

PRESS RELEASE



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More cooperation on the rail network is needed! So why is a useful cooperation platform now at risk of being scrapped by the latest developments in the 4th Railway Package?

The independent rail operators, represented by ERFA, the logistics service providers and freight forwarders, represented by CLECAT, and the shippers represented by the European Shippers Council, insist on more cooperation and customer orientation on the railways.

ERFA, ESC and CLECAT are united in wanting a fundamental shift in the way the provision of rail services is delivered to reflect the need for a more dynamic, efficient and competitive rail sector and more customer-orientated services.

That is why the independent rail operators and the freight users strongly support the coordination committees, as envisaged by the original proposals in the 4th Railway Package, which bring together all the users, including the customers of the rail network to work together with the infrastructure manager in improving the performance and customer-orientation of the rail network.

Customers are crying out for more efficiency and coordination in delivering goods by rail across Europe.

Operators of the rail network are extremely reliant on the management of the infrastructure to ensure efficient service provision for their customers.

The Coordination Committee is a chance to establish a platform for all users to advise the infrastructure manager on issues such as intermodality and the needs of users related to maintenance and development of infrastructure capacity.

Greater cooperation among rail operators, the infrastructure manager and customers, will not only improve the quality of transport services, but also potentially lead to rail being a more attractive transportation choice for shippers and customers alike.

Infrastructure managers, as natural monopolies, have not necessarily adapted to the needs of a more market orientated rail sector, one that competes for customers with other modes of transport.

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ERFA, ESC and CLECAT believe that coordination committees inclusive to all users will help the infrastructure manager to become a facilitator of freight transportation, and avoid being a blocking force to more efficient rail services.

That is why the independent rail operators and the rail users strongly opposes recent developments on the 4th Railway Package, which would exclude customers from the coordination committees, make the committees optional and weaken the ability of the coordination committee to give informed advice to the infrastructure manager.

ERFA, ESC and CLECAT urge EU decision-makers to reflect the needs of today's rail sector, which has moved beyond the interests of an incumbent providing a monopoly service , and is reliant on cooperation and coordination between the relevant actors in order to increase investment, efficiency and growth.

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CLECAT represents the interests of freight forwarders, transport and customs related services in Europe.

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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 a competitive and innovative railway market. In 2015, ERFA represents 34 members from 16 countries across Europe.

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The European Shippers' Council (ESC) represents the freight transport interests (by all modes of transport) of business in Europe (manufacturers, retailers or wholesalers).