

Press Release – European Industry and Transport Associations call for change on Railway Capacity Management

10 January 2025

On 10 January, 12 industry associations issued a joint open letter calling for negotiating partners on the European Railway Capacity Management Regulation to adopt an ambitious and international approach to the file. The Regulation is viewed as an important tool to improve the reliability of rail freight services and, with it, improve the functioning of European supply chains and the broader economy. This initiative from ERFA, jointly with other industry associations, reflects the high importance and interest of European industry in rail freight, but also the expectations for a change in capacity management.

The Regulation, proposed by the European Commission on 10 July 2023, seeks to move European railway capacity from a system which is manual, national and rigid to a digital, international and flexible system. This is particularly important for rail freight services where over 50% of all trains cross at least one national border.

In November 2024, the Regulation entered what's known as trilogue negotiations where the European Commission, Parliament and Council of the European Union seek to find an agreement on a compromise text. Whilst many important issues in the Regulation are agreed upon by all negotiating parties, such as the introduction of multi-network capacity rights, many points remain outstanding such as the Regulation's binding nature, governance as well as incentives to ensure capacity is managed in a good way.

ERFA President, Dirk Stahl, stated, *“rail freight today is undermined by poor capacity practices, particularly for international traffic. If rail freight is to play an increasingly important role in connecting European industries, we need to move to a system of capacity management that reflects how freight moves. It is clear from the joint letter issued by key European industry and transport associations that there is an expectation for change”*.

ERFA Secretary General, Conor Feighan, concluded, *“what is particularly important is this proposed Regulation does not lead to a deterioration or lack of legal certainty for companies involved in rail freight. The Regulation will revoke important initiatives such as the “Rail Freight Corridors” Regulation, so if negotiating parties are to reach an agreement, we need to be certain it is a step in the right direction and not a step into the unknown.”*

Please find the Open Letter [here](#).