



Asea station (photo by author)

GREECE

PROTEST AGAINST THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HISTORIC PELOPONNESE RAILWAY LINE

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We were astonished to learn of the intention of the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE) to convert the historic narrow-gauge railway line of the Peloponnese, in the section from Megara-Corinth-Kalamata, into a bicycle path. In its September 24, 2025 announcement, TEE stated its plan to commission a particularly costly preliminary study, to be financed by the Hellenic Green Fund.

The destruction of this existing 250-kilometre-long railway line, an environmentally friendly mode of transport and a valuable infrastructure asset of the country's central rail network, contradicts fundamental national planning objectives, as:

- This line is included in the officially approved “The Statutory National Spatial Planning Framework of Greece (2009).”
- The upgrading and reoperation of the Corinth-Argos-Nafplio section is part of the “Approved National Strategic Transport Plan of Greece” (NTSP, 2019), which was prepared and substantiated through studies on behalf of the Ministry of Transport, upon the mandate of the competent Directorate-General of the European Commission. In 2022, a feasibility study com-

missioned by OSE confirmed the project's positive socio-economic justification based on key indicators (ERR, ENPV, and B/C).

- The further upgrading of the Corinth-Tripoli-Kalamata corridor is included in the Ministry of Transport's Operational Plan (2024–2044) for the development of Greek railways. This specific infrastructure underwent a complete renovation between 2004 and 2009, funded by the Peloponnese Regional Operational Program (ROP), with an investment of €80 million to fully renew the railway superstructure with heavy materials designed for speeds up to 120 km/h.
- The line is included in the current comprehensive network of the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T/Railways – Comprehensive network).
- At the same time, while residents persistently demand the reactivation of the railway, a cooperative program has already begun between the Swiss Confederation, Europa Nostra, and the Hellenic Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage, in collaboration with ETH Zurich, to promote the re-opening of this line.

In light of all the above, VIDA NPC joins other organisations in strongly protesting the irreversible destruction of a valuable public infrastructure and demands the cancellation of all related actions. The necessary reactivation of the line will not only help preserve the region's historical identity but will also serve as a tool for sustainable development throughout the Peloponnese.



Leonari station (photo by author)



Manari station (photo by author)

We wish to underscore the warm and valuable support extended to our initiative by TICCIH International, which conveyed its solidarity through **an official letter of concern** addressed on October 11 to the relevant authorities and institutions.

Brief historical overview

The Peloponnese was the most developed and productive region of the country within the then-limited Greek territory, before the

annexation of Thessaly. The cities of Patras and Kalamata, both significant ports and emerging industrial centres, were located in the Peloponnese. Therefore, considering the region's pivotal role in the national economy, Prime Minister Charilaos Trikoupis prioritised the development of a railway network in the Peloponnese.

On April 19, 1882, a contract was signed with Ioannis Dumas, Director of the General Credit Bank and representative of a consortium of Greek and foreign investors, for the construction of a

single-track, narrow-gauge railway line which, starting from Piraeus, would connect the port and the city of Athens with Corinth, Patras, Argos, Nafplio, and Myloi. The construction and operation of this network were undertaken by the company “Piraeus–Athens–Peloponnese Railways” (SPAP), established by the General Credit Bank on October 17, 1882.

In November 1899, Kalamata was connected by rail with Tripoli and Athens. The railway network of the Peloponnese was completed in 1904 with the extension of the line to the port of Kalamata. The SPAP narrow-gauge network linked the capital with almost the entire Peloponnese, as well as the cities within the region, reaching a total length of approximately 750 kilometres, making it not only the largest narrow-gauge railway network in Greece but also one of the largest in Europe. The network consists of two lines connecting Kalamata with Athens: first through Tripoli, and then through Patra/Pyrgos.

In 1939, under the regime of Ioannis Metaxas, SPAP was placed under liquidation and came under state control. During the Occupation, the network and rolling stock suffered extensive damage. Eventually, SPAP was nationalised in 1954 and, in 1962, was integrated into SEK (Hellenic State Railways), the predecessor of OSE (Hellenic Railways Organisation).

Source

“Assessment Study of the Buildings of the Historic SPAP Complex as Elements of the Country’s Industrial Heritage”, Vault of Industrial Digital Archives - VIDA NPC, January 2025, commissioned by OSE.

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COLOMBIA

PATRIMONIALISATION AND TENSION IN THE BANANA AGROINDUSTRY IN COLOMBIA

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Bananas are one of the most consumed fruits worldwide, and Latin America and the Caribbean is the regions that exports the most tons on the planet. Colombia ranks fourth in this category in the area, after Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Guatemala (FAO, 2025). This in-

formation underscores the importance of the crop to Colombia and, within the country, to the Urabá region, which accounts for 60% of national production. In this part of Antioquia, cocoa, pineapple, palm, and cassava crops are also important, although to a lesser extent in terms of hectares.

Agroindustry, like any other sector, can generate heritage associated with spheres of production, such as coffee farms and processing plants, sugarcane and its mills, vineyards, etc. But sometimes it is insufficient to focus the analysis solely on the traditional dimensions of industrial heritage (immovable, movable, and intangible). Addressing historical and geographical complexity reveals more than we suspect.

The agroindustry and mining of Latin America and the Caribbean have been marked first by colonisation and then by extractivism.



Towing banana containers across the León River. The containers are loaded onto the ship on the high seas. A more modern port is under construction (photo by author)