



Resolution 876 (1987)¹

European high-speed train network

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the debate during the Public Hearing on a European high-speed train network held on its initiative in Liège on 15 and 16 December 1986, to the report submitted by its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development ([Doc. 5714](#)) and the opinions of its Committee on Science and Technology ([Doc. 5725](#)) and its Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities ([Doc. 5731](#)), and to its [Recommendation 1041 \(1986\)](#) on transalpine traffic ;
2. Recalling the positions it has previously adopted in favour of a European high-speed train network as, for instance, in its Resolutions 815 (1984) and 858 (1986) on the activities of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), and also [Opinion No. 23 \(1983\)](#) and [Resolution 164 \(1985\)](#) of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, which carry a similar message ;
3. Being of the view that a European high-speed train network would bring peoples closer together and promote European unity, and that the creation of such a network is a sine qua non for the establishment of a large integrated market in Europe, especially as intra-European exchanges are developing much more quickly than national traffic ;
4. Noting that the existing routes for high-speed trains are very popular with users, and that the development of a European network would provide a comfortable, rapid, economical and environmentally inoffensive means of transport between the larger European cities, to the extent that it would create no air pollution and would help to reduce the noise pollution caused by traffic, particularly on transalpine routes ;
5. Noting that direct connections from city centre to city centre (whenever possible) are essential, both to ensure effective liaison between such a European network and other forms of transport, and also for its social, financial and economic success and efficiency ;
6. Considering that :
 - 6.1. the European high-speed train network is also a priority because it involves the establishment of rapid links with peripheral regions, with the help of appropriate feeder lines ;
 - 6.2. existing lines must be included in the high-speed network, insofar as they can be adapted to speeds of at least 160 km/h, on the understanding that existing and projected high-speed lines must be interconnected as soon as possible ;
 - 6.3. national planning must be co-ordinated from the outset, since the extension of a European high-speed train network will progress to the extent that it matches national transport potentials and meets national interests ;

1. Assembly debate on 7 May 1987 (6th and 7th Sitzings) (see [Doc. 5714](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, [Doc. 5725](#), opinion of the Committee on Science and Technology, and [Doc. 5731](#), opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities). Text adopted by the Assembly on 7 May 1987 (7th Sitting).



7. Observing that the research efforts of a number of institutions and European countries have led to the development of different technologies such as rail-wheel (French TGV and German ICE), magnetic levitation (Maglev) and air-cushion systems, including hovertrain and tracked hovercraft ;
8. Convinced that Europe's current technological lead in high-speed rail transport could open up interesting export markets, providing that research is co-ordinated ;
9. Noting that a European high-speed train network could help develop relations with East European countries, and that, for this purpose, it should be properly linked with their respective railway networks ;
10. Stressing that, for real effectiveness, a European high-speed train network should cover the whole of Europe, and result, inter alia, from an effort to step up transfrontier co-operation over the construction and operation of the necessary infrastructures, and that the Council of Europe is the best-placed organisation to promote its realisation, in co-operation with the European Community, ECMT, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the International Union of Railways ;
11. Aware that the integration of the whole of Europe through a high-speed train network requires not only improved standardisation but also a solution to administrative and technological problems of crossing natural (and technical) barriers such as the Pyrenees, the Alps or the English Channel ;
12. Noting the converging views in favour of the soonest possible construction of such a network, expressed by the various political, industrial, economic and social circles represented at the Liège Hearing, and welcoming with interest all the support thus elicited,
13. Requests the Ministers of Transport of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom forthwith to co-ordinate the building of the North European high-speed train (Paris-Brussels-Cologne/London-Amsterdam) and the Channel tunnel, bearing in mind the overriding concern to create a financially profitable link serving the interests of the European peoples in their domestic and international exchanges ;
14. Requests the governments of the other countries of Central and South-East Europe to co-operate with the above-mentioned projects so that the future European network of high-speed trains may serve the whole of Europe, from London to Istanbul ;
15. Considers that these two projects are the first transfrontier projects in Europe and will constitute an important step in the realisation of the European high-speed network for which the whole of Europe has an absolute need, and urges that other European countries also pursuing research in the field of high-speed trains should now be associated with it ;
16. Stresses that the economic development of Spain and Portugal, and their integration in the European Community, can be speeded up by including some of their railway lines in the European high-speed train network ;
17. Encourages the institutions of the European Community to continue their work on financial engineering with a view to finding new ways and means of co-ordinating the public and private sectors for the financing of major transport infrastructures in Europe, and the European Investment Bank to bring forward proposals and prepare market research studies for the implementation of the project ;
18. Considers it essential to establish common standards for railway technology, equipment and signalling, and to strengthen industrial co-operation in Europe, and requests the governing bodies of the Eureka programme to include, among its projects, the design and construction of a European high-speed train in the same co-operative spirit as has given birth to Airbus ;
19. Urges greater co-operation between the organisations, both public and private, engaged on research and development in the field of railway systems and equipment, with a view to the successful establishment of a genuine European high-speed train network, under a formula which gives states the authority to direct operations in co-operation with the national and regional railway companies ;
20. Encourages the governments of member states and their railway companies to begin planning the interconnections with this network necessary for liaison with the major centres of population and economic activity not themselves directly served thereby, and to reduce the isolation of the peripheral and frontier regions ;

21. Calls on ECMT, which has already included this project in its work programme, to increase its efforts to enlist the support of the governments of its nineteen member countries, so that democratic Europe may make the best use of its opportunities to meet this new challenge of land transport and, in particular, of railway renovation in the twenty-first century ;

22. Instructs its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, in co-operation with its Committee on Science and Technology and its Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, to follow up this resolution by submitting to it any further proposal for action designed to promote the realisation of a European high-speed train network and, to that end, to work in consultation with the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.