



WARNING ON CRIME

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF TURIN-LYON HIGH-SPEED RAILWAY



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1. Introduction

The history of the project of the New Railway Line Turin-Lyon, shortened as **NLTL** and currently known as high-speed train **Turin- Lyon (named TAV Turin-Lyon)**, saw a lot of stakeholders that interacted, exchanged, conflicted and overlapped.

The first part of this paper aims at understanding the evolution/origin of the project in order to clarify the role of the Italian and French stakeholders involved. Then, the paper continues with the description of the main steps of the history of TAV project. In these steps will be underlined the moments in which some stakeholders have been involved in incidents of lawlessness and corruption.

2. The origin of the project and stakeholders involved

2.1 The Italian stakeholders

The project for the TAV Turin-Lyon involved many Italian stakeholders, institutional and not. First of all in 1989 the **Associazione Tecnocity**² presented in a public meeting at the Fondazione Agnelli the project of a high-speed railway line for passengers between France and Italy. The project foresees the construction of a transalpine tunnel 50 km long as a part of the future railway line between East and West Europe (Number Five Corridor³). This was the first project of the New Railway Line Turin-Lyon.

¹ All the paragraphs have been written by Manfredi and Massarente, with the exception of: paragraph 2.2 written by Franck Violet and Michel Cannarsa; paragraph 4 written by Caterina Mazza. Valeria Ferraris was the internal reviewer.

² It is an association created in 1985 by the will of FIAT, Olivetti, Settimi, Unione industriali di Torino and Amma with the aim of promoting the increase of efficiency in the productive system of Piedmont.

³ See paragraph 3 "The history of the project".



Picture 1 - Corridor no 5. From the archive of the newspaper "La Stampa" of Turin, realised by Maurizio Tropeano

The idea was successful to the point that, after only one year after meeting, in 1990, was created the **Comitato Promotore per l'Alta Velocità**⁴ from Tarvisio to Lyon, passing through Turin. This *Comitato Promotore* was formed by all the representatives of the entrepreneurial scene in Turin, like *Tecnocity*, *Federpiemonte*⁵, *Camera di Commercio di Torino*⁶, *Confindustria Piemonte*⁷, *Unioncamere Piemonte*⁸, *San Paolo IMI Bank*, *Unione Industriale di Torino*⁹, *S.I.To*¹⁰, and of local public institutions like *Provincia di Torino*¹¹ and the **Municipality of Turin**. The chairmen of this *Comitato Promotore* was Umberto Agnelli, FIAT Vice-president and President of Juventus Football Club and Vittorio Beltrami, President of **Regione Piemonte** at that time. It aimed to hold up, through a promotional campaign, the importance and the necessity of a fast rail connection between East and West Europe¹². Since the beginning, the local and regional authorities (*Regione Piemonte*, *Provincia* and the Municipality of Turin) were in favour of the project, and they start an intense search of potential interlocutors and political supporters at national level. In a relatively short time, they were able to reach the interest of the Italian President of the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies,

4 It is an organising Committee to promote high-speed railway.

5 *Federpiemonte* is a regional branch of *Federitalia*. It is a no-profit association that helps citizens and companies in understanding Italian credit system, giving also assistance in case of situations in which usurious and/or illegitimate interests are applied.

6 The *Camera di Commercio di Torino* (Torino Chamber of Commerce) is a public institution with autonomy of statute, regulation, management and accountability, whose mission is to foster the growth of local economy and enhance it through effective and targeted initiatives, thus playing the role of spokesman with competent authorities for more than 227,000 companies working in the Province and registered with the Torino Chamber of Commerce. See more at: http://www.to.camcom.it/Page/t01/view_html?idp=9143

7 *Confindustria Piemonte* supports the association of the territory and the associates companies, representing them with local, regional national and European institutions.

8 400 thousands companies.

9 *Unione Industriale di Torino* is an association representative of companies belonging to the territory of *Confindustria*, to protect, promote, and develop their interests.

10 It is the Intermodal Goods Centre of Turin, a company specialised in designing infrastructures and services for transports and logistics. It has realised and it manages the logistic platform of Turin. It is located in Orbassano near Turin.

11 The *Provincia di Torino* includes 315 municipalities spread over a territory that covers an area of 6.830,25 kmq.

12 From the Archive of the newspaper *La Repubblica*, 27 June 1985.

Paolo Cirino Pomicino¹³, and of the whole **Italian Government**¹⁴ that, from 1990 since today, has always been, regardless of which was the majority party (Maggiolini, 2010), in favour of the project¹⁵.

In contrast to this wide enthusiasm was the multinational *Ansaldo*, who had the task of designing the Italian General Transport Plan, and *Ferrovie dello Stato (FSI)*¹⁶, the main representative of the Italian national railway interests. Both agencies had other priorities and they preferred, instead of the project of Turin-Lyon TAV, the development of the national railway network for high-speed trains. However, there was a change when in 1991 the Italian Government chose *Lorenzo Necci* as special administrator of FSI. He brought FSI among the TAV Turin-Lyon supporters (Maggiolini, 2012, p.89). In spite of this important change, dissenting voices were not lacking. Institutions and civil society in *Val Susa*, the geographical area involved in the project in Italy, doubted since the beginning of the utility of this new railway network.

This Valley is little, heterogeneous and with an economy founded on the natural resources. It is especially the defence of these resources the basis of the people opposition to the TAV project. People of *Val Susa* - knowing strengths and weaknesses of their own territory, having already witnessed the construction of Frejus Motorway (A32) and of the power line between Mont Cenis and the Low Valley - were frightened by technical and environmental consequences coming from a new large construction site.

At first, the dissenting voices in Val Susa found representatives in the *Comunità Montana*¹⁷, an organisation considered highly representative and democratic by the local citizens. In 1995 the *Comunità Montana* founded the *Comitato di Coordinamento di Valle*¹⁸ that brought together the mayors of the municipalities of *Val Susa*, *Sangone Valley* and of the West belt of Turin, the deputies, provincial and regional councillors of the territory, local health system branches¹⁹, representatives of *Coldiretti*²⁰, the unions and trade associations.

This *Comitato* aimed to promote the active participation of citizens resident in *Val Susa* in order to constitute a representative voice of the local opinion about TAV project. It has been an interesting experiment in representative democracy, has been able, through their good and bad moments, to represent the Valley until 2009, the year of its dissolution.

The resistance of the *Comunità Montana* and its *Comitato di Coordinamento di Valle* was not, however, the only form of opposition to the TAV project that rose from the Valley. There were in fact also Valley residents who did not agree completely with the opposition philosophy of the *Comunità Montana*: in particular they distanced themselves from some topics such as how to fight or the choice of possible partners and political supporters. So, in December 1991, they constituted the association *Habitat*²¹, with the aim of defending liveability and environment of the area involved by the project. It would become an additional local partner with which the promoters of the high-speed railway would dialogue to find a compromise.

Among the opposition ranks in the Valley there were, finally, ordinary citizens who chose to express their opposition independently, finding space and representation in the grass root movement known as No-TAV.

13 Pomicino was an Italian politician involved in the corruption scandal known as *Mani Pulite* (clean hands) that brought him in court for 42 different trials.

14 The Parliament majority was represented by Christian Democracy Party and the Italian Prime Minister was Giulio Andreotti.

15 The only difference among the political forces of the Italian scene was in the way of dialoguing and in how they considered the opinion of people resident in the Italian area involved in this project.

16 Since 2001, FSI has been replaced by Rete Ferroviaria Italiana, that has been founded on 1 July, 2001. It is the Infrastructural company of Ferrovie dello Stato Group and it was created because of the transposition of European directives about the separation between the network manager and the providers of transport services, and for the completion of corporate reorganisation of FS Group.

17 The *Comunità Montana* is an Italian local institution, founded by the law no. 1102 of 3 December 1971, actually regulated by article 27 of legislative decree no. 267 of 18 August 2000 (general law about local authorities). In Val Susa, the *Comunità Montana* was in the Low Valley, but it represented also the upper Valley, including in total 25 municipalities.

18 Resolution no. 542 of 20/12/1995, by the *Comunità Montana* of Lower Val Susa.

19 The local body of public health in Italy is named *Azienda Sanitaria Locale*.

20 It is the Italian organisation of farmers at national and European level.

21 The founder of Habitat was Claudio Giorno.

The No-TAV movement, often described alternatively as an anarchist, terrorist, extremist and dangerous movement by the press and institutions, became the representatives of all those who, even if coming from different social backgrounds and political views²², firmly opposed the TAV project.

Even if these oppositions to TAV project had different roots, all of them aimed to reach two objectives:

- To access the preliminary technical studies of the project in order to understand its consequences;
- To create a space of dialogue, where social and institutional stakeholders involved or potentially involved in the project, could share their opinions and complaints.

Regione Piemonte, to meet these demands, created in 1995, the **Coordination Committee** between the Institutional bodies involved, with the aim to “promote and ensure the development of the design of a new fast train path Turin-Lyon.”²³ This Committee, however, did not last for long. It ends its activities in 1996 for lack of communication between the parties: in particular the request of local authorities for access to preliminary documents of the project was denied by FSI and Regione Piemonte. In 2002 Regione Piemonte created a new space for the parties involved in TAV debate: **the technical-political board**, that consisted of thematic meetings designed for local authorities and regional representatives. However, even this experience failed, due to rejection of the request made by the local authorities to take part to the monitoring activities.

The third attempt of dialogue between *Regione Piemonte* and local authorities was **The Rivalta Commission**.²⁴ It was founded in September 2005, and it was composed by experts appointed by local authorities, *Comunità Montana* in the Valley, together with the *Provincia di Torino* and the Municipality of Turin. This Commission aimed at analysing the critical issues that the TAV project and its realization could bring out. In particular it started working on the risks due to the presence of dangerous materials, the construction of Venaus tunnel and the crossing of surface areas. The Commission, however, closed its work after less than four months due to the rising of social conflict in Val Susa.

2005 was a really tense year. The conflict between opponents and supporters of TAV project became violent, with the concrete risk of interruption of the dialogue.

Therefore the Italian Government, worried about the success of the upcoming Winter Olympic Games 2006 in Turin, started a process of mediation.

The first step of this process was the allocation of funds, from the Ministry of Transports and Infrastructure to the *Provincia di Torino* with the aim of starting up a **strategic plan**²⁵ to find cohesion and a common view about 5 specific topics of TAV Turin-Lyon project: sustainable mobility and economic development, territorial and environmental regeneration, safety of the territory, integrated development and Mountain areas.

In 2006, severe clashes involving the entire valley, saw the police against the population, with the mayors in front line. The second step was the decision in March 2006 of removing the project from the so called Legge Obiettivo (see pag. 3) and two ad hoc tools were created in order to overcome the standstill. **The Institutional Forum of Palazzo Chigi** (seat of the Italian Government), intended for dialoguing and negotiating with the national, regional and local institutions, and the **Osservatory**, for the dialogue between the divergent findings of the studies from the opponents and the proponents (Maggiolini 2013).

It was composed by the representatives of the Italian Ministries involved, of the Region, Province, Turin Municipality, local authorities in the Valley, a representative of the Italian Delegation of the French-Italian intergovernmental Commission for NLTL (CIG) and by the representatives of RFI and LTF. The President of the Italian Council of Ministers, Silvio Berlusconi, appointed as President of the Observatory, Mario Virano.

22 See the archive of the newspaper “La Repubblica” of 31 May, 2003.

23 From the resolution of the Regional Council no. 249-44375 of 27/3/1995.

24 The name of the Commission comes from its president Architect Luigi Rivalta. This commission was born in September 2005 by an Italian Government will (prot. 1286).

25 For further information and insights about the Strategic Plan see the section of the official website: http://www.Provincia.torino.it/speciali/2008/piano_strategico_torino_lione/.

Despite its high purposes, the Observatory had several difficulties that would not allow the easy achievement of its own objectives.

2.2 The French stakeholders

Since the beginning of the 1990s, local authorities strongly mobilized for the TAV project that will contribute to their economic development and the dynamism of trade with neighbouring countries. In France, the Rhône-Alpes Region is committed to contribute financially to the implementation of the French section of the Lyon Turin.

The Region and the Département de Savoie also supported the approach initiated by the State under the procedure "Large projects" (optimization of the home of the future staff involved in the work). France was involved in 100%. On 29th January 2001, the French and Italian Governments signed an agreement, become international treaty, whereby they committed themselves to achieve the new link between Lyon and Turin with a main tunnel connecting Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, in the Savoie region to Susa in Piedmont/Val di Susa. The agreement of 2001 was confirmed by a new intergovernmental agreement in January 2012.

2.2.1 The partners

- Réseau Ferré de France (RFF), and Lyon-Turin Ferroviaire were two promoters of the new Lyon-Turin railway for the French section. Owner of the French section between greater Lyon and Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne 140kms long, including 60% in underground works, this section would allow the flow of traffic passenger and freight. Three long tunnels should be built: Dullin / Thorn (15 km), Chartreuse (25 km), and Belledonne (20 km). RFF, public industrial and commercial establishment, created in 1997, manages, develops, builds and finances the national rail network. LTF binational company (in French law), a subsidiary of RFF and RFI, was responsible for the studies of a preliminary draft and the work of recognition for the cross-border section. It is planned for this section the construction of a 57 km tunnel linking Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne to Susa.
- Société Nationale Chemins de Fer Français Group (SNCF) consisted of four branches: transport and logistics, Voyageurs France Europe, proximity and Infrastructure and engineering. This is the industrial partner, the domestic "transport and logistics" combines multimodal freight transport and logistics services.
- Committee for the European Transalpine link. The members of this Committee and the *Comitato Transpadana* worked in partnership since 1991 to promote the Transalpine link for the benefit of the economy, the environment and Europe. The Committee was to carry out any action that might facilitate or accelerate the execution of the rail link to high-capacity, passengers and freights between Lyon and Turin. The Committee brought together local authorities, companies, associations, economic organizations, unions, or consular bodies. The Committee for the Transalpine worked closely with its Italian counterpart Comitato Transpadana, which worked for the realization of the Turin-Milan-Venice-Trieste-Ljubljana train path and for the European Foundation for the development of the Regions based in Geneva, that animated the Alpines Transversales Observatory.

3. The history of the project

The beginning of the high-speed Turin-Lyon railway project dated in 1991. In spring the *Comitato Promotore per l'Alta Velocità* presented to FSI and to SNCF the feasibility study for the new railway Turin-Lyon. The study was based on two assumptions: by 2002 passenger traffic would have increased by 500% and the saturation of the existing line would happened by 1997.

The study also quantified the cost of the new line in 7.200 billion Lire (€ 3.7 billion), without presenting one unique idea of the track.

In October this study was presented again in Viterbo, at the **Annual Summit between Italy and France**. On this occasion, the Italian Minister of Transport, Carlo Bernini, and his French counterpart, Paul Quilès, signed the declaration of intent for the realisation of the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway, giving to FSI and SNCF the mandate of carrying out further feasibility studies and of constructing the railway. At the same time, Val Susa institutions and civil society, began, in different ways, to express their dissent towards the realization of the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway: in particular the

Comunità Montana sent some letters to *Regione Piemonte* explaining the reasons of their opposition to the project and on 14 December 1991 Habitat organised a first meeting in Condove, which gathered more than 60 people (citizens, politicians, administrators, University professors that were indispensable to give technical arguments).

Nevertheless FSI and SNCF created a specific body in order to realise the preliminary feasibility studies. The **GEIE Alpetunnel** - then **Società Lyon-Turin Ferroviaria (LTF)**. In addition, in November 1992 was founded the *Comitato di Pilotaggio Italo-Francese* (the French-Italian Steering Committee) composed by the representatives of the two countries, stakeholders and local authorities, involved in the project. The Committee had the aim of examining all GEIE Alpetunnel studies and it would be assisted by the **French-Italian Inter-governmental Commission (CIG)**²⁶, that, instead, was in charge of drafting the inter-governmental agreement on the main features of the work.

The first project's official proposal came almost one year after the Viterbo's meeting, and it was presented in October 1992, by *Regione Piemonte*, together with the *Comitato Promotore per l'Alta Velocità*.

The proposal foresees the construction of a high-speed railway that crossed Moncenisio through a double barrel tunnel 54 km long, at the cost of **12.000 billion Lire (€6,2 billion)**²⁷. The project was approved by the French- Italian Steering Committee in Rome, in September 1993.

At the same time, in Val Susa, the will to stop the beginning of works on the new railway, increased. In December 1994, 17 majors belonging to the *Comunità Montana*, signed the paper named "**Four no to the TAV project**"²⁸: four synthetic points that explained all the issues in opposition to the project. The debate between opponents and supporters of the new railway became the motor of the project history. As a matter of facts stops and goes to the starting of the work depended on the state of the dialogue, not always easy, between parties.

Throughout the history of the project both supporters and opponents were not so united and some members changed side according to specific moments.

The first crisis among supporters of the new railway line appeared when in 1996 the *Provincia* in a meeting explained its uncertainties about the overstated provisions of passenger traffic and about the soaring of the costs (Castronovo, 2008).

In that occasion the supporters, listening to these objections, underlined that the new railway would increase not only passenger traffic, but also the freight one. The promoters seized the opportunity to announce a possible modification to the original project, from TAV to **TAC**: High Capacity Train, for both passengers and goods.

FSI too, began to doubt the usefulness of this work, contributing, in this way to undermine the strength of the promoters. The doubts arose when, in September 1996, its President Lorenzo Necci was arrested, for swindle, criminal association, false accounting, embezzlement of public money, corruption, abuse of functions. In 1998 The new President Giancarlo Cimoli²⁹ declared that, it would be better to work on the col of *Gottardo* or the Genoa-Marseilles railway, whose double track was almost finished (Castronovo 2008). His position was supported by the Italian Minister of Transports Claudio Burlando.

The internal debate among promoters became tense when, in 1997, Alpetunnel and *Provincia* showed two alternative projects, in two different public meetings.

Alpetunnel exposed its project at La Mandria (natural reserve near Turin), with the presence of *Comunità Montana* and of the Municipality of Susa. The project provided a tunnel from Mompantero to Bruzolo, an embankment six metres high until Borgone, and another tunnel 8 kilometres long

26 Established in January 1996, it took office on 14 November of the same year.

27 From the website of Municipality of Rivalta di Torino: <http://www.comune.rivalta.to.it/interna.asp?idArea=227&idSottoarea=374>

28 The "no" listed in this paper were: "No because Val Susa cannot sustain another infrastructure; No because environment quality is a fundamental right of local communities; No because TAV is in contrast with the citizens' right to join nature and environment as a priority in life; No because it is demagogic to think that the construction of the railway can solve unemployment of Susa Valley." Source: <http://www.cires.unifi.it/upload/sub/Lettura%204.%20Italia%20e%20Francia%20a%20confronto%20per%20le%20politiche%20infrastrutturali.pdf>.

29 In the framework of National Conference of Transports.

until Novaretto, then side by side with the motorway towards Alpignano and finally towards the Municipalities of the Metropolitan area of Turin.

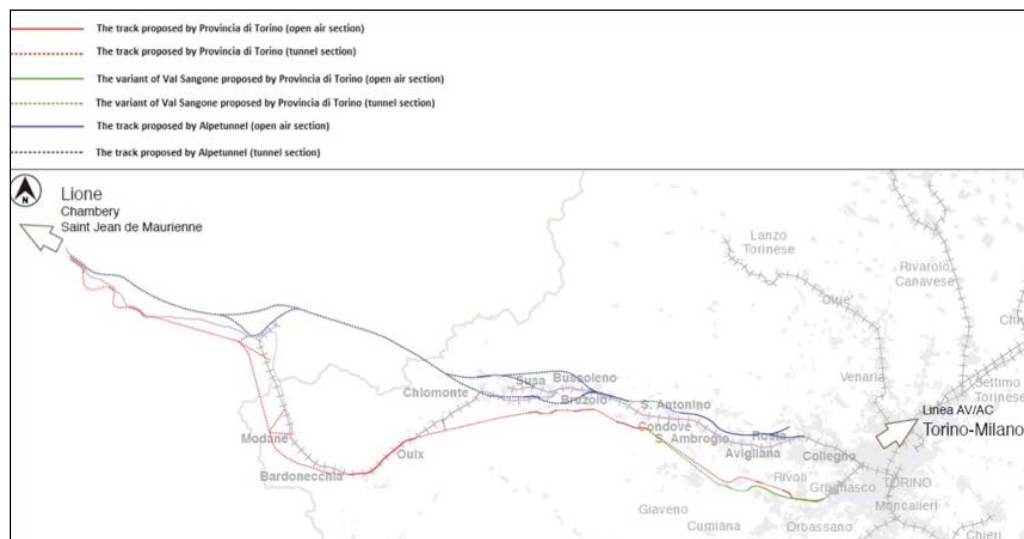
Provincia presented, instead, its project in Oulx. This project provided the change of mountainside towards the low Valley, the crossing of Sangone Valley and the passage close to S.I.To. The proposal of Alpetunnel seemed the favourite one. However the debate among promoters continued, not enabling the definitive choice of the track and slowing down the beginning of the works. Therefore in October 1997 in a bilateral meeting in Chambéry, Italy and France confirmed their commitment in the realisation of the Turin-Lyon TAV project and scheduled the development of a three years action valued **55.000.000 ECU**³⁰. (Maggiolini, 2010, p.80)

This stalemate was broken because of a tragedy: on 24 March 1999, 39 people died in a fire in the motorway tunnel of Monte Bianco.

For Ghigo, the new President of Regione Piemonte, this disgrace represented an opportunity to underline, to the Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema, the importance of change from motorway traffic to the railway one, and to ask for a fast start of the TAV works. His request had immediate reactions.

On 24 September 1999, the Annual Summit Italy-France in Nimes was the occasion for a common final statement between the two governments with the following commitments:

- the adoption of all the measures to transfer the freight traffic from the motorway to the railway;
- the realisation as soon as possible of the railway project Turin-Lyon high-speed train;
- the application of the measures established during the 1997 Chambéry meeting;
- the formal request to the intergovernmental Commission of finishing the feasibility studies started in 1998, in order to take a definitive decision by the next meeting in 2000.



Picture 2 – The tracks for the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway line proposed by Provincia di Torino and Alpetunnel (Milani, Najjar, 2011)

The Intergovernmental Commission answered expressing its official preference for the Alpetunnel project. Further, in 2001 Alpetunnel feasibility studies³¹ have been published and, in the same year in Turin, the prime ministers Giuliano Amato and Jacques Chirac signed the French-Italian intergovernmental agreement for the realisation of the new Turin-Lyon railway.

The Turin-Lyon high-speed train project is not the only one in Europe. It would complete the so called "No. 5 Corridor" from Lisbon, crossing Barcelona, Lyon, Turin, Venice, Trieste, Lviv in Ukraine and in the end Kiev. The European Commission, for this reason, included the Turin-Lyon TAV project in the

30 ECU is the second virtual value of EU after UCE, with the ERM (Exchange Rate Mechanism) funded the European Monetary System in 1979. ECU was born as an account unit for the realisation of the internal budget of the European Community.

31 These studies were ordered in 3 chapters: environment and territory, financial and economic aspects, the tunnel.

priority projects listed in the White Book on transport policy³². In order to speed up the realisation of the works, in December 2001, the new Italian Government chaired by Silvio Berlusconi approved the so called "*Legge Obiettivo*" (L. 443/2001)³³.

This act aimed to:

- identify the public and private infrastructures and strategic productive sites with a preeminent national interest that have to be realised for the development and the modernisation of the country³⁴;
- plan the modernisation of existing infrastructures in Italian territory;
- define at legal, financial and operative level the realisation of strategic public works of national interest.

The intention of the Government was to increase the realisation rate of the public works. In order to achieve this objective, this law limited the possibility for local authorities to express their opposition to public works. They could only ask for variations but, as this works are considered essential by the Government, they could not stop the projects. Further this law strongly limited and changed the procedures of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)³⁵ that became a competence of the *Comitato Interministeriale per la Programmazione Economica (CIPE)*³⁶ and not anymore of the Ministry of Environment. In this way the environmental costs/benefits ratio of a project, usually analysed by technicians and experts, was evaluated by a Ministerial body, evaluator of economic priorities and not environmental costs. Moreover, this law introduced the "general contractor", the subject who has the entire responsibility of the realisation of a strategic infrastructure.

On 15 December 2003 the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway was included in the list of the strategic projects to whom the rules of the *Legge Obiettivo* are applied, for a cost of 2,278 million euros (Cicconi, 2009).

While the *Comunità Montana* lodged an appeal against the *Legge Obiettivo* to the TAR (Regional Administrative Court) of Regione Lazio in order to avoid the exclusion of the local authorities from the decision process, the French Government started doubting about usefulness, costs and environmental impact of this work. As a consequence, the project of Alpetunnel was questioned again. In order to find a new compromise, *Regione Piemonte*, *Provincia* and the Municipality of Turin started looking for new proposals³⁷.

32 White Paper submitted by the Commission on 12 September 2001: "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" [COM(2001) 370 final - Not published in the Official Journal] http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/tackling_climate_change/124007_en.htm

33 The *Legge Obiettivo* introduced new standards not only in terms of spending, but especially in procedural terms, by identifying in this sense a very precise and rigorous schedule that has reduced considerably the times that usually existed between the design and building of infrastructure projects considered as strategic for the socio-economic development of the country. Source: <http://sirsi.mit.gov.it/reserved/LaLeggeObiettivo/legge443.pdf>

34 Law 21 December 2001, no. 443 <http://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:2001;443>

35 EIA (in Italian VIA - Valutazione di Impatto Ambientale) is an analytical process that systematically examines the whole possible environmental impacts (direct/indirect, temporary/permanent, single/cumulative, etc...) due to the construction of a new public work in a specific territory.

36 CIPE is an inter-ministerial body in charge of individuating all the action necessary for the achievement of the national public economy's objectives.

37 In December 2003, Italferr (Engineering society of RFI Group) presented a new project for Turin-Lyon railway. To find a compromise, this project provided: the substitution of Caprie interconnection with a new tunnel from Grange di Brione to Chiampano; the passage of the railway line along the Turin highway near Venaria; the displacement of the railway from Pianezza to Druento - S. Gillio; the absence of connection with Orbassano logistic centre.



Picture 3 - Base tunnel. From the archive of the newspaper "La Stampa", realised by Maurizio Tropeano

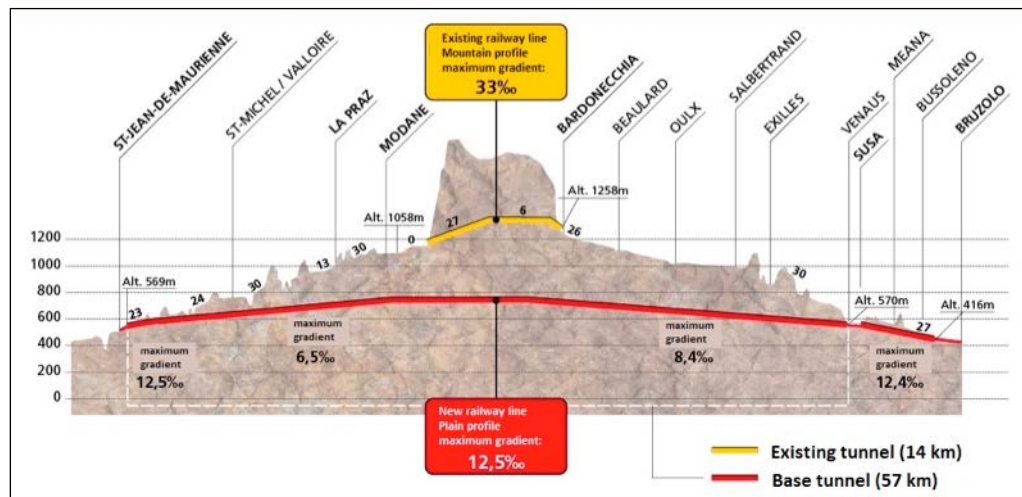
A new step forward would be done on 3 December 2003, when CIPE approved the preliminary project of the international track from San Didero to the base tunnel, at the total cost of 2 billion and 300 million euros. Less than a week later, in Paris took place the meeting of the **Comité interministériel d'aménagement et de développement du territoire (CIADT)**, the French counterpart of Italian CIPE, with the aim to take a final decision on the allocation of funds for public works from 2004 to 2020. Turin- Lyon high-speed railway was included in the public works that have to be realised within 10 years. However, the day after the French Government declared that Turin-Lyon was not a priority so the major of Lyon scheduled the beginning of works in 2012 (Milani and Najjar, 2011).

In spite of this, Italian Government and its Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi did not give up as they wanted at least to announce the beginning of works. Therefore in May 2004 Berlusconi with the Minister of Infrastructures Piero Lunardi went to Paris.

France and Italy agreed upon a new economic costs partition, whose total amount was **13 billion euros**:

- France: 4 billion for the Monmelian-Saint Jean de Maurienne track, whose construction was assigned to RFF;
- Italy: 2.3 billion euros for the Turin-Burzolo track, whose construction was assigned to RFI and 6.7 billion euros for the payment of the 67% of the international track from Burzolo to Saint Jean de Maurienne.
- EU: 20% of the costs related to the international track whose construction was assigned to LTF.

In this way Italy was committed for the payment of the 2/3 of the whole railway line (4,221 billion euros) even if only 1/3 of the track is in Italy. However, having reached this compromise, Italian Government could announce the beginning of works for the Turin-Lyon, during the election campaign. At the same time, at the beginning of May 2005, the Court of Turin started an investigation about the public procurement bidding for the Turin-Lyon (see par. 3.2). Despite the seriousness of this investigation, CIPE in August 2005 approved the preliminary project for the national track from Settimo to Bussoleno, allocating the record amount of 460 thousands billions of lire (almost 240 billion euros). Finally, the drilling could begin.



Picture 4 - The international track, the project for a railway line under the mountain. From the archive of the newspaper "La Stampa", realized by Maurizio Tropeano.

However, it was France that began first, with the works for the exploratory tunnels in Modane, Le Praz and Saint Martin de la Porte. In Italy, instead, the same works for Venaus tunnel caused the outbreak of conflicts in Val Susa.

In November 2005, these protests became tense and sometimes violent. To find solutions, as the beginning of the Winter Olympic Games was very close (February 2006), the Berlusconi's Government called a meeting among all stakeholders to establish a respite. However, the No-TAV movement asked for the intervention of some representatives of the European Commission, to clarify all the issues. To meet this request, in the end of November 2005, a delegation of the European **Committee on Petitions** of the European Parliament, chaired by the MEP De Palacio, made an on-site verification in Val Susa.

The Committee reported that it was necessary to take into account all technical problems and all the worries expressed by the residents and civil society representatives. However, it expressed its favour for the transfer of traffic flows from motorway to railway and asked for an in-depth analysis of the preliminary study. Finally, MEP De Palacio, decided to assign to a team of independent experts the evaluation of the dossier presented by LTF for the international track of the new railway. The team gave a positive evaluation of LTF dossier underlining the necessity of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the pilot tunnel of Venaus, that had to be finished by 2007. The beginning of studies for the EIA and the opinion of the Committee were not enough to decrease the protests in Val Susa; the Institutional Forum and the Technical Observatory were not able to mediate among parties. The No-TAV movement continued to obstacle the drilling works in Venaus, while Regione Piemonte tried to mediate with the local authorities of the Valley. In order to find a mediation, the Regione Piemonte proposed to convene a *Conferenza di Servizi*³⁸, but all parties started to quarrel about the organisation and the Comunità Montana appeared strongly against it.

On 12 October 2006 a first preliminary meeting of the *Conferenza di Servizi* took place. In this meeting a change of the international track of the Turin-Lyon was proposed. It was named *Soluzione in destra Dora* ("Solution on the right side of river Dora") because it proposed that the railway line would be built in the opposite side of Val Susa. Municipality of Turin, *Provincia* and *Regione Piemonte* supported this hypothesis because it could be an opportunity to revitalise this territory without soil consumption.

38 It has the aim of simplify the action of public administration through the joint analysis of the different public interests involved in a public procedure. In short it is a joint meeting of all the administration involved in a procedure. It is a measure that responds to the good governance criteria of the public administration: cost-performance, simplicity, celerity and effectiveness.

Almost one month later, on 27 November 2006, the official Conferenza di Servizi was called, but the Majors of Val Susa did not participate. However the participants decided to go on with the works and the Government declared the importance of the connection with the logistic centre of Orbassano (S.I.To) and, as a consequence, that the track through Val Sangone was the most suitable.

At the beginning of 2007 the Italian Ministry of Transport Alessandro Bianchi met the majors of Val Susa and took part to the meeting of the Technical Observatory. Bianchi, declaring that he supported the mediation of the technical observatory in spite of Conferenza di servizi, obtained from the majors a new willingness to enter into a dialogue with public institutions. He proposed a track that was a mix of those on the table: from the Interporto di Orbassano to Avigliana with a tunnel under the moraine hill, in parallel with the old railway of the Lower Val Susa until Meana, where both the railway would be buried under built up areas, proceeding toward Chiomonte until the international tunnel entrance, one km before Venaus. The No-TAV movement did not like this proposal and shows its dissent with demonstration.

Barrot the EU Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, worried about this situation issued an ultimatum to Italy: if the project for the international track would not be delivered within June 2007, the European contribution for the realisation of the work would be definitely lost.

So, the Italian Premier Romano Prodi, to accelerate the procedure of mediation called a meeting of the Institutional Forum of Palazzo Chigi.

The modification discussed during this political board were:

- A shorter base tunnel, delating the project for the tunnel of Venaus;
- The track could pass along the left side of river Dora, to avoid the crossing of soils containing asbestos;
- The rails in Val Susa would follow the old railway in part through its empowerment and in part with the burying of the rails;
- The track could cross Turin through Corso Marche, connecting itself with the high-speed railway from Milan³⁹.

In the end, this board expressed its preference for an alternative project based on the empowerment of the existing railway. However, the technical observatory is asked to examine the different hypothesis, to build a project shared with the administrators of Val Susa.

EU took into account of the Italian efforts and made go on the procedure for the call for European contribution, whose final say was to the Commissioner Jacques Barrot and to the European Commission.

Despite the No TAV movement and the majors of Val Susa presented papers and petitions to the relevant EU offices explaining their opposition to the project, on 1 November 2007, EU allocated an amount of 671,8 million euros as first contribution to the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway.

The debate in Italy continued with only one step forward: the signing of "the agreement for projecting the new railway line and for the new transport policy of the territory". This agreement was closed between the Technical Observatory and local authorities and signed in Pra Catinat on 28 June 2008. It aimed to promote at Italian governmental level, appropriate procedures to guarantee the consultation of local authorities and residents before the realisation of infrastructures and public works and not after, as happened for Turin-Lyon railway⁴⁰, in which the decision to establish communication between LTF and affected parties was taken 15 years after the high-speed rail project was firstly proposed (Burnside-Lawry, Ariemma, 2014).

This agreement, even if it had no effectiveness in the short run, it was considered as a key-document that attested the common will to find a solution and reduce the conflicts.

39 From the archive of the newspaper "Il Sole 24 ore": http://www.ilssole24ore.com/art/SoleOnline4/Speciali/2007/tav/tav-lavori-tre-tratte_PRN.shtml

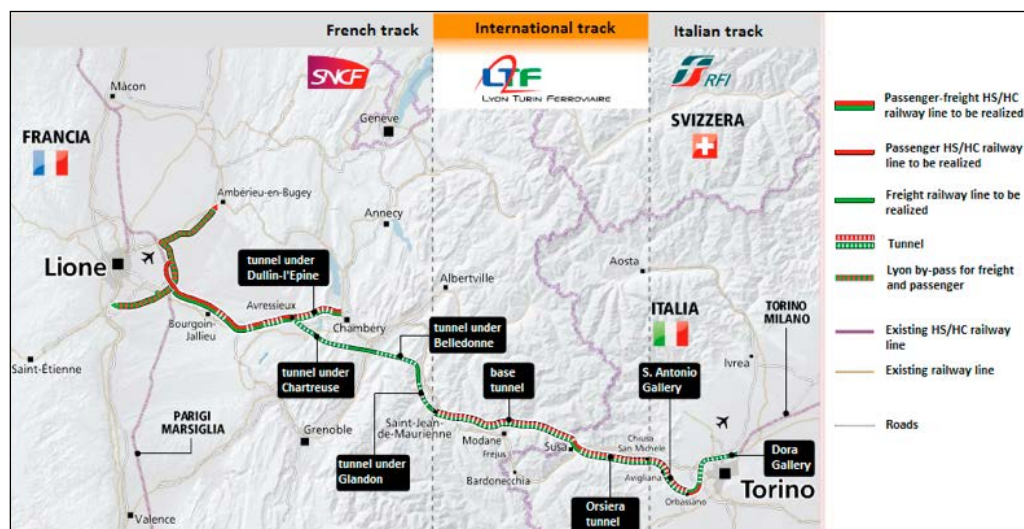
40 Source: "Accordo per la progettazione della nuova linea e per le nuove politiche di trasporto per il territorio", available on this website: <http://www.trail.unioncamere.it/>

However, protests continued, and the drilling officially started only in December 2009, when the Prefecture of Turin inaugurated the exploratory phase through the presentation of the definitive and detailed work plan approved by the technicians of the Comunità Montana. In parallel the press announced the start of the first construction site in Chiomonte within the end of 2010.

However, even if the drilling started, the works did not. On 9 June 2010, EU issued another ultimatum to Italy and France: if works did not start by the 30 June, the funds allocated for the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway would be cut.

Works did not start. On 27 October 2010, the European Commission after the funding review on the loans 2007-2013, allocated for the 92 TEN - T (trans-European networks)⁴¹ projects, cut 9,18 million euros from the first loan of 671,8 million, allocated for the international track of the Turin-Lyon. Moreover the European Commission announced that if the works for the exploratory tunnel of La Maddalena did not start by the beginning of 2010 and if by the end of 2010 there were not a new agreement between Italy and France for the partition of funds, the whole loans would be lost.

Under this European pressure, CIPE approved in November 2010 the definitive project of the tunnel La Maddalena. Less than 3 months later, in February 2011, the trial started in 2005 ended with eight convictions and six acquittals⁴² (see par.3.2).



Picture 5 - Preliminary project approved in 2010. From the archive of the newspaper "La Stampa", realized by Maurizio Tropeano.

This big scandal, that involved the first promoters of the project, would not stop the opening of Chiomonte construction site on 27 June 2011. However, less than one week later, the opponents tried to break in the site, causing violent clashes. In the end there were 400 people hurt among law enforcement officers.⁴³ As a result of this, the Italian government has deemed the work site to be of

41 The TEN-T programme consists of hundreds of projects – defined as studies or works – whose ultimate purpose is to ensure the cohesion, interconnection and interoperability of the trans-European transport network, as well as access to it. TEN-T projects, which are located in every EU Member State, include all modes of transport: road, rail, maritime, inland waterways, air, logistics, co-modality, innovation.

42 From the archive of the newspaper La Repubblica: http://torino.repubblica.it/cronaca/2011/02/08/news/appalti_truccati_per_lavori_stradali_otto_condanne_e_sei_assoluzioni-12217664/

43 From the archive of the newspaper Il Fatto Quotidiano: <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2012/02/27/ventanni-storia-dellalta-velocita-torino-lione/194168/>

strategic national importance⁴⁴, allowing 24/7 military surveillance and any resulting military action to protect the site (Burnside-Lawry, Ariemma, 2014).

All of these events demonstrated the failure of the Observatory as mediator (Maggiolini, 2012) and as a consequence of this, most of the representative institutions of Val Susa leaved the Observatory.

In 2009 No-TAV movement has jumped from the grass root to politics through the election in civic lists of representatives of the movement, then in 2010 Regional elections, the dynamics of voting in Susa Valley contributed to condition the outcome of the competition, with the rise of a new political force entering the political arena for the first time: the 5 Stars Movement (Movimento 5 Stelle - M5S). This one, a group promoted by the blogger and comedian Beppe Grillo supported the No-TAV movement without hesitation in Susa Valley, focusing its electoral campaign on this issue (Maggiolini, 2013). The M5S won 40% of the vote in Susa Valley, becoming the region's number one party (Burnside-Lawry, Ariemma, 2014). In this way, representatives of the movement entered in the politics' rooms both at local and regional level.

In the same period the new Italian Government, chaired by Mario Monti, tried to proceed with the works, in order to meet the European expectations. On 30 September 2011 Italy and France signed a new agreement on the partition of costs: Italy, with the 40% of the total tracks, would face the 63% of costs, France, with the 20% of the total track, would pay the 58% (Milani Najjar 2011).

Since then, nothing happened until 30 January 2012 when the Italian government and the French one signed an intergovernmental agreement that divided the realisation of the railway in priority phases. This agreement has not been implemented yet and few steps have been made to go on with works. The final decision on the project is still missing and the discussion is still open on three possible alternatives:

1. Preliminary project;
2. "0" alternative: empowerment of the existing railway line;
3. Division of the preliminary project in successive phases.

The works in the construction site stopped. France began losing interest in this project, and even if Italy was still promoting this public work at political level NLTU Turin-Lyon seemed to be fallen in a vicious circle, from which it will emerge with difficulties.

Since the beginning of 2015, new steps forward with the approval of the final project for the Italian part of the international track by CIPE and the institution of TELT – Tunnel Euroalpin Lyon-Turin –, the new public promoter (public corporation??), that replaces LTF as responsible for the realisation and the management of the new infrastructure.

The Italian Minister of Infrastructures Maurizio Lupi met his counterpart Alain Vidalies in Paris, to sign the additional protocol for the beginning of works and deliver the application for assistance to the EU.

Actually TELT has 12 years of time to realize the tunnel and 99 years for the management of this infrastructure. The estimate for the international track (about 65 km long) between Saint Jean de Maurienne and Bussoleno is about 8,6 billion euros. The 40% of this cost will be charged to of EU, the 35% to Italy and the 25% to France⁴⁵.

44 Article 9 of the Law no. 183/2011 establishes that to assure the realisation of the Turin-Lyon railway line and guarantee the works for the Maddalena explorative tunnel, from 1 January 2012, areas and sites belonging to the Municipality of Chiomonte, identified as construction sites for the explorative tunnel and for the base tunnel of the Turin-Lyon railway line are considered of strategic national importance. This expression means that there is a strong interest for all Italian citizens that justifies a particular juridical status. As a result of this it is possible to limit or forbid the access. Further this status provides, for the control of the territory, the use of the army, with the function of public security (Algostino 2014).

45 From the press release of FSI official website, March 2015: <http://www.fsitaliane.it/cms/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=df275ef32e72c410VgnVCM1000008916f90aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=f11d72443148b310VgnVCM1000005817f90aRCRD>

4. Criminal infiltration and high-speed railway in the media

This paragraph aims at understanding how Italian media depicts the high-speed railway public work and, specifically, if the criminal infiltration is considered an issue in this major work or, at least, linked to it. For reaching these goals, the articles published between 2001 and 2014 - in particular those published by La Stampa, that has great relevance both at national and local level - has been considered.

The research results show that media generally link the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway work to some specific items, mainly the actions and claims of the protest movements, with particular regard to "NoTAV" group. Specifically, the newspaper emphasised every single episodes of tension, or even of violence, which happened during the protests and the risk of eventual terroristic attacks. Moreover, since 2001 great attention has been focused on benefits which can come from this major work, and on the various favourable reasons that support the execution of this public work.

On the contrary, **the link between the issue of criminal infiltration in public procurement and the Turin-Lyon High-speed railway is little observed** and poorly described by the media. During the period of time analysed, few articles randomly refer to this matter. In fact, generally, the media focus their attention on the connection among criminal and mafia groups and various subjects involved in the Turin-Lyon railway public work only when some relevant judicial case starts or impressive events take place. It is not by chance that some articles on this question have been published in 2002, when 59 persons were under investigation during an inquiry of the existence of a hidden network which illegally managed the acquisitions of public bidding for furniture, services and building of infrastructures in the Turin area. This judicial inquiry led to 12 arrests of entrepreneurs charged with conspiracy to rig bidding. This affair attracted the media's attention also on the high level risk of criminal infiltration in the Turin-Lyon railway major work, causing consequently the publication of some articles on this plight.

Later on some articles on this issue have been published simultaneously with one of the more recent investigation on the 'Ndrangheta in the Piedmont region, which ended in the 2014 well-know pre-trial detention order named "Ordinanza San Michele". This judicial order has shown the hidden relationships among 'Ndrangheta members and several actors of the legal world, including entrepreneurs, politicians, public officials in the Piedmont region and in particular in the Val Susa area (see for more details the working paper, *"The High-speed railway and the prevention of economic crimes (corruption and organised crime)"*, par. 5).

The newspaper articles refer to the hidden relational network and to individuals involved in it, underlining the importance of the investigation and the level of criminal infiltration risk in the region. Other newspaper articles on such matters have been published in 2011, when a complex police operation named "Minotauro" took place, proving the entrenchment level of 'Ndrangheta in Piedmont. This police operation explicitly refers to criminal infiltration in public procurement, including the Turin-Lyon High-speed railway work. As in the previous cases, the issue of the pre-trial detention order attracted the attention of the media.

In conclusion it appears clear that **Italian newspapers considered the criminal infiltration problem** linked to the High-speed railway work in Piedmont **only when relevant judicial events occur**. Otherwise, the issues discussed by the media usually referred to other aspects of the phenomenon.

All these results have come to light from a general overview throughout the main Italia newspapers. However, the principal aspects of the issue are clearly identified and the features of the public discourse on the phenomenon are almost the same for all the analysed period. It would be interesting to study in depth this matter. To examine, item by item, the subjects to really understand both the interpretative frame used by the media and the specifics of the public discourse created by the institutions. To continue this research should be useful for better understanding the level of awareness of citizens on the problem and for identifying the elements which shape the perceptions of the public.

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