SNCF, TOTALLY DERAILED?

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SNCF, the French National Railways, is today caught up in the maelstream of liberalisation. The market is set to open up to competition by 2009, but the premises of deregulation have already been palpable for the past ten years. The aim of the operation is simple: allowing a variety of French and foreign railway companies to run their trains - against paying a toll - on the RFF, the French Railway Network, which is caught up in the game of profitability.
Over 1500 km of railway tracks thus suffer from bad maintainance, or none at all. It's come to a point where SNCF has decided to slow down trains on these lines since October 2004. A typical example, which we'll examine in this film, is the Béziers-Clermont-Ferrand-Paris line, one of the oldest in France. SNCF is even considering to abandon the service on this line, which crosses the famous 'Massif Central' from north to south and offers an alternative travel option to the motorway. At the same time, the motorway in question - the A75 - receives the full attention of the state and the media thanks to its stunning Millau Viaduct, a technological feat and a major tourist attraction...

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