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# EU rail reform

## Deal on EU rules to improve regulation of rail sector

A deal between the European Parliament and Council on legislation revising EU rules on the regulation of the rail sector was approved yesterday by EU member states (1). Commenting on the deal on the recast of the first rail package, Green transport spokesperson **Michael Cramer** said:

*"This deal is an important step for sustainable, cheaper and safer rail transport for EU citizens and towards the realisation of a single European railway area. The deal will strengthen the role of independent regulators and ensure fairer access to rail networks, while taking steps to reducing noise pollution from rail at source and towards the implementation of a European rail safety system (ERTMS).*

*"Strong, independent national regulators are a necessary precondition for a healthy rail sector and it is an important achievement that this Green priority was included in the final deal. These regulators must now be fully up and running within 30 months of the legislation entering into force, with proper staff and resources to ensure their independence from rail operators and political influence. Any complaints must be processed within 6 weeks as a general rule (2). This will bring an end to the seemingly endless delays of complaint procedures. The national operators will also be coordinated through an EU network, which will help make clear if full EU-level regulation is needed in the future.*

*"The deal also included Green proposals aimed at dealing with some of the social and environmental problems of rail transport. Noise-dependant route prices and EU funding for retrofitting of older, noisy freight carriages would help ensure quieter railways. The deal also includes proposals to ensure railway operators have choice as regards their energy supplier in order to avoid discrimination through higher electricity prices for private competitors."*

(1) The deal was approved in COREPER and will now be formally endorsed by the European Parliament plenary and EU governments in Council.

(2) An extension to 16 weeks can be granted in exceptional circumstances.

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**Responsible MEPs**



Michael Cramer

Member

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