

Press release

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CER congratulates new EU Commission and outlines key priorities for Rail Sector

High-speed rail on track for a greener Europe

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) extends its warm congratulations to EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and her newly confirmed College of Commissioners. The European rail sector stands ready to work with and support the new college, particularly on necessary priorities such as funding & investment, increasing modal shift towards sustainable mobility and tourism, accelerating the roll-out of trans-European infrastructure, including a master plan for high-speed rail, and making the most of digital tools to support high-performing, sustainable, and inter-connected networks across Europe. These priorities, highlighted in the recent hearings and related mission letters, align perfectly with the main priorities of the CER Manifesto "On track for Europe".

CER looks forward to working with Commissioner for Sustainable Transport & Tourism **Apostolos Tzitzikostas** on, amongst others, his commitment to an ambitious **European high-speed rail network**, connecting EU capitals, including through night trains, and accelerating rail freight, and to increased rail safety through deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS). CER has long advocated for high-speed rail, highlighted as a significant gap in Europe's transport offering by former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta in his High-Level Report on the Future of the Single Market. The rail sector is eager to see how the Commission will involve all necessary stakeholders to achieve the Smart and Sustainable Mobility strategy's goals of doubling high-speed rail traffic by 2030 and tripling it by 2050.

The Rail Sector also awaits with interest the European Commission's proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) under Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration **Piotr Serafin**. This crucial legislation will shape European competitiveness, and the value of rail connectivity for regional cohesion and the EU Single Market cannot be underestimated. CER looks forward to collaborating with Commissioner Serafin to ensure railways' safety, sustainability, energy efficiency, and security are recognised in the EU budget. For this, the next MFF must support cross-border and national projects, the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS), and Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) technologies.

CER welcomes Executive Vice-President for Cohesion & Reforms **Raffaele Fitto's** commitment to integrating regional and transport policy to combat transport poverty, especially in rural and peripheral regions. Rail can address connectivity gaps, offering cost-effective, sustainable, and energy-efficient transport solutions. With transport central to regional cohesion, CER anticipates strong synergies between regional and transport policy, enhancing mobility across the EU.

CER applauds Executive Vice-President for the Clean, Just and Competitive Transition **Teresa Ribera Rodríguez's** commitment to maintaining the European Green Deal and supporting European companies in achieving a global level playing field. Equally her aim to implement EU climate and energy targets for 2030 and set a 2040 target to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 90% compared to 1990 levels, enabling the EU to become carbon neutral by mid-century. CER is looking forward to the revision of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) Regulation in 2026.

CER is interested to see Executive Vice-President for People, Skills and Preparedness **Roxana Mînzatu's** new Action Plan for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights as the key commitment of her mandate and the related EU-wide social policy dialogue that will be launched with social partners, governments and youth organisations to inform the new Action Plan. Also of high relevance to railways is the new Gender Equality Strategy expected post-2025.

CER embraces the pledge by Commissioner for climate, net-zero and clean growth **Wopke Hoekstra** to publish a Clean Industrial Deal within the first 100 days of the new Commission. This deal will include simplification, faster permitting, unlocking more funds, upskilling workers, boosting clean tech, and making energy more affordable. It aims to combine green and economic strategies for decarbonisation. CER is also keen to see how transport decarbonisation and taxation will impact the intermodal level-playing field and rail.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said *"We congratulate EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and her new college of Commissioners and stand ready to support them in all efforts to achieve a high-performing, sustainable and interconnected Europe. A new college with a new mandate is a new opportunity for Europe to choose rail and increase modal shift towards sustainable mobility and tourism and accelerate the roll-out of trans-European infrastructure and digital technologies such as ERTMS and DAC. We greatly look forward to the eagerly anticipated and long called-for master plan for high-speed rail. The revision of the ETS Regulation will be an opportunity to recognise the importance of carbon avoidance and to channel ETS revenues to rail and sustainable transport"*.

Read more on the priorities of European rail for the new term at www.cer.be/ontrackforeurope.

Contact person

Cliona Cunningham
CER Head of Communications
E: cliona.cunningham@cer.be
M: +32 491 16 21 73

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 or follow us on Twitter [@CER_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cer).