

## Press release

Brussels, 21 February 2025



# Rail's vital role in enabling the future of EU defence

**The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) emphasises the crucial role of railways in enhancing EU defence capabilities amidst rising security threats, such as the invasion of Ukraine. Enhancing the EU's preparedness to deter and address such threats has become a top priority on the EU's political agenda. In a position paper approved unanimously by the CER membership at its recent General Assembly in Brussels on 18 February, CER lays out the steps needed to ensure an enhanced response from the European rail system.**

Fundamental measures include:

- Increasing rail network capacity and interoperability by investing in existing and new infrastructure.
- Ensuring harmonised capacity management and implementing digital systems.
- Replenishing and adapting rolling stock for military use.
- Protecting rail infrastructure from hybrid and cyber threats.
- Improving intermodal connections with other transport modes.
- Securing the operational continuity of critical systems.
- Increasing EU and national funding for the railway system.
- Simplifying procurement processes.
- Streamlining procedures for military logistics and establishing effective governance systems for coordination with NATO, which will further improve planning, operational efficiency and response times.

Railways are vital for EU defence logistics, providing efficient, high-capacity, sustainable and secure transport for military assets and convoys.

Therefore, CER urges policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders to prioritise investments in rail infrastructure and rolling stock to ensure the EU's preparedness and resilience. The future of EU defence must be bolstered by robust rail systems that can meet both civilian and military demands, in line with the need to ensure a comprehensive, society-wide approach.

**CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola** said: *"Investing in rail infrastructure not only enhances transportation; it also ensures the security and resilience of the European Union. In the current context, replenishing and adapting rolling stock for military use has become urgent. Railways are the backbone of our defence logistics, capable of efficiently transporting military assets and supporting our strategic objectives. We urge all stakeholders to prioritise these investments to safeguard our future".*

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The CER Position paper on Military mobility can be found on the CER website [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 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](#) or [LinkedIn](#).