

Title: **Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure Towards Sustainability and Justice: The European Rail Network at the Centre**

Tabled by: Partido Ecologista Os Verdes

- **Consolidated text with CAS accepted amendments** - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure](#)
- Spreadsheet amendments **7 December** - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure](#)
- Spreadsheet amendments **6 December** - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure](#)
- R3 Examples Background Text - [Airport Expansions and Night Flights](#) - 5 Dec (15h15)
- Spreadsheet amendments **5 December** (morning) - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure](#)
- Spreadsheet amendments **28 November** - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure](#)
- Overview spreadsheet amendments 20 November - [Shifting Europe's Transport Infrastructure Towards Sustainability and Justice: The European Rail Network at the Centre](#)

1 Gathered in Lisbon, a city with little to no train connection to the rest of
2 Europe, we Greens are acutely aware of the urgent need to place rail transport
3 at the centre of Europe's mobility strategy. The Portuguese example demonstrates
4 the urgency of this need. Since the 1990s, significant portions of the country's
5 rail network have been de-activated, while roads and highways have been
6 massively expanded. Lisbon has lost
7 its direct train connection to Madrid and the broader European network.

Across Europe, there are many similar stories. Public transport and rail networks have been dismantled and left to decay due to underinvestment and privatisation. Night trains have been discontinued or left without improvements, reducing alternatives to short-haul flights.

Meanwhile, airports and roads keep expanding. Projects such as the expansion of Barcelona and Heathrow airports, the port of Valencia, and new motorways in Belgium contradict the European Green Deal, the Biodiversity Strategy, and the EU's climate commitments. Europe's infrastructure model still depends excessively on cars and planes, while trains – the most reliable, sustainable, and socially equitable mode of transport – remain underfunded and underdeveloped, leading to decreased quality and safety. According to a 2023 Greenpeace report, Europe's rail network shrunk by 6.5% over the past 30 years, while motorways grew by over 60%.

The Greens call for a radical shift in European infrastructure policy, placing rail at the heart of European mobility and the green transition.

Shifting EU Transport Policy to a Sustainable Model

Europe's current transport model is unsustainable, unjust, and increasingly incompatible with climate goals. The mass use of cars, proliferation of flights, and the high cost of train journeys favour the wealthiest and exclude peripheral areas, exacerbating mobility poverty. At the same time, large destructive infrastructure projects are further increasing emissions, destroying habitats, and undermining the goal of climate neutrality by 2050, while jeopardising energy sovereignty, geopolitical autonomy, and security .

Increased aviation and road traffic produce high greenhouse gas emissions, as well as noise and air pollution, that harm public health. Despite this, subsidies are still flowing disproportionately toward aviation, with kerosene still tax-free and touristification rising. Road traffic represents as much as 20% of Europe's total emissions, but governments insist on expanding motorways, inducing further demand, while online shopping and last-mile logistics add even further pressure.

Europe's infrastructure model remains based on the outdated belief that massive road and port expansion drives economic growth. Human- and nature centred means

of transportation are overlooked and disregarded. The current model places disproportionate pressure on cities and fragile ecosystems, particularly in peripheral regions, where access to mobility, economic opportunities and social services remains limited. Sustainable mobility should be seen as a meta-right, necessary to exercise other rights, not an economic privilege.

If Europe continues this path, it will remain geopolitically fragile, economically inefficient and socially unequal. It will be impossible to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, mitigate climate change and protect life on Earth. A fundamental shift toward sustainable transport centred on rail is essential to protect the planet, ensure energy independence, and guarantee fair mobility for all citizens.

Demands

Gathered in Lisbon the European Greens demand:

- A massive European investment plan in the rail network, including high-speed lines, cross-border connections, and the renaissance of night trains connecting European cities
- Affordable train prices that make rail competitive with cars and planes
- An end to unfair aviation subsidies
- An end to fiscal exemptions for flight tickets, and the regulation of low-cost flights
- An immediate moratorium on airport and port expansions in Europe
- The immediate end to night flights
- Prioritisation of rail freight and local distribution hubs instead of endless last-mile delivery vans

The European Greens propose to:

- 64 – Build a European rail system that guarantees affordable mobility, protects
65 biodiversity, and reduces Europe's dependence on fossil fuels
- 66 – Learn from countries that have efficient and innovative public transport
67 systems, like Luxembourg, Japan, South Korea and Switzerland
- 68 – Create a single, integrated train booking system for travel across all Europe,
69 following the model of a single-ticket system currently used in European
70 countries
- 71 – Build rail lines in ways that minimise environmental damage, e.g. through
72 bridges and tunnels, and ensure accessibility and sufficient space for people
73 with disabilities and visual impairments
- 74 – Make rail the backbone of Europe's transport system, both for people and
75 freight, replacing short-haul flights and reducing car dependency
- 76 - Create a EU-funded pool of rolling stock (including for night trains)
77 available for leasing by undertakings

Background

it is proposed to add the examples in this section

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Yes

Supporters

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