



# OPINION

European Economic and Social Committee

## Rail capacity and traffic management

TEN/820

# STARTING POINT OPINION

Rail transport is an energy-efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport.

**According to the data: represents only 0.4% of greenhouse gas emission.**

Rail transport only uses 1.9% of transport energy consumption, due to the fact that most train journeys are made on electrified lines.

**According to the Sustainable and Mobility Strategy of 2020, rail freight traffic should increase by 50% by 2030 and double by 2050, while traffic on high-speed rail should double by 2030 and triple by 2050.**

Considering that the rail network is largely electrified, an increase in the use of rail services could help reduce emissions by helping achieve the objectives of the Green Deal.

**EESC ask to act accordingly promoting investments in building new infrastructure and maintaining existing infrastructures, while also investing in digitalised tool.**

Current rail infrastructure is not at all sufficient to meet demand. Building new infrastructure and properly maintaining the existing network will significantly increase capacity as well as the quality of the infrastructure and rail passenger and freight services.

- **The EESC fully supports the objectives of the Greening Transport Package;**
- **Welcomes the proposal on the use of railway infrastructure capacity and the ambitious goals for rail transport, which is a crucial pillar of a green and sustainable transport system**
- **With an increasing proportion of the EU's railway network suffering from congestion, the EESC welcomes the proposal to have a more flexible and effective method for capacity traffic management.**
- **The EESC is aware of the need to efficiently allocate rail capacity. The various modes of transport, such as passenger and freight, long-distance and local, national and international, involve multiple stakeholders and often opposing interests. The EESC asks the Commission to strike the right balance between these different interests by prioritising the public interest.**

- **The EESC welcomes the ambitious goals for rail transport, which is the backbone of a sustainable transport system. More efficiently allocating infrastructure capacity can create much-needed additional capacity in the short term and improve planning for long-term needs.**
- **The EESC also supports the efforts to harmonise technical differences in the European rail network.**
- **The EESC regrets to note that the results of the Regulation will only be visible after 2030. Therefore, the EESC recommends speeding up the implementation of certain elements in order to achieve concrete results by 2025, such as digitalisation of tools and digital capacity management (DCM).**