# Severe blackout plunges Spain and Portugal into chaos



On Monday, a severe blackout struck Spain and Portugal, plunging both countries into widespread power outages that disrupted flights, paralysed train systems, halted mobile communications, and shut down ATMs across the Iberian Peninsula. The blackout, one of the most significant in Europe in recent years, caused Spain—a nation with a population of 49 million—to lose approximately 15 gigawatts of electricity in just five seconds, accounting for 60% of its national demand.

By 11am on Tuesday, power had largely been restored. Spain’s electricity operator, Red Electrica, confirmed that the Spanish electrical system was functioning normally, while REN, the Portuguese grid operator, reported that electricity was restored to all 6.4 million customers in Portugal. Despite this progress, isolated disruptions persisted, particularly in commuter train services in some areas.

The cause of the blackout remains undetermined. Eduardo Prieto, director of services for system operations at Spain’s electricity operator, identified two steep, back-to-back “disconnection events” prior to the blackout but indicated that further investigations were necessary. Spain’s meteorological agency, AEMET, found no evidence of unusual weather or sudden temperature fluctuations that could explain the incident. Meanwhile, Portugal’s National Cybersecurity Centre reported no signs of a cyberattack, and Teresa Ribera, executive vice president of the European Commission, dismissed sabotage as a cause.

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez emphasised the government’s priorities as restoring Spain’s electrical system and identifying the cause of the blackout to prevent any recurrence. Authorities are also investigating fatalities potentially related to the blackout. According to Spanish news agency EFE, five deaths are under examination, including three members of the same family in Galicia, possibly due to carbon monoxide poisoning from a generator, a woman in Valencia reliant on an oxygen supply machine, and a fatal fire caused by a candle in Madrid.

The extensive power outage severely affected public transport and infrastructure. In Madrid, Madrid Open tennis's postponed matches resumed on Tuesday, with second-ranked Iga Swiatek advancing to the quarter-finals. At Madrid's Atocha station, hundreds of travellers, many having spent the night wrapped in blankets provided by the Red Cross, awaited updates to rebook or board trains. Emergency services reported rescuing approximately 35,000 passengers stranded across railways and underground systems on Monday.

Madrid’s subway service was fully restored by 11am Tuesday, while in Barcelona, the subway operated normally but some commuter trains remained suspended due to “electrical instability,” according to Rodalies Catalunya on social media. Several commuter and mid-distance train services across parts of Spain continued to operate at reduced capacity or were suspended.

One stranded commuter, 24-year-old Ruben Carion, described his experience of being stuck on a commuter train outside Madrid before walking to the nearest station and spending the night at Atocha station as “pure chaos,” marked by hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.

The blackout’s effects prompted makeshift refuges to form in sports centres, railway stations, and airports, underscoring the vast disruption caused to daily life during the event. Authorities continue their investigation into the outage’s cause while managing the ongoing aftermath. The Belfast Telegraph is reporting.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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5. <https://cadenaser.com/nacional/2025/04/29/aemet-no-detecto-en-espana-ningun-fenomeno-meteorologico-o-atmosferico-inusual-que-pudiese-provocar-el-apagon-cadena-ser/> - This article reports that Spain's State Meteorological Agency (AEMET) found no evidence of unusual meteorological or atmospheric phenomena that could have caused the blackout, ruling out weather-related causes.
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