

Press release

Brussels, 27 January 2021



2020 figures reveal € 26 billion loss for railways due to COVID-19

Keeping European mobility operational during the COVID-19 pandemic has been vital. Despite heavy losses in revenue, railways continue to do their utmost to keep essential freight and passenger services running, while protecting their customers and staff. The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) has been monitoring the situation in close collaboration with all our members and the data collected for 2020 reveals the alarming financial impact of COVID-19 on railways.

As we all hope for a brighter future at the dawn of the EU Year of Rail, figures bring us back to a dire reality: railways lost € 26 billion in revenue last year in the European Union (EU27). Passenger services were more affected than freight, but the pandemic is taking its toll across the board.

	LOSS OF REVENUES (Turnover decrease 2020/2019)	
	€	%
Passenger Services	- 24 billion	-42%
Freight Services	- 2 billion	-12%

Data collected by CER

While these figures are daunting enough, they only show part of the picture. Whereas freight seems to have managed to somewhat mitigate losses in the second half of 2020, the situation of passenger services started to deteriorate again in the autumn (after a short upswing during the summer) to reach record-high revenue losses of -50% in December.

The results of the CER survey were presented at the CER General Assembly which took place on 26 January via videoconference.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *"The COVID-19 crisis is impacting heavily on railways. However the rail sector is showing resilience and capacity to help fight the pandemic and assist society on the road to recovery. Getting Europe's economy back on track while continuing to bring down global emissions is a pressing dual challenge. The European Year of Rail is a timely recognition of the role railways can and should play on these fronts."*

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About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure

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managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 71% of the rail network length, 76% of the rail freight business and about 92% 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](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) on Twitter.