

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002141/25
to the Commission
Sophia Kircher (PPE)
(28 May 2025)**

Subject: Investing in the future: 5G corridors as key pillars of a modern and secure European railway network

The Connecting Europe Facility plays a central role in the deployment of physical and digital infrastructure in the EU, in particular by funding 5G corridors along the trans-European transport network (TEN-T). These allow for uninterrupted high-speed connections and significantly help improve rail safety, efficiency, the passenger experience and the resilience of transport and logistics systems — key elements for the EU's competitiveness.

In view of the objectives of the 2030 Digital Compass and the negotiations on the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the question arises as to what will be done in future to promote digital rail connectivity, and in particular the widespread roll-out of 5G along railway lines in the European Railway Traffic Management System (ERTMS).

1. How will the Commission ensure that enough funding is earmarked for the deployment of 5G corridors — especially along ERTMS railway lines — in the next MFF?
2. What measures will it take to accelerate the deployment of FRMCS/5G along the TEN-T rail network, thus preventing delays in the ERTMS/gigabit passenger connectivity?
3. Will it carry out a survey on the user experience when it comes to digital connectivity during rail travel, as well as the economic and environmental benefits of the digitalisation of rail transport, in order to better align investments with passengers' needs and modal shift objectives?

Submitted: 28.5.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(22 July 2025)**

On 8 March 2021, the Commission adopted a communication on a Digital Compass, setting connectivity targets for 2030 ⁽¹⁾, including 5G coverage in all populated areas.

The deployment of pan-European 5G corridors contributes to this objective and was taken-up in the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030 of December 2022 ⁽²⁾.

With respect to rail, the 5G corridors relies on the roll-out of a pan-European network infrastructure supporting the Future Rail Mobile Communication Systems (FRMCS), that is integrated into the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) ⁽³⁾, while enabling the provision of high-speed connectivity to train's passengers.

The Commission adopted in July 2025 its proposal for the next multiannual financial framework. This framework and the relevant sectoral proposals will set out, for the coming period, the details and funding availabilities for digital infrastructures, including connectivity.

The speeding-up of FRMCS/5G deployment along the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) rail corridors can be achieved through network sharing and cooperation models between rail infrastructure managers, telecoms operators and tower companies.

Different options are developed in the 5G Strategic Deployment Agenda 'Spectrum and Connectivity for Rail' ⁽⁴⁾.

The launch of the first projects under the Connecting Europe Facility programme, phase II ⁽⁵⁾, Digital part, will enable to validate these various options.

Broad rail stakeholders ⁽⁶⁾ cooperate in EU-RAIL Joint Undertaking Deployment Group to develop most suitable scenarios for the deployment of FRMCS.

⁽¹⁾ COM/2021/118 final. Communication from the European Commission: 2030 Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade.

⁽²⁾ Decision (EU) 2022/2481 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 establishing the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030, OJ L 323, 19.12.2022, p. 4-26.

⁽³⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1695 of 10 August 2023 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the control-command and signalling subsystems of the rail system in the European Union, OJ L 222, 8.9.2023, p. 380-560, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/1695/oj.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://smart-networks.europa.eu/5g-strategic-deployment-agenda-for-connectivity-and-sustainability-in-europe/>, adopted 20 December 2024 by the Governing Board of the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking, on the basis of contributions from EIM, CER, UIC and UNIFE/UNITEL.

⁽⁵⁾ https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/connecting-europe-facility-cef-multiannual-work-programme-2024-2027_

⁽⁶⁾ Including the ones above participate in EU-RAIL Joint Undertaking Deployment Group <https://rail-research.europa.eu/participants-deployment-group/>.

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for her suggestion and will consider it as part of its next studies and consultations in the areas of digital and transport.
