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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Rail Transport  
(Fifty-fifth session, 16-18 October 2001,  
agenda item 4 )

**STUDY OF THE SITUATION OF THE RAILWAYS IN MEMBER COUNTRIES**

Addendum 3

Transmitted by the International Union of Railways (UIC)

**RAIL PASSENGER TRAFFIC IN THE EU AND EFTA COUNTRIES (1950 – 2000)**

The attached graph shows the total passenger traffic in the EU and EFTA from 1950 to 2000 in Pkms. At 294.0 billion Pkms, traffic in 2000 is two-thirds higher than it was in 1950.

As the graph shows total passenger figures, it includes both "high speed" and "conventional" traffic. High speed services commenced in 1981, by which time the "conventional" traffic had established a 30 year upward trend, with no reason to believe that it would not have continued upwards even if high speed services had not been "invented".

Whilst it is common to talk of a "high speed network" there is not in fact a separate physical network as such. There are sections of new high speed line that have been added onto or built into the existing network, and there are some sections of existing line that have been up-graded for high speed running, but the beginnings and ends of these lines lie in the existing network. The high speed trains therefore make extensive use of the ordinary network of railway lines, travelling over the network at normal speeds, usually at the beginnings and ends of their journeys.

"High speed network" may also be taken to refer to the extent of high speed services, and while this is useful as a concept it would then represent the sum of the services rather than indicating a separate comprehensive series of interconnecting trains.

However talk of a "high speed network" brought about the need to find a short way to refer, by contrast, to non-high speed services, and the term "conventional network" was born, but this again is something of a misconception. The "conventional network" is no more and no less than the whole railway network which has existed since the 19th century. It is not a network to be "developed" in the sense often implied, it exists.

In other words the "high speed" services and the so-called "conventional services" are part and parcel of the same whole. The high speed trains are part of the continuous and continuing development and improvement of rail services. They are the natural and worthy successors to the famous express trains, which were, literally, the high speed trains of their day. In time those express trains became the norm, and after 20 years that is now happening to the current generation of high speed trains. As more and more high speed trains have been introduced, they have replaced the "conventional" services, so that the passengers carried on high speed trains now account (in Pkms) for 19% of the total.

Behind the glamour of the high speed services and the attention given to them lies the solid achievement of the workaday, day in, day out "ordinary" services: suburban, local, regional, inter-regional, interurban and intercity trains that make up the major part of the ever increasing rail passenger traffic in the EU and EFTA.

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# Rail Passenger Traffic in the 17 Countries now in EU & EFTA 1950 - 2000

