

European Railways integral to EU Defence Strategy

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) welcomes the European Commission's recognition of the essential role rail will play in EU defence and readiness in its White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030, published on 19 March. The document, which provides a comprehensive reflection on enhancing EU military capabilities, outlines ways to better coordinate national defence spending and strategy, ensuring that collective, coordinated actions provide higher value for money. Under the Security and Action for Europe (SAFE) Regulation, a budget line of EUR 150 billion will be allocated to address common and urgent priorities, including military mobility.

Strategic emphasis on military mobility

The Rail Sector takes note of the strategic emphasis on the EU-wide network of land corridors, airports, seaports, and support elements and services that facilitate the seamless and rapid transport of troops and military equipment across the EU and partner countries. This recognition aligns perfectly with CER's priorities, as railways are vital components of this network.

Military mobility is defined as an essential enabler for European security and defence: *"Strengthening the logistics of the armed forces also matches the need to make our economy more connected and competitive – a perfect fit in terms of dual use."* CER has long advocated for the importance of specialised rolling stock and dual-use transport assets to be recognised, as highlighted in its recent position paper *"Rail's vital role in enabling the future of EU defence"*. Railways are vital for the development of the EU defence industry and logistics, providing efficient, high-capacity, sustainable and secure transport for military assets and convoys.

Support for simplification and streamlining

CER supports the Commission's call for immediate simplification and streamlining of regulations and procedures, ensuring interoperability and priority access for armed forces to transport facilities, networks, and assets.

Call for investment in rail infrastructure

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: *"Railways are the backbone of our defence logistics, capable of efficiently transporting military assets and supporting our*

Press release

Brussels, 19 March 2025



strategic objectives. The same infrastructure works in peacetime for our economy promoting growth and competitiveness. We welcome the Commission's recognition of the essential role of rail and stand ready to contribute to the collective effort to enhance EU defence and readiness".

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 or follow us on Twitter [@CER_railways](#) or [LinkedIn](#).