

Press Information

An unsung protagonist is celebrating a birthday - the original, the Europallet is 60 years young!

- It revolutionised logistics.
- 11 boards, 9 blocks and 78 nails carry up to 1,500 kg.
- Quality-tested and standardised - for 60 years.
- Reusability and exchange protect the environment.

Vienna, 12.07.2021 - The year 1961 was significant for several reasons. With Juri Gagarin, we ventured into space for the first time, in Germany, the Berlin wall was built and in France, the original, the Europallet (EUR-pallet) came into the world. Since then, our lives have changed considerably. Space travel has developed further and the Berlin Wall has disappeared once more. One constant over the years, however, remained in body and appearance. With its characteristic dimensions of 800 mm x 1,200 mm x 144 mm, it is one of the unsung protagonists of logistics - the Europallet.

Revolution in logistics

The introduction of the EUR-pallet increasingly revolutionised logistics throughout Europe and beyond in 1961. Even just the use of the pallets halved the time required to load railway carriages. The world of logistics is based on its dimensions - from the dimensions of storage spaces, to transport systems all the way to storage spaces in HGVs and goods lorries. With its rapid spread, an international exchange system also established itself from the start. Through this, the Europallet quickly caught on. Today, 600 million EUR-pallets are in use worldwide.

Worldwide exchange of EUR-pallets protects the environment

The reusability and the exchangeability of the EUR-pallets make them sustainable load carriers. Furthermore, it is primarily made from the renewable resource wood. Depending on its use, one EUR-pallet can be used on average around six to seven times before it is repaired and then used again. The "EUR" symbol on the pallet is a guarantor of its exchangeability.

Quality-tested, durable and protected

A significant success factor in the EUR-pallet's triumph is the strict quality control. Europallets may only be manufactured and repaired by authorised companies. The use of the correct type of wood with a corresponding maximum wood humidity is decisive for the durability and bearing capacity of max. 1,500 kg. 11 boards, 9 blocks and 78 nails are the fixed components of one EUR-pallet.

The checking of the manufacturing and repair quality is carried out by the international railway union, internationale des chemins de fer (UIC). Only pallets, which are labelled with the characteristic "EUR" symbol, correspond to the quality requirements. The UIC (which will celebrate its 100th year in 2022) will continue to reliably carry out the standardisation of the EUR-pallets in the portfolio and the issuing of licences and quality assurance through your UIC member RUs. The trademark rights to the EUR-pallet have belonged to ÖBB Rail Cargo Austria since 1961.



Rail Cargo Group: ÖBB freight transport

As Europe's leading rail logistics specialist, we shape the industry. 365 days a year – 24 hours a day. From Europe all the way into Asia. We connect people, business and markets – from the first mile to the last. Thanks to our 9,340 employees in 18 countries with 34 nationalities, we are able to bring 460,000 trains safely to their destination every year – that's around 1,260 trains every day. We transport 95 million net tonnes every year with our efficient end-to-end logistics solutions. Our railways contribute 28.2% to the total volume of goods transported in Austria, making us the frontrunner in Europe and saving around 1.1 million tonnes of CO₂ annually throughout Austria. The controlling company of the Rail Cargo Group is Rail Cargo Austria AG.

ÖBB: Today. For tomorrow. For us.

As a comprehensive mobility and logistics service provider, ÖBB transported a total of 287 million passengers and over 95 million tonnes of goods to their destinations in a climate and environmentally friendly manner in 2020. The electricity for trains and stations is generated entirely from renewable energy sources. ÖBB is one of the most punctual railway operators in Europe, with a punctuality of around 97 percent in passenger transport. With over EUR 3 billion invested annually in railway infrastructure, ÖBB is building the railway system of tomorrow. Across the Group, almost 42,000 bus and rail employees and an additional 2,000 apprentices ensure that around 1.3 million passengers and around 1,300 freight trains arrive safely at their destinations every day. ÖBB is the backbone of Austrian public transport and, as Austria's largest climate protection company, gets people and goods to their destinations safely and in an environmentally friendly manner. The strategic lead company of the group is the ÖBB-Holding AG.

Photo may be used free of charge provided that the © is respected

Further inquiry notice:

Ing. Bernd Winter, MSc
ÖBB-Holding AG, Group Communications
Press Relations Officer
Phone: +43 1 93000 32233
bernd.winter@oebb.at
www.oebb.at

About UIC

UIC is the worldwide organisation for the promotion of rail transport at a global level and collaborative development of the railway system. It brings together some 200 members on all 5 continents, among them rail operators, infrastructure managers, railway service providers, etc. UIC maintains close cooperation links with all actors in the rail transport domain right around the world, including manufacturers, railway associations, public authorities and stakeholders in other domains and sectors whose experiences may be beneficial to rail development. The UIC's main tasks include understanding the business needs of the rail community, developing programmes of innovation to identify solutions to those needs and preparing and publishing a series of documents known as IRS that facilitate the implementation of the innovative solutions.

Wooden pallets are used for carriage of goods and form part of the packaging for goods conveyed by all modes of transport, particularly by rail.

Since 1961, the provisions and requirements of the 435 series of UIC Leaflets have constituted the basis for the production and repair of pallets. They also set out requirements for pallet licensing, control and quality systems.

To ensure the general functionality of pallet production and repair and to improve interchangeability, the UIC Working Group is committed to:

- Offering the product with the same high quality to new and existing users in an open, exchangeable pallet pool
- Revising and updating UIC Leaflet series 435 in accordance with European legislation
- Classifying existing pallet quality in accordance with trade and industry specifications
- Maintaining the rules – and, in particular, the quality system - for UIC/EUR pallets
- Proposing innovative testing systems
- Protecting the “UIC + EUR” trademark stamped on the pallets with the help of national authorities

<https://uic.org/freight/eur-pallet>

UIC Communication – com@uic.org

<https://uic.org/>

