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# Preparedness and Resilience: what European Railways can learn from Ukraine

**On the occasion of today's Ukraine Recovery Conference, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) and JSC Ukrainian Railways (Ukrzaliznytsia) are pleased to issue a joint special report "Preparedness and Resilience: What European Railways can learn from Ukraine." Highlighting the increasing cooperation between European and Ukrainian railways, the report is centred on a twofold objective: supporting Ukrainian resilience through EU rail integration and reinforcing Europe's railway systems for preparedness in every eventuality.**

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, Ukrainian Railways have played a crucial role as a lifeline for the country and have continued to function almost without interruption, demonstrating exceptional resilience. The third-largest railway network in Europe — with around 165,000 employees and 63% of the country's freight carried by rail — Ukrainian Railways have also evacuated more than 4 million people since 2022. Since the first day of the war, CER and its members have stood by the Ukrainians. Starting with free transport and respite to evacuees and carrying essential goods needed at home, CER members have been steadfast both in their humanitarian support and in their assistance to the Ukrainian rail system.

Over four years of war, Ukrainian Railways have developed a standalone Railway Resilience concept, integrating detection, protection, recovery and governance into a single, coherent framework. This experience has positioned railways not only as a transport system, but as a cornerstone of national resilience, playing a central role in ensuring the functioning of society and the economy under the most severe conditions.

This unique operational know-how is at the heart of the growing collaboration between CER and Ukrainian Railways. Through structured exchanges and continuous cooperation, European railways are drawing valuable lessons presented in this joint special report. Key takeaways include Ukraine's ability to operate under sustained pressure, adapt to rapidly evolving threats and restore operations within hours following disruptions.

Building on this partnership, CER and its members are working together with Ukrainian Railways to deepen cooperation through the sharing of best practices, the development of common approaches to infrastructure protection and resilience, and the exploration of joint initiatives. Strengthening these synergies contributes to enhancing the preparedness and resilience of European and Ukrainian railways and can serve to support EU policy orientation in light of Readiness 2030. These lessons can directly contribute to the EU Military Mobility Package and the next EU Budget, (2028–2034), together with broader investment efforts such as the mobilisation of NATO's 1.5% pledges.

**Chairman of the Management Board of Ukrainian Railways Oleksandr Pertsovsky said:** *"Over four years, we have experienced what no railway in the world has ever faced: the evacuation of millions, the systematic destruction of infrastructure, cyberattacks, relentless attacks on our rolling stock — and we kept running. Not because it was easy, but because stopping was not an option. This experience is the most valuable thing we can offer Europe today. Strong cooperation between our railways is essential to better anticipate risks, adapt to new threats and ensure that rail systems remain operational in*

## Joint Press Release

*any circumstances. We also count on Europe's continued support for Ukraine's reconstruction and our integration into the EU rail network."*

**CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola** said: *"The experience of Ukrainian Railways shows that rail is much more than transport infrastructure — it is a cornerstone of national resilience. European railways have a great deal to learn from the Ukrainian model, from rapid recovery capacities to integrated protection approaches. By deepening our cooperation, we are strengthening the resilience of the entire European rail system. Quick adoption of the EU Regulation on Military Mobility is essential, but our new report shows that there is still more to be done."*

The special report *"Preparedness and Resilience: What European Railways can learn from Ukraine"* is accessible [here](#).

### 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 diverse and comprehensive membership made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, covers the large majority of the rail infrastructure network, rail freight business and 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 resilient, competitive, and sustainable transport system in Europe.

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### About Ukrainian Railways

JSC "Ukrainian Railways" (Ukrzaliznytsia) is Ukraine's largest strategic enterprise, employing about 165,000 people and serving as the primary logistics network for the transportation of cargo and passengers in both domestic and international traffic. Throughout the full-scale war it has maintained passenger services and a critical share of freight, having evacuated more than 4 million people since 2022.

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