denmark, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.
- Without an efficient railway axis, the economic future of the zones it goes through is endangered: there is a risk that companies delocalise and it will be more and more difficult to attract new investments.

4. A PRESERVED ENVIRONMENT AND AN INCREASED SAFETY: Railways is the friendliest transportation mode with the environment and the safest. Its revitalisation is at the heart of the European Commission sustainable development policy.

- The European Commission White Paper on Transport Policy puts the rebalancing of transport modes at the heart of the EU sustainable development strategy. It therefore proposes to revitalize railways.
- Revitalizing the FERRMED axis will allow, in line with the European Directives, to:
 - Save energy;
 - Reduce the emanations of CO₂; helping the EU to reach its objectives of reducing greenhouse effect gases in line with the Kyoto Protocol.
- Besides, dangerous materials will be transported by railways, a safer transport mode than the road.
- Less traffic on roads and highways will allow drivers to gain time and will also favour the plans of the Commission to reduce by 50% the number of dead on European roads from now until 2010.
- The FERRMED axis will favour a better interconnection between the European regions and will guarantee a coherent organisation of the European territory.
- Finally, revitalizing of the FERRMED axis will allow the balanced development of intermodality between the surface transport network, the inland waterways and the maritime lines of the North Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Its revitalisation will also favour short-sea shipping.

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Mr. Jacinto SEGUI

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