

**EUROPEAN TRANSPORT RESEARCH ALLIANCE
(ETRA)**

Terms of Reference

(As revised by the Plenary of December 2014 - in articles 6.2 d&e)



1 Overview

- a. The European Transport Research Alliance is a voluntary grouping of partner organisations coming together for the deepening of the European Research Area in Transport (ERA-T) through the exchange of information and sharing of positions on areas of mutual interest.

- b. It shall provide a forum for coordination between the partners. It is not expected to manage or subsume its partners. Partners remain free, and encouraged, to develop their own position papers and develop their unique views. However, the benefits of cooperation between the Alliance partners will provide them with a more powerful collective voice and the efficiency benefits of reducing duplication, and give the highest visibility to the transport research community and its potential contribution in supporting policies issues.

2 Challenges for the ERA in Transport (ERA-T)

- a. Our shared transport system is part of the problem and at the same time part of the solution for all pressing societal and political Grand Challenges addressed by the European Union. These Challenges include climate change, energy, water and food, public health, ageing societies and globalisation. Some examples of these issues include the need to:
 - i. Reduce the climate, air quality and noise impacts of transport,
 - ii. Make transport infrastructure and transport systems more resilient to a changing climate,
 - iii. Reduce energy consumption in the transport system and increase the security of supply,
 - iv. Reduce transport system impacts on ground water supplies,
 - v. Consider transport in land-use planning,
 - vi. Increase the effectiveness of transport necessary for food production (including in developing countries) and improve transport logistics to reduce food waste,
 - vii. Raise the standards of public health by increasing access to health facilities (including developing countries), increasing the resilience of the transport system in pandemics and improving safety and security, reducing traffic accidents fatalities and injuries,
 - viii. Adapt transport and mobility systems for an ageing population,
 - ix. Shape and maintain a transport system that reflects the needs of developing globalisation and help European transport system stakeholders to adapt accordingly.

- b. Addressing these Grand Challenges will be one of the key priorities, if not THE key priority, of the ERA-T. The core belief of the Alliance is that only through a well-functioning ERA will these challenges be met. Focussing on individual elements of the ERA separately will not be sufficient because it is only through a joined-up approach that we will successfully address those challenges. This requires an extension to the coordination and cooperation between transport research stakeholders.

3 Building the ERA in Transport

- a. To build the ERA-T and associated transport research programmes, the so-called Ljubljana process is recognised as critical by the Alliance. This ERA concept combines a European "internal market" for research, where researchers, technology and knowledge freely circulate with effective pan-European coordination of national and regional research activities, programmes and policies together with initiatives implemented and funded at European level.
- b. In the spirit of this objective, the Alliance, following the work that has been done so far by the Lyon Declaration Signatories¹, will be working along the following ERA themes;
- i. The **adequate flow of competent researchers** with high levels of mobility between institutions, disciplines, sectors and countries (this has been long recognised by Alliance partners).
 - ii. The establishment of **world-class research infrastructures** that are integrated, networked and accessible to research teams from across Europe and the world is recognised. This aspect includes not only individual 'hard' research infrastructures such as civil engineering laboratories facilities, as well as the networks of electronic communication infrastructures that will link geographically dispersed facilities with each other and with researchers, but also the soft infrastructures based on databases and libraries. The Alliance will consider not only the technical requirements for facilities that will be required to address the still-emerging issues related to, for example, climate change adaptation, but also the issues of improving the coordination of research infrastructure management and means of access to reduce fragmentation.
 - iii. Developing **excellent research institutions and communities** that include engagement with effective public-private cooperation and partnerships.

¹ In 2008, ECTRI, FERSI, FEHRL, EURNEX, HUMANIST, ISN and NEARCTIS as the Lyon Declaration signatories committed themselves to work together on the deepening of the European Research Area objectives in the field of transport in order to address the Grand Societal Challenges. The concept of ETRA derives from this Lyon Declaration.

- iv. Through their links with industry and notably through their roles in many European Technology Platforms (ETPs), Alliance partners are and will continue more heavily in the future to be engaged in developing **effective knowledge-sharing** between policy makers, public and private research, industry and society.
- v. Promoting **International cooperation** is a core concept for the Alliance. Opening of the ERA to the world is a key aspect for raising the level of scientific expertise, addressing global challenges and creating a more dynamic and competitive sector.
A number of Alliance partner organisations already include international partners within their memberships. Through these established links, the synergy between international cooperation and other ERA elements mentioned above is clear.
- vi. Finally, a significant emphasis is placed on **well-coordinated research programmes and priorities**, including jointly-programmed public research at European level involving common priorities, coordinated implementation and joint evaluation.

4 Objectives and purpose of the Alliance

The main objective of the Alliance is to provide a platform through which the main transport research Organisations can work together on topics of mutual interest and coordinate their efforts towards the full realisation of the ERA in the field of Transport along the lines mentioned in the previous article.

The objectives of the Alliance are to be realised through the following:

- a. Providing a structure for the interchange of knowledge and making joint efforts to foster research results through to their full implementation,
- b. Promoting the setting of joint transport research priorities and coordinating research programmes and initiatives,
- c. Promoting cooperation in all relevant areas - starting with its partner Organisations and, where possible, developing cross-modal and interdisciplinary joint research activities (including JRIs),
- d. Preparing common position papers (e.g. SRA, road maps) on key transport related issues for added value to the transport users and the community as a whole,
- e. Joint strengthening of the European research expertise, research infrastructures and mobility of researchers through specific joint actions and initiatives,
- f. Promoting the uptake of European transport expertise and innovation internationally and vice versa,
- g. Supporting the continued development of TRA as the major European and international conference bringing together all stakeholders in the sector,
- h. Other related initiatives as necessary.

5 The core values of the Alliance

The partners of the Alliance will share the following common core values and apply them in all their activities:

- i. A conviction and willingness to go forward together, to develop the ERA in Transport;
- ii. Transparency;
- iii. Mutual respect for distinctive roles and positions.

The partners of the Alliance are expected to work in true partnership and mutual understanding.

6 The Structure of the Alliance

The Alliance will be composed of the appropriate partner Organisations necessary to achieve its goals.

6.1 Partnership of the Alliance

- a. Partners will be Research Associations.
- b. Applications for partnership may only be accepted from entities based in EU and EFTA countries whose main focus is transport research and its application. Such Organisations shall include members from at least five (5) EU/EFTA countries.
- c. After review by the Chair on the validity of application, requests for partnership shall be considered by the Plenary of Partners. Decisions on partnership shall be decided by unanimous agreement.
- d. There is no limit on the number of partners.
- e. Partners will not be charged a fee by the Alliance. However, partners may from time to time make voluntary contributions to common activities.

6.2 Legal basis

- a. The Alliance is not a legal entity.
- b. It shall work according to its Terms of Reference
- c. The Alliance will be governed by the Plenary of the Partners. Each partner is represented by one Plenary member nominated by their respective President. No more than one Plenary member shall be from the same research institute. A Plenary shall be considered a quorum when at least two-thirds of the Partners are present or represented.
- d. A Chair shall be elected by the Plenary. Any person nominated by a Partner may be a candidate. He or she should represent the Alliance with a neutral perspective and not an individual Partner.

The Plenary shall also elect a Vice-Chair to support and share the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in pursuing the aims of the Alliance.

- e. The Chair and Vice Chair are appointed personally for a period of two (2) years.
- f. Changes to the Terms of Reference can be made by the Plenary of the Partners by a two-thirds majority at a quorate meeting.
- g. The Alliance is initially established for a period of four (4) years. It may develop a new Terms of Reference for continuation beyond that period. It can be dissolved at any time by the consensus of the partners or if the number of partners falls below three (3).

6.3 Plenary

- a. The Plenary will meet once per year or otherwise as required by the Chair or by two-thirds of the members.
- b. The Plenary will establish an agreed process and the necessary resources to carry out the work. Decisions should be reached on the basis of consensus.
- c. The Partners will elect the Chair and a Secretary at their inaugural meeting.
- d. At the suggestion of the Partners, non-voting observer positions may be agreed by the Plenary to complement the workings of the Alliance from organisations outside of the Alliance. The number of such observer positions cannot exceed 25% of the total number of Alliance partners. Observers may attend the Plenary meetings at the invitation of the Chair. They can intervene on request of the Chair.
- e. The functions exercised by the members of the Plenary, the Chair or the Secretary will not be subject to remuneration.
- f. Minutes of the meeting shall be kept by the Secretary of the Alliance.

6.4 Secretary

- a. A secretariat function is required to support the Chair and the Plenary.
- b. Proposals for a Secretary shall be made by the Chair and will be appointed by a two-thirds majority of the Plenary. The members of the Plenary will finally define and agree the description of the role of the Secretary.
- c. Main Tasks:
 - i. Prepare and organise Plenary meetings,
 - ii. Prepare draft minutes in liaison with the Chair,
 - iii. Provide internal communication: e.g. mailings, web-site (if required) and intranet updates,
 - iv. Provide external communication: contact point for requests of basic Alliance information including applications for joining,
 - v. Support dissemination activities.

The post of Secretary shall not be remunerated and shall be provided as an in-kind contribution of one or more of the Partners.

6.5 Working Groups (WGs)

- a. Cross-sectorial WGs may be created by the Plenary. Their role may be as a platform of exchange and possibly aimed at harmonising activities between the partners of the Alliance, or creating new activities at the request of the Partners. All WGs created will need a moderator and Terms of Reference (ToR). WG moderators and ToRs will be agreed by the Plenary.
- b. Any Partner's member organisation that wants to join a WG will have to apply in writing to the moderator(s). A nomination of a liaison person within the organisation and the expression of commitment by the organisation are necessary.
- c. Subject to the approval of the Plenary, any European or international organisation having a significant research activity in the transport sector could be a member of a WG.
- d. Withdrawal from the WG takes place after a six-month period of inactive participation.
- e. Each WG shall provide a report on its activities for each Plenary meeting.

6.6 Costs and funding

- a. Each Partner shall cover their own costs and provide services in-kind for the operation of the Alliance.
- b. Membership fees shall not be charged to partners.
- c. The Alliance may mobilise public and private funds to achieve its objectives.
- d. Proposals for European funds may be submitted to support the activities of the Alliance. Such funds shall be managed through the Alliance partner organisations or their members. However, the Alliance itself will not apply for research funding.

7 Relation to European Technology Platforms (ETPs)

- a. The Alliance is complementary to the ETPs. Appropriate links should be maintained through the Partners with all relevant ETPs for the purposes of agenda setting and research projects arising.

8 Accession to the Terms of Reference

Partners acceding to these Terms of Reference are:

Association	President	Signature and Date
ECTRI	Neil Paulley, TRL	
EURNEX	Wolfgang Steinicke, EURNEX	
FEHRL	Joris AI, Rijkswaterstaat	
FERSI	Horst Schulze, BAST	
Humanist VCE	Jean-Pierre Medevielle, IFSTTAR	

