



Herrn
Bundesminister Patrick Schnieder
Bundesministerium für Verkehr
Invalidenstraße 44
D-10115 Berlin

Tuesday, May 13th, 2025

Keep European industry on track: Rail freight needs more reliability and better infrastructure quality in Germany

Dear Minister Schnieder,

On behalf of the signatories to this letter – representing rail freight and combined transport industries from Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, and Slovakia as well as European associations – we extend our sincere congratulations on your appointment as Germany's Federal Minister for Transport.

This letter marks the first joint appeal from a broad coalition of international rail freight stakeholders. With half of European rail freight crossing national borders – and Germany being the crucial centrepiece of European logistics – the performance of your railway infrastructure is critical to our collective success. This affects military mobility, industrial productivity, and the economic viability of climate friendly transport.

However, the performance of DB InfraGO AG – the primary infrastructure manager – is failing to provide sufficient quality, reliability, and customer-oriented information that is standard in many European countries. In consequence, rail freight operations on the German network become increasingly complex and costly with a lot of uncertainty for customers.

Tip of the iceberg is the “Generalsanierung”-programme. While we strongly support infrastructure investment, prolonged closures of main corridors are not standard practice. Sufficient and economically feasible diversion capacity must be provided in every case to keep business on the rail. If that cannot be guaranteed, the approach must be reviewed and adapted accordingly.

All measures must be based on transparent planning, stakeholder involvement, and precise coordination. The reality for the planned closures of main transit corridors in Bavaria, Northern Germany, and along the Rhine is a different one: Proposed diversion routes by DB InfraGO AG are excessively long, lack sufficient capacity, and are themselves affected by disruptions. Communication is frequently delayed and inconsistent. In some cases, additional construction is planned on alternative routes during the closures.



This situation risks driving freight back to the road – a concern already raised by [a coalition of German industry stakeholders](#). Such a shift would increase congestion of motorways and transport emissions, undermining transport and climate goals.

We urge you to act with high priority on the condition and management of Germany's rail network. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further and contribute to developing constructive, workable solutions.

We wish you much success in the important work ahead.

Yours Sincerely

Signatories:

AROSRAIL – Asociácia železničných dopravcov Slovenska (<https://arosrail.sk/>)

Associazione Fermerci – Associazione Operatori nel trasporto ferroviario merci (<https://www.fermerci.it/>)

ERFA – European Rail Freight Association (<https://erfarail.eu/>)

FerCargo – Confederazione del Cargo Ferroviario (<https://www.fercargo.net/>)

FTE – Forum Train Europe (<https://www.forumtraineurope.eu/>)

NEEÖ – Netzwerk Europäischer Eisenbahnen Österreich (<https://www.die-gueterbahnen.at/>)

RailGood (<https://www.railgood.nl/>)

UIRR – Union Internationale Pour le Transport Combine Rail-Route (<https://www.uirr.com/>)

ZESNAD.cz – Sdružení železničních nákladních dopravců České republiky (<https://www.zesnad.cz/>)

ZNPK – Związek Niezależnych Przewoźników Kolejowych (<https://www.znpek.org/>)