

Press Release
Brussels, 31 May

Recast of the first railway package - diverging opinions

Today, the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) held its second reading vote on the European Commission proposal to recast the first railway package. The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) is not entirely satisfied with the outcome of the vote, as some important points of concern of the European railway sector have not been properly addressed.

On the one hand, the progresses made with the Parliament's first reading vote on the strengthening of the national regulatory bodies have been confirmed, the duration of the Multi Annual Contracts between governments and rail infrastructure managers has been set at 5 years and clear principles for the calculation of the track access charges have also been outlined. On the other hand, unsatisfactory compromises have been found on important aspects of rail financing and on ETCS-differentiated charging.

At the same time, however, triologue negotiations among the EU institutions are going on, and the agreement to be reached during these talks is likely to be put forward to a vote in plenary in July.

"We are looking forward to the results of the upcoming negotiations," said CER Executive Director Libor Lochman, "and I hope that further progress can be made. Second readings and triologue discussions are not really transparent processes, while negotiations between EU institutions are becoming more rigid every day. A more open dialogue between the institutions and the sector representatives should be considered as valuable resource which could help reaching a good final agreement. I am convinced that the current differences among the political institutions and the sector are a direct consequence of the lack of a more systematic dialogue. Like we did in the past, we remain open to participate in a constructive conversation in order to find better and reasonable solutions to our common concerns."

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The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 European railway undertakings and infrastructure companies. CER represents the interests of its members towards the European institutions as well as other policy makers and transport actors. CER's main focus is promoting the strengthening of rail as essential to the creation of a sustainable transport system which is efficient, effective and environmentally sound. For more information, see www.cer.be