

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000265/26
to the Commission
Kostas Papadakis (NI), Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)
(23 January 2026)**

Subject: Dangerous state of Greek and European railways and the recent rail accidents in Spain

On 18 January 2026, near Cordoba, Spain, a train derailed and collided with an oncoming train passing on the parallel track. The death toll stands at 41 so far, with dozens more injured. In the space of a few days, two further accidents have occurred in Barcelona and Girona.

The train drivers' union SEMAF had warned about the state of the lines, while rail infrastructure administrator ADIF had reported a further eight technical issues on that stretch of the track.

The EU, national governments and the legislative packages on railways are to blame: they opened the door to 'liberalisation' and the privatisation of railways for the sake of competitiveness and corporate profits.

This policy also led to the crime at Tempí in Greece, the causes of which the Greek Government is trying to cover up.

In view of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. How does it respond to the fact that, as a result of the actions of the EU, national governments and corporate groups, there is a criminal delay in adopting and implementing the necessary safety measures in rail transport and in ensuring and maintaining essential infrastructure, due to the 'cost-benefit' approach, leading to increasingly frequent and foreseeable tragedies across the EU?
2. On what basis does the European Railway Agency continue to grant certifications and operating authorisations to railway infrastructure marked by staff shortages, undermaintained facilities and trains without fire safety?
3. Almost nine months after the Executive Director of Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking cynically stated that thousands of railway carriages should be sent to the scrapyard, are these carriages still in circulation and, if so, what is their total number in the EU and in Greece in particular?

Submitted: 23.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(17 April 2026)**

Despite tragedies such as Adamuz, available data (among other statistics compiled by the European Union Agency for Railways or Eurostat) show that there is an overall reduction of major accidents (from an average of 5 per year at the end of 1990s to 1 per year since 2020) in the single European railway area as well as a reduction of the number of victims in parallel to the adoption of the 4th railway package and the improved safety framework.

This legal framework and in particular the Rail Safety Directive 2016/798 ⁽¹⁾ defines clearly the responsibilities and obligations of the rail transport ecosystem: rail undertakings, infrastructure managers, national safety authorities and the European Railway Agency.

Certification and validation that the different applicable regulations are fulfilled is a shared effort and review mechanisms are foreseen in case of non-compliance by any of the certified entities.

In this regard, there are no indications that the 4th railway package and the liberalisation of the train services had any negative impact on safety.

The Executive Director of Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking's declaration draws attention to the reality and specificity of the rail sector, where rolling stock typically has a lifespan of around 40 years, while infrastructure equipment can last even longer.

Provided maintenance is performed as required, this is not a safety challenge per se. The work of Europe Rail Joint Undertaking is focused on innovations and investments, including those that improve rail safety.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/798/oj/eng>.