



## **Strategic Session 12**

### **Plenary theme: Staying Competitive and seizing the opportunities**

#### **TITLE:**

*Impacts of automation and digitalisation on workforce of the transport industries*

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

The transport sector has adopted increasing levels of automation as well as new innovative technologies such as AI, IoT, etc for achieving safer and more secure operations, better efficiency and sustainability.

These innovations, together with the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, has also shown the importance of optimising digitalisation and AI for ensuring the safety and well-being of transportation workers. They have also brought changes to the nature of work including the need to acquire new skills in addition to changes to the organisation and work routines.

The fast pace at which the transport system is integrating higher technologies can lead to a “concentrated disruption<sup>1</sup>” for its workforce (and users). Such disruption have the potential to diffuse large benefits and create new jobs provided that appropriate framework conditions are put in place (at policy and research and deployment levels, other incentives). There needs to be focus on the new skills needed for the new work, and the training, re-training and new skills development of the workers must be made in order to support the most disrupted jobs.

What actions can we take to prepare the workforce (and users) for a highly automated and resilient transportation system and, more importantly, what can be done to avoid and mitigate socio economic losses during this difficult and uncertain period of COVID-19? Will women workers be more affected than male workers? How are the education systems responding to the challenge: higher education, vocational and primary? How can research and deployment of innovative approaches/solutions tackle the barriers and new challenges being faced by the workforce (and users)? What options can become available to an eventual displaced workforce that is likely to be aggravated by business disruptions from social distancing rules and lack of consumer trust?

This session aims to tackle these questions as well as discuss how socio-economic changes brought by the current COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing automation and/or digitalisation of the transport system, together with shifting concepts of mobility, will affect its future workforce (including job location, needs for new skills, education and training) and will require new competences. It will also aim to identify gaps in research and innovation, measures and best practices to mitigate negative impacts while enabling access to transport and mobility for all within a green, competitive, inclusive and innovative European economy.

#### **TOPIC / KEYWORDS:**

socio-economic impacts, automation, digitalisation, workforce issues, gender, education

#### **SESSION ORGANISERS:**

European Commission (DG MOVE, DG RTD), ETRA, EUROCONTROL, FEHRL, ECTRI

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**FORMAT:**

*A panel of specialists representing key stakeholders in transport policy, research and innovation. The moderator will briefly introduce the session topic. Panellists will then have 5-8 minutes to express their points of view. The panel would then discuss these views, with the moderator keeping the discussion lively and the panel involved. The session will also make use of any arrangements/tools for interaction with the audience.*

*The moderator will provide a short summary and close the session.*

**SPEAKERS/PANELLISTS:**

- **Herald Ruijters**, Director Investment, Innovative and Sustainable Transport, DG MOVE
- **Philippe Merlo**, Director Research & Innovation and Strategy, Eurocontrol
- **Evangelos Bekkiaris**, Professor, CERTH/HIT
- **Bipasha Baruah**, Professor and Canada's Research Chair in Global Women's Issues, University of Western
- **Fabian Wylenzek**, Head of Talent Acquisition Region North, Deutsche Bahn AG

**MODERATOR:**

- **Thierry Goger**, Secretary General, FEHRL