

Press release

The 100th container train of the year has arrived from China

Záhony-Budapest, 17 November 2021 – This year's 100th container train has arrived from China via Záhony-Eperjeske in Hungary. The train was welcomed by the member companies of the CELIZ consortium – MÁV-REC, CECZ, ZÁHONY-PORT – as well as the managers of Rail Cargo Operator - Hungaria and Rail Cargo Hungaria in the presence of László Mosóczy, State Secretary for Transport and Róbert Homolya, chairman of MÁV.

The Chinese-Hungarian traffic shows an outstanding growth this year. 100 intermodal trains a year – equivalent to almost 10,000 TEU – have never been forwarded on the continental Silk Road before. Last year altogether 38 container trains arrived on this route. The 100th train was coordinated by Rail Cargo Logistics - RUS, organized by Rail Cargo Operator - Hungaria, and forwarded to its destination, to the Rail Cargo Terminal - BILK in Budapest, by Rail Cargo Hungaria, who ordered the handling of the containers from ZÁHONY-PORT.

The increasing intensity of the relationships is also marked by the fact that, in addition to the already existing regular freight transport connections between the Rail Cargo Terminal - BILK in Budapest and Xian and Ganzhou, direct rail freight transport connections with other Chinese industrial areas have also been established this year. Container trains also run weekly between Urumchi in the province of Xinjiang and Budapest, and trains are already arriving in Hungary from Deyang in the province of Sichuan.

In the first three quarters of 2021, the trains handled by Rail Cargo Operator on the continental route and on the land stretch of the sea route transported a total of 47,000 containers, and hence carried 15,000 more compared to the same period of the previous year, primarily between various industrial areas in the Far East and the Rail Cargo Terminal - BILK. Chinese manufacturers responding to the increased European demand for consumer goods and the operators involved in the organisation have increasingly used the route to Hungary via Záhony: in the first nine months, the number of the containers arriving this way doubled compared to the previous year.

At the end of this summer, the first Chinese export train started from Budapest, and since then ten more trains have followed. This is the first regular connection that leaves the European Union at Záhony-Eperjeske and uses the middle route of the "One Belt One Road" initiative.

An export train was first started from Budapest a few years ago, but that time the initiative was not followed by any further shipments. The experts of Rail Cargo Group have formed an international cooperation in order to prepare the current train projects. To establish the product base, colleagues of the Austrian and Hungarian subsidiaries of Rail Cargo Operator and, because of the coordination on the route section in the intermediate countries, also the colleagues of the Russian subsidiary of Rail Cargo Logistics were involved in the process.

Rail container traffic from Asia via Záhony to the European Union has again seen an upswing this year. In addition to the overloaded Malaszewicze transshipment station in Poland, more and more trains are arriving directly via Záhony to Hungary. Since this middle route is faster and more infrastructure capacities are available in its vicinity, it can be assumed that the Záhony border crossing will become one of the most important freight transport channels in the foreseeable future.

The Southern seaports also play an important role in the freight traffic between Hungary and China: Chinese container traffic to Hungary via the ports of Piraeus and Rijeka also showed a double-digit growth in 2021. Although RCO-HU handled almost the same number of trains between the seaports and the RCT-BILK in the reporting period, they carried 20-25% more containers.

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