

## What's new this month

### WELCOME

This month's edition of the *European Rail Timetable* includes a number of significant updates, most notably in France, Finland and Poland.

Our **Summer International Supplement**, which contains advance timings for selected international tables valid from June 12, has been expanded to 32 pages and will be found on pages 577 to 608. This will be updated and expanded further in our May edition to include advance versions of all our international tables.

We are pleased to announce that from next month, in addition to our regular printed timetable, there will be a digital version available for you to download onto your smartphone, tablet, eBook or computer. Please check our website for further updates regarding this new development ([www.europeanrailtimetable.eu](http://www.europeanrailtimetable.eu)).

### ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries, editors of *hidden europe* magazine, head to central France to explore the classic *ligne de Bourbonnais* from Paris to Clermont Ferrand. The description of their journey will be found on page 35 and the latest timings are shown in Table 330.

### TIP OF THE MONTH

As reported in our February edition, the conditions of the global InterRail pass now allow the holder to make a single journey within their home country at the start and end of their trip. Our *Tip of the Month*, which will be found on page 36, reviews this useful new benefit in more detail.

### INTERNATIONAL

From April 3 a daily TGV service will be introduced between Brussels and Strasbourg via Lille (Tables 11 and 391). This new service will compensate in some way for the withdrawal of the IC trains between Brussels and Basel via Luxembourg and Strasbourg (Table 43). A second TGV service is due start running from July 3. Other journeys between Strasbourg and Lille/Brussels are possible with a convenient change of train at either Marne la Vallée-Chessy or Paris Charles de Gaulle and these are also shown in our tables.

High-speed operator Thalys is to launch a new low-cost service between Paris Nord and Brussels Midi. The service, branded *Izy*, will start on April 3 using Thalys staff and reliveried Thalys trains. They will use classic lines in France (via Longueau and Arras) and then the high-speed line across the border into Belgium. The trains will not have catering and tickets will only be available through its website ([www.izy.com](http://www.izy.com)) or from selected agents. The initial service will be two round trips per day with an additional train on Fridays and Sundays (Table 18). Journeys will vary from 2 hours 8 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes and ticket prices start at €19, when booked up to two months in advance, increasing to a maximum of €59. Larger standard XL seats with an individual power socket (the equivalent of first class) are available for €69. A novel concept is that 25 tickets on each service will be available for tip-up seats (€15), together with ten standing tickets (€10). Standing passengers will travel in the unused bar car (although a seat may be allocated by the train manager if one is available). Please note that InterRail passes will not be accepted on these trains.

*Alleo* high-speed services between Paris and Germany will continue in the same timings until July 2 (Tables 30 and 32). When the TGV Est high-speed line extension opens on July 3, journey times to Stuttgart, München and Frankfurt will be reduced.

### GREAT BRITAIN

Our Scottish tables have been fully updated to show amended timings during the Glasgow Queen Street high-level station closure from March 20 to August 7. As mentioned last month, the tunnel just north of the station is being renewed and during this work all services are diverted to serve either the Queen Street low level platforms or Glasgow Central.

### FRANCE

There have been some major changes to schedules from April 3, mainly affecting regional services in eastern France, together with many TGV services to and from Metz, Nancy and Strasbourg.

TGV service alterations were originally planned to take place in conjunction with the opening of the high-speed line extension to Strasbourg. However, as the opening of this line has been postponed until July 3, some interim arrangements have been put in place. The most significant changes involve TGV trains between eastern and southern France shown in Table 379. Luxembourg gains a through TGV service to Montpellier via Metz and Strasbourg. Metz retains two other through services to the south of France: one to Nice via Nancy and the other to Marseille via Strasbourg. When the high-speed line extension opens, the Metz – Strasbourg – Marseille service will also start from Luxembourg and both services will utilise the new infrastructure, reducing the journey time by approximately 30 minutes.

The number of TGV services from and to Paris (Table 390) remains roughly the same as before, but a number of trains are retimed, particularly those on the Paris to Luxembourg route.

Regional services throughout the Lorraine region are completely recast from April 3, the first phase of a project known as *Cadencement du réseau TER-Métrolor*. The overall aim is to increase the level of service and capacity on principal routes, often using new rolling stock. On most routes a combination of limited stop *Express* and stopping *Proxi* trains are provided and in many cases timings have been simplified with departures set at the same minutes past the hour (although services do not necessarily run hourly on all routes). The Nancy – Metz – Luxembourg axis sees the most dramatic improvement with a reported 50% increase in overall seating capacity (Table 384). The extra trains on the Bar le Duc to Nancy route (Table 382) will have the added benefit of improving journey opportunities for those wishing to avoid TGV trains between Paris and eastern France. The second phase of this project is due to be implemented on August 29 with further service enhancements following the delivery of more new trains.

Please be aware that certain timings were still to be confirmed as we went to press, so further updates may be required to timings currently shown in our tables.

### SPAIN

*Alvia* trains 2084 and 2094 from Madrid to Cádiz are now combined to run daily in the timings of train 2084. Return trains 2085 and 2095 are similarly combined in the timings of train 2085. *Alvia* trains 2114 and 2115 between Madrid and Cádiz now run on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays throughout the year, whereas last year they only ran in the peak summer period. Some *Media Distancia* services have also been retimed (Tables 660 and 671).

There have been a number of amendments to services on the coastal route between Barcelona and València (Table 672). *Euromed* 1071 from Barcelona to Alacant, together with return service 1162, run additionally on Saturdays. *Talgo* 1191 from Barcelona to València Nord departs 30 minutes later at 1930, whilst the 1900 departure slot is now taken by a new *Euromed* service 1191 to València Joaquín Sorolla, running daily except Saturdays.

The scenic Lleida to La Pobla de Segur line will have a new timetable from April 30 but timings had not been received as we went to press (Table 655).

One pair of *Media Distancia* services between A Coruña and Monforte de Lemos via Lugo has been extended to Ourense (Table 682) creating a new journey opportunity from Lugo to Madrid with a change of trains at Ourense (Table 680).

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## What's new this month *(continued from page 3)*

### FINLAND

Our Finnish section has been updated with new timings valid from March 27 to June 19. There have been some significant alterations including the withdrawal of a number of early morning and late evening trains on some routes.

The line between Helsinki and Turku has been completely recast (Table **791**) and now features a limited-stop return *S220 Pendolino* service on Mondays to Fridays, completing the journey in just one hour and 38 minutes. This new fast service leaves Turku at 0708 and returns from Helsinki at 1610.

The morning through service from Kuopio to Rovaniemi (Tables **794** and **798**) has been retimed to run approximately two hours earlier than before. Also on this route, the early morning Kajaani to Oulu and late evening return services have been withdrawn.

The lines between Jyväskylä and Seinäjoki (Table **793**) and between Joensuu and Nurmes (Table **799**), which were reportedly under threat of closure, have been reprieved for the time being, albeit with fewer trains running each day. Another route with a reduced service is between Pieksämäki and Joensuu (Table **799**) which now has only one daily return train, although the section between Pieksämäki and Varkaus retains four return journeys a day in each direction.

### GERMANY

Two regional routes are to be temporarily closed for a number of months so that upgrade work can take place. The first is between Jena Göschwitz and Weimar via Jena West (Table **858**) which will be completely closed from April 2 to September 3. All trains will be diverted and retimed during this period and will call at Jena Paradies instead of Jena West.

Further south, services between Immenstadt and Lindau (Table **935**) will be affected from April 4 to October 20 by the total closure of the line between Immenstadt and Oberstaufen. During this period buses will replace trains over the affected section resulting in extended journey times to and from Lindau. However, passengers travelling between München and Lindau will be able to avoid the inconvenience of using the replacement bus services by travelling via Memmingen and a number of additional through trains are provided via this route by extending certain München to Memmingen trains.

The start of services by private operator *derschnellzug.de*, originally planned for March 18, was postponed. No new start date has been given and so timings have been removed.

### POLAND

New schedules valid from March 13 have been received and all tables updated.

Although minor alterations are possible at any time, especially on and around public holidays, of particular note is that from May 27 many services will use Warszawa Gdańska station instead of Warszawa Centralna and Wschodnia. As it is not possible on this occasion to show these detailed changes in our tables, readers are advised to consult local information.

### CZECH REPUBLIC and SLOVAKIA

Arriva has introduced a through train from Praha to Trenčín, running once weekly on Saturdays from Praha, Sundays from Trenčín. Details are in Table **1157**.

### HUNGARY

Hungarian Railways has issued timetable amendments effective from April 4, which have been incorporated into our tables.

### TURKEY

All services on the Bandirma – Ballikesir – Izmir route are currently suspended so that electrification of the route can be completed (Table **1571**). Rail services are not expected to resume until at least mid-June.

### UKRAINE and MOLDOVA

All tables for Ukraine and Moldova have been rewritten and renumbered to improve our coverage. This coincides with the schedule change from March 27, which is also the start of summer time when clocks go forward. Since Russia and Belarus do not adopt daylight saving time, trains crossing into these countries are now mostly shown in two columns. One shows winter time when Ukraine is on GMT +2, and there is therefore a one-hour time difference at the border, and the other shows summer time (March 27 to October 29 this year) when Ukraine is on GMT +3 and there is therefore no time difference with Russia or Belarus.

### BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section features two areas: Tables **8000** to **8400** show the latest Japanese schedules, whilst Tables **9900** to **9965** cover South America.

The new Shinkansen route to Hokkaido Island has now opened meaning conventional trains between Shin Aomori and Hakodate have been replaced by Shinkansen services between Shin Aomori and Shin Hakodate Hokuto. The latter station is located some 18 kilometres from Hakodate, although local connecting services are available between the two stations. Details of the new service will be found in Table **8020**. Services between Sapporo and Hakodate (Table **8225**) will also call at Shin Hakodate Hokuto and it is here that passengers should change for connections to Shin Aomori and beyond.

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