



The CREAM team during the official kick off in mid-January at the Railion headquarters in Mainz

A seamless connection from West to East

The CREAM project officially kicked off in mid-January at the Railion headquarters in Mainz. The transnational EU research project to improve and increase rail traffic between the Benelux countries, Turkey and Greece. Along with Railion Deutschland, the project partners include 25 European logistics service providers and research institutes from a total of 11 countries.

CREAM stands for “Customer-driven Rail-freight services on a European mega-corridor based on Advanced business and operating Models”. In addition to the investments made by its individual project partners, the EU has also provided over 12 million euros in funding for the project. The main focus is a pan-European corridor stretching from the Netherlands towards the Bosphorus via Germany, a route promising one of the highest growth potentials in European freight traffic. CREAM endeavors to make rail freight traffic more attractive along this pivotal route using competitive connections across borders. The initial duration of this practice-oriented project is three years.

The project partners aim to shift a total of 200 million ton kilometers of freight from road to rail. To reach this goal, multi-system locomotives are to be increasingly

employed, border stops are to be curtailed and alternative connections, including sea routes, are to be taken into consideration. Furthermore, a modern transnational train surveillance system and the use of modern technologies in transporting sensitive goods are also included in the nine working areas as defined by CREAM.

“We are involved in practically every process”, stresses Ferhat Hacıimamoglu, responsible for the CREAM project at Railion. Railion chairs the sub-project on developing transnational quality management, which aims to harmonize and thus optimize operating procedures in the individual countries. Hacıimamoglu is convinced that “we can only provide consistently good performance for our customers and attract further companies to the railways if we are able to assure quality beyond our borders.”

Combined expertise

At the first meeting of railways and research institutes participating in the quality management sub-project in Skopje, Macedonia at the end of March, partners held lively discussions on various ways of implementing quality assurance. Railion collated the most important results, which will then be integrated as defined standards in a transnational quality manual which is to be completed by the end of this year. “This book will enable us to move on to the second stage of training all of our CREAM partners’ relevant specialists”, says Hacıimamoglu of the plans on the horizon. “Implementation will then follow in the third and fourth stages of the project.

The CREAM project intensifies the close cooperation between DB Logistics and 14 central and southeastern European railways

which began with the ZEUS project. “The difference to ZEUS is that by adding partners from the technology sector, such as universities and external consultants, we are now able to develop and implement new, innovative technologies, for example telematics systems,” enthuses Frank Weppner, head of

the CREAM project at Railion. In addition to integrating universities and consultants, the project also involves the forwarders involved along the way. Customers can also get involved, be it through direct talks with project employees or online. For example, the forum at www.cream-project.eu allows you

to address your thoughts and ideas to the CREAM team directly. For Weppner it is precisely these common interests that form an important aspect of the project: “That lets us optimize the combined expertise of all of our partners.” ■