

Press Release

Madrid, 30 November 2023

European rail infrastructure CEOs discuss opportunities & challenges of digitalisation, TEN-T, and the Capacity Regulation

European rail infrastructure CEOs from the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) and the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) gathered in Madrid today to discuss the current challenges and priorities of the sector, in particular, the opportunities of digital transformation, and the challenges posed by both the TEN-T requirements and the new rules of the proposed Capacity Regulation. They confirmed that international coordination of capacity management can ensure modal shift and increase rail capacity.

The CEOs of rail infrastructure companies discussed the transformation of the rail sector and integration of digital technologies which have an impact on the workforce. In the context of the European Year of Skills, panellists discussed the strategies necessary to upskill and reskill the workforce and how to leverage the opportunities of the Year.

The meeting also provided the opportunity to discuss the requirements of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) policy, in the context of the ongoing Trilogue negotiations between the EU Parliament, the Council and the Commission. CEOs shared the essential requirements needed for more performant rail operations in Europe and the main challenges of military mobility given the new geostrategic context. Debate also focused on the EU financial framework in light of the strong political ambitions set in the TEN-T.

In discussions on the European Rail Capacity Management Proposal, speakers agreed that this ambitious legislation will assist in the optimisation of capacity and rail traffic and ensure efficient use of the network. However, it is key to keep the legislation simple and to use existing sector organisations. Dialogue focused on the many opportunities and challenges of the Proposal, which include governance structure, Temporary Capacity Restrictions, socio-economic and environmental criteria, the link to Rail Freight Corridors, as well as elements of the Regulation that can be applied earlier than 2030.

This year's High-Level Infrastructure Meeting (HLIM) took place in Madrid on 30 November at the Spanish Council of Civil Engineers on the invitation of rail infrastructure manager Adif. Jointly organised by CER and EIM, this annual meeting provides a platform for the exchange of information and experience, with a view to finding common solutions to support rail traffic in Europe and make railways more attractive for customers.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *“Simplicity and cooperation among infrastructure managers, as well as with other stakeholders, is key to making railways competitive and to achieving a Single European Railway Area. Discussions like today’s lead to pragmatic solutions to make the sector attractive for both customers and employees, and to the optimisation of available capacity and the completion of the European network.”*

EIM Executive Director Monika Heiming said: *“Rail infrastructure managers are essential to reach EU’s geostrategic, green and digital objectives. Ambitious initiatives such as the TEN-T or the European Capacity Management can help us to achieve these goals. The 2023 HLIM provides an excellent occasion to exchange on the measures needed to move forward. Together, we can create the European rail network of the future, open to all.”*

<p>Contact Person</p> <p>Cliona Cunningham CER Head of Communications E: cliona.cunningham@cer.be T: +32 (0)2 213 08 90 M: +32 (0) 472 48 75 98</p>	<p>About CER</p> <p>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 78% of the rail network length, 81% of the rail freight business and about 94% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policymakers 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 @CER_railways on Twitter.</p>
<p>Contact Person</p> <p>Sandrine Roussel Manager of Internal Affairs: E: sandrine.roussel@eimrail.org T: + 32 (0)2 234 37 70 M: +32 (0) 476 57 45 16</p>	<p>About EIM</p> <p>EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following the liberalisation of the EU railway market. It also provides technical expertise to the appropriate European bodies such as the European Railway Agency. EIM’s primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer orientated rail network in Europe. For further info, please consult www.eimrail.org.</p>