

## **Revision of the mandate of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA)**

### **EPF response to the Call for Evidence – February 2026**

On 5 December 2025, the European Commission launched a [Call for Evidence to revise the mandate of the European Union Agency for Railways \(ERA\)](#). The aim is to align the Agency's founding rules with its evolving role and ensure it continues to deliver high levels of rail safety, security and sustainability. The revision will take into account ERA's expanding responsibilities in safety and interoperability, developments in EU legislation since 2016, and the 2023 Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) package. Overall, the initiative seeks to clarify and update ERA's legal mandate and strengthen its contribution to rail modernisation, digitalisation and innovation.

The European Passengers' Federation (EPF) strongly supports ERA's work, whose mission is "*Moving Europe towards a sustainable and safe railway system without frontiers*". Since its establishment in 2004, ERA has made significant progress in strengthening rail safety and interoperability across the EU, and its technical achievements are widely recognised. However, EPF considers that ERA's mandate should now be clarified and expanded – including extended monitoring and enforcement powers – and supported by adequate financial and human resources, to better serve passengers and deliver EU policy objectives.

#### **Strengthening Monitoring from a Passenger Perspective**

ERA's current monitoring activities – notably interoperability reporting – remain largely technically focused. EPF believes this should be complemented by a stronger end user-focused perspective. Monitoring should include passenger-oriented KPIs, such as reliability and service quality, in line with the criteria defined in the revised Rail Passengers' Rights Regulation, which requires Railway Undertakings to define and monitor service quality standards, with reports published on ERA's website.

Monitoring should, in particular (see below – Closing the gap: Multi-provider ticketing) also focus on the availability and accessibility of timetable data, as well as the ability to purchase tickets online, at machines, or in person, including individual requirements such as discounts and PRM assistance. EPF also supports ERA monitoring of multimodal indicators – with an initial feasibility study conducted in 2024<sup>1</sup> – and environmental indicators, as introduced in the first ERA Rail Environmental Report published in 2024<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Closing the gap: Multi-provider ticketing**

From a passenger perspective, a major unresolved barrier to a truly "Single European Railway Area" is multi-provider and cross-border ticketing. Booking journeys that involve multiple operators and/ or EU Member States remains unnecessarily complex. In some cases, dominant operators refuse to cooperate with competitors. As a result, many passengers opt for air or car travel rather than navigating fragmented rail booking systems.

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<sup>1</sup> First report (May 2024) available here: <https://www.era.europa.eu/content/exploring-feasibility-multimodal-kpis-2024-era-compelling-vision>

<sup>2</sup> Report available here: <https://www.era.europa.eu/content/2024-rail-environmental-report>

Full access to timetable, tariff and real-time data is essential for seamless international journey planning, yet remains incomplete. International ticketing is often not customer-friendly. The report “Simplifying European Ticketing” provides a detailed analysis of the structural obstacles to seamless multimodal travel.<sup>3</sup> EPF members confirm these findings and highlight additional challenges, including differing advance booking windows, restrictive cancellation policies, payment barriers for non-EU cards, invalid discount cards and uncertainty regarding minimum connection times.

EPF calls for ERA to take a more proactive role in this area, in line with its mission and in support of the Green Deal and upcoming policy initiatives promoting integrated rail ticketing (such as the Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation<sup>4</sup>). This role should encompass both monitoring and enforcement.

### **From Monitoring to Enforcement**

Monitoring alone is insufficient. While ERA can currently assess compliance, it lacks enforcement powers. EPF therefore recommends expanding ERA’s mandate to include enforcement of existing data-sharing and interoperability obligations – including the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TAP-TSI and PRM-TSI), MMTIS Delegated Regulation requirements, the harmonised use of common distribution standards, and the obligation for Railway Undertakings to publish Service Quality monitoring reports, among others. Strengthened monitoring and enforcement capabilities would enable ERA to assist the European Commission in benchmarking progress, supporting regulatory compliance, and ensuring the effective implementation of the above and other key EU rail policy initiatives, including the latest High-Speed Rail Action Plan.

### **Aligning Ambition, Mandate and Resources**

In the “20 Years of ERA” report<sup>5</sup>, ERA outlines an expanded role for the Agency within a green, multimodal, and integrated transport system. Priority areas include strengthening safety, enhancing climate resilience, streamlining authorisation procedures, reinforcing its role as System Authority for telematics, optimising infrastructure capacity, and facilitating multimodal cooperation. Although ERA’s recent work programmes contain promising elements<sup>6</sup>, the Agency often lacks the internal capacity to implement dedicated measures in all these areas. To achieve its full ambitions:

- ERA’s legal mandate must explicitly reflect its expanded responsibilities, particularly in digital governance and data management;
- Its budget and staffing must be significantly increased.

Compared to EU agencies in maritime and aviation, ERA remains underfunded, despite operating in a highly fragmented and technically complex sector. In line with the proposed extended mandate, EPF therefore calls for increased financial and human resources, enabling ERA to make rail truly seamless, competitive, and passenger-oriented.

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<sup>3</sup> The report, written by Jon Worth and commissioned by Jakob Dalunde, is available here: <https://jonworth.eu/a-report-for-jakop-dalunde-mep-and-a-follow-up-event-about-rail-and-multimodal-ticketing-in-the-eu/>

<sup>4</sup> See for example Ursula von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Commissioner Tzitzikostas, available here:

[https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/de676935-f28c-41c1-bbd2-e54646c82941\\_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20TIZITIKOSTAS.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/de676935-f28c-41c1-bbd2-e54646c82941_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20TIZITIKOSTAS.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Available here : <https://www.era.europa.eu/content/era-20-years-empowering-european-railways>

<sup>6</sup> Most recent Single Programming Document available here: <https://www.era.europa.eu/library/documents-regulations/era-work-programmes-activity-reports>