



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ERRAC, the Technology Platform for the rail sector in Europe, disappointed by the message of the European Commission on the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking**

(Brussels, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020)

The European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC), rail's European Technology Platform (ETP), held its Plenary today digitally.

The ERRAC Plenary welcomed a presentation on the new ERRAC Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), which should be published later this month. The SRIA is a key document for the rail sector and the preparation of Shift2Rail's successor within Horizon Europe: "Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking".

Sadly, the keynote contributions from DG MOVE and DG Research and Innovation about Horizon Europe and the future Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking, have raised strong concerns from ERRAC's members. Current budgetary and timeline uncertainties could hamper the *Transformation of the European rail system*. ERRAC is calling for a total EU funding budget of €1.5 billion for Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking and delays should be avoided for the launch of the new rail partnership given that there will be no Shift2Rail funding calls next year. Furthermore, 2021 is a very important year for the rail community and enthusiasts alike as it has been designated the European Year of Rail. ERRAC members have also communicated to the European Commission that the future Master Plan of Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking must be based on the R&I priorities included in SRIA and supported by the rail sector.

**Alberto Parrondo, ERRAC Chairman**, emphasised " The lack of clarity on the final budget, as much as the risk of running an empty 2021 in terms of EU Rail Innovation, are very disappointing news. We need to urgently act in order to make rail more agile: a massive digitalization, a shift to automation, the arrival of autonomous train won't happen by themselves".

Additionally, the ERRAC Plenary served as an opportunity to learn more about Shift2Rail's activities and progress during 2020. Notably, TER4RAIL, a Shift2Rail project, presented its final results: <https://ter4rail.eu>.

**Note to editors:**

ERRAC contributes to the creation of a single European rail sector with world class skills and capabilities. ERRAC's principle mission is to make the European rail sector more competitive and sustainable in the sector's prime task of moving people and goods safely and efficiently around Europe.

ERRAC was set up in 2001 with the ambitious goal of creating a single European body with both the competence and capability to help evolve the European rail sector and make it more competitive, by fostering increased innovation and guiding research efforts at European level.

Within ERRAC, all major rail stakeholders are gathered including: railway undertakings, infrastructure managers, manufacturers, the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Railways, EU Member States, academics and users' groups.

ERRAC covers all forms of railway transport: from conventional, high speed and freight applications to urban and regional services.

Further information can be found on the ERRAC website – [www.errac.org](http://www.errac.org) or by contacting the secretariat – [brennan@uic.org](mailto:brennan@uic.org) or [nicolas.furio@unife.org](mailto:nicolas.furio@unife.org)

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