# The European Rail Facilities Portal

**What is it?**

The Portal is an EU-funded, common, user-friendly and market-oriented GIS-based ICT tool, mapping and providing key information on the rail service facilities (e.g. train stations, intermodal terminals, marshalling yards and refuelling facilities) and last-mile infrastructure (e.g. public and private sidings) all over Europe. It also provides information on the availability of rail-related services (e.g. locomotive repair and maintenance, refuelling and customs clearance).

The Portal allows to search for specific types of rail facilities or services by using exhaustive pre-defined categories that filter the information, such as types of equipment, types of loading units accepted at the facility, types of cargo, etc. It is possible to search in a particular geographical area by using the map zoom-in tool, by typing in a postcode, by filtering facilities located on any of the Rail Freight Corridors and more.

**Why do we need it?**

Different sources have identified the lack of an easy and quick access to information about last-mile infrastructure for rail (especially freight) as being a significant barrier to the efficient planning of rail services, in particular across borders.

The European Commission has addressed the issue in [Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32012L0034) and in [Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/2177 of 22 November 2017 on access to service facilities and rail-related services](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32017R2177). EU legislation requires that all operators provide non-discriminatory access to service facilities and to the supply of rail-related services in these facilities and that they publish a description of the facility and the services provided. The Portal provides one of the three ways for service facilities operators to comply with their obligation under [Directive 2012/34/EU](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32012L0034) to prepare and publish a description of their service facilities and the services supplied in these facilities. The Portal is set up to provide easy on-line access to such information, free of charge.

**Who is it for?**

The Portal meets the needs of both parties supplying and demanding access to rail service facilities and to services provided in those facilities. Railway undertakings, logistics operators, rail regulatory bodies will be the main users of the tool on the demand side. The Portal will also give a boost to rail service facility operators and service providers, who now have a possibility to provide easy access to information about their facilities and services and develop their business by being easily located and identified by potential clients.

**How does it work?**

Access to the Portal is free and no registration is required for users looking to locate rail service facilities. The initial set of information provided on the Portal has been collected by the independent contractor who developed it. Rail service facility operators or rail-related service providers can register on the Portal and introduce or edit the information about their own facilities and services. In the future, the service facility operators will be responsible for updating the data for their own facilities. The use of the Portal by service facility operators is optional, given that alternatively information can be published also on facility operator’s or infrastructure manager’s website. Nevertheless, in Commission’s view, the most effective way to support the single European rail market is to use the common EU Portal.

**Do you need to pay to use it?**

No. At present, during the phase-in period, all services provided by the Portal are free of charge. However, in the future the portal the Commission intends to hand over the Portal management to an independent entity, which represents the broadest possible range of rail stakeholders. This entity will be in charge of managing and developing the Portal’s business model in a manner that ensures that it becomes self-sustainable. This would include identifying revenue sources and specific services, for which users would be ready to pay.

# Summary of the legislation on access to rail service facilities and rail-related services

On 1 June 2019, [Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/2177 of 22 November 2017 on access to service facilities and rail-related services](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32017R2177) comes into effect. The Regulation specifies the minimum information that operators of service facilities must provide in a service facility description for the service facility and for the services, for which they are responsible. The Regulation also provides the rules on the content of requests for access to service facilities and the procedures for applying and allocating capacity in such facilities, including the rules on response to requests, for resolving conflicting requests, etc.