

## What's new this month

This edition is going to press just a few days after the major schedule change of **December 11** which affected most of Europe. Inevitably there are late changes to timings, and many of our tables have been further updated this month.

### SAMPLE FARES FEATURE

Our annual Sample Fares feature will be found on pages 33 to 38. As usual it aims to give an idea of the level of fares payable in a wide range of European countries, and includes brief details of the various types of tickets available.

### INTERNATIONAL

Thalys has issued a new timetable, which was received too late to be included in last month's edition. Amongst the various alterations are the withdrawal between Liège and Brussels of the early morning Liège - Brussels - Paris train, whilst its evening counterpart no longer extends to Liège. The Liège - Namur - Paris train (Table 17) has been retimed to give an earlier morning departure from Liège, and a pair of early morning trains between Paris and Brussels (Table 18) has been withdrawn.

As noted last month, the third daytime TGV train between Paris and Milano (Table 44) was reintroduced from the December timetable change. However, in a late change to the timings, the new train now runs in a separate path on Saturdays and Sundays with different train numbers (9245 or 9247 from Paris, 9242 or 9244 from Milano).

The daily journey between Warszawa and Vilnius via Suwałki and Šeštokai now requires an additional change of train at Kaunas (Tables 93 and 1040).

The Berlin Night Express, which runs overnight between Berlin and Malmö via the train-ferry linking Sassnitz (Mukran) with Trelleborg, will recommence for the season in late March, but this year will convey only couchette cars.

The twice weekly Berlin - St Peterburg sleeper (Table 56) has been withdrawn. Also withdrawn are the through cars from Warszawa to Moskva and St Peterburg, that used to run in train 116 / 115 Warszawa - Minsk. The only remaining through cars from St Peterburg to central or western Europe are conveyed in train 445 / 444 *Vltava* to Praha and these are now shown in Table 56.

### FRANCE

December 11 saw the biggest timetable change in France for many decades, and inevitably the details were still being adjusted even as we went to press with this edition. Modernisation of the network also means that many overnight and early morning trains in particular are affected by retiming or cancellation, and full details have yet to emerge. Several local services have been subject to last minute amendment, and we have been able to update many of these this month, but further changes are likely in forthcoming editions.

### ITALY

Trenitalia's tight planning cycles means that very little information was available before the actual timetable change. Principal trains have now been updated in our tables but much still remains subject to alteration, including local trains throughout the network.

Considerable changes have been made to long-distance services. Many daytime and overnight trains have been rationalised or simplified and in most cases the distance operated by such services has been reduced. For instance, night trains to Sicily now originate at Roma instead of further north (Tables 640/1) whilst those serving the Adriatic coast start from Bologna (Tables 630/1).

In the new timetable the Eurostar City (ESC) train category is no longer in use, and is replaced by Frecciabianca (FB), used for high-quality trains which do not run on the dedicated high-speed lines.

Trenitalia is currently refurbishing some Alta Velocità (AV) trainsets. These offer four classes of accommodation: Executive, Business, Premium and Standard class. Currently the new categories are available only on a single Milano - Napoli train pair, but as further sets are completed other services may change over (Table 600).

### SPAIN

The thrice weekly Arco connections at Linares - Baeza, from train 697/694 *García Lorca* Barcelona - Málaga, to Granada and Almería (Table 661) are now formed of *Media Distancia* stock. Also, the daily Arco connection at Alcázar de San Juan, again from train 697/694, to Badajoz (Table 678) is now an R-598 train. Timings have been

accelerated. Train 17804 now departs Madrid Atocha Cercanías two hours earlier, to increase the gap (previously 14 minutes), between the two afternoon services from Alcázar de San Juan to Badajoz.

The daily *Media Distancia* Ourense - Puebla de Sanabria service has been retimed (Table 680), and we understand that train 941/940 *Picasso* Bilbao - Málaga (Table 661) will not run this year.

### PORTUGAL

New timetables were introduced on most lines from December 11. The most significant changes are on the Lisboa - Faro line (Table 697) where IC trains have been speeded up and no longer serve Setúbal. The local trains from Setúbal to Tunes or Faro have been withdrawn.

### POLAND

The line between Skarżysko Kamienna and Stalowa Wola Rozwadów has been reopened and a daily Warszawa - Przemyśl train has been introduced via this route (Table 1058).

The Opole - Chalupki - Bohumin train has been retimed and is now the only train to use this minor border crossing with the Czech Republic, the Katowice train having been curtailed at Chalupki (Table 1079).

### BULGARIA

The Bulgarian section has been updated with the new timetable valid from December 11. Unfortunately there have been a significant number of withdrawals affecting both long distance and local services. One of the most notable withdrawals is that of the night train between Sofia and Varna via Karlovo. The overnight service between Sofia and Dobrich is now operated as through cars on the remaining Sofia - Varna night train (via Pleven). A further casualty is the overnight service between Dimitrovgrad and Ruse. Many local routes have also been affected.

The route between Sofia and Kulata (Table 1560) has seen significant change with most services retimed and diverted to the town of Petrich. Passenger wishing to travel to/from the border town of Kulata will now need to use a connecting shuttle service from/to General Todorov.

New Table 1565 has been added to show the Plovdiv - Sofia - Thessaloniki bus service operated by Greek Railways in conjunction with a Bulgarian bus operator.

### TURKEY

Additional services have been introduced on the recently opened Ankara - Konya high-speed line (now shown in Table 1570). All other tables have been updated where necessary.

### RUSSIA, BELARUS AND UKRAINE

Regular readers will know that Russia and Belarus no longer adopt daylight saving time in summer but have moved to permanent 'summer' time. This means that until March 25 (when most countries put their clocks forward), Russia and Belarus will be a further hour ahead of its western neighbours (including the Ukraine) than hitherto. As information on the revised train times is limited we have left many times as they are, in particular those between Russia and the Ukraine, so changes of up to an hour are likely on any cross-border services.

### BEYOND EUROPE

This month's section covers India (Tables 5000 upwards).

### NEXT MONTH

The February edition will contain an 18-page Summer International Supplement, with selected tables valid from June 11. As usual, it will be expanded in the March edition, and the April and May supplements will contain summer versions of all our international tables.

*After holding the cover price of the timetable for three years we have had to introduce a small price increase from this edition. However, subscription prices are unchanged and represent even better value. All our publications are available from our online bookshop [www.thomascookpublishing.com](http://www.thomascookpublishing.com) (10% discount on the European Rail Timetable). See page 1 for contact details.*

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
**from Thomas Cook Publishing**

and thank you to all the operators and correspondents who have supplied information