

Berne Declaration

Taking the cross-border rail customer experience to the next level

Adopted at the CEO Summit in Berne on 1 July 2023

Railways offer fast, comfortable, safe, environmentally friendly and reliable means of transportation across borders and over long distances.

Railways connect Europe by ensuring the mobility of millions of citizens and transporting millions of tonnes of goods every day.

Railways are responsible for less than 2% of European transport energy consumption and for less than 1% of European transport emissions.

Railways drive industrial development supporting economic growth and the creation of skilled jobs.

Railways foster the resilience of Europe and keep people together in times of crisis.

We, the European railway and infrastructure companies, are committed to enhancing the satisfaction of our customers and thereby increasing the modal share of rail in line with the objectives of the Green Deal.

Our vision is to provide seamless, punctual, predictable and sustainable rail transport for all customers or transported goods and to increase the efficiency of the rail networks across Europe. We want to focus on the strengths of railways and seek to actively shape the rail customer experience of the future as follows:

For our **passengers** we aim to:

1. ... provide a wide range of **international long-distance destinations**
 - ... by developing new and convenient international day and night connections between European capitals and major cities, for instance the planned new direct day and night connections between Paris and Berlin, Prague and Copenhagen, Budapest and Istanbul, Budapest and Burgas.
 - ... by investing in modern, reliable and interconnected railway infrastructure that supports cross-border travel, with a focus on reducing travel times and increasing capacity, like the infrastructure of Turin/Lyon, Brenner, Rail Baltica and Berlin–Prague–Vienna.
2. ... extend **regional cross-border offers**
 - ... by offering new services such as the recently inaugurated CEVA project in the Geneva region between Switzerland and France and the planned regular regional service between Innsbruck in Austria and Bolzano in Italy.
3. ... make travelling by rail **easier and more comfortable**
 - ... by delivering seamless international ticketing with the implementation of the CER Ticketing Roadmap.
 - ... by developing real-time information solutions.
 - ... by developing and integrating multimodal transport solutions for the first and last mile to provide travel offers that cover the entire mobility chain.
 - ... by using modern, spacious, and comfortable trains that suit the needs of leisure travellers as well as business travellers.
 - ... by developing sustainable railway stations facilitating decarbonised intermodal mobility.
 - ... by putting a stronger focus on sustainable tourism-related mobility.
 - ... by opening new routes and connecting European tourist destinations with each other.
 - ... by promoting attractively priced tourist packages and intermodal cooperations.
4. ... encourage the modal shift to rail transport as the most **sustainable mode of transport**
 - ... by promoting low-carbon travel options by putting forward the competitive advantages of rail transport and reducing the environmental impact of rail operations.
 - ... by promoting train usage for youths, notably thanks to Interrail passes.

For our **rail freight customers** we aim to:

1. ... make rail freight the green and resilient **logistical backbone** for all people and industries in Europe
 - ... by creating a single European transport area based on a single trans-European network that is complete, integrated and multimodal.
 - ... by developing multimodal terminals with fast and reliable transshipment such as Basel Wolf (connecting the Rhine river with the Rhine-Alpine-Corridor), the Calais or Sète

terminals for rail motorways, the Alessandria Terminal near the Third Giovi Pass line, the new transshipment terminal at Milano Smistamento and the “Mega-Hub” Terminal Lehrte.

- ... by deploying Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) all over the European continent and thereby paving the way for additional freight volumes on our infrastructure and digital solutions for our customers.

2. ... render rail freight **seamless, flexible and fast**

- ... by providing additional services such as real-time information.
- ... by implementing relevant and compatible digital technologies such as Digital Platforms (DP), Digital Capacity Management (DCM), Autonomous Train Operation (ATO) with coordinated transition plans.

To achieve this next level cross-border user experience, a comprehensive, efficient and well-maintained railway infrastructure is required. We ensure that **railway infrastructure** as the determining factor for rail services is safe, digitalised and reliable and commit to:

- ... **strengthening cross-border cooperation** between railway companies, infrastructure managers and national governments using a **pan-European approach** to eliminate technical and administrative barriers.
- ... **maintaining and renewing existing rail infrastructure** on main lines as well feeder and outflow lines and in remote regions near borders.
- ... **completing missing links** especially for cross-border traffic.
- ... **optimising the utilisation of infrastructure and improving capacity management, notably** by implementing Time Table Redesign (TTR) and Digital Capacity Management (DCM).
- ... **steering international train operations** with European Traffic Management Network (ETMN) and providing a European Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA).
- ... **improving international coordination** especially in relation to Temporary Capacity Restrictions (TCRs) that might have a substantial impact on international freight traffic.
- ... **digitalising the infrastructure.**
- ... **managing construction works** in an integrated manner along cross border corridors and considering appropriate deviation measures to ensure capacity and availability.
- ... **scaling up the synchronised deployment of European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS)** trackside and on-board, improving interoperability.

These measures pave the way to increase the modal share of rail and thus contribute directly to achieving the Green Deal objectives.

Our efforts need to be complemented by the necessary policy framework.

We thus **invite policy makers at the European and national levels to:**

- ... ensure sufficient, predictable and sustainable long-term financing for the European railway sector including adequate funding for rail infrastructure maintenance and development, in line with the ambitions of the revised TEN-T Regulation.
- ... ensure a fair level playing field for all transport modes, particularly with regard to external costs and Europe's dependence on energy.
- ... trust the sector to establish suitable framework conditions for digital layer (MDMS) and support the sector to implement the CER Ticketing Roadmap.
- ... work together with railway companies in developing cross-border services by using existing instruments like PSO contracts.
- ... set up a European Master Plan for DAC implementation and ensure sufficient financing.
- ... foster a harmonised sector-approach on research and innovation (Europe's Rail).
- ... swiftly conclude and implement new TEN-T regulation.
- ... provide a legal framework for better international capacity allocation, notably enabling the implementation of TTR without altering the existing legal framework more than necessary.
- ... develop and commit to principles to align and harmonise the infrastructure investment cycles and investment planning.
- ... ensure sufficient financing to allow for the continuous deployment of ERTMS in a synchronised manner.
- ... establish a multimodal transport framework that truly promotes the most energy-efficient and environmentally-performing modes (for example, via the Combined Transport and Weights & Dimensions directives).

We believe that by working together and with the support of policymakers, we can take the cross-border rail customer experience to the next level, making rail transport the preferred choice for passengers and shippers across Europe.

Signatory companies and organisations as of 1 July 2023 in alphabetical order

Organisation	First name	Last name	Function
BLS AG	Daniel	SCHAFFER	CEO
BLS Cargo AG	Dirk	STAHL	CEO / ERFA President
ČD	Michal	KRAPINEC	CEO
CER	Alberto	MAZZOLA	Executive Director
CFL	Marc	WENGLER	CEO
CIT	Gilles	MUGNIER	Secretary General
Deutsche Bahn AG	Richard	LUTZ	Chairman of the Management Board and CEO
LDz	Rinalds	PLAVNIEKS	Chairman of the Board
MÁV	Zoltán	PAFFÉRI	CEO
NS	Wouter	KOOLMEES	CEO
ÖBB-Holding AG	Andreas	MATTHÄ	CEO / CER Chair
SBB-CFF-FFS	Vincent	DUCROT	CEO
SNCB-NMBS	Sophie	DUTORDOIR	CEO
SNCF Group	Jean-Pierre	FARANDOU	Chairman and CEO
UIC	François	DAVENNE	Director General
VDV	Oliver	WOLFF	General Managing Director