PRESS RELEASE

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Railway sector comes together to mark official closure of European Year of Rail

Today, the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), together with the Alliance of Passenger Rail New Entrants in Europe (ALLRAIL), the European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services (CLECAT), the European Passengers' Federation (EPF), Erasmus by Train e.V. (EbT) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), came together to formally close the European Year of Rail, on the occasion of the European Railway Summit organised within the framework of the French Presidency of the EU Council.

2021 was an extremely challenging year for railways. The Covid-19 pandemic hit the sector hard, and its impact is still felt today with more than €50 billion of cumulated losses. Despite these difficulties, our associations have nonetheless supported the European Commission, with full commitment and passion, in the organisation of an important and varied calendar of European Year of Rail (EYR) activities, with particular focus given to the important role of raising awareness for our mode of transport.

Among many important initiatives, the Connecting Europe Express (CEE) was arguably the flagship endeavour of the EYR. It set off from Lisbon on 2 September for a 6-week journey across Europe arriving in Paris on 7 October. The train bridged three different gauge systems and brought together many actors in the rail community during its delivery and operation. More than that, railways reached out beyond Brussels to the broader public of national and regional policymakers, as well as to the wider European civil society. Raising awareness to inspire behavioral change has been the main objective of the activities organised during 2021.

Thanks to the European Year of Rail, European citizens are today more conscious of the sustainability credentials of railways. We believe that, reinforced by our commitment to the continuous improvement of the passenger experience, rail will become the backbone of transport, delivering Europe's goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions, reducing air pollution, and relieving congestion.

We now look forward to 2022, to build together upon the achievements of 2021 and to transform them into positive policy results on the very important dossiers currently debated by the EU institutions, from the revision of the TEN-T guidelines to the Fit for 55 legislative package and Action Plan to boost long-distance and cross border passenger rail services

By doing so we take another step closer to the achievement of the targets set by the EU Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility, including doubling high-speed rail by 2030 and tripling it by 2050, as well as doubling rail freight share by 2050.

We also take this opportunity to welcome 2022 as the European Year of Youth. We will continue to draw public attention to how railways contribute to the building of a truly European identity - something for which rail services such as DiscoverEU undoubtedly play an important role. By working together with European youth organisations, railways will show once more how the beauty of our continent is best explored when travelling by train and how the engagement and participation of European youth is essential for a greener, more sustainable and therefore also more just future, in which rail plays an important role.

For more information:	
Cliona Cunningham CER Head of Communications E: cliona.cunningham@cer.be M: +32 (0) 472 48 75 98	The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together around 70 railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 79% of the rail network length, 77% of the rail freight business and about 90% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policymakers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a competitive and sustainable transport system in Europe. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow @CER_railways on Twitter.
Nick Brooks ALLRAIL Secretary General E: nick.brooks@allrail.eu M: +49 (0) 151 5760 4043	ALLRAIL, the Alliance of Passenger Rail New Entrants in Europe, represents independent passenger rail companies – railway operators and ticket vendors. ALLRAIL promotes competition in the passenger rail market, aiming for an EU regulatory environment that encourages innovative & attractive rail services. Our members share the belief that faster market opening is the best way to help Europe achieve its ambitious climate change targets as set down in the EU Green Deal. For more information please go to: www.allrail.eu or follow @ALLRAIL_EU on Twitter.
Nicolette van der Jagt CLECAT nicolettevdjagt@clecat.org M: + 32 497484570	CLECAT is the European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services. CLECAT members, operating at EU and global level, utilise all modes of transport, including road, rail, air, maritime and inland waterways, as well as intermodal solutions. CLECAT has over 20 national organisations of European freight related service providers in its

	membership. For more information visit www.clecat.org @CLECAT_EU on Twitter.
EPF European Passengers' Federation, Kortrijksesteenweg 304, 9000 Gent, Belgium. Phone: +32 (0)9 233 97 29 E: secretariat@epf.eu	The European Passengers' Federation brings together the passengers' associations of over 20 European countries. It represents their interests at the European level both within the EU and to other international fora, such as the UN ECE. With a knowledgebase enriched by its participation in a range of multi-national research projects, EPF seeks to work constructively with transport operators and policy makers in promoting passenger-focused, sustainable mobility. For more information, visit www.epf.eu
ERASMUSBYTRAIN **Sara Coimbra Trigo** EbT Spokesperson E:sara.trigo@erasmusbytrain.eu	Erasmus by Train e.V. is a student-led initiative which aims to link the Erasmus & Interrail programmes for a more sustainable and united Europe. Since 2019 students from multiple European countries call the EU to provide free train tickets for Erasmus participants for travel to and from the exchange location! For more information, visit www. erasmusbytrain.eu or follow @ErasmusbyTrain on Twitter and Instagram.