

Gender diversity top priority for European rail sector

Two years ago, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), representing railway sector employers, officially signed the Women in Rail autonomous agreement with the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), aimed at promoting employment of women in the sector¹. On the two-year anniversary of the agreement 91.5% of the CER EU member employees are now covered by a comprehensive gender equality policy ensured by this agreement.

This autonomous agreement, which is **the first such agreement on gender equality in any sector at EU level**, was designed to bring about real change in terms of gender diversity. It comprises 8 important policy measures to attract more women to the rail sector and guarantee them more protection and equal treatment in the workplace.

Women represent only a little more than 21% of railway companies' workforce, and the share is even lower for some professional categories. To avoid missing out on the many benefits – for all workers – deriving from a diverse and inclusive workplace, CER members have put in place a wealth of concrete policies and measures in order to advance towards the goal of more diversity. This binding commitment underlines CER and its members' engagement for more diversity and CER has worked closely with its members to ensure a prompt and diligent implementation. Over the coming months CER will continue to support its remaining members who are in the process of finalising completion.

The Women in Rail Agreement and follow up activities were discussed at the annual plenary meeting of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Rail Transport on 24 November in Brussels. Also at the meeting, the CER delegate Matthias Rohrmann (Deutsche Bahn/AGV MOVE) was appointed Chair of the Sectoral Social Dialogue for Rail Transport (SSD Rail) for the term 2023-2025. Outgoing Chair Giorgio Tuti (President ETF Railway Section) will now fulfil the role of Vice Chair for the two-year duration. CER looks forward to a productive collaboration and work programme within the SSD Rail for the new term.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *"Increased diversity and gender equality is of paramount importance to the railway sector, and this is clearly shown by the high level of implementation of the Women in Rail agreement within our membership. We look forward to building upon this groundbreaking initiative to achieve further progress and reinforce the essential role of women in our sector"*.

EU SSD Rail Chair Matthias Rohrmann (Deutsche Bahn/ AGV MOVE) said: *"I am delighted to have been unanimously elected by CER and ETF as the new Chair of the Social Dialogue Railways. The European social partnership and dialogue is very important to me. And we have many current, highly relevant topics. For me, these include the attractiveness of the rail sector, promoting diversity (implementation of the Women in Rail agreement), the*

¹ Drawing on Article 155 TFEU, the European social dialogue process makes provision for consultation with the social partners at Community level across the entire raft of subjects relating to employment and social affairs, listed in Art. 153 TFEU.

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transformation of work and digitalisation. "Strengthening the railway" (especially rail freight transport) and supporting both employment and employees are important issues to me – as they are to all CER and ETF members."

Further information on the agreement and CER's commitment to women in rail can be found [here](#) on the CER website. Please also find a related short animated video [here](#).

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About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together around 70 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 79% of the rail network length, 77% of the rail freight business and about 90% 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 us on Twitter [@CER_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) or [LinkedIn](#).