



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

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The EP failed to give a clear signal against further rail liberalisation and fragmentation

Yesterday, Wednesday 26 February 2014, the European Parliament (EP) adopted in 1st reading the 4th Railway Package. Although weakening some strict rules of the Commission's proposal, the EP accepted in principle the market opening for domestic railway passenger services and further restrictions for integrated railway companies. The EP failed to give a clear signal that domestic rail passenger transport is a public service that cannot be subject to profit orientation. The ETF welcomes that the EP stopped those forces that wanted to interfere with the fundamental right to strike of workers.

Despite more than 4,000 railway workers from at least 17 different countries gathered on Tuesday in front of the European Parliament to raise their voice against further liberalisation and fragmentation in the sector, the EP did not reject the Commission's proposals to modify the PSO Regulation (public service obligations) and the so-called governance directive.

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) always supported the freedom of public authorities to choose the model they prefer in organising their public transport services, in line with protocol 26 of the TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the EU). **Sabine Trier, ETF Deputy General Secretary** comments: *"Although the possibility to directly award public service contracts for rail public passenger services has been formally reintroduced by the EP, it is subject to such severe conditions that in practice its use will be seriously undermined. It is deplorable that the EP did not support in a decisive way the public authorities' freedom of choice and did not reject the Commission's proposal. At least the MEPs recognised that market opening needs rules to protect workers against social dumping and employment uncertainties and they improved the provisions for social standards and transfer of personnel in competitive tendering."*

Additionally, the ETF does not understand the logic of the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who on the one hand acknowledge that driving and rest time of train drivers need to be checked to avoid fatigue and guarantee safety, while on the other hand they reject all amendments introducing a recording device on locomotives that makes such controls possible.

The ETF welcomes, however, the rejection of the amendment asking the Member States to interfere with the fundamental right to strike of workers by ensuring minimum services in case of strike of workers in public transport. *"The ETF supports the right of mobility of citizens but this must not be done to the detriment of workers' rights,"* concludes **Sabine Trier**.

The ETF will further monitor closely any developments in this dossier and do the utmost to put a halt to the further liberalisation and fragmentation of the railway sector.

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The ETF represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 243 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.