



ABSTRACT

The construction of new High Speed infrastructures with the main aim of offering a system of quality effective and competitive transport constitutes, undoubtedly, one of the most representative aspects of the railway activity in the last 20 years. The birth of the High Speed was conceived in its precursor countries, Japan and France, as a solution to the capacity problems of certain lines and as a measure of strengthening the railroad between their major cities.

In view of its success, Europe is betting for a High Speed's European network, whose gradual entry into service offers a great range of possibilities, which go beyond connecting big cities. The High Performance Railroad Regional Services are a clear example of the opportunities that enable High Speed's new lines.

This dissertation intends to study the potential of this new typology of services on the railway current market through the charging policies and of the costs associated with the use of infrastructures in some European countries. This balance between revenues associated with ticket sales and costs related to the infrastructure charges imposed by the railway manager, is carried out by the High Performance Railroad Regional Services, in Spain and in other four West European countries, and for other typologies of Medium and Long Distance services in Spain as well (Conventional Medium and Long Distance services and High Speed services).

The obtained results confirm the importance that infrastructure charges acquire, which they could mean more than 50 % of the revenues achieved by the railway operator. The weight of the toll in the railway's income varies greatly among the studied European countries, as well as the financial capacity of the companies' operators to face other costs of exploitation. Moreover, substantial differences are appreciated between the toll of High Speed's services and those that circulate along conventional lines, with considerably more reduced tolls per kilometre.

Focusing on Spain, there can be identified certain relations exploited nowadays by the product AVE, but they meet the own characteristics of the Avant's services. Further analyses corroborate the similarities between the mentioned AVE relations and the High Performance Railroad Regional Services exploited under the Avant trade.

The analyses carried out in the present dissertation reflect the great potential of the High Performance Railroad Regional Services in certain regional relations, due to the advantages for the operator, but especially for the society as a whole. On the other hand, calculations show a resource availability to meet operating costs, discounted the costs associated with the use of infrastructure, lower than the services of long distance, and therefore they are not expected to reach full profitability for themselves. Nevertheless, the social interest that these services provoke would justify a slight deficit situation of the service.