

Innotrans 2016 in Berlin

More, bigger, better every time – these are traditionally the attributes that the bi-annual rail industry trade fair Innotrans in Berlin likes to use for its self-promotion. Indeed, every version of the fair thus far has attracted more exhibitors, offered more vehicles on display and featured larger crowds. But anyone who walked around the open-air exhibition grounds this year will have noticed that suddenly there was more space than usual: the gaps between vehicles had become larger and suddenly peripheral areas which were still occupied two years ago stood virtually empty.

Contemporary buzzwords such as “digitalisation” or “self-propelled vehicles” were also omnipresent in Berlin. At the “paperless” DB stand it was possible to converse with the humanoid robot “Pepper”, who is also intended for use at DB travel centres on a trial basis. Spectacular new vehicle showcases, on the other hand, were few and far between. Bombardier’s Twindexx for SBB, Siemens’ ICE 4 or Škoda’s double-deck trainset for DB Regio were all absent. Instead, several electric buses were displayed for the first time and made their rounds in the fair’s summer garden.

A small selection of locomotives, multiple units and coaches on display in Berlin will be presented on the following pages. These are predominantly vehicles that haven’t already been described in previous issues.

Stadler presents the Giruno

In view of the many prominent absentees the presentation of Stadler’s first high-speed train, featuring five cars from the first two compositions, attracted all the more attention. During the weeks leading up to the trade fair, employees at the Bussnang plant had worked flat out on the five cars. That complete vehicles can already be exhibited just two years after the purchase contract was signed is remarkable, even though apparently there had not been enough time to finish the dining car or one of the disability-adapted cars with outside doors that align with the different platform heights of 55 and 76 cm. In their spirited speeches, Stadler boss Peter Spuhler and SBB CEO Andreas Meyer did not hold back on references to “other, not quite unproblematic, rolling stock projects”.

According to Stadler, the low-floor access “is a novelty for a serially produced high-speed train”; this somewhat pretentious statement seems to have forgotten the Spanish Talgo trains, however. Even the latest double-deck TGV generation offers virtually step-free entry. Compared to other SBB vehicles, the individual compartments of the Giruno are unusually small, but this is due to the short car bodies. On a walk through the train, one notices how all seats are properly aligned with the windows, thanks to a well conceived design: seats with little or no window view at

all, like on the new DB ICE 4, don’t exist on the Giruno. The windows are rather on the small side, however, which is not only due to the general technical parameters such as weight and pressure resistance, but also to SBB’s design preferences: rounded corners, which would have allowed for larger window surfaces, were ruled out. SBB is very proud of its gender-separate toilets, which have not been seen since the TEE era. Electronic pictograms make it possible to change a ladies or gents WC into a unisex toilet, when one of the two oppositely located “loos” is defective.

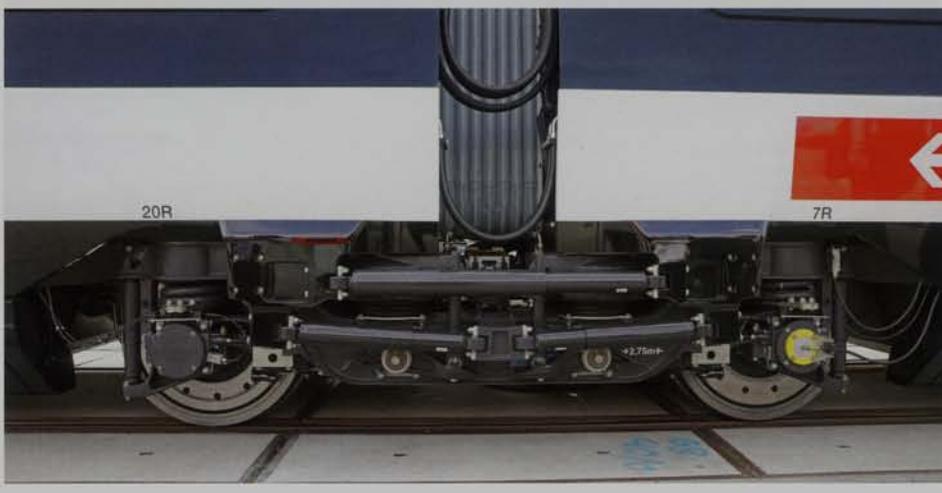
The 202-metre-long, up to 250 km/h-fast trains with four powered bogies are certified according to TSI High-Speed criteria. Country approval for Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland is being aimed for. Stadler plans to formally present and officially hand over the first finished Giruno to SBB on 18 May 2017, so that the event may coincide with the 75th company anniversary, about two and a half years before the announced start of revenue services between Zürich and Milano.

Five further Stadler vehicles were also on show at Innotrans, including a Flirt 3 for Netherlands Railways NS (from a series that had only just been ordered in April 2015), a Variobahn for the light rail system in the Danish city Aarhus, a bi-modal tram-train for Chemnitz (developed together with Vossloh Kiepe and built in Valencia), a bi-modal mainline locomotive for Direct Rail Services (also built in Spain) and finally the first of three first-class sleeping cars for Azerbaijan State Railways with 16 berths. Another 21 second-class sleepers and three WLAB as well as three dining cars are also part of this order. All these vehicles feature variable-gauge bogies, allowing them to be deployed as 10-coach trains on the future Baku – Tbilisi – Ankara – Istanbul route.

Unlike Stadler, and the Giruno notwithstanding, SBB was “invisible” at the Berlin fair, after



Left centre and below: The powered bogie in the end car as well as an unpowered Jacobs bogie between two coaches of the Giruno (photos: A. Gerber).



Below: Giruno’s type TMF 50-33-4 traction motor supplied by Traktionssysteme Austria weighs 710 kg and is capable of 600 kW (photo: J. Lüthard).

