

# EEA passenger transport by rail 1990 - 1998

*Some countries: huge increase  
some countries: large decrease*

## Statistics in focus

### TRANSPORT

THEME 7 – 2/2001

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Total passenger transport by rail for the EEA rose by 2.9 % between 1990 and 1998 (Graph 1). The number of passengers increased steadily from 1995. However, the peak registered in 1992, when the EEA railway networks carried 5 200 million passengers overall, has not been reached again.

In the period of reference, twelve of the sixteen countries recorded a rise in the number of rail passengers carried.

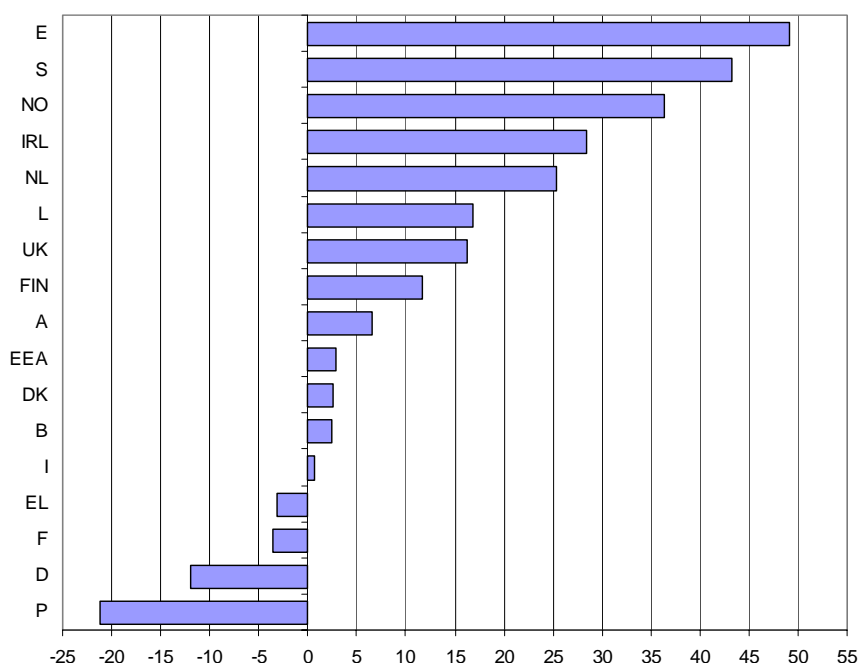
The highest increase in the volume of rail passengers was experienced by Spain (+ 49.2 %), followed by Sweden (+ 43.3 %) and Norway (+ 36.3%). The biggest decrease (- 21.2 %) has been registered in Portugal (due to the decline in the volume of Portuguese national transport).

In 1998, Denmark registered the highest number of journeys per inhabitant (28.1), more than double the EEA average (13.5). The lowest rate was recorded in Greece (1.1).

The Netherlands had, that year, the highest network utilisation rate (114 300 passengers per kilometre of network). Greece had the lowest rate (5 100 passengers per kilometre of network).

Norway shows the lowest rail network density: 12.4 m/km<sup>2</sup>, which represents nine times less than the EEA highest value (111.7 m/km<sup>2</sup>) recorded by Belgium.

**Graph 1: The percentage change of the total passengers transport in 1998 compared to 1990**



Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

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## Total passenger transport

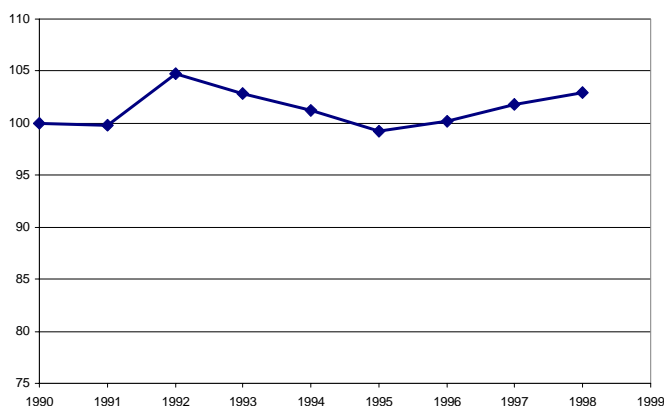
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Over the long term, Spain more than doubled its number of passengers (+ 134 % between 1980 and 1998). Remarkable increases have also been registered by Ireland (+93.0 %) and the Netherlands (62.8 %). By contrast, Germany, Portugal and Belgium recorded a fall in the volume of passenger transport. Luxembourg and Austria experienced little change (see Table 4 on page 6).

Between 1990 and 1998, at EEA level, three stages of evolution of the passenger transport can be distinguished (Graph 2).

The total number of passengers rose by 4.8 % from 1990 to 1992, when it reached its peak. The countries with the biggest contribution (in terms of absolute change) to this increase were Spain, the Netherlands and Germany. For Spain, one of the reasons for the considerable growth in the number of passengers could have been the inauguration of high-speed services over the new Madrid-Seville route for the Seville World Exhibition in April 1992.

**Graph 2: Evolution of the total passenger transport in EEA for the period 1990-1998 – in % (1990=100)**



Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

From 1992 to 1995, the EEA passenger transport went into decline (-5.3 %) due to the strong decrease in the number of passengers in Germany, France and Portugal. France experienced, in fact, a steady decline, recording a decrease of 8 % between 1994 and 1995, probably due to the strike at the end of 1995. In the case of Portugal, the growing popularity of express and interregional services had not been able to compensate for the decline in regional, suburban and international traffic, largely put down to an increased car ownership and an improving road network.

Between 1995 and 1998, the EEA total passenger transport registered a steady increase (3.7 %). The field was mainly led by the United Kingdom, France and Spain, largely compensating the decline recorded by the Netherlands, Germany and Italy. France, in particular, notched up this rise as a consequence of the growth in the activity on the TGV network.

Over the eight-year period under review (1990 to 1998), twelve of the sixteen countries experienced an increase in passenger numbers, while the figures for Portugal, Germany, France and Greece took a downturn.

Spain recorded the biggest rise in passenger transport (+ 49.2 %), followed by Sweden (43.3 %), Norway (36.3 %), Ireland (28.5 %) and the Netherlands (25.4 %).

In absolute terms, in 1998 Germany carried the highest number of passengers (1 332 millions), followed by the United Kingdom (891 millions) and France (812 millions). These three countries accounted for 60 % of the total passenger transport within the EEA. Greece, Luxembourg and Ireland posted the lowest passenger transport figures.

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## Breakdown by type of transport

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The breakdown of total passenger transport into national and international transport was available only for Belgium, Greece, France, Austria, Portugal, Finland, United Kingdom and Norway.

Over a five-year period (1994 to 1998) the volume of national and international passenger transport rose in

Belgium and Finland, whereas Greece and Austria experienced a fall in figures. In France and Portugal, a decline in national passenger transport contrasted with a rising number of international passengers. Norway recorded a rise in national transport, but a decrease in the number of international passengers.

## National transport

Four countries (Greece, France, Austria and Portugal) posted a negative trend in national passenger transport (Table 1). Portugal experienced the biggest decrease (-11.8 %). The highest increase in the volume of

national passenger transport was registered in UK (24.9 %), followed by Norway (24.1%) and Finland (16.7 %). Belgium recorded a slight increase in 1998 compared to 1994 (0.4 %).

**Table 1: National passenger transport – in thousands**

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Change 1994-1998 (%)
<b>Belgium</b>	133 417	133 215	130 754	133 209	133 923	0,4
<b>Greece</b>	11 517	11 241	12 610	13 051	11 509	-0,1
<b>France</b>	792 596	724 873	767 678	773 717	786 123	-0,8
<b>Austria</b>	180 918	185 247	185 053	176 382	172 354	-4,7
<b>Portugal</b>	201 102	187 357	176 914	177 932	177 323	-11,8
<b>Finland</b>	43 849	44 249	46 814	49 760	51 155	16,7
<b>United Kingdom</b>	708 343	:	798 188	839 353	884 812	24,9
<b>Norway</b>	37 758	39 459	40 571	44 634	46 856	24,1

Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

## International transport

The percentage changes in international transport over the period 1994-1998 are greater than for national transport (Table 2). A decline in the number of international passengers was registered in Norway (-31 %), Austria (-25.1 %) and Greece (-19.6 %).

Increases in the volume of international transport were recorded in Portugal – whose figures more than doubled - France, Finland and Belgium. Since 1996, a steady increase of international passenger transport has been recorded in UK (29.4 %).

**Table 2: International passenger transport – in thousands**

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Change 1994-1998 (%)
<b>Belgium</b>	9 185	10 797	10 942	10 253	11 934	29,9
<b>Greece</b>	209	237	206	210	168	-19,6
<b>France</b>	13 769	15 974	18 849	23 539	26 054	89,2
<b>Austria</b>	9 494	8 785	8 375	7 515	7 111	-25,1
<b>Portugal</b>	254	176	180	198	642	152,8
<b>Finland</b>	140	171	186	220	215	53,6
<b>United Kingdom</b>	-	:	4 867	6 004	6 300	29,4 (96-98)
<b>Norway</b>	168	134	130	110	116	-31,0

Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

In 1998, the shares of international transport in total vary considerably between countries, from 8.2 % in Belgium to 0.4 % in Portugal and Finland (and even less in Norway: 0.2%).

In Belgium and Greece the absolute change in international transport has in the period 1994-1998 a higher contribution to the total passenger evolution than the national transport.

In France, the remarkable increase in the international transport (89.2 %) turned the negative national

transport change (-0.8 %) into a positive development of total passengers figure.

For countries like Portugal and Finland, where the share of international transport in total is very low (less than 1 %), even a very high increase in international transport of 152.8 % and 53.6 %, respectively, does not influence the development of the total passenger figures. In Norway, the strong decline in international passengers (-31%) has almost no effect on the figure for total passengers.

## Network utilisation rate

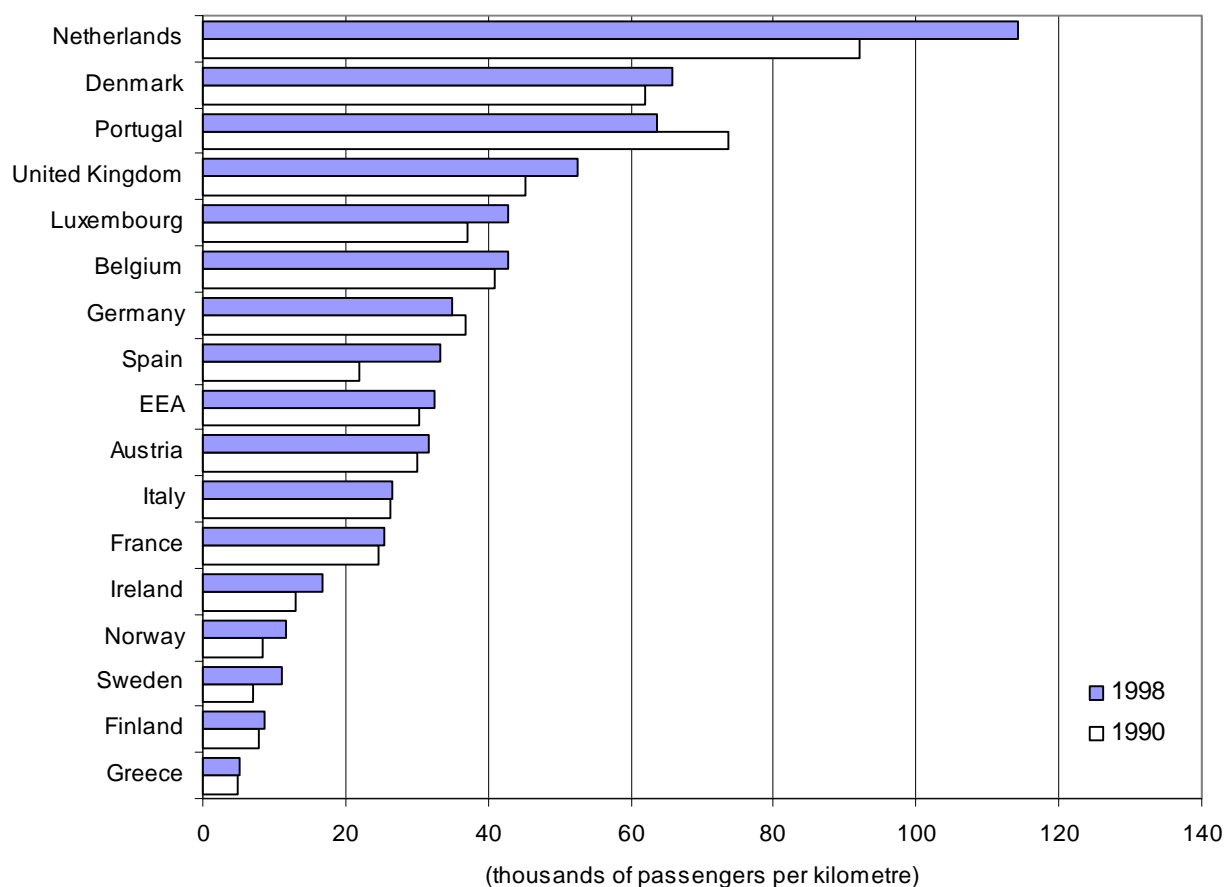
The network utilisation rate is obtained by dividing the number of passengers by the length of the network. Graph 3 presents a comparison between 1990 and 1998 concerning the passengers carried by km of national network.

In 1998, the Netherlands had the best utilisation rate, carrying 114 300 passengers per kilometre of network, ahead of Denmark (65 900 passengers/km) and Portugal (63 700 passengers/km). Bringing up the rear was Greece, with a rate of 5 100 passengers per km.

The average for EEA stood at 32 600 passengers/km.

In Germany and Portugal the network utilisation rate in 1998 was smaller than in 1990, due to the fall of the total passenger transport. France and Greece show, as well, a decrease in total passenger figures, but on the other hand they experience a slight increase in the network utilisation rate, due to rail network decreases. All other countries recorded an increase in network utilisation rate, as well as in total passengers.

**Graph 3: Passengers carried by km of national network in 1998 and 1990 – in thousands**



Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

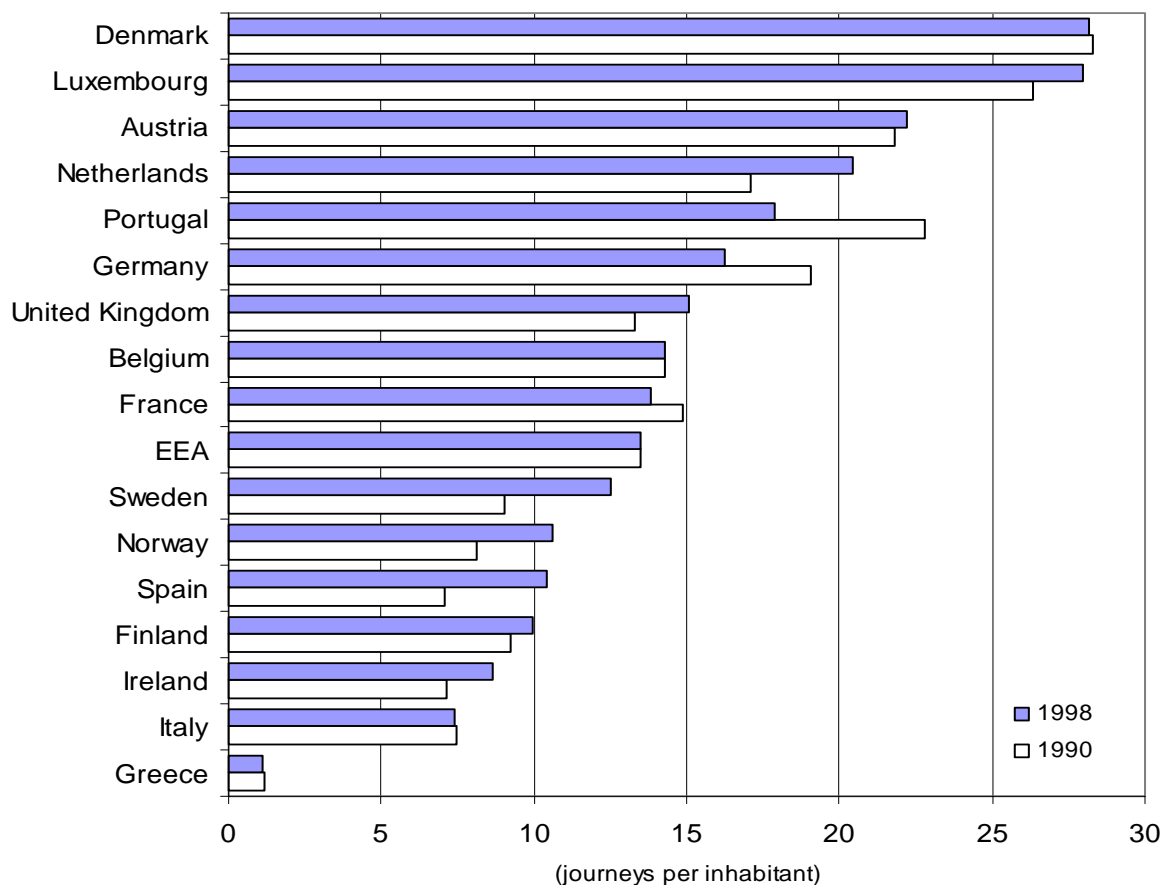
## Number of journeys per inhabitant

In 1998, Denmark recorded the highest rate of all countries, at 28.1 journeys per inhabitant (Graph 4). Other countries with a rate of more than 20 journeys per inhabitant were Luxembourg (27.9), Austria (22.2) and the Netherlands (20.4). At the other end of the scale, the inhabitants of Greece made an average of 1.1 train journeys per year. Denmark and Italy had a slight decrease in the number of journeys per inhabitant

in 1998 compared to 1990 despite the increase registered in the total passenger figures. In Belgium, the number of journeys per inhabitant was the same in 1998 as in 1990 (14.3). For all the other countries the number of journeys per inhabitant had the same trend as total passengers.

On average, each inhabitant of the EEA travelled by rail 14 times in 1990 and also in 1998.

**Graph 4: Number of journeys per inhabitant in 1998 and 1990**



Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

### Network density

The network density figure is obtained by dividing the total length of a country's railway lines by the country's surface area. From Table 3 can be observed that Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg have the highest densities, while Norway, Finland and Greece have the lowest. This reflects the fact that Norway and Finland

have a relatively large surface area but a low population density. Greece, on the other hand, comprises a large number of small islands, most of them with no rail network. The largest country, France, has only an average density, while the smallest EEA countries, Belgium and Luxembourg, have a high one.

**Table 3: Network density for 1998 – in m/km<sup>2</sup>**

	Density (m/km <sup>2</sup> )	Length (km)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Belgium</b>	111,7	3 410	30 528
<b>Denmark</b>	52,5	2 264	43 094
<b>Germany</b>	106,8	38 126	357 028
<b>Greece</b>	17,4	2 299	131 957
<b>Spain</b>	24,4	12 303	504 877
<b>France</b>	57,9	31 770	549 087
<b>Ireland</b>	27,2	1 909	70 285
<b>Italy</b>	53,4	16 080	301 323
<b>Luxembourg</b>	106,7	274	2 568
<b>Netherlands</b>	67,5	2 808	41 574
<b>Austria</b>	67,3	5 643	83 858
<b>Portugal</b>	30,4	2 794	91 910
<b>Finland</b>	17,4	5 867	338 147
<b>Sweden</b>	22,4	10 065	449 960
<b>United Kingdom</b>	69,6	16 994	244 149
<b>Norway</b>	12,4	4 021	323 758

Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

## Background information

**Table 4: Total passenger transport – in thousands**

	1980	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>Belgium</b>	163 710	142 372	145 473	145 006	145 347	142 602	144 012	141 696	143 566	145 857
<b>Denmark</b>	130 413	145 385	144 725	142 172	139 982	142 300	145 467	144 308	144 579	149 191
<b>Germany</b>	1 714 237	1 514 307	1 398 362	1 565 054	1 569 786	1 494 958	1 366 620	1 348 699	1 351 058	1 332 000
<b>Greece</b>	10 136	12 067	12 252	12 233	11 747	11 726	11 478	12 816	13 261	11 677
<b>Spain</b>	174 977	274 350	316 327	361 152	353 550	352 898	365 992	377 892	395 220	409 467
<b>France</b>	675 690	842 546	836 949	850 465	821 958	806 365	740 847	786 527	797 256	812 177
<b>Ireland</b>	16 654	25 010	25 625	25 837	26 143	25 813	27 124	27 930	29 467	32 146
<b>Italy</b>	381 412	423 180	434 718	432 185	423 937	448 163	453 065	454 447	444 730	426 290
<b>Luxembourg</b>	11 269	10 044	10 371	10 400	10 700	11 300	11 198	11 127	11 536	11 735
<b>Netherlands</b>	197 225	256 000	330 000	333 000	320 000	312 000	358 619	306 481	315 636	321 000
<b>Austria</b>	170 012	168 385	173 618	174 935	181 100	190 412	194 032	193 428	183 897	179 465
<b>Portugal</b>	224 191	225 882	223 631	224 621	208 588	201 356	187 533	177 094	178 130	177 965
<b>Finland</b>	39 310	45 998	45 795	45 101	44 362	43 989	44 420	47 000	49 980	51 370
<b>Sweden</b>	77 070	77 424	77 569	92 700	92 500	94 140	98 371	98 988	106 783	110 949
<b>United Kingdom</b>	760 192	767 000	745 400	750 017	718 931	708 343	738 106	803 055	845 357	891 112
<b>Norway</b>	37 948	34 465	33 429	35 800	37 514	37 926	39 593	40 701	44 744	46 972
<b>EEA</b>	4 784 446	4 964 415	4 954 244	5 200 678	5 106 145	5 024 291	4 926 477	4 972 189	5 055 200	5 109 373

	Change 1980-1998 (%)	Change 1990-1998 (%)
<b>Belgium</b>	-10,9	2,4
<b>Denmark</b>	14,4	2,6
<b>Germany</b>	-22,3	-12,0
<b>Greece</b>	15,2	-3,2
<b>Spain</b>	134,0	49,2
<b>France</b>	20,2	-3,6
<b>Ireland</b>	93,0	28,5
<b>Italy</b>	11,8	0,7
<b>Luxembourg</b>	4,1	16,8
<b>Netherlands</b>	62,8	25,4
<b>Austria</b>	5,6	6,6
<b>Portugal</b>	-20,6	-21,2
<b>Finland</b>	30,7	11,7
<b>Sweden</b>	44,0	43,3
<b>United Kingdom</b>	17,2	16,2
<b>Norway</b>	23,8	36,3
<b>EEA</b>	6,8	2,9

Source: Eurostat (New Cronos), UIC

## ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

### Definitions

The following definitions are taken from the Glossary for Transport Statistics (Eurostat/UN-ECE<sup>1</sup>/ECMT<sup>2</sup>)

#### Rail passenger

Any person, excluding members of train crew, who makes a journey by railway vehicle.

Passengers making a journey by railway-operated ferry or bus services are excluded.

#### Railway network

All railways in a given area.

This does not include stretches of road or water even if rolling stock should be conveyed over such routes, e.g. by wagon-carrying trailers or ferries. Lines solely used for tourism purposes during the season are excluded as are railways constructed solely to serve mines, forests or other industrial and agricultural undertakings and which are not open to public traffic.

#### National rail transport

Rail transport between two places (a place of embarkment and a place of disembarkment) located in the same country irrespective of the country in which the railway vehicles were registered. It may involve transit through a second country.

However, it should be noted that figures on national transport are only partially comparable. For some countries, the figures are liable to include passengers carried by secondary railway enterprises, whereas other countries take only the readership of principal railway enterprises into account. Unfortunately, details about data sources are not always available. Another problem relates to urban journeys: in some countries, these are included in national transport figures, whereas other Member States take no account of them in their statistics.

#### International rail transport

Rail transport between two places (a place of embarkment and a place of disembarkment) in two different countries. It may involve transit through one or more additional countries.

### Methodology

#### Total transport, national and international

The figures on total, national and international passenger transport have been extracted from Eurostat's New Cronos database (domain "Transport"). Those data were collected through the Eurostat/UN-ECE/ECMT Common Questionnaire. UIC<sup>3</sup> figures have been used to complete the data series.

Liechtenstein has 18.5 km of railway network, but owned and operated by ÖBB (Austrian Railways) and included in their statistics. Iceland does not have any railways.

In the case of United Kingdom, the figures for the period 1996-1998 cover Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) railway companies, Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) and Eurostar UK. All basic figures were supplied for the financial years (1 April – 31 March). Calendar year figures could be calculated for Great Britain due to the availability of quarterly data in the publication "Transport Statistics Great Britain: 1999 edition". The figures for NIR and Eurostar UK have been taken from UIC database. The data on international traffic for United Kingdom refer to Eurostar UK. Passenger journeys figures were estimated from ticket sales. The figures include an element of double counting, as a journey involving more than one operator is scored against each operator. This contrast with data previously published for British Rail, for which a through-ticketed journey was counted only once, irrespective of any changes made. Republic of Ireland records the traffic to Northern Ireland as national traffic.

#### Network utilisation rate

The number of passengers carried was divided by the length of the network. Using this rate, network utilisation can be compared between the various countries.

Figures presented are based on total transport (national and international, where international transport applies to international train passengers embarked in the reporting country).

#### Number of journeys per inhabitant

To calculate this rate, the number of passengers carried was divided by the population of the country concerned. The rate measures annual use of a country's rail network by its inhabitants.

#### Network density

Network density is determined by dividing the length of the network by the surface area of the country. It is expressed in metres per km<sup>2</sup>.

The surface area of Norway excludes Svalbard and Jan Mayen.

#### Totals

The EU 15 totals are not included due to the small difference from the EEA totals.

<sup>1</sup> : United Nations – Economic Commission for Europe

<sup>2</sup> : European Conference of Ministers of Transport

<sup>3</sup> : International Union of Railways

This publication was prepared with the assistance of Petronela Reinecke, Artemis Information Management.

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(Please use block capitals)

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Forename: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Function: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post code: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment on receipt of invoice, preferably by:**

Bank transfer

Visa  Eurocard

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires on: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Please confirm your intra-Community VAT number:**

If no number is entered, VAT will be automatically applied. Subsequent reimbursement will not be possible.