

## The best investment plan for Europe

UIRR along with 43 other European transport associations have issued a joint statement<sup>1</sup> on the importance of investing into transport, highlighting the following points:

1. **Transport is an enabler** of the internal market, the free movement of goods and people, it fosters regional development and connectivity.
2. **Decarbonisation** is the only way forward, as sustainability is a must.
3. **Making Europe resilient** in the face of security challenges, disruptions and supply chain sovereignty.
4. **A key to EU competitiveness** through a resource efficient functioning.
5. **Creating valuable jobs** for skilled individuals.
6. **Capacity and connectivity** gaps still exist which will need to be relieved to create a transport network free of bottlenecks.
7. **Grants to complete the network** from the EU remain essential to emphasise the need for European level connectivity.
8. **No regret investment projects** of the transport sector guarantee superior EU added value.

In our view the need to build a rail infrastructure network supporting the circulation of **2000t gross weight 740-metre-long electrically powered P400 freight trains**, which can remove 50 trucks from the parallel roads, is the primary mission of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

The CEF has already co-funded several **development projects for Combined Transport** mostly focused on digitalisation solutions, which has been most welcome.

The CEF programme should also fund the development of **intermodal transshipment terminals**, where – until now – it has not been so successful. CINEA needs to show a greater empathy towards the typically SME terminal manager when designing its application process. Member States, unlike with passenger stations, do not allocate funding from the renovation budget for the modernisation of terminals, or the construction of new ones, when a particular railway line is modernised. Therefore, ministries of transport should support the allocation of a meaningful portion of the CEF funds needed for this purpose.

9 out of 10 intermodal freight trains cross at least one internal border of the European Union. **Border crossings**, therefore, are very important to Combined Transport operators. The bottlenecks caused by the combination of often disharmonized border crossing procedures in combination with inadequate infrastructure would also deserve a dedicated CEF envelope.

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*"EU funding for transport-related infrastructure development is not only needed for financial reasons, but also to emphasise the shared interest in developing a Pan-European infrastructure network that connects the continent across all borders."* – highlighted UIRR President 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 Transshipment 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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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.uirr.com/en/media-centre/press-releases-and-position-papers/2024/mediacentre/2879-the-best-investment-plan-for-europe-joint-press-release.html>