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Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission has no data that confirms a negative impact on safety of the rail market opening to competition. On the contrary safety indicators and safety performance data collected by the European Union Agency for Railways imply a positive trend of improved safety levels in the Single European Railway Area since 2010. Despite deplorable large accidents in recent years, 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 accidents (fatalities and seriously injured). Moreover, most of the reported accidents refer to accidents caused by third parties: road users at level crossings or unauthorised persons trespassing railway tracks. These two categories of accidents account also for 97,4% of all fatalities¹.

Finally, in respect of military mobility, the Commission promotes the concept of ‘dual-use infrastructure’ to ensure that military mobility projects will positively contribute to the development of the EU rail system and thus society as a whole. The cost reductions advocated by the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) European Coordinator’s report² are supposed to lower the cost of ERTMS deployment on trains and therefore allow for a wider roll-out of this important safety system.

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 Work plan of the European coordinator Matthias Ruete, Publications Office of the European Union, 2026, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2832/9894936>.