

Janusz Poliński: Rail Freight Transport between China and the EU – Transport Corridors, Technique, Strategies and the Role of Poland in This Transport

Rail freight transport between China and the European Union has been steadily growing for several years. Maritime transport plays a dominant role in it, however, due to the long transport time, the need to use rail transport is increasingly recognized. It is implemented via transcontinental corridors, most of which are connected to the Trans Siberian Railway. For the transport of goods there, mainly containers are used, which in addition to protecting cargo against theft and damage, ensure fast and safe transshipment. Forecasts predict a further increase in rail transport. In the article, problems related to this mode of transport are described on the basis of available analytical materials, among others, from the Centre for Eastern Studies, as well as studies commissioned by the Eurasian Economic Union or Eastern railways. The profitability of transport in this direction, resulting from the co-financing by Chinese cantons, means that apart from Polish railways, also Lithuanian, Estonian and Russian railways (Kaliningrad), who see their significant share in the transport of containers to Western Europe, are seeking for them. The article introduces some issues of economic, technical, operational and organizational character, seen from the perspective of Eastern countries. It also refers to studies on high-speed freight solutions intended for trade exchange with China.

Keywords: rail transport, transportation of goods east-west-east, Silk Road