



**European Committee
of the Regions**

The President
COTER Chair

Brussels, *date of official registration*
PCab/DF/ij – D/1458 (2021)

Dear members,

In the context of the European Year of Rail 2021 (EYR), the European Commission is inviting local and regional politicians to welcome the [Connecting Europe Express](#) (CEE) during its journey across the EU. The CEE is one of the most visible initiatives of the EYR, and symbolises the close cooperation between the EU, national, and local and regional levels. It will criss-cross the EU in September and October this year, stopping in 23 Member States as well as three neighbouring countries.

As you will see from the detailed itinerary in annex, the train will depart from Lisbon on 2 September and make its final stop in Paris on 7 October. Following on from our joint letter in November last year announcing Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport's (DG MOVE) call for regional event proposals for the European Year of Rail 2021, we are now pleased to update you on the next steps in our cooperation with DG MOVE in this exciting and unprecedented European Year.

At the express request of Adina Vălean, Member of the European Commission responsible for Transport, it is our pleasure to invite all members of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) to take part in this exciting European project, particularly those members whose regions will be visited by the European train. Please contact the COTER commission secretariat (coter@cor.europa.eu) for further information and/or to express your interest in welcoming the train when it arrives at one of the stops in your town/region. The CoR as a whole will do its utmost to support members wishing to take part in the project, including with media support.

We are pleased to note that many CoR members have been actively involved in organising regional rail events over the course of the Year. More than 70 proposals were submitted at the local and regional level, which have helped ensure genuine depth and breadth to the range of EYR discussions and exchanges. Participation in the CEE project would be another valuable opportunity to demonstrate the local and regional commitment to the EYR and its objectives.

We therefore encourage as many members as possible to take part in this unique opportunity, as a reflection of the role of the CoR's members and of local and regional authorities across the EU in supporting the sustainable mobility transition and promoting the economic, social and territorial cohesion of our territories. We look forward to seeing you *en route!*

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

(signed)

Apostolos Tzitzikostas
President
European Committee of the Regions

Isabelle Boudineau
Chair
Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy

