

**PRESS RELEASE - 13/12/21**

*related to the incoming EU Action Plan on cross-border passenger rail*

## **EU action plan for pan-European rail travel: A on-time departure to make rail an attractive alternative to air travel?**

The European Commission wants to fight the disconnections in the European rail network and thus strengthen climate-friendly railways compared to carbon-intensive air and road transport. To this end, it will present an Action Plan to boost long-distance cross-border passenger rail services and a further development of the TEN-T rail investment plan on Tuesday 14 of December 2021. Before the delivery of these documents, the Europe on Rail coalition stresses the urgent need for ambitious policies improving the European rail network. Amongst necessary measures<sup>1</sup>, the coalition particularly emphasizes:

1. **Guaranteeing fair market conditions amongst transport modes**, integrating the environmental cost of air and road travel.
2. **Investing in interoperable rolling stock**, by establishing and/or financing a European interoperable rolling stock pool.
3. **Upgrading the role of the European Railway Agency (ERA)** to optimize international rail capacity planning and traffic management among and between European member states.
4. Obliging rail operators to **share real-time ticketing data** and ensuring comprehensive **rail passenger rights**.

"The Commission should become active in the development of EU-wide ticketing platforms and strengthen passenger rights," suggests **Germanwatch** policy advisor and Europe on Rail coordinator **Jacob Rohm**. "We need more courage from the EU to coordinate international train connections between the member states."

**Europe on Rail** also sees a need for action on the EU side especially to level the playing field between all transport modes. There is a need, on one hand, to internalize the environmental impacts of the most polluted transport modes and, on the other hand, to promote low carbon transport such as rail by reducing and harmonizing rail tolls.

"If we want this necessary and urgent modal shift from carbon-intensive air and road travels to climate-friendly trains, the EU needs to guarantee fair market conditions across all transport modes, phasing out damaging subsidies and tax exemptions to fossil fuels and integrating the real cost of carbon emissions in the ticket prices.", stresses **Jérémie Fosse**, president of **eco-union**.

According to the coalition, this window of opportunity for the rail renaissance can only serve if the EU invests massively in the rail sector, leveraging on the Recovery and Resilient Funds, while adopting the adequate policies to remove technical, commercial and political barriers that impedes a well connected, efficient and safe European rail network.

### **About Europe On Rail**

EuropeOnRail is a European initiative led by Civil Society Organizations to reduce carbon emissions from international mobility by promoting night and day passenger trains between European cities and countries. [www.europeonrail.eu](http://www.europeonrail.eu) - [info@europeonrail.eu](mailto:info@europeonrail.eu) **Press contact:** Jacob Rohm, Low-Carbon Mobility Policy Advisor, Germanwatch, [rohrm@germanwatch.org](mailto:rohrm@germanwatch.org)



<sup>1</sup> This [Position Paper](#) gathers all our policy recommendations.