



The TEN-T Priority Project No 6 Lyon-Turin, between popular struggles and economic crisis

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Will the base tunnel be safer ?

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The base tunnel will be made up of two tunnels, allowing the second one to serve as an escape route, if necessary. But the various low-cost hypotheses have talked about delaying the realization of dual tunnels so, at the moment, there are no safety assurances guaranteed in the initial phases.

But, if it were true that: “the existing tunnels don’t meet safety requirements in relation to the volume of traffic – a single tunnel for a double track system for freight and passenger travel”, we can conclude that all the existing tunnels on the historic railway lines in Italy, one tunnel for two railway tracks, are unsafe.

It is also useful to remember that the high-speed Bologna-Florence line, opened in 2009, has a single tunnel for both directions of travel.

Moreover, it is true that the shafts could serve as emergency exits toward the outside, but the length of the planned tunnel, which is a fifth the length of the future one, in and of itself represents an advantage in case of an emergency from either one of the two openings. It has also been determined that the emergency tunnel that is being constructed for the highway which, along a great deal of its route runs near or parallel to the railway, would be linked to the base tunnel to guarantee greater safety.

Finally, one must consider that the entire route in the metropolitan area of Turin – according to the new itinerary – will be constructed underground, leaving no doubt that trains carrying hazardous goods would be excluded from passing below such a densely populated area.

In conclusion, the realization of the project in low-cost phases could result in the fact that freight – even dangerous goods – would have no other route than that of Turin’s city rail link where it would pass through tunnels next to platforms full of travellers.

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