

# Rail's priorities for the European Green Deal

**The EU and its Member States should implement a number of policy measures to set transport on a path to full decarbonisation by 2050, with a modal shift to rail, effective tools to implement 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles and proper funding for clean mobility. European railways are therefore proposing priority measures for the upcoming European Green Deal.**

European railways are calling on the European Commission, Parliament and Member States to agree on a strong European Green Deal, one that will help to progressively reduce to net-zero the greenhouse gas emissions from transport and from the wider economy by 2050 at the latest. As the existing green mode of motorised transport – thanks to very low externalities, high degrees of electrification and increasingly zero-carbon operation – they can greatly help greening transport. The European Green Deal should support their contribution.

**Overarching policies:** With the European Green Deal, the EU and Member States should set ambitious, but realistic milestones 2030/40/50 for decarbonising EU transport. A shift to rail should be supported, for rail freight with an action plan of EU and national measures, for passengers with support for a shift to rail particularly in the case of cross-border travel up to 1000 km. Marginal social-cost pricing should be promoted in transport, i.e. implement the principles of 'polluter pays' and 'user pays'.

**Financing and funding:** It is important to significantly increase the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) budget for transport. Besides developing rail infrastructure, investment is specifically required for electrifying further rail tracks, further digitalising railways and further reducing rail freight noise. Robust funding should be provided for railway research and innovation. A scale-up of private investment in rail projects should be facilitated.

**A level playing field for rail:** To allow rail to compete with other transport modes on an equal footing, the European Green Deal should help implement robust carbon pricing for transport across the EU. Specifically, it should allow taxing energy used in international aviation or maritime shipping and end subsidies for flying. Moreover, it should make road charging more comprehensive.

**Other priority policies** for the European Green Deal include promoting low-emission transport in Erasmus+ programmes, improving cross-border interoperability by swiftly implementing the TEN-T-Regulation, increasing interconnectivity between rail and road and mainstreaming the European Green Deal across all EU policies, to boost the energy transition and develop sustainable cities.

As **additional policies**, the EU and respectively Member States should temporarily waive part of rail track access charges, reduce the customs guarantee burden for rail

freight, promote sustainable tourism and improve transport eco-labelling to help travellers and shippers to make well-informed choices.

**European railways are a key to EU transport decarbonisation** and asking the EU to help them maximise their contribution. In return, they will further improve their energy efficiency, further reduce their specific CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, further improve their processes and operational efficiency, further innovate rail services and products, and closely cooperate with other modes of transport to further develop Mobility as a Service (MaaS).

The items above are explained in detail, and many of them supported by concrete figures, in CER's position paper "Rail's priorities for the European Green Deal" published [here](#) today.

**CER Executive Director Libor Lochman** commented: *"European railways warmly welcome the plan of the incoming European Commission for a European Green Deal to support the EU's transition to a net-zero carbon economy by 2050. As the existing green mode of motorised transport, rail can make a key contribution to this transition with a modal shift to clean transport. They are today making concrete proposals on how the Deal can support their contribution. CER stands ready to engage with policymakers to help the European Green Deal deliver clean mobility for all."*

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#### **About CER**

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together 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 71% of the rail network length, 76% of the rail freight business and about 92% 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](http://www.cer.be) or follow [@CER\\_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) on Twitter.