

European Rail Sector leads the way forward

United behind a clear and ambitious game plan, Europe's railways and rail supply industry (CER & UNIFE) have reaffirmed their strong commitment to the future development of the European railway system. The European Rail Sector Joint Declaration signed by CER and UNIFE on 2 February 2026 in Brussels sets the joint priorities and direction, that we as a sector believe the railway of the future must evolve towards.

As the actors responsible for operating, maintaining and supplying Europe's rail system, we take our role as custodians of the railways very seriously and assume responsibility for their ongoing transformation. Our vision includes strengthening safety levels, increasing capacity, enabling seamless cross-border services, reducing system costs, and investing in research and innovation. These are our essential priorities.

In the face of urgent modernisation needs and increasing competitive pressures, the European railway system requires substantial investment in infrastructure, research and development. With adequate EU funding and strong political support, we are committed to delivering on key European objectives, including the implementation of a European high-speed rail network and military mobility, as well as the continent-wide deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS®).

The EU rail ecosystem contributes 247 billion euros of GDP to the EU economy and supports more than 3 million jobs. Railways stand at the crossroads of clean mobility, industrial competitiveness, territorial cohesion and efficient military mobility; what is more, they are essential assets to achieve these goals.

We are ready to play our full part in modernising the railway system and the essential role it plays in European competitiveness and resilience. We would like to embark on this path together with our partners in particular the European institutions, including the European Union Agency for Railways and Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking, with the firm awareness that progress can only be achieved by moving forward together.

Read the full CER – UNIFE Joint Declaration [here](#).

Quotes attributable to CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola

"Europe's railways and rail supply industry are united behind a clear vision for the future of our system. With the right political backing and adequate EU funding, we stand ready to deliver a safer, more efficient and more competitive railway for all Europeans — for the passengers who rely on us year-round for 8 billion trips, and for the rail freight customers who depend on reliable, high-quality services to keep Europe's economy moving. The challenges ahead are significant, but so is our determination. By working closely with our partners in the EU institutions, we can ensure that rail continues to strengthen Europe's connectivity, resilience and industrial leadership."

Quotes attributable to UNIFE Director General Enno Wiebe

"Rail is the only mode of transport that can achieve all the goals Europe has set for itself – a reduction in emissions, better continental defense, greater innovation and boosting growth. By supporting rail, the sector and policymakers can help ensure a stronger Europe."

“We must own the direction we travel in, which is why the European Rail Supply Industry and operators have joined forces on this document. We understand the needs of the sector, and so it is on us to offer up our own vision.”

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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 [LinkedIn](#).

About UNIFE

UNIFE represents the European Rail Supply Industry in Brussels since 1992. The association gathers more than 120 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 strives to effectively represent its members' interests at both the European and international levels. Our mission is to proactively foster an environment within which members can continue to provide high-quality railway systems needed to meet the growing demand for rail transport – both passenger or freight services – in Europe and beyond. UNIFE also brings together 12 national rail industry associations of European countries. For more information, visit www.unife.org or follow us on [LinkedIn](#).