

## Competition between companies reduced average prices of high-speed trains to Levante and Andalusia by more than 20% in 2023

- The average prices of the cheapest operators hovered around 25 euros on the Madrid-Valencia and Madrid-Alicante routes, and 40 euros on the Madrid-Seville and Madrid-Malaga routes, routes on which competitors commenced operations in the last year.
- Passenger numbers were close to 8.5 million, 29% more than in the same quarter of 2022. The Madrid-Alicante corridor has grown the most, by 53%.
- For freight transport, the net tonnage transported decreased by 4.8% year-on-year.

**Madrid, 25 March, 2024.** - High-speed trains in Spain set a new passenger record in the last quarter of 2023, carrying almost 8.5 million passengers, 29% more than in the same quarter in 2022. On average, ticket prices fell by more than 20%, according to the 4th Quarterly Report 2023 ([INF/DTSP/111/23](#)).

On the most important corridors, more than 20% year-on-year passenger growth was recorded. The most significant increases were 53% on the Madrid-Alicante corridor—despite a 19.5% drop compared to the previous quarter (summer)—and between Madrid and Seville, with 44% more users—having grown by 11% compared to the previous quarter—to over one million.

### Cheaper tickets

The prices recorded by the CNMC<sup>1</sup> fell on all corridors compared to the same quarter in 2022, with savings of between 21% on the Madrid-Barcelona route and 26% on the Madrid-Malaga route. It was possible to travel from Madrid to Valencia for 22 euros, to Alicante for 25 euros, to Barcelona for 37 euros, to Seville for 38 euros, and to Malaga for 42 euros.

On routes where there has been competition for more than a year—Madrid-Barcelona and Madrid-Valencia— the cumulative reduction was around 40%.

### High-speed market shares

---

<sup>1</sup> Prices posted on the operators' websites, every day in the fourth quarter of 2023, for travel from the following day, every day, until 40 days later, i.e., those posted in the fourth quarter of 2023 include ticket prices for travel until the beginning of February 2024.

Renfe Viajeros remained the leading operator on all corridors, with shares of between 50% and 76% of passengers. Iryo obtained between 25 and 30% except on the Madrid-Alicante route, where since 15 September it has been operating only from Thursday to Sunday. Ouigo maintained a share of around 21% on the Madrid-Barcelona, Madrid-Valencia and Madrid-Alicante corridors.

### **Other passenger services**

The discounts and free travel introduced by [Royal Decree-Law 14/2022](#) meant that services under public service obligations, provided exclusively by Renfe Viajeros, saw increases in passenger numbers:

In the last quarter of 2023, passengers on high-speed medium-distance trains (AVANT) increased by 12.3% and those on commuter trains by 6%, but conventional medium-distance users fell by 6.2% compared to the fourth quarter of 2022, the first full quarter in which the Royal Decree-Law was applied.

Compared to the third quarter of 2023, commuter train users increased by 10.2%, equalling the number of passengers in the last quarter of 2019 (pre-pandemic).

Long-distance conventional services saw the same number of passengers as in the last quarter of 2022.

### **Freight transport**

Freight transport activity improved with respect to the previous quarter: by 1.4% in net tonnes and 3.4% in net t.km, although these increases failed to compensate for the summer setbacks. The year-on-year variations were negative in both indicators, 4.8% and 2.6%, respectively.

Several companies increased their activity compared to the last quarter of 2022: in terms of net tonnes transported, Medway was up 31%, Captrain 15%, and Continental 12%. Renfe Mercancías and Transfesa experienced decreases of 18% and 9%, respectively.

### **Related content:**

- [Quarterly report on passenger rail transport \(4Q-2023\)](#).

- [Quarterly report on freight rail transport \(4Q-2023\)](#).
- [Press release](#) (3Q- 2023): Commercial high speed rail broke its record in the third quarter with 8.4 million passengers thanks to the competition along the Levante and Andalusia corridors.
- [Press release](#) (2Q- 2023): Spanish high-speed rail beat its all-time passenger record in the second quarter, boosted by competition between companies.
- [Press release](#) (1Q- 2023): The Madrid-Valencia corridor doubled the number of passengers in the first quarter of the year and hit one million users.
- [Press release](#) (4Q2022): The entry of Ouigo and Iryo into the Madrid-Valencia corridor doubled the number of passengers in the last quarter of 2022.
- [Press release](#) (3Q2022): The Madrid-Barcelona high-speed corridor recorded 43% more passengers in the third quarter than in the same period in 2019.
- [CNMC Data Portal](#).