

# *French Transport Workers Begin Strike*

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Paris, November 5 (RHC)-- Transport workers in France have begun a nationwide strike "in defense of public transport," according to reports from Paris. The rail and metro strike was called by the CGT, one of France's largest trade unions, for Tuesday in response to controversial rail reforms approved this summer.

The CGT denounced the rail reforms which sparked a two-week long French railway strike in July. Train workers are against the government's proposed spending cut plans that would bring the state-owned SNCF rail company and the RFF, the firm that maintains the rail network, under one holding company, while keeping their operations separate.

"We have a lot of work to do to explain to our citizens and commuters that an alternative future for the nation's transport is still possible. We can still make our transportation system work for the good of the public instead of letting the European Union damage it," Gilbert Garrell of the CGT union told reporters in Paris.

The French Transport Ministry has predicted that the railway sector's debt will soar to more than 80 billion euros by 2025 from the current 40 billion euros if the proposed changes are not implemented. The train workers, however, fear their working conditions will be comprised and that the reforms would not help contain the debt.



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