

What's new this month

WELCOME

As well as the latest updates to European rail schedules, this month's digital edition includes the first version of our Summer International Supplement with 18 pages of advance timings for selected international tables valid from June 14. The supplement will be found towards the back of this edition (from page 585) and will be expanded and updated further in the April and May editions.

INTERNATIONAL

Summer timings for the daytime *Allegro* and overnight *Tolstoi* services between Russia and Finland have been updated (Table 1910). *Allegro* trains now make an additional call at Pasila (situated to the north of Helsinki), extending the journey time by 3 minutes.

LUXEMBOURG

A significant event in Luxembourg is the introduction of free public transport from March 1 which includes second-class rail travel for all domestic journeys. Tickets are still required for international journeys although most fares to and from the Grand Duchy are reduced to take into account the free part of the journey within Luxembourg.

NETHERLANDS

We have previously indicated in Table 497 that rail passes are valid on RET services between Hoek van Holland and Schiedam. Whilst passes were accepted on the replacement buses during the route upgrade work, we have been informed that they are not valid for travel on the newly introduced metro services. Therefore, rail pass holders intending to use this route should allow extra time to purchase a valid ticket before travelling.

SWITZERLAND

The tracks through Zürich Flughafen station are being renewed during the period March 2–28 resulting in some timetable alterations. Certain services are diverted and do not call at the airport station while others may be subject to platform changes. Apart from the Zürich Flughafen changes, the overall timetable remains basically the same, although Swiss Railways recommend checking timings before travelling.

SPAIN

The new high-speed *Avant* service between Sevilla and Granada commenced on February 16 and an additional panel in Table 673 has been created to show timings. *Media Distancia* services Algeciras – Antequera-Santa Ana and Sevilla – Málaga have also been recast and there are some good connections between *Media Distancia* and *Avant* services at Antequera-Santa Ana. A number of services in Table 673 are temporarily replaced by bus as follows: Between Pedrera and Osuna (a short stretch of the route between Antequera-Santa Ana and Dos Hermanas), between Almería and Huércal-Viator (on the Almería – Granada route) and until March 25 between Algeciras and Jimena de la Frontera (the latter situated between San Roque-La Línea and Ronda). Spanish Railways will introduce its low-cost high-speed service between Madrid and Barcelona on April 6. Branded *avlo*, three daily services will run in each direction, two of which will call at Zaragoza; a fourth will be added from May 4. Certain *AVE* trains will be retimed or withdrawn to accommodate these low-cost services (Table 660).

DENMARK

Services between København and Kalundborg are subject to alteration from March 4 to April 17 due to planned engineering work (Table 704). During this period trains are partially replaced by bus resulting in extended journey times.

SWEDEN

Footnotes have been fully updated in respect of the forthcoming Easter holiday period although readers are still advised to check locally for any variations that may have been made subsequently.

Essential trackwork will be taking place on several routes from April 3 to 13. The most significant alterations are in the Stockholm area where a majority of services will depart and arrive at Stockholm Södra or Flemingsberg instead of Stockholm Central (to travel to and from central Stockholm it will be necessary to use local commuter trains on which a separate ticket may be required). Buses will replace trains on a number of routes as follows: Between Alingsås and Göteborg (April 9–12), between Borlänge and Storå (April 10–19) and between Örebro and Mjölby (April 10–13). Passengers are advised to confirm timings before travelling during these periods.

GERMANY

Readers planning journeys in Germany are reminded that timings shown in the German section are only valid until April 10 owing to numerous alterations during the temporary closure of the high-speed line between Mannheim and Stuttgart from April 11 to October 31. All of our German tables will be fully updated with the revised schedules in the upcoming April edition. Special versions of international Tables 21 and 32, valid from April 11, will be found on pages 596, 597 and 599.

The next phase of work to electrify the Sudbahn route between Ulm and Lindau will take place from March 2 to July 12 and Table 933 has been updated with the revised schedules. During this period a bus replacement service operates between Aulendorf and Ravensburg. A normal service will resume for the summer period from July 13 to September 13 before the final section of the route to be upgraded, between Ravensburg and Friedrichshafen, is temporarily closed.

TURKEY

We understand that the weekly *Transasya Express* between Ankara and Tehran has been temporarily suspended as a measure to contain the spread of coronavirus (Table 1575).

UKRAINE

International trains to and from Russia have been updated with summer timings, although some data was unavailable as we closed for press.

BALTIC STATES

Running days of the *Go Rail* service between Tallinn and Moskva (trains 34 VJ and 34 AJ) were reduced from daily to three days per week from February 7 (Table 1870). The train now leaves Moskva on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, returning from Tallinn the following day. Summer timings for other international trains to and from Russia are included in this edition.

CRIMEAN PENINSULA

An updated timetable for this region shows minor amendments to local services and Table 1790 has been updated accordingly.

BEYOND EUROPE

This month's Beyond Europe section includes the latest updates in China and will be found on pages 570 to 583. Readers are advised to check the latest official travel advice for trips to areas most affected by the coronavirus outbreak.

Another batch of dedicated high-speed routes opened in China during December taking the total length of high-speed lines in the country to a staggering 35,000 kilometres! By recasting some of our tables we have managed to include some in this edition. Beijing to Hohhot Table 7062 is now a high-speed only table with the conventional services moving to Table 7050. The Beijing – Zhangjiakou section is the world's first where automated trains can reach speeds of 350 km/h and also features a new underground station, Badaling changcheng, serving the Great Wall.

The section of line between Yibin and Guiyang also opened in December thus completing the Chengdu to Guiyang high-speed line. Table 7181, which previously included conventional services between Chengdu and Kunming, is now dedicated to high-speed trains and Table 7146 (Chengdu – Guangzhou) also shows services that use the new infrastructure. There no longer appears to be any conventional through services between Chengdu and Kunming, probably because they took up to 22 hours to complete the journey whereas it takes a mere six hours via the new line! However, new Tables 7178 and 7179 show the few remaining services that still use the traditional line.

Finally, Table 7095 shows services on the 415 kilometre Nanchang to Ganzhou high-speed line which opened on December 26, just over five years after construction started. This line is being extended to Shenzhen and will also connect with the Xiamen – Shenzhen line.

SUMMER INTERNATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

Table 44 (Summer) – We understand *Thello* will be introducing a new high-speed service using ETR 1000 trains on the Paris – Lyon – Torino – Milano route from June 14 with two daily services in each direction.

Table 56 (Summer) – A fifth *Berlin Warszawa Express* service is due to start running from June 14.

CLOCK CHANGE

Daylight Saving Time will begin during the early hours of March 29 with clocks moving forward one hour in most European countries. The only exceptions are in Iceland, Russia, Belarus and Turkey.