

Colmar France Vogelshheim Breisach Germany Freiburg (Breisgau)

What was missing ❌
The bridge over the Rhine river was destroyed and not rebuilt.

8

What happened? ➡️
Back in 2012, a cross-border association was founded, which fought very hard for the restoration of the Rhine Bridge for railway transportation. Since 2018, the issue has become more topical: Both the German and French parliament opted for a reference to the reactivation of the route in the bilateral Élysée Treaty. The German Bundestag approved the necessary funds for a feasibility study in June 2018. The French counterpart likewise agreed to co-financing.

Varaždin Caovec Slovenia Lendava Rédiš Hungary Zalaegerszeg

What was missing ❌
Infrastructure was partly dissembled.

13

What happened? ➡️
The Slovenian town Lendava intends to apply for the title of European Capital of Culture 2025. In this context, it wants to undertake intensive efforts to increase sustainable mobility and shift towards other modes of transport. One of its declared aims is the reactivation of railway lines to Rédiš.

Toulouse Pau France Orlon S^{te} Marie Canfranc Spain Huesca Zaragoza

What was missing ❌
The existing infrastructure needs refurbishment.

9

What happened? ➡️
In mid-October 2016, regional governments of Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Aragon were successful in applying for funds in the first round of funding for minor closures of gaps. It was decided that CEF would cover 50% of the costs for refurbishment studies of the route. We are thus one step closer to a closure of the gap.

Berlin Germany Ducherow Świnoujście Poland Wolin Pomorski

What was missing ❌
The lift bridge over the Szczecin Lagoon was heavily damaged and infrastructure was partly dissembled.


15

What happened? ➡️
The state government of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania included the reactivation of the Karnin lift bridge in its coalition agreement 2016-2021. It unsuccessfully attempted to finance the refurbishment through the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. Funding was ultimately denied.

Mind the gap!



New developments



A map showing a rail route from Paris, France to Brussels, Belgium. The route passes through Charleville Mézières, Givet, and Dinant. A gap is indicated between Givet and Dinant.

What was missing ❌
No cross-border rail transport.

What happened? ➔

Although the gap is not passable via rail transport, there is a bus frequenting both destinations. At the same time, Givet and Dinant are connected through the Maas Cycle Route since 2016. This renders a reactivation of the route impossible. However, as of December a cross-border railway service between Charleroi/Mons and Maubeuge/Aunoye will be resumed.

2



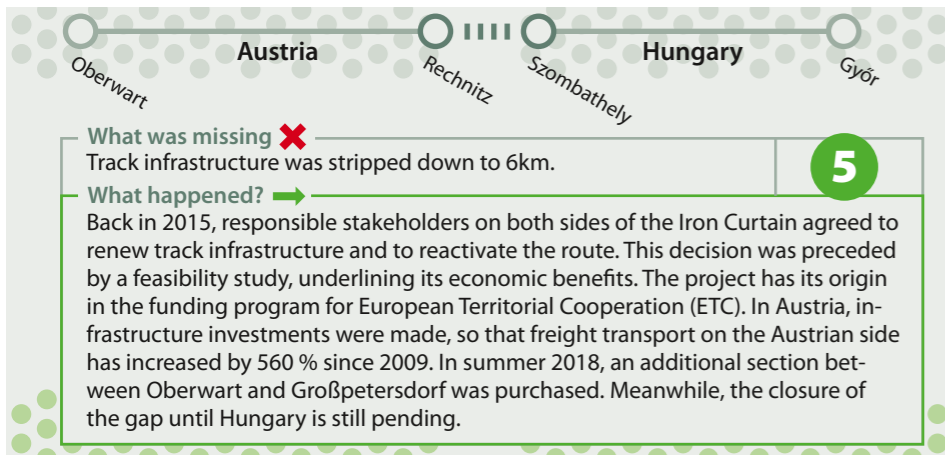
A map showing a rail route from Hof, Germany to Cheb, Czech Republic. The route passes through Selb-Plößberg and As. A gap is indicated between Selb-Plößberg and As.

What was missing ❌
Track infrastructure existed, but was not in use.

What happened? ➔

Planned resuming of the route has been successful. Since 2015, regular trains travel between Germany and Czech Republic on the existing track infrastructure. The route is operated by the Czech railway service in cooperation with "Länderbahn".

6



A map showing a rail route from Oberwart, Austria to Győr, Hungary. The route passes through Rechnitz and Szombathely. A gap is indicated between Rechnitz and Szombathely.

What was missing ❌
Track infrastructure was stripped down to 6km.

What happened? ➔

Back in 2015, responsible stakeholders on both sides of the Iron Curtain agreed to renew track infrastructure and to reactivate the route. This decision was preceded by a feasibility study, underlining its economic benefits. The project has its origin in the funding program for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC). In Austria, infrastructure investments were made, so that freight transport on the Austrian side has increased by 560 % since 2009. In summer 2018, an additional section between Oberwart and Großpetersdorf was purchased. Meanwhile, the closure of the gap until Hungary is still pending.

5



A map showing a rail route from München, Germany to Prag, Czech Republic. The route passes through Passau, Waldkirchen, Nové Údolí, and Černý Kříž. A gap is indicated between Waldkirchen and Nové Údolí.

What was missing ❌
Tracks were partly removed on the German side.

What happened? ➔

The Ilz Valley Railway now travels from May to October on all Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays on the German section between Passau and Freyburg. The association deploys buses at the Waldkirchen station, so that passengers can get to Nové Údolí.

7

In 2014 I posed the question: Do we want insane large-scale projects or real bridging of gaps?

I thereto publicized enclosed flyer "Mind the gap!" in order to visualise the problem and propose a solution to it. The publication was the result of intensive, pan-European research and led to the creation of a comprehensive databank, which can be found on www.missing-rail-links.eu. The slogan has not lost its currency, though, fortunately, there are new developments and real progress has been made.

On the one hand, the European Commission commissioned a study under the admittedly cumbersome title: „Comprehensive analysis of the existing cross-border rail transport connections and missing links on the internal EU borders“. It comprises an initial systematic account of existing gaps in cross-border rail transportation.

On the other hand, I am especially pleased that Green demands for a change of investment policies on EU-level found a sympathetic ear and are now being implemented. Since 2017, the Commission provides funding for closures between cross-border gaps. Demand for it has been so high that the envisioned budget of 110 Mio. was raised to 140 Mio. Euros. Financial means stem from the infrastructure program "Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)". Until now, 13 projects were awarded funding.

This benefitted some projects, which had been mentioned in this flyer (i.e. nr. 9) previously. I would like to inform you about these new developments with this additional note. In this way, the whole flyer need not be reprinted at the expense of the environment and yet you are up-to-date. I am convinced that we must continue our efforts so that such positive achievements will not remain singular.

A project by the Greens/EFA in the European Parliament
Initiated by **Michael Cramer**, Member of the European Parliament



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V.i.S.d.P Michael Cramer

