

EN

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Answer given by Mr Hoekstra
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.11.2024)

The Commission's current plan to support rail freight transport is the 2020 Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy¹, which sets out milestones to increase rail freight transport by 50% until 2030 and to double it until 2050 compared with 2015. The development of rail freight transport will be driven by operators attentive to the customer needs supported by policy initiatives addressing barriers to market access, technical interoperability, multimodal integration and cross-border coordination. Policy action at EU level is particularly relevant for rail freight transport, as more than 50% of rail freight transport is cross-border.

The aforementioned Strategy targets issues such as infrastructure development, capacity/traffic management and innovative automation technologies, e.g. the digital automatic coupling. Many actions have been implemented since its adoption in 2020. Key examples include the adoption of the new trans-European transport network (TEN-T) Regulation², the Greening Freight Package³, including the Commission's proposal for a regulation on the use of railway infrastructure capacity⁴, as well as ongoing work to deploy the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS)⁵ and the Digital Automatic Coupling⁶. The Commission also pursued its enforcement of EU legislation to promote the single European market for rail and multimodal transport services.

The Commission President-elect's mission letter to the Commissioner-designate for Sustainable Transport and Tourism confirms the Commission's commitment to developing rail freight transport in the EU.

Finally, since the formal investigation on alleged aid granted to Fret SNCF is still ongoing, the Commission cannot give any further indication relating to it.

¹ COM(2020) 789 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0789>

² Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1679>

³ COM(2023) 440 final.

⁴ COM(2023) 443 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0443>

⁵ See in particular https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/infrastructure-and-investment/trans-european-transport-network-ten-t/european-rail-traffic-management-system_en and https://www.era.europa.eu/domains/infrastructure/european-rail-traffic-management-system-ertms_en

⁶ See in particular <https://rail-research.europa.eu/european-dac-delivery-programme/>