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Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas
on behalf of the European Commission
(5.5.2026)

With regard to the effect of liberalisation on rail safety, the Commission notes that the available data does not confirm a negative impact on safety of the opening of the railway market to competition. A stable positive trend of improvement of safety levels can be observed in the Single European Railway Area since 2010 – as evidenced by data on safety performance collected by the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA). According to this data, the number of significant accidents has dropped from 2230 in 2010 to 1565 in 2023, a similar downward trend can be observed for the number of victims of these accidents (fatalities and seriously injured). Most of the reported accidents refer to accidents caused by third parties: level crossings users and unauthorised persons crossing the railway tracks. These two categories of accidents account also for 97,4% of all fatalities¹.

With regard to the rail safety in Greece, the Commission deplores the tragic accident in Tempi. Shortly after the accident, the Commission requested ERA to prepare a report on the state of implementation of the rail safety legislation in Greece. On that basis, the Commission opened an infringement case INFR(2023)2036² against Greece which addresses several long-standing shortcomings in the functioning of the Greek rail system. To address them, the Greek authorities have developed an Action Plan, which contains measures strengthening the capacity of the infrastructure manager to adequately carry out its responsibilities. The Commission, together with ERA, are in a continuous dialogue with the Greek authorities on the implementation of the Action Plan while the actions envisaged there are closely monitored.

¹ Safety Overview 2025, EU Agency for Railways, March 2025, see figures 2, 8 and 10. Document available at: <https://www.era.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/safety-overview-2025.pdf>

² Press release: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_6006.