



Press Release  
29 March 2023

**On Wednesday 29 March 2023, Karima Delli, the chairwoman of the transport and tourism committee (TRAN) of the European Parliament, Josef Doppelbauer, the Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Railways, as well as several CEOs of rail freight companies have called on the decision-makers to implement ambitious policies to concretely foster the transport of goods by train.**

Brussels, 29 March 2023

***“In May 2020, we called for relaunching rail freight across the European Union, in order to achieve a 30% modal share by 2030. Three years later, this modal share has slightly decreased, although the volume has got higher”, said Karima Delli.***

In this statement, the stakeholders make several recommendations to facilitate modal shift as well as to achieve the 30% modal share by 2030. Many issues are raised, such as track access charges, the implementation of the European rail traffic management system, relevant state aids regimes as well as a review of the governance regime of rail freight corridors.

“The statement confirms our commitment to prioritise rail freight, which is not only more economical but also emits 9 times less gCO<sub>2</sub>e than road freight”, says Josef Doppelbauer. “Shifting from long-distance road to rail for distances over 700 km could save 40 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year and increase rail's modal share for freight to 36% in the EU. These impressive figures provide a compelling call to action for informed and sustainable decision-making.”

Alberto Mazzola, Executive Director of CER, added: “Trains don't fly. We need infrastructure. We count on the European Parliament and Council to take the appropriate decisions on TEN-T. Today, the Union is also facing another significant challenge: unprecedented energy scarcity. The Ukraine crisis has revealed how vulnerable we are in this regard and this may well be the start of a long-lasting energy crunch. Whereas rail is 9 times less CO<sub>2</sub>-emitting than road, rail is also, and perhaps more crucially, 7 times more energy-efficient. While the Union is 58%-dependent on outside supply for its total energy needs, it is now clear that ‘energy consumption’ must become a default criteria in all policy initiatives, including the upcoming ‘Greening Transport Package’”.

“Greenhouse gas emissions in the EU fell by 32% between 1990 and 2020 across sectors. In the same period, however, transport emissions have increased by 7%. Our current transport policy, including freight transportation, is not aligned with our emissions reduction strategy. As pointed out, modal shift is a key enabler of achieving this, as rail freight has significant environmental savings, and must be pursued” says Conor Feighan. “However, we must also recognise that rail freight growth has stagnated over the past decade. It is therefore essential that there is a strong push now to ensure this legislative mandate is one



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that had a positive impact on rail freight. The current framework is clearly not meeting the needs of rail freight”.

Issuing this statement at the end of Q1 2023 is significant, as 2023 will be of major importance when it comes to the freight sector in the European Union. The European Commission is indeed supposed to present several proposals in June and political negotiations linked to freight are ongoing (on the Trans European Transport Network – TEN-T, for instance).

The statement then takes into account those current and upcoming legislative developments, as well as addresses issues related to national public policies.

“We are absolutely aware about the fact that rail freight cannot meet all the needs. All modes of transports must be considered adequately with this regard. Rail freight has however been left behind for years and it is vital to make it a matter of top priority. We then call on the Member States and the European Commission to address the current challenges effectively. I really hope our voice will be heard”, Mrs Delli concluded.

#### **About the EU Agency for Railways:**

The European Union Agency for Railways was established in Valenciennes in 2004, and has 188 employees representing more than 22 European Member States.

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.

Since 16th June 2019 the EU Agency for Railways is mandated to issue single safety certificates and vehicle (type) authorisations valid in multiple European countries and to ensure an interoperable European Rail Traffic Management System.

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