

OUR MESSAGE TO GLASGOW



Rail is the most sustainable mode of motorised transport today, already avoiding million tons of CO2. As world leaders gather in Glasgow to take new steps towards achieving the Paris agreement objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°, we propose to show more ambition and call on governments to give rail an even more central role in tackling this challenge.

WE ACT...

1. New international high-speed routes on existing infrastructure

We are accelerating the development of the London-Amsterdam service on the busiest international air route in Europe. We have the ambition to run five direct return services a day between London and Rotterdam/Amsterdam. By 2025, this could represent 1.2 million passengers per year choosing to take the train rather than a plane, which is a potential saving of 62,760 tonnes of carbon emissions.

We are exploring the potential for new international high-speed routes across Europe. We will keep working closely with EU and UK authorities to set the right conditions of success.

2. More attractive international timetable and seamless cross-border travel

We optimise timetabling processes for international services by facilitating coordination between infrastructure managers of different countries. The Eurolink project, which is a platform of European infrastructure managers focused on optimising long-term international transport plans based on market needs, will contribute to this.

We work towards the adoption of harmonised traffic management rules for international services and we rapidly develop tools to overcome language barriers for train drivers and traffic controllers on international corridors.

On the routes between London and the EU, we will pilot and implement an upgraded model of border controls combining advanced travel authorisation, online check-in and automated boarding.

3. Staying the most sustainable mode of motorised transport

Some of us are joining the UN's "Race to Zero" campaign, committing to set a net zero emissions target, aligned with the aims of the Paris Agreement and what science dictates is necessary to limit global warming to 1.5C. Others have signed up to the UIC's "Low Carbon Rail Transport Challenge" and the Rail Climate Responsibility Pledge.

In particular, we commit to using low carbon energy sources. NS Dutch operations already rely 100% on renewable energy. Eurostar has the ambition to reach the use of 100% renewable electricity to power its trains by 2030 and is also working to reduce energy consumption by standardising efficient driving techniques through aDriver Advisory System (DAS).

We are deploying reused materials in our supply chain, such as recycled steel for tracks.

4. End-to-end rail ticketing and a seamless passenger experience

Railway operators endorse the Ticketing Roadmap recently adopted by CER, which builds on progress made towards harmonised standards of timetable and ticketing interoperability. We are committed to accept requirements for greater access to simple, reliable, and comprehensive online information regarding timetables, prices, dependable real-time information and ticket purchasing. This should make it possible to book a train ticket from Amsterdam, Brussels or London to Milan as easily and early as booking a flight, with a single interlocutor and whilst enjoying passenger rights for the full journey.

5. Combined air-rail tickets

We encourage, support or develop digital solutions and distribution agreements to make it easier for international passengers travelling to or from Europe to book an air-rail combination ticket, or to book on a rail service via an air booking platform. Air-rail cooperation is to enhance the passengers travel experience with easier check-in and greener forms of international journeys.

WE SUPPORT...

1. The EU's and UK's plans for carbon-neutral mobility with rail at its core

We welcome the EU's Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy and the "Fit for 55" package, in particular the proposed reform of the EU Emissions Trading System and the review of the Energy Taxation Directive, which will put a price on transport carbon emissions and will create a level playing field across all modes. We note in particular the European Commission's ambitious proposal that traffic on high-speed lines should double by 2030 and that "scheduled collective travel under 500 km" should be carbon-neutral.

We support the UK's and EU's political and financial commitment to build new long-distance high-speed lines. We welcome the UK government's ambition of a net zero railway network by 2050, and the commitment to support the growth and development of international services.

WE ASK...

1. Pursue a modal shift objective

Rail travel offers a solution to the climate crisis here and now, yet its modal share for passenger transport in the EU has been stagnating at less than 8% over the past five years. Nationally determined contributions attached to the Paris agreement should feature a modal shift objective towards rail.

Governments should incentivise businesses to take responsibility. The Dutch coalition of employers, Anders Reizen, can work as an example to all.

When on a certain route there is a rail alternative to more polluting modes available within 800km or and five hours journey time, regulatory or fiscal policy should send a strong signal and make rail the default option.

2. Actively stimulate rail market development

Since supply creates demand on international train connections, the EU and national governments should actively facilitate and stimulate rail market development. For instance, by implementing price or tax incentives to capture all transport modes' external costs; by setting up guidelines to enable passenger information about a journey's carbon footprint; by enforcing a green taxonomy of investments in the transport sector; by covering part of the long-term investment charges passed on to customers; by subsidising tickets.

We also call to use post-pandemic recovery stimulus packages to redirect public spending on road and aviation to invest in rail's modern fleets and infrastructure.

