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Women in Rail Award 2024: Shaping the Future of Rail

Placing people at the heart of the rail sector's evolution is key to shaping a sustainable future. Despite women comprising over 50% of rail passengers, they represent only about 20% of the rail workforce in the EU. To promote fairness, diversity, and equality, the [European Commission's Women in Transport platform](#), [Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking \(EU-Rail\)](#), the [European Union Agency for Railways \(ERA\)](#), the [Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies \(CER\)](#), the [European Rail Supply Industry Association \(UNIFE\)](#), and [Federation of European Train Drivers' Unions \(ALE\)](#) have united to launch the Women in Rail Award 2024, celebrating outstanding women in the industry.

Ensuring fairness, diversity and equality in the workplace is of paramount importance for building a more inclusive and dynamic culture in the rail sector. This is why the **Women in Rail Award 2024** will celebrate outstanding and inspiring women and their achievements in the rail sector.

Magda Kopczyńska, Director-General for Mobility and Transport, European Commission stated *“As someone deeply committed to fostering diversity and inclusivity in the transport sector, I am thrilled to announce the launch of the 2024 Women in Rail Award in collaboration with our esteemed co-organisers and our own 'Women in Transport - Platform for Change'. Recognising the profound impact of empowerment, leadership, research, and innovation, we are dedicated to bridging the gender gap. I eagerly await the applications from the inspiring women who are driving positive change and shaping the future of rail with their dedication and talent”.*

The award ceremony is planned to take place on Wednesday, 25 September 2024 in Berlin at the European Stand [at InnoTrans](#). Candidates can apply [here](#) to one of the three award categories **before 31 May 2024**.

What is the purpose of the award and why is it important?

With only 20% of women, the rail workforce is not gender balanced. To keep the sector competitive and resilient and to benefit from a broad talent pool in view of increasing staff shortages, we need to address this imbalance.

The award recognises the work of a woman, a group of people led by a woman, or a company/organisation having demonstrated achievements bringing the railway sector forward and/or overcoming obstacles for other women to thrive in the railway sector.

Who can apply?

Candidates responding to the following eligibility criteria can apply:

- Any organisation, company or individual, acting from the railway sector or from academia.
- The candidate must be based in the EU.
- The proposed project/initiative should be ongoing for at least 1 year.
- The candidate should contribute to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.



What are the achievements that we are awarding?

- **Women Empowerment Award**
This award recognises a European company in the railway sector that has gone the extra-mile in making gender-balance a top priority and fully integrated in its day-to-day decisions and DNA.
- **Leadership and Mentoring Award**
This award recognises a woman who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and mentoring through concrete actions helping women to make a positive impact in the European railway sector.
- **Research and Innovation Award**
This award recognises a woman that has demonstrated outstanding work through research and innovation contributing to enhance the attractiveness and/or competitiveness of rail.

How to apply for the 'Women in Rail Award 2024'?

Interested candidates can apply to one of the three award categories by **filling the [EU Survey form](#) before 31 May 2024**. The jury, composed of one representative from each of the six organisers will then assess the applications.

For further information, please contact Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking via communication@rail-research.europa.eu or +32 (0)2 541 83 74.

The objective of the [Women in Transport - EU Platform for change](#), launched in November 2017 by the European Commission, is to strengthen women's employment and equal opportunities for women and men in the transport sector thanks to the actions brought about by the Platform members. It also serves as a forum where stakeholders committed to improving female employment in transport discuss and exchange good practices. The platform also regularly cooperates with the transport industry to launch initiatives to increase the attractiveness of the sector. In 2022, it cooperated with the rail industry in the framework of the European Year of Rail to launch the first [Women in Rail award](#).

The **Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking (EU-RAIL)** is the European partnership for rail research and innovation under the Horizon Europe programme (2020-2027) and the successor to the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking. The partnership aims to accelerate research and development in innovative technologies and operational solutions. It supports EU policies and objectives for the rail sector, its competitiveness, and the European rail supply industry. EU-Rail accelerates the use of integrated, interoperable and standardised technological innovations necessary to support the Single European Railway Area.

The **European Union Agency for Railways** is the European authority in charge of railway safety, interoperability, and cross-border vehicle authorization, safety certification, and ERTMS trackside approval. ERA has been providing EU Member States and the European Commission with technical assistance in the development and implementation of the Single European Railway Area. This comprises enhancing technical interoperability and harmonising rules, promoting simplified access for customers, developing a common approach to safety and safety culture, advising on telematics applications and ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System), monitoring National Safety Authorities and Notified Bodies and facilitating the exchange of information between the railway actors in Europe.

The **Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)** brings together railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 78% of the rail network length, 81% of the rail freight business and about 94% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow @CER_railways on [X](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

UNIFE represents the **European Rail Supply Industry** in Brussels since 1992. The association gathers more than 100 of Europe's leading large and medium-sized rail supply companies active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems and related equipment. UNIFE also brings together 13 national rail industry associations of European countries. For more information, visit www.unife.org or follow UNIFE on [X](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

ALE, the **Federation of European Train Drivers' Unions**, is made up of 13 train drivers' unions from different member states, representing more than 45,000 workers, aiming for harmonisation in the EU railways, adequate training in our sector, high safety standards and the promotion of social dialogue with the different social partners in the European railway sector. For more information, please visit <http://www.ale-org.eu> or follow @Aledrivers on [X](#) or [LinkedIn](#).