Productivity is critical to the future of the rail industry, according to Philippe Citroën, former general director of Unife.

Citroën, who recently stepped down from his role after 42 years in the rail industry, told IRJ: “I really think there is a real change of mindset, people really think that rail is at the heart of the decarbonisation of the transport system.”

Citroën highlighted the importance of electrification in reducing carbon emissions, with high-speed trains particularly well-suited for this purpose. He praised the rapid progress made in countries such as France and China, where high-speed rail networks have been developed to support sustainable transport.

However, Citroën also acknowledged the challenges facing the rail industry, particularly in terms of funding and regulatory frameworks. He urged governments and stakeholders to work together to overcome these obstacles and support the transition to a more sustainable form of transport.

Citroën concluded by calling for continued international collaboration on rail projects and a focus on innovation and technology to drive the industry forward.

“Rail is at the heart of the decarbonisation of the transport system,” he said. “We must continue to work together to ensure that rail remains a vital part of the sustainable transport mix.”