Twitter Thread by Jon Worth



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A quick thread about night trains

The transport ministers from ■■■■■■■■, and the CEOs of the state-owned ■ operators in each (DB, ÖBB, SNCF, SBB), held a press conference about night trains today...

This slide summarises what they'd agreed

Don't get me wrong: night trains are *good*, and the trains on these routes will be ÖBB NightJet services, and ÖBB runs the best night trains there are in Europe.

I personally will be very happy to take these trains.

But so much for the good news.

Most of these routes have *already* been announced (Zürich to BCN, Rome, Amsterdam) - see https://t.co/7JnAo74tIX

Or have been even trialled (Vienna-Brussels) - see https://t.co/kYCambVXph

That means only really the parts of the trains going to Paris and Berlin are in some way new - and even then we don't know how this will work (old Berlin-Paris night train went *through* Brussels)

In short: we're talking today about something like 4-6 new train services a day

In comparison: DB has 400 ICE units, SNCF 600 TGVs.

All of this is a *drop in the ocean*.

One of the headaches with ÖBB's NightJet trains to date has been combining tickets for them with tickets for other providers (even with those at this press conference!)

Was there word on how to solve that? No, of course not

Also bunging money at state railways is only one way to solve this - actually achieving genuine competition in EU-wide rail would be another.

ÖBB CEO Matthä talked of fair competition - but only with other transport modes.

And there was of course one notable absentee at today's event: the politician actually supposedly responsible for all of this - @AdinaValean, the European Commissioner for Transport.

So today was a tiny, tiny step forward.

The press will no doubt lap it up, because everyone likes a shiny new train.

But in reality if we're to get more Europeans out of planes and onto long distance trains, we need a LOT more and a LOT better than this!

/ends