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#### INFORMATION NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Council

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Subject: **Any other business**

Presentation Progress Report IRP

– Information from the Dutch and Austrian delegations

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Delegations will find attached an information note prepared by the Dutch and Austrian delegations on the above-mentioned subject for consideration under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 3 June 2021.

**AOB “Presentation Progress Report IRP”**

On June 2nd 2020, European Ministers of Transport decided to establish the Platform on International Rail Passenger Transport (IRP). The platform supports the European agenda on international rail passenger transport, as part of the EU Green Deal. Moreover, the platform works together with all signing EU Member States and third countries, the European Commission, the European Railway Agency, Shift2Rail, OTIF and rail sector organisations with the aim of further developing and improving rail passenger transport in the EU.

The Netherlands, together with Austria, are currently chairing the platform and two of its four subgroups (NL: “EU Green Deal”; AT: “Regulatory Framework”). Germany and Switzerland are chairs of two Subgroups (DE: “A network of international passenger services”; CH: “Customer experience & digitalization”). On all those areas market barriers and topics are identified and recommendations or possible solutions are shown.

The platform showed a great dynamic and motivation to work on international rail transport by its members, the sector representatives and the European institutions. The context of the European Year of Rail and the Portuguese EU presidency focusing on railways is also driving the needed changes. The European citizens are expecting results and better accessible international train services.

The platform presented first results of the work of the subgroups during the Kick-off event for the Year of Rail in March 2021 and will now submit the Progress report to Transport Ministers, Commission and the Sector. Based on the progress report the platform will continue to work with stakeholders on the implementation and monitoring. The objective is to continue the close cooperation in particular with the European Commission.