

PRESS RELEASE



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4th Railway Package – ERFA Welcomes progress under Italian Presidency

ERFA welcomes the success of the Italian Presidency in making progress on the market pillar of the 4th Railway Package and in tackling critical issues linked to discriminatory access to the network.

The Commission proposal has been on the table for almost two years now, and contains a range of measures aimed at removing basic access barriers on the rail market.

Maintaining these barriers in place simply serves to hold back the rail sector's potential, as new entrants, small and medium-sized rail operators, at best struggle to overcome the hurdles, at worst are deterred from investing in the rail sector at all.

ERFA reiterates the comments made by Commissioner Bulc at the 8th December Transport Council meeting:

“The market pillar has to catch up. The technical pillar alone will not deliver the outcome needed;”

“The railway sector is in real need of reform. Rail costs 80 euros to each EU citizen every year;”

As rail continues to enjoy a low modal share across the EU, as rail continues to suffer from underinvestment, and as the EU continues to support a shift to more sustainable modes of transport, ERFA strongly supports efforts to complete the Single European Railway Area and to make the rail sector more competitive and attractive.

New entrants on the rail market bring competition which stimulates growth, investment and jobs - they represent 118,000 or rather 21% of the total number of employees in the rail sector, despite new entrants having a relative low market share.

They can act as a real growth-enabler. But the lack of financial transparency between infrastructure managers and their incumbent railway undertakings, and the consequent lack of independence of the infrastructure managers, blocks this potential.

ERFA strongly supports efforts to rapidly deliver on both pillars of the 4th package and to bring rail up to speed with other modes of transport.

ERFA welcomes the Latvian Presidency's commitment to keeping the Package together and hopes for a written agreement on the Market Pillar as well as progress on the Technical Pillar.

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ERFA will continue to work with the Latvian Presidency as well as other member states' governments to ensure the maximum progress on both pillars.

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ERFA - European Rail Freight Association - represents new entrants, i.e. all those operators who want open access and fair market conditions, and sustains their role of pushing forward the development of the railway market. The Association is very much a spin-off of the First Railway Package, adopted by the EU in 2001, and its vision of creating an open and competitive European rail market.

In 2014, ERFA represents 34 members from 16 countries. The members of ERFA all share a commitment to work towards a competitive and innovative single European railway market by promoting attractive, fair and transparent market conditions for all railway companies.

The members of ERFA represent the entire value chain of rail transportation: rail freight operators, wagon keepers, service providers, forwarders, passenger operators and national rail freight associations.