



The Voice of European Railways

The CER input to the European Commission Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility

A railway-based mobility blueprint



CER aisbl COMMUNITY OF EUROPEAN RAILWAY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMPANIES

Avenue des Arts, 53 - 1000 Bruxelles | Tel : +32 2 213 08 70 | Fax : +32 2 512 52 31 | contact@cer.be | www.cer.be | [@CER_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways)

The CER input to the European Commission Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility

A railway-based mobility blueprint

The demand for sustainable mobility solutions has strongly increased in the last few years. With 1% of transport GHG emissions only, rail is widely seen as the green mode by excellence. Yet demand cannot always be met, for infrastructure or cost reasons.

The COVID-19 crisis has shown that the European rail system - passenger, freight and infrastructure companies - has major resilience, as well as the financial stability and staff to keep Europe moving, even at a time of significant crisis.

EU leaders must seize the opportunity in the post-COVID-19 recovery to place a greater focus on rail and green public transport instead of seeking a return to the *status quo*.

The upcoming EU Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility must reflect this firm orientation.

CER puts forward four key messages:

- 1) **The EU should aim at net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transport by 2050 at the latest.** This is key to achieving net-zero emissions in the wider EU economy by 2050 and requires agreement on GHG emission reduction milestones for transport: 25% by 2030 (on 1990 levels, amounting to 41% for 2016-30), 65% by 2040 (on 1990 levels) and -100% by 2050 (climate-neutral transport).
- 2) **Marginal social-cost pricing (MSCP) must belong to all transport policy reflections and initiatives.** This is key to implementing the 'polluter-pays' and 'user-pays' principles across all transport modes, so as to internalise transport externalities.
- 3) **Rail freight modal share should be at least equal to 30% by 2030.** A pan-European deployment plan for rail freight digitalisation based on a system approach where all technologies are interlinked will make this objective achievable.
- 4) **The modal share of passenger traffic (passenger-km) should be equal to 15% by 2030 and 20% by 2050.** An enhanced digitalised purchasing and travel experience accessible to all passengers in both national and international rail services will be key to reach those targets.

Rail – a highly resilient mode of transport

No policy reflection can take place today without accounting for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The world economy has suffered like in no crisis since WWII. The European economy has shrunk. With only very few exceptions, European mobility almost stopped entirely.

International rail passenger traffic came almost to a standstill due to severe restrictions at intra-EU borders. In some countries, passenger traffic dropped by more than 90%. Both business and leisure booking activity decreased to almost zero. European rail freight companies, combined transport and wagon load operators, wagon keepers, workshops and mobile services were able to maintain their operations only thanks to massive efforts.

It is hard to estimate now the final impact of the current pandemic, and how long its consequences will last, but recovery will take several years, especially for international and cross-border operators.

At the same time, even in this dramatic scenario, railways proved to be of fundamental importance to provide for the transportation necessities of people, public bodies, public companies and private businesses. Rail freight operators have been able to offer safe cross-border cargo connections for large volumes of goods using minimal human resources and offered concrete solutions to maintaining consumer goods supplies running. In many cases, freight operators contributed to the transportation of health supplies and medicines. Mass transport operators sustained important services despite plummeting passenger figures.

Railway transport proved to be not only safe and sustainable: railway transport proved to be extremely resilient. Railways are able today to start from where almost everything stopped. Logistic chains across Europe are able to restart by reshaping themselves around persistent rail segments that never ceased to function. Never before railways have proven so evidently to be the backbone of European logistics.

To count on the railway system as a backbone of sustainable mobility in the future, we need to promote it further and unleash its full potential. The European Recovery Plan will have to play a major role: it will be necessary that Member States and the European Commission ensure that national reform and recovery plans will give rail the resources it needs. Further than that, these resources will have to go hand-in-hand with firm and well-oriented legislative actions.

Cleaner EU mobility requires all legislators to support the same agenda

The 2011 Transport White Paper set several positive goals, and yet most of them remain unachieved.

Despite the many good initiative that have been launched in the past years and the honest commitment of many institutional and corporate stakeholders, the modal shift promised in those pages is yet to be seen. If on the one hand it is undeniable that railways found a special place in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, **the pledge to redress intermodal competitive conditions has yet to be fulfilled.** This is why modal share targets – especially freight ones – have not been met.

We need change.

Already today, diesel accounts for only around 20% of EU rail traction and Railways commit to do more, by gradually phasing out EU rail diesel traction to less than 5% by 2040, 1%

by 2045 and 0% by 2050.

Now we must create the regulatory conditions that would enable a rail freight modal share of 30% by 2030, and a rail passenger modal share of at least 15% by 2030 and 20% by 2050.

A European interoperable high-speed network, linking European capitals and major cities, connecting urban nodes and airports should be among the objectives of the next decade, along with a denser network with more capacity for more efficient rail freight services.

The Commission proposed with the European Green Deal the most ambitious plan ever for a supranational institution, to make of Europe the world champion of sustainability. On the basis of their undisputed sustainability credentials, European railways support this agenda with all their strength and will advocate in its favour vis-à-vis European as well as national policymakers.

But for the European Green Deal to become a reality, and for the upcoming Strategy for Sustainable and Smart Mobility to be translated into a better and more just legal framework, then we need a significant acceleration of past efforts.

The discontinuity must be reflected at the highest level of all EU legislative institutions, with a new interinstitutional pledge for bolder, more disruptive policy actions, through which the future of European mobility is redesigned around railways.

To this end, the commitment of all the institutions – the Commission, the Parliament, the Council - is necessary. All national governments must mature strong green agendas. Given the EU institutional interplay in any policymaking process, a system where the responsibilities of the European green ambitions are delegated only to certain institutions cannot work.

If this change will not happen, the costs we all bore on the account of the recent pandemic will be little when compared to the costs all European citizens will have to bear to adapt to increased global temperatures.

Embracing technology and our changing society will make EU transport fit for the future

The architects of future EU mobility will have to design policy initiatives by taking into account new demographic, socio-economic, technological and political trends that are already shaping the modal choices of citizens and businesses.

New ways of moving in urban and non-urban areas are happening, and railways are integrating themselves into multimodal, ever more digitalized transport chains.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic may have temporarily slowed down the process, it remains foreseeable that in the coming years a tech-savvy generation of younger customers will rely much less on private transport, and an increasing number of elderly people will be led to use trains more frequently both in urban areas and for long distance journeys. This is why passenger service providers are investing in higher levels of comfort, on-board connectivity and accessibility. Current investments in innovative solutions to deliver barrier-free traveling, in particular for passengers with reduced mobility, will be key to that process.

Rail freight undertakings are working on the offer of superior innovative products to integrate seamlessly with customers' processes and interfaces, and fully reap the quality and cost advantages of big data crunching and Artificial Intelligence. In addition, innovative

coupling processes (Digital Automatic Coupling) and automatic train operations will substantially improve end-to-end rail-based transport solutions.

Infrastructure managers are becoming increasingly digital too, in order to improve their operational performance in terms of better punctuality and increased and efficient capacity. A strong push in this direction will arrive from rolling out the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS).

It is clear that we must enable this future - also with a serious commitment on a coordinated deployment of such technologies - if we want to seize the opportunities it can bring to the European society. Railways are doing much on their side. More must be done by legislators at EU and national level.

Targeted actions will deliver tangible results

We grant our support to the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council of the European Union and the European Agency of Railways for all initiatives aimed at making a reality of the ambitions set by the European Green Deal and further specified in the European Climate Law.

A key role will also be played by national governments, in the transposition, implementation and enforcement of the regulatory framework stemming from the European Green Deal.

This is why we believe that the achievement of those objectives is an intense process of policy design that must in all cases enable European society to make better use of railways and their services, and complete the process leading to the Single European Rail Area.

We put forward in the Annex to this input a series of specific requests within a wide range of policy areas: from taxation to environment, from energy to infrastructure, from research & innovation to tourism and education. These requests are based on three necessary focal points: fair intermodal regulatory framework, adequate financing and regulatory stability of the rail-specific acquis.

We are confident that together we will succeed in considerably strengthening the role of railways and thus contribute substantially to the achievement of the climate goals.

Endorsed by the CER Management Committee on 10 July 2020.

Annex

Specific policy inputs

Smart Pricing of Externalities and Taxation for an even playing field

- **Marginal social-cost pricing (MSCP) must be promoted** in any transport policy reflection. 'Polluter-pays' (a principle enshrined in TFEU art. 191(2)) and 'user-pays' principles must be implemented so as to internalise transport externalities. Only in such a framework, green modes like rail have a fair chance to compete and to fully play their role¹.
- **Robust carbon pricing should be applied EU-wide in transport**, through ETS, taxation or user charges. The trading schemes of GHG emissions allowance (ETS Directive 2018/410) must be revised in order to phase out free allowances for aviation and to pave the way to carbon pricing applicable in the road sector, for example by including fuel producing companies in the scheme.
- **Tax exemptions for aviation and maritime shipping must come to an end.** The Energy Taxation Directive (2003/96/EC) should be amended accordingly, whereas optional energy tax exemption can be maintained for energy products and electricity used for goods and passenger transport by rail, metro, tram and trolley bus. The revision should help promote the use of renewable energies in transport, also by removing existing obstacles such as disproportionate charges on use of renewable energies.
- Regarding cross-border travel and **VAT (Value Added Tax)**, a level playing field remains to be established between aviation (exempt from VAT by all member states) and rail (required to pay VAT on cross-border travel by seven member states, incl. key transit countries like Austria, Belgium and Germany).

Environmental legislation

- As suggested with the European Green Deal, **greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transport and the wider economy need to be reduced to net-zero by 2050 at the latest.** It is important to agree on an ambitious 2030 climate target revision. The forthcoming transport strategy should define a clear path for EU transport emission reductions by setting milestones for decarbonising EU transport: transport is the EU's only major sector that has not decreased its GHG emissions since 1990. Instead, transport emission increased by 28%. It is feasible for EU transport to reduce its GHG emissions to zero by 2050 if a proper reduction path is taken from now:
 - -25% by 2030 (on 1990 levels, amounting to -42% for 2017-2030)
 - -65% by 2040 (on 1990 levels)
 - -100% by 2050 (climate-neutral transport)
- These numbers should be made binding targets. However, that would require swift corrective action by Member States when EU transport emissions overshoot.

A revision of Regulation 2018/842 on binding annual GHG emission reductions by

¹ For more details on this topic, see the CER Position Paper "[Europe's economic recovery after Covid-19: help finance it by applying user-pays and polluter-pays principles in transport](#)".

Member States from 2021 to 2030 (Effort Sharing Regulation) should set binding annual GHG emission reduction goals for EU transport specifically.

- **Transport eco-labelling** must be implemented to help travellers and shippers making well-informed choices for low-carbon mobility. Quick gains in reducing transport GHG emissions could be achieved by triggering behaviour change. The Commission should help align existing carbon footprint approaches, so that a unified methodological framework can be established.

Rail financing

- The budget for the **Connecting Europe Facility** should continue providing railways adequate support, within the MFF 2021-2027 as well as beyond it. CEF should in particular continue to finance infrastructure aspects of the railway system (studies and work for new lines, upgrades and enhancements of existing ones), ERTMS deployment (including onboard units) and progressive digitalization of all portions of the rail system, and investments for improving access to rail services for persons with reduced mobility. Further reducing rail freight noise, the major remaining environmental challenge for rail, is also necessary. Retrofitting of freight wagons must also be supported by CEF funds with at least 50% co-funding.
- **Next Generation EU** (aka Recovery Fund) will have to play a major role not only for rail short-term recovery, but for consolidating the basis of a rail system capable of serving efficiently the wider European economy: national recovery and reform plans will have to recognize rail as the backbone of transport.
- The **Military Mobility** envelope should be secured and maintained in the long-term: in fact, the renewal of the infrastructure permitting these types of transport will benefit the civil sector as well by allowing a bigger loading gauge for freight trains and help therefore the modal shift of trucks to be transported by rail.
- **Further resources for the expansion of the TEN-T Network** should also be gathered to ensure adequate capacity for continental traffic as well as to benefit from growing intercontinental freight traffic.
- The development of international rail passenger services requires the development of new station capacity. **EU financial support is needed especially to expand station capacity for international services** or the creation of new international stations.
- Available **EU funds for innovation and deployment of new railway technologies** shall be used accelerating projects such as the development of RINF and TAF / TAP telematics systems to further digitize rail services.
- **European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds** should also continue contributing to rail system funding, and the investment priorities of such funds should include both investments in rail infrastructure as well as in rolling stock for both commercial and PSO services.
- European Green Deal ambition will require scaling-up of **private investments** in the transport sector, and the rail sector will have to be economically attractive enough to be among the destination of such investments. The EU Taxonomy should acknowledge the potential of carbon savings from a modal shift by setting similar thresholds across modes and facilitate investment in low carbon transport modes such as rail.

Rail infrastructure

- It is essential to **speed up the completion of the TEN-T Network** in order to comply with the deadlines outlined in the TEN-T Regulation, without applying additional financial and bureaucratic costs for the sector.

The revised TEN-T Regulation should accommodate the increasing need of further electrifying the rail infrastructure and investing in ERTMS enhanced functionalities. These latter investments would increase capacity and reliability of all services and implementing advance sensor systems to shift from preventive to predictive maintenance of both infrastructure and rolling stock.

Cross-border interoperability should be promoted and, as a priority, Member States should apply INF TSI in full when building or upgrading lines. **740 m freight trains and 22.5 tons axle load must also be enabled.**

- Since the construction of additional infrastructure will not be able to keep up with growing demand from railway undertakings, infrastructure management requires intelligent capacity planning. **TimeTabling and Capacity Redesign** (RNE TTR project) including **Digital Scheduling** will be essential to achieve this.
- A **European high-speed rail core network** must be completed by 2035 and a comprehensive one by 2050 (see Directive 2016/797, Annex I). It is of the utmost importance that **the completion of such high-speed rail network connects all portions of the Union**, including those areas – especially concentrated in the Central and Eastern portion of the continent – that today are lagging behind in the deployment of high-speed infrastructure.
- Future **deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure** should include the rail network, and Directive 2014/94/EU should be amended accordingly.
- **Infrastructure capacity should allow rail services to grow and provide better services.**

The Rail Freight Corridors Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 913/2010) has a crucial role to play, with positive spill overs for both the freight and the passenger market segments. As for freight specifically, 30% market share for rail freight by 2030 should be the guiding principle and an explicitly stated objective of the revised Regulation. The competences of the RFCs' governance structure should be improved and enhanced.

A stronger cooperation between RFC and TEN-T structures is also needed.

Rail freight services

- The right regulatory conditions must be created to enable the achievement of **a rail freight modal share of 30% by 2030.**
- **Rail freight digitalisation** must be approached from a system point of view where all technologies are interlinked, and which require a clear pan-European deployment plan. Especially, the comprehensive deployment plan must include:
 - **Digital Automatic Coupling** (DAC), ensuring the necessary financial backing for European roll-out and creating a European roadmap for the migration to DAC. DAC will be a crucial driver for the innovation of the entire system, and of the freight logistic especially.
 - European **Digital Capacity Management** based, amongst others, on the innovative capacity booking concept; Digital capacity Management is

promoted by the sector in particular within the timetable redesign project.

- **EU-wide Data Exchange Platforms** which can serve as the backbone of the Commission-intended B-to-A and B-to-B Multimodal Data Platforms;
- **Digitalization of all accompanying transport and customs documents should be ensured** (phytosanitary and veterinary documents, invoices, certificates of origin, movement certificate EUR.1, bill of lading, loading and packing lists). Besides, already NCTS Phase 4 transit procedure should be improved to not require any print outs, as full deployment of NCTS Phase 5 will still take several years;
- **Adequate funding for ERTMS deployment** until when ERTMS benefits will start to materialise for operators is essential also in view of promoting the deployment of **Automated Train Operations**.
- Intermodal cooperation between maritime, road, rail and inland waterways should be supported with measures that **reduce transshipment costs**, for efficient long-distance freight transport in a multimodal system. The upcoming revised proposal of the Combined Transport is a good opportunity to modernise support measures for intermodal transport with rail as the backbone of long-distance freight transport. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that interconnectivity between rail and road is increased, also by making compatibility of trucks and trailers with combined transport mandatory by law. In this context, future revisions of Directive 96/53 and Regulation 1230/2012 should ensure that all trailers, semi-trailers and cabs are interoperable and can be used in combined-transport operations.
- The **customs guarantee burden for rail freight must be reduced**, by making a guarantee waiver the standard arrangement for rail freight.
- **Local freight networks** have been underestimated for too long and must become a field of innovation and new partnerships. This will encourage - including financially - manufacturers to bet on rail by connecting their facilities to the main rail freight corridors. This would be a pragmatic approach for supporting single wagon load and European industries in their needs for intermediate shipping.

Rail passenger services

- The **modal share of passenger traffic** (passenger-km) transported by rail in EU-28 (6.9% in 2017) should be **15% by 2030 and 20% by 2050**. Such a target can be achieved not just by raising capacity, affordability and reliability on the existing network, but also by fostering pan-EU integrated ticketing through commercial agreements between companies, harmonised booking time intervals, and by clarifying liabilities vis-à-vis passengers thanks to transparent commercial agreements between railway services distributors.
- As international rail passenger services are vital for the success of the Green Deal, for example to replace short haul flights with a range of 1000 km, the Strategy must deliver on measures under the current policy framework to help business development and market-driven deployment of **new international passenger services**. Closer coordination amongst Member States could open opportunities for more international city to city connections, more frequent path usage and cross-border services. Enabling night trains service with appropriate political support should be explored in coordination with all stakeholders.
- In an urban context, **regional and suburban rail service segments as well as long-distance rail services must be an integral part of any new sustainable**

urban mobility package. CER stressed that the socio-economic situations in each Member State differ and it would be reasonable to partially leave the choice of suitable measures to local/ regional and/ or national level. However, from the EU perspective we should consider the following to integrate railways in urban mobility:

- The Commission should propose **uniform guidelines for environmentally friendly measures for urban mobility**, leveraging rail passenger services in the context of sustainable urban spatial planning. This could prevent too much fragmentation of cities' mobility approach. The EU and its Member States should incentivise sustainable urban mobility measures (e.g. expanding public transport to rural areas, season tickets & passes, promoting door-to-door mobility) and encourage the shift to sustainable modes of transport. Finally, common urban mobility targets should be proposed as well concerning modal shift, emissions, noise, accidents etc., whilst leaving the choice of measures to achieve those targets to the national/local level to a wide extent.
- Furthermore, CER suggests developing **a common European Urban Mobility network in which local administrators can exchange and put forward project proposals**. European urban nodes should be seen as a 'big network' that is interconnected in a sustainable way. To this aim, the Connecting Europe Facility should support urban mobility infrastructure projects to address missing links and bottlenecks and deployment of concepts to increase multi-modality.
- **Tailored Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) models** could benefit customers through close collaboration of all transport providers within a given city or region. Railways and public transport operators could be an ideal integrator for sustainable MaaS models that ensures affordable and accessible mobility to all users whilst enabling a better use of existing transport infrastructure, services and resources. Intermodal approaches and partnerships in mobility services can also help to address the problem of last mile emissions.
- New **ticketing models and cooperation for through-tickets** must be based on commercial agreements. The adequate environment for these commercial agreements has been provided, among others, by rail sector-led initiatives such as the Full-Service Model or the UIC's new Tariff Model.

Technical specifications for ticketing must be defined by the TAP Retail Liaison Group² together with practical solutions to ensure railways' compliance with TAP TSI or passenger rights.

Railway undertakings are embracing the chances of digitalisation by adapting booking systems, sales services, ticket distribution systems, traffic information but also train driving, rolling stock, infrastructure assets and traffic management to thereby improving the overall performance and quality for the passengers.

- The EU and the railway sector have been working for many years on facilitating cross-border rail transport by improving rail interoperability, investing resources into rail infrastructure and creating a common market for rail services. Any **security-measures which impact seamless cross-border rail travelling must be of proven added-value and be proportionate** to the level of security

² TAP TSI Retail Liaison group regroups rail operators and distributors around the table to solved common issues in relation with TAP TSI standards.

gains desired. A requirement to collect passenger name records and perform conformity checks between tickets and identity cards in the rail sector would only add complexity for cross-border rail journeys, making trains more expensive without improving security in stations and onboard trains – unless it is made clear that the responsibility of such checks lies with the national border authorities and not with the rail undertakings.

- Railway passenger services still makes too little share of the overall passenger flow in Europe. EU Member States should agree on the **EU-level incentives (whether legal or financial) to induce international passenger transportation by rail**. EU level initiatives on expansion of international passenger services may be carried out. Uniform guidelines for Member States may the quickest support for national authorities to make decisions on expansion of international rail passenger services.
- Rail passenger services must be developed to be **accessible to all passengers** and in view of an aging population there will be increased numbers of passenger with reduced mobility. However, the legacy infrastructure and rolling stock fleet is not fully prepared to provide services to PRMs. Given that investments into infrastructure and rolling stock are being made for decades perspective, EU authorities should flank PRM TSI requirements and its national implementation plans for railway infrastructure and services with sufficient financial instruments that could speed-up towards adjusting railway services to PRMs needs. It is therefore necessary to have a coherent CEF in addressing and supporting transport accessibility for all users.
- International passenger services still are fully unused potential in developing and enhancing EU inner tourism. **Night trains** with hop-on/hop-off option may become attractive alternative to cheap flights. Members States should be encouraged to offer incentives to railway operators to develop such services.

Rail system digitalisation and digital economy

- A **high-performing & digital European railway network** shall be shaped. Capacity needs to be increased in order to cope with more transport volume. ERTMS and ATO are key factors for this. Initiatives like OCORA shall significantly contribute to this work – defining a uniform functional reference system design for implementing interoperability, interchangeability, modularity, evolvability, implementation of plug & play interfaces.
- The deployment planning and funding of **5G mobile infrastructure and services along railway lines** in order to implement Gigabit Train and Digital Rail Operations applications shall be started. A focus shall be given to the drafting or amendment of the necessary accompanying legislation. CER and EIM, described their view of the future digital communication in the Strategic Deployment Agenda '5G connectivity and spectrum for rail'.

Research and innovation

- In April 2020, the European railway sector - supported by the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking - delivered its vision on the next generation of Shift2Rail to the European Commission. **The new Rail iEP** (i.e. 'institutionalized European Partnership') **shall contribute to deliver the Single European Railway Area bringing to the market an integrated, sustainable and digital rail system of systems** for the high-speed network, freight, regional and commuter lines, delivering value to its customers in terms of mobility and transport services. This vision now needs to be transformed into a legislative proposal and the new

institutionalised partnership needs to be set up.

Standardisation

- The general benefits of standardisation are well known. Business-led standards provide a real potential for cost reductions, the creation of new business models or an increase in competition and greater opportunity for system effectiveness and efficiency. For the shared network, where various operators use the same infrastructure, standards are in addition a key prerequisite for a safe and reliable operation, not only within but also beyond Europe. Furthermore, standards can incentivise the design of components improving maintenance logistics, enabling scale-effects and so on. **Standards and standard-like products shall come from the sector and support the work, needs and business of the sector.**

Future of employment and social dialogue

- Railway companies directly employ more than 1 million workers and create another 1 million jobs through their activities. Technological developments and the adaptation of railway services to emerging environmental and societal needs are reflected in the evolution of tasks and jobs, and the sourcing and training of railway staff. In order to **attract the necessary workforce** amidst these wide changes, railway companies have initiated several actions, regularly building on the partnership with employees' representatives:
 - On the topic of **gender equality** the European social partners CER and ETF have recently launched negotiations to achieve an autonomous agreement for the promotion of equal opportunities and women employment in the rail sector.
 - The European railway social partners CER and ETF are also carrying out an EU-funded project about the **impact of digitalisation and automation on railway staff employability**³, which is expected to culminate with the production of valuable guidance and recommendations. CER considers that this input should be considered in the framework of any future Commission initiative on the impact of automation and digitalisation on the transport labour force.
 - Keen to anticipate and prepare for the future railway labour market, railway undertakings and infrastructure managers have joined forces with the rail supply industry and the educational sector and submitted a proposal for a **'Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills'** under the Erasmus+ programme. This initiative is conceived to identify specific labour market needs and demands for new skills and to encourage the cooperation between companies and railway-related education and training providers for and beyond the next 4-5 years.
- The **EU Sectoral Social Dialogue for Railways** is a unique forum where employers and employees' representatives can discuss and develop action-oriented guidance and rules on employment and workforce-related issues. Since its early establishment in 1972, formalised in 1999, the railway social dialogue has been one of the most active and productive sectoral social dialogues at EU level. CER is convinced of the benefits of European social dialogue, especially in its sectoral dimension, and it encourages the European Commission to uphold it via material

³ "Employability in the railway sector in the light of digitalisation and automation (EDA Rail)".

support and thorough involvement of social partners in the policy-making.

Education

- The EU should support railways in setting up **educational programs** for shaping sustainable travelling behaviours of children and students, as well as ensuring that schools, colleges and universities prepare the needed amount of highly skilled railway experts.
- Kindergartens and schools can become the first institutional step in shaping EU-wide approach to sustainable transport. Children and students should be encouraged to choose railway as the most sustainable mode of transport since the early days. Today, members states have discounts systems for children and students, but educational initiatives, environmental awareness should become a part of educational programs in every member state.

A concrete step from the EU would be to **include the DiscoverEU programme as part of the European Commission flagship programme Erasmus+**. This could help to identify partnership opportunities and promote a more intensive use of train for students participating in exchange programmes abroad.

Tourism

- **Promote sustainable tourism**, especially the choice of near-by European destinations and sustainable travel modes. So far, EU action for sustainable tourism is focused on tourism products, destination management and accommodation. Taking a wider approach, policymakers should now be "addressing the environmental impact of transport linked to tourism", a major challenge identified already in the Commission's 2007 "Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism".

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 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 policy makers 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.

This CER document is for public information.

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this document, CER cannot be held responsible for any information from external sources, technical inaccuracies, typographical errors or other errors herein. Information and links may have changed without notice.