

CER welcomes new EU Regulation set to unlock network capacity for more rail services

The Community of European Railway & Infrastructure Companies (CER) welcomes today's vote by the European Parliament, formally adopting a new Regulation on the use of railway infrastructure capacity. This Regulation marks a major step forward in modernising capacity management across Europe and will help create more space for additional rail services.

Rail capacity determines how many trains the network can safely accommodate. It has an impact on punctuality and reliability of service. By shifting to a more European, digital and long-term approach, the new framework is expected to reduce inefficiencies, lower related costs, and support a significant increase in usable capacity.

A central element of the Regulation is the creation of the European Network of Infrastructure Managers (ENIM). Composed of senior representatives of rail infrastructure managers and allocation bodies, this new coordination platform will develop EU-wide frameworks for long-term planning, cross-border traffic and disruption management, and performance review.

Another key element of the regulation strongly supported by CER is the establishment of the European Railway Platform (ERP). This consultative body bringing together network users (railway undertakings, service facility operators and other operational stakeholders) will provide structured input into planning processes, ensuring a robust and coordinated market voice in implementation.

Shifting more traffic to cleaner, energy-efficient transport modes like rail has never been so crucial for Europe's sustainability goals and energy transition. Improvements under the new legislation are expected to unlock up to 4% additional capacity, equivalent to nearly 250 million train-km, complementing much needed investment in physical and digital infrastructure.

Preparatory work is already underway to ensure readiness for the first rail timetable under the new system in 2031. The rail sector is confident that aspects of the Regulation can be delivered even earlier and calls for progressive implementation allowing to fast-track specific elements.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *"The Capacity Regulation is a key milestone for the rail sector to make existing capacity more efficient and increase it by 4%. CER commends the co-legislators for their dedication in reaching this agreement. The sector is fully committed to implementing the new framework and delivering results for smoother, more predictable planning of passenger and freight services as soon as possible."*

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Contact person

Laura Henry
CER Head of Communications
E: Laura.Henry@cer.be
M: +32 491 16 21 73

About CER

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 diverse and comprehensive membership made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, covers the large majority of the rail infrastructure network, rail freight business and rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policy makers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a resilient, competitive, and sustainable transport system in Europe. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow us on social media.