

VILNIUS CONCLUSIONS

European Rail Freight at a Crossroads

Railway and infrastructure leaders, policymakers, institutional representatives, customers, ports and logistics stakeholders met in Vilnius on 15 October 2026 to discuss the future of European rail freight.

Drawing on these exchanges and recent research, CER and UIC reaffirm that rail freight is essential to Europe's competitiveness, industry, sovereignty, resilience, security and climate objectives. Customers, however, need more reliable, predictable and competitive end-to-end services for the efficiency of their Supply Chains. Delivering these requires shared action by policymakers and the entire rail ecosystem.

CER and UIC therefore underline the need to:

- ensure that European and national policies fully acknowledge rail freight's strategic contribution;
- translate existing European legislation, notably the TEN-T and Capacity Management Regulations, into tangible improvements through effective implementation and cooperation;
- Support corridor development by establishing stable framework conditions and adequate investment for infrastructure, terminals, private sidings, rolling stock, digitalisation, innovation and skills, mobilising private and public funds and carbon credits; and
- strengthen sector cooperation and accelerate adoption of interoperable technical and digital solutions led by the sector to deliver more reliable, efficient, open, fair, responsible, non-discriminatory, and customer-oriented services within an integrated multimodal system.
- strengthen Europe's resilience and preparedness by investing in dual-use rail infrastructure, terminals and rolling stock, improving cross-border coordination, and ensuring that military mobility needs are addressed while safeguarding sufficient capacity for commercial rail.

CER and UIC commit to advancing this shared agenda and supporting practical cooperation towards a competitive, multimodal and resilient European transport system.

Adopted at the High-Level Freight Meeting in Vilnius on October 15th, 2026.