

Zero-Carbon Combined Transport can deliver the European Commission's 90% CO₂ reduction target for 2040

Brussels, 2 July 2025 — The European Commission adopted its proposal to amend the European Climate Law¹ by, among others, specifying a **2040 EU climate target of 90% reduction in net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions** compared to 1990 levels. Marie Bjerre, Denmark's Minister of European Affairs, expressed the support of the Danish Presidency, highlighting **the link between decarbonisation and Europe's competitiveness**. UIRR strongly supports this proposal.



The studies performed for the Combined Transport for Europe (CT4EU) campaign² have found that contemporary **door-to-door Combined Transport achieves this target already today**.



The efficient integration of electric rail freight and waterborne modes of transport into longer distance transport chains, complemented by short road legs at origin and destination, ideally performed by electric trucks, can **deliver this ambition if the intermodal mode of transport is recognised as the backbone of European freight logistics**.

UIRR members' Combined Transport tonne-kilometre output grew by 8,4% in 2024³. If this outstanding performance could be repeated each year until 2040, **the proposed target could be achieved by the freight transportation sector**.

What would be needed to achieve this result?

- Rapid conclusion of the triologue, adoption and consistent implementation of the Rail Infrastructure Capacity Management Regulation – **to ensure more and better-quality train paths for intermodal freight trains**.
- Consistent implementation of the TEN-T Guidelines Regulation (2024/1679) to ensure that Europe has a **robust and well-performing transport infrastructure**.
- Adoption of the revision of the Combined Transport Directive (1992/106) introduced by the Commission in November 2023 – with the need to **broaden the scope of combined transport operations and to enhance the operating framework**.

Combined Transport Operators and Intermodal Terminal Managers, brought together by UIRR, **invest ambitiously into intermodal assets** such as terminals and rolling stock. They also dynamically advance the digitalisation of Combined Transport to continuously evolve the competitiveness of their freight transport capabilities. The **European legislative and implementation support** outlined above should complement these efforts.



"The European Combined Transport Community encourages the acceptance of the proposed amendment to the European Climate Law (Reg 2021/1119) by the EU co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union." – stated UIRR Director General, Ralf-Charley Schultze.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport (UIRR)** represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transhipment Terminal Managers. Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).

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¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1687

² <https://www.ct4eu.eu/studies>

³ <https://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2025/mediacentre/3134-business-year-2024-positive-ct-performance.html>