

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

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## Investments for competitive European railways EIM welcomes Council backing for Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail

On Friday, March 14, the Council of Ministers for Transport adopted their support for the European Commission's proposal for a Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail regulation. EIM welcomes the Council's backing of the proposed regulation and especially the strengthening of the proposal's aspects on membership to the Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail undertaking, which was a highlighted priority in the previously published EIM position paper on Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail.

The Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail initiative will support the development of better rail services in Europe. The aim is to double the capacity of the railway transport system, to reduce its life-cycle cost by 50% and to increase the reliability and punctuality of rail services by 50%. Ultimately, the initiative should increase the competitiveness of the European rail sector compared to other transport modes and compared to global competitors.

**Cooperation:** The Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail initiative is a part of the Horizon 2020 framework programme covering the Union's research and innovation policy for 2014-2020. One of the main aims of Horizon 2020 is to strengthen the European society and optimize the use of Union funding for innovation. The Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail Joint Undertaking will be founded by the Union, represented by the European Commission, and by the Members other than the Union, i.e. the railway stakeholders.

**Investment:** The activities of the Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail Joint Undertaking will be jointly funded by the Union and the members of the Joint Undertaking. Union funding amounts to EUR 450 mio. over the 2014-2020 budget period of the Horizon 2020 programme. By the Council position adopted last Friday, the Council has made the conditions for membership of the Joint Undertaking very clear and allows single legal entities as well as consortia to participate in the work of Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail by associate membership.

**EIM** welcomes the formal adoption of the regulation by the Council at the Transport Council in June. Some EIM members have already signed up to the Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail Joint Undertaking and EIM strongly believes in the great potential that the Shift<sup>2</sup>Rail initiative holds to develop a competitive European rail sector. Better cooperation on research and innovation in the sector is needed to strengthen the foundation of a future Single European Rail Area.

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EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following the liberalisation of the EU railway market. It also provides technical expertise to the appropriate European bodies such as the European Railway Agency. EIM's primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer orientated rail network in Europe.