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Apply now for the Women in Rail Award 2025

Women make up over 50% of rail passengers but only about **20% of the rail workforce in the EU**. In recognition of female talent and the efforts to attract more women to the sector, the European Commission's Women in Transport platform, Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking (EU-Rail), the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), the European Rail Supply Industry Association (UNIFE), the European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) and the Federation of European Train Drivers' Unions (ALE) have united to launch the **Women in Rail Award 2025**.

First held in 2021, the Women in Rail Award aims to celebrate the outstanding achievements of inspiring women in the rail sector and showcase best practices in building gender balance into corporate culture. The initiative builds upon the European Social Partner Agreement on Women in Rail¹, furthering its mission to promote fairness, gender diversity, and equality within the rail sector.

Divided into **four categories**, the award recognises the work of a woman or a group of people led by a woman having demonstrated achievements bringing the EU railway sector forward and/or overcoming obstacles for other women to thrive in the railway sector, or a company/organisation's outstanding efforts in this regard.

Individuals, companies and organisations [can apply](#) for one of the following award categories **before 17 June 2025** (midnight CEST):

- The **Women Empowerment Award** recognises a European company in the railway sector that has gone the extra-mile in making gender-balance a top priority and has fully integrated it in its day-to-day decisions and DNA.
- The **Leadership and Mentoring Award** recognises a woman who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and mentoring through concrete actions, helping women to make a positive impact in the European railway sector.
- The **Research and Innovation Award** recognises a woman that has demonstrated outstanding work through research and innovation contributing to enhance the attractiveness and/or competitiveness of rail.
- the **Next Generation in Rail Award** recognises outstanding educational initiatives, projects and activities that empower girls and young women (from Primary to Higher Education, from 6 to 25 years old audience) to explore careers in the rail sector.

The award ceremony is planned to take place in October 2025, at the [European Rail Safety Days 2025](#) in Krakow, Poland.

For technical questions regarding applications, please contact the European Union Agency for Railways via servicedesk@era.europa.eu.

¹ The European Social Partner Agreement on Women In Rail ([Women in Rail Agreement](#)) is aimed at promoting employment of women in the rail sector.



The objective of the [Women in Transport - EU Platform for change](#), launched in November 2017 by the European Commission, is to strengthen women's employment and equal opportunities for women and men in the transport sector thanks to the actions brought about by the Platform members. It also serves as a forum where stakeholders committed to improving female employment in transport discuss and exchange good practices. The platform also regularly cooperates with the transport industry to launch initiatives to increase the attractiveness of the sector. In 2022, it cooperated with the rail industry in the framework of the European Year of Rail to launch the first [Women in Rail award](#).

The [Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking \(EU-RAIL\)](#) is the European partnership for rail research and innovation under the Horizon Europe programme (2020-2027) and the successor to the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking. The partnership aims to accelerate research and development in innovative technologies and operational solutions. It supports EU policies and objectives for the rail sector, its competitiveness, and the European rail supply industry. EU-Rail accelerates the use of integrated, interoperable and standardised technological innovations necessary to support the Single European Railway Area.

The [European Union Agency for Railways](#) is the European authority in charge of railway safety, interoperability, and cross-border vehicle authorization, safety certification, and ERTMS trackside approval. ERA has been providing EU Member States and the European Commission with technical assistance in the development and implementation of the Single European Railway Area. This comprises enhancing technical interoperability and harmonising rules, promoting simplified access for customers, developing a common approach to safety and safety culture, advising on telematics applications and ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System), monitoring National Safety Authorities and Notified Bodies and facilitating the exchange of information between the railway actors in Europe.

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 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. For more information, follow CER on [X](#), [Bluesky](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

[UNIFE](#) represents the **European Rail Supply Industry** in Brussels since 1992. The association gathers more than 100 of Europe's leading large and medium-sized rail supply companies active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems and related equipment. UNIFE also brings together 13 national rail industry associations of European countries. For more information, follow UNIFE on [Bluesky](#) or [LinkedIn](#)

[EIM](#), the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests of the infrastructure managers in Europe. EIM's primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer-oriented rail network in Europe. To find out more about EIM, visit www.eimrail.org

[ALE](#), the **Federation of European Train Drivers' Unions**, is made up of 13 train drivers' unions from different member states, representing more than 45,000 workers, aiming for harmonisation in the EU railways, adequate training in our sector, high safety standards and the promotion of social dialogue with the different social partners in the European railway sector. For more information, follow ALE on [X](#) or [LinkedIn](#).