

20th February 2019

Siemens-Alstom: thanks to the Commission for its perseverance in the enforcement of competition rules. Next step: to ask for a real market access reciprocity.

Over the last 20 years, the Commission's goal has always been clear: to make rail travel cheaper, safer, more accessible and less susceptible to taxpayer subsidy, through development of internal competition. Rail is now considered as an affordable alternative to road transport.

Freight and passenger market success stories have demonstrated that the European competition model is benefitting customers:

- New services have been developed like the "rolling road concept" and the rail freight corridors
- In countries where there is a market share of alternative operators, rail volumes have grown considerably, e.g. the Netherlands, UK, Sweden, Germany.
- For rail freight, modal shift are common for commodities as cereal, food product, wood, aggregates, etc.
- Efficiencies driven by a competitive market mean that rail products are now more affordable
- Innovations have been implemented – for example quieter wagons and communications systems for customers.

This progress has been made possible by the constant attention of the Commission in respect of competition regulations.

Competition is vital to support a healthy, efficient and innovative market that looks after its customers. This is why ERFA supports the recent decision of the Commission regarding ALSTOM/SIEMENS.

ERFA supports the idea of having a strong European railway manufacturing sector. In order to protect this industry against unfair competition, the Commission must as a next step ensure there is real market access conditions reciprocity.

The continued action of the Commission is essential for rail to continue its path towards more and more qualitative services at increasingly competitive prices with other modes of transport; this will support more modal shift and lead to the goal of climate challenge.

Carole Coune, Acting Secretary General of ERFA : We applaud the decision of Mrs Vestager to reject the Siemens-Alstom merger in her role of guardian of the Treaty and its competition rules.

Such a merger would have increased costs for European industry at a time when railway undertakings are redoubling their efforts to achieve excellence. But our European industry must be protected by a real reciprocity of the market access conditions.

We need a Commission which goes ahead with the enforcement of the rules that benefit to customers, making rail travel cheaper, safer, qualitative, more accessible and less susceptible to tax subsidy. In achieve climate change goals, it's crucial that this policy remains a priority.