



TSA4-CT-2005-016018.

## ERRC3

# Third European Road Research Conference

Instrument: **Specific Support Action**Thematic Priority: **Sustainable Development, Global Change and Ecosystems**

## Publishable Final Activity Report

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# 1. Project execution

## 1.1 Objectives

The FEHRL Road Research meeting (FeRRM 05) was held in Brussels in June 2005 under the framework of the ERRC3 specific support action. The objectives of ERRC3 were to establish effective synergies between research efforts, engage a wide range of stakeholders and, ultimately, support the realisation and strengthening of the European Research Area in the road transport field.

An additional objective was to consider options for future conferences supporting road research in Europe. As a result, during the development of FeRRM 05, the organisation of the Transport Research Arena (TRA) 2006 became a reality.

Set to take place in Goteborg on 12-15 June 2006, TRA 2006's main theme will be the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) in support of a sustainable, safer and more efficient road transport system in Europe (<http://www.traconference.com>).

## 1.2 Contractors involved

FEHRL directly coordinated the ERRC3 project and brought in skills and competencies from its member institutes. FEHRL consists of twenty-nine national road research centres from the European Union, the EFTA countries and the rest of Europe. ERRC3 benefited from the FEHRL extended membership and exploited the strength created by the close collaboration amongst FEHRL national road research institutes and its partner organisations.

FEHRL has an important role to play in maintaining road transport research as highest priority in the political agenda on the European and international levels. In this context, the FeRRM annual event constitutes a core element of FEHRL's activities in order to further exchange and promote strategic planning among its members and key European partners.

## 1.3 Work performed and end results

The conference was structured around topical strategic and technical sessions where leading experts using practical examples provided insight into the needs in road research and, ultimately, contributed to the formulation of the research conducted during the timeframe of the Seventh Research Framework Programme.

The well-packed three-day presentations, keynote addresses and panel discussions identified an increasing trend in the way research work is carried out. The emphasis has clearly shifted from individual technology oriented projects to a more holistic programme.

The conference also stressed the importance of involving end-users in the implementation process.

The participation of a large delegation from five different Directorates-General of the European Commission - DG Transport, DG Research, DG Information Society, DG Environment and DG Enterprise - highlighted the high priority that road research has on the European agenda.

FeRRM 05 delegates had the opportunity to meet and network in the exhibition area filled with stands from many organisations with a stake in road transport. The conference also hosted a number of satellite meetings bringing together FEHRL's partners in many activities. Among these were CALM II (a coordination action for Advanced Transport Noise Mitigation) which held a well attended workshop for managers of European noise projects.

Additionally, the ERRC3 project contributed to the preparation of a major event in June 2006 - the Transport Research Arena (TRA 2006) Conference – being organised by CEDR (Conference of European Directors of Roads), ERTRAC (European Road Transport Research Advisory Council) and the European Commission. Its main theme is the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) to support the development of a more sustainable, safer and efficient road transport system. In this regard a press launch was organised to introduce the large scope of the TRA 2006 conference initiative to FeRRM 05 delegates and journalists.

#### **1.4 Methodology and approach employed**

The conference programme was designed to contribute to the cohesive development of the European Research Area (ERA) in the field of roads and of road transport in general. The emphasis was laid on the definition of research needs coupled with a sound assessment of resources, with particular focus on closer integration of Europe's road research capacity. A well-thought distributed approach towards road research would respond better to local differences across Europe. An additional focus was on possible solutions to face the increasing growth of the road system in towns, cities and major highways.

The inclusion in the programme of strategic sessions promoted the generation of relevant knowledge and achievement of consensus on research priorities for the implementation of ERA. The involvement of non-research organisations in the session debates provided a wider perspective to research issues.

In addition, FeRRM 05 marked a shift from the academic type of conference to theme-oriented sessions hosted by flagship projects. Sessions were broadened out to correlated and linked projects. In doing so, knowledge was exchanged at the program level and the scope of the sessions was then expanded to cover a wider range of issues of interest to participants. This effectiveness of this approach was recognised at FeRRM 05 and it will be adopted for TRA 2006 conference.

## 1.5 Impact of the project on industry and research sector



The primary merit of the ERRC3 project was the creation of a comprehensive platform to promote the exchange of knowledge resulting from ongoing research activities and support, ultimately, the take-up of results. With this aim, the project encouraged the participation of SMEs that are already partners in a number of projects of the FEHRL Strategic Road Research (SERRP) programme.

A special effort was also made towards the active participation of the road infrastructure industry that is keen to develop and test new techniques and innovations. This certainly contributed to prepare the ground for future initiatives based on sound public-private partnerships.

ERRC3 encouraged knowledge-sharing and “cross-fertilisation” by bringing together people working on synergetic issues, who found an immediate added-value in exchanging experiences and in discussing integration for future research and innovation in a European dimension. In particular, ERRC3 succeeded in integrating the results of European as well as national projects and programmes to respond better to the challenges raised by the ERA with respect to the need for enabling and promoting a more harmonised approach in European research.

Additionally, the partnerships created in the context of the European Road Transport Research Advisory Council (ERTRAC) and the ECTP technology platform in the construction sector provided direct access to a variety of relevant stakeholders. This includes the industry, road operators, local and national governments, research institutes, NGOs, academia and the European Commission.

To reinforce these links and synergies, ERRC3 closely involved certain members of ERTRAC and ECTP in the organisation of the European Conference. The Conference programme was carefully tailored to provide the multi-stakeholder community with opportunities to highlight priorities for the formulation of a comprehensive road research plan.

## 2. Dissemination and use

The table below shows the dissemination activities conducted from February 2005 until October 2005 on the ERRC3 project. All activities listed below were performed by the Brussels FEHRL office.

Planned/actual Dates	Type	Type of audience
26 January 2005	Promotion at SERRP IV stakeholder workshop	SERRP stakeholders
February 2005	Direct e-mailing	29 FEHRL institutes
28 February 2005	Article in "The Parliament Magazines"	MEPs and national decision makers
2 February 2005	Promotion at the ERTRAC Press Event	ERTRAC (academia, industry, research providers, users), EC
22-24 February 2005	Promotion at the Tire Technology EXPO	Automotive & tyre industry
March 2005	Release of FeRRM 05 web area	General public
April 2005	1 <sup>st</sup> announcement in FEHRL News	29 FEHRL institutes
April 2005	Preparation and distribution of FeRRM 05 Leaflet	General public
April 2005	Direct e-mailing	Road Directors
April 2005	Direct e-mailing	Research Coordinators
April 2005	Direct e-mailing	EC; FEHRL Institutes; partner organisations
12 April 2005	2 <sup>nd</sup> announcement in FEHRL News	29 FEHRL institutes
May 2005	Press release on "CORDIS wire"	European research community
15 May 2005	Announcement in "CORDIS focus"	European research community
26 May 2005	Insertion in "The European Voice"	EU institutions; Brussels insiders
09 June 2005	Insertion in "The European Voice"	EU institutions; Brussels insiders
11-13 May 2005	Promotion at the Joint YRS 2005	Young researchers (FERSI, ECRTI, FEHRL)
1 June 2005	Preparation and distribution of FeRRM 05 brochure	Conference delegates
June 2005	Conference proceedings available online	General public
August 2005	Preparation and distribution of CD-rom of proceedings	Conference delegates

Additionally, updates and information on the conference programme were made available on the FEHRL site ([www.fehrl.org](http://www.fehrl.org)). The site also provided online registration, contact form for feedback and practical information concerning hotel accommodation, accessibility to the conference venue and leisure time.

The conference was also promoted through:

- Web pages of the member institutes which are linked from and to the FEHRL site (see <http://www.fehrl.org/members.php>).
- Sites of partner organisations such as POLIS, EUCAR/ACEA, EARPA.
- FEHRL projects sites (see [www.fehrl.org/projects\\_fp6.php](http://www.fehrl.org/projects_fp6.php)).
- Relevant European Commission information services (RTD and CORDIS wire).
- The European Transport Research Knowledge Centre (EXTR@Web project <http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/extra/web>).
- Web pages of international magazines with a European focus (e.g.: World Highways - <http://www.worldhighways.com/events/article.cfm?recordID=298>).