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PRESS RELEASE

LYON-TURIN PROJECT8 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE ACROSS ITALY AND FRANCE SEE THE NEW RAIL LINK AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE MOBILITY IN EUROPE

Brussels, 30 September 2026 – More connections between Europe's metropolitan areas, options for same-day international return journeys, and comfortable services for groups and families. These are among the expectations for rail mobility expressed by around 5,000 people in Italy and France surveyed by IPSOS and BVA for TELT in summer 2026 in relation to the future Lyon-Turin railway line.

The survey had two objectives: to gain a better understanding of international travel habits and to assess the benefits expected from the new railway link currently under construction beneath the Alps. The results were presented today by TELT Chairman Daniel Bursaux and Director General Maurizio Bufalini to the European Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism Apostolos Tzitzikostas, during the Connecting Europe Days in Brussels. In particular, the findings show that the new line is seen as an infrastructure project serving people's mobility needs: more than two-thirds of respondents in both Italy and France believe that the Lyon-Turin line will improve mobility and international connections, while contributing to social cohesion and Europe's economic development.

Today, travel still relies primarily on cars and air transport

International travel still accounts for a relatively limited share of people's overall mobility compared with regional and domestic journeys, and is mainly undertaken for tourism. In Italy, only 17% of respondents travel to a European metropolitan area at least once a year, while 16% visit areas outside major cities. France records similar figures, at 16% and 11% respectively.

For regional journeys, cars are used by 75% of Italians and 78% of French respondents. The same trend can be seen at regional level, with cars accounting for 77% of journeys in Piedmont and 74% in Rhône-Alpes. Cars also remain the main mode of transport for domestic travel, chosen by 58% of Italians and 67% of French respondents.

For international travel, however, air transport remains dominant. When travelling to other European metropolitan areas, 70% of Italians choose to fly, compared with 10% who travel by train. In France, the figures are 43% and 22% respectively. At local level, air travel is chosen by 70% of respondents in Piedmont and 48% of those in Rhône-Alpes. The figures are similar when looking specifically at the Turin and Lyon areas, at 67%, and 47% respectively.

Rail can grow, but on two conditions: price and journey time

Competitive fares and shorter journey times are the two main factors that would make rail a genuine alternative for international travel among both Italian and French respondents. When asked what could encourage them to use the future Lyon-Turin line, ticket price ranks first in both countries, cited by 28% of respondents in Italy and 43% in France. This is followed by shorter journey times, mentioned by 22% of Italians and 25% of French respondents.

The possibility of making a same-day return journey is also seen as an attractive factor, cited by 14% of Italians and 7% of French respondents. This suggests that the Lyon-Turin railway line could be used in the same way as existing connections between Turin and Milan or between Lyon and Paris.

A similar pattern emerges at local level, although with some differences. Residents of the Susa Valley broadly reflect the national sample, with 32% citing price, 21% journey time and 10% the possibility of a same-day return journey. In the Maurienne Valley, by contrast, the possibility of completing a return journey within the same day ranks jointly first with price, both cited by 23% of respondents. Shorter journey times come third, at 17%.

The message is clear: rail's competitiveness will depend above all on its ability to offer faster and more affordable journeys than other means of transport.

Under-30s: a generation on the move, more European and train-oriented

The data show that Italians under 30 travel more than the population as a whole. Seventeen per cent travel to other European countries for study or work, more than twice the 8% recorded across the overall population. The same trend can be seen in France, where 23% of young people travel to European metropolitan areas, compared with 16% of the population as a whole, while 16% of people under 30 travel to other countries, compared with the national average of 11%.

Greater European mobility also goes hand in hand with greater use of rail. For interregional journeys, trains are used by 38% of Italians under 30, compared with 21% of the overall population. When travelling to European metropolitan areas, 20% of Italian under 30 choose rail, twice the share recorded across the population as a whole.

In France too, young people are significantly more likely to travel by train to European cities, both nationally, at 28% compared with 22% overall, and in Rhône-Alpes, at 40% compared with 23%. In Lyon, the figures are 30% among people under 30 and 26% across the overall population. The only exception is the Maurienne Valley, where only 10% of people under 30 have travelled by train, compared with 14% of residents overall.

Sustainability also plays a more important role among people under 30 than among other age groups. Twenty per cent of young Italians cite environmental impact as one of the main criteria that could encourage them to choose rail over other modes of transport, compared with 10% of the overall population. In France, this sensitivity is even more pronounced, with 34% of young people compared with 22% across the population as a whole. This priority sits alongside factors shared with the wider population, including lower fares, shorter journey times and better connections.

Lyon-Turin railway line: addressing the challenges of mobility and sustainability

The findings on the expected benefits of the future line reflect these expectations. Eighty-seven per cent of Italians and 91% of French respondents believe that the Lyon-Turin line will improve mobility and connections with the rest of Europe. This view is also widely shared locally, by almost four in five respondents in Piedmont and Turin and by nine in ten people in Rhône-Alpes and Lyon. In addition, 85% of Italians and 88% of French respondents consider the project important for Europe's unity and development.

Modal shift also emerges strongly from the survey. Eighty-seven per cent of Italians and 79% of respondents in Piedmont believe that the line will help reduce heavy goods vehicle traffic in the Alpine valleys. In France, this rises to 88% nationally and 84% in Rhône-Alpes region. Eighty-three per cent of French respondents and 77% of people in Rhône-Alpes believe that the line will help reduce air traffic between the two countries. In Italy, this view is shared by 82% of respondents nationally and 66% in Turin, rising to 74% among people under 30.

The expected economic benefits are also widely recognised. Eighty-one per cent of Italians and 88% of French respondents believe that the project will benefit their country's economy, while 83% of Italians and 89% of French respondents believe it will also contribute to the economic and tourism development of the areas concerned.

Even in the Susa and Maurienne valleys, which are directly affected by the construction sites and the project's impacts, the economic benefits of the line are acknowledged: almost two-thirds of respondents believe that the project will benefit their respective national economies, while 65% of residents in both valleys believe it will contribute to local economic and tourism development.

If we consider people under 30 - who will be among the future users of the line - these percentages rise to 72% in the Susa Valley and 83% in the Maurienne Valley.

Methodology

The study, conducted by Ipsos BVA, one of the world's leading companies in market research and opinion polling, was carried out in France and Italy using several representative population samples. In France, 1,000

people were surveyed nationally, together with 701 residents of the Rhône-Alpes region, 411 residents of the Lyon metropolitan area and 400 residents of the Maurienne Valley. In Italy, 1,000 people were surveyed nationally, together with 600 residents of the Piedmont region, 309 residents of the Turin metropolitan area and 400 residents of the Susa Valley. Fieldwork was carried out between late June and July 2026. Where sample sizes allowed, results for people under 30 were also analysed separately.

TELT is the binational public project owner and promoter responsible for the construction, management and subsequent operation of the cross-border section of the Lyon-Turin freight and passenger rail link, as defined by four international treaties. TELT is jointly owned, 50% by the French State and 50% by the Italian State through Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane (FS).

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