

## Press release

Brussels, 18 July 2024



# "Europe's choice": railways for a competitive Union

Speaking in the European Parliament today before her re-election as European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen outlined her programme for the next five years as published in the 2024-2029 Political Guidelines. The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) congratulates Ursula von der Leyen on her re-appointment and looks forward to continuing a fruitful exchange with her on leveraging the strengths of European railways for the competitiveness of the European economy.

CER welcomes President von der Leyen's commitment to pursuing the objectives set out in the **European Green Deal**. The digital and green transitions remain key targets of the Commission policy action and railways guarantee their support to achieve them. Energy-efficient rail transport makes use of low-carbon energy from increasingly renewable sources, providing zero-emission mobility for passengers and freight.

European railways feel that their contribution is fundamental in achieving the Commission President's vision for "a **strengthened cohesion and growth policy with regions at the centre**". Rail will accompany the further integration of European regions by allowing better passenger mobility. Railways welcome in particular the call of President von der Leyen for policies that enable the shift towards more sustainable transport modes and reiterate their commitment to achieving seamless cross-border rail ticketing by 2025 by implementing the [Open Sales and Distribution Model](#) (OSDM) and expanding the CIT [Agreement on Journey Continuation](#) (AJC) as well as other steps foreseen by the [CER Ticketing Roadmap](#), designed and agreed proactively by European rail passenger undertakings.

Transport and railways especially are a fundamental **enabler of Europe's competitiveness**, since they provide strategic infrastructure and fundamental services that enable the European Single Market. They accompany the European re-industrialisation and reshoring of Europe's supply chains – for instance in key sectors such as steel and chemicals – by serving European industrial sites with efficient, sustainable transport solutions.

To achieve climate neutrality by 2050, railways look forward to assessing the Commission proposal for a European Competitiveness Fund and the announced proposal on the Capital Market Union, thereby "**turbo charging investments**". We agree that the new Fund should **invest in strategic technologies** and we firmly believe that rail technologies should be considered among them.

Future funding policies will have to provide the means to achieve the vision of the Trans-European Transport Network Regulation: increasing rail capacity for both passenger and freight services, achieving the Guidelines' explicit objective of cross-border train travel and providing adequate resources for military mobility.

## Press release

Brussels, 18 July 2024



**CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola** said: *"The programme of the next Commission as outlined by President von der Leyen provides the right continuity with the ambitions of the past legislature, but also new tools to address the challenges that Europe is facing today and will face in the years to come. We underline how the next Multiannual Financial Framework must be up to the task of delivering the right means to overcome those challenges. European cohesion, competitiveness and resilience need railways and we are ready to play our part to ensure a stronger Europe for its citizens and businesses."*

### Contact person

Cliona Cunningham  
CER Head of Communications  
E: [cliona.cunningham@cer.be](mailto:cliona.cunningham@cer.be)  
M: +32 472 48 75 98

### 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 78% of the rail network length, 81% of the rail freight business and about 94% 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](http://www.cer.be) or follow us on Twitter [@CER\\_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cer).