

European rail CEOs set course for EU green mobility with VP Timmermans

Meeting in Brussels today, Europe's leading rail CEOs set the course for the EU's shift to a sustainable mobility system together with European Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans. The CEOs also elected ÖBB CEO Andreas Matthä as the Chair of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) for a two-year period.

Vice-President Frans Timmermans teams up with railways

The European Green Deal, published by the European Commission in December, recognises the role of rail in greening European transport. European Commission Executive Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** joined a high-level meeting of European rail CEOs, members of the CER Management Committee, to kick-start the cooperation. The rail sector reaffirmed its commitment to continue investing in safe, sustainable and customer-oriented passenger and freight services that contribute to emission-free mobility. Setting the right framework conditions is crucial to make the modal shift to rail a reality.

Strategy for Sustainable and Smart Mobility

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the CER General Assembly, where European Commission Director-General for Transport (MOVE) **Henrik Hololei** introduced the **Strategy for Sustainable and Smart Mobility**, expected to be published before the end of the year. The CEOs responded by providing concrete examples of how they are further greening rail operations, today responsible for only 3% of all transport emissions, although rail carries 17% of inland freight and 8% of passengers in Europe.

In addition, a high-ranking panel including **Elisabeth Werner** (European Commission), **Josef Doppelbauer** (ERA), and **Carlo Borghini** (Shift2Rail) as well as sector representatives discussed different questions related to **Digital Automatic Coupling** (DAC) of rail vehicles. Locomotives and wagons need to be fitted with DAC as a game changer for the comprehensive automation and digitalisation of rail freight transport. It will enable the deployment of ERTMS Level 3 resulting in increased infrastructure capacity; and it will ensure data communication throughout the entire train. DAC is therefore key to achieving efficient and competitive rail freight, which Europe needs to meet the demands of both climate protection and rising transport volumes. Along with a robust budget and a realistic migration plan, a sound deployment strategy for DAC must be developed by all involved actors.

CER Chairmanship

Acting Chair **Andreas Matthä** (CEO of ÖBB) was elected by the rail CEOs as CER Chair for a two-year period.

The General Assembly also confirmed two new members to the CER Management Committee (MC) and is composed now as follows:

Erik Laidvee (EVR CEO), **Oliver Wolff** (VDV General Managing Director), and **Marc Wengler** (CFL Director General) are the association Vice-Chairs.

New members of the Management Committee are **Jean-Pierre Farandou** (SNCF CEO) and **Mantas Bartuška** (LG CEO).

They are joining: **Isaías Táboas Suárez** (RENFE President), **Sophie Dutordoir** (SNCB CEO), **Richard Lutz** (DB CEO), **Krzysztof Mamiński** (PKP CEO), **Gianfranco Battisti** (FSI CEO), **Andreas Meyer** (SBB CEO), **Geert Pauwels** (Lineas CEO), **Roger van Boxtel** (NS CEO), and **Róbert Homolya** (MÁV President and CEO).

CER Chair **Andreas Matthä** said: *"These are decisive times for the railway sector: We need to make rail and other means of sustainable transport a centrepiece of the implementation of the European Green Deal. We need to strengthen rail infrastructure in Europe and pay more attention to the challenges and benefits of digitalisation. Europe must foster the right conditions to shift traffic from road to rail. I am looking forward to working with all CER members to make rail the backbone of Europe's mobility system."*

CER Executive Director **Libor Lochman** said: *"I am extremely happy about today's fruitful exchange of views with Frans Timmermans, Henrik Hololei, Elisabeth Werner, Joseph Doppelbauer and Carlo Borghini. Sustainability and technological progress are indivisible elements of the solution that the rail sector offers to the Union in its fight against climate change and for smarter mobility. I am also pleased about the election of Andreas Matthä as Chair of the association. Together, we look forward to ensuring our support to all the good policy solutions that will make Europe the world champion of sustainability."*

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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.