

What's new this month

WELCOME

Welcome to the June edition of the *European Rail Timetable* which, for most countries, includes updated summer schedules valid from June 15 to December 13. As usual there are a number of exceptions and readers are advised to refer to the introductory text of each country to confirm timetable validity. For example, new timings in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and the Baltic states were introduced on June 1, whilst schedules in Great Britain changed on May 18. In Sweden the summer timetable will commence on June 29 and details will be shown in the July edition.

ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries return to the rails this month with a journey across the Alps on the *Bernina Railway* from Pontresina in Switzerland to the Italian town of Tirano (Table 547). Operated by the narrow gauge Rhätische Bahn, this is a truly fascinating and particularly scenic rail journey. This month's feature will be found on page 35.

INTERNATIONAL

The number of TGV services between Paris and Barcelona will be increased to four in each direction from July 6 (Table 13).

Greece has been reconnected to the European rail network with the welcome return of the Thessaloniki – Beograd and Thessaloniki – Sofia through trains. Both services were reintroduced as planned last month and full timings are now shown in Tables 61, 1380 and 1560.

GREAT BRITAIN

Services between Barmouth and Pwllheli have been disrupted for several months due to a combination of ongoing storm damage repairs and bridge construction work. A replacement bus service is currently running between Harlech and Pwllheli and, with no immediate prospect of the normal rail service being restored, timings have now been included in Table 148. Readers intending to travel in this area are advised to confirm their travel arrangements with the operator as timings could change at short notice.

The First TransPennine Express service between Manchester and Scotland (Table 151) has been enhanced following the delivery of new electric trains. There is now an hourly service between Manchester and Carlisle with alternate trains serving Edinburgh and Glasgow.

As part of the 'Northern Hub' project, the number of First TransPennine Express trains between Leeds and Manchester have been increased from four to five per hour on Mondays to Saturdays (Table 188). The hourly Newcastle service now runs to and from Liverpool via Manchester Victoria, thus providing two direct Leeds to Liverpool services per hour (the other continuing to run via Manchester Piccadilly). The extra space required to show this expanded service has meant that Tables 190 and 192 have had to be temporarily relocated to page 337.

FRANCE

The direct service from Paris to Royan (Table 301) will not run this summer.

From July 5 the through service between Bordeaux and Clermont Ferrand is expected to be withdrawn between Ussel and Clermont Ferrand (Table 326).

Services to and from Genève via Bellegarde will be severely disrupted from July 15 to August 29 in the next phase of work to improve the route between Lyon and the Swiss border. During this period most cross border services will be replaced by bus between Bellegarde and Genève or, in some cases, cancelled altogether. This includes many TGV services between Paris and Genève, although alternative connections will be available via Lausanne.

SWITZERLAND

There are amendments to several Swiss tables from June 15. Most notable is the restructure of services via the Gotthard pass between Zürich and Milano. International services now operate every two hours 0732 - 1932 from Zürich and 0825 - 2025 from Milano Centrale. One train pair between Luzern and Milano also operates (Table 550).

ITALY

New schedules will come into force from June 15. Only partial information was available as we went to press, but all trains shown in our tables with a train number have been checked and amended where necessary although timings around holiday dates should be verified locally. Minor alterations to local services are also expected and will be shown in subsequent editions.

SPAIN

Additional services have been introduced on the routes from Palma to sa Pobla and Manacor (Table 674).

DENMARK

The usual plethora of engineering work is affecting several lines once again this summer.

The København to Kalundborg route is disrupted until August 17 when no direct services will operate; passengers will be required to complete part of the journey by bus between either Lejre or Hvalsø (both west of Roskilde) and Holbæk. Table 704 has been updated to show the temporary schedules.

København to Helsingør is also disrupted whilst bridge works take place. From June 21 to July 20 passengers will be required to use S-tog Line C between Østerport and Klampenborg for journeys to and from Helsingør (Table 703).

In addition, Århus to Grenaa is partially closed until October 17 whilst work takes place in connection with construction of the new Århus light rail system (Table 728). Replacement bus services are provided.

ICELAND

Further minor alterations have been made to summer schedules and Table 729 has been updated.

GERMANY

From June 14 to July 27 timings and stopping patterns of services between Hamburg and Hannover are subject to alteration in the latest phase of work to upgrade this particular route. During this period many IC services are suspended between Hannover and Hamburg, whilst ICE services are diverted or make additional station stops resulting in extended journey times.

AUSTRIA

A new timetable valid from May 31 has been introduced on the narrow gauge *Mariazellerbahn* between St Pölten and Mariazell (Table 994). Most services are operated by a brand new fleet of electric multiple unit trains, although a traditional loco-hauled service continues to operate on Saturdays, with a steam service also running on selected dates.

POLAND

Retimings are expected from June 15, but unfortunately information was not available as we went to press. We hope to show updated schedules next month.

SLOVAKIA

Following a period of suspension, the international bus service between Poprad Tatry and Zakopane (Table 1183) is expected to recommence on June 15.

HUNGARY

Summer timings for lines around Lake Balaton will be in effect from June 21 to August 31 and have been incorporated into this edition, along with further amendments from June 21. From that date the IC trains between Budapest and Eger (Table 1261) will no longer carry the InterCity classification and will therefore no longer require compulsory reservation.

ALBANIA

Further changes have been made to the timetable following restructure of Hekurudha Shqiptarë (Albanian Railways) into business units (Table 1390).

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BULGARIA

As mentioned earlier, the Thessaloniki – Kulata – Sofia service made a welcome return in May with one daily train being provided in each direction. Please be aware that seating capacity is limited (there are only two through coaches) and reservation is compulsory. There have also been a number of alterations to domestic services between Sofia and Kulata and full details of these will be found in Table **1560**.

A brand new international service commenced on May 10 between Vidin and Craiova, the first scheduled passenger services using the recently completed Danube bridge. There are two daily return journeys and timings will be found in Table **1520**. These appear to be through services, although some reports suggest that a change of train at Golenji may be required.

LITHUANIA

A number of additional services have been introduced between Vilnius and Kaunas (Table **1811**).

ESTONIA

From June 1 *Elron* has introduced additional services on the Tallinn – Tartu – Valga route. The express train service between Tallinn and Tartu has doubled from two to four, and a third train is now running between Tartu and Valga (Table **1880**).

RUSSIA

Amongst the many changes in the new timetable is an increase in the high-speed service between Moskva and Nizhni Novgorod (Table **1990**), which now sees three *Swallow* units each way (previously one) as well as the two *Sapsan* trains. The withdrawal of train **1248/9** Berlin to Saratov at the end of last year has allowed space to expand our coverage of services to and within Kazakhstan (Tables **1975** and **1980**).

SHIPPING

DFDS Seaways is to cease operation of its Harwich – Esbjerg route on September 29 (Table **2220**). This crossing, the last remaining passenger ferry between Great Britain and Scandinavia, was inaugurated as long ago as 1875.

BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section covers North America with Tables numbered **9000** upwards.