

Multimodality in European leisure travel: Putting rail at the centre of sustainable transport

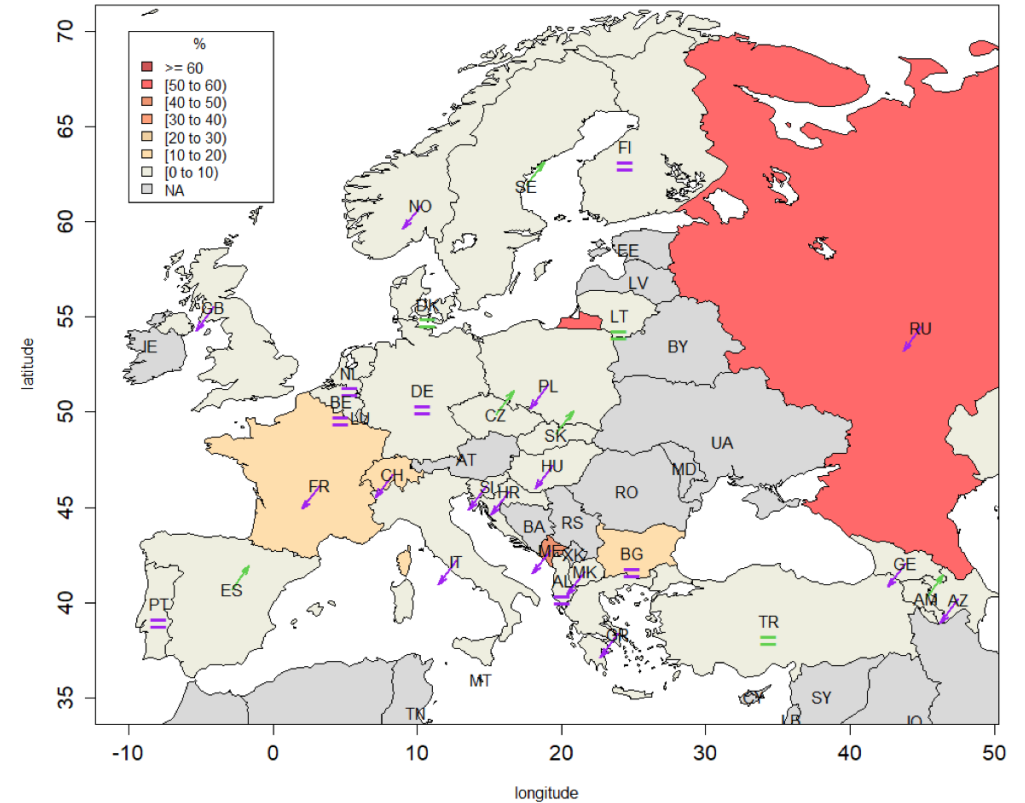
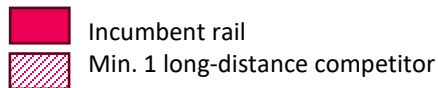
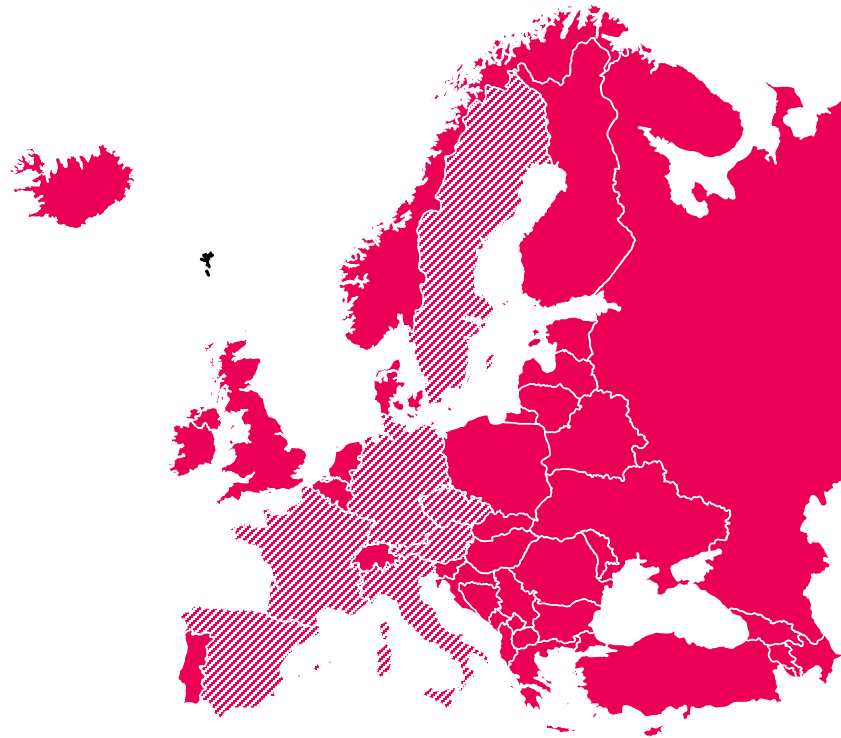
Klaus Kreher, Rail Europe, 27 June 2025



Tailwinds for multimodal tourism in Europe? - rail liberalization provides choice, but the share of rail stagnates

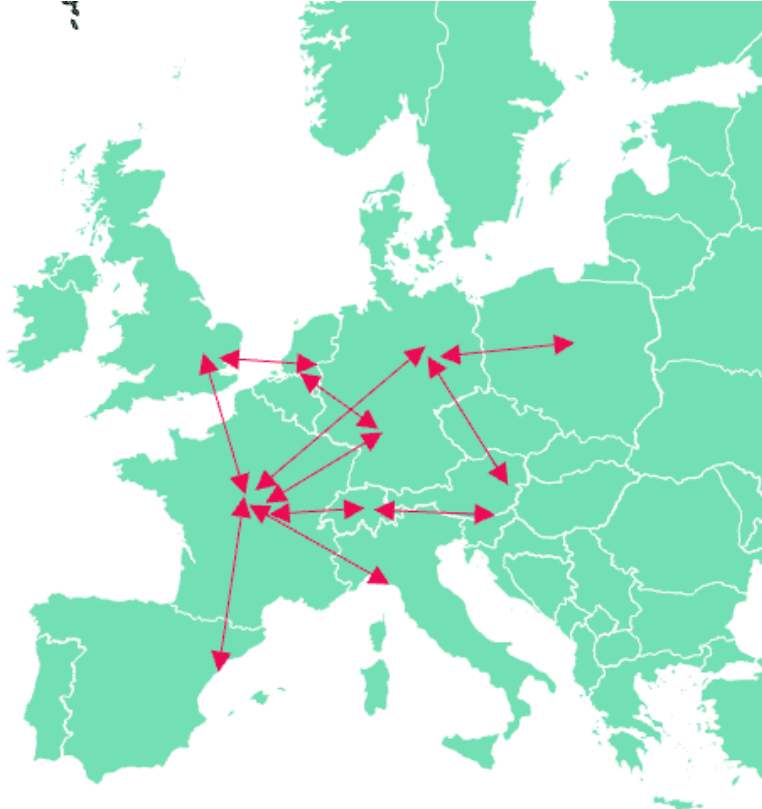
Rail liberalisation progresses well in 7 EU members....

...but its modal share remains at an average of 8%



Source: UIC 2023, The modal share of rail in inland transport and infrastructure investment. Available at: https://uic.org/com/IMG/pdf/the_modal_share_of_rail_in_inland_transport_and_infrastructure_investment.pdf

An optimistic outlook for EU tourism: cross-border direct connections and new night services provide choice vs. air/road



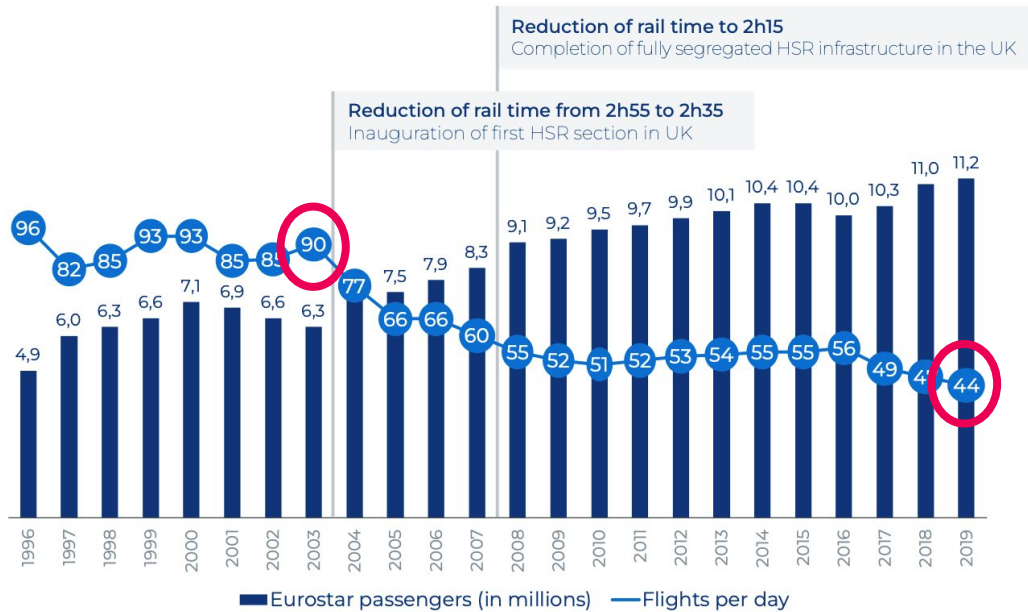
Future cross-border connections:

London – Frankfurt / Geneva
Rome – Munich / Berlin
Madrid – Lisbon

International night services:

ÖBB (Austria) Nightjet
European Sleeper (private)
CD Czech Railways
ZSSK Slovak Railways

The case for investment in rail for European tourism: rail is an effective tool for transport decarbonization



High-speed operator Eurostar has halved the number of flights on the Paris-London route

Source: ALG 2024, Modal Competition and Substitution: High-Speed Rail versus Air Transport. Available at: <https://www.alg-global.com/sites/default/files/2024-06/HSRvsAir.pdf>

Rail competition in Spain and France has reduced fares and organically grown demand

Route	Operators	Daily frequency increase	Average price reduction	Demand increase
Madrid-Barcelona	Renfe, Ouigo, Iryo	13%	-65%	17%
Madrid-Valencia	Renfe, Ouigo, Iryo	120%	-44%	96%
Madrid-Alicante	Renfe, Ouigo	92%	-10%	66%
Madrid-Sevilla	Renfe, Iryo	44%	-16%	35%
Paris-Lyon	TGV, Ouigo, Trenitalia	15%	-23%	14%
Rome-Milan	Trenitalia, NTV	46%	-30%	39%

Impact of increased inter-rail competition on HSR's demand. Source: CNMC, Trainline, ALG Analysis

Opportunities for effective multimodality: less friction through better interoperability

Air + Rail

Combining long-haul flights with rail in-country

Last mile interoperability

Combined offers and tickets for rail + local transport

Booking and ticketing

Comprehensive ticketing platforms for Europe

Combined and through ticketing

Regulatory framework

Level-playing field for operators and distributors