

Press Release
Brussels, 9 March 2012

One step closer to second reading agreement recasting the first railway package

On 8 March, the Council of Ministers adopted its position on the recast of the first railway package, following the political agreement reached last December. The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) welcomes this formal step as it triggers the second reading, which hopefully, will be finalized in a shorter timeframe than what was necessary for the first reading.

Compared to the common position adopted in December, no modifications were made to the content of the document. CER's position therefore remains unchanged, whereby CER strongly regrets the short-sighted approach of the Council on the financial framework conditions, for example its approach to infrastructure financing and track access charging rules. In particular as it is common understanding that adequate financial framework conditions are the backbone of a successfully developing European railway area. In addition, CER cannot support the tendency of the Council to limit the reinforcement of the regulatory body powers. CER strongly believes that regulatory control is the way to limit over-regulation.

Initial technical discussions between the European Parliament, Council and the European Commission have already started in order to seek agreement on a final text to be adopted jointly by both institutions at second reading before the summer recess. CER hopes that the upcoming informal triologue discussions will allow finding reasonable compromises bringing added value to the sector which is already badly hit by the economic crisis.

CER Executive Director Libor Lochman said: *“CER welcomes this formal step and is looking forward to fruitful discussions between the Council and the European Parliament. I now call upon decision makers to finalise the second reading with a reasonable and workable result.”*

He added: *“The recast of the first railway package is very complex but nevertheless contains some key provisions which should help the rail sector face inter and intra modal competition. I do hope that the upcoming negotiations between the Council and the Parliament will result in real added value for the sector and not only in additional red tape and administrative cost. Legal and economic stability is crucial for a positive development of the rail sector”.*

The CER press release on the December Council is available on the [CER website](#).

For further information, please contact:

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The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 European railway undertakings and infrastructure companies. CER represents the interests of its members towards the European institutions as well as other policy makers and

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transport actors. CER's main focus is promoting the strengthening of rail as essential to the creation of a sustainable transport system which is efficient, effective and environmentally sound. For more information, see www.cer.be

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