

Combined Transport Directive Amendment withdrawal

Brussels, 22 October 2025 — Yesterday the College of Commissioners adopted its **work programme for 2026¹**, indicating the intention to **withdraw the proposed amendment of the Combined Transport Directive**, which was tabled as part of the Greening Freight Transport package in November 2023.

The Combined Transport Community represented by UIRR regrets the intention about which the European Commission has not conducted any sort of public consultation. Moreover, the European Parliament's study, drawn up on request of rapporteur Flavio Tosi, was only finalised a week ago. The European Parliament was about to start its work on the proposed amendment using this study. The Belgian and Hungarian Council presidencies must be commended for working intensely on the Combined Transport dossier. Member States are now waiting for an impulse from the Parliament.

European Combined Transport is the prime solution for involving rail freight and waterborne means into European supply chains and the engine of growth of European rail freight, and in this capacity, it is in a difficult situation today. Overcoming the present-day crises and challenges faced by the daily operations is the number 1 priority, with a focus on infrastructure capacity. The unprecedented underperformance of the railway infrastructure, the lack of terminal capacities in several regions of Europe and the absence of a minimum service guarantee, and the shortcomings of digitalisation hold back its performance.

The current difficulties and challenges would not alone be solved by an amended Combined Transport Directive or a revised Weights and Dimensions Directive. Yet **intermodal freight transport, as a mode of transport in its own right, needs a framework legislation**.

UIRR pays attention to the following dossiers to achieve a comprehensive solution to the current challenges of its community:

- Catalysing the conclusion of the legislative process on the new **Rail Infrastructure Capacity Management Regulation** which will have to be followed by the efficient and timely implementation of the Regulation,
- Establishing an **excessive operating cost compensation regime** around infrastructure works sites in case long bypass routes are forced on operators,
- Assisting the Commission and Member States in the implementation of the recently adopted **TEN-T Regulation**,
- Contributing to the evaluation of the **Single European Railway Area (SERA) Directive** and its implementing regulations to create the legislative framework for reliable infrastructure charging and infrastructure management,
- Performing for **Military Mobility** by enabling the effective insertion of electric rail freight into defence supply chains and the movement of military cargo.

Overcoming the difficulties and challenges will take several years during which digitalisation will naturally progress. We are hopeful that on a long-term a revised Combined Transport Directive will fit into a regulatory framework that will enable the effective functioning of Combined Transport for the whole of Europe.



"I would like to encourage the Commission to reconsider its idea of withdrawing the Combined Transport Directive amendment proposal. A long-term perspective is needed, and a chance should be given to the EP rapporteur and the TRAN Committee. Therefore, the work programme should not be rigidly executed." – stressed 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_2414