

# MORNING MOBILITY

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## DRIVING THE DAY

**RAIL REPORT EXPOSES INDUSTRY CONCERNS:** The European Rail Supply Industry (UNIFE) this week unveiled its [legislative priorities](#) for the Parliament's next mandate ahead of the June election. The group, which represents some 650,000 workers, noted 3 percent compound annual growth in total market volume, driven largely by climate change, urbanization and social cohesion needs. The group noted there is room for further growth, particularly in freight transport. Rail currently accounts for just 11.5 percent of intra-EU freight transport.

**New Commission, same goals:** UNIFE's main benchmarks remain to double rail traffic by 2030 and even triple it by 2050, while boosting rail freight by 50 percent by 2030 and doubling it by 2050. To achieve these ambitions, the group says, the EU's production capacity for high-speed and freight rolling stock will require significant investments by 2050, a target that should be linked with the planned completion of the region's [TEN-T network](#) and emissions reduction targets.

**Competition from China:** Joining the automotive sector in bemoaning China's growing dominance, the rail group asserts that competition with Asia has become "extremely fierce" in the last few years, and is now "a cause for serious concern in third-country markets and even Europe." To level the playing field, UNIFE is calling on the bloc to mobilize "all existing legal instruments," including trade autonomous tools and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, the EU's tariff on carbon-intensive goods. Another tool in the EU's arsenal is the EU Global Gateway initiative, Europe's response to China's Belt and Road, which has helped fuel its global infrastructure expansion.

**PFAS again:** UNIFE calls on the Commission to tackle the challenge of toxic items like per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), but claims the rail sector will need more time to phase out the use of such "forever chemicals." The rail and auto industries are [pushing back](#) against a proposed 2027 ban on the chemicals, arguing it would hamstring battery production for electric vehicles.

The European Chemicals Agency [shared an update](#) this week on the proposed PFAS phase-out put forward by Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway last year. Talks on PFAS use in consumer mixtures (e.g. cosmetics) and the potential hazards of the chemicals will happen in March, with additional meetings in June and September. Find the full overview of the agenda [here](#).

**We want regulation:** "There is no climate neutrality without a strong European rail supply industry," UNIFE Director General Philippe Citroën [said](#) in a press note. "We need better regulation and a focus on upskilling and training the next gender-balanced generation of workers, who can help deliver a key piece of Europe's green transition." UNIFE's ideal governance includes the passage of an EU budget that would increase private financing for rail in the next Multiannual Financial Framework, as well as funding for new rolling stock.