Rail transport is essential to growth in most countries. Commuter rail and metro services keep our major cities moving and create the deep labour markets that make them competitive. High speed rail out-competes other modes for inter-city connectivity over medium distances when traffic volumes are large and where it is well integrated with other public transport networks. Efficient freight rail is key to international competitiveness not just for heavy export commodities and long distance continental movements but also for production of high value products like automobiles. The best rail operations match the reliability of road services and permit coordinated just-in-time production from multiple sites.

The keys to success are efficiency, investment, focus on the market in terms of quality of service and pricing, and—where the tax payer supports passenger transport—value for money. The last three decades have seen radical improvements in productivity and financial sustainability through liberalisation, most notably in North American freight railways and Japanese passenger railways. In Europe progress has been made in securing more stable public funding and reducing debt in some countries, but not everywhere. The development of high speed rail has been rapid but strategic development objectives have overtaken commercial or social rate of return as the criteria for investment, with consequences for financial sustainability. China has seen a similar, even more pronounced expansion. India is making very large investments in dedicated freight capacity but still cross-subsidises under-priced passenger services from freight profits and, along with Russia, has still to fully liberate prices where rail faces competition from trucking. In these conditions traffic is bound to be lost as motorway networks expand. Shifting freight from road to rail is a concern everywhere, with targets often aspirational rather than clearly costed and resourced.

With Ministers from around the world, and leaders from the rail sector, this Roundtable will address the following issues:

- What are the key opportunities for rail in trade and freight transport? What policies will do most to increase rail freight’s modal share? Is there any reason not to privatise freight railways?
- How can enhanced cooperation best be combined with promoting competition in the provision of rail services – freight and passenger?
- Why invest in high speed rail and under what conditions? For speed, for capacity, to free up commuting lines, for commercial returns, for wider economic benefits? Who should pay for regional benefits from uncommercial lines?
[1] Canada, Mexico and the USA.

**Related information:**

- *The Economics of Investment in High-Speed Rail*, ITF, 2015
- *Freight Railway Development in Mexico*, ITF, 2014

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**Speaker**

Anna Johansson  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Sweden

Anna Johansson has been Minister for Infrastructure in the Swedish Government since 2014. She is chairman of the Social Democrats in Gothenburg Municipality, deputy member of the executive board of the Social Democrats and was deputy municipal commissioner in Gothenburg Municipality from 2009 to 2014. Johansson was elected to the Swedish Riksdag (parliament) in the 2014 general election.
Peter Gašperšič is Slovenia’s Minister of Infrastructure. His previous experience includes heading several construction investment projects and civil engineering project for different investors in the private sector. His career in public administration, where he has held leading positions for ten years, including the position of state secretary, has included all fields of transport, infrastructure and construction.

Dan Ťok was appointed Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic in December 2014. Prior to this, from 2008 to 2014, he served as Chairman of the Board and Managing Director of Skanska. He was also a member of the Scientific Board of the Brno University of Technology, the Regional Business Chamber in Brno and President of the American Chamber of Commerce. From 2006 to 2007, he was Managing Director of KKCG Industry B.V., responsible for the strategic development of Kovosvit MAS, Kovosvit a.s., ŽDB Group and Bonatrans Group and the further expansion of KKCG Industry B.V.

Il-ho Yoo has been Korea’s Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport since March 2015. Prior to his appointment, Yoo was Policy Committee Chair of the Saenuri Party, having been its Speaker, from 2013 to 2014. He has been a Representative in Korea’s 19th National Assembly since 2012, having served as a Representative in the 18th National Assembly from 2008 to 2012. From 2002 to 2012, Yoo was a Professor at the Korea Development Institute (KDI) School of Public Policy and Management. From 1998 to 2001 he was President of the Korea Institute of Public Finance.
Speaker

**John-Ragnar Aarset**  
State Secretary  
Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications

John-Ragnar Aarset has been State Secretary at the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications since 2013. The political post as state secretary in Norway’s government ministries was gradually introduced from 1947. The state secretaries and the political advisers are the political collaborators of the prime minister and the ministers. Prior to this Aarset was first then second Deputy Representative to Parliament for Buskerud between 2001 and 2009. Since 2000 he has been Chairman and member of The Decision Committee, The Norwegian Young Conservatives.

Speaker

**Maria Magdalena Grigore**  
State Secretary, Ministry of Transport  
Romania

Maria Magdalena Grigore was appointed State Secretary at the Romanian Ministry of Transport in January 2015.

Speaker

**Robert Goodwill**  
Parliamentary Undersecretary of State  
Department for Transport, UK

Robert Goodwill was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department for Transport, UK in 2013. Prior to this, he was appointed by the Prime Minister David Cameron as an Assistant Government Whip and shortly after this was promoted to Pairing Whip in the Government Whips’ Office. In 2005 Goodwill was elected as a Member of Parliament for Scarborough and Whitby, and served 18 months as a Member of the Transport Select Committee. In 2006, he was promoted to the front bench, serving in the Opposition Whips’ office having departmental responsibilities for DEFRA business. Goodwill was re-elected for a second term in the UK’s General Election of 2010.
Yuriria Mascott Pérez has been Mexico’s Undersecretary of Transportation since 2014. Prior to this appointment, Mascott Pérez has been General Director of the Mexican Postal Service, Sepomex, since December 2012. She has extensive experience in the transport and communications sector, having held various positions since 1995, including at the Federal Commission of Electricity.

Frantisek Palko, has been State Secretary at the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of Slovakia since April 2012. Prior to this, he was Director of the Economic Policy Institute, a non-profit organisation, having been State Secretary at the Ministry of Finance from 2006 to 2010 and Director-General of Fiscal Policy between 2003 and 2006. Prior to this he was the Ministry’s Director General of the Financial Market, following his Directorship of the Department of Banking and Insurance. Since 2007 he has also been a Member of the Supervisory Board on Social Insurance and since 2002 has been Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Slovak Guarantee and Development Bank.

Vladimir Shulmeister was appointed Ukraine’s First Deputy Minister of Infrastructure in December 2014. Prior to this, Shulmeister was Chief Financial Officer and Deputy General Director of the Foxtrot group of financial companies between 2005 and 2009. From 2003 to 2005, he ran he own consulting company, ComFi Solutions SA. Previously, Shulmeister was Structural Group Manager, Trade and Finance, at Fortis Bank, UK.
Speaker

**Alexander Saltanov**
Vice-President
JSC "Russian Railways"

Alexander Saltanov has been Vice-President of the joint-stock company Russian Railways since 2011. Previously, he was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation from 2001 to 2011, following a diplomatic career which began in 1970. Saltanov is a graduate of the Moscow State University for International Affairs.

Speaker

**Monika Heiming**
Executive Director
European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM)

Monika Heiming has been Executive Director of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) since 2011. She has been active as a lobbyist and manager of international associations and groupings for a number of years. Heiming was Secretary-General of the European Rail Freight Association (ERFA), having managed and marketed the engineering activities of European engineering group Europengineers EEIG from 1999 to 2004. Prior to this, she was involved in developing UNIFE (the Association of the European Rail Industry) in Brussels, Belgium from 1993 to 1997.

Speaker

**Jean-Pierre Loubinoux**
Director General
International Union of Railways (UIC)

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux was appointed Director-General of the International Union of Railways (UIC), the worldwide association representing the rail sector and encompassing 240 railways across all continents, in March 2009. His mandate was renewed at the December 2013 UIC General Assembly in Paris and is set to run until 2015. Prior to joining UIC, has was Chairman and CEO of French railways SNCF International and SNCF Director of International Development from 2001 to 2009, having been appointed Chief Executive of SNCF Freight International in 2001. Before joining the SNCF Freight Department where he successively managed the Coal-Steel Business Unit and the Human Resources, Data Processing and Finance Department, Jean-Pierre Loubinoux held various responsibilities including Director of the SNCF General Delegation in North-America and Chief Executive of French Railways UK Ltd in Britain.
Speaker

Íñigo Izaguirre
International Director
RENFE

Íñigo Izaguirre is International Director of RENFE, the Spanish Rail Service. Before joining RENFE, Mr. Izaguirre was CFO of the Arab-Spanish Consortium Al-Shoula, responsible for the construction and operation the high-speed train between the cities of Mecca and Madinah in Saudi Arabia. He has also worked for Andersen Consulting and Procter & Gamble in various countries in Europe. Íñigo Izaguirre has a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Navarra and the School of Engineering of Bilbao and Master of Science in Management Science & Engineering from Stanford University, California.

Moderator

Matt Frei
Moderator
ITN’s Channel 4

Matt Frei leads ITN’s Channel 4 coverage of the Americas and is also part of the presenting team across Channel 4’s news and current affairs portfolio, including the award-winning Dispatches programme. Previously, Frei anchored the BBC World News America bulletin and was also Washington Correspondent. He presented a weekly radio show called Americana, and in 20 years at the corporation reported from Bonn, Rome, Bosnia, Kosovo, North Africa, Hong Kong and Singapore.