The RFC Network
User Satisfaction
Survey
2024

Report for RFC RALP

RFC USER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2024

CONTENT

——

01 STUDY DESIGN

HOW THE SURVEY WAS SET UP

STUDY DESIGN

- 9 evaluations including 2 personal interviews

- Computer Aided Web Interviews (using the online tool Survio)

- Contacts (e-mail address) delivered by RFCs

- 51 invitations sent

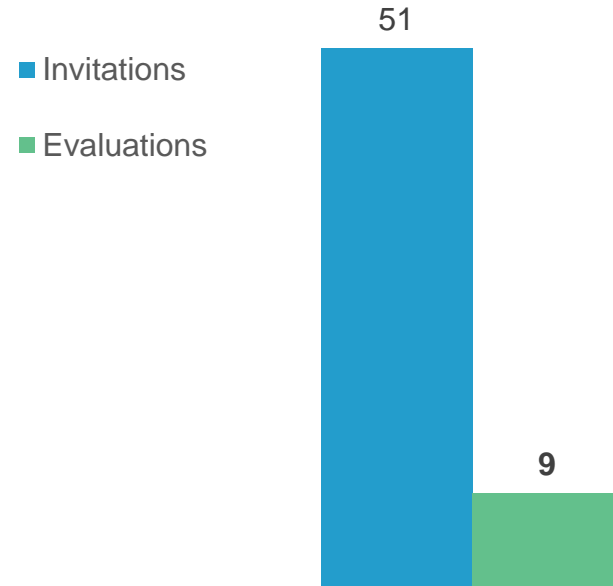- Field Phase: 2 September to 16 October 2024
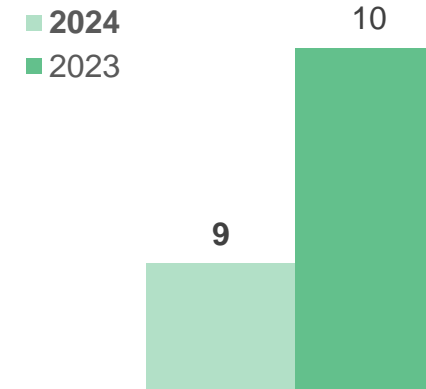
RESPONSE RATE

Compared to the previous year

	2024	vs 2023
Total	**9**	**(-1)**
RUs/non-RUs	6	
Terminals/Ports	3	
Invitations sent	51	(+9)
Response rate overall	**18%**	**(-6%)**

Invitations vs. Evaluations ratio

- ■ Invitations
- ■ Evaluations

Number of responses 2024 vs. 2023

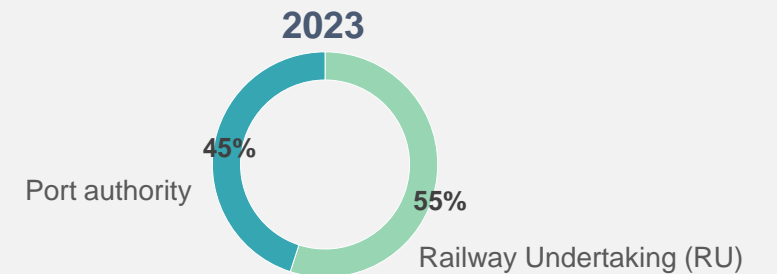- ■ **2024**
- ■ 2023

SATISFACTION & PARTICIPATION

9
evaluations

This is a decrease of 6% compared to the previous year (10 evaluations in 2023).

Customer satisfaction

77%
*overall satisfaction

*Answers given were satisfied and slightly satisfied. This is 3% lower compared to the previous year

Participant groups in % of 2024

Port authority — **33%**

Non-RU applicant — **11%**

56% Railway Undertaking (RU)

2023

Port authority **45%**

55% Railway Undertaking (RU)
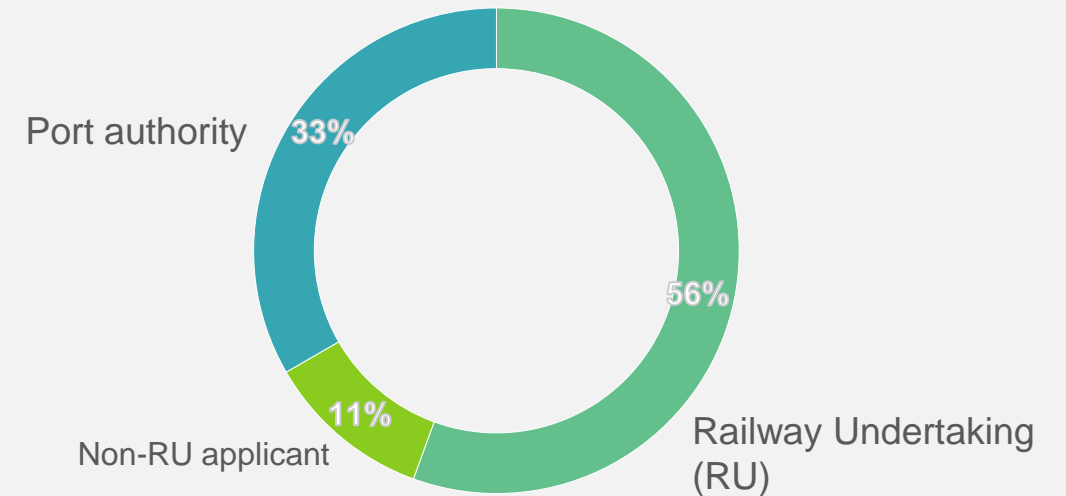
02 SATISFACTION WITH RFC RALP

INTRODUCTION

The RFC USS 2024 is based on the relaunched version from 2023, which was optimized to better suit the needs of the invitees and the RFC Network.

The **general questions covered the same topics** as previous years. Similarly to 2023, all the **questions** were **open**. This simplification was done hoping not only to gather more feedback but also more specific input concerning insights or issues that participants would like to highlight.

Interviews were possible again in 2024. These Q&A sessions followed the same script as the questionnaire, although follow-up questions might have come up during the meetings.

All figures are rounded **without comma.**

SATISFACTION WITH RFC RALP

» Overall, how satisfied are you as a user of the RFC?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports

» sample size = 9

77%
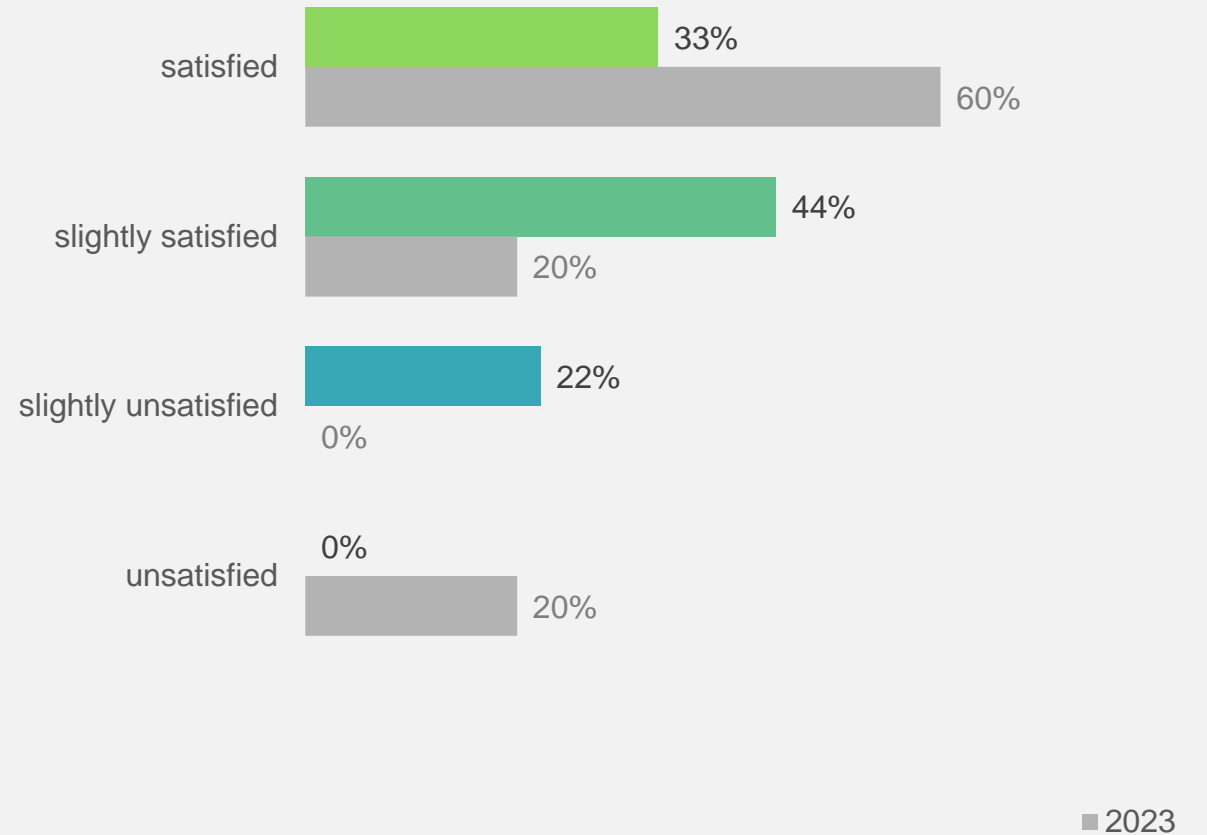**Generally satisfied**

Answers given were satisfied and slightly satisfied.

3 %
Decrease of satisfaction

compared to 2023

satisfied — 33% / 60%

slightly satisfied — 44% / 20%

slightly unsatisfied — 22% / 0%
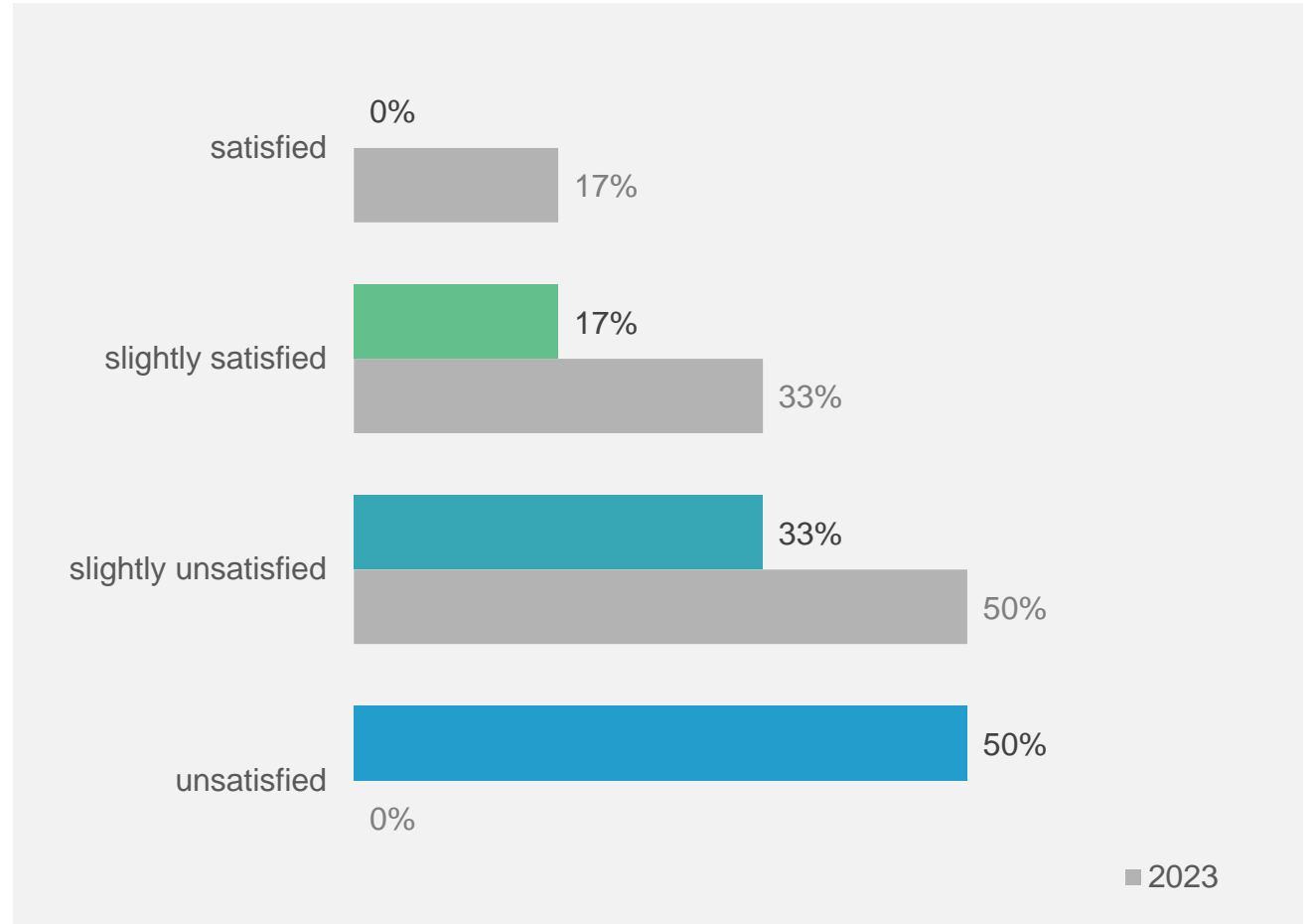
unsatisfied — 0% / 20%

■ 2023

REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- The focus of the RFC seems quite operational and especially strong on TCRs. It might be interesting to investigate and discuss the implementation of TEN-T specifications on the corridors, so that individual member states can be pointed out their 'to-dos' on the corridor in relation to the other countries.

- Meetings have been periodically scheduled and overall, information sharing has been effective

- Good collaboration

- It's very good because of the corridor management, following the Rastatt incident from what I see and what I heard from the market. Their improvement that the people see there is the value of the corridor and the corridor management for contingency management and all that stuff. So from the corridors, as I know a bit from in detail, I'm very much satisfied with the current management and the corridor itself, though it is heavily affected by external factors

- The needs of RUs are respected, contact to C-OSS is good. Products are satisfactory. The IT tool PCS is working fine. However, construction works and parameter differences between countries create difficulties with PaPs.

- Too many short-term disruptions on DB InfraGO, especially on Köln - Koblenz section due to uncoordinated planning of construction works. A general lack of availability of infrastructure due to insufficient maintenance and reinvestment.

- In recent years, the rail freight corridors have become less effective, and now Europe is introducing new legislation. The direction is changing, and the corridors might disappear. I think it's a shame because Alpine is one of the best rail freight corridors. But the outcomes are not enough. we're too dependent on national infrastructure providers, There's still a huge problem with interoperability and border issues.

- The conditions in Germany in terms of infrastructure context; quality, punctuality, etc. are a disaster. Although DB InfraGo has recently carried out corridor renovations, it will take decades to reach the necessary level. Particularly concerning upgrades in the Rhine Valley. This jeopardizes the shift to rail and the overall developments of this mode of transport.

- Still a lot of works and diversions ahead

SATISFACTION WITH TEMPORARY CAPACITY RESTRICTIONS (TCR)

» To what extent are your needs and expectations satisfied with the publication on Temporary Capacity Restrictions (TCR) at the corridor level?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs

» sample size = 6

satisfied: 0% / 17%

slightly satisfied: 17% / 33%

slightly unsatisfied: 33% / 50%

unsatisfied: 50% / 0%

■ 2023

REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Low commitment on capacity for rerouting options and a lack of international rerouting announcements. For example, when Venlo is closed and rerouting via Emmerich is necessary. German reroutings are often implemented without prior announcement.

- Publications by RFC do not contain much added information to what is already published nationally. A European analysis and/or maps with the consequences and detours (based on the current publications) would be more interesting. Furthermore, these publications are updated less frequently than the national ones.

- We do not use this publication of TCR from the Corridor, we get information about TCR on national level.

- The information provided should be more detailed.

- IM's should coordinate the construction works better together. Communication is the key to success! Please ensure that RUs are also informed !

- The detours are not working, and we really need proper diversion routes. This is not only a capacity management issue; it also involves the figures used in the rail traffic control phase. The system is not robust enough. We might have a plan, but when it comes to actual operations, it's almost useless.

USEFULNESS OF **TCR DOCUMENT**

» Please, assess the usefulness of the document and the extent to which it replaces or complements equivalent documents provided at national level

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs

» sample size =6

COMMENTS

Too many information sources. We focus on the documents provided by our most important IM (DB InfraGO) and their handling. Every additional document from another source means extra efforts and the need to check for consistency. A one stop shop and unified data format would probably be a solution to easily handle such information at a European level and to be exchanged via interfaces for our own planning systems.

We do not use this publication of TCR from the Corridor, we get information about TCR on national level.

Information should be more detailed especially on rerouting paths.

The documents are outdated for me, I get the required documents earlier from the national IMs. LinkedIn is also used effectively.

INVOLVEMENT IN CAPACITY REQUESTS VIA THE C-OSS

REASONS:

» Were you involved in a request for corridor capacity via the C-OSS as a leading or participating applicant/RU?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs

» sample size = 6

- Many international trains are not requested via PCs in the corridor. Instead, we use the national infra provider's system. One of the problems is that the corridor doesn't offer all the needed slots and no capacity request has been made. This depends mainly on the production concept. PaPs often do not align with the personnel turnover. The requested train paths can also be obtained manually within the national framework.
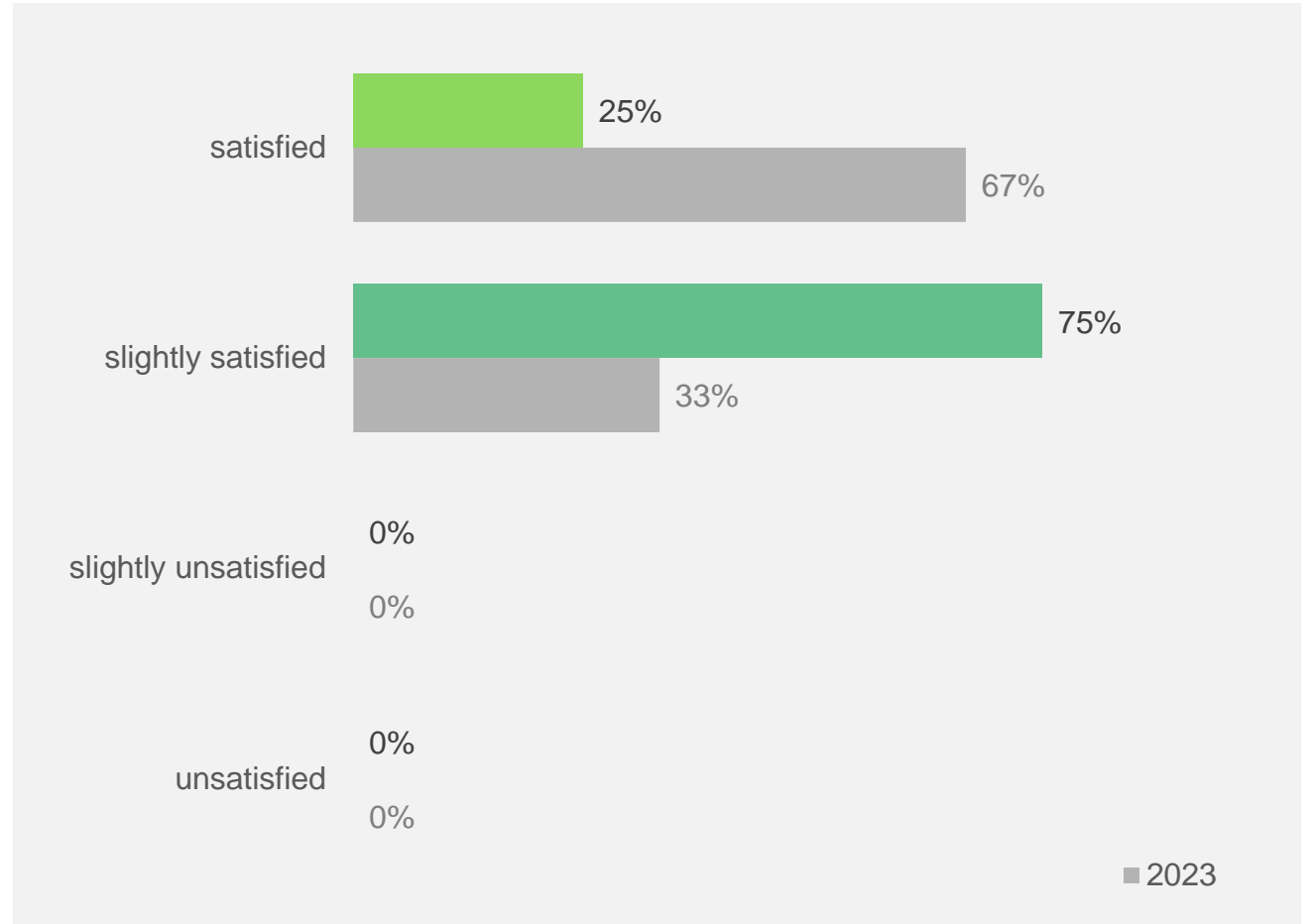
Capacity request via C-OSS

67%
Yes
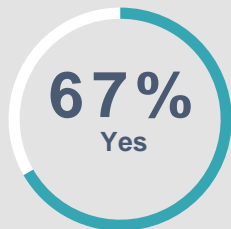
Compared to the past year
The rate was consistent.

SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE BY THE C-OSS

» To what extent are you satisfied with the service by the C-OSS?

» Answered by: RUs

» sample size = 4

satisfied
25%
67%

slightly satisfied
75%
33%

slightly unsatisfied
0%
0%

unsatisfied
0%
0%

■ 2023

REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- C-OSS is an additional layer to deal with on top of the national IMs and is kind of limited in its options, as its actions must also be coordinated with the national IMs with whom we already have to deal directly. The distinctions of some paths to be dealt with C-OSS and other paths to be dealt with national IMs for the same traffic is annoying.

- A better coordination among IMs and RUs would be fruitful.

SATISFACTION WITH **RFC COMMERCIAL OFFER**

» To what extent are you satisfied with the current RFC(s) commercial offer?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs

» sample size = 6

satisfied
0%
17%

slightly satisfied
83%
50%

slightly unsatisfied
17%
33%

unsatisfied
0%
0%

■2023
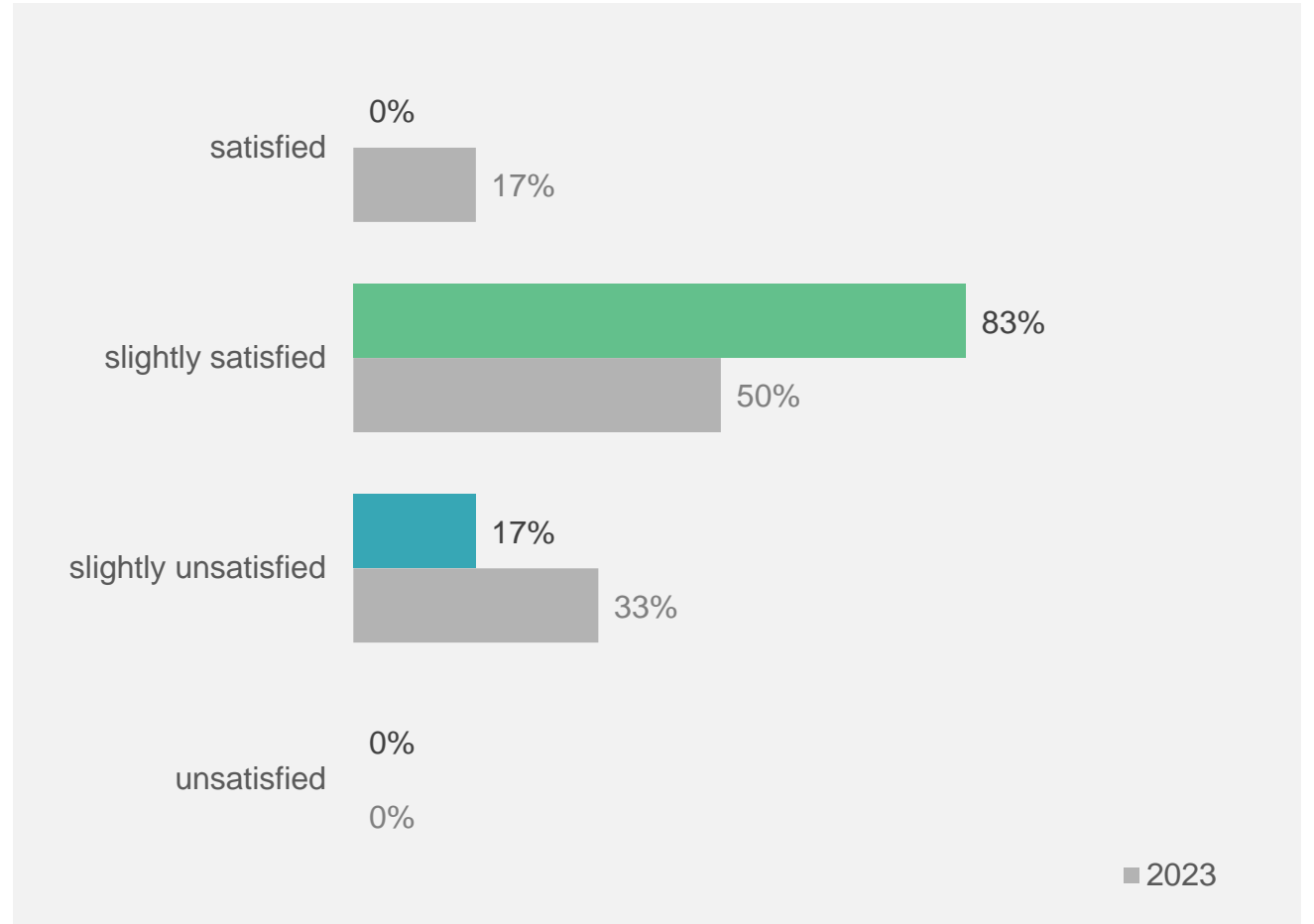
REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- The restriction of only being allowed to order paths including PaPs via PCS is causing double amount of work in our planning system and is always a high risk of lower quality, especially when order data is transferred manually at e.g. DB InfraGO. We would strongly prefer to be allowed to place parallel orders via interfaces, where we can assure, that all our parameters are received and we don't have to do extra efforts to import path contracts via the interface into our planning system.

- The publications are OK. It would be good if there were more PaPs, since they have a better position when it comes to the allocation of capacity

- The offer does not always respond to the real needs of the RUs.

- We would very appreciate it if there were PaP offers via Venlo.

- The service offers train paths in five countries, but once the path is allocated, everything is handed over to the national systems which creates challenges. You cannot solve this problem if you don't go back and take a closer look at the whole process. The COSS does not offer all the slots, the market asks for more flexibility and traffic control can fulfil your wishes. The only good thing is the IT tool.

- We encountered some problems with PaPs covering the stretch Emmerich – Oberhausen (Germany) where significant longer-term works are taking place. Those PaPs which were affected by a total closure on this stretch during certain days were removed in their entirety from the PCS offer so that even the inner-German sections not affected by the closure (e.g., Oberhausen – Mainz) on these days could not be requested any longer. Respondent colleagues from (CH) were in general satisfied with the PaP offer and the handling of the PCS dossiers, which made it possible for them to increase the number PaP orders to 13.

However, we see process-related problems with catalogue path allocation in Switzerland (CH): The current regular process for allocation of catalogue paths for stretches in CH is running asynchronously to the process for requesting PaPs in general (i.e., catalogue paths for CH will only be allocated after the deadline for PaP requests). This leads some-times to a situation where the allocated catalogue path for the Swiss part of the entire international route is different from the originally requested path and thus is not consistent any longer with the harmonised paths in Germany (DE) and Italy (IT), regarding the times at the borders. The international

path construction and allocation process, however, does not foresee the possibility for a subsequent alteration of the already harmonised paths in Germany and Italy in order to make them compatible with the allocated catalogue path in CH. There-fore, the current construction process for paths DE-CH-IT does not make much sense. Nevertheless, the involved infrastructure managers are forced to continue constructing the initially requested paths, which will in fact never have the chance to be compatible or harmonised. This creates additional effort and costs for both railway undertakings and infrastructure managers without any benefit. Example: A requested path via the Luino route was changed (after the deadline for PaP request) by the Swiss infrastructure manager to the Chiasso route, i.e., even to another border-crossing point.
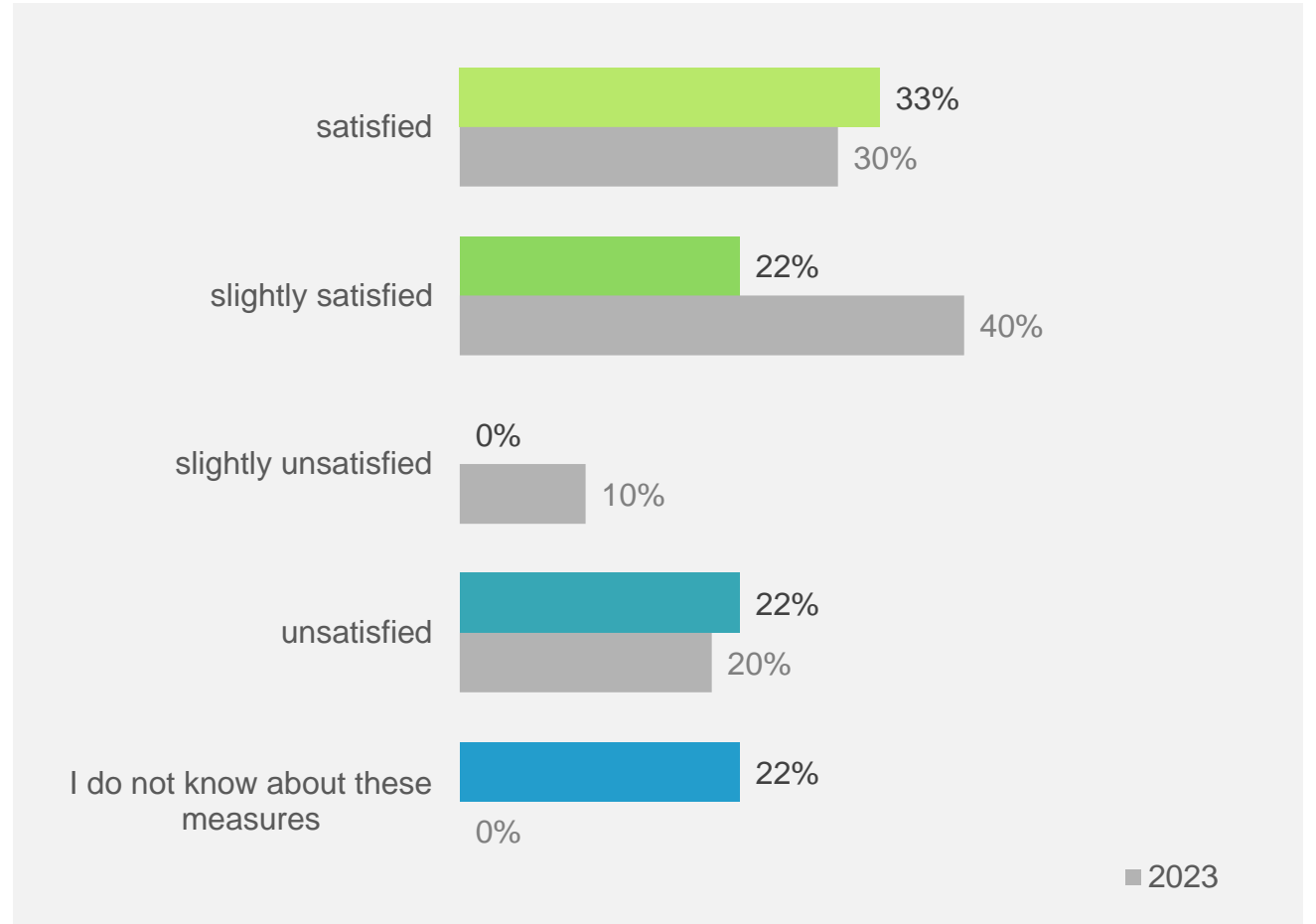
In PaPs for stretches in Italy, some parameters (weight, length) were restricted and did not always fit with our traffic concepts. In some cases, our need for parameters exceeding those in a PaP could be agreed with the corridor manager and the infrastructure manager RFI. Technical restrictions in PCS, however, make it still impossible to enter such altered parameters directly into the requested timetable. Therefore, they were submitted via the

REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Therefore, they were submitted via the comment field addressed to RFI to be considered during construction. Unfortunately, these comments were not considered in the actual path offers by RFI. We finally received path offers with the initially published restricted parameters and not how they were requested in the dossier agreed with RFI/RFC-manager. Finally, the general problem that information published by national systems is sometimes not identical with what is visible in PCS is persisting.

SATISFACTION WITH **RFC PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

» To what extent are you satisfied with the process and the results of performance monitoring as well as on the measures taken to achieve the Corridor's objectives?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Ports

» sample size = 9

satisfied — 33% / 30%

slightly satisfied — 22% / 40%

slightly unsatisfied — 0% / 10%

unsatisfied — 22% / 20%

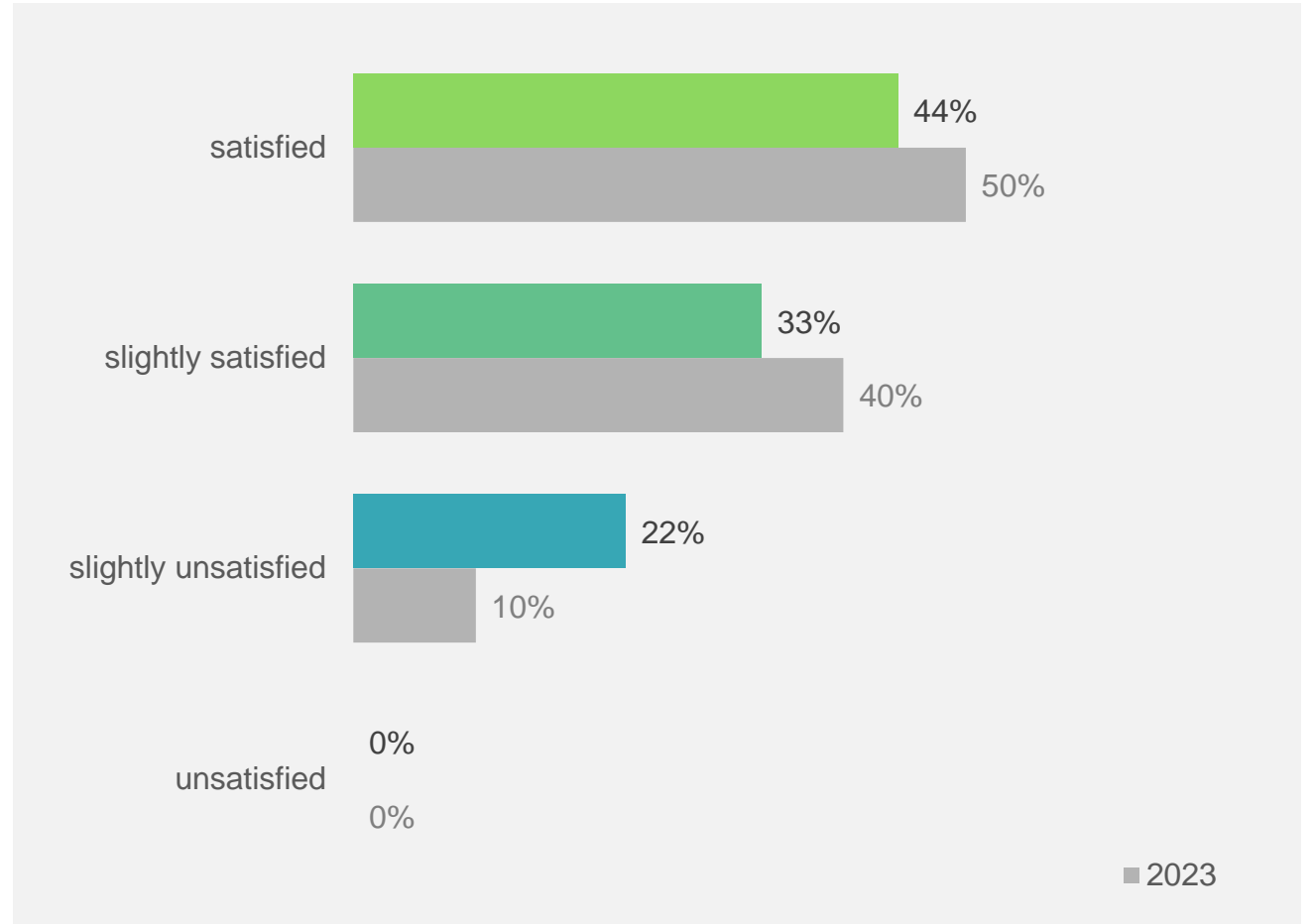I do not know about these measures — 22% / 0%

■2023

REASONS:

- We see little of the input and outcome from the plan-do-check-act cycle.

- The PCS tool is more stable. But PaPs have not changed much.

- The current performance management systems are not working well due to the lack of proper monitoring and analysis. We need to acknowledge this problem before we can find a solution. The current approach is not effective enough for major interoperability issues. For example, while each segment is 740 meters, it does not help with coordinating the work. We aim for 740 meters, but if that's not possible because of a 667-meter restriction, then we should stop at the border.

- We mainly check it for our internal purposes. It's not something which impact our day-to-day business. But to make clear the general quality to customers, to convince them to use these kinds of systems. There are a lot of rumors, stories and a lot of negative things about railway Therefore, it's more than good to say yes in that specific case we have evidence. It's good to have facts to see the weak points and prevent rumors in the market.

- Monitoring fine, but actions do not show that much results

SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION PROVIDED BY RFCS

» To what extent are you satisfied with the information provided by the RFC(s) (e.g. RFC website, social media channels (LinkedIn, etc.), annual reports, Corridor Information Document, Customer Information Platform)?

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Ports

» sample size = 9

satisfied — 44% / 50%

slightly satisfied — 33% / 40%

slightly unsatisfied — 22% / 10%

unsatisfied — 0% / 0%

■2023

REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- As previously stated, the additional source of information provided by corridor to the national IMs, leads to an information overload which is normally ignored to focus on the original source of information from the national IMs.

- There are interesting reports and information documents. The websites could be more user friendly though and be more alike in look and content. As the processes are still nationally focused the information is not really used much within the organization.

- Sometimes there is too much information and it is not easy to handle.

- Of course, a proactive approach from Rus is mandatory. Nonetheless, especially during peak work periods, a more fluent communication stream from the Corridor would be appreciated

- I don't look at the websites, but the annual report is very interesting. You should be more proactive because short-term information is not useful. For example, there is no need to know in April or July what will happen in December or January. It's valuable if you develop an application, but it also needs to be communicated effectively. I receive a lot of information one or two years in advance from IMs.

- The inclusion process is good and stakeholders have the opportunity to express their opinions.

- From my point of view, it is sufficient. Anyone who needs more details can ask questions, but the level of detail provided is absolutely fine for standard use. The operational content that impact us is valuable, but the theoretical content is not interesting.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- PaPs remain an important element for ensuring capacity on yearly timetable basis. Furthermore, we would like to have information on the concrete impacts of the corridor merger (what does this mean for RU, PaP, information distribution, contact persons).

- it's about communication and relationships. Working internationally can be challenging.

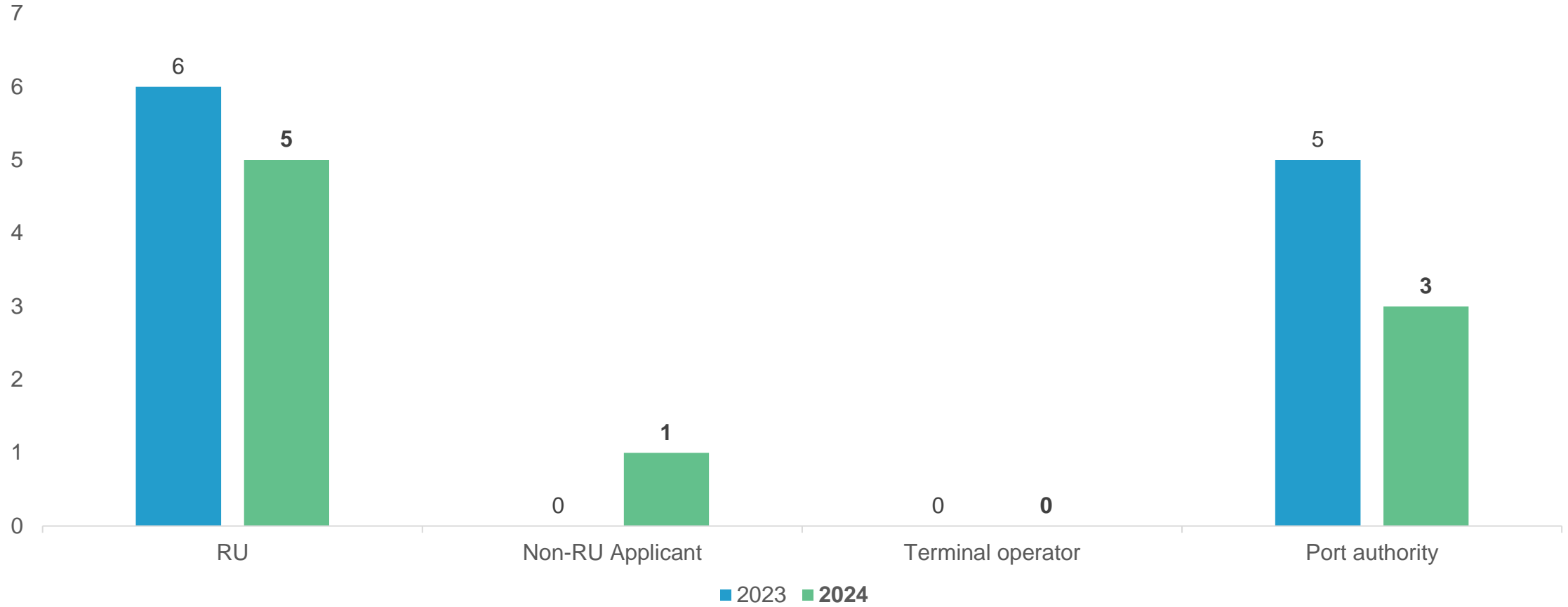- No, otherwise I will share it in the TAG

03 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Target group

» "To which of the following type of target groups does your company belong?"
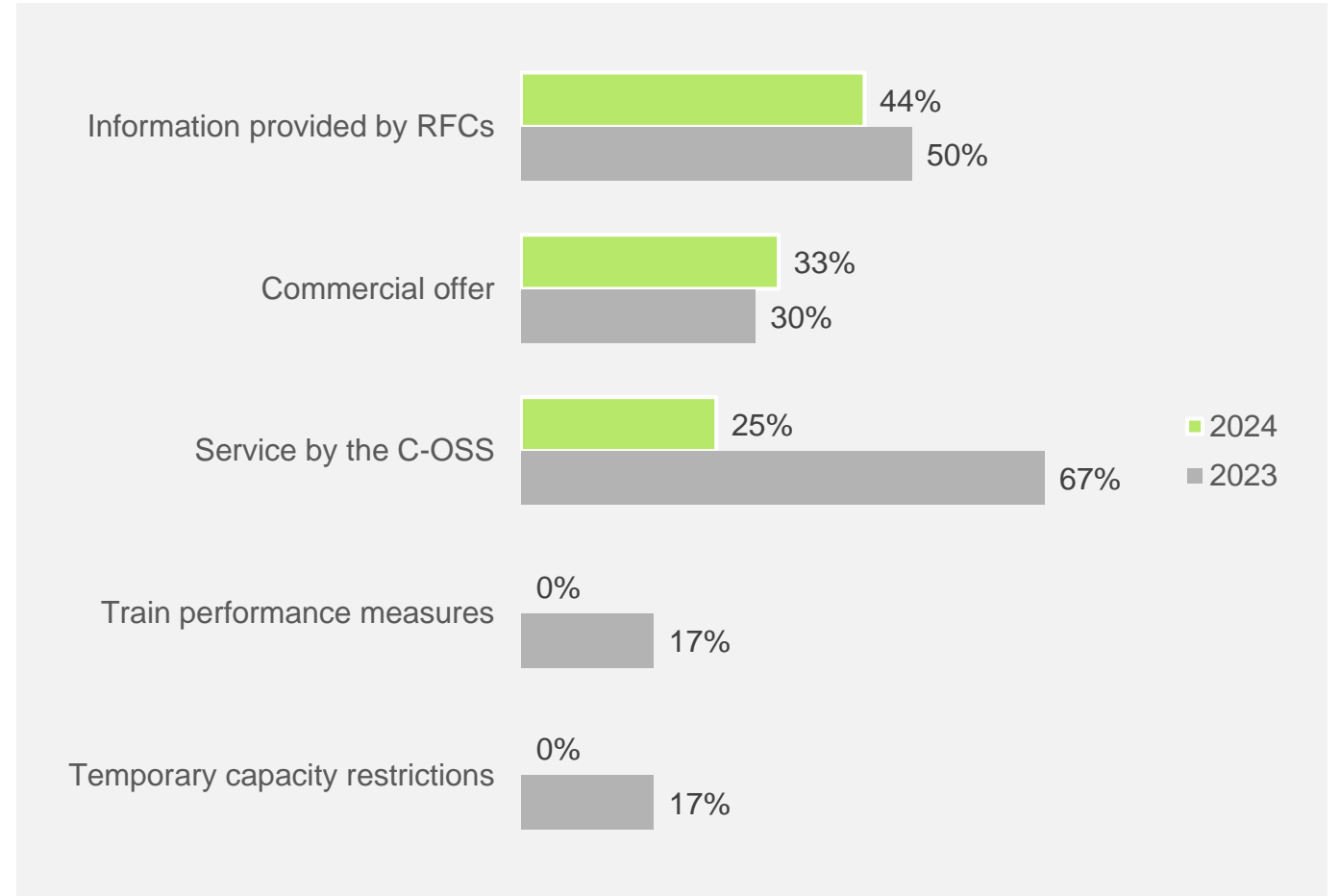» sample size = 51; 9

04 SUMMARY

SUMMARY – SATISFACTION RATING

All respondents

» Only fully satisfaction rates considered (not slightly satisfied)

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Terminals/Ports

» Different sample sizes on some topics

Most satisfactory topic

Information provided by RFC

Information provided by RFCs
- 2024: 44%
- 2023: 50%

Commercial offer
- 2024: 33%
- 2023: 30%

Service by the C-OSS
- 2024: 25%
- 2023: 67%

Train performance measures
- 2024: 0%
- 2023: 17%

Temporary capacity restrictions
- 2024: 0%
- 2023: 17%

■ 2024
■ 2023

SUMMARY – DISATISFACTION RATING

All respondents

───

» Only fully disatisfaction rates considered (not slightly unsatisfied)

» Answered by: RUs/non-RUs, Ports

» Different sample sizes on some topics

Least satisfactory topic

TEMPORARY CAPACITY

RESTRICTIONS

TEMPORARY CAPACITY RESTRICTIONS (TCR)

0%

- 2024
- 2023