C6new4 Resolution on a European Train Network of the Future

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Resolution date:	07/17/2019
Agenda item:	2 Resolutions

Text

1   Cross borders, meet people, get together.

2   European citizens are becoming more and more mobile. We are going out more
3   often, we are going on holiday more frequently and further than ever. That is
4   really amazing from a social and cultural perspective. However, there is a
5   downside to this: the frequency and the impact of flying, notably, is increasing
6   significantly over the years.

7   We could challenge this, both from a social perspective as an environmental
8   point of view. Less than 10% of the global population actually ever had the
9   possibility to take a flight, which means that only a small part of society is
10   responsible for the environmental impact of flying. Nonetheless, health issues
11   due to pollution by aircrafts, as well as global warming, affect everyone.

12   Another example is the policy of commercial flights; how employees of (mostly
13   low-cost) airline companies are being underpaid and are taken for granted,
14   meanwhile the health risks of working as a flight attendant is significantly
15   high (according to data from the Department of Labor, it's number 8 out of the
16   top 47 most damaging jobs in the United States)!

17   Here are some facts, to put the environmental impact of flying into perspective:

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20   • Total CO_2-emission of flying is approx. 2% of the total world emission and
21   even 3% within the EU (*Climate Action - European Commission, 2016*)
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23   ◦ That's similar to the total yearly CO_2-emission of Germany (*CO2
24   emissions from aviation*, *2018*)
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       ◦ If the airplane sector would be compared to a country, it would be
         the 6th most polluting country in the world in terms of CO2
         emissions between Japan and Germany (*Corsia: The UN's plan to
         'offset' growth in aviation emissions after 2020, 2019*)

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- A grow of up to 300% is expected according to Transport & Environment (*Aviation emissions and the Paris Agreement, 2016*)

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- But hopefully: the (domestic) aviation industry actually is included within the Paris Climate Agreements (*Top 3 misconceptions about CORSIA., ICAO checked July 2019*)

31 Even with these few numbers, we are facing a serious issue. How can we as
32 (united) young greens continue engaging with each other, without damaging our
33 Mother Earth as much?

34 Travelling by train is a viable and sustainable option, even if it is sometimes
35 a slower way of travelling. It connects passengers in Europe with the countries
36 they are passing through, with their landscapes and the people they meet. When
37 we choose the train over the plane, the distances we travel are no longer
38 abstract.

39 We would like to make short distance travel by train more appealing and
40 optional. Night trains and a proper European train network will be a solution.
41 We therefore propose the following four key elements of a modern and
42 international train network:

43 (1.)

44 Night trains should become a major way of travelling in between European cities.
45 Many European cities, including important capital cities, are not served by
46 national or international night trains. Night services have been a trademark and
47 key component of intra-European rail transport for over 100 years and this
48 feature characteristic of European travel culture should be preserved. FYEG
49 stands for a revival of the night trains in Europe to be a viable and affordable
50 alternative for travellers to European destinations as it has been in the past,
51 retaining or reactivating routes as necessary. The few existing night trains
52 should not compromise on services and investments in wagons and booking services
53 are to be encouraged. Passengers now experience outdated wagons and difficulties
54 booking a correspondent train which operates in another country. Night trains
55 should become a major way of travelling in between European cities that are
56 close by (<1000km).

57 (2.)

58 FYEG pledges for a well-organised European mobility where trains connect
59 European cities. We are convinced that we can change the system drastically,
60 without impacting our freedom of movement significantly. We can work this out,
61 as long as we work together as a union. The European Union should play a leading
62 role in promoting this way of transport by investing in the improvement of

63 infrastructure, supporting train companies with coordination and expertise and
64 by creating a harmonised European legislative frame. This could be financed by
65 implementing a tax on kerosene, flight tickets and via the contributions of
66 their respective members.

67 There is a great inequality in investments in European mobility: while low cost
68 airlines expand with the help of taxpayers' money, train companies face budget
69 cuts from their governments. Tax money seems to be mostly going to the airplane
70 sector. As an example: a recent study revealed that the European Union
71 subsidised the Airbus A380 with approximately 6.5 billion dollar. This is
72 exactly the plane that was recently taken off the market due to low demand. This
73 indicates that this money could have been spent on other mobility issues, as for
74 example establishing a competitive European train network.

75 FYEG stands for travelling by train to become cheaper than by plane for
76 distances less than 1000 kilometres (approx. 621.4 miles) over land. We are
77 convinced that this is a good way of redistributing tax money, promoting social
78 interactions throughout Europe and keeping our air clean. We propose a tax on
79 kerosene or flight tickets with an ecological and social aim. These taxes could
80 be used to establish and maintain a European ticketing system, a European Train
81 Union and finally more equal mobility opportunities for European citizens.

82 (3.)

83 FYEG supports the founding of a European Train Union. This union works together
84 with national railway networks to build a European train strategy: a shared view
85 on routes, infrastructure and investments. Secondly it increases cooperation
86 between train companies on delays and assures exchange of information.
87 Furthermore the unionsimplifies and harmonises different national legislations
88 for train travelling. Eventually it supports the procurement of night and
89 international train wagons. A decent European rail network also requires a
90 significant budget, by combining all these companies into one organisation for
91 international journeys, we will both have the means as a cheaper, more efficient
92 organisation.

93 (4.)

94 It is currently impressively harder to plan and book itineraries by train across
95 Europe than by flight, with some train companies not allowing the online booking
96 of international tickets or seat reservation or making mandatory the fact
97 physical collection of tickets. FYEG therefore pledges firstly for an EU managed
98 route planner and open booking system, very similar to the national ones most of
99 the countries already have. This does not necessarily change anything about the
100 tickets and the individual companies involved as the fees will still go to them.
101 It would, however, give two important advantages:

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- A very smooth and user friendly interface, similar to the existing
  national train companies

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- A better overview for train connections, a harmonised refund system for tickets and better communication towards passengers in case of delay.

106 The facilitator of this could be a European Train Union as described in (3).

107 We are convinced that a well-organised European Train Union is part of the
108 future of Europe. A future we want to embrace.