

**Press release**

Brussels, 17 September 2024



# Mobility at the heart of our Union - European Rail welcomes work programme of new Sustainable Transport Commissioner

**The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) congratulates Apostolos Tzitzikostas on his appointment as Commissioner-designate for Sustainable Transport & Tourism and warmly welcomes President von der Leyen's mission letter which recognises mobility at the heart of the European Union and is aligned with the main priorities of the CER Manifesto "On track for Europe".**

**European railways stand ready to work with and support President von der Leyen, Executive Vice-President Raffaele Fitto, and of course the new Commissioner in achieving these ambitious and necessary priorities which, amongst others, will focus on increasing modal shift towards sustainable transport, accelerating the roll-out of trans-European infrastructure and making the most of digital tools to support high-performing, sustainable, and inter-connected networks across Europe.**

In particular, CER applauds the call of President von der Leyen to "put forward a plan for an ambitious European high-speed rail network to help connect EU capitals, including through night trains, and to accelerate rail freight". CER has been calling for this for many years and its absence was referred to as a "glaring paradox in EU infrastructure" in Former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta's recent High-Level Report on the Future of the Single Market.

CER equally welcomes the ambition for a Sustainable Transport Investment Plan which will outline a strategic approach to scale up and prioritise investments in transport decarbonisation solutions. Railways need fair, long-term, comprehensive financing in order to fully realise their potential as the essential backbone of sustainable mobility and net-zero logistics in Europe.

The Commission's recognition that digitalisation is essential to help modernise the transport system is vital. The deployment of rail's key digital enablers, which include the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) but also Digital Capacity Management (DCM), Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) for optimised rail freight operations and the Open Sales and Distribution Model (OSDM) for easier international ticketing, will be game changing, not only to enhance rail services for its end users but also reduce costs. For instance, the increase in rail capacity that can be achieved through digital means with DCM requires just 5% of the budget that would be needed to build new physical rail infrastructure.

The European Rail Community also reiterates its commitment to achieving seamless cross-border rail ticketing by 2025 by implementing the [Open Sales and Distribution Model](#) (OSDM) and expanding the CIT [Agreement on Journey Continuation](#) (AJC) as well

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as other steps foreseen in the [CER Ticketing Roadmap](#), designed and agreed proactively by European rail passenger undertakings. CER looks forward to working with the Commissioner-designate on Single Digital Ticketing and Booking Platform Regulation.

**CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola** said: *“European railways are committed to providing Europeans with better passenger services for all, including high-speed connections between capitals and major cities; digital rail freight operations integrated with other modes, leading to zero-emission European logistics; and reliable, safe, high-speed infrastructure as well as improvements to the existing network through modernisation and digitalisation. We warmly welcome that these points have been taken up in the next term of the European Commission and stand ready to fully cooperate and support the new Commission in achieving these objectives”.*

Read more on the priorities of European rail at [www.cer.be/ontrackforeurope](http://www.cer.be/ontrackforeurope).

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### About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together around 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](http://www.cer.be) or follow us on Twitter [@CER\\_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cer).