

Put the night trains back on track

for climate-friendly transports



**A case study on the potential
of the French “Intercités de nuit”**

by the association « Oui au train de nuit »

2017

--- Summary ---

The **climate challenge** of this century encourages to rethink our mobility. Planes and individual cars, very energy-consuming, are used for a great portion of very-long-distance travels (more than 750 km). In order to progress towards modal shift to more ecological modes, massive investments for rail have been made since the 2000's. They have been mostly concentrated on High-Speed-Lines (LGV, in French) projects.

But in spite of these huge investments, these projects did not reduce of the emissions of aviation, which keep growing in France. What's more, it is becoming very complicated to finance the expansion of the LGV network, as the most relevant lines – between metropolises separated by 400 to 750 km – have already been built. And nowadays passengers tend to prefer cheaper tickets to faster journeys.

Besides, an other rail solution for very long distances, the InterCity Night train (ICN) sees its dismantling accelerated in 2016-2017. As for the classical railway network and the daytime Intercity trains (ICJ for “InterCités de Jour”), they have suffered underinvestment during all these years.

Neglected for the last decades, the ICN offer now has problems of visibility, unattractive timetables, and too frequent delays and cancellations: it seems that its use has been – willingly or not – discouraged. SNCF and the French State have kept repeating **contradictory justifications around the “alleged deficit” and “empty” night trains, but they have high occupancy rates**. The ICN has in fact quite many advantages :

- ✓ **Saving time:** To travel more than 750 km and to arrive in the morning, the ICN offers a very useful and appreciated “night jump”. The day train would force to leave on the day before, and to pay for accommodation. The ICN therefore saves half a day and leaves the whole day on destination: “the ICN allows to travel 1000 km in one hour: ½ h to fall asleep, and ½ h to wake up”.
- ✓ **A multi-directional network to serve the regions:** As high-speed trains have to make few stop-overs, they do not benefit much to small cities. What's more, the LGV network forgets transverse relations, which do not pass through Paris. Night trains are therefore necessary to irrigate medium-sized cities and to connect directly regions that are far from one another.
- ✓ **To connect South of France to the rest of the country:** Many Southern cities are located more than 750 km away from Paris, which is too long for high-speed lines to be relevant. Furthermore, Paris being rather north than at the centre of France, it is not a good transport hub for southern regions: from the latter, to go through Paris to reach the East, West or Centre increases distances, costs and duration of travel. An expensive TGV journey of more than 4 or even 6 hours is not attractive. Consequently, the decline of Intercity trains makes a large part of France being considered almost inaccessible by train from the South.
- ✓ **A sober mode in terms of public funding:** beyond the pretext of the “so-called deficit”, the ICN remains one of the transportation modes which is closest to self-financing. Replacing these trains with planes or LGV projects would be much more expensive for the taxpayer and for the traveller.
- ✓ **A climate-friendly mode:** the night train not only consumes little energy, but it uses the existing infrastructure and thus avoids creating new artificial surfaces. It fosters modal shift from air to rail, in a much cheaper way than LGV projects do, with a wider scope, while being much faster to implement.
- ✓ **Travel on a European scale:** relevant for distances from 550 km up to 1500 km, the ICN can serve regions of the South and also international connections. Austria, Russia, Finland and Sweden are already betting on the night train. France can also play a key role in Western Europe for modal shift from planes to ICN.

“We are at the verge of a renaissance for night trains”, so let's not lose time. Climate change doesn't wait...

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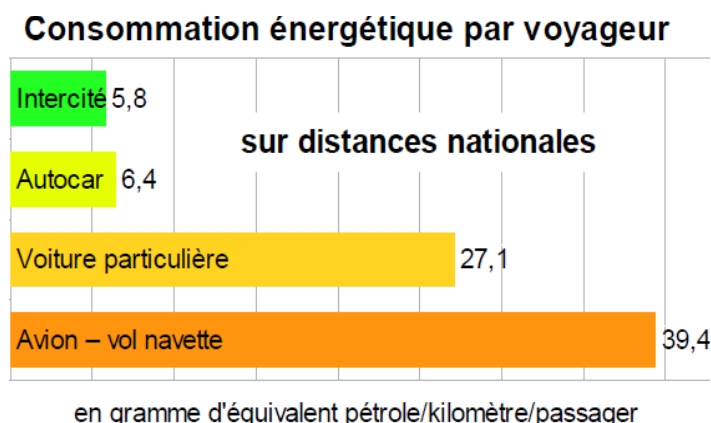
1/ Night trains, between dismantling and revival for climate

The number of overnight lines has been in fast decay since the 2000's. In 2016, the State got even more disengaged. Regions were forced to take over – in exchange for subsidies – most of the daytime Intercity lines (ICJ for "InterCités de Jour")¹. As for overnight lines, almost all have been abandoned, despite protests of passengers and elected representatives². Out of 8 "InterCités de Nuit" (ICN) lines existing in 2016, 5 were closed down, and another one could be closed in December 2017.

However, their redeployment is possible: mobilization of local and regional elected officials, of railwaymen and passengers has permitted the return of the train from Paris to Portbou³. Actually, all the reasons are there for night trains... to start up again!

Night trains passengers are in the first line to note that, despite the deteriorated service, night trains remain very appreciated and much used where they still exist. Declarations of SNCF and the French State appear like fallacious pretexts. Therefore, "Oui au train de nuit", backed by about thirty associations, has investigated to discover an impressive sum of service dysfunctions, the thoughtlessness of pretexts around the "so-called deficit" and the occupancy rate, and above all the great underexploited potential of ICN to fight against climate change. Not having access to some key figures, we have expressed a series of questions. These are to be answered by a parliamentary information mission and/or by services of the State. To shed light on this will enable to rehabilitate ICN as a long-distance energy-saving mode necessary in the fight against climate change and for ecological transition in transports.

Which long-distance transports to fight against climate change?



Source : ADEME, *Chiffres clés Air, Climat, Énergie*, 2013 (p. 67)

The French State has set goals to engage the energy transition: "to reduce final energy consumption 50 % by 2050"⁴, "dividing by four or five greenhouse gases emissions"⁵. Yet the transport sector is "the biggest contributor" to these emissions (30% of national total) and it uses 32% of total energy⁶. The Paris Climate agreements also invite to stop using fossil fuels⁷.

If we do not change our travel habits, transports alone will eat up the majority of our energy quota and will exceed our emission goals.

1 Lionel Steinmann, [La révolution discrète des trains Intercités](#), *Les Echos*, December 26th 2016

Florence Guernalec, « [TET : l'exécutif vise une réduction drastique du déficit d'exploitation](#) », *Mobilicités*, January 12th 2017 ;

Transport Secretary of State, « [Un nouvel avenir pour les Trains d'Équilibre du Territoire](#) », January 12th 2017

2 « [19 élus défendent le train de nuit](#) », September 16th 2016 ;

Julien Estrangin, « [Train de nuit: la Région met un coup de pression](#) » *Le Dauphiné*, October 1st 2016 ;

3 [Le train de nuit Paris / Cerbère circulera à nouveau en juillet](#), *Midi Libre*, April 27th 2017 ;

AFP, [Perpignan : des usagers fêtent le retour du train de nuit](#), *Midi Libre*, July 7th 2017

4 See art. 1.III.2° of the law [Loi de Transition Énergétique](#)

5 See art. 2 of the law [Loi de Programmation fixant les Orientations de la Politique Énergétique \(POPE\)](#), n° 2005-781 of July 13th 2005

6 CGDD, Environment Ministry, [Chiffres clés du Transport](#), 2016 (page 35-36 et page 11) ; ADEME, [Chiffres clés Air, Climat, Énergie](#), 2014 (pages 64 and 67).

7 Florentin Collomp, [Le Royaume-Uni bannit à son tour les véhicules à essence et diesel d'ici à 2040](#), *Le Figaro*, July 26th 2017

Falila Gbadamassi, [Énergies fossiles: le début de la fin?](#), *Geopolis-FTV*, May 2nd 2017

Maxime Combe, [Accord de Paris : arrêtons de pomper et de creuser !](#), *dd magazine*, October 6th 2016

Train is one of the most energetically efficient transport modes⁸. Consistent with that, the “Grenelle 1st” law set that “regarding infrastructures, priority will be given to rail investments versus road or airport projects”⁹; and the law for energy transition encourages “modal shift from individual car to land public transportation”¹⁰.

Up to now, efforts about very long distances have been concentrated on building new High-Speed Lines (LGV). This “unique solution” turned out to be very expensive. It also tends to exclude medium-sized cities and to “forget” transverse connections. Besides, between 750 km and 1000 km, the LGV are less relevant, whereas ICN are in their optimal range of action. Note also that most travellers now prefer cheaper transports to fast journeys (see Annex).

The Intercity (IC) solutions therefore need to be promoted. Among them, the ICN have a key role to play for very long distances. The latter have been neglected for decades (see Section 2). Analysing the pretexts used to dismantle ICN trains enables to expose an important modal shift potential, quickly accessible and cheap (Section 3). Properly developed in the framework of an ecological transition in transports (Section 4), the ICN could be relaunched to serve medium cities, transverse connections and very long distance national and international routes (Section 5).

2/ State of play: night trains neglected for decades

2.1/ Hidden “Serious dysfunctions”

The use of night train is discouraged: lack of advertisement, increased journey times¹¹, unattractive timetables, suppressions of some stop-overs, poor maintenance, trains arriving with missing carriages, withdrawal of reclining seats and bar carriages and on some lines, too frequent delays and cancellations, the list is quite long... The deputy Joël Giraud questioned the Environment Minister about the night train Paris-Briançon: “We thank the government for maintaining it, but it knows serious dysfunctions. Since the beginning of the year, it has indeed been cancelled or even worse, it did not reach its destination about a hundred times. That is much!”

Ms Ségolène Royal [The Environment Minister at that time] explains the frequent cancellation of night trains in case of disruptions: “the operation of night trains is more complex, and hence more fragile than that of the day trains. It was decided from the beginning of the the agreement for the operation of TET [Trains d’Équilibre du Territoire, that is to say Intercity trains] that night trains would not run during strikes”¹²

These important disruptions also exist on other lines: in 2017, out of 223 scheduled Paris-Tarbes-Irun night trains, **a third were cancelled or did not reach the final destination**. Only 127 did arrive with less than 15 minutes delay (57%)¹³. This means **43% delayed or cancelled trains**.

As for the Consumer association “UFC-Que Choisir”, it reports the **hidden cancellations**: “Regarding cancellations, a train cancelled on the day before within 16pm does not appear in statistics.”¹⁴ The reality of bad conditions of these lines is thereby concealed in statistics published by SNCF¹⁵.

2.2/ Night trains which do not appear on reservation platforms

An even more serious problem is that **for many night trains, booking often opens very late** (often 2 weeks before departure, instead of 3 months)¹⁶. However, passengers who travel on 800 km use to book their tickets very early. Then only the TGV and the bus are suggested. The time slot to buy tickets is even narrower because ticket sales sometimes closes several hours before departure¹⁷. Also note that some train stations happen to “disappear”¹⁸. Compared to this, planes can often be booked 10 months ahead. And in

8 On a simple journey of 793 km (Pau-Paris), the SNCF comparative tool indicates quite different figures than those of ADEME. But they go in the same direction: the equivalent petrol consumption would be of 5.39 kg by train, 14.51 kg by coach, 42.82 kg by car and 60.03 kg by plane (regional connection). See T. Longué, « [Pau : une manifestation pour le maintien de la Palombe bleue](#) », *Sud Ouest*, November 26th 2016

9 See art. 12.I of the law [Grenelle 1](#)

10 See articles 36 and 40 of the [Loi de Transition Énergétique](#)

11 The Paris-Irun on its direct path used to travel 800km. Since 2012, it makes a detour by Toulouse, which implies more than 1000km of travel. Similarly, from 2014 on, the Strasbourg-Nice/Portbou made a detour of more than 200km which meant arriving in Strasbourg 80min later, at 9:20 instead of 7:59. See FNAUT, « [Trains de nuit : une offre indispensable](#) », *FNAUT-info*, n°234, May 2015

12 Note that strikes are not the main reason for cancelling ICN. See: Assemblée Nationale, [Projet de loi de finances pour 2017](#), Hearing of November 2nd 2016

13 [Circulation de l’intercités de nuit la palombe bleue Paris-Tarbes-Irun en 2017](#), by « oui au train de nuit ».

14 The study conducted on TER should be reproduced about Intercity trains: Sylvie Gittus, « [Trains régionaux : géographie d’une crise](#) », *Le Monde*, May 18th 2016

15 See [monthly punctuality of Intercity trains](#), data.sncf.fr

16 B. Aubin, « [SNCF : comment tuer les Intercités ?](#) », *Bernard Aubin* (blog), March 27th 2012 ;

B. Aubin, [L’avenir des trains de nuit passera-t-il par la Russie ?](#), *idem*, February 5th 2015

17 [Au guichet SNCF de Tarbes « vous ne pouvez pas acheter le billet, car le train est déjà parti de Bayonne »](#)

18 The Paris-Portbou stops in Lézignan-Corbières, but this station was often invisible on reservation platforms in 2016

Central Europe, ICN tickets can be bought 4 months ahead concerning Trenitalia, and 6 months ahead for the Austrian company ÖBB!

M. Sean Clairin, in charge of Intercity trains in the Center-South, explains the situation: "this is not done on purpose. We do not always have timetables in advance. It is hard to forecast during the night, because there are maintenance works on the tracks."¹⁹ Night trains have been running since the 19th century. But, in the 21st century, SNCF Réseau [The French railway infrastructure manager] is not able to secure night train paths 2 months ahead in case of maintenance works: "Intercity trains are particularly impacted by the accumulated delay in renovation of the classical railway network due to priority investments in new High-Speed Lines. Their use is thereby durably handicapped by speed limitations imposed by track disrepair and by the maintenance works planned to catch up with this maintenance delay. The "train paths crisis" which has been observed since 2010 has severely impacted [...] the operation of night trains."²⁰

If SNCF wanted to prevent the night connections with "fragile train paths" from being excessively disadvantaged, it should not make this offer invisible, but should rather make it appear on its reservation platform, with a kind of warning which could be "not yet available for booking", "possibly affected by maintenance works", or "could be cancelled".

To be studied:

Question: Is SNCF Réseau really doing its best for this? To question SNCF Réseau about the possibilities to avoid programming ICN on "fragile train paths"? Or at least to confirm paths 1 or 2 months ahead, rather than only 15 days before departure? Which possibilities to sell ICN tickets 6 months ahead?

To question SNCF Mobilités on the possibilities to improve visibility of the ICN? (even those cancelled or with timetables still to be defined).

2.3/ "To make passengers switch to TGV" even if it is not suitable



Demonstration in pyjama at departure of the ICN in Tarbes on February, 17th 2017: "The South needs daily night trains to Strasbourg, Geneva, Ventimiglia, Paris, Lille..."

Since the 2000's, the number of overnight lines has been progressively reduced. The objective was to "convince" passengers to "prefer" the TGV, even if the latter offers poor services to medium-sized cities and transverse connections. Explanation by the Court of Audit: "as and when the high-speed network develops, the company reduced step by step the traffic on the classical railway lines, in order to have customers shift to TGV."²¹ This shows that the French State and SNCF oppose TGV and ICN: they are deemed incompatible. However, China proposes high-speed trains between Beijing and Shanghai, and

¹⁹ Clara Griot, Fériel Naoura, [Voie de disparition](#), Le Quatre heures, August 1st 2017

²⁰ Cour des comptes, [Les trains Intercités : sortir de l'indécision](#), February 2015, p. 231-232

²¹ Cour des comptes, [Les trains Intercités : sortir de l'indécision](#), February 2015, p. 234

complete the daytime offer with 3 different ICN connections²²

The TGV has been considered “magic”, and able to serve even regions where it does not go. Or the country's geography seen from Paris is quite vague: the Court of Audit deplores in 2014 that “the State has requested the SNCF to maintain the [night] lines Hendaye-Nice and Hendaye-Geneva, despite the opening of the Rhin-Rhône LGV”²³ (which is nonsense if one looks at a map). But the dismantling of the ICN Geneva-Irun, Nice-Irun and Paris-Luchon²⁴ eventually took place in 2013-2014. Then in 2016 the four-branch ICN connecting Strasbourg/Luxembourg to Nice/Portbou was also removed. However no TGV or ICJ are replacing these connections.

For tourism in mountainous or rural areas, the TGV journey often needs to be competed by one or several changes. Thus a journey of more than 750 km often lasts more than 4 hours, or even more than 7 hours for transverse connections. Tourists do not choose destinations implying 7 or 8 hours spent in day trains. If the ICN is missing, they tend to switch to flying to much farther destinations abroad. This means a loss for local tourism and for the climate.

To be studied: the evolution of air traffic in territories whose night trains have been withdrawn. And more generally to study the modal shifts caused by dismantled ICN.

In 2016, the State issued a call for tenders (“AMI for Appel à Manifestation d'Intérêt”) for private railway operators to take over the night train lines. Transdev – one of the potential candidates – is not interested and replied that many informations in this call were false or incomplete; that network access conditions, traffic data and current earnings were not provided; and that the Transport Ministry did not ensure neither transfer of employees, neither provision of rolling stock or accuracy of electrification data²⁵. Thus **the State has not seemed to wish to maintain ICN**, be they run by SNCF or by other actors.

2.4/ At the borders: absurd connections

One of the missions of night trains is to connect with neighbouring countries. But nowadays, connections at borders are “nonsensical” or sometimes non-existent. Timetables are not specified in the contract between the State and SNCF to run Intercity trains. The choice to remove connection possibilities with ICN is thus the sole responsibility of SNCF²⁶.

What's more, many Intercity and regional trains now terminate just before the borders. Yet it is important that trains reach at least the first train station of the neighbouring country, to ensure connections and to have more potential passengers. Thus, Intercity and regional trains should run until Port-Bou instead of Cerbère²⁷, Irun instead of Hendaye²⁸, and Ventimiglia instead of Nice²⁹.



The lack of cooperation and the service discontinuity between borderer train stations separated by only few kilometres create barriers between neighbouring European regions and goes against European integration³⁰. This service discontinuity encourages shift to TGV which are then the only trains properly crossing borders³¹. Note that the European parliament is already aware of these discontinuities of rail infrastructure at borders³².

To be studied: At Port Bou 2 Spanish trains are leaving one minute before arrival of the rare French trains to cross the border. Similar nonsensical connections were observed in Narbonne. Has the TGV line

22 Mark Smith, [Beijing to Shanghai by sleeper train: Video guide](#), Seat61, September 1st 2014

23 Cour des comptes, [Trains d'Equilibre du Territoire](#), 2014, page 44.

24 An (uncomplete) list of already closed lines is available on: « [Intercités de nuit](#) », [wikiwand](#)

25 Jean-Michel Gradt, « [Trains de nuit : pourquoi Transdev n'est pas intéressé](#) », *Les Echos*, April 4th 2016 ;

Lionel Steinmann, « [Transdev se désengage des trains franco-italiens Thello](#) », *Les Echos*, June 28th 2016

26 In 2011 the Paris-Irun used to arrive at 7:36 and offered connections with trains to Barcelona (8:05), Madrid (8:15) and La Coruna (8:45). Bus since it was rerouted by Toulouse, it arrived in Irun at 8:55. Thus Renfe decided to delay the train to La Coruna to 9:15... but then SNCF delayed the arrival time even more... to 9:25, which makes connection impossible for 10 minutes. In Summer 2014, the terminus was moved to Hendaye and the train did not proceed further, eliminating all connection possibilities. For more informations, see: Juan-Carlos DÍEZ, [Le train de nuit La Palombe Bleue \(Paris-Tarbes-Hendaye-Irún\), un train d'avenir à maintenir](#), December 2016

27 See Annex I of the associative propositions, [Des transports doux pour l'Occitanie](#), [ouiautraindenuit.wordpress.com](#), June 2016

28 Olivier Razemon, [Entre Hendaye \(France\) et Irun \(Espagne\), les voitures passent. Les trains s'arrêtent](#), *Blog - Le Monde*, April 27th 2014

29 Last overnight connections from Paris, Strasbourg or Reims terminated (or terminate) at Nice and do no longer proceed to Ventimiglia.

30 PTP-Barcelona, [Nous voulons que les trains entre Portbou et Cerbère puissent rentrer à la maison avec des passagers !](#), April 7th 2017

On the France-Belgium connection: Kris de Decker, « [La grande vitesse est en train de tuer le réseau ferroviaire européen](#) », *Carfree*, December 19th 2013

31 F. P., [Train Portbou-Cerbère : la correspondance existe encore, sauf sur les sites de réservation](#), *L'indépendant*, July 7th 2017

32 Michael Cramer, [Mind the Gap ! 15 railway projects for a better connected Europe](#), The Greens in the European Parliament, Nov. 2015

Perpignan-Figueras, still facing serious financial problems³³, been helped by establishing absurd connection times on the parallel classical line?³⁴

In Germany, Deutsche Bahn (DB) have favoured TGV rather than less expensive trains by paying sellers at the ticket desks and by biasing the website. The latter made some connections using regional trains invisible. Following the scandal, it was forbidden to pay sellers more to sell these trains, and buttons were introduced on DB's website: to uncheck "prefer fast connections" allows to discover journeys which are a bit longer but much cheaper. It is now also possible to select the preferred transport modes (regional trains, daytime Intercity, ICN, TGV, buses, and so on). Other problem of the SNCF ticketing system: it allows only 2 train changes on internet (and 5 changes at the ticket desks), which makes some journeys using many regional trains invisible. Note that the website ter-sncf.com allows more changes, so the change is possible... French elected officials should therefore ask SNCF to correct these problems and to introduce the same options as on DB's website.

2.5/ A lack of rolling stock for regular lines and "special trains"

In order to save Alstom, the French State forced SNCF to buy too many TGV trains³⁵, but it has not ordered new sleeper trains since the 1980's. As a consequence, SNCF has abandoned the "Corail" rolling stock with reclining seats and berths, also on *special trains*³⁶. Yet the latter are very important, especially for pilgrims visiting the city of Lourdes, second French town for hotels. Even the ambulance carriages have been left behind, although TGV trains are not suitable for the disabled³⁷. Pilgrimage organizers in Belgium explain that "on the French network, priority is given to TGVs, while "ordinary" trains have to wait sometimes long minutes to let them pass before. Thereby, last night train travels [Namur-Lourdes] have lasted between 20 and 22 hours!"³⁸... that is to say an average speed of 50 km/h, whereas ICN trains can go at 160 km/h.

Today there is not even enough rolling stock for regular ICN lines, as well as for seasonal peak periods³⁹. This is one of the causes of line closures.

2.6/ Underinvestment in the classical railway network

Besides the dismantling of ICN, it is all the classical railway network which has lacked investments during the decades of the "all High-Speed doctrine".⁴⁰ In 2014, SNCF Réseau dedicated 4,2 billion euros to new LGV lines, but only 210 millions to upkeep the existing network. The transport minister, Ms Elisabeth Borne describes the situation: "on more than 5300 km of tracks trains are going at lowered speeds because we haven't been able to maintain satisfyingly our networks."⁴¹ It represents 15% of the total railway length, and this deterioration eventually leads to closures of some lines, like the ICN Paris-Luchon in 2014⁴². The decrepit state of tracks also caused the serious rail incidents of Brétigny⁴³ – 7 dead – and Denguin⁴⁴ – 35 injured –, although the train is one of the safest transport modes⁴⁵. In front of the infatuation still arousing from LGV projects, the State and SNCF have been trying for several years to negotiate the turn to put priority back on renovating the existing classical network⁴⁶.

33 Lionel Steinmann, [Le besoin de réduire les pertes menace les lignes Paris-Barcelone et Paris-Genève](#), Les Echos, July 25th 2017

34 See Annex of [Des transports doux pour l'Occitanie](#), « Oui au train de nuit », July 9th 2016

35 See the last episode: Franck Bouaziz, « [Alstom : l'Etat commande, la SNCF grince](#) », *Libération*, February 6th 2017 ; Marc Fressoz, « [TGV Paris-Milan : la SNCF passera finalement par un appel d'offres](#) », *MobiliCités*, February 23rd 2017

36 The last special SNCF train ran on October 12th 2017, see [Le Train, n° 320](#), December 2014, p. 22

37 "SNCF is removing carriages which allowed the sick to lie down while travelling. They dated back to World War II and are too old but they will not be replaced because of profitability matters. Thus we will probably need special buses with berths."

Pascal Tissier, « [L'avant-dernier train de nuit](#) », *jurapastoral.ch*, May 2014

38 Pèlerinages Namurois, « [Pèlerinage à Lourdes en TGV](#) », Vie du diocèse de Namur, March 20th 2017 ;

Joëlle Meert, « [Le dernier train de nuit à destination de Lourdes](#) », RTBF, July 16th 2016

39 [Hautes-Alpes : les parlementaires LR et LREM mettent la pression sur la SNCF](#), *Alpes1*, August 2nd 2017

40 Dorine Goth, [Trafic ferroviaire. La vétusté du réseau mise en cause](#), *L'Humanité*, August 1st 2017

41 [Commission du développement durable : Mme Elisabeth Borne, ministre chargée des transports](#), Assemblée Nationale, July 19th 2017, 21st min; ARAFER, [La mise en œuvre de la réforme ferroviaire : état des lieux du régulateur](#), October 2016, p. 28 ; Senate, [Auditions des Présidents-directeurs généraux de SNCF Mobilités et SNCF Réseau](#) (online video), March 30th 2016 ; Gilles Balbastre, [Vérités et Mensonges sur la SNCF](#) (online documentary), 2015

42 Laurence Boffet, « [Luchon: dernier train au départ](#) », *France3 Haute-Garonne*, November 16th 2014

43 See the well documented links: « [Accident ferroviaire de Brétigny-sur-Orge](#) », *Wikipedia* ; Elise Lucet, [Envoyé spécial](#), *France 2*, September 29th 2016

44 EB, [Accident ferroviaire de Denguin : la SNCF pointée du doigt](#), *La République des Pyrénées*, January 28th 2016

45 Let us remind that road provokes more than 3000 dead each year, see [accidents de la route en France](#), *Wikipedia*

46 AFP, [LGV : le gouvernement veut différer les nouveaux chantiers pour privilégier l'entretien du réseau](#), *Le Populaire du Centre*, February 18th 2015;

Eric Béziat, « [L'Etat promet 46 milliards d'euros pour rénover le réseau SNCF](#) », *Le Monde Économie*, December 21th 2016 ;

Lionel Steinmann, [Elisabeth Borne lance le grand virage de la politique des transports](#), Les Echos, July 5th 2017

2.7/ Is SNCF sabotaging ICN activity to obtain its dismantling ?



Demonstration in Lourdes train station on March 17th 2017: "night train: more climate-friendly than planes, cheaper than the TGV, and more comfortable than buses"

The SNCF CEO, Mr Guillaume Pépy, talks of night trains using the past tense: "at the time when night trains existed", "since they have disappeared"⁴⁷, whereas the State asked him to maintain several destinations: Rodez, Latour-de-Carol, Briançon, Portbou, and that ICN trains still go to Toulouse, Marseilles, Nice and many other cities. Communication from the CEO helps to make this offer invisible by pretending, as is too often heard at the SNCF ticket desks, that "ICN do not exist any more". Do people know the cars trains, which could also disappear in 2018⁴⁸? Many people actually think that ICN do not exist anymore, even in regions where they are still running. To improve their visibility, an important advertising campaign is needed.

In May 2015, an internal document of SNCF suggests to withdraw all ICN.⁴⁹ Already in the 2000s, SNCF employees reported that "night trains are and old-fashioned, outdated product. Even the Paris-Nice line will disappear with the LGV PACA [Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur]". Thus it seems that for decades SNCF has been dreaming about sweeping under the carpet the ICN activity, which is complex, requires a lot of staff and whose potential has been underexploited for a long time.

Intervention of the State and of Parliament is therefore necessary to convince the SNCF board to solve the serious problems of ICN and in a word, to relaunch the activity⁵⁰. Note that, following another complain or deputies from Hautes-Alpes about the Paris-Briançon line⁵¹

It would be important to question the SNCF executive board on its will to carry out the mission to maintain some ICN, as demanded by the State:

* Is SNCF still willing to make ICN disappear? Has it let dysfunctions appear and stay? Does it give a bad image of ICN to the State in order to obtain their dismantling?

* Is SNCF giving up its mission of territory development to concentrate on its expansion abroad? Which investment priorities between the national and international scales?

47 On France-Inter on March 10th 2017. See the answer by "Oui au train de nuit" [Les 8 arguments du PDG de la SNCF pour supprimer les trains de nuit sont bidons](#), Interview of "Oui au train de nuit" by Sarah Lefèvre, StreetVox, March 23rd 2017

48 [Et si vous emmeniez votre voiture en vacances ?](#), Guide auto/train, SNCF, 2017 edition

49 They are deemed not competitive any longer because of car-pooling, low-cost airlines, cheap hotels and low fares on day trains. However: (1) to abandon rail and replace it with planes or cars is a climate mistake and goes against sustainable development; (2) cars and coaches are not comfortable for journeys of more than 800 km; (3) Day Intercity trains seldom run on very long distances and transverse connections are neglected by the TGVs; (4) A journey in a night train is at the same time cheaper and shorter than a TGV journey added together with a hotel night.

50 [Hautes-Alpes : Guillaume Pépy promet une modernisation du Paris-Briançon](#), Alpes1, August 3rd 2017

51 [Hautes-Alpes : les parlementaires LR et LREM mettent la pression sur la SNCF](#), Alpes1, August 2nd 2017

3/ Questioning pretexts to rediscover the potential of ICN



"More than 750 km: to arrive early it is of no use to run" and "To sleep together is connecting people" : signs in the train station of Pau, on April 14th, 2017

3.1/ Time optimization and sober resources consumption

While the LGV projects are justified by a certain obsession for "saved minutes", passengers insist on the convenience of the night train, which also optimizes time:

- ✓ **The ICN allows to finish the working day and to travel during night... to benefit from the whole day on the destination.** In comparison, to leave on the day before with a day train and to sleep in a hotel often takes half a day (or often the whole day for transverse connections).

- ✓ **To travel during sleep enables a "night jump": "With the night train, Paris and Strasbourg are only one hour away from the South of France: ½ hour to fall asleep and ½ hour to wake up!"**. Ouibus coaches are going across France by night, and Flixbus coaches promote travel across Europe with the catchword "Say yes to overnight coaches and sleep your way to your destination"⁵². For very long distances, the ICN is more attractive than the day Intercity⁵³. On some connections between Paris and the Northern Alps, SNCF has removed the sleeper trains, and replaced them with overnight... TGV trains! But without reclining seats or proper beds, the overnight TGV is more expensive and less comfortable.

- ✓ By arriving **early in the morning**, the night train allows **to spend whole days** at the destination, while **saving one or two hotel nights and without losing a day in transports**. In comparison, to leave on the day before with a day train from a medium city and to spend a night in a hotel often takes half a day longer (or even the whole day for transverse connections).

- ✓ **It allows to reach the train stations at times when there is public transportation and connections with regional trains** – which is not the case for TGV early in the morning or late at night.

Moreover, to go always faster is not trendy any more. Questioned about their mobility lifestyle, 82% of the French say they want to slow down. And for society to tackle the environmental challenges, 60% would be ready to give up personal car or aviation⁵⁴. The ICN thus corresponds to the growing trend of bicycle and soft transports, where the aim is no longer absolute speed but efficiency and ecological soberness, with some taste of time and friendliness. The ICN means a long trip which allows to meet people, "to sleep together is connecting people". The ICN is also a social link⁵⁵.

⁵² Simon Hamy, [Les « cars Macron » ne démissionnent pas : le point au départ de Périgueux](#), *Sud Ouest*, August 31st 2016 ; « [Dormez jusqu'à votre destination avec nos bus de nuit](#) », *Flixbus*

⁵³ On the Paris-Portbou line, the daytime IC transported 86985 passengers in 2015, while the ICN had 144061 passengers: 65% more, source CE SNCF.

⁵⁴ [Modes de vie & mobilité, les grands résultats en chiffres](#), Forum Vies Mobiles, L'Observatoire Société et Consommation, 2015

⁵⁵ Axel Roux, « [Le crépuscule des trains de nuit](#) », *Le Journal du Dimanche*, August 7th 2016



Demonstration at Lourdes train station on March 17th, 2017: "Take the time to slow down. Paris is 1h away from the South: ½ h to fall sleep + ½ h to wake up"

3.2/ The "alleged deficit" hides one of the rare trains which can self-finance

x The night trains are blamed for "loosing money". Yet most trains are in deficit. For Elisabeth Borne [the French transport minister], "SNCF also tells us that 70% of TGV connections do not make profit". And according to the Court of Audit, "the Intercity activity remains one of the less subsidised. With a global deficit around 25% it is in a much better situation than Regional trains (65%) and Transilien [regional trains in Paris area] (62%)"⁵⁶. As for urban public transports – run by public or private –, they often present a self-financing rate well under 50%⁵⁷.

x How could a train which does not arrive one time out of three self-finance? SNCF is forced not only to refund tickets, but also to pay for hotel nights, extra meals and sometimes taxi rides. Occasionally some ICN can arrive at destination with more than 6 hours delay⁵⁸. **It is the poor service condition which leads to a loss of "more than 100€" per passenger.**

x It is also worth putting this cost in perspective, because subsidies of more than 100€ per sold ticket are not an exception when it comes to territory development. It is the case for some regional air connections⁵⁹. Therefore, **to replace night trains by flights or LGV projects would be much more expensive**, for customers as well as for taxpayers.

x Other fallacious justification: *"the deficit of overnight lines represents about 25% of the deficit of all Intercity lines, though they represent only 3% of journeys"*. To count the number of **journeys** is misleading. Many costs, among which track access fees, are proportional to distance. Comparison should be based on revenues or on passengers*kilometers, because overnight journeys are much longer (600 to 1000 km) than those on day trains. Night trains actually represent 27.2% of trains*kilometres of all Intercity trains⁶⁰ for only 25% of the deficit: this entails that they are more profitable than day Intercity trains! According to the Court of Audit, overnight lines account for 42.5% of earnings of Intercity trains in 2013⁶¹. To count in terms of journeys throws light on the excessive priority given to the TGV, as Ms Borne underlined: "long-distance rail journeys represent less than 1% of journeys in France. But they have monopolized 16% of investments in infrastructure for the last 5 years"⁶².

⁵⁶ Cour des comptes, *Trains d'Équilibre du Territoire*, July 2nd 2014, p12.

⁵⁷ See *Étude sur l'évolution de l'offre Intercités*, Laurent Kestel and Adrien Coldrey, DEGEST, November 21st 2016 (page 13)

⁵⁸ S. Milhomme et E. Champale, « *Le train de nuit Paris-Briançon arrive avec sept heures de retard* », *France Bleu*, March 8th 2016 ; Fabrice Valery, *6 heures de retard pour deux trains de nuit de Paris vers Port-Bou et Latour de Carol*, France 3 Occitanie, November 10th 2016

Sophie Accarias, *Joël Giraud en colère contre la SNCF*, France 3 PACA, July 20th 2017

All delays do not appear in the news, note for example that on August 22nd 2016, the Paris-Irun was 6 hours 36 minutes late.

⁵⁹ Isabelle Morisque, « *La grande misère des petits aéroports régionaux* », *L'Express*, November 10th 2016

⁶⁰ *Étude sur l'évolution de l'offre Intercités*, Laurent Kestel et Adrien Coldrey, DEGEST, November 21st 2016

⁶¹ Cour des comptes, *Les trains Intercités : sortir de l'indécision*, February 2015, p. 231

⁶² *Commission du développement durable : Mme Elisabeth Borne, Ministre des transports*, Assemblée Nationale, July 19th 2017, Minute 20'45" ; Olivier Razemon, « *TGV : 38% des investissements, 2% des passagers* », *Blog – Le Monde*, January 5th 2017

To be studied: what are the annual revenues, losses and number of passengers*kilometers of day Intercity and ICN between 2000 and 2017?

3.3/ Night trains have high occupancy rates but the French state pretends they are “empty”

x The former French government justified dismantling by arguing that *“occupancy has decreased by 25% since 2011”*, intending a disaffection of passengers. But in fact this decrease comes from a reduction of the number of ICN connections: three overnight lines were withdrawn between 2011 and 2015. Carriages were removed and the number of operating days was reduced on some lines. Supplementary trains during seasonal peak periods have become rare (up to three night ICN were added on some nights, for example between Paris and Nice). Whole trains were often cancelled “because of maintenance works” right in the peak periods. But despite this poor service quality, the ICN are the fullest Intercity trains⁶³. Mr. Sean Clairin, in charge of Intercity trains in the Centre-South, admits that *occupancy of ICN has not decreased over the last three years. Trains are even often full*⁶⁴ (see also the picture below), and it is also the most user-recommended train. In fact, the ICN remains very popular⁶⁵. In 2016, the ICN Paris-Tarbes-Irun reached an occupancy rate of 72% (to be compared with an average of 65% in TGV). These very good signs show that **the ICN has a strong recovery potential**.

Mr. Guillaume Pépy, CEO of SNCF declares: “at the time when night trains existed, there were not many people in them, except on Wednesdays and Sundays”⁶⁶. First note that night trains still exist. Here is a picture of *Thursday 27 October 2016*, in Paris-Austerlitz, where all ICN are full.

Photograph @bb_8620



x Other fallacious justification: *“overnight trains do not correspond any longer to the needs of passengers”*. A public satisfaction survey was conducted in 2015⁶⁷: “There is a majority of positive answers about four topics: comfort (62% satisfied), number of stops (79% satisfied), journey time (55% satisfied) and timetables (51% satisfied). Only the frequencies are not satisfying (46% satisfied).” Besides, “most of the questioned persons (56%) are against an improvement of travel time if this means more expensive tickets”.

x According to the report by the Duron commission, (unpublished) operation costs are *“particularly high and therefore require very high occupancy rates (nearly 450 passengers per train) in order to make operation profitable”*. Up to 16 carriages can compose an ICN and can carry more than 850 passengers per train⁶⁸. The ICN are often full, but SNCF doesn't add more coaches in order to improve earnings. But curiously enough, the number of coaches tends to decrease, and it even fell down to 3 on relations to Rodez and Latour-de-Carol⁶⁹... Can a train composed of only three carriages be profitable? The association of Regions of France (ARF) notices that Intercity trains have a “high occupancy rate of 210 passengers per train on average”.⁷⁰ Furthermore, whereas daytime Intercity trains are expected to offer departures at least every two hours, one single ICN train can seduce most overnight passengers, which enables **to group all overnight travellers in a single train with a high capacity**.

63 The average occupancy rate of Intercity train is of 35%. **Night trains have a much higher occupancy rate than the mean of Intercités because for the line with lowest occupancy, Paris-Savoie, it is still of 38%; all other lines having occupancy rates of at least 43%, the best line (Paris-Hendaye) even reaching 53%.** See Étude sur l'évolution de l'offre Intercités suite aux annonces du Secrétaire d'Etat Alain Vidalies du 21/07/2016, Laurent Kestel and Adrien Coldrey, DEGEST, November 21st 2016.

64 Clara Griot, Fériel Naoura, [Voie de disparition](#), Le Quatre heures, August 1st 2017

65 TNS Sofres, [Etats Généraux du Rail et de l'InterModalité](#), poll in the Occitany region in July 2016: 65% of people having used a TER, Intercités, TGV or regional coaches declare that night trains should be maintained. Other RTL survey: 55% of questioned people “regret the withdrawal of night trains”. See [here \(sondage en bas de page\)](#).

66 Sarah Lefèvre, [Les 8 arguments du PDG de la SNCF pour supprimer les trains de nuit sont bidons](#), StreetVox, March 23rd 2017

67 See textbox number 7 in Commission Duron, [TET: Agir pour l'avenir](#), May 25th 2015, p. 28-29

68 Each [Corail](#) carriage can carry up to 60 passengers on berths or 88 on reclining seats.

69 « [Les cheminots CGT inquiets pour le train de nuit Rodez-Paris](#) », *La Dépêche*, October 28th 2016

70 Association des Régions de France, [Contribution des Régions aux réflexions sur l'avenir des Trains d'équilibre du territoire](#), 2014.



Comic made by a passenger used to queue to get into the night train

Reasons put forward to dismantle ICN are therefore misleading. SNCF not only presents false figures to obtain their dismantling, but the government is also responsible for his biased interpretation of these figures⁷¹: some of the presented arguments are fallacious and mostly betray a will to disengage: "you give a dog a bad name and then you hang him".

A good point is that the Transport Minister suggests to evaluate trains in a different way: "I am conscious that the occupancy cannot be taken as a reference figure on certain lines with rolling stock no longer adapted and infrastructures not maintained enough to allow normal speeds [...] One must judge on the assumption of a quality service."⁷² Yet curiously enough, she repeats the figures advanced by the former government: "the economic model of night train is not viable any more"⁷³. But it is the model of TGV which is not viable any more. As for planes and individual cars, they are not environmentally viable. In such a situation, besides soberness (to travel less), what will be the long-distance transport modes in the future?

To be studied: to re-evaluate the ICN seems indeed necessary in order to get a less grotesque balance sheet.

3.4 / SNCF and the State are they attributing overheads to the "Intercités" branch?

x The Court of Audit reveals that sharp rises in **the deficit of Intercity trains are "mostly explained by a change of counting rules concerning track access charges** paid by these trains to Réseau Ferré de France [the infrastructure manager, today "SNCF Réseau"]. This change follows a recommendation issued by the Authority for Regulation of Railway Activities [today "Arafer"] to set their tolls at the highest level paid by TGV." More recently, to prevent the LGV Tours-Bordeaux from going bankrupt, SNCF Réseau is trying to stop competition from slower trains – as ICN – by strongly rising access fees on the classical line parallel to the LGV. A majority of passengers could indeed prefer cheaper tickets rather than to "save an hour"⁷⁴. Therefore, during works on the POLT line (Paris-Orléans-Limoges-Toulouse), the ICN to the South-West will have to use the line Paris-Bordeaux with very high tolls... for less attractive timetables. The Arafer opposed to this rise in access charges⁷⁵.

71 "The decrease of occupancy can indeed be due to the reduction of the offer", a SNCF employee confirms. "It is the State doing this interpretation" adds an other one (personal communication).

72 [Audition de Mme Elisabeth Borne](#), Commission de l'aménagement du territoire et du développement durable, Senate, July 20th 2017, minute 12h35'

73 Andy Barrejat, [Fin de la Palombe bleue : l'Etat maintient sa position](#), La Dépêche, July 31st 2017 ;

Martin Vanlaton, [Suppression de l'Intercités de nuit Paris-Tarbes : l'Etat campe sur sa position](#), France 3 Occitanie, August 1st 2017

74 La Vie du Rail, [Tours – Bordeaux. Stupeur et financement](#), Rail Passion, April 29th 2015 ; Jean-Yves Guerin, [Tensions sur la LGV Tours-Bordeaux](#), le Figaro économie, December 4th 2015 ; Pierre Recarte, « [LGV : La faillite comme modèle de financement ?](#) », Enbata, March 13th 2017

75 [Avis n° 2016-012 relatif à la fixation des redevances d'infrastructures du réseau ferré national pour 2017](#), ARAFER, February 10th 2016

x Taking note of the "very complex organization" of the SNCF accountancy, the Audit of Intercity trains questioned the importance of "train station or toll charges, high level of remuneration of the capital and the computation mode of distribution charges" ⁷⁶. The ICN pay a lot for each stop in the many train stations on their route, while this offers a true local service. Their departure station, Paris-Austerlitz, is "the most expensive French train station"; **"Intercités is a constrained customer of other subsidiaries of the SNCF group"**

x Following the Audit of Intercités, **"the Arafer asked SNCF Mobilités to change its accountancy separation rules"** ⁷⁷. Let us rephrase some questions: are overheads attributed to regional trains ⁷⁸ and intercity trains to finance the losses of TGV? How much do the IC pay for the SNCF indebtedness? Note that this debt is mostly due to constructions of LGV ⁷⁹ which do not benefit to IC. Contrary to what is generally thought, aren't regional and Intercity trains paying the hidden deficits of TGV (thanks to subsidies asked by SNCF to the State and regions) ?

x How much are ICN paying their night train paths to SNCF Réseau? The train station Lyon Part-Dieu is less used by night, whereas its saturation during the day is problematic ⁸⁰. The ICN therefore appears as a **tool to avoid saturation of rail nodes** and could be financed for this reason ⁸¹.

To be studied: A European rule forces to reduce track access fees during the night. Is it respected by SNCF Réseau?

3.5 / The lies of Deutsche Bahn (DB) about the deficit of its night trains

The European-wide social movement for the return of ICN ⁸² has shown that the German railway company (DB) has also distorted the figures of its ICN in order to dismantle them. "ICN make profits, it is in the offices of the company that the deficit is created.", Joachim Holstein explains, spokesperson of the economic counsel of European Railservice, a DB subsidiary. "They take into account some costs, which are not caused by the ICN. [...] The balance sheets might be willingly biased to make losses appear, because the DB group wishes to give up ICN" ⁸³. The polemic reached the 1st German TV broadcast ⁸⁴. And the scandal, revealed by the minority in Parliament, is now considered by the majority.

In February 2017, the head of main lines of the Austrian national railway company (ÖBB), Mr. Kurt Bauer, explained to German deputies that ICN can be profitable. Good point: DB does not call its users nostalgic of plane phobic any more. Deutsche Bahn explained that "the demand has increased". In fact the demand was there, but unsatisfied. In 2017, DB increased its offer with its "night trains of the future"... with only reclining seats. The berths are operated by ÖBB, which prepares a new extension of its network in 2018 ⁸⁵.

3.6/ The ICN is one of the most economically efficient modes of transport

The justification of deficit is fallacious, because almost all trains and transport modes are losing money. They represent a public cost:

x **Roads without tolls are financed by general taxes.** They cost **16 billion euros** a year for the taxpayer ⁸⁶ (275 billion € between 1990 and 2015 ⁸⁷), without having the car driver to pay to progress towards their economic balance.

x **Aviation benefits from 2,8 billions a year of tax exemptions** ⁸⁸, and add to this the 10 billions of subsidies to French air lines and airports between 2000 and 2013 ⁸⁹.

76 J-F Verdier, C. Assailly, D. Genet, IDF-CGEDD, [Audit des Intercités](#), July 2016, p. 23-25 ; see also the summary page, *op. cit.*

77 Marc Fressoz, "The ARAFER forces SNCF Mobilités to clarify its accountancy", *MobiliCités*, January 25th 2017. See also: ARAFER, « [séparation comptable](#) » ; ARAFER, [L'Arafer ne valide pas les péages 2018 de SNCF Réseau](#), February 8th 2017

78 SNCF tells all regions that it loses money on regional trains (TER)... yet on the national scale the TER activity is making profits. Florence Guernalec, « [Guillaume Pepy \(SNCF\) : "Pour les TER, nous devons vendre moins cher aux Régions"](#) », *Mobilicites*, August 23rd 2016 ; François Tonneau, « [Guillaume Pépy admet que, sur les TER, la SNCF est "très très loin du compte"](#) », *La Provence*, January 30th 2016

79 Julie de la Brosse, « [SNCF: la spirale infernale de la dette du rail](#) », *L'Express*, June 2nd 2016

80 Fabien Fournier, [Pourquoi la commission Duron condamne le TGV](#), *lyoncapitale.fr*, 2013

81 Other advantage, for the environment: night trains are mostly running during periods of low electricity consumption.

82 See [www.nachtzug-bleibt.eu](#) and [back-on-track.eu](#).

83 [Comment la Deutsche Bahn noircit le tableau de ses trains de nuit](#), Nikolaus Doll, Max Zimmermann, *Die Welt*, June 1st 2016

84 [\[ALLEMAGNE/AUTRICHE\] La Renaissance du Train Couchettes](#), émission de télévision sur la Chaîne nationale Allemande n°1, July 5th 2017

85 Note that in 2006-2008, a similar positive evolution was observed in Finland:

Kalevi Kämäräinen, [Comment la Finlande s'est mobilisée pour défendre ses trains de nuit](#), July 8th 2017

86 Union des Syndicats de l'Industrie Routière Française, [L'état de la route 2016](#)

87 Jean Michel Gradt, [Rail, routes, autoroutes : retour sur 25 ans d'investissement](#), *Les Echos*, January 9th 2017 ; CGDD, Ministère de l'Environnement, [Les infrastructures linéaires de transport : évolutions depuis 25 ans](#), December 2016 ; see also the [European comparator](#).

88 Court of Audit, [L'efficacité des dépenses fiscales relatives au développement durable](#), Nov. 2016, page 25

89 Jasper Faber, Dagmar Nelissen, [Tax exemptions and reductions for domestic commercial air passenger transport in France](#), CE Delft, June 2015 ; Mathilde Gracia, « [Quelles sont les véritables émissions de CO2 du trafic aérien ?](#) », *Le Monde.fr*, June 18th 2015

x The SNCF admits that out of 180 TGV lines, 80 to 100 make losses⁹⁰. Actually, in France only the Paris-Lyon LGV line is said to be profitable⁹¹. The Tours-Bordeaux LGV costed 8 billions and risks to generate a deficit of 150 to 200 millions per year⁹². The Rhin-Rhône LGV loses 60 millions a year⁹³. The bankruptcy of the Perpignan-Figueras LGV costed 450 million euros to the taxpayer⁹⁴.

Compared to these figures, the "alleged deficit" of ICN is small: 75 millions per year for the 8 overnight lines existing in 2015. To subsidise them during a century would cost less than the sole LGV project between Bordeaux and Toulouse/Dax, estimated to 9 billion euros (plus annual losses likely to be high). In 2017 the SNCF estimated the "so-called deficit" to be financed to relaunch a line to 10 millions a year. To get the Paris-Portbou line to start again, the Occitany region managed to dispute this estimate. To denounce these exaggerated estimates and to improve the service would bring closer to economic equilibrium. Until 2011 the Paris-Irun was making profits⁹⁵. **Charged with "deficit", the ICN is however one of the rare modes potentially very sober in terms of public funding. It is probable that the least expensive for the taxpayer, the passenger and the climate is, for many long-distance relations, the ICN.**

Besides, the Court of Audit emphasizes the new role that ICN could play: "after decades of withdrawal, [...] on some long-distance destinations, they can become an economically interesting alternative to TGV for customers more price-sensitive than speed-sensitive" ⁹⁶. What has already become true for day Intercity trains⁹⁷, remains to be made for ICN.

To be studied:

* To question the government: it has refused to participate in financing the ICN service Paris-Tarbes-Irun, while it supports aviation. Given that all transport modes have a cost for the taxpayer, why should only the ICN cost nothing to society? After the Paris Agreement during COP21, shouldn't financing choices be made based on environmental criteria?

It is well probable that the less expensive for the taxpayer, the passenger and the climate would be the ICN for many long-distance connections.

* What is the actual cost per km*passenger of the ICN, compared to other means of transport? On transverse connections? On radials with medium-sized cities? What would be this cost if the service was optimized? (trains with high capacity, with high occupancy rates and arriving at their destination)

* What have been the annual revenues and costs of each ICN since 2000?

3.7/ Territory development: to avoid the headlong rush towards High-Speed in the South

Compared to other European countries, **France has a large territory, with distances over 1000km, which are particularly suited to ICN**. Examples: Brest-Nice 1450km, Brest-Hendaye 860km, Hendaye-Nice 900km, Strasbourg-Hendaye 1350km, Strasbourg-Nice 950km, Lille-Nice 1150km. Does one wish ecological long-distance modes for the country? And above all, does one want to travel only to and from Paris?

Withdrawals of the Intercity service questions the **equal treatment of regions**. Paris and the big metropolises, which do not gather most inhabitants, have benefited from dozens of billion euros of investments to build LGV, loss-making for most of them. Besides, medium-sized cities and remote regions of the country are asked to abandon their ICN lines to "save money". Yet their inhabitants also deserve the right to participate in national, associative, sportive artistic and economic activities.

Closures of ICN were led by the former government, on promises of future polemical and not financed LGV lines. But the evolution is positive. From now on Elisabeth Borne wishes to optimize existing networks: "I am told that the train station is saturated. [...] I come from a company [the RATP, in charge of public transports in Paris] where we run a RER [Express Regional Network in Paris area] transporting 2500 passengers every two minutes, [...]. I think that we seriously have to put our engineers in the modern world, where one should start by studying the exploitation procedures, and first improve what is existing before asking for billions to build a new line". To put priority back on the classical railway network also means to

90 Fabrice Gliszczynski, « [Pourquoi le TGV fait plonger la SNCF dans le rouge](#) », *latribune.fr*, February 13th 2014

91 Jean-Michel Gradt, « [TGV : seules les lignes Paris-Lyon et Tokyo-Osaka seraient rentables](#) », *Les Echos*, March 27th 2015

92 Philippe Jacqué, « [La ligne à grande vitesse Tours-Bordeaux, un jackpot pour Vinci ?](#) », *Le Monde Economie*, March 13th 2017 ; ATTAC%France, « [LGV Tours-Bordeaux : Vinci nous roule à grande vitesse !](#) », March 1st 2017

93 Serge Grass, « [TGV Rhin-Rhône : un scandale financier et démocratique](#) », *Contribuables associés*, May 11th 2015

94 L.C., « [Le gouvernement espagnol vote la reprise du tronçon ferroviaire Figueres-Perpignan par la France et l'Espagne](#) », *L'indépendant*, December 16th 2016

95 Juan-Carlos DíEZ, « [La Palombe Bleue, un train d'avenir à maintenir](#) », December 2016, disponible sur : [ouiautraindenuit.wordpress.com](#)

96 Cour des comptes, *Les trains Intercités : sortir de l'indécision*, February 2015, p. 249 ;

Philippe Bonnet, « [Paris-Bordeaux en Corail : moins vite, mais moins cher](#) », *La Nouvelle République*, April 5th 2015

97 Simon Barthélémy, *Les trains à moins grande vitesse font le plein au départ de Bordeaux*, Rue89 Bordeaux, July 17th 2017

Philippe Bonnet, « [Paris-Bordeaux en Corail : moins vite, mais moins cher](#) », *La Nouvelle République*, April 5th 2015

show that LGV projects are not the only horizon of long-distance passenger trains. **To pause these LGV projects, the State will need to rehabilitate the ICN.**

A good point is that the Occitany Region has accepted to subsidize the partial return of the ICN Paris-Portbou for 1.4 millions per year⁹⁸. Compared to the 150 millions of annual deficit of a new LGV line (as for example Tours-Bordeaux, but also Bordeaux-Toulouse), the different order of magnitude need to be underlined. As for the Aquitaine Region, it is willing to finance the LGV project to Dax but it refuses to do the same for the ICN Paris-Irun⁹⁹. This shows that **regions stay mostly centred on the idea of the unique "all High-Speed" solution.**

3.8 / The ICN creates jobs: SNCF wants to get rid of it

One of the reasons for SNCF to give up ICN is said to be the pressure for productivity exerted by the State¹⁰⁰. SNCF has been suppressing around 2000 railwaymen jobs per year since 2003¹⁰¹. Productivity – a concept which remains to be clearly defined according to Arafer – is sometimes measured in terms of trains*km per employee, which leads to run as many trains as possible with the least workforce possible... even if it is more expensive. For example, the former government had one time imagined to replace some Intercity trains with TGVs but on classical railway lines. However, event at reduced speed, a TGV is 30% more expensive to run than an Intercity¹⁰²: less workforce but more expensive!

ICNs need a locomotive to pull them. They necessitate manoeuvres to return them, entailing more workforce: up to 45 employees are working for each night train running¹⁰³. Yet, in long trains, carriages pulled by a locomotive can be less expensive than self-motorized trains¹⁰⁴. Productivity counted in terms of trains*km/agent does not value the fact that ICNs are long trains with high occupancy rates and which can self-finance.

As for LGV projects, despite huge amounts of money invested, they do not create many jobs. Would it be possible to include in the evaluation of projects the *social intensiveness* indicator¹⁰⁵ which compares the amount of human working hours to the sums invested?

SNCF considers the ICN as a secondary product, which never has priority over other activities. The ICN is also "more complicated to run": manoeuvres, to attach multi-branch trains together, staff turnover in the middle of the night, working by night, etc. In comparison, it is much simpler to run a TGV. The SNCF board does not appreciate resistance of the trade unions against night trains withdrawals. They do not like the ICN activity, and thus to get rid of them makes things simpler. **Many SNCF employees indeed see their future, and the future of SNCF in its many subsidiaries abroad.** For them, even admitting that some ICN can self-finance, anyway **investment priorities of SNCF are abroad.**

But SNCF does not bear all the responsibility for this: Occitany is the French region which is most active to save ICN, and it is also the one which needs them the most. However, in terms of priorities it places ICN after LGV projects (hard to finance¹⁰⁶), expansion of aviation (destroying the climate), and even "science-fiction" start-ups¹⁰⁷. Elected officials are dreaming while neglecting renewal of the existing service. For SNCF to reconsider seriously the ICN activity, **citizens and public institutions must reaffirm the importance of ICN**, by telling SNCF to prioritize territory development rather than international adventures.

Besides, ICNs are suffering from cancellations because of maintenance works. However it would be possible to keep trains running on one track while works are taking place on the other track. But unfortunately these works are more and more made by subcontractors with less trained workers¹⁰⁸. It is then harder to respect security standards to maintain trains running on one track. To have these works done by railwaymen teams from SNCF – and there are more of them – would help to create quality jobs and improve

98 Charlotte Coutard, [Le train de nuit Cerbère-Paris de nouveau sur les rails les week-ends et pour les vacances scolaires](#), France Bleu Roussillon, April 28th 2017

99 Note that EELV [the Greens] -- which has seats in the majority of both regions -- is opposed to the LGV: Jean Lissar, Sophie Bussière, Nelson Palis-Niermann, [Décision Modificative et financement de la LGV par la Région Nouvelle Aquitaine](#), EELV Aquitaine, October 23rd 2016

100 [Contrats État - SNCF : une visibilité à 10 ans](#), SNCF Réseau, April 24th 2017

101 Pauline Damour, [SNCF: nouvelle coupe des effectifs en 2016](#), December 16th 2016

Éric Béziat, [La SNCF va supprimer 1 200 postes en 2017](#), Le Monde Economie, December 15th 2016

102 Lionel Steinmann, [Les 15 TGV commandés pour sauver Alstom Belfort pourraient commencer... au garage](#), Les Echos, February 16th 2017

103 Voir les témoignages dans « La pétition arrive en train de nuit au ministère », [JT 19-20 de France3-Pays Catalan](#).

104 « [Rame tractée ou automotrice ?](#) », [TransportRail](#), December 20th 2016

105 [Retrouver le sens de l'humain, la notion d'Intensité Sociale](#), Les Pieds sur Terre, 2013

106 For Nicolas Hulot, "we cannot afford it", see: Lionel Laparade, [Mauvaise nouvelle pour Toulouse: « le TGV n'est pas une priorité » selon Nicolas Hulot](#), La Dépêche, August 30th 2017

107 Philippe Emery, [Hyperloop : la guerre des tubes](#), La Depeche, February 6th 2017 ; Eric Vagnier, François Lenglet, [Hyperloop : un vrai projet d'avenir ou science-fiction ?](#), RTL, August 4th 2017

108 Olivier Cognasse, [SNCF Réseau fait la part belle aux sous-traitants](#), L'Usine Nouvelle, May 4th 2016 ; Sophie Chapelle, [Sécurité ferroviaire : ces questions qui dérangent la SNCF](#), Bastamag, September 23rd 2013 ; Marion d'Allard, [Le train fou de la sous-traitance](#), L'Humanité, October 16th 2013 ; Raphael Brun, [« Une vraie inquiétude »](#), Monaco Hebdo, May 21st 2015

the works quality and the security on the network.

In this situation, the freight branch of SNCF went from 13000 railwaymen in 2009 to only 6000 in 2017. These jobs destructions induces a reduction of this activity yet very important for the energy transition. It also leads to a loss of knowledge which appears problematic¹⁰⁹. Insomuch as with deteriorating working conditions, SNCF now has difficulties to recruit¹¹⁰.

In 2016, with railwaymen committing suicide¹¹¹, the management pressure of SNCF was criticized¹¹². The war against railwaymen and trade unions was nourished by the media, the FNAUT¹¹³ and the direction board. Yet the trade unions have also helped maintaining some everyday trains and proximity services, whereas SNCF directors have for years wished to close lines and train stations, and elected officials were only dreaming of LGV. Today, in front of the increase of track access tolls (7000€/train on Paris-Bordeaux) and of advertising expenses of SNCF, it is more difficult to hear that railwaymen are too expensive. It is now high time to recruit again to ensure renewal of the expertise and to give rail a new start for the ecological transition. A good point to be noticed is that DB just got out of its contraction logic for freight, to recruit 700 new railwaymen¹¹⁴. An example to be followed soon by SNCF?

The decrease of the ICN activity¹¹⁵ which is suffering too, like the ICN, from insecure train paths. Besides, everyday trains, with regional trains being modernised to transform them in real express networks around cities (as is the case around Paris with the RER) is also an important stake for the future¹¹⁶.

An important investment of the State is therefore necessary to develop the full potential of the existing railway network. To find such funding, the great plan of ecological taxes is the next challenge.

4/ Which tax and price systems to reflect environmental costs ?

4.1/ To extend ecological taxes

For rail to play its role in the ecological transition, the heavy environmental costs of road and air transport need to be re-included by an ecological tax system. Such a system is being progressively implemented in Europe, but it is still quite discreet in France¹¹⁷. To amplify it will sooner or later be necessary **to get rid of these abnormal prices in order for land public transportation to appear clearly cheaper than individual car or air travel**, – which is already spontaneously true in countries where resources are limited –. To reduce VAT on Intercity trains (currently 10%) would go in this direction¹¹⁸.

The Court of Audit estimates that “the total of fiscal expenses unfavourable to sustainable development amounts to 13 billion euros in 2015”, whereas “fiscal expenses for the environment, in decrease over the same period”, are now under 5 billion euros¹¹⁹. **To cut down subsidies to polluting activities, among which fossil fuels extraction¹²⁰, will allow to make energy-consuming modes more expensive, thus generating important new budgetary resources.**

109 Marie-Sophie Ramspacher, [La SNCF face à la rupture des générations](#), *Les Echos Business*, October 26th 2016 ; [SNCF Montparnasse : la première panne du siècle](#), *VilleRail&Transports*, August 1st 2017

110 France 3 19-20, « [La SNCF recherche désespérément des conducteurs de train](#) », *francetvinfo.fr*, February 21st 2017

111 [Un cheminot se suicide à la gare Saint-Lazare, à Paris](#), *FranceInfo avec AFP*, March 11th 2017 ; [Suicides à la SNCF: le moral des cheminots déraile-t-il ?](#) *La Croix-AFP*, May 26th 2017 ; see also the documentary, [Cheminots](#), directed by Sébastien Jousse and Luc Joulé, 2010

112 [Béziers : un cheminot se suicide, la CGT dénonce un «management agressif»](#), *Le Parisien*, April 16th 2016 ; Chantal Blandin, [Suicides de cheminots. Effet Orange, effet Werther](#), *La lettre du cheminot*, April 13th 2017 ;

113 The FNAUT (French Federation of Transport Users Association) refuses to collaborate with railwaymen. It supports the main LGV projects, and only talks about night trains to ask for their privatization. The action “Oui au train de nuit” has shown that the position of presidents of FNAUT does not represent the opinion of many users and passengers associations. What's more, some conflicts of interest are obvious. For example: the president of FNAUT used to be at the head of UTP (the Transport Employers Union) where he already supported privatization. The FNAUT point of view dates back to the 1990s. A radical change would be very useful because FNAUT keeps an important mission in promoting rail in front of aviation and road.

114 [DB Cargo suspend son programme d'économie pour investir](#), *Ville Rail & Transports*, July 17th 2017

115 Marc Fressoz, [L'Arafer juge le contrat État-SNCF Réseau "irréaliste"](#), *MobiliCité*, March 30th 2017 ; Vincent Doumayrou, « [Résultats de la SNCF en 2016 : la faute à pas de bol](#) », *Mediapart*, January 16th 2017 ; see the humoristic caricature « ouivélo » : « [La SNCF lance Ouivélo pour remplacer ses trains](#) », *Carfree*, August 16th 2016

116 See Usagers des Transports de l'Agglomération Toulousaine et de ses Environs (AUTATE), [projet Mobilités 2025-2030](#), 2016 ; besides, the network in Paris area is also in a worrying wear state: Éric Béziat, « [La grande panne de la gare du Nord, symptôme de l'anémie du réseau ferré francilien](#) », *Le Monde Economie*, December 8th 2016 ; in comparison Geneva aims to have a train every 6 minutes: République et Canton de Genève, [Offre ferroviaire 2030-35 La valorisation de l'axe Lausanne-Genève doit s'accompagner d'un développement ambitieux des réseaux régionaux](#), GE.ch, April 28th 2017.

117 [Fiscalité carbone](#), Ministère de l'Environnement, January 9th 2017 ; « [Contribution climat énergie: l'Assemblée prévoit une trajectoire de prix de la tonne CO2 jusqu'en 2019](#) », *Le Revenu*, December 2nd 2015 ; see also: [Taxe Carbone sur Wikipédia](#) ;

Elodie Guéguen, [Le scandale de l'écotaxe : enquête sur un échec à 10 milliards d'euros](#), *France Info*, Radio France, May 26th 2017

118 Lionel Steinmann, [L'exécutif envisage une baisse de la TVA dans les transports publics](#), *Les Echos*, July 17th 2015

119 Cour des comptes, [L'efficacité des dépenses fiscales relatives au développement durable](#), November 2016, pages 21-22

120 See the action week to stop investing in fossil energies: [Global Divestment mobilisation](#), May 5th-13th 2017 ; see also [Rapport annuel](#), 350.org, 2015

4.2/ Premises of an Incentive Pricing

The taxpayer pays a lot for rail, but also for road and air traffic. It is therefore not much acceptable that, at the time of climate change, some trains are running empty because of a price system that promotes the most polluting transport modes. Yet, the more and more intricate SNCF prices are generating such a **tariff complexity** that it acts like **a barrier for non-regular users**. "76% of travellers in France benefit from reductions", declared the SNCF CEO, Guillaume Pépy¹²¹. Which mostly means that those who have not found such a reduction avoid taking the train. The full price – too high – is repulsive, it maintains most people on the road. The individual car indeed still represents 83% of travels¹²², although it induces thousands of dead a year and air pollution¹²³ as well as a high contribution to global warming¹²⁴.

A positive point is that the "Intercités 100% Eco" of SNCF shows a price equal to car-pooling, around 7€/100km¹²⁵. The former Midi-Pyrénées Region has also fixed such a pricing¹²⁶. In comparison, earnings of other Intercity trains are not much higher : 9,6€/100km/passenger¹²⁷. However the traveller often sees a deterrent price, around 15€/100km... For him, "the train, it's expensive". As for long-distance coaches, their price will stabilize above 8€/100km when the companies will have reached economic equilibrium¹²⁸. It was already above 5€ TTV/100km at the end of 2016¹²⁹. In Catalonia¹³⁰, regional trains also have a price around 6 to 8 €/100km. In this situation, coaches are not a concurrent but a complement to rail¹³¹.

The "Intercités 100% éco" has proved efficient to fill trains and to reach economic equilibrium¹³². The Intercity is, in this sense, an ideal transport mode to reach **profitability by volume**: to fill longer trains with more carriages, to compensate for costs and track access fees. SNCF is already shifting to this strategy: "there will be no more rises in price" the SNCF CEO confirms¹³³. **To set clear prices for TER and IC equal to those of car-pooling would open considerable perspectives of modal shift from road to rail, entailing energy savings.**

4.3/ Buses where the train is missing

The environmental balance sheet of coaches is better than that of planes and cars. They are welcomed by the young generations, because it helps to do without the individual car. However the ecological balance of a well filled train is even better¹³⁴. The train can also be more comfortable, faster (the IC can go at 160 km/h, and even 200-230 km/h on renovated tracks, whereas coaches are limited to 100 km/h), safer (less accidents) and more punctual (it avoids traffic jams at peak hours and on vacations departures). It should therefore be preferred wherever available.¹³⁵

For very long distances (800 km), the coach is not very comfortable, and even dangerous for the fragile. During long journeys (6 hours), the "economy class syndrome" exists in coaches as well as in planes: the passenger is immobilized in seated position during many hours, which slows down venous return in legs and increases the risk for venous thrombosis¹³⁶. Thus 50% of journeys in coaches are less than 250 km long, and they are mostly used by young generations¹³⁷.

121 M.Pépy on France Inter and « [SNCF : des hausses de tarifs annoncées ce lundi](#) », *Le Figaro*, March 10th 2017

122 CGDD, Environment Ministry, [Chiffres clés du transport](#), 2015 (page 10)

123 Leila Aichi, [Pollution de l'air : le coût de l'inaction](#), Senate, July 15th 2015 ; Réseau Action Climat-France, [Transports et pollutions, une feuille de route pour mieux respirer](#), January 2017 ; note also the toxicity for building employees: Lorena Galliot, « [Après l'amiante, le bitume bientôt interdit ?](#) », *France 24*, June 17th 2010

124 Video on the impact of cars: #DATAUEULE 65, [Ne voiture rien venir ?](#), Video, November 21st 2016

125 Florence Guernalec, « [Les Intercités 100% Eco vont desservir Nantes et Strasbourg](#) », *MobiliciCités*, October 14th 2015 ; Olivier Razemon, « [J'ai testé le train lent et pas cher, Strasbourg-Paris en 4h30 et 15€](#) », *Blog – Le Monde*, February 15th 2017

126 The *TickeMouv'* tariff also works on some regional trains: Toulouse-Pamiers 5 € au lieu de 12,60 €. And miracle: Toulouse-Lourdes 7,5 € instead of 30 €!

127 J-F Verdier, C. Assailly, D. Genet, IDF-CGEDD, [Audit des Intercités](#), July 2016 (page 37).

128 In Spain where coaches liberalisation took place many decades ago, the average price is 8,20 €/100km. It is likely that the French price will eventually exceed the Spanish price. See the comparison on [Coût des transports](#), *Le Télégramme*, September 6th 2016

129 Florence Guernalec, [Bilan des autocars Macron au quatrième trimestre 2016](#), *MobiliciCités*, March 17th 2017

SNCF is financing losses of its Ouibus coaches, for 30 to 50 million euros a year, thus destabilizing rail and even the coach market:

Jean Fund, « [Cars Macron](#) » ! [Transdev pointe le rôle de la SNCF](#), *Le Figaro*, June 15th 2016 ; J.M. avec AFP, « [Cars Macron](#) »: [Transdev attaque la SNCF](#), *BFM*, December 9th 2016 ; Robert Viennet, « [Autocar : l'Autorité de la concurrence rejette la plainte de Transdev contre la SNCF](#) », *MobiliciCités*, June 1st 2017 ; Dan Israel, [Les ratés au démarrage des «cars Macron»](#), *Mediapart*, February 9th 2017 ; Marc Fressoz, « [Ouibus lost 30 million euros in 2016](#) », February 27th 2017 ; Krystell Veillard, « [Les Ouibus, une concurrence déloyale aux TER, pour la Région Bretagne](#) », *France 3 Bretagne*, March 4th 2017 ; Alban Elkaim, « [Cars Macron](#) » : [la guerre des prix fait de nouvelles victimes, les chauffeurs Ouibus](#), *Rue89*, May 2nd 2017

130 Note that Catalonia is not "poor": its [GDP](#) is evaluated at 27 663 €/inhabitant in 2015 ; [GDP of Occitany](#) 26 684 €/inhab in 2013.

131 Note that car-pooling is less developed in Catalonia than in France, maybe due to cheaper public transports.

132 [Trains Intercités : les bas prix relancent l'activité](#), *France 2*, June 9th 2017 ; [Le trafic des trains Intercités repart à la hausse](#), AFP, June 8th 2017

133 Florence Guernalec, [Guillaume Pépy \(SNCF\) confirme qu'il n'y aura pas de hausse de prix des billets TGV en 2017](#), *MobiliciCités*, June 29th 2017 ; Lionel Steinmann, [Pourquoi la SNCF n'augmente pas ses tarifs cette année](#), *Les Echos*, January 3rd 2017

134 Vincent Doumayrou, [Le Bilan carbone du train \(n'en parlez pas à François Hollande\)](#), *Carfree.fr*, September 10th 2015

135 See also: CEREMA, [Pertinence des modes fer et route pour des dessertes régionales](#), 2014, p. 23

136 [Le syndrome de la classe économique](#), europ assistance

137 ARAFER, [Analyse du marché libéralisé des services interurbains par autocar, Bilan du 4ème trimestre 2016](#), March 2017, p. 13

4.4/ The ICN to eventually reduce the footprint of aviation ?

While the fight against climate change requires all sectors of economy to reduce their greenhouse gases emissions, aviation is one of the rare sectors to forecast an infinite growth, up to +700% by 2050¹³⁸ (+4.3% per year). 52 new airports are projected in Europe and 222 in Asia, but not without oppositions¹³⁹, also in France¹⁴⁰. Aviation does not fit in the framework of the Paris agreement. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) separately negotiates in 2017-2018, behind closed doors, the CORSIA mechanism¹⁴¹, with few ambition¹⁴².

CORSIA does not aim at curbing emissions, but at excusing their growth, by forcing other actors, often in countries of the South, to reduce their emissions¹⁴³. A misleading calculation can then give the impression of "carbon neutrality". To increase emissions of the rich – already very high – by limiting those of the poor is called compensation (by the ICAO) or the "double destruction" (by NGOs). In the meantime, only a small proportion of world population will have the opportunity to get on an aircraft. This is an injustice which cannot last for long: its aim is to create a temporary illusion, to avoid more drastic regulations.

Besides, promises of technical progress are praised, to give hope in hypothetical technical solutions. There again, the idea is to save time while avoiding regulations¹⁴⁴. These illusions, temporary by definition, have already managed to counter taxation projects which had started in Sweden and Norway.

"Political courage is necessary to curb air traffic", or at least to set a maximum level of emissions, to reduce subsidies and to tax fuel. There are already some positive examples: Canada is taxing domestic flights, which amount for 85% of total flights, at about 7€/carbon ton in 2018, and up to 33€/ton in 2022. In the United-Kingdom, 70% of plane seats are occupied by 20% of population, but frequent travellers often have a high social status and high income: thus they could be aware of the problem¹⁴⁵. There will be international conflicts linked to fluctuating energy prices, therefore to invest public money in the most energy-consuming solution – aviation –, and to refuse to subsidise the more sober alternative – the night train –, encourages these international tensions.

What's more, aviation is a quite mature technology. Airbus is not inventing any new planes. There are no more great research projects. Even with plenty of planes being ordered, Airbus is not hiring more people. Therefore aviation is already the past. In terms of industrial opportunities, **the future is to the ICN**.



Action in front of Airbus building to set a symbolic limit to aviation growth, on August 27th 2017.

138 [How UN aviation deal is cheating the climate](#), FERN, September 27th 2016

139 George Monbiot, [Climate change means no airport expansion – at Heathrow or anywhere](#), The Guardian, October 18th 2016

140 Lorène Lavocat, [Devant Airbus, des militants dénoncent l'expansion du trafic aérien](#), Reporterre, August 28th 2017

141 CORSIA : Carbon Offsetting Scheme for International Aviation

142 [Decarbonisation of aviation: why EU and ICAO action is needed](#), Transport&Environment, February 20th 2017

143 [Les ONG environnementales et les scientifiques défient l'Agence suédoise de l'Énergie – « Arrêtez de soutenir de fausses solutions aux changements climatiques en Ouganda »](#), Carbon Market Watch, September 23rd 2016

144 Peeters et al., [Are technology myths stalling aviation climate policy?](#), Transportation Research D: Transport and Environment, Vol.44, May 2016

145 Marion Mathus & Mathilde Frézouls, [Des vacances au kilomètre](#), Qu'est-ce qu'on fait ? ADEME

Transport throughout Europe has for a long time depended on local airports, which according to the Court of Audit are too many and too subsidized¹⁴⁶, and on *low-cost* companies which often act like predators of regional subsidies¹⁴⁷. In contradiction with the carbon tax system, **aviation benefits from de-taxed fuel and reduced VAT**¹⁴⁸. The situation was mocked in this way: "Take the plane! Climate suffers from it, and the State pays the bill"¹⁴⁹. An increased taxation¹⁵⁰ – and less subsidies¹⁵¹ – for aviation are both possible and necessary. Sooner or later, **flying will have to stop being cheap** because of its environmental footprint and also because it does not correspond to a first need: planes are mostly used by businessmen or for tourism. In both cases, the taxpayer should not have to pay for it. For the Negawatt association, "in total, the number of km*passengers by plane increased by 50% between 2000 and 2015, [...] **a particular form of soberness is necessary about this long-distance mobility**"¹⁵² According to Elisabeth Borne, "about kerosene taxation, [...] we should rather concentrate on the European and national levels on moving forward without disadvantaging our aviation. I will organize a conference on aviation in 2018."¹⁵³

The very heavy investments in building LGVs has not reversed the increase of emissions of the French aviation¹⁵⁴. LGVs reaching their relevance limit around 750km, ICNs are necessary to complete them¹⁵⁵, all the more so as on modernised lines, their range can reach 1500 to 2000 km. In comparison with LGV projects, investment and implementation time are much lighter, because the infrastructure is already existing. In this sense, Austria is on the front line to reduce aviation growth¹⁵⁶... and to relaunch ICNs.

Aviation will not disappear for all that, but it can in no case benefit from a perpetual growth¹⁵⁷. The sector should therefore anticipate these evolutions to progressively concentrate on its most relevant market, which is intercontinental connections.

4.5/ To reconsider the environmental balance sheet of High Speed

Official figures of energy consumption have long been biased in favour of LGVs. The ADEME 2013 balance sheet¹⁵⁸ "excludes phases [...] of construction and upkeep of infrastructures"¹⁵⁹. Yet these impacts are significant: on the CO2 footprint of the Rhin-Rhône LGV, "42% of generated emissions on 30 years correspond to the construction phase"¹⁶⁰. And beyond 50 years, the ageing of many bridges and tunnels increases the price of maintenance. Let us also remind that High-Speed increases energy consumption and wear.

LGV projects also tend to create large artificial areas. The Tours-Bordeaux LGV has impacted in this way more than 5000 Ha¹⁶¹ (even more than the 2000 Ha of Notre-Dame-des-Landes airport¹⁶²). Their environmental impact¹⁶³ generates oppositions¹⁶⁴ which for example lead to cancel the Poitiers-Limoges LGV¹⁶⁵ and to the unfavourable recommendation of the public inquiry about the Bordeaux-Toulouse/Dax LGV¹⁶⁶. And as the Court of Audit indicates, "the cost of the avoided carbon ton is therefore especially high for LGV"¹⁶⁷.

146 Cour des comptes, *Les aéroports français face aux mutations du transport aérien*, 2008 ; see also Philippe-Michel Thibault et Philippe Bernard, *Train - avion, éternels rivaux* (documentaire), LCP, June 28th 2016

147 AFP, « *Ryanair placé sous contrôle judiciaire* », *Le Figaro*, February 3rd 2017 ; Oeil-20h, « *Les subventions publiques de Ryanair* », *France 2*, January 1st 2017 ; Gaëlle Nicolle, « *Ryanair vole avec l'argent du contribuable* », *Sputnik France*, January 11th 2017

148 Olivier Mary, « *Les avions ne payent pas d'impôts mais polluent un maximum* », *Reporterre*, February 11th 2014

149 Amélie Mougey, « *Combien coûterait votre billet d'avion sans subvention à la pollution* », *Terra Eco*, June 22nd 2015

150 The *solidarity tax on plane tickets* -- "*Chirac tax*" -- was implemented and promoted at the international level by France, which shows that increased taxes on aviation are possible. The EU makes kerosene taxation legal. For the moment, only François Hollande has implemented it.

151 Cuts in subsidies to "territory development air connections" are also taking place: Senate, *Transports aériens*, November 19th 2015, p. 50 ; see also: Observatoire des gaspillages, « *Vers la fin des subventions aux aéroports et compagnies low cost ?* », October 14th 2013

152 Association Négawatt, *Scénario négaWatt 2017-2050, Dossier de synthèse*, January 2017 (page 20) ; Lorelei Limousin, *Le transport aérien est un ennemi subventionné du climat*, *Reporterre*, June 22nd 2017 ;

153 *Audition de Mme Elisabeth Borne*, Commission de l'aménagement du territoire et du développement durable, Sénat, July 20th 2017, min. 12h15'

154 *Environnement : les émissions du trafic aérien français en 2015*, air journal, 2016

155 Poul Kattler, *Night trains versus airlines*, back-on-track.eu, October 2015

156 F.M. with AFP, *L'agrandissement de l'aéroport de Vienne interdit à cause... du réchauffement climatique*, *Le Monde.fr*, February 10th 2017

157 See: *Semaine d'Action Globale contre la croissance de l'aviation*, October 2016 : « Restez sur terre. La croissance de l'aviation est annulée pour cause de changement climatique ».

158 Source of the chart: ADEME, *Chiffres clés Air, Climat, Energie*, 2013 (p. 67). The balance sheet of TGV is not included.

159 Deloitte, ADEME, *Efficacité énergétique et environnementale des modes de transport*, 2008, p. 6

160 Réseau Ferré de France (RFF), *LGV Rhin-Rhône, le premier Bilan Carbone Ferroviaire Global*, 2011.

161 *Audition de M. Laurent Cavois, président de Ligne à Grande Vitesse Sud Europe Atlantique (LISEA)*, Sénat, January 31st 2017 ;

162 ACIPA-NDL, *Fiche n°11 : Agriculture : emprise, activité, emplois*, acipa-ndl.fr, April 17th 2016

163 Jade Lindgaard, *Ligne à Grande Vitesse: le «chantier du siècle» condamné pour pollutions*, *Mediapart*, December 7th 2016

164 Julie Gacon, Daniel Ibañez, Jean-Pierre Vial, *Sur la route... du Lyon-Turin*, *France Culture*, May 20th 2017 ; Jacques Monin, *Lyon-Turin : le tunnel qui valait 26 milliards*, *Secrets d'info*, *France Inter*, June 3rd 2017 ; *Lyon-Turin, un projet sous tension* - Vox Pop - Arte, November 9th 2014 ; France 5, *Le combat de Daniel Ibañez contre la LGV Lyon-Turin*, *C Politique*, January 15th 2017 ; *Transversale Sud : diversité de projets, mais quelle utilité ?*, *Transportrail*, February 2017 ; Guillaume Lamy, *À qui profitera la 2e ligne TGV Paris-Lyon ?*, *Lyon-Capitale*, 25 oct. 2012

165 Conseil d'État, *Décision contentieuse LGV Poitiers-Limoges*, 15 avril 2016.

166 Florence Guernalec, *LGV Bordeaux-Toulouse : la déclaration d'utilité publique annulée par un tribunal administratif*, *Mobilicité*, 29 juin 2017 ; Ximun Larre, « *Nouveau recours contre la LGV* », *MediaBask*, 1er août 2016 ;

AFP, *LGV Bordeaux-Toulouse et Bordeaux-Dax : avis défavorable de la commission d'enquête publique*, *MobiliCities*, 30 mars 2015 ;

Conclusions et avis de la commission d'enquête GPSO/LN, 27 mars 2015 ;

167 Sophie Fabrégat, *Des TGV coûteux, pour des gains environnementaux limités*, *Actu-environnement.com*, 23 octobre 2014

Besides, LGVs serve many airports. With the vision of "always faster", they also participate to create a growing idea that Europe should be accessible within a few hours, which leads to an increase of air connections. In this sense, LGV lines have their part of responsibility in aviation growth.

In parallel to this, LGV stations outside of cities are encouraging the use of cars. In comparison, train stations in city centres are more easily accessible by foot or with public transports. A corrected comparative assessment ICN/TGV would help to turn the "all High-Speed" page.

To be studied: To ask the CGEDD to evaluate the ecological compared cost to link, for example, a metropolis and a medium city separated by 800 km, by ICN, ICJ, TGV+TER, plane, car-pooling and coach. The idea would be to measure the ecological performance of the ICN with a high service quality, trains with 850 seats/berths and high occupancy rates.

4.6/ Is the ICN old-fashioned? Transports between need for soberness and technological headlong rush

Dismantling of ICN was based on promises of great LGV projects for the South of France, while ICN were described as a "nostalgic" mode. "I am nostalgic of night trains; but yes, now we are in a new world" the SNCF CEO declared¹⁶⁸. Promoted as a necessary "modernity", these LGV promises have risen expectations everywhere. Seen from Toulouse, "to have the TGV" seems to entail almost "instantaneous" displacements, along with economic growth¹⁶⁹... Yet the LGV would mostly serve the metropolis, and only towards Paris – and in more than 3 hours –. It does not solve long-distance travels from Occitany. This region is indeed less and less linked to the rest of the country, because of withdrawals of ICN and ICJ. **The alleged obsolescence of ICN therefore shows a headlong rush towards "all High-Speed".**

Promises of futuristic mobility go beyond LGVs. **At a time when we should go back to more sober modes, there is a craze for so-called modern modes, especially in the media.** After the dreams of free-energy cars¹⁷⁰, vacuum-levitating trains are coming back¹⁷¹, the autonomous car is presented as a revolution¹⁷², and flying cars are back (without any considerations on their environmental impact)¹⁷³.

Besides, France as well as Europe are preparing "low-emission mobility strategies"¹⁷⁴, which will mostly finance electric cars¹⁷⁵. Yet an investment in low energy-consuming modes (e.g. bike and ICN) would give more immediate results and more behaviour changes on the long term¹⁷⁶. As for the SNCF¹⁷⁷ and the Occitany Region¹⁷⁸ they subsidize the Hyperloop project which raises fund by selling its speed dream¹⁷⁹.

This hope in technical progress also denotes a refusal to see the necessary changes to be made. It is hard for example to give up using the individual car when life choices have been made which imply long daily travel in rural areas... Rather than questioning these life or society choices, a technological revolution is expected. This inaction and loss of time can prove terrible in the fight against climate change...

To put it in a nutshell, the sober modes are already known, and **the transports of the 21st century may well be similar to those of the... early 20th century**: walking and biking, trams and public transports, organized hitch-hiking or "spontaneous car-pooling" (which need not wait for a "connected mobility")¹⁸⁰, trains on the existing railway network, and ICN for very long distances...¹⁸¹

4.7/ The precedent of the return of trams

In a few decades, we went from the "all-road" to low-cost airlines, then to "all High-Speed", and more recently to coaches. The next one should be the Intercity trains. Thus to withdraw ICNs, one of the most ecological alternatives, could be a historical mistake reminding of the dismantling of trams in the middle of the 20th century.

168 Sarah Lefèvre, [Les 8 arguments du PDG de la SNCF pour supprimer les trains de nuit sont bidons](#), StreetVox, March 23rd 2017

169 Carole Delga : «La grande vitesse, une question de justice territoriale», La Dépêche, August 1st 2017

170 [La voiture à énergie libre de Nicolas Tesla a 78 ans et fini sa vie au fond d'une casse](#), Energie Libre, January 6th 2016

171 Pauline Moullot, [Paris-Amsterdam en 30 minutes dès 2021: les fantasmes d'Elon Musk contaminent la presse](#), June 28th 2017 ; Adrien Bonetto, [Innovation : Paris-Moscou en une heure, c'est \(bientôt\) possible !](#), Le Point, May 21st 2014 ; Lara Charmeil, [L'Hyperloop, ce train qui mettrait Paris à 35 minutes de Marseille](#), WeDemain, June 29th 2015 ;

172 Karl Rettino-Parazelli, [La révolution de la voiture autonome passe par le partage](#), Ledevor, July 25th 2017

173 Elsa Trujillo, [Uber met le cap sur les voitures volantes](#), June 28th 2017

174 Environnement Ministry, [Stratégie de développement de la mobilité propre, document préparatoire](#), June 2016

European Commission, [Une stratégie européenne pour une mobilité à faible taux d'émissions](#), July 20th 2016

175 Interview de Eric Vidalenc, [Transport du futur : "La voiture pour tous, c'est fini"](#), Nom de Zeus, 2017

176 Tim Burns, [Swapping cars for bikes, not diesel for electric, is the best route to clean air](#), The Guardian, July 31st 2017

[Le développement des énergies renouvelables implique toujours plus d'activité minière, souligne la Banque mondiale](#), Reporterre, July 31st 2017

177 [Rencontre SNCF – Hyperloop](#), SNCF, November 10th 2016

178 [Avec Hyperloop, la Région prend le « train du futur »](#), La Région Occitanie, January 24th 2017

179 Pauline Moullot, [Paris-Amsterdam en 30 minutes dès 2021: les fantasmes d'Elon Musk contaminent la presse](#), June 28th 2017 ;

180 See [Rezopouce](#)

181 See also François Briens, [Il n'y a pas de solution technologique à la crise écologique](#), Reporterre, August 30th 2017

Trams were neglected and disappeared from our cities between 1920 and 1960¹⁸². At that time, the adaptation of cities to cars was generating popular enthusiasm and was concentrating a great part of public funding for urban mobility. Considered "out-of-date" 50 years ago, trams have suddenly become modern and many cities are dreaming of it. The ICN is neglected and threatened today, with a scenario similar to the story of trams 50 years before, and with the same reasons: a craze for other means of transport, often more expensive and more environmentally damaging, not really more efficient but generating more economic activity and presented with a positive image of "technical progress" and "modernity". Yet the climate emergency does not allow us to neglect good solutions. Then, to avoid repeating the mistake, how can the ICN be reinvented today?

5/ Brainstorming to extend again overnight trains across Europe

5.1/ Which national night connections for the 2020 decade?

Since 2016, ICJ have recovered some priority in investments¹⁸³. In 2017, a change of view is also operating about the overnight service: SNCF Intercités organized a giant brainstorming to "reinvent the night train"¹⁸⁴. This is the moment to come up with propositions!¹⁸⁵

✓ **Considerable improvements can be obtained for a small price.** For example optimized connections at borders with regional trains (it would be interesting for the Paris-Nice to run again to Ventimiglia)¹⁸⁶, optimized timetables (departure around 22pm in Paris and between 20pm and 23pm elsewhere, arrival in Paris between 6:30 and 6:50), showers in train stations¹⁸⁷ and to sell tickets 3 months before departure. Cleanness is also a key element often seen in inquiries. Toilets should be clean, in service (!) and with water (!)...

✓ **To provide daily services** improves both quality and visibility of connections: passengers know that they can travel when then need. Besides, to run trains is not much more expensive than not using them.

✓ **To use longer trains, approaching the maximal capacity** (15-16 carriages at departure from Paris-Austerlitz). It is important to increase the number of coaches per destination, because the ICN are often full. This will improve self-financing.

✓ **To reopen lines:** many connections have been withdrawn over the last years and it is now time to reverse this trend. Transverse links should restart to connect between them the most remote parts of the country, with destinations including Luxembourg, Portbou, Strasbourg, Irun, Geneva, Quimper/Brest, Ventimiglia, Lille/Bruxelles... Regions located more than 750km (or 550km without LGV) away from Paris need at least a link with the capital city: Saint-Gervais/Bourg-Saint-Maurice, Briançon, Rodez/Albi, Latour-de-Carol, Luchon, Ventimiglia, Portbou, Irun, as well as the Cévennes and Aubrac lines.

✓ **To reopen intermediate stopovers:** an advantage of the ICN is that it can serve a great number of medium or small cities to irrigate territories. For example, on the lines to Strasbourg, stops in Besançon and Montbéliard would enable to increase frequenting of trains.

✓ In Germany like in France, the ICN have changed name, but "Intercity night" is the name still engraved in memories and popular. The name "Intercity night" or "Intercités de Nuit" has the advantage to be easily understandable in various European countries.

✓ The motorail trains are threatened. But they are promising because they are a complement to electric cars: the latter having a limited autonomy, these trains enable to recharge them during the night on the train and thus to travel 1000km with a combination car+train+car. **Motorail trains are promoting electric mobility even for vacations !**

✓ See Annex B for concrete suggestions to optimize the existing ICNs, and Annex C to see the aims for 2030.

182 [Tramways parisiens : le démantèlement](#), TransportParis, January 10th 2017 ; Laure Gabus, [Ce que le tram 12 dit des Genevois](#), la Tribune de Genève, May 23rd 2012 ; Sidney Ribaux, [La petite histoire de la disparition des tramways](#) [Canada], Journal Metro, May 27th 2013 ; Richard Bergeron, [Le complot anti-tramway exemplaire de General Motor](#) [US], Meilleur 10 ans plus tard ! N° 239 - May 2005

183 Lionel Steinmann, [La révolution discrète des trains Intercités](#), Les Echos, December 26th 2016

184 M.-H. P., [Trains de nuit. La SNCF rêve de nouveaux services](#), La lettre du cheminot, May 1st 2017

185 [La SNCF réfléchit à ses trains de nuit... enfin ?](#), Transportrail, April 27th 2017

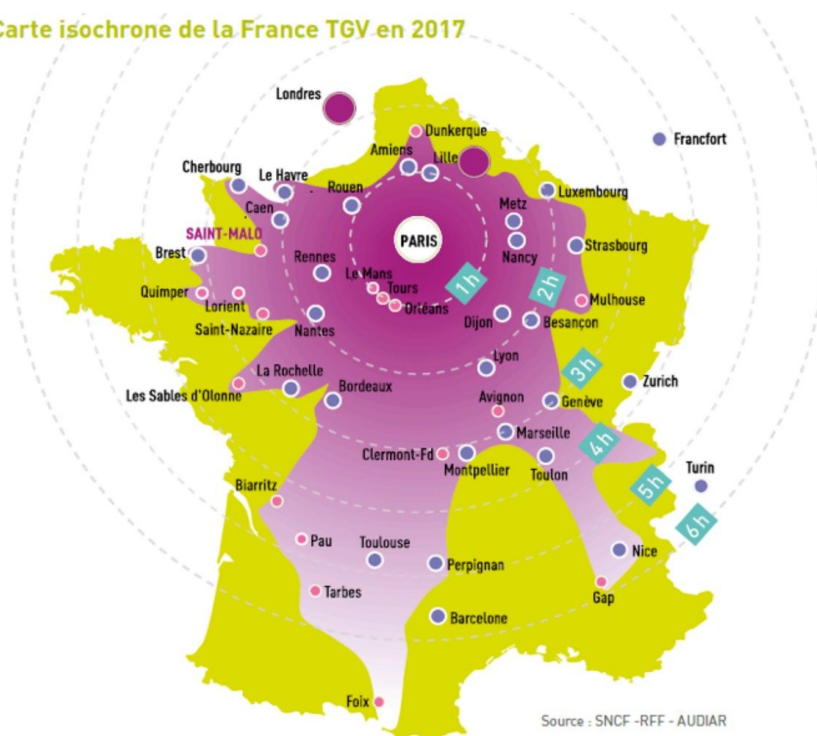
186 In the future TET convention, SNCF should be forced to offer optimised connections in stations:

* At Port Bou, La Tour Carol/Puigcerda, Irun, Vintimille, etc with the foreign operator (Renfe in Spain).

* With regional trains, in Perpignan to Villefranche-Vernet ; in Carcassonne to Quillan ; in Narbonne to Béziers ; in Figeac to Aurillac and Villefranche de Rouergue ; in Rodez to Millau and Albi, etc. (this list being not comprehensive)

187 The [showers in Paris-Austerlitz](#) exist but are expensive (9,90 €). They used to cost 6 € in 2011. Could the ticket include a reduced fare for the shower?

■ Carte isochrone de la France TGV en 2017



The isochronous map shows relevancy of the overnight radial lines from Paris to Tarbes-Irun, Toulouse, Latour-de-Carol, Rodez-Albi, Perpignan-Portbou, Gap-Briançon, Ventimiglia, and on the "Aubrac" and "Cévenol" lines (these journeys all take more than 4 hours).

5.2/ The unexpected potential of transverse ICN lines

Transverse connections are too often "forgotten" by decision makers. The railway planning – maybe too "Parisian" – appears to forget that 81% of the French population lives outside Paris area¹⁸⁸ and that they need to be able to get across the country without going through Paris.

Transverse overnight relations have all been withdrawn. It was said that they had less passengers than radial links to Paris. However, few long transverse connections have direct day trains. What's more, transverse air connections between medium cities are not much frequented and quite expensive. These long journeys are sometimes poorly served by roads, especially because of the difficulty to cross the Massif Central in the South half of France. Besides, as opposed to day trains, a single overnight train generally suits all passengers, which enables to gather them in a single daily train. **The ICNs are therefore capable to concentrate an important part of transverse displacements, in trains with great capacity.** And already, available occupancy figures indicate that transverse overnight connections are almost more popular than radial lines¹⁸⁹. What's more, the track access fees are lower on transverse paths (a reduction of about 40%).

For too long th TGV has been seen as "instantaneous": where it goes it would replace all other long-distance modes. Thus some transverse IC were replaced by "diagonal" TGV connections, going around Paris. For example a TGV connection between Nantes and Marseilles induces a high cost (more than 1100km of LGV tolls) for a journey more than 6 hours long and a ticket price often above 100€, which is not very attractive. And if on top of that there is a cumbersome change of train station in Paris, the offer becomes even less interesting. Therefore the TGV is not the unique magical solution everywhere. **The ICN is relevant to complete the daytime offer beyond 750km** (or beyond 550km if there is no high-speed line), on radials and even more on transverse connections.

A related problem is that of the saturation of the Paris-Lyon LGV. Transverse Intercity connections without going through Paris would enable to ease this bottleneck and to gain time and money. Note for example the direct line from Bordeaux to Lyon, that the region Nouvelle-Aquitaine is willing to reopen¹⁹⁰.

188 Population Île de France : 11 959 807 inhab. in 2013 which represents 18,8% of total population of Continental France (source [INSEE](#))

189 The four-branch transverse line Luxembourg/Strasbourg – Nice/Portbou carried 276 000 passengers in 2014, which means 756 passengers/train. During the same year, one of the best radial connections, the Paris-Briançon/Nice ICN carried 255 000 passengers, which means 350 passengers per train.[wikipedia](#).

190 Lucas Valdenaire, [SNCF : la ligne Bordeaux-Guérét-Montluçon va reprendre du service](#), France Bleu Creuse, April 25th 2017



Demonstration in Strasbourg: the extremities of the country need to be linked by ICNs.

A proposition to be brought forward by deputies: to transfer the SNCF executive board in Toulouse. There the good questions will come up: if from Paris "everything" is at a travel time of 3 hours, from Toulouse can one go to Nantes in train without spending the whole day? How long does it take to reach Grenoble? Nice? Strasbourg, Nancy? Lille? Normandy? The map of travel times in train is always drawn from Paris. What would this map look like from Toulouse, Perpignan, Bordeaux, Strasbourg or Nice?

5.3/ A future European rolling stock?

As in many European countries, the ICN rolling stock has not been renovated regularly. Its ageing induces many breakdowns, delays and cancellations, entailing financial losses. The Court of Audit underlined the very old age of carriages, built in the 1980's. It also reminds "their well-known robustness and a comfort level which remains appreciated. [...] To maintain this service [8 overnight lines] would require renovation of 300 carriages before 2018. [...] The cost of this is estimated by SNCF around 120 million euros."¹⁹¹ The former government is said to have asked for renovation of 60 to 80 carriages in 2018¹⁹², out of the 300 circulating in 2015, which is not much¹⁹³. This will allow for 5 more years using these coaches, or even 10 years or more in case of a complete renovation¹⁹⁴.

In addition to this renovation effort, the State should also already anticipate buying new overnight rolling stock in order to maintain the service beyond 2020-2025. This would send a clear signal to national rolling stock builders to convince them to take position on this market segment, abandoned for several decades¹⁹⁵. Note that the Spanish company CAF – also present in Occitany region – produces berth coaches¹⁹⁶.

After the United-Kingdom¹⁹⁷, Finland and Russia¹⁹⁸, Austria also issued a tender for new ICN rolling stock. Most of the European stock needs to be changed, which is an important industrial opportunity. In order to lower costs, a European-wide cooperation would be relevant, to avoid having each country building a small number of carriages. On the contrary, an important order uniting several countries would enable to have the same compatible rolling stock, with a choice of comfort that customers would find in all these countries. This would make the product easier to present and to sell.

Would it be possible to start a feasibility study, to define a common requirement framework on a European scale for ICN rolling stock?

¹⁹¹ Court of Audit, *Les trains Intercités : sortir de l'indécision*, February 2015, p. 243, 244, 247

¹⁹² SNCF now evaluates the cost of renewal at 30 millions per ICN line. *La SNCF rêve de nouveaux services pour ses trains de nuit*, Ville Rail&Transports, lettre confidentielle n°157, April 10th 2017 ; AFP, *France: l'ensemble des trains Intercités renouvelés d'ici 2025*, *La Croix*, January 12th 2017

¹⁹³ In the meantime, 24 TGV trains will be thrown away instead of being renovated, in order to give 420 million euros of activity to Alstom, for 15 new TGV trains. This order will be financed on the budget allocated to Intercity trains. See:

Lionel Steinmann, *L'Etat transfère à la SNCF la commande des 15 TGV à Alstom*, *Les Echos*, February 15th 2017 ;

Marc Carémantrant, *Rebondissement dans l'affaire des TGV d'Alstom*, *Rail Passion*, May 3rd 2017

¹⁹⁴ Note that "Corail" carriages do not respect European standards any more and are still running thanks to an exemption.

¹⁹⁵ Lionel Steinmann and Derek Perrotte, « *Alstom : les questions que pose l'achat des TGV par l'Etat* », *Les Echos*, October 4th 2016

¹⁹⁶ *Grande-Bretagne : Serco signe avec CAF, GBRf et Alstom pour le Caledonian Sleeper*, Ville Rail&Transports, February 16th 2015

C. Etxeberri, M. Mariscal, *CAF abrirá en 2018 una planta de montaje en Reino Unido*, *Diario de Gipuzkoa*, September 15th 2016

Caledonian Sleeper reveals new look and Riviera Sleeper fleet overhaul gathers pace at Wolverton, *rail.co.uk*, July 5th 2016

¹⁹⁷ *Brand new Caledonian Sleeper trains from 2018*, *Caledonian Sleeper*, February 13th 2015

¹⁹⁸ *La Russie livrera 20 wagons à la SNCF*, *TASS*, RBTH, Feb. 20th 2016 ; *La Russie livrera des wagons à la SNCF*, *Sputniknews*, Feb. 19th 2016

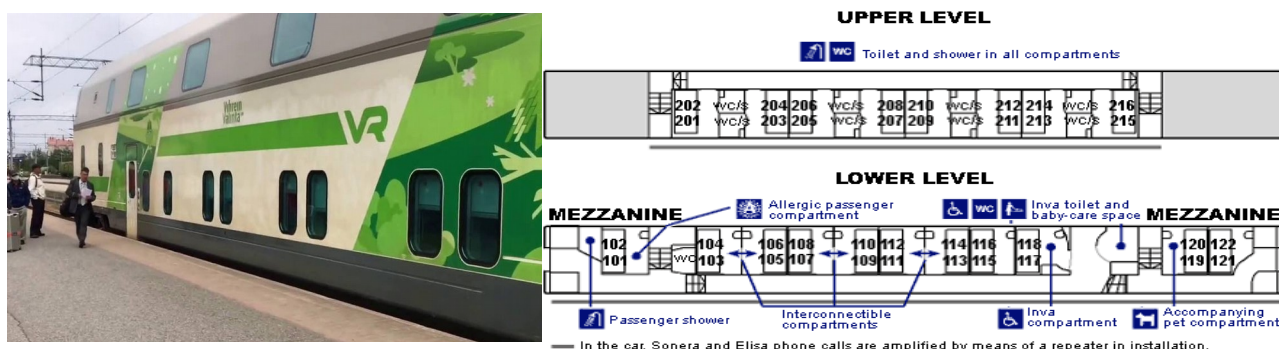
✓ Future equipments should include **4 comfort levels: reclining seats**, which were removed on some lines but were eventually recognized necessary to compete with coaches and for the many people looking for the cheapest tickets. Reclining seats carriages have a greater capacity and they save laundry. Compartments with 6 berths (2nd class) or 4 berths (1st class) are the main service. **Private compartments** (1 or 2 beds) can seduce the "business class" market and thus compete with planes. In fact it is the most expensive and the cheapest comfort categories which are sold out first. The average price is the most difficult to sell¹⁹⁹.

✓ To include showers accessible for all passengers gives a psychological information, which brings the train closer to the standard of hotels. In fact they are not much used, and thus 1 shower is enough for 100 passengers. Many of them are going home and do not need them. Showers in train stations are also relevant. However the price of 9€90 in Paris Austerlitz is too high, and generates a psychological barrier.

✓ A bar is not enough for journeys longer than 5-6 hours. ÖBB proposes a breakfast served directly in compartments.

✓ The ICN also has a tourist dimension. The combination train+bike needs to be developed²⁰⁰. Future ICN cars with more space for bikes are a common need throughout Europe²⁰¹.

✓ The Health Ministry recommends to avoid phone calls during fast displacements, and especially in trains²⁰². But passengers having free time, usage of phones on trains is particularly intense²⁰³. **To propose in each train a "white carriage", with phones turned off** and no Wi-Fi – as there used to be non-smoking carriages – would make transport accessible to fragile people²⁰⁴. This would also help passengers to talk to each other.



New duplex carriages for Finnish ICN: an optimization of space!

5.4/ False hopes on rail liberalization versus European collaboration for night trains

It was suggested that "exterior" operators should take over ICNs through free-market opening²⁰⁵. Actually, private operators will have, or already have, quite many difficulties on rail²⁰⁶. Veolia is withdrawing after important losses abroad²⁰⁷. A major part of European railway companies have 100% of their capital public-owned²⁰⁸. The historical operator (with public funding) remains dominant even in countries open to the

199 The Spanish Trenhotel focuses on luxury cabins and seated cars.

200 [Trains de nuit : Une solution pour une rando vélo ?](#), bougersebouger.fr, September 13th 2016

201 « [Actif-Trafic demande plus d'emplacements vélo dans les ICN](#) », petition Actif-Trafic.ch, 2017

202 [Téléphones mobiles, santé et sécurité](#), Ministère de la santé, juillet 2012 ; Campaign ["Tout savoir sur le bon usage du portable"](#), Health Ministry. See also [Conditions générales de vente et de service des offres prépayées](#) Orange, July 6th 2017

203 Michèle Rivasi, [Exposition aux ondes électromagnétiques: les travailleurs demandent des mesures indépendantes pour évaluer les risques sanitaires](#), 8 fév. 2012 ; Fanny Doumayrou, [Dans les tunnels du métro, la bataille des ondes a commencé](#), L'Humanité, January 21st 2013

204 [Pour le droit de voyager dans des wagons sans wifi et sans ondes](#), pétition, PRIARTEM, April 10th 2017

205 Michaël Verbauwheide, [Le 4ème paquet ferroviaire, ou l'anti COP21](#), le Vif, December 18th 2016

206 Fabrice Gliszczynski, ["Sans modèle économique du TGV, l'ouverture à la concurrence ne fonctionnera pas" \(Pepcy\)](#), La Tribune, June 30th 2017
Lionel Steinmann and Pierre de Gasquet, [La SNCF descend d'Italo, le TGV privé italien](#), Les Echos, July 17th 2015

207 Jean-François Arnaud and Anna Rousseau, [Pourquoi Veolia dit adieu aux transports](#), Challenges.fr, December 6th 2011

208 Most railway operators are 100% state-owned: in Spain (Renfe, Adif, Feve and FGC), in Italy (Thello and Trenitalia), in Belgium (SNCB), in Switzerland (CFF), in Austria (ÖBB), in Germany (DB), in Sweden (SJ, SL, Inlandsbanenn and BV), in Denmark (Banedanmark, DSB) and in France (SNCF).

For more informations on the detail of ownership of these companies, search their name on the web.

private sector (Germany²⁰⁹, Italy²¹⁰, Sweden²¹¹, Norway²¹², Austria²¹³, Denmark²¹⁴, the Netherlands²¹⁵). Even "new" operators are often subsidiaries of (public-owned) companies from other European countries. Note that Transdev is 70% public-owned and Keolis is 100%²¹⁶. In the United-Kingdom, the infrastructure manager Network Rail came back to the public sector, which enable to improve security, after two severe incidents caused by the ageing network and lack of investment during private ownership²¹⁷. Railway operators are private²¹⁸, but quite greedy of... public funding. The Public Service Obligations to private companies have already proved able to threaten service to secondary destinations and security while bringing the risk of a sharp rise and important variations of prices²¹⁹. "It is clear that privatization did not work, it has rather brought fragmentation and inefficiency. Waste money [in subsidises] could be better used today and help improving the service and reduce the price of tickets in the future. A majority of Britons is willing that, but we are in front of the ideological position of a government which denies facts"²²⁰

It is therefore mostly States which get involved in rail. One reason is that **rail is a complex industry which works better if strongly centralised**. To go beyond ideological visions also means to accept the idea that some sectors like railways can be operated by a unified public company. Nowadays, in a certain schizophrenia, **public companies are investing in uncertain projects abroad**²²¹ to compete on most frequented lines. **In the meanwhile, they disengage at home from their public service mission of territory development.**

Concerning national ICNs, which are often small lines, it is not likely that private operators will assume important investments and risks, while SNCF owns the network and has kept saying it wanted the ICN to disappear. An exterior company would be in an even weaker position to negotiate track access fees with SNCF-Réseau. In any case a large number of national and international lines should be relaunched. **For new companies there is already space** to create international ICN lines to Spain, Germany or Italy and they do not seem to be in a hurry to do it. Thello (100% subsidiary of Trenitalia) only runs – and with difficulties – one overnight line, Paris-Venice²²². What's more, the State can ask the national public operator to run the service at equilibrium – which means with no profits – but on the contrary a private or foreign operator would want to earn money, proportionally to its investments and risks, which ICN cannot offer.

Note to conclude that the European Parliament has ordered a report listing all the reasons why ICN operated by private companies are not viable²²³. Many reasons are by the way misleading²²⁴. A logical conclusion of this report is that the ICN remains a public service mission.

Under these conditions, the French government cannot wait for the service to come from hypothetical "new" operators. Sweden and Austria, although allowing private railway operators, have relaunched their ICN through their national state-owned companies SJ and ÖBB. **The ICN is a strategic activity which is to be operated by our national company, the SNCF, under control of the State.**

Questioned by German deputies on the alternative Luna-Liner project suggested by NGOs²²⁵, DB officials have declared "we have thoroughly studied Luna-Liner. This corresponds to 97% of the DB network existing in the past. [...] Thus DB cannot do it alone, and the State will have to finance renewal of rolling stock, and this would require a European-wide collaboration". The Luna-Liner project shows that a strongly connected network is more efficient to manage rolling stock and train crews. A European company owned, for example at 10-15% by each of the multiple companies DB, SNCF, ÖBB, Trenitalia, etc would enable to run this network in cooperation, with national staff in each country.²²⁶

209 Pauline Houédé, [La difficile libéralisation du rail allemand](#), Les Echos, August 1st 2017

210 In Italy, NTV competes with FS on high-speed, with 20% owned SNCF. See also: Philippe Ridet, [En difficulté, le transporteur ferroviaire italien NTV interpelle l'Etat](#), Le Monde.fr, September 3rd 2014

211 Some private operators other than Transdev and DSB (public Danish company) operate in Sweden (but are not dominant).

212 NSB and LinxAB in Norway are mostly state-owned.

213 In Austria a private company (Westbahn) competes with ÖBB. See: [La SNCF réduit sa part dans l'autrichienne Westbahn](#), AFP, Finances.net, April 23rd 2013

214 Subsidiaries of DB operate in Denmark (but are in minority)

215 In the Netherlands the infrastructure manager ProRail and the main operator are 100% state-owned. Subsidiaries of DB, SNCF and Transdev also operate but are minority.

216 See also Stéphane Ortega, [Comment la SNCF a créé des centaines de filiales pour mieux préparer le démantèlement du transport ferroviaire](#), Bastamag, July 5th 2017

217 Tristan de Bourbon, [Des trains anglais plus sûrs mais coûteux](#), L'opinion, May 31st 2016

218 Main operators : Arriva (which is a subsidiary of DB), First Group, National Express, Go Ahead, Stagecoach.

Gérald Roux, « [C'est comment ailleurs ? Les tarifs du train en Grande-Bretagne](#) », Radio France, March 13th 2017 ; see also « [Grèves, retards, prix prohibitifs : pourquoi certains Britanniques veulent renationaliser leurs chemins de fer](#) », France Info, December 16th 2016

219 Julian Mischi and Valérie Solano, « [36 compagnies pour une ligne de chemin de fer](#) », Le monde diplomatique, June 2016

220 Quoted in Sasha Mitchell, [Au Royaume-Uni, la privatisation des chemins de fer déraile](#), La Tribune, January 9th 2017

221 SNCF communicates on this vision on its webpage: "SNCF will make 50% of its revenues abroad in 2025."

222 Marc Fressoz, [Thello stoppe sa marche sur Rome mais veut titiller la SNCF en Italie et en région PACA](#), Mobilicités, October 8th 2013

223 [Night trains in Europe : the end of the line ?](#), Policy Dept, Transport&Tourism, European Parliament, May 8th 2017

224 Poul Kattler, [The end of the line – we don't think so !](#), Back-on-track, May 17th 2017

225 [LunaLiner, "The new collaboration for European ICN"](#), [Bahn für alle](#), 2016-2017.

226 It is the usual cooperation model: Alleo (SNCF and DB), Elipsos (50% SNCF and 50% Renfe), Lyria (74% SNCF and 26% CFF), Thalys (62% SNCF, 28% SNCB, 10% DB).

5.5/ To mobilize actors

The problem of the ICN is that it is prejudiced. A pedagogical action is necessary in order to:

- ✓ To convince **SNCF** that the ICN can come close to self-financing by volume. In a commercial logic, it is a "good product". The ICN has selling arguments: it is a climate-friendly product, which connects people. It has been neglected for years and can for this reason offer a nice growth during the years 2020. The ICN is ideal to segment customers because each passenger chooses the level of comfort he can afford: when he chooses the reclining seat it is because he is looking for small prices. As for the richer traveller, he will accept to pay for a private compartment. Besides, public funding for territory development is available. It is also important to note that relaunching the ICN is a key point to prevent SNCF from being forced to start again new costly LGV projects to the South.

- ✓ **The State** can realize its missions for remote regions and for climate through a sober financial effort. The point is mostly to make the necessary investments in rolling stock (note that the latter has been perfectly paid for itself until its age limit) and to make sure of the attitude change in the SNCF group. For the time being, SNCF imposes too high track access fees and overheads which do not seem justified. It will be necessary **to force SNCF to clarify its accountancy**.

- ✓ States are offering subsidies to buy electric cars, and are dreaming of autonomous cars. But there exists an electric vehicle where passengers do not have to drive: the train. Customers of ICN therefore also deserve these subsidies. After 2025-2030 we know that the combustion motor will be losing interest: it is an opportunity for ICN.

- ✓ **Bruxelles** has a quite bureaucratic image, never acting. To regenerate a continental ICN network would be a positive project for EU, similar to Interrail²²⁷ or Erasmus for the young. ICNs are trains which unite Europe and avoid the environmental impact of planes. The EU is not used to investing on a European scale. Yet this could be a nice symbolic program for European cohesion, if Bruxelles is not opposed to a unified system.

- ✓ There is a problem of closing borders within Europe: it is possible that Interior ministers prefer that people travel by plane, to facilitate controls. But this goes against European integration.

- ✓ To convince **local and regional authorities**, it is very important to show them that for the same amount of money invested, financing ICN in all directions would offer much better connections in France and Europe than LGV projects.

- ✓ To tell **the building industry, the aviation sector and their employees** that, their activities having an important environmental footprint, they cannot keep growing for ever. On the contrary other activities are to start: the ecological transition creates more jobs than it destroys. And these jobs are quality jobs²²⁸. The transition must be anticipated to enable reconversion of professions thanks to training²²⁹.

- ✓ To explain to the plane and individual car **users** that the ICN will enable them to keep travelling on very long distances while preserving the climate. The image of ICN has got old-fashioned, as has one day the image of trams and bikes. Communication is a key element for them to come back²³⁰. A great part of population has good memories of ICN. A minimum **promotion** effort will be efficient: "Save the climate: for your long-distance travels, choose the night train!", "Go across France during your sleep!", "To fall asleep in Strasbourg, to wake up on the beach!", "Wish to ascent the Mont-Blanc? First get on a sleeper!", and so on.

- ✓ **Tourism** in the years 2000 was oriented towards intercontinental plane travels, with an important environmental impact. In the 2010's already, the trend goes back to local tourism. The ICN will help creating a green tourism, which gives value to the national and European territory, and with a reduced carbon footprint.

- ✓ The ICN is important for "green tourism": by reaching rural and mountainous areas, the ICN can carry bikes and also reduce the number of individual cars on destination. This would reduce pollution and would save space, which is very limited in the mountains. This is why ÖBB offers the combined ticket for the "final mile". Thus local authorities can prefer to finance the ICN rather than costly parking spaces, where cars often stay without being used during the stay. The ICN arrives in the morning and allows connection with local public transports, whereas daytime trains often arrive late in the evening, which makes things more complicate because of the absence of public transports late at night.

In parallel, SNCF should also **involve passengers**, railwaymen and local authorities through regular users associations. Knowledge of users and proximity will help identify dysfunctions which accumulated year by year, and would enable the launch of commercial offers (for example packages including night train + a local offer). To inform these actors, the future TET convention [between the State and SNCF for Intercity trains] should include publication of key figures for each line: number of forecast service days, and number of trains effectively run; number of offered seats and occupancy rates for each circulation; number of full trains, etc.

227 A Member of European Parliament suggested that the EU could finance an Interrail ticket for all youngs aged 18, to help discovering Europe.

228 World Health Organization, [Les emplois liés aux transports respectueux de l'environnement et de la santé](#), 2014

229 Plateforme emplois-climat, [un million d'emplois pour le climat](#), December 2016

230 A good example : Camille Marion, [Cinq raisons de tester le train de nuit](#), Association Transports et Environnement Suisse, May 3rd 2017



The "Nightjet" network of the public Austrian company ÖBB and its partners

5.6/ And for European distances over 750 km? Plane? Or the ICN!

Like the hare and the turtle, the TGV can cover only a maximum of 750km in 3 hours. The ICN, by running a whole night between 100 and 200 km/h can cover more than 1500km: Strasbourg-Irun, withdrawn in 2014, was 1350km long. Modernising tracks will enable **a reach of more than 2000km**²³¹. And even staying in the range 550-1500kmn **the ICN is very adapted to travel on the European scale**.

The Talgo night trains Paris-Madrid and Paris-Barcelona were withdrawn at the end of 2013 when inaugurating the TGV Paris-Barcelona. In TGV, a Paris-Madrid journey lasts 10 hours, and the traveller can no longer choose to travel by night on a sleeper train. In 2016, the LGV carried 800 000 passengers, which is what the Talgo did in... 2006²³². The Perpignan-Figueras LGV went bankrupt because of lack of travellers (only 15% of the forecast passenger traffic, and 8% of freight traffic²³³). Taken over by the States, the hard economic equilibrium of this LGV remains hard to find²³⁴. The Talgos were self-financing better than the LGV. There again, financing the "alleged deficit" (5 millions a year, but this is probably exaggerated) during a century would have cost much less than the LGV.

The choice to replace international Intercity connections by LGVs has also been criticized concerning the Benelux³⁰. Isn't it now great time **to give a new impulse to night trains, as a complement to daytime TGV services** for travels of more than 750 km? For example Marseilles, which is located more than 750 km away from Paris, is served by daytime TGVs and, since 2015, by the daily Paris-Nice Intercity night train.

5.7/ "We are at the verge of a renaissance for night trains in Europe"

In Europe, after decades of underinvestment, rebirth of ICN is now taking place²³⁵. The social European expectations are strong for ecological transports²³⁶. Suggestions of a European-wide ICN network,

²³¹ See the report about "Very Long Distance Night Trains": International Union of Railways and DB, [Night Trains 2.0](#), 2012

²³² In 2006, the rail traffic on main international lines (Talgo) carried 811 000 between the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of Europe. Add to this a part of the 260 021 passengers of the ICN Paris-Portbou and Strasbourg/Luxembourg-Portbou in 2015, as well as a part of those of the Paris-Irun, Geneva-Irun and Ventimiglia-Irun, withdrawn in 2013-2017. Compare this with the 826 439 passengers carried by the LGV in 2016: high-speed has not brought any progress in favour of modal shift to rail...

²³³ [Sncf réseau rapport financier semestriel 2016](#), PriceWaterhouseCoopers, ErnstYoung, June 30th 2016

²³⁴ Lionel Steinmann, [Le besoin de réduire les pertes menace les lignes Paris-Barcelone et Paris-Genève](#), Les Echos, July 25th 2017

²³⁵ The list of existing overnight lines existing in Europe is available on [entrain.ch](#), [rail.cc](#), [seat61.com](#) ou [Interrail](#)

²³⁶ [A petition](#) gathered 36 996 signatures in Germany See also: [« back-on-track »](#), <http://savethenighttrain.eu/>

"Luna-liner" are presented by NGOs²³⁷. Italy is re-opening lines. The Austrian railway company ÖBB have taken over night lines closed down by Germany and Switzerland²³⁸. In Germany, DB dismantled its sleeper trains in December 2016. But already in 2017, traffic is rising, be it in Intercity trains with seats operating by night (run by DB) or in the "Nightjet" sleeper trains run by ÖBB²³⁹. In Sweden, the line Stockholm-Malmö gained +65% occupancy in one year, thanks to a reduction of 30%-50% of prices **to reach profitability by volume**. This success comes with 4 comfort levels, showers, optimized timetables, and an active communication which fosters modal shift from plane to the ICN²⁴⁰. In Austria as well as in Sweden, the ICN are doing better than expected. They have reached economic equilibrium from the first year²⁴¹. The European Parliament is also interested in relaunching night trains, and for the deputy Jakob Dalunde, "we are at the verge of a renaissance for night trains"²⁴².

Finland overcame its "ICN crisis" already in 2008²⁴³. The service was maintained and modernised with **duplex carriages** offering more space and showers²⁴⁴. In countries in the South, the ICN are also being modernised²⁴⁵. In Ukraine, the transport minister is opposed to a reduction of the ICN offer and explains why²⁴⁶. In Russia, distances are important and train almost means ICN: it is not rare to travel day and night for more than 24 hours. With at least three comfort levels, including a cheap one, it is an alternative to flying that Russia extends until Western Europe: it relaunched connections Paris-Moscow and Nice-Moscow²⁴⁷ with connections up to China and Japan.

For SNCF, even if it dreams of it sometimes²⁴⁸, there is no need to go so far away. Europe has a reasonable size: Paris-Prague is only 1000km, Lyon-Naples 1200km, Paris-Warsaw 1600km, Amsterdam-Barcelona 1600km. Denmark is only 1200km away from Paris. Even Istanbul is only 2400km away from Lyon. Like Austria and Central Europe, France has a good geographical position. Thus it has a key role to play for ICN in Western Europe. It could then be **a motor for modal shift from plane to rail** and for fight against climate change.

To be studied: an information mission in Austria would help to assess the potential of ICN.

* To question Renfe and SNCF on the possibilities to start again the Renfe-SNCF cooperation for ICN to Spain.

* A study should be made on ICN connections in Europe in a range of 600 to 1500km.

6/ To mobilize together for ICN and for the ecological transition in transports

After the Paris-Portbou ICN coming back on July 6th 2017²⁴⁹, the future of ICNs is to be reinvented. As the great LGV projects have been paused by the government, the moment is crucial for the future evolution of our model for long-distance transports. Furthermore, the point is to avoid missing a step in the march against climate change.

Dismantling of ICN is a symbol of the incoherence of our society which prefers huge technological works and energy waste rather than simple and sober solutions. Let us remind that trams and bikes, although very efficient for urban transports, have almost disappeared from cities during the 20th century. Sober transport modes do not have a lobby to promote them. Thus they need the citizens' energy to come back on stage. The tram is coming back since the 1980's and 1990's, the bike in the years 2000's, and rebirth of ICN is on its way for the next decades. We call on passengers, NGOs, SNCF and elected officials to mobilize for ICN and even further, to promote ecological alternatives for transports. After decades of disinterest of all in ICN, it remains popular and there is a strong potential for improvement. Everyone can do something:

Pétition « Sauvez les trains de nuit », actif-traffic in Switzerland.

237 LunaLiner, "the new cooperation for European ICN", Bahn für alle, 2016-2017.

238 ÖBB, Dossier NightJet, 2017 ; E. Fouvreaux, « L'Autriche fait le pari du train de nuit », *Transportrail*, October 14th 2016

239 [ALLEMAGNE] La reprise des trains de nuit par ÖBB est un succès, T. Wüpper, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, June 6th 2017

240 Vincent Doumayrou, Le pays où le trafic des trains de nuit augmente, 2015 ; The Greens, Revitalising European Night Train and EC-IC services (vidéo), July 1st 2015 (from the 42nd minute).

241 Pieter Neumann and Vincent Doumayrou, « Train de nuit : l'opérateur envisage de nouvelles liaisons », *Mediapart*, February 19th 2017

242 Le parlement européen s'intéresse lui-aussi aux trains de nuit, *Tarbes-info*, May 14th 2017

243 Kalevi Kämäräinen and Vincent Doumayrou, Comment la Finlande s'est mobilisée pour défendre ses trains de nuit, July 8th 2017

244 Night train travel, VR-Finlande. See also Kemijaervi-Helsinki and Train de nuit Père Noël Express, *Interrail*. Also watch the Vidéo ;

245 R. S./APS, Mise en marche de deux trains reliant Béchar et Saïda à Oran, *El Watan*, April 29th 2017

246 Les chemins de fer ukrainiens réduisent les liaisons trains de nuit. Pourquoi est-ce une erreur ? par Alexandre Kava –ex ministre adjoint de l'infrastructure d'Ukraine, *finance.bigmir.net*, December 9th 2015. Available on ouiautraindenuit.wordpress.com > témoignages

247 <https://fr.rail.cc/russie/train-nuit/ru#rail> ; https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moscou_express ; Poul, « Night trains to and from Russia increase passengers », *back-on-track.eu*, August 5th 2016

248 Carole Bellemare, La SNCF veut remettre l'Orient-Express sur les rails, *Le Figaro*, September 2nd 2014 ; L'Orient-Express : tout l'art du voyage dans un train, *snf.com*

249 Isabelle Bris, Pyrénées-Orientales : le retour en fanfare du train de nuit Paris-Cerbère, *France 3 Occitanie*, July 8th 2017
Célébration ferroviaire en gare de Port Bou, *L'Indépendant*, July 10th 2017

✓ **If you are an activist, please spread the petition** on change.org or on cyberacteurs.org and **distribute the flyer** while travelling. Passengers are in need for informations, you will for sure be successful. Many actions have taken place in France and Europe to save ICN²⁵⁰. We are looking for motivated people in each city to create **local groups**. The first thing to do is to take **a nice picture with enthusiast passengers** and to send it with a press release to the **local newspapers**. This is an efficient way to inform people with little effort. Please contact us.

✓ **If you are an organization:** do not hesitate to contact us to add your signature and/or contribute to the present document.

✓ **If you are elected:** we need you to intervene to question the Transport Ministry in order for ICN to be included in the priorities for the ecological transition.

✓ The **deputies and senators** are invited to gather to start an information mission around the potential of ICN during Autumn 2017.

✓ We are asking for **the State and SNCF** to collaborate to have complete and less misleading figures to be published and to progress together towards a better evaluation of the potential of ICN.



Mobilisation in Paris in November 2016

7/ Summary of proposals

To reinvent the ICN

- ✓ **To restore the ICNs, to:**
 - (1) open up remote territories and mountainous areas;
 - (2) to offer overnight travel parallel to LGV lines longer than 750 km;
 - (3) to recover transverse connections (which do not pass through Paris) between peripheries;
 - (4) to encourage modal shift from plane to rail on a European scale.
- ✓ **To promote ICN as very-long-distance transports for modal shift from air to rail in order to fight climate change.**
- ✓ **To maintain a public service obligation for ICN** by SNCF (and in cooperation with other European operators) to allow an active national strategy
- ✓ **To launch an information mission in Parliament** on the potential of ICN at the national and European scales.
- ✓ To give **priority to regenerating and modernizing the existing railway tracks** rather than new roads, LGV or airport projects.
- ✓ **To stop dismantling ICNs** to end the headlong rush toward "all High-Speed".

To give each mode its role in the ecological transition

- ✓ **To set a wider ecological tax system** to finance and make the existing railway network competitive.
- ✓ To suggest **a simple and incentive pricing** on ICN, ICJ and TER [Regional trains], with a price reference around 7€/100km (price of car-pooling). The aim is to show that rail is less expensive than the plane, the individual car and coaches, to be coherent with their respective environmental footprints.

8/ Press review

Kalevi Kämäräinen, [Comment la Finlande s'est mobilisée pour défendre ses trains de nuit](#), July 8th 2017

²⁵⁰ La mobilisation européenne a même organisé quelques belles mises en scènes: <http://back-on-track.eu/actions-june-2016> ; en France : <http://back-on-track.eu/so-many-demonstrations-in-france-in-favor-of-night-trains/>

[\[Allemagne\] La Renaissance des Trains Couchettes](#), TV Allemande N°1, July 5th 2017
[Les chemins de fer autrichiens remportent un succès avec les trains de nuit](#), T. Wüpper, Stuttgarter Zeitung, June 6th 2017
[L'Europe planche sur l'avenir des trains de nuit](#), Marion d'Allard, L'Humanité, May 16th 2017
[Carole Delga : « le train de nuit Paris-Cerbère reprend du Service »](#), E.D., L'indépendant, April 28th 2017
 Les trains de nuit sont victimes d'une stratégie de découragement, Le Petit Journal du 65, April 19th 2017
[Le TGV n'est pas l'unique solution partout](#), Le Petit Journal du 65, April 19th 2017
[Allemagne : une demande en hausse pour le train de nuit](#), Vincent Doumayrou, Mediapart, April 1st 2017
[Retiens les trains de nuit !](#), David Ramasseul, Paris Match, March 24th 2017
[Les 8 arguments du PDG de la SNCF pour supprimer les trains de nuit sont bidons](#), Interview of "oui au train de nuit" by Sarah Lefèvre, StreetVox, March 23rd 2017
[Les trains de nuit, une alternative bien moins couteuse que le TGV](#), Nolwenn Weiler, Bastamag, March 22nd 2017
[\[alternative à l'avion\] Lueurs d'espoir pour le train de nuit](#), le Petit Journal du 65, March 8th 2017
[Trains de nuit : un démantèlement justifié par des chiffres trompeurs ?](#), le Petit Journal du 65, March 1st 2017 (or in [La dépêche](#)).
[Le train de nuit fait de la résistance dans le sud](#), Marc Fressoz, MobiliCités, February 21st 2017
[Suppression des trains de nuit : les usagers ne lâchent rien](#), Coralie Schaub, Libération, December 3rd 2016
[200 personnes en Gare de Perpignan pour dire oui au train de nuit](#), Olivier Roirand, Vidéo TV Sud, October 15th 2016
[19 élus défendent le train de nuit](#), September 16th 2016
["La pétition arrive en train de nuit au ministère"](#), JT 19-20 de France3 Pays Catalan, July 22nd 2016
[Alternative à la voiture et à l'avion, les trains de nuit vont... disparaître](#), Rendez moi mon train, Reporterre, June 16th 2016
[La grande vitesse est en train de tuer le réseau ferroviaire européen](#), Kris de Decker, Carfree.fr, 2013
[SOS train de nuit : le Paris - Hambourg ne répond plus](#), Vincent Doumayrou, 2009

See more press articles on <http://trainsdenuit.canalblog.com>

9/ Who are we?

"Oui au train de nuit" is a gathering of passengers and environmental associations militating for a transition towards more climate-friendly transports. The action is supported by more than 20 000 signatures on the [petition at www.change.org/p/ouiautraindenuit](http://www.change.org/p/ouiautraindenuit).

National organizations : [Amis de la Terre-France](#), [ATTAC-France](#), [Confédération Paysanne](#), [Fédération des Usagers de la Bicyclette](#) (FUB), France Nature Environnement (FNE),

Local organizations : Usagers du Train Perpignan-Port Bou, Comité d'Usagers du Train Jaune-66, Coordination Barousse Comminges train Luchon-Montréjeau (31), Collectif Anti-LGV Limoges-Poitiers OUI au POLLT, Nature&Progrès-11, Collectif Roosevelt-11, Alternatiba-66, Actival-65, ACIPA (NDDL), Objecteurs de Croissance LR, ATTAC%11, 65 et 66, SEPANSO, SEPANSO-24, 33, 40, 64, FNE-65, [FRENE-66](#), Amis de la Terre-Limousin, Recyclo-Loce (65), Terra-Ma-Terre (65), Can Decreix (66), Vélo-en-Têt (66), [2 pieds 2 roues](#) (31), Pau à Vélo (64), Biocoop Floréal, Tourne-sol, Pays'en Bio (11), Confédération Paysanne-11,

"Oui au train de nuit" is also thankful for the support of: Sud-Rail Midi-Pyrénées, CGT cheminots-64-65-66, FO Cheminots-66.

Find the updated study at: ouiautraindenuit.wordpress.com

Informations and actions on: twitter.com/ouiautraindenuit www.facebook.com/ouiautraindenuit

Petitions at: www.change.org/p/ouiautraindenuit

www.cyberacteurs.org/cyberactions/oui-train-nuit-1244.html

Contact : ouiautraindenuit@ntymail.com

Annex A/ The end of the "all High-Speed" doctrine gives space for ICN

A.1/ An excessive race for very high speed

When inaugurating the High-Speed-Line (LGV) Paris-Rennes, on July 1st 2017, the French president clearly stated that "the dream of the five next years should not be a new great project like this one." Priorities must change in order to "finance renewal of the existing infrastructures, which are not maintained

enough"²⁵¹. "We have lived with many lies in this sector. All these accumulated debts, one day someone will have to pay for them."²⁵² This major change of view has been explained in more detail by Ms Elisabeth Borne, the transports minister²⁵³.

In 2013, the report *Mobilité 21* suggested to postpone a great part of LGV projects. It recalls that "high-speed rail makes sense mainly on distances from 400 km up to 1000 km, to connect important metropolises. [...] For cities and conurbations of lower size, **other types of services should be considered around 200 to 220 km/h, [...] using the existing infrastructure.**"²⁵⁴ Indeed to build a kilometre of LGV can be up to 16 times more expensive than a classical railway line, which induces high track access fees, and therefore more expensive tickets...²⁵⁵

In 2014, the Court of Audit showed that the LGV model had been "carried beyond its relevance area": "SNCF evaluates that at present almost all the High-Speed Lines projected or under construction may reduce its operating margin"²⁵⁶.

In 2016, many official studies suggested to "stop for a dozen years State subsidies to new LGV projects, in order to **prioritize modernisation of existing networks.**" "the TGV appears to be the most relevant transport mode up to 500km, sometimes up to 750km, under certain conditions. Yet, **all such relevant lines have already been built.**"²⁵⁷

The financing plans for great LGV projects are uncertain²⁵⁸. More and more elected officials²⁵⁹ and administrations²⁶⁰ take position against them. SNCF does not them neither: after the construction LGV between Tours and Bordeaux, the SNCF CEO declared: "I think this is the last such construction for the time being"²⁶¹.

The craze for LGV projects since the 2000's has had an irrational dimension: frequenting of new lines was generally overestimated²⁶², making new LGV be loss-making – already one went bankrupt²⁶³ – and creating over-indebtedness of railway companies²⁶⁴. Beyond France, Spain carried the model even further. It is the European country which has built the biggest number of High-Speed Lines. The new connection Tolède-Cuenca-Albacete was closed after only six months operating: it carried only "16 passengers per day"²⁶⁵. A bribery network around High-Speed was eventually discovered²⁶⁶.

The race for "always faster" seems to be coming to an end: when switching from 300 to 360 km/h the energy consumption of a TGV rises by 50%. Track wear is also much more intense²⁶⁷, hence the repeated request of the French infrastructure manager, Réseau Ferré de France (RFF) to reduce speed²⁶⁸. The Paris-Lyon LGV, which stays the only line really making profit, was built for a maximum speed

251 Morgan Boëdec, [Transports - Emmanuel Macron annonce une loi d'orientation des mobilités](#), Localtis, July 3rd 2017

252 L.B., [6 millions d'euros : la facture de la sauterie de la SNCF a du mal à passer](#), L'Obs, July 5th 2017 ;

Olivier Razemon, [Gare Montparnasse: le discours prémonitoire d'Emmanuel Macron](#), Blog-Le Monde, August 1st 2017

253 "On a placé des réponses de manière un peu systématique. On a placé les élus, dans l'alternative entre on ne change rien, ou alors on fait une LGV. (...) J'ai en tête une projet où en dépensant 15% du coût, on a 50% de gain de temps.", [Commission du développement durable : Mme Elisabeth Borne, ministre chargée des transports](#), Assemblée Nationale, July 19th 2017, minute 1:08:00

Voir aussi [Audition de Mme Elisabeth Borne](#), Commission de l'aménagement du territoire et du développement durable, Senate, July 20th 2017, minute 12h35' ; Pierre Weill, [Elisabeth Borne, L'invité de 8h20](#), France-Inter, July 20th 2017

254 Commission Duron, [Rapport Mobilité 21](#), June 27th 2013

255 [Combien coûte... un kilomètre de ligne TGV : 15,9 millions €](#), le journal du Net, 2010

256 Cour des comptes, [La grande vitesse ferroviaire : un modèle porté au-delà de sa pertinence](#), 2014, p. 27, 116 ; La Matinale d'Europe 1 (08h20), [SNCF : les TGV sont de moins en moins rentables](#), Vidéo en ligne, February 28th 2017 ; Daniel Ibanez, [Financement des projets ferroviaires, le Conseil d'État s'en mêle-t-il ou s'emmêle-t-il ?](#), Les Echos, January 15th 2017

257 Commission of Finances, [Rapport sur le financement des infrastructures de transport](#), Senate, September 28th 2016 ; this is coherent with the opinion of ARAFER, [Avis du 18 nov. 2015 sur le projet de budget 2016 de SNCF Réseau](#), p. 5 ; Nathalie Da Cruz, [Infrastructures ferroviaires : vers la fin de la folie des grands projets ?](#), La gazette des communes, October 28th 2016

258 Court of Audit, [L'Agence de financement des infrastructures de transport de France \(AFITF\)](#), June 2016 ; Marc Fressoz, [La Cour des comptes met à nouveau en émoi les partisans du Lyon-Turin](#), *Mobilicités*, September 5th 2016 ; Florence Guernalec with AFP, [LGV Tours-Bordeaux : des élus des Pyrénées-Atlantiques refusent de payer leur part](#), *MobiliCités*, August 17th 2016

259 Ève Moulinier, [Lyon-Turin : le "non" des maires de Turin et de Grenoble](#), *Le Dauphiné*, September 10th 2016 ; JK, Place Grenet, [Ligne ferroviaire Lyon – Turin : Grenoble a tiré le signal d'alarme et se désengage](#), July 21st 2016 ; [La Ministre des transports Elisabeth Borne : « On fait une pause sur le Lyon Turin »](#), Reporterre, July 19th 2017 ; Député Gilles Savary, [Déclaration d'Utilité Politique](#), June 6th 2016.

260 François Mauduit and Daniel Ibañez, [Rapports et études Dossier Lyon-Turin](#), May 27th 2017 ; Laurent Radisson, [Grands projets : la Cour des comptes réaffirme ses doutes sur la pertinence du Lyon-Turin](#), Actu-environnement.com, June 6th 2017 ;

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262 Emmanuelle Andréani, [TGV : la future ligne Tours-Bordeaux, un gouffre financier pour la SNCF](#), *Capital*, October 24th 2015 ; Lionel Steinmann, [Comment la France est en train de tuer le TGV](#), *Les Echos*, June 23rd 2014 ; [Territoire, grande vitesse et ressources](#), Transportrail, June 2017 ; Fabrice Durtal, [Le TGV, un gouffre financier](#), *Les enquêtes du contribuable*, July 8th 2015 ; see also : Marc Fressoz, [F.G.V. Faillite à grande vitesse: trente ans de TGV](#), Cherche-Midi, 2011

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265 Efe, [El AVE directo Toledo-Cuenca-Albacete tenía únicamente 9 viajeros al día](#), *El Mundo*, June 27th 2011 ; see also : Marc Fressoz, [TGV marocain : un cadeau empoisonné ?](#), *Atlantico*, September 29th 2011

266 Jesús García, [La red de sobornos en obras del AVE se extiende a toda España](#), *El País*, February 17th 2017 ; Pierre Recarte, [LGV : la France va-t-elle suivre l'exemple de l'Espagne dans la dérive des gaspillages publics ?](#), *Le Journal du Pays Basque*, 2013 ;

267 Laurent Martinet, [TGV du futur: "La vitesse n'est pas forcément un besoin réel"](#), *L'Express*, June 6th 2014

268 Mélanie Taravant, [La très grande vitesse aux oubliettes ?](#), *Europe1*, December 7th 2010 ; Gilles Bridier, [Le TGV accélère sa perte de vitesse](#), *slate.fr*, 2013 ; Fabrice Gliszczynski, [SNCF : Pèpy prêt à étudier un train intermédiaire entre le Corail et le TGV](#), *La Tribune*, 2013

of 270 km/h. Germany is moving towards 250 km/h as a maximal speed, Austria and Switzerland around 220 km/h. These speeds have the advantage to be reachable without having to build new lines, but by upgrading the existing tracks. **This is an other High Speed which is emerging across Europe with Intercity Express trains (ICE) going around 200-250 km/h.**

A.2/ Medium-sized cities do not benefit much from High Speed

The association “Villes de France” (Cities of France) has become alarmed²⁶⁹ at this fact: **the TGV serves properly and favours only metropolises** and it does not irrigate much medium-sized cities²⁷⁰. The problem has been known for years, for example at Saint-Etienne since the arrival of high-speed at the nearby city of Lyon: which company would not prefer to invest in Lyon, which is much better connected than Saint-Etienne ? The LGV thus makes a great part of the territory lose in attractiveness: “the tunnel effect penalizes a growing number of intermediate areas as the new infrastructure are being built”²⁷¹. Furthermore, contrary to the often highlighted promises of prosperity, “effects of High-Speed Lines are invisible in regional gross domestic products”²⁷². The effect of LGVs could even be the reverse: they transfer all activities on the biggest metropolis, which is the only city to be linked to all others. For example, the economic boom of Toulouse may also come from its distance to Paris...

What's more, to go fast, the TGV trains must stop and slow down the least often possible. Hence the inappropriate and expensive establishment of **“beetroot TGV stations”, far away from city-centres**²⁷³. For passengers, reaching these remote train stations adds a cost and makes them lose many minutes that were so expensive to save with the TGV. From now on, the government agrees that it is time to study other ways to serve medium cities and rural areas²⁷⁴.

A.3/ “Forgotten” transverse connections

The French high-speed network is almost exclusively radial, centred on Paris, and **it serves poorly transverse connections between regions**. Seen from Paris, all regions are about to be connected. But it is seen from the regions that the mobility deficiency is striking, because these regions are connected only to the capital city. For example, how to connect West and South-West knowing that to travel the 350 km between Nantes and Bordeaux takes 5 hours (with some portions at only 40 km/h because of bad condition of the tracks), and that detour by Paris adds more than 500 km²⁷⁵? High-Speed Lines – if not completed by the Intercity network – isolate regions from each other and increase their dependency towards the capital city. They tend to transform intermediate territories into deserts²⁷⁶. The 30 000 km of classical railway tracks going across France in all directions cannot be efficiently replaced by only 2 800 km of LGV²⁷⁷.

To be studied: travel time by train between 2 medium-sized cities separated by 800 km in France. Compare, for a series of city pairs, travel time in 2017 with the time in 1990, 1960, or even 1930 and 1900.

A.4/ Paris is not a good connection platform for the South

The High-Speed network centred on Paris is quite inefficient to integrate the South within the whole country. Paris is not at the centre: the capital city is located 300 km away from Dunkerque, 800 km from Hendaye and more than 900 km by rail from Cerbère and Nice. To travel from the South, with a change of train station in Paris to reach the West, the East or the Centre of France, significantly lengthens distances and increases travel time by several hours, which cancels the benefit of high-speed. In addition to that, passengers often need to change train station in Paris and use the underground. This often forces to pay more than 120-150 € to spend a whole day in different trains – which only few passengers are ready to accept. **Paris is therefore a poor rail “hub” for the Southern half of France.** With regression of Intercity connections these last years, **a great part of the country is actually considered almost unreachable by train for most inhabitants of the Pyrénées.**

Furthermore, mountainous regions in the South of France, with the Pyrénées, the Massif Central and the Alps, are not very adapted for LGVs. Important curves reduce speed and increase rail wear. Rugged landscape requires numerous bridges and tunnels, inducing soaring prices. In 2016 already, the bankruptcy

269 Villes de France, *Transport ferroviaire : Les propositions de Villes de France pour sauver les grandes lignes*, March 9th 2016 ; Martine Kis, « *Les villes moyennes s'alarment de la disparition des grandes lignes* », *Le Courrier des Maires*, March 11th 2016

270 Exemple de ville mal desservie : M.Tournadre, « *Deux TGV bientôt supprimés entre Montélimar et Paris* », *France Bleu*, October 12th 2016

271 Pierre Zembri, « *La contribution de la grande vitesse ferroviaire à l'interrégionalité en France* », AGF, Vol. 85, N° 4, 2008, pp. 443-460

272 Yves Crozet, « *La LGV Tours-Bordeaux échappera-t-elle à la malédiction des PPP ferroviaires?* », *Transports*, 2015, pp. 22-33

273 Projet de gare en cours : FNAUT, « *Allan-Montélimar-TGV : un caprice de notables, contraire aux intérêts des voyageurs* », January 30th 2017

274 Michel Delebarre, *Accessibilité du Limousin et des territoires limitrophes*, Mission auprès du gouvernement, July 27th 2017

275 Bordeaux-Nantes : 350 km by the direct line and 970 km if passing by Paris : 600 km more!

276 *Une manif dimanche à... 0h30 - Dernier train de nuit à Gourdou*, *La Dépêche*, August 31st 2017

277 SNCF-Réseau, « *Le réseau* » (webpage)

of a “mountain” High-Speed Line was paid for by the taxpayer²⁷⁸. What's more, distances to Paris exceed 750 km and journeys are longer than 3h, which is unfavourable for LGVs.

A.5/ International night lines... out of reach by TGV

From Paris to Madrid in TGV takes at least 10 hours, for a price around 300€, with a change of train in Barcelona. Actually, connections longer than 750 km are quite unfavourable for LGVs. According to the Court of Audit, “there remains almost no European city which is at the same time populated enough and close enough to justify a high-speed link with France”.

A.6/ Travellers are looking for cheaper tickets, rather than “saved minutes”

From now on, a growing proportion of travellers prefer a cheaper ticket than a fast journey. In Spain, a great part of passengers choose the bus, much slower, but often three times cheaper than the AVE. The latter mostly conveys the richest people²⁷⁹. The same phenomenon is now at play in France²⁸⁰.

To improve slow sections would save time for cheap: how much would it cost to double the unique track (Strasbourg-)Besançon-Lyon? Could a list be drafted, showing slow connections which need to be improved?

A.7/ Actor play: many inappropriate pro-LGV behaviours

The former deputy Gilles Savary emphasizes the deviancies of many actors around railways²⁸¹:

x “The “all high-speed” principle is supported by local elected officials both from the right and left parties. This also concerns the President, with François Hollande wanting a TGV between Limoges and Poitiers at all costs, despite the unfavourable public studies.” His former Secretary of State for Transports Alain Vidalies, also wanted the LGV for “his” city, Mont-de-Marsan, with a rather sinuous route... which was not saving time compared to a modernisation of the existing classical line, more direct.

x “Our railway policy is under **pressure of industrial lobbies. Those of the building industry and of Alstom**. Pressure of Alstom²⁸² is illustrated by the “investment in 15 TGV trains worth 30 million Euros each, to run on a network on which speed is limited to 200 km/h on its best parts, whereas Siemens's Railjet (3 comfort levels, Wi-Fi and 250 km/h) is conquering central Europe for 11 to 12 million Euros a train. [...] Alstom sells the TGV only in France, even if it is said that the whole world envies it. When I see a Lamborghini, I admire it, but it does not make me buy it. [...] It is like if Air France was told to buy only Concorde planes”. As for the building industry, its pressure increases with lack of activity: “the sector has known for 8 years one of the worst crises of its history”²⁸³. But unfortunately lobbies lack some global vision: all they want is to build (expensive) without considering the number of trains which will use the infrastructure. There are only 5 trains per day on the costly Perpignan-Barcelona line!

x Economic and political decision-makers promote High-Speed Lines to Paris. For example, there is a recurrent demand for a LGV link between Paris and Clermont-Ferrand, presented as essential for the Michelin company²⁸⁴. But these needs are not the same as those of the inhabitants, who need to be able to move in all directions. Clermont-Ferrand holds a central position in France. It is a shame that the decline of Intercity trains is turning the city into a bag-end. Important investments are necessary to regenerate and improve Intercity connections with Nantes, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Perpignan, Marseilles, Saint-Étienne, Dijon, etc. As for the link to Paris, to build a LGV and therefore to maintain two parallel railway lines would be expensive. This is why an “Intercity Express” at 200 km/h on the existing modernized tracks would better match the demand with an acceptable price.

278 Myriam Chauvot, « [TGV : Perpignan- Figueras, une ligne en faillite](#) », *Les Echos*, September 16th 2016 ;

279 INE, « [Estadística de Transporte de Viajeros](#) », June 13th 2016

280 J.M., « [Les cars Macron font à la fois concurrence au TGV et à Blablacar](#) », *BFM*, January 6th 2017 ; ARAFER, [Les pratiques de mobilité des voyageurs sur les lignes régulières d'autocar](#) (studies carried between October and December 2016)

281 Gilles Savary, Bertrand Panher, [Rapport Assemblée Nationale sur la Réforme Ferroviaire](#), October 4th 2016 ; [Vidéo à l'Assemblée Nationale](#) ; Interview of Gilles Savary by Benoît Lasserre, « [Plaidoyer pour une SNCF libre](#) », *Sud Ouest*, October 31st 2016 ; vidéo [Gilles Savary en cheminot](#), “J'aimerais vous y voir”, *LCP*, Dec 9th 2015 ; Simon Barthélémy, « [Le TGV est un astre mort](#) », selon [Gilles Savary](#), *Rue89-Bordeaux*, Oct 22nd 2014

282 Jean-Christophe Féraud, [Alstom Belfort/ Usine à chantage](#), *Libération*, December 30th 2016

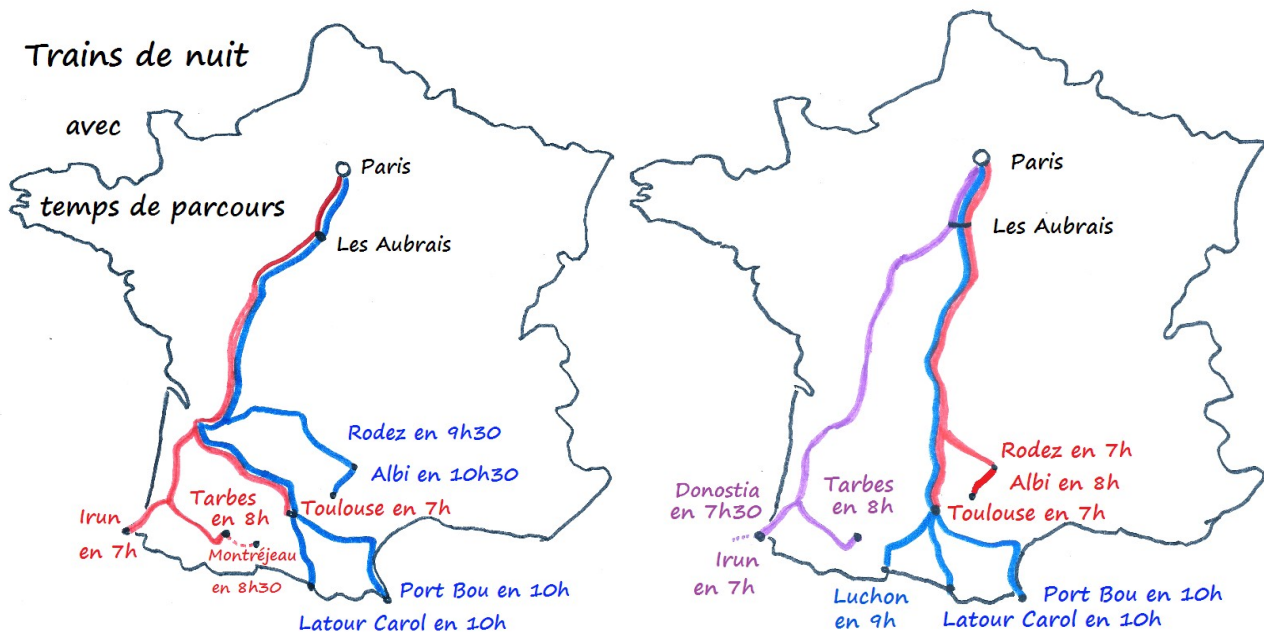
283 Fédération Nationale des Travaux Public, [Réinvestissons la France](#), *Rapport d'activité 2016* ; Mathias Thépot, « [Le vieillissement de nos infrastructures est très préoccupant](#) » Bruno Cavagné, *FNTF* », *La Tribune*, February 22nd 2017

284 Franck Lemarc, « [Le TGV, facteur de compétitivité pour les entreprises](#) », *MaireInfo*, February 7th 2017

Annex B/ To optimize the remaining ICN lines

B.1/ Which ICN between Paris and the South-West?

Concerning the South-West, to merge together (in a single multi-branch train) the 6 destinations Rodez, Latour-de-Carol, Toulouse, Portbou, Tarbes and Irun entails a too important reduction of the number of carriages per destination. This solution is also fragile, because if a train is late, all other branches have to wait. Distances being also very different, timetables cannot be convenient for all 6 destinations at the same time. There used to be 4 ICN serving the Occitany Region in 2016 (6 in 2013). One single ICN cannot offer a good service.



Until 2021 the POLT line (Paris-Orléans-Limoges-Toulouse) will be closed during the nights because of maintenance works, except on weekends and during Summer vacations. A first improvement would be to run 2 three-branch trains:

- ✓ 1st ICN: the train to Latour-de-Carol should be attached to the Paris-Portbou, since travel times are similar: both destinations are 3 hours away from Toulouse. Paris-Rodez(-Albi) also has the same travel time. This would enable to put again 4 carriages to Rodez and Latour-de-Carol (instead of 3 today), along with the 7-8 coaches to Portbou.
- ✓ 2nd ICN: Toulouse is the most popular ICN destination in the South-West. Thus timetables need to be optimized for this destination. As a consequence, Toulouse cannot be properly served by the Paris-LatourCarol/Portbou/Rodez train, because it would mean a too early arrival time from Paris²⁸⁵. Paris-Toulouse would better be linked to the Paris-Tarbes-Irun until Bordeaux, because the distance (850km) and travel time (7-8h) is the same. This enables re-use of the rolling stock during the day for the "Intercités 100% éco" Paris-Toulouse, to optimize usage of carriages.
- ✓ During weekends and vacations, when the POLT line is open during the night and the occupancy is better, to maintain the 3 two-branch ICN existing in 2016 would be relevant: Portbou/Latour-de-Carol, Toulouse/Rodez, Tarbes/Irun. Add to this good opportunities for 2021: it will be possible again to run to Luchon and the Irun branch could go further to Saint-Sébastien (Donostia), thanks to the 3rd rail with European gauge²⁸⁶.

B.2/ Other elements to optimize existing ICN

✓ **To merge together ICN serving mountainous areas with those serving important cities would bring us closer to self-financing.** For example, it would be relevant to maintain the the Paris-Nice ICN, attached to the Paris-Briançon, as today. In 2014, during works preventing the Paris-Nice from running, SNCF also suspended the Paris-Briançon, saying that if the latter was running alone, deficit was too high... Can the Paris-Briançon be kept alone today?

- ✓ At the end of the railway lines, rural regions are often poorly served by regional trains. There the ICN

²⁸⁵ Note nevertheless that in the South → North direction, the Cerdagne/Latour-de-Carol – Paris can take passengers in Toulouse. Leaving around 1am, this leaves the whole evening free in Toulouse.

²⁸⁶ [Adif adjudica las obras para la implantación del ancho mixto de vía entre Hernani e Irun por más de 45 millones](#), Le DiarioNorte, June 24th 2016

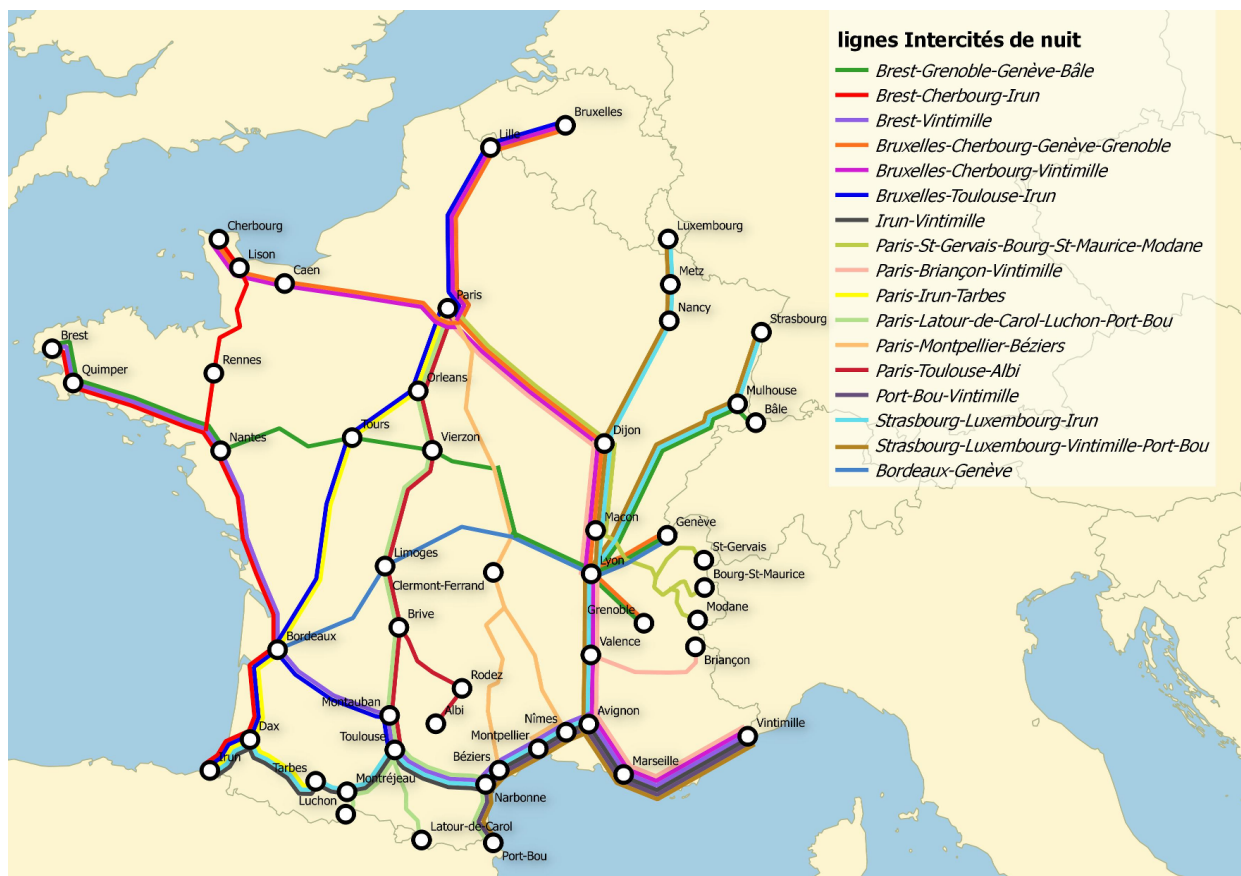
is also the last evening train and the first morning train. Thus a recurrent demand to transform some coaches in seated accommodation, in order to accept passengers on short distances. For example, 10-15 minutes in Toulouse or Brive should be enough to clean and turn empty berths into seats. Coaches remained in berth accommodation should on the contrary remain inaccessible, to avoid waking up passengers. The sections Gap-Briançon, (Toulouse-)Perpignan-Portbou, Brive-Rodez want to benefit from this possibility, and this would improve the economical equilibrium of the ICN.

Annex C/ Which ICN in 2030?

In order to prepare the future of ICNs, here is a sketch of what could be the ICN network in 2030, for radial connections (see the small map beside) or including tranverse lines (great map below). In the future, the ICN directed to Strasbourg should continue to Francfort or at least Karlsruhe. International links from France should also be represented²⁸⁷.

During the second semester 2017 the Paris-Briançon/Nice and Paris-Rodez/Toulouse/Latour-de-Carol/Portbou are the only ICN running.

François Hollande used to justify the 1 billion deficit to build the Poitiers-Limoges LGV: "It we are building an infrastructure, it is not always for it to be financially profitable. It is also because it follows a logic of territory development"²⁸⁸. In comparison, a small fraction of this sum would be enough to renovate the rolling stock and to relaunch an ICN network.



²⁸⁷ Following connections should be included: Paris-Hambourg-Copenhagen (ex-Nord-Express), Paris-Berlin-Warsaw-Moscow (existing), Nice-Vienna-Moscow (existing), Paris-Rome, Paris-Venice (existing), Paris-Madrid, Paris-Barcelona (existed until 2013), Hendaye-Lisbon (existing), Paris-Munich-Vienna (ex-Orient-Express), etc. Between the North and South of Europe, Paris is an obstacle: to cross France, having to take the Parisian subway is a loss of time, and is cumbersome and not competitive. What's more, track access fees are very high to enter Paris. It is therefore important to also include trans-European connections which "avoid this torture in Paris": Hambourg-Lyon-Narbonne, Barcelona-Francfort, etc.

²⁸⁸ [François Hollande relance le projet de LGV Poitiers-Limoges](#), *Sud-Ouest*, October 8th 2016.