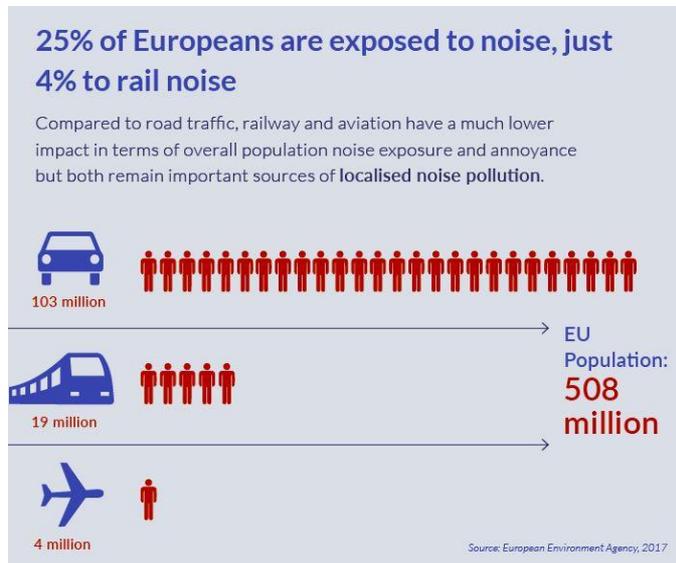


Reducing rail freight noise: what should we do?

On 3 May, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) organised a high-level conference to explore solutions to further reduce rail freight noise. CER was delighted to welcome European Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc as a keynote speaker.

Noise pollution remains a major environmental health problem in Europe. According to the European Environment Agency, **one in four EU citizens are affected by environmental noise**, which is the second greatest environmental and health hazard after bad air quality. Noise is a side effect of all major modes of transport and is one of the key concerns for people living near transport infrastructure. While rail is considered the most environmentally friendly transport mode, rail freight noise remains an important source of localised noise pollution. **Rail freight noise is the last remaining environmental challenge for the European rail sector**, therefore it is a priority topic.



See the CER Fact Sheet with more facts and figures [here](#).

With the kind support of the European Commission, CER organised two panel discussions bringing together high-level speakers from both the EU institutions as well as rail freight CEOs.

The first panel focused on **the noise-related regulatory framework**, in particular the Noise TSI. While **Matthew Baldwin** (DG MOVE Deputy Director-General) outlined the EU's regulatory framework, **Sylvie Charles** (CEO Rail and Intermodal of SNCF Logistics), **Jürgen Wilder** (CEO of DB Cargo), **Ferdinand Schmidt** (Board Member of Rail Cargo Austria), and **Jan Kilström** (CEO of Green Cargo) provided practical sector insight.

Reducing noise costs money. That's why the second panel **explored the financing possibilities for noise mitigation**. **Herald Ruijters** (Director 'Investment, Innovative and Sustainable Transport' at DG MOVE), **Michael Cramer** (MEP (Greens/EFA, DE)) and **Constance Kann**, Director of Institutional Relations and Public Affairs at the EIB's Brussels Office) presented the views and solutions at EU level. **Geert Pauwels** (CEO of Lineas) and **Nicolas Perrin** (CEO of SBB Cargo) focused on the sector needs.

To highlight the issues raised at the conference, CER published a [fact sheet](#) illustrating the sector's strategy in reducing noise pollution and the economics of noise reduction measures.

European Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc stated: *"As demand for mobility increases, so does transport noise. This has a negative impact on human health, which can only be addressed through coordinated actions. A comprehensive approach, including joint planning, corridor deployment and co-financing is the most appropriate. It will provide for a satisfactory reduction in rail noise, while preserving the competitiveness of rail freight transport."*

CER Executive Director Libor Lochman said: *"The railway sector promotes a freight noise strategy that tackles the problem at the source. Retrofitting is the most effective measure, however the funding for retrofitting of wagons needs to be addressed. The availability of public funding should be consistent with the transport policy goals. CER advocates a pragmatic European approach to rail freight noise abatement. Policymakers should ensure an optimal and efficient general regulatory framework for the successful implementation of rail noise reduction measures while not compromising the sector's competitiveness."*

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About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 73% of the rail network length, 83% of the rail freight business and about 95% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policy makers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a competitive and sustainable transport system in Europe. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow us via Twitter at [@CER_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways).