

## What's new this month

Welcome to the August edition of the *European Rail Timetable* which includes a number of significant updates, particularly in Sweden and Finland where revised timetables will come into force on August 10 and 11 respectively.

### ROUTE OF THE MONTH

Nicky Gardner and Susanne Kries board the *EuroCity* train *Avala* at Budapest for the 7 hour 45 minute journey to Beograd (Tables **61**, **1295** and **1360**), a route famously taken by Leon Trotsky in 1912. Find out more about this intriguing journey on page 35.

### INTERNATIONAL

Following a suggestion from a correspondent, Train **17/18** Moskva – Nice has been added to Table **95** to indicate that there are four direct services a week between Moskva and Wien.

### FRANCE

Tables **280** to **288** have been updated with schedules valid from August 25, although there will be further changes to Lannion services from September 1 (Table **284**) and Rennes/Nantes – Quimper local trains from September 29 (Table **285**). The summer versions of these tables, valid until August 24, will be found on pages 558 to 562.

Readers are reminded that services to and from Genève via Bellegarde are severely disrupted until August 24 as work is undertaken to modify the electrification system between the French border and Genève. During this period cross border services are replaced by bus between Bellegarde and Genève or, in some cases, cancelled altogether. This includes many TGV services between Paris and Genève, although three alternative through trains are provided in each direction, operating via Vallorbe (see Table **341** for timings).

In addition to the changes outlined above, Bellegarde station will be closed to all rail traffic during the period August 20 to 24, disrupting further all services in the area (certain trains on the morning of August 25 will also be affected).

### ITALY

There are minor changes on the Genova – Pisa – Roma axis from August 4 to 24 (night train departures August 3–23). Many services have minor time differences and depart some stations earlier and arrive later. Train numbers also differ and readers are advised to check locally if travelling during this period (Tables **610** and **611**).

### SPAIN

The seasonal *Picasso* service makes its usual appearance this summer, although we have been unable to show full details in the relevant tables. Operating between Bilbao and Málaga, the days of running and timings are as follows: *Alvia* train **10940**, running on Mondays and Fridays from July 21 to August 29, departs Bilbao 0640, Zaragoza 1115 and Ciudad Real 1337, arriving Málaga at 1544; the return train, *Alvia* **10943**, runs Tuesdays and Sundays from July 22 to August 31, departing Málaga 1225, Ciudad Real 1439 and Zaragoza 1715, arriving Bilbao at 2147.

Another high-speed seasonal service operates between Sevilla and Alacant as follows: *AVE* **3961** runs on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays from July 27 to August 31, departing Sevilla at 0905, Puertollano 1032 and Albacete 1243, arriving Alacant at 1335. The train returns on the same day (*AVE* **3962**) departing Alacant 1600, Albacete 1653 and Puertollano 1948, arriving back in Sevilla at 2042.

### PORTUGAL

International services between Porto and Vigo, which previously ran non-stop, now make intermediate calls at Nine, Viana do Castelo and Valença (Table **696**). Overall journey times are similar, although the evening departure from Vigo (train **422**) now runs a few minutes later.

### SWEDEN

Travel between northern Sweden and Finland has been simplified with the use of just one bus station at the Haparanda / Tornio crossing. This means there is no longer a requirement to walk between the Swedish and Finnish bus stations in order to continue onto the railhead at Kemi. The combined bus station - known as Haparanda/Tornio or Tornio/Haparanta - is actually located in Sweden, approximately 200 metres from the border (Table **768**).

Several tables have been updated with new timings valid from August 10. Readers travelling before this date should consult the July edition or contact the editorial office for schedules.

### FINLAND

Finnish Railways has issued a revised timetable valid from August 11 to October 25 with many trains retimed and certain services operating with a different category of train. Some features of the new timetable are outlined below.

The last train of the day from Helsinki to Vaasa, which previously departed Helsinki at 1830 combined with an Oulu service, will now operate independently departing Helsinki at 1906 (Table **794**). This replaces train *IC* **181** between Helsinki and Seinäjoki.

On Mondays to Fridays and Sundays the 1830 Helsinki departure mentioned above now combines with a through Helsinki – Tampere – Jyväskylä – Kuopio *Pendolino* service. This replaces train *IC* **927** between Tampere and Kuopio (Table **795**).

Engineering work between Ylivieska and Oulu, which has required passengers to travel by bus on many services Mondays to Thursdays, will now continue until September 25. In addition, all services between Kokkola and Oulu are subject to alteration on most Saturdays during this timetable period with bus replacement services in operation. Weekend engineering work also results in the cancellation of overnight trains **266** and **273** on certain dates as specified in Table **794**.

There have been some significant alterations to timings on the route between Kouvolaa and Kajaani (Table **798**). The early morning service between Kuopio and Kouvolaa is now operated by a *Pendolino* train departing 30 minutes later (at 0440) and at Kouvolaa is combined with the early morning Imatra to Helsinki service. Most other services on this route have also been retimed by varying degrees.

### SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

The weather damage inflicted during early summer on the direct route to Bar is still causing problems. Consequently there is only one daily train running between Beograd and Bar which is currently diverted via Lapovo, Kragujevac and Kraljevo to regain its booked route at Požega. Departure from Beograd is at 1805 with arrival in Bar at 0952 the following morning. In the opposite direction the train departs Bar at 1700 and arrives in Beograd at 1007. Since July 18 through coaches from Subotica (depart 1156, arrive 1326) and Novi Sad (depart 1517, arrive 1250) have been included in the train composition. Through cars from Moskva, Praha and Budapest, which would normally have been conveyed on the *Avala* to Subotica and the *Pannonija* southwards from there, have been suspended as the decision has been taken to cancel the *Pannonija* for the whole summer season (Table **1370**).

### BULGARIA

The next phase to upgrade the international route between Bulgaria and Turkey means that services between Jabalkovo (situated a few kilometres west of Dimitrograd) and Svilengrad are expected to be replaced by bus until December 13. This includes the overnight services *Balkan Express* and *Bosphor*. Table **1550** has been updated with the latest available timings and Jabalkovo station has been temporarily added to aid journey planning in the area. However, readers intending to travel in this area are strongly advised to confirm timings locally beforehand.

### TURKEY

According to reports, high-speed services should have commenced running between Ankara and Pendik (located approximately 25 kilometres east of Istanbul) late in July following a demonstration run on July 25. There were no confirmed timings available as we went to press and have therefore been unable to update Table **1570** for this edition. We hope to include details of these services next month.

### BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section covers South East Asia, Australia and New Zealand, with tables numbered from **6000** upwards.

In Malaysia work will start on upgrading the line from Gemas to Gua Musang from August 15 (Table **6010**). This work will generally take place between 0900 and 2100 each day and during this period no trains will operate (services at other times may also be rescheduled). There has been no indication as to how long it will take for the work to be completed.

Please note that *Queensland Rail* services in Table **6330** are only valid until October 12, although a brief outline of the service between Brisbane and Cairns from October 13 has been included in the footnotes. Full details will be available in our special Winter edition published in December.