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## **Sustainable mobility going backwards with the diminution of cross-border trains between France and Spain**

Since 2013, Spanish public rail operator Renfe and French SNCF have been operating services together between France and Spain through Catalonia. However, on 11 December 2022, this cooperation ended and from now on **only two trains a day in each direction will cross the border through the Perthus Tunnel.**

The Barcelona-Lyon and Madrid-Marseille connections, operated by Renfe, will not run anymore. The only remaining services in the Mediterranean corridor are the Paris-Barcelona connection, operated by SNCF alone. The services had all been suspended during Covid-19 but had progressively been reinstated, with the exception of the Barcelona-Toulouse connection, which was definitively abandoned.

One of the reasons for the suspension of these lines is the difficulty for operators to be allowed access to the French rail infrastructure, as administrative obstacles have been imposed. **The services that will be maintained are in any case insufficient** to provide a convenient and competitive low-carbon alternative to short and medium haul flights or private cars that are dominant in cross-border mobility.

The new high speed Perthus Tunnel link between France and Spain amounted to a massive public and European investment of 3500 million € but is barely used today. Operators should take advantage of this infrastructure to offer **reliable rail services** connecting neighbourhood regions and its main cities (Barcelona, Toulouse, Perpignan, Figueres, Girona, Montpellier).

**Night trains** between Paris and Barcelona were also suspended in 2013 when the high speed line was open despite being a **sustainable alternative** to planes for long-distance trips. On the Atlantic corridor, the Paris-Madrid night connection was suspended as well and there are currently no direct trains connecting the two capitals. The night train between Lisbon and Hendaye, at the French border, was also suspended during the pandemic and the service has not been recovered, despite the call of Comboios de Portugal to re-activate the connection.

French and Spanish Civil Society Organizations are calling on national governments and rail operators of both countries to maintain the existing services, reinstate the Barcelona-Toulouse services, reopen the Paris-Barcelona, Paris-Madrid and Lisbon-Hendaye night trains and increase cross-borders regional services between Perpignan and Figueres. **Offering sufficient cross-border rail connections is essential to give citizens the option to choose a greener mobility in the fight against climate change and to ensure economic activity.**

## Signatories:



The Iberian Railway Alliance was created to influence the rail policies of Spain and Portugal, with the aim to have rail play a central role in the mobility of both countries. To this end, the Alliance proposes concrete operations in the short-medium term; and system and planning in the medium-long term. <https://alianzaferrocarril.org/>



Europe on Rail is a European initiative led by civil society organisations to reduce carbon emissions derived from international mobility. Through research work and by bringing together actors of the railway sector, the aim is to foster ambitious policies for a train revival in Europe. [www.europeonrail.eu](http://www.europeonrail.eu)



eco-union

eco-union is a think & do tank based in Barcelona that aims to promote the climate transition towards sustainability in Europe and the Mediterranean region. We work with governments, companies, and international institutions to develop and implement public policies and accelerate the energy transition, sustainable mobility, green and blue economy, among other sustainable development issues. [www.ecounion.eu](http://www.ecounion.eu)



The "National Federation of Transport Users' Associations" (FNAUT) advises and defends the users of all modes of transport and represents them before the public authorities and transport companies. As a general interest pressure group, it strives to influence transport and land use policy. FNAUT Occitanie Pyrénées Méditerranée represents the voice of users throughout the region to local authorities, transport operators and through its local associations. <https://www.fnaut.fr>



Promoció del Transport Públic (PTP) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation and the only association dedicated exclusively to the defence of collective public transport in Spain. For more than 25 years we have been studying and defending collective public transport, as well as rail transport of goods, thinking only in the common interest, under the principles of social equity and environmental protection. <https://transportpublic.org/es/>



Réseau Action Climat – France is an association focused on climate change. It is the French representative of Climate Action Network International (CAN-I), a global network of more than 1,100 NGOs around the world. A federation of national and local associations, it fights the causes of climate change, from the local to the international level, and aims to encourage governments and citizens to take action to limit the impact of human activities on the climate. <https://reseauactionclimat.org>