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Rail as a key to decarbonising transport

Rail is an environmentally friendly and highly energy efficient transport mode, with a track record of improving its carbon-efficiency for both passenger and freight transport. The rail sector is committed to further reducing its greenhouse gas emissions through extended electrification as well as the improvement of its energy efficiency through research and innovation. So rail should play a key role in the European Commission's strategy on transport decarbonisation.

In a joint position paper published last week, CER (Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies) and UNIFE (European Rail Industry Association) call on the Commissioners responsible for the Energy Union, Climate Action & Energy, and Transport, Vice-President Šefčovič, Commissioner Cañete and Commissioner Bulc, to promote rail as the backbone of sustainable mobility and its interconnectivity with other low-carbon modes, in the upcoming Communication on transport decarbonisation.

In particular, the rail sector confirms its support for the objectives set in the Transport White Paper of 2011, notably the 60% reduction target for transport emissions by 2050 compared to 1990 levels and suggests adding a binding target for 2030. These targets are all the more relevant in light of the ambitious worldwide climate objectives set during the COP21 conference last year in Paris.

Moreover, CER and UNIFE invite policymakers to pursue a win-win strategy by linking climate, energy and transport policies: shifting more passengers and goods to rail will lead to transport decarbonisation as well as increased energy security.

CER Executive Director Libor Lochman said: *“Europe must reduce its dependency on imported fossil fuels and move towards a low-carbon economy with high energy efficiency. The transport sector has an untapped potential to achieve energy savings and emission reductions. Rail, as a low-oil and low-carbon transport mode, is central to deliver massive cuts in transport emissions, reduce oil dependency and mitigate congestion in cities.”*

UNIFE Director General Philippe Citroën commented: *“The rail industry fully supports the European Commission's objective of reducing transport emissions and looks forward to ambitious targets and policy measures in the upcoming Communication. A modal shift to rail as the most sustainable mode of transport should be at the backbone of any transport sector strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions.”*

The CER/UNIFE position paper is available on the [CER website](#).

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CER

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 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, visit www.cer.be or follow us via Twitter at [@CER railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways).

UNIFE

UNIFE represents the European Rail Industry in Brussels since 1992. The Association gathers around 80 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 also brings together 14 national rail industry associations of European countries. UNIFE members have an 84% market share in Europe and supply 46% of the worldwide production of rail equipment and services. For more information, visit www.unife.org or follow [@unife](https://twitter.com/unife) on Twitter.