

## What's new this month

### WELCOME

Following the start of the new timetable period on December 9, we have been able to complete updates for most of our tables, particularly those in Denmark, Sweden and Italy which were only partially updated in our Winter edition. We have also started rechecking all other tables and making any necessary adjustments to reflect confirmed timings from the timetable change. We will, of course, continue the process of checking and updating our tables throughout the year.

Last month we briefly mentioned significant changes to the Interrail and Eurail pass schemes for 2019. Full details have now been released and are explained in the news item below.

### INTERNATIONAL

The twice weekly Leo Express service between Praha and Kraków will not run from January 8 to March 21 due to engineering work along the route. From June 20 the service frequency is expected to increase to daily (Table 99).

### SPAIN

Although we have not received official confirmation that electrification of the line between Enllaç and Manacor has been completed, we understand that direct services were operating between Palma and Manacor over the Christmas and New Year period. However, no timings were available as this edition went to press (Table 674).

### PORTUGAL

The temporary engineering work timetable on the *Douro Valley* route Porto – Régua – Pocinho (Table 694) changed from December 16 just three weeks after bus substitution was introduced. There are earlier departures on certain journeys and the revised timings are shown on page 562.

### DENMARK

The Danish section has been fully updated and covers schedules until December 14, 2019.

The small number of through services that previously ran between København and Fredrikshavn have been withdrawn. All long-distance services now only run as far as Aalborg where a change of trains is required for journeys further north. Table 701 has been adjusted to cover the section between Aarhus and Aalborg, whilst the service between Aalborg and Fredrikshavn is now shown in a separate table, numbered 702. Readers planning journeys between Langå and Aalborg should note that timings are subject to considerable alteration until February 3 due to engineering work with many services operated by bus.

København Airport station has been added to Table 700 so that the numerous long-distance domestic through services that are available from and to the airport can be clearly shown.

### ICELAND

The 7.4 kilometre Vöðlaheiði road tunnel, located just east of Akureyri, is expected to open on January 12, shortening the route between Akureyri and Reykjahlid by 16 kilometres. The journey time on the Akureyri to Egilsstaðir bus route will be reduced by 13 minutes as a result (Table 729).

### POLAND

Timings of almost all local services in Poland have been checked and updated but a series of further amendments were received on December 28! Unfortunately we have not had time to make the necessary adjustments for this edition, so readers are strongly advised to check timings when planning journeys in Poland.

### UKRAINE

The Hungarian Intercity train *Latorca* (Table 1270) runs from Budapest to Záhony and across the Ukrainian border to Chop. Announced too late for our Winter edition was the extension of the train for a further 41 kilometres to the Ukrainian town of Mukachevo (Table 1715) thanks to a new standard gauge track which avoids the gauge change problem at the border. One of the local Záhony – Chop trains has been similarly extended to and from Mukachevo.

### UZBEKISTAN

A new 33 kilometre line has opened from Urgench to the ancient city of Khiva, once an important rest stop on the Silk Road trade route, where the walled city (Ichan Qala) is a World Heritage Site. Train 56 runs four times per week from Tashkent; days of running and timings can be found in Table 1980.

### FERRY SERVICES

Irish Ferries has announced that it is unlikely to operate a service from Rosslare to Cherbourg or Roscoff in 2019, having recently introduced a larger ship, the *W.B. Yeates*, onto the more popular Dublin to Cherbourg route (Table 2027).

### RAIL PASSES

From January 1 there are significant changes to the Interrail and Eurail pass schemes for 2019, with Interrail (for European residents) and Eurail (for non-European residents) being largely aligned. Full details can be found on pages 563 to 565. Lithuania has been added to both Global passes, and is also available as a One Country Pass (OCP). A major change for visitors from overseas is that Great Britain is now included in the Eurail Global Pass, although there is no OCP option due to the separate Britrail scheme. Furthermore, the addition of Macedonian Railways to Eurail means that both schemes now cover the same 31 countries. Global passes are also now valid on the services of Leo Express and RegioJet, as is the Czech Republic OCP for domestic travel.

Interrail and Eurail now have the same options in terms of classes of travel, age groups, and periods of validity. The second class option for Eurail, introduced experimentally in 2018, has been made permanent for all age groups. For both schemes there is a new 3 days within one month pass (not available from stations), whilst the 5 day Interrail pass is now 5 days within one month (previously within 15 days) and the 10 and 15 day flexi passes are extended to 10/15 days within two months instead of one. The Interrail Global Pass now also has the option of two or three months of continuous travel to match Eurail. All One Country Passes are now available for 3, 4, 5, 6 or 8 days within one month.

Recommended retail prices have also been aligned for both schemes, meaning a reduction in Eurail Pass pricing. However, the Eurail Saver Pass for groups of travellers has been withdrawn as a result, as have the Select Passes, which covered two, three or four adjacent countries. In line with Interrail, all Eurail passes have a Senior category for those aged 60 plus, giving a discount of approximately 10%.

The Interrail Greece Plus and Italy Plus passes are no longer available. However, there is a revised Greek Islands Pass valid on ferries operated by the Attica Group, which now includes Hellenic Seaways and covers most Greek Islands as well as sailings between Italy and Greece. There are two options: 6 trips (2 international plus 4 domestic), or 5 trips (all domestic); both are available as Interrail or Eurail passes.

The final change involves the removal of the 7pm rule for overnight travel with flexi passes. Previously the day of arrival had to be written on the pass. Now the date of departure will need to be written on the pass for all night trains leaving before midnight (irrespective of the time of departure) and of course the pass can be used for the whole of that day. Provided it is within the overall validity of their pass, passengers will not need to activate a second day on their pass unless they board a second train. The rule can also be used for late evening trains arriving after midnight.

### BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section covers India and will be found at the back of this edition from page 570. All timings have been rechecked although most changes are of a minor nature.