Keeping the world’s top transport policy event on track

17 April 2015
Tags:
climate change
tourism
trade

Lesley Brown, EURAILmag, The Magazine for European Rail Decision Makers
The ITF’s Annual Summit has become the must-attend event for high-level exchange on global transport strategies for the 21st century. With only weeks to go to the 2015 Summit, EURAILmag caught up with José Viegas, ITF Secretary-General, and Mary Crass, ITF Head of Policy and Summit Preparation, at their offices in Paris, to find out what goes into keeping this key event on the rails.

EURAILmag: How is the Annual Summit theme chosen?

José Viegas: It is a long process, usually initiated by the Secretariat, then validated by the ITF’s 54 member countries. Normally the theme is sufficiently wide not only to embrace a variety of topics, but also participants from different angles. Hence a large part of the preparatory work involves putting together a programme that appeals to different points of view in society, different types of stakeholder, and even different types of people active in policy making.
For instance, after the 2014 edition on “Transport for a Changing World”, we jointly decided that it would make sense to have a sequence of umbrella topics for the Summits to come in 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Mary Crass: We have an 18-month planning cycle. The 2016 Summit theme will be “Green and Inclusive Transport.” Each time we start out with a big strategic subject, which subsequently articulates across sectors and modes.

EURAILmag: What are the major issues for debate in 2015 on “Transport, Trade and Tourism”?

José Viegas: Transport is an enabler of trade and tourism and the Summit will explore the bilateral relations between both of them and transport. It will debate policy issues linked to the interconnected nature of transport, trade and tourism:

- how should transport respond to shifting global trade flows?
- how can it prepare for shocks to supply chains, caused, for instance, by increasingly extreme weather as a result of climate change?
- how can the growth in global tourism be balanced with sustainability?
- what can be done to improve the transport experience for tourists?

Mary Crass: Tourism is part of the services envelope of trade. Often the data and decision-making regarding trade do not consider tourism activity, which can result in a policy and governance disconnect. Part of our message at the Summit will highlight the importance of more "joined-up" governance of transport, tourism, and trade.

EURAILmag: How do you keep a fresh approach each year?

José Viegas: The Summit concept is always evolving, and each year we take the lessons learned and develop from them.

Mary Crass: Year on year we introduce innovations as we learn from feedback and inputs. This year we have two newly developed programme formats, refined from 2014. Firstly, a masterclass, whereby a single topic is explored in depth, with an expert from the transport community who is recognised globally as having the highest level of notoriety and competence in this area. This year it will explore the role transport plays in major events, such as the Olympics, international exhibitions, the football World Cup, etc.

Secondly, to leverage the ITF’s rich body of research and policy analysis, we’re bringing the outcomes of our work to the forefront of the Summit. This May a session “Do mega-ships need mega-ports?” is dedicated to maritime transport.

We also see a direct link between policy discussions at the Summit and the COP21 Conference on Climate Change, in Paris in November 2015. The Summit will provide an important opportunity to align views on contributions of transport, trade and tourism to climate change mitigation.
Women in transport

12 June 2015
Magdalena Olczak-Rancitelli, International Transport Forum

The role of women in the transport sector is something that needs to be addressed. Women account for only 17.5% of the workforce in EU urban public transport for example, and hold less than 10% of technical and operational jobs. In the United States, women comprise only 15% of transport and related... Read more

Transport, trade and tourism

27 May 2015
Pravin Krishna, Chung Ju Yung Distinguished Professor of International Economics and Business at Johns Hopkins University

To mark the opening of the International Transport Forum’s Annual Summit, today’s post is by the Summit’s keynote speaker Pravin Krishna, Chung Ju Yung Distinguished Professor of International Economics and Business at Johns Hopkins University We live in exciting times.... Read more

Why should cities foster coach tourism?

26 May 2015
Nick Greenfield, ETOA - the European Tourism Association

Polis and EMTA are hosting a side event at the ITF Summit about cities and coach transport. Several European cities, such as Budapest and Amsterdam have developed strategies for coach tourism, access and routing in answer to the increasing challenges that coach tourism and travel brings. The IRU... Read more

How public transport supports business and tourism in cities

25 May 2015
Alain Flausch, Secretary General, International Association of Public Transport (UITP)

Cities are the powerhouses of the world economy. They generate more than 80% of the global economic output. The economic health of cities is thus central to global economic growth. High quality public transport improves connectivity in metropolitan areas and reduces constraints on growth, by... Read more

Sharing economy and collective transport: a level playing field is key

21 May 2015
The desire for innovative businesses to make the most of new technology is driving the economy. Current technology allows for companies to work more efficiently, offer new products to customers and create new or meet unsatisfied consumer demand. Today, people have access and the opportunity to...

**How to Be a Smart Freight Leader**

13 May 2015
Sophie Punte (Executive Director, Smart Freight Centre) and Angie Farrag-Thibault (Associate Director, BSR)
Imagine you are the CEO of a multinational company trying to get millions of shoes, laptops, and candy bars to consumers around the globe. Your global freight supply chain is vast and complex, involving thousands of contractors who use a combination of trucks, trains, ships, and planes to reach...

**Long-distance freight transport - innovation for climate mitigation**

6 May 2015
Francois Davenne, Secretary General, International Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF)
Innovation can facilitate the modal shift to rail, a key component for climate change mitigation. However, rail's network structure and insufficient legal and technical interoperability need to be tackled in order to achieve such innovation. In terms of interoperability...

**Transforming urban mobility for a better future**

23 April 2015
Andrey Berdichevskiy, Senior Community Manager, Automotive Industry, World Economic Forum
Urbanisation, coupled with strong population growth in certain regions, will add an additional 2.5 billion people to cities by 2050, by which point two-thirds of the world’s population will be based in urban areas. As such, cities around the world will face increasing demand for urban...

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Make logistics a pillar of a global sustainable development strategy!

10 April 2015  
Marco L. Sorgetti, Director General, FIATA (International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations)  
In the year 2000, the 189 member states of the United Nations set themselves eight priority objectives to be achieved by 2015. Known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), they ranged from eradicating extreme poverty and achieving universal primary education to ensuring environmental stability... Read more

Aviation’s climate action takes flight

3 April 2015  
Michael Gill, Executive Director, Air Transport Action Group  
I would like you to think for a moment about the coordination it takes to get one flight into the air. From the engineers who build and maintain the aircraft, to the airline flight crews and the airport baggage handlers and ground teams, the catering staff and the air traffic management personnel... Read more

Getting more from city tourism growth

12 March 2015  
Ruud van der Ploeg, Secretary-General, European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA)  
City tourism is a thriving income source for local economies. Innovative local authorities will make the most of recent “shared economy” opportunities, from increased employment as rentals and goods’ hire boom, to technology jobs for app-makers to design better city mapping,... Read more

Boost global growth through better logistics connectivity!

26 February 2015  
Nicolette van der Jagt is Director General of CLECAT  
Ensuring convenient access to global trade by providing logistics connectivity is the best political investment policy makers can make. The Global Connectedness Index 2014 compiled by logistics DHL shows that emerging economies are about as globally connected as advanced economies in terms of trade... Read more