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7<sup>th</sup>. December 2012.

**Open letter to Siim Kallas, Transport Commissioner at the European Commission,  
and Matthias Ruete, Director-General of DG-MOVE**

Dear Mr. Kallas and Mr. Ruete,

**The World Carfree Network feels compelled to write to you with regard to the increasing number of cuts across the European railway system, and to international passenger routes in many parts of Europe in particular. Fewer, slower trains discourage rail use, especially when combined with the loss of network benefits such as through ticketing and good connections. The actions of one company can make many international journeys impractical to make by rail. These trends undermine the long-term EU policy aims of (i) supporting the single market by facilitating the seamless movement of goods and people, and (ii) promoting modal shift to rail for medium- and long-distance journeys.**

**We ask you to act immediately to address the root causes of these problems at the strategic policy level, and by promoting cooperation and good practice dissemination. The EU must (i) increase the competitiveness of rail with other modes as an urgent priority, and (ii) review liberalisation and fragmentation policies that have led to ‘market failure’ and the consequent contraction of the international passenger train network.**

Rail is the safest mode of motorised surface transport in Europe, and also one of the least environmentally damaging. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per passenger km for rail are typically one quarter to one third of those of air and cars, and even less in countries with a greater proportion of electrified route kms and/or electricity generation from renewable sources.<sup>1</sup> Railways connect wealth-generating city regions, expand labour markets, decongest the road network, facilitate sustainable tourism and can be major employers in their own right, while passengers can use travel time productively.

A comprehensive, integrated and attractive European passenger train network is therefore crucial for meeting the aims of the 2011 White Paper, namely a 60% reduction in transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (on 1990 levels) by 2050 without curbing mobility, and a target for half of all medium-distance passenger kilometres to be made by rail.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the White Paper calls for the maintenance of “a dense railway network in all Member States” and the development of a “Single European Railway Area”, while the Transport Commissioner himself has stated that “there is no reason why passengers should not be able to [...] buy a single ticket [regardless of operator or mode] for their journey at the click of a mouse”.<sup>3</sup> The trends on the ground differ markedly from these aspirations.

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<sup>1</sup> Rail: 53.4 g CO<sub>2</sub>e / pkm; short-haul air: 182.2 g CO<sub>2</sub>e / pkm (incl. radiative forcing effects); average medium-sized car: 201.5 g CO<sub>2</sub>e / vkm, or 143.9 g CO<sub>2</sub>e / pkm with an average load of 1.4 persons. Based on UK data (thus representative of countries with low renewable/nuclear share of electricity generation) from *2011 Guidelines to Defra / DECC’s GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting: Methodology Paper for Emission Factors* (DEFRA, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> *Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system* (EC, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/393&type=HTML>



So, what has gone wrong? Firstly, the Commission and national governments have dragged their heels over the imposition of 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles in the road and aviation sectors for far too long, making these modes significantly cheaper than railways for both operators and end users. Similarly, highway building and upgrade programmes continue apace, especially in central and eastern Europe, supported by EU TEN-T policy and European financial institutions. The result is that trunk hauls (of people and goods) become much quicker by road, leading to modal shift away from rail.

Declining subsidies and lower farebox revenues have over many years led operators to cut services, which in turn fuels a vicious cycle of declining passenger numbers and revenue. In the last few years attention has turned from the pruning of marginal rural branch lines, to strategic secondary routes and cross-border lines: the latter is a particular problem given the often perverse EU restrictions on direct subsidies for international public transport services.

Although it is tempting to focus on technical inter-operability issues, the real problems are in fact:

1. 'Market failure' arising from the EU's liberalisation policies;
2. The impact of the current financial crisis on national Government budgets, with rail in general and international passenger trains in particular regarded as a low priority for scarce funding, in direct contravention of EU aims; and
3. Railway management failings and an inattention to detail, leading to an unappealing service: core issues include neglected infrastructure, a lack of information, timetables that do not meet user needs (including poor connections), and unattractive rolling stock (see also Appendix I).

Before discussing the first point in more detail below, we would like to highlight some of the worst effects of these problems (see Appendix I for more detail):

- Under pressure from international financial institutions, **Greece closed all its border crossings to passenger trains** in 2011, isolating the country for the first time since these lines were constructed;
- FS in Italy no longer cooperates with neighbouring state railways in the operation of international passenger trains: there are currently **no through passenger trains from Italy to Slovenia and beyond**, and **no daytime through trains from Venezia to Villach and Wien in Austria**. Motorail overnight trains from Berlin, Düsseldorf and Hamburg to Verona and Trieste ceased in September 2012;
- Poor connections, a reduction in destinations served by direct trains, and increasingly complex ticketing issues via the major hub station of Brussels Midi in Belgium;
- Extensive **timetable cuts in the Balkans** will be made in December 2012, compounding the problems caused by deteriorating infrastructure, especially in Serbia, where strategic routes could close if track is allowed to deteriorate further. Serbia's actions threaten the viability of international trains throughout the wider region, having already made rail travel between central Europe and Bulgaria extremely unattractive if not impossible;
- Poor connections at the northern border crossing between Spain and France, undermining significant infrastructure investment either side of the border.

Liberalisation of the European rail sector is intended to increase competition and in turn the attractiveness of rail, but this has seemingly failed to anticipate (i) the negative effects of track access charging regimes on the economic viability of international passenger trains, (ii) the fragmentation of marketing and almost every aspect of ticketing, and (iii) the consequences of good relations between neighbouring operators turning adversarial. To a large extent these problems have their origins in the EU's requirements that one entity must take full commercial responsibility for the operation of international trains from origin to final destination, and that the accounting of trains and track must be separated.

Vertically integrated national railways used to have responsibility for international trains on their own territory. An assessment of commercial viability was based on the marginal costs associated



with operation to/from the border, which for any given train were close to zero on a vertically integrated railway with significant other traffic. However, the situation today is that many infrastructure managers demand track access fees that are substantially higher than the true marginal costs associated with a specific train. This problem is compounded by EU restrictions on subsidies for international passenger operations, which extend to discounted track access fees even if money is channelled through infrastructure managers in the form of block grants. The sole operator must also either employ its own staff (drivers, conductors, shunting and maintenance staff, cleaners, etc.) or hire them from other operators for parts of the journey in foreign countries, again at above marginal cost rates. It is a similar story with locomotive hire and the costs of obtaining approval to use existing locomotives abroad. These factors have contributed significantly to the loss of all overnight and most 'classic' medium- to long-distance international day trains via Brussels, plus the Germany – Ukraine trains that ceased in September 2012 (see Appendix I).

DB Station & Service station usage fees (priced by train length and separately for boarding and alighting) are almost certainly one of the reasons why Russian Railways does not carry Poland – Germany – France traffic on its recently improved Russia – France services, despite the potential demand for convenient direct daytime trains linking Berlin and Hannover with Strasbourg and Paris, as just one example. In the past such a train would have conveyed day coaches over at least part of the route, been integrated into each national network and subject to true marginal infrastructure usage charges (and no more), thus generating additional income from shorter-distance passengers and enabling the long-distance sleeping car traffic to be handled at low marginal cost.

The commercial viability of the current overnight train between the two EU Member State capitals of Sofia and Bucureşti is similarly undermined: one cannot (officially) travel in the Russian or Ukrainian sleeping cars, but the train does not convey any other through carriages between the two cities, and there is no high speed daytime alternative!

Rightly or wrongly, passengers expect that 'the railway' functions as a single entity at the point of contact, with the opportunity to purchase through tickets to any destination in Europe, regardless of the colour of the trains. Unfortunately the EU-mandated move towards single operator commercial responsibility has played a role in the increase in fragmented ticketing between a limited number of stations served by an operator's trains, with little or no through ticketing. This has simplified accounting from the operators' perspective, but the public is left wondering why through tickets from Brussels to Düsseldorf via a combination of Thalys and DB are no longer sold. Instead, one must buy a Thalys 'global price' ticket to Köln, and a separate ticket from there to Düsseldorf. This is a far cry from the stated aspiration of the Transport Commissioner! Such complication is often accompanied by the loss of or severe cuts to 'classic' services with simple 'walk-up' pricing, leaving passengers with the choice of booking ahead (after consulting several operators rather than one in many instances) or simply switching to another mode. This is in stark contrast to alliances within the aviation industry, together with an abundance of travel agents and price-comparison websites happy to sell through tickets for air journeys involving multiple operators.

Poland, where rail usage has plummeted in recent years, presents perhaps the most extreme example of fragmentation, leading to reduced cross-acceptance of tickets between operators, and the loss of through ticketing for a number of years until the policy was abandoned. Ticket offices have been wastefully duplicated in many stations, with each operator selling only its own tickets. Romania appears set to follow in the same direction. Some operators have opted out of the InterRail/Eurail pass schemes: examples include the ODEG concessionaire on several routes in eastern Germany, and the rapidly expanding Regiotrans and Transferoviar Călători private operators in Romania.

Sadly some national train companies not only no longer cooperate with their neighbours, but go a step further by actively seeking to prevent the operation of commercially attractive international services on their territory by other providers. FS has sought to undermine the commercial viability



of daytime Germany – Austria – Italy trains since a new Italian partner took over, and it has indicated that it will compete directly with SNCF for traffic to/from Paris, while the Milano – Genova – Nice – Marseille corridor remains without long-distance cross-Ventimiglia trains.

Finally, information provision has not kept pace with the increase in complexity heralded by global pricing and on-rail competition. A website started as a hobby by a former employee of the British Department for Transport – The Man in Seat 61 ([www.seat61.com](http://www.seat61.com)) – has done more to demystify and promote international rail travel (to/from the UK) than any EC-funded project or national operator (save for the HAFAS online journey planner first developed for DB).

See Appendix I for a summary of cuts and other problems affecting major international routes. Appendix II lists recently closed (since 1990) and threatened border crossings. The irony here is that services have worsened or indeed disappeared since the enlargement of the EU in 2004 and the subsequent abolition of routine passport and customs controls on internal borders. Croatia's plan to cut 34 out of 56 international trains in December 2012 is on the very eve of its accession to the EU. These trends should have rung alarm bells at the Commission by now.

So, whilst the EU aims to support rail at a strategic level, a whole host of policies threatens to undermine this. We therefore ask the Commission and European funding institutions to:

1. Push politically unpalatable but crucial policies such as road user charging, in line with the oft-stated aims to 'internalise external costs' and adopt 'user pays' principles. It is unacceptable to cite the subsidiarity principle as justification for inaction or further prevarication, as no single Member State will push this policy forward for fear of losing economic competitiveness;
2. Consider environmental impacts and unintended effects on the railway first and foremost when assessing applications for infrastructure funding, consistent with the White Paper's stated aim to "ensure that EU-funded transport infrastructure takes into account energy efficiency needs and climate change challenges";
3. Urgently review and mitigate the consequences of the requirement for trains and infrastructure management to be separated beyond the level of accounting transparency;
4. Urgently review and mitigate the consequences of the requirement for a single operator to be commercially responsible for international trains from end to end;
5. Take immediate steps (most logically by attaching pro-rail conditions to funding/aid) to ensure that countries do not isolate themselves and/or otherwise make strategic international rail routes difficult or impossible to use;
6. Review EU-level restrictions on operating subsidies for cross-border passenger trains;
7. Consider setting up a dedicated funding stream to modernise cross-border railway routes and provide operating subsidies as necessary. We would expect this to deliver the following minimum standards as a condition of the funding:
  - a. Significantly faster transit of the border through:
    - i. Efficient operational procedures;
    - ii. Faster passport and customs controls at non intra-Schengen borders;
    - iii. Good connections;
  - b. An attractive service that meets the needs of users (rather than operators);
  - c. Through ticketing for local and long-distance cross-border journeys with mark-ups (over domestic tariffs) proportional to genuine additional operational costs.

Practical interventions can also be highly effective in addressing problems related to through services, connections, through ticketing and information thereon. The Commission should take immediate action to:

8. Participate pro-actively in the international timetable negotiation process that culminates in the annual European timetabling conference. DG-MOVE officers should make suggestions to national operators and infrastructure managers, with a focus on avoiding closures, preventing poor/broken connections and maintaining a constructive dialogue between players;



9. Support the development of online and printed "Man in Seat 61"-type information resources in all Member States, in order to provide impartial expert advice on international surface travel in an easy-to-understand way.
10. Disseminate best practice in the financing and operation of international trains, with a focus on the efficient and passenger-friendly use of existing resources, through high-level conferences and publications. These would be aimed at operators and infrastructure managers, national transport ministries and regional funding/tendering authorities (see also Appendix III);

In conclusion, many cross-border rail services are being cut in direct contravention of EU aims, despite the growth in domestic rail travel seen in parts of Europe. This requires an EU-level response. The last three recommendations above are low-cost initiatives that could be implemented immediately: there is often much to be gained from optimising the use of existing infrastructure and disseminating information at every level: to operators, infrastructure managers, funders, relevant tiers of government and potential passengers alike. The strategic steps listed would also entail low costs in comparison with the substantial portfolio of transport infrastructure projects currently being implemented around the EU. They could even be self-financing through the hypothecation of "polluter pays" taxation to fund projects that promote modal shift. Finally, the Commission must act quickly and decisively to address the correlation between rail liberalisation legislation and the cost escalations and damaging conflicts between players that have already led to cuts and threaten many other international routes.

World Carfree Network urges you to take immediate action to maximise the potential of rail to facilitate economically, socially and environmentally sustainable mobility across Europe.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Field  
on behalf of the  
World Carfree Network Steering Committee.

**Appendix I: issues affecting international rail routes between major European cities since 1990.  
These are ordered geographically from south-west to north-east.**

Region	Route	Description of problem(s)	Cause(s) of the problem(s)
Iberia	Lisboa – Madrid	No day trains; sole remaining night train pair unfavourably re-timed in October 2012.	Consolidation and re-timing of overnight trains to/from Portugal in late 2012, in a bid to reduce operating costs in line with national budget cuts; Poor marketing.
	Lisboa – Irún / Hendaye – Paris	Very poor connections in Irún / Hendaye since 2011, leading to extended journey times; no through ticketing in either direction.	SNCF timetable changes made with no regard to connections; Consolidation and re-timing of overnight trains to/from Portugal in late 2012, in a bid to reduce operating costs in line with national budget cuts. National operators appear to have insufficient commercial incentives to provide a more attractive service for international passengers.
	Barcelona – Genève – Bern – Zürich	Withdrawal of direct overnight service in December 2012, only partially replaced by a new Genève - Figueras TGV day train pair.	General uncompetitiveness of rail in the distorted transport market.
	Barcelona – Torino – Milano	Withdrawal of direct overnight service in December 2012 without replacement.	General uncompetitiveness of rail in the distorted transport market.
Western Europe	UK – continental destinations via Lille or Paris	Poor connections in the dedicated high speed train interchange station Lille Europe; No through fares from London to Germany, Italy, Spain and beyond via Paris.	Timetable planning without regard for connections; 'Global (market) pricing' of individual trains and routes; No progress by 'Railteam' in expanding through ticketing facilities.
	Paris – Austria and countries east thereof	Withdrawal of all 'classic' through daytime trains / carriages to Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and beyond since the early 1990s; Replacement high speed services require at least one change, have little or no catering and usually do not offer integrated fares.	A preoccupation with the market for high-speed trains between specific large cities 2-4 hours apart. In France this has been at the expense of classic services and longer international journeys off the high-speed network, especially for the non time-sensitive market.
	Paris – Wien	A direct victim of the opening of the high-speed line LGV Est, the overnight train on this route was cut back to Strasbourg - Wien in December 2009 (immediately leading to ticketing problems to/from Paris), then finally completely withdrawn one year later. There are no direct daytime replacement trains.	SNCF has shown a lack of interest in sleeper trains (most domestic routes have been cut). Cuts to 'classic line' services invariably follow the opening of new lines in France, as it is believed that passengers will tolerate the additional change(s) of train required and higher, more complex fares.
	Paris – Italy	Overnight and daytime trains alike have ceased at various times over the last few years, before being partially reinstated with new operating partners. The Paris - Bologna - Roma overnight service did not run in 2012.	Disputes between SNCF and FS: the latter no longer cooperates with the former, and has indicated it wishes to compete for passengers by running its own trains instead. The final two years of the joint SNCF/FS Artesia overnight operation (suspended in 2011) was characterised by extremely poor service standards and chronic unreliability.



Western Europe	International journeys to/from/via Brussels: The UK – The Netherlands, Germany and beyond	Poor connections and increasingly complex ticketing issues via the major hub station of Brussels Midi in Belgium, especially to/from London by Eurostar.	In recent times Eurostar has changed its timetables several times per year, usually with scant regard to the timetables of trains to/from Germany and the Netherlands. Eastbound 'connections' have been broken by just one minute in recent timetables, while the westbound minimum permitted connection time in Brussels was increased to 45 minutes in June 2010, increasing all journey times by one to two hours;
		Eurostar has cyclically introduced and withdrawn the sale of attractive tickets such as 'London to Any Dutch Station' on a regular basis. Through tickets from London to Germany and vv. have never been sold for journeys involving a combination of Eurostar, Thalys and DB trains, nor are they currently available on trains operated by NMBS/SNCB (that fill gaps in the Brussels – Cologne timetable) via the 'classic line' between Liège and Aachen.	Competition rather than cooperation between several operators on the London - Brussels - Köln corridor is one major cause of these problems, compounded by the failure of 'Railteam' to introduce through ticketing across its members' network. DB formally withdrew from the Thalys consortium in 2012, a step that is likely to exacerbate the situation.
		The 2-hourly Oostende – Brussels – Aachen – Cologne InterCity service was withdrawn in 2005. It offered a comfortable, non-crowded, reliable and affordable walk-up service for people making shorter international journeys between Belgium and western Germany. It was replaced by a mixture of compulsory reservation, market-priced Thalys trains and unreliable DB ICE services, which do not stop in Brussels Central station and offer sub-optimal connections to/from London.	This is a further example of a 'classic line' service reduction accompanying the inauguration of a high speed line. For journeys to/from London, the time savings derived from use of the high speed line between Liège and Aachen, which was constructed at great expense but used by a maximum of one train per hour in each direction, have been largely wiped out through such inattention to connections.
		The remaining 2-hourly Liège - Aachen local train service offers poor connections at both ends of the route, but is the only attractively priced option for spontaneous international journeys. This is also now threatened by planned infrastructure changes.	The Oostende InterCity service currently runs to/from Eupen in Belgium, necessitating the provision of a shuttle service across the border to Aachen. This has its origins in the classic line service cuts heralded by the opening of the Liège - Aachen high speed line. DB Netze now plans to move the voltage changeover point from Aachen Hbf station to a remote location closer to the border, which would prevent existing Belgian rolling stock from reaching Aachen. This is another example of the actions of one organisation increasing costs and threatening the existence of an international rail service.
		All international sleeper trains via Brussels and Liège were withdrawn in December 2009. Since then overnight trains from Paris to the north and east of Germany have taken a longer route via Mannheim. Through coaches to/from Poznan, Warsaw and Moscow were also withdrawn. Arrival and departure times in the UK via Eurostar connections are unattractive.	Infrabel's track access charges resulted in diversion of these trains away from Belgium, with consequential loss of the Brussels and Liège stops. In consequence the Paris – Hamburg overnight train did not run at all in 2010. One infrastructure manager's fees were therefore directly responsible for a reduction in the attractiveness of rail for journeys between several countries.



Western Europe	International journeys to/from/via Brussels: The UK – The Netherlands, Germany and beyond	The hourly 'Benelux InterCity' service from Brussels (Midi and Central) to Roosendaal, Rotterdam, Den Haag and Amsterdam will be withdrawn in December 2012. It will be replaced by the Fyra market-priced 'high speed' service with compulsory reservations and no stops in Roosendaal and Den Haag. An additional change of train will be required for journeys via the Dutch junction station of Roosendaal to/from the major Dutch cities of Arnhem, Den Haag, 's-Hertogenbosch, Nijmegen, Tilburg and Vlissingen. Journey times will be extended significantly and travel will become more expensive unless booked far in advance: this is an extremely regressive step that is likely to deter rail use by the discretionary international short hop market e.g. Antwerpen – Rotterdam / Tilburg. The withdrawal of London to Any Dutch Station tickets from all sales channels is likely to increase the cost of travel by at least 50%.	The changes appear to be motivated by NS HiSpeed's financial difficulties and desire to compete with Thalys for the Brussels - Schiphol - Amsterdam market. This is at the expense of connections to/from elsewhere in the Netherlands.
	Brussels – Luxembourg – Metz – Strasbourg – Basel – Zürich	The 'InterCity' trains on this route have been steadily decelerated (average speed 92 km/h between Brussels and Basel) and stripped of all catering facilities. In December 2011 the service was reduced from 3 to 2 train pairs, with a change of train in Basel required in the eastbound direction. Low service standards have prompted calls from MEPs for a special TGV service when the European Parliament moves between cities!	A lack of interest in non-high speed international traffic from SNCF and NMBS/SNCB, who prefer passengers to travel via Paris (requiring two separate tickets). It is likely that SBB has cut the eastbound trains in response to frequent late running: it has a policy of running its own replacement trains within Switzerland when international trains arrive late at the border, a policy that is costly to resource but maintains a reliable service for domestic passengers.
	Berlin / Düsseldorf / Hamburg – Verona / Trieste	These Motorail (car-carrying) overnight trains were withdrawn in September 2012. There are no other direct passenger trains between northern Germany and Italy.	The cuts are thought to have been triggered by higher RFI (the FS infrastructure manager) track access charges, this being the final straw for an operation with high fixed costs and thin profit margins.
	Milano – Verona – Innsbruck – München	EuroCity trains on this route no longer run to/from Milano. Through tickets are not available to/from other stations in Italy, while FS does not sell tickets for these trains at all.	FS in Italy no longer cooperates with neighbouring state railways in the operation of international passenger trains. It withdrew from the joint operation of daytime trains on this route in December 2009, after which LeNord took over as the Italian partner of DB and ÖBB. FS responded to this by refusing to sell tickets for the trains, while its infrastructure wing RFI decelerated the trains by pathing local stopping trains a few minutes ahead of them and blocking access to Milan's main station, which also broke many connections.
	Venezia – Villach – Wien	Only one overnight train pair remains on this route, all other long-distance services between Italy and Austria having been replaced by ÖBB 'express bus'.	FS does not wish to participate in the joint operation of international passenger trains.





Western Europe	Venezia – Ljubljana and countries east thereof	There are currently no through passenger trains from Italy to Slovenia and beyond. Daytime trains were cut in 2009, while the last remaining overnight train (Venezia - Budapest) was finally withdrawn in December 2011.	FS does not wish to participate in the joint operation of international passenger trains.
	Berlin – Malmö	The seasonal night train via the Sassnitz - Trelleborg ferry ran for the last time in October 2012. Connections in Malmö to Göteborg and Stockholm were very poor in the northbound direction. The train was poorly marketed and conveyed only non air-conditioned couchette cars in 2012.	SJ withdrew from the operation of this train in 2011, DB having done likewise a number of years earlier. New operator Veolia was unable or unwilling to provide sleeping cars during 2012, but loadings remained healthy in high summer thanks to low prices for InterRail holders. The overnight ferry service used by this train will not run in 2013.
The Balkans and south-eastern Europe	Ljubljana – Budapest	Despite recent upgrades to the line within Slovenia, the direct day train on this route will be withdrawn in December 2012, leaving only a night train. Daytime travellers will be forced to travel via Austria or Croatia, thus paying more for slower journeys with up to three changes of train.	Austerity measures in Slovenia are suspected to be to blame.
	Ljubljana – Zagreb	The current service of 6 train pairs will be cut to 4 in December 2012.	Budget cuts and the poor marketing of international rail services in Croatia. These trains were included in HŽ's list of cuts announced in Sep 2012.
	Zagreb – Beograd	The current service of 4 train pairs will be cut to 1 in December 2012. Trains are uncompetitively slow, averaging only 72 km/h between Zagreb and Beograd.	Budget cuts and deteriorating track condition in Serbia, where there is no political commitment to rail, has led to the imposition of severe speed restrictions in recent years, extending journey times significantly.
	Zagreb – Budapest	One of the two daily direct trains will cease to operate in December 2012. A third journey opportunity with changes of train will also no longer be possible, as the two pairs of local cross-border trains will also be cut.	Budget cuts and the poor marketing of international rail services in Croatia. Sectorisation in line with EU guidelines has led to rolling stock and staffing inefficiencies, a common problem on small networks.
	Zagreb – Wien	One of the two daily direct trains will be cut in December 2012. Journeys will take 2 hours longer and cost more via alternative routes.	Budget cuts and the poor marketing of international rail services in Croatia. Sectorisation in line with EU guidelines has led to rolling stock and staffing inefficiencies, a common problem on small networks.
	Sarajevo – Budapest	The only direct train pair on this route will be withdrawn in December 2012. Local trains via the Croatia - Hungary border crossing used by these trains will be cut at the same time, with the result that the rail journey will no longer be possible in one day. The Sarajevo – Beograd train pair will also cease in December 2012.	These trains were included in HŽ's list of cuts announced in September 2012. It is therefore likely that this operator is directly responsible for the loss of international rail services between three other countries.
	Beograd – Budapest	One of the three daily direct trains will cease to operate in December 2012. These trains are extremely slow, averaging a mere 45 km/h within Serbia.	The railway in Serbia continues to shed passengers thanks to the lack of basic infrastructure maintenance that has extended journey times massively in recent years. Poorly maintained rolling stock is unattractive to passengers. This all stems from a lack of political commitment.

The Balkans and south-eastern Europe	Beograd – București	The sole pair of overnight trains was 'temporarily' replaced by a bus between Beograd and the border station of Vrsac during 2012. In reality the service will disappear completely in December 2012.	It is thought that track condition in Serbia had deteriorated to the point that the rail service had to be suspended. Passengers are offered a faster and more frequent service by competing bus companies.
	Beograd – Skopje	One day train and one overnight train take around 9.5 hours to cover the 450 km journey according to the timetable, but delays of 60-90 minutes are the norm thanks to infrastructure and rolling stock problems. The advertised catering service is not provided and smoking is permitted on board. Passenger numbers have shrunk to the extent that 1 or 2 carriages are sufficient to cater for demand.	Infrastructure maintenance has been neglected for several years. A visit by World Carfree Network members in October 2012 revealed many severe speed restrictions resulting from poor track condition and the failure of automatic level crossing equipment.
	(Wien –) Beograd – Sofia	The direct day train on this route was withdrawn with no warning during 2012, leaving no other daytime journey opportunities by rail. A shortage of serviceable ŽS rolling stock means that the surviving overnight train (average speed: 44 km/h) frequently does not convey sleeping cars and couchette coaches. Border formalities are carried out in the early hours of the morning eastbound, making this train an unattractive option. Through coaches to/from Wien were withdrawn in December 2010: the chronic unpunctuality of northbound trains meant that the through coaches almost always reached Beograd after departure of the day train booked to convey them to Budapest and Wien.	Low speeds are a consequence of neglected infrastructure. ŽS has blamed the loss of the day train on a shortage of serviceable diesel locomotives required for the Niš - Dimitrovgrad section, a further consequence of severe underfunding.
	Skopje – Thessaloniki (– Athina)	All remaining international trains to/from Greece were cut on 13 February 2011. Intending passengers (without access to a car) must use buses instead. A new weekend service (running at extremely unattractive times of day) was announced in summer 2012, but it is not clear whether it actually operated.	Austerity measures demanded by the international community have had a disproportionate effect on the badly managed Greek railway system, much of which has been upgraded with EU money in recent years. New rolling stock now stands idle, while renewed track slowly rusts away before being stolen (along with valuable copper wiring) by metal thieves.
	Sofia – Thessaloniki (– Athina)	All remaining international trains to/from Greece were cut on 13 February 2011.	Austerity measures demanded by the international community have had a disproportionate effect on the badly managed Greek railway system, much of which has been upgraded with EU money in recent years.
	Sofia – Istanbul	The overnight train pair on this route has started and terminated in the border station of Kapikule in the middle of the night since early 2012.	Construction of the Bosphorus rail tunnel in Istanbul has resulted in closure of the city's central terminal stations. It is unclear why these trains cannot be diverted to alternative suburban stations for the duration of the work.
	Thessaloniki – Istanbul	All remaining international trains to/from Greece were cut on 13 February 2011.	Austerity measures demanded by the international community have had a disproportionate effect on the badly managed Greek railway system, much of which has been upgraded with EU money in recent years.
	See also Appendix II for further details of closed and threatened border crossings in the Balkans		



Central Europe	Berlin – Katowice – Kraków	The night train on this route was withdrawn in December 2009. The sole daytime train pair has been progressively decelerated and operated with badly maintained rolling stock. From December 2012 this train will be cut back to Wrocław. This leaves the major tourism centre of Kraków with no direct trains to/from western Europe.	It is likely that the very low speed of this route in Poland has contributed to the drastic loss of passengers in recent years. Average speed Berlin - Krakow = 58 km/h. This stems from the chronic mismanagement and underfunding of the Polish rail system.
	Hamburg – Berlin – Wien / Bratislava – Budapest	The current service is an example of good practice (see Appendix III). However, the service is likely to be split in Prague from December 2014, with grave consequences for comprehensive information provision, connections and through ticketing.	DB plans to end cooperation with ČD in favour of a private operator of 'open access' trains in the Czech Republic, presumably on cost grounds. Since the new operator has not yet procured the rolling stock that would be required, World Carfree Network does not know how it has been able to price its proposed contract with DB.
	See also Appendix II for further details of closed and threatened border crossings in central Europe		
Eastern Europe	București – İstanbul (with connections to Bulgarian coastal resorts)	The overnight train pair on this route has started and terminated in the border station of Kapıkule in the middle of the night since early 2012. It was also replaced by buses between Ruse and Dimitrovgrad in Bulgaria for many months in late 2012, but this information was not presented clearly on BDZ's website, nor was it forwarded to DB for inclusion in its journey planner.	Construction of the Bosphorus rail tunnel in İstanbul has resulted in closure of the city's central terminal stations. It is unclear why these trains cannot be diverted to alternative suburban stations for the duration of the work. Many infrastructure managers and/or operators do not forward information on timetable alterations to neighbouring countries.
	București – Sofia	The sole day train and an overnight train are extremely slow (average speed 41 km/h). The only sleeping cars on the overnight train are RZD (Russian) cars to/from Moscow, which cannot officially be booked for use between București and Sofia. All passengers are awoken by border police twice in the middle of the night, a procedure that could be avoided if attendants were to hold passports during the journey.	Poorly maintained infrastructure and prolonged waits at the border for passport control and customs checks. Incompatible ticket issuing systems and/or restrictions on the carriage of passengers in through sleeping cars of a third party railway company are to blame for difficulties in booking sleeping car accommodation.
	Berlin – Ukraine	Berlin - Odessa trains were cut in 2011. Berlin - Kyiv trains were withdrawn on 30 September 2012, forcing passengers to/from Ukraine to change in Warszawa.	Higher DB Netze track access charges have been blamed for this.
	Warszawa – Vilnius	The direct overnight train was withdrawn in December 2005. Direct daytime trains were withdrawn at the same time, but the journey is possible once per day with two changes of train.	Gauge changing equipment at Šestokai is no longer used. International buses have become more competitive as Poland's motorway building programme has expanded.
	Vilnius – Riga	There is no rail service by a geographically direct route	Neglect and contraction of the rail network since 1990, with a greater focus on the use of rail for heavy freight.
	Riga – Tallinn	There is no rail service by a geographically direct route	Neglect and contraction of the rail network since 1990, with a greater focus on the use of rail for heavy freight.

## Appendix II: lists of closed and threatened cross-border railway routes.

### i. Lines already closed to passenger trains since 1990, in alphabetical order by country.

Note: major border crossings for long-distance trains are shown in **bold**. Closure dates are given if known.

- Albania: there has never been a passenger service on the cross-border line to Montenegro. The railway to Pogradec, close to the Macedonian border, has been closed since August 2012 as a result of damage to the line caused by road construction work.
- Belgium:
  - To France:
    - Dinant – Givet
    - **(Brussel / Bruxelles – Charleroi –) Erquelinnes – Jeumont (– Aulnoye – Paris)**. Closed on 10 September 2012. This marked the closure of the last non high-speed line border crossing on a geographically direct route between Brussels and Paris. Only two ‘classic’ routes between Belgium and France now remain open, both of which are in the Lille area and are not used by long-distance passenger trains.
    - **(Brussel / Bruxelles – Mons –) Quévy – Feignies (– Aulnoye – Paris)**. Closed in 2008, when the Germany – Paris night trains were re-routed to avoid high Infrabel track access charges in Belgium.
    - De Panne – Bray Dunes (– Dunkerque).
- Bosnia & Herzegovina:
  - To Croatia:
    - Martin Brod – Knin. Closed in 2010 on the grounds of poor track condition. Formed part of a route from the west of Bosnia to the coastal resort of Split.
    - (Tuzla –) Brčko – Gunja (– Vinkovci). Closed in 2010.
  - To Serbia:
    - Bijeljina – Velino Selo – Sremska Rača Nova (– Šid). Closed in 2005.
- Bulgaria:
  - To Greece:
    - Svilengrad – Díkaia (– Alexandroupolis). Closed in 2009.
    - **(Sofia –) Kulata – Promachon (– Thessaloniki)**. Closed on 13 February 2011.
  - To Romania:
    - (Varna – Razdelna –) Kardam – Negru Vodă (– Medgidia – Bucureşti).
- Croatia:
  - To Bosnia & Herzegovina:
    - Knin – Martin Brod. Closed in 2010 on the grounds of poor track condition. Formed part of a route from the coastal resort of Split to the west of Bosnia (and an alternative route to Zagreb).
    - (Vinkovci) – Gunja – Brčko (– Tuzla). Closed in 2010.
  - To Serbia:
    - (Vinkovci –) Erdut – Bogojevo (– Subotica – Budapest).
  - To Slovenia:
    - Đurmanec – Sveti Rok ob Sotli.
    - (Čakovec –) Macinec – Središče (– Ormož). Closed in 2010.
    - (Čakovec –) Mursko Središče – Lendava.
    - (Savski Marof –) Kumrovec – Imeno.

- Czech Republic:
  - To Germany:
    - (Rumburk –) Jiřikov-Filipov – Ebersbach. Closed in 2010.
  - To Poland:
    - Černousy – Zawidów (– Zgorzelec / Görlitz / Zittau).
    - **(Šumperk – Jeseník –) Głucholazy – Nowy Świątów (– Nysa – Wrocław / Opole)**. Głucholazy – Nowy Świątów closed in 2010, isolating the former from the Polish rail network and effectively closing a cross-border route.
    - Meziměstí – Mieroszów. Closed in 2004.
    - Český Těšín – Cieszyn. Closed in 2009.
  - To Slovakia:
    - Sodoměřice nad Moravou – Skalica na Slovensku. Closed in 2007.
    - Hodonín – Holíč nad Moravou. Closed in 2004.
  
- Denmark:
  - To Germany:
    - (København – Nykøbing –) Gedser – Warnemünde (– Rostock – Berlin). This train ferry ceased in 1995, causing the Nykøbing – Gedser line to close.
  
- Estonia:
  - To Latvia:
    - **(Tallinn – Pärnu –) Mõsaküla – Ipiki (– Riga)**. This line forms the direct route between the two capitals but has been closed for many years.
  
- France:
  - To Belgium:
    - Givet – Dinant.
    - **(Paris – Aulnoye –) Jeumont – Erquelinnes (– Charleroi – Brussel / Bruxelles)**. Closed on 10 September 2012. This marked the closure of the last non high-speed line border crossing on a geographically direct route between Paris and Brussels. Only two 'classic' routes between France and Belgium now remain open, both of which are in the Lille area and are not used by long-distance passenger trains.
    - **(Paris – Aulnoye –) Feignies – Quévy (– Mons – Brussel / Bruxelles)**. Closed in 2008, when the Germany – Paris night trains were re-routed to avoid high Infrabel track access charges in Belgium.
    - (Dunkerque –) De Panne – Bray Dunes.
  - To Germany:
    - (Bouzonville –) Guerstling – Niedaltdorf (– Dillingen (Saar)).
    - Reumaux – Merlebach Nord.
    - (Strasbourg –) Roeschwoog – Wintersdorf (– Karlsruhe).
  - To Switzerland:
    - (Evian-les-Bains –) St Gingolph – St Gingolph (Suisse) (– Bouveret).
  
- Germany:
  - To Czech Republic:
    - Ebersbach – Jiřikov-Filipov (– Rumburk). Closed in 2010.
  - To Denmark:
    - (Berlin – Rostock –) Warnemünde – Gedser (– Nykøbing – København). This train ferry ceased in 1995, causing the Gedser – Nykøbing line to close.
  - To France:
    - (Dillingen (Saar) –) Niedaltdorf – Guerstling (– Bouzonville).
    - Merlebach Nord – Reumaux.
    - (Karlsruhe –) Wintersdorf – Roeschwoog (– Strasbourg).

- To Poland:
  - (Frankfurt (Oder) –) Guben – Gubin (– Zielona Góra). Closed in 2002.
- Greece:
  - To Bulgaria:
    - (Alexandroupolis –) Dikaia – Svilengrad. Closed in 2009.
    - **(Thessaloniki –) Promachon – Kulata (– Sofia)**. Closed on 13 February 2011.
  - To FYR Macedonia:
    - **(Thessaloníki –) Idomeni – Gevgelija (– Skopje)**. Closed on 13 February 2011.
    - (Thessaloníki –) Neos Kafkatos – Kremenica (– Bitola). Closed in 2006.
  - To Turkey:
    - **(Alexandroupolis –) Píthio – Uzunköprü (– İstanbul)**. Closed on 13 February 2011.
- Hungary:
  - To Romania:
    - Csenger – Satu Mare.
    - Körösnagyharsány – Cheresig.
    - Elek – Grăniceri.
    - **(Szeged –) Apátfalva – Cenad (– Timișoara)**.
  - To Slovakia:
    - **(Győr – Hegyeshalom –) Rajka – Rusovce (– Bratislava)**. Closed in 2011.
    - (Győr –) Komárom – Komárno (– Nové Zámky). Closed in 2008.
    - **(Budapest – Hatvan –) Somoskőújfalu – Šiatorská Bukovinka (– Fil'akovo – Zvolen)**. Closed in 2011.
    - (Miskolc –) Bánréve – Lenartovce (– Zvolen). Closed in 2009.
    - Hídvégardó – Host'ovce.
    - (Miskolc – Szerencs –) Sátoraljaújhely – Slovenské Nove Mesto. Closed in 2008.
  - To Slovenia:
    - Rédics – Lendava.
- Italy:
  - To Slovenia. All three border crossings are closed to passenger traffic:
    - (Venezia –) Gorizia Centrale – Vrtojba (– Nova Gorica).
    - (Venezia – Trieste –) Villa Opicina – Kreplje (– Nova Gorica).
    - **(Venezia – Trieste –) Villa Opicina – Sežana (– Ljubljana)**. Closed in 2011.
- Latvia:
  - To Estonia:
    - **(Riga –) Ipiki – Mōsakūla (– Pärnu –Tallinn)**. This line forms the direct route between the two capitals but has been closed for many years.
  - To Lithuania:
    - (Daugavpils –) Eglainē – Obeliai (– Rokiškis – Radviliškis).
    - **(Riga – Jelgava –) Meitene – Šarkiai (– Šiauliai – Vilnius)**. This is the direct route between the two capitals.
    - (Riga – Jelgava –) Reņģe – Laižuva (– Mažeikiai).
    - (Priekule –) Vaiņode – Lūšē (– Mažeikiai).
    - (Priekule –) Kaleti – Skuodas (– Klaipeda).
  - To Russia:
    - (Riga – Gulbene –) Vecumi – Purvmala.

- Lithuania:
  - To Latvia: see above.
  - To Russia:
    - **(Klaipėda –) Pagėgiai – Sovetsk (– Kaliningrad).**
- FYR Macedonia:
  - To Greece:
    - **(Skopje –) Gevgelija – Idomeni (– Thessaloníki).** Closed on 13 February 2011.
    - (Bitola –) Kremenica – Neos Kafkatos (–Thessaloníki). Closed in 2006.
- Moldova:
  - To Romania:
    - (Basarabeasca –) Prut-2 – Fălcui (– Bârlad). A service was re-introduced in 2010 then withdrawn later the same year.
- Montenegro: there has never been a passenger service on the cross-border line to Albania.
- Poland:
  - To Belarus:
    - (Białystok –) Czeremcha – Wysoko-Litovsk (– Brest). Closed in December 2011.
  - To Czech Republic:
    - (Zittau / Görlitz / Zgorzelec –) Zawidów – Černousy.
    - (Opole / Wrocław – Nysa –) Nowy Świątów – Głuchołazy (– Jeseník – Šumperk). Nowy Świątów – Głuchołazy closed in 2010, isolating the former from the Polish rail network and effectively closing a cross-border route.
    - Mieroszów – Meziměstí. Closed in 2004.
    - Cieszyn – Český Těšín. Closed in 2009.
  - To Germany:
    - (Zielona Góra –) Gubin – Guben (– Frankfurt (Oder)). Closed in 2002.
  - To Slovakia:
    - (Muszyna –) Leluchów – Čirč (– Plaveč – Košice). 'Temporarily' closed in June 2010 after the line was flooded, but the passenger service was not reinstated upon completion of repairs.
    - (Przemyśl –) Łupków – Medzilaborce mesto (– Humenné). Closed in August 2010.
  - To Ukraine:
    - (Lublin –) Hrebenne – Rava Rus'ka (– Lviv). Closed in 2005.
    - (Sanok –) Ustrzyki Dolne – Staryava – Khyriv (– Sambir). Closed in November 2010.
- Portugal:
  - To Spain:
    - (Porto – Pocinho –) Barca de Alva – Fregeneda (– Salamanca). Served the Coa Valley Archaeological Park, a World Heritage Site.
    - **(Lisboa – Entroncamento –) Marvão Beirã – Valencia do Alcántara (– Madrid).** Closed on 15 August 2012.
    - (Entroncamento –) Torre das Vargens – Elvas – Badajoz. Closed (from Torre das Vargens) on 1 January 2012.
- Romania:
  - To Bulgaria:
    - (București – Medgidia –) Negru Vodă – Kardam (– Razdelna – Varna).



- To Hungary:
  - Satu Mare – Csenger.
  - Cheresig – Körösnagyharsány.
  - Grăniceri – Elek.
  - **(Timișoara –) Cenad – Apátfalva (– Szeged).**
- To Moldova:
  - (Bârlad –) Fălcu – Prut-2 (– Basarabesca). A service was re-introduced in 2010 then withdrawn later the same year.
- To Serbia:
  - Baziaș – Vračev Gaj (– Vršac).
  - (Oravița –) Iam – Jasenovó.
  - Jamu Mare – Vršac.
  - (Timișoara –) Cruceni – Jaša Tomić).
  - (Cărpiniș –) Ionel – Međa (– Jaša Tomić).
  - (Sănnicolau Mare –) Vălcani – Vrbica.
- To Ukraine:
  - (Sighetu Marmăției –) Cămpulung la Tisa – Teresva (– Chop). Passenger trains ceased upon opening of a new road between the two countries.
  - **(Cluj Napoca / Brașov – Sighetu Marmăției –) Valea Vișeuului – Dilove (– Rakhiv – Lviv).** Closed in 2006.
- Serbia:
  - To Bosnia & Herzegovina:
    - (Šid –) Sremska Rača Nova – Velino Selo – Bijeljina. Closed in 2005.
  - To Croatia:
    - (Budapest – Subotica –) Erdut – Bogojevo (– Vinkovci).
  - To Romania: see above.
- Slovakia:
  - To Czech Republic:
    - Skalica na Slovensku – Sodoměřice nad Moravou. Closed in 2007.
    - Holíč nad Moravou – Hodonín. Closed in 2004.
  - To Hungary:
    - **(Bratislava –) Rusovce – Rajka (– Hegyeshalom – Győr).** Closed in 2011.
    - (Nové Zámky –) Komárno – Komárom (– Győr). Closed in 2008.
    - **(Zvolen – Fil'iakovo –) Šiatorská Bukovinka – Somosköűfalu (– Hatvan – Budapest).** Closed in 2011.
    - (Zvolen –) Lenartovce – Bánréve (– Miskolc). Closed in 2009.
    - Host'ovce – Hídvégardó.
    - Slovenské Nove Mesto – Sátoraljaűjhely (– Miskolc). Closed in 2008.
  - To Poland:
    - (Košice –) Plaveč – Čirč – Leluchów (– Muszyna). The cross-border section was 'temporarily' closed in June 2010 after flooding, but the passenger service was not reinstated upon completion of repairs. The Slovak section between Plaveč and Čirč will close in December 2012.
    - (Humenné –) Medzilaborce mesto – Łupków (– Przemyśl). Closed in August 2010.
- Slovenia:
  - To Croatia:
    - Sveti Rok ob Sotli – Đurmanec.
    - (Ormož –) Središče – Macinec (– Čakovec). Closed in 2010.
    - Lendava – Mursko Središče (– Čakovec).
    - Imeno – Kumrovec (– Savski Marof).



- To Hungary:
  - Lendava – Rédics.
- To Italy. All three border crossings are closed to passenger traffic:
  - (Nova Gorica –) Vrtojba – Gorizia Centrale (– Venezia).
  - (Nova Gorica –) Kreplje – Villa Opicina (– Trieste – Venezia).
  - **(Ljubljana –) Sežana – Villa Opicina (– Trieste – Venezia)**. Closed in 2011.
- Spain:
  - To Portugal:
    - (Salamanca –) Fregeneda – Barca de Alva (– Pocinho – Porto). Served the Coa Valley Archaeological Park, a World Heritage Site.
    - **(Madrid –) Valencia do Alcántara – Marvão Beirã (– Entroncamento – Lisboa)**. Closed on 15 August 2012.
    - Badajoz – Elvas – Torre das Vargens (– Entroncamento). Closed (to Torre das Vargens) on 1 January 2012.

Reference: [http://egtre.info/wiki/Category:Border\\_Crossings](http://egtre.info/wiki/Category:Border_Crossings) (accessed 6 October 2012).

## Appendix II: lists of closed and threatened cross-border railway routes.

### ii. Lines with a limited service and/or subject to heavy cuts or closure (as at 23 November 2012).

Note: major border crossings currently or formerly used by long-distance trains are shown in **bold**.

- Austria:
  - To Italy:
    - **(Villach –) Thörl-Maglern – Tarvisio (– Udine – Venezia)**. Two pairs of local trains between Villach and Udine resumed in June 2011, after several years without a daytime passenger service, with funding from local authorities and the EC Interreg-4c Programme in place for one year. It is not known how/if this will continue from June 2012. Long-distance services on this route are actually buses operated by ÖBB.
  - To Slovenia: a number of through trains to/from Slovenia have been replaced by connections in **Villach** in recent years.
  - It should also be noted that the state of Niederösterreich continues to withdraw funding for domestic routes, some of which run close to the Czech border.
- Belgium:
  - To Germany:
    - **(Liège –) Verviers – Aachen** (classic line only). If DB Netze proceeds to move the overhead line voltage changeover point from Aachen Hbf station to a remote point west of the city, existing Belgian trains will no longer be able to reach Aachen. Neither NMBS/SNCB nor DB has suitable dual voltage rolling stock available for this route.
- Bosnia & Herzegovina: see Croatia.
- Bulgaria: see also FYR Macedonia.
  - To Serbia:
    - **(Sofia –) Kalotina – Dimitrovgrad (– Niš – Beograd)**. International trains are currently limited to a pair of overnight trains between Sofia and Beograd. Since early 2012 these have operated without sleeping cars, pending fleet replacement. Day trains across this border were withdrawn in 2012, with ŽS citing a shortage of serviceable locomotives. The track between Dimitrovgrad and Niš was in very poor condition in October 2012.
  - To Turkey:
    - **(Sofia / Bucureşti –) Svilengrad – Kapıkule (– İstanbul)**. Served by one pair of night trains that has terminated/started in the middle of the night in Kapıkule since March 2012, owing to long-term reconstruction work in İstanbul. It is not known why the trains cannot run to/from an alternative station in the greater İstanbul area.
- Croatia:
  - To Bosnia & Herzegovina:
    - **(Zagreb –) Volinja – Dobrljin (– Banja Luka – Doboј – Sarajevo)**. This is the main rail route between the two countries. The two pairs of daily trains between Zagreb and Sarajevo will be reduced to one pair in December 2012.
    - (Ploče –) Metković – Čapljina (– Sarajevo). The service of two daily train pairs will be reduced to one in December 2012.





- Estonia:
  - To Russia:
    - **(Tallinn –) Narva – Ivangorod-Narvskiy (– Sankt-Peterburg)**. Served by a daily night train pair plus an intermittently-operated daily pair of day trains.
  
- France:
  - To Germany:
    - **(Metz – Thionville –) Apach – Perl (– Trier)**. Served by a single train pair at weekends only.
  - To Spain:
    - **(Paris – Bordeaux –) Hendaye – Irún (– San Sebastián)**. Most trains terminate at Hendaye or Irún owing to the change of gauge. Onward connections continue to deteriorate following major SNCF timetable changes in December 2011 and consolidation of the Spain – Portugal overnight trains in October 2012.
  
- Germany:
  - To Belgium:
    - **Aachen – Verviers (– Liège)** (classic line only). If DB Netze proceeds to move the overhead line voltage changeover point from Aachen Hbf station to a remote point west of the city, existing Belgian trains will no longer be able to reach Aachen. Neither SNCB/NMBS nor DB has suitable dual voltage rolling stock available for this route.
  - To Czech Republic:
    - (Cranzahl – Chemnitz –) Bärenstein – Vejprty (– Chomutov). Currently a single train pair at weekends only.
    - **Nürnberg – Furth im Wald – Česká Kubice (– Plzeň – Praha)**. Trains will be re-routed to München from December 2012, owing to the large drop in passenger numbers since completion of the new Nürnberg – Praha motorway. DB operates a bus service in competition with the partially tendered rail service operated by Vogtlandbahn GmbH and ČD. Further road building will threaten the Praha – München trains.
  - To Denmark:
    - **(Lübeck –) Puttgarden – Rødby Færges (– Nykøbing – København)**. Limited train ferry capacity (a maximum of four carriages can be accommodated) and the unreliability of the high-speed diesel trains on this route threaten the economic viability of the København – Hamburg service.
  - To France:
    - **(Trier –) Perl – Apach (– Thionville – Metz)**. Served by a single train pair at weekends only.
  - To Poland:
    - **(Berlin – Cottbus –) Forst (Lausitz) – Zasielki (– Tuplice – Wrocław)**. Served by a single daily pair of EuroCity trains known for severe delays (on a very slow timetable) and poorly maintained rolling stock without catering. The overnight train to Kraków was withdrawn in 2009. The EuroCity trains will be cut back to operate between Hamburg and Wrocław only in 2013.
  - To Sweden:
    - **(Berlin –) Sassnitz – Trelleborg (– Malmö)**. The seasonal night train via this route ran for the last time in September 2012: the train ferry route it used will not operate overnight in 2013. The alternative Rostock – Rostock Seehafen Nord suburban rail service will cease in December 2012, a victim of funding cuts in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Land.

- Hungary:
  - To Croatia:
    - **(Budapest – Pécs –) Magyarbóly – Beli Manastir (– Osijek – Sarajevo).** This route carries one long-distance and two local train pairs. It will lose all of these services in December 2012.
    - **(Wien / Budapest –) Gyékényes – Botovo (– Koprivnica – Zagreb).** The principal route between Croatia and Hungary will lose two of its three pairs of year-round long-distance trains and both pairs of local trains in December 2012.
  - To Serbia:
    - **(Budapest –) Kelebia – Subotica (– Beograd).** One pair of Budapest – Beograd day trains will be withdrawn in December 2012, leaving the route with a sole pair of day trains plus one overnight train pair. Trains currently average 45 km/h south of Subotica owing to poor track condition, and spend around one hour at the border, making the service extremely unattractive.
  - To Slovenia:
    - **(Budapest – Zalaegerszeg –) Bajánsenye – Hodoš (– Pragersko – Ljubljana).** Despite much of this strategic route having been upgraded between 2000 and 2009, the through daytime Budapest – Ljubljana train will be withdrawn in December 2012, leaving the route with an overnight train and three pairs of local cross-border services, none of which have offer good connections. Daytime passengers will in effect be forced to take longer and much more expensive routes via Austria.
- Italy:
  - To Austria:
    - **(Venezia – Udine –) Tarvisio – Thörl-Maglern (– Villach).** Two pairs of local trains between Udine and Villach resumed in June 2011, after several years without a daytime passenger service, with funding from local authorities and the EC Interreg-4c Programme in place for one year. It is not known how/if this will continue from June 2012. Long-distance services on this route are actually buses operated by ÖBB.
- Latvia:
  - To Russia:
    - Kārsava – Skangali. One daily train pair.
    - Zilupe – Posiņ (– Moskva). One daily train pair.
- Lithuania:
  - To Poland:
    - **(Vilnius – Šeštokai –) Mockava – Trakiszki (– Suwałki – Warszawa).** The through train pair between Vilnius and Warszawa was withdrawn in 2005. Gauge-changing equipment at Mockava is no longer used. Journeys can still be made between the two capitals once per day, but are unattractive owing to the two changes of train required.
- FYR Macedonia:
  - To Serbia:
    - **(Skopje –) Tabanovci – Preševo (– Niš – Beograd).** Two very slow train pairs remain: these are formed of badly maintained rolling stock and offer very poor connections in Niš to/from Sofia (Bulgaria).
- Montenegro: there has never been a passenger service on the cross-border line to Albania.



- Poland:
  - Note that there is a long list of routes recommended for closure in a consultant's report dating from summer 2012, some of which will impact on international journeys: see [http://egtre.info/wiki/Poland\\_-\\_General\\_Information#Special\\_Notes](http://egtre.info/wiki/Poland_-_General_Information#Special_Notes).
  - To Czech Republic:
    - Lubawka – Kralovec (– Trutnov). Reopened briefly for seasonal services in 2008, but subject to stop-start funding by the Polish local authority since then.
    - (Ostrava – Krnov –) Jindřichov ve Slezsku – Gluchořazy – Mikulovice (– Šumperk). This is a 'corridor route' between two sections of Czech territory. Polish plans to close the line in December 2012 (maintenance has been deferred for a few years already) will prevent the operation of the Czech domestic route between Ostrava, Krnov and Jeseník.
  - To Germany:
    - **(Kraków – Tuplice –) Zasieki – Forst (Lausitz) (– Cottbus – Berlin)**. Served by a single daily pair of EuroCity trains known for severe delays (on a very slow timetable) and poorly maintained rolling stock without catering. The overnight train from Kraków was withdrawn in 2009. The EuroCity trains will be cut back to operate between Wrocław and Hamburg only in 2013.
  - To Lithuania:
    - **(Warszawa – Suwałki –) Trakiszki – Mockava (– Šeštokai – Vilnius)**. The through train pair between Warszawa and Vilnius was withdrawn in 2005. Gauge-changing equipment at Mockava is no longer used. Journeys can still be made between the two capitals once per day, but are unattractive owing to the two changes of train required.
  - To Slovakia:
    - **(Katowice –) Zwardoń – Skalité-Serafínov (– Čadca – Žilina)**. Only two local train pairs traverse this section, despite the completion of electrification in 2002.
- Portugal:
  - To Spain:
    - **(Lisboa – Entroncamento –) Vilar Formoso – Fuentes de Oñoro (– Madrid)**. The sole surviving night train pair (there are no other trains between Lisboa and Madrid) has been threatened and reprieved at regular intervals in the last few years. It was combined with another train and re-timed (for operational reasons rather than the benefit of passengers) in October 2012.
- Romania:
  - To Serbia: see below.
- Serbia:
  - To Bulgaria:
    - **(Beograd – Niš –) Dimitrovgrad – Kalotina (– Sofia)**. International trains are currently limited to a pair of overnight trains between Beograd and Sofia. Since early 2012 these have operated without sleeping cars, pending fleet replacement. Day trains across this border were withdrawn in 2012, with ŽS citing a shortage of serviceable locomotives. The track between Dimitrovgrad and Niš was in very poor condition in October 2012.
  - To Croatia:
    - **(Beograd –) Šid – Tovarnik (– Vinkovci – Zagreb)**. Four current train pairs on this strategic trans-Balkan route will be cut to just one in December 2012.

- To Hungary:
  - **(Beograd –) Subotica – Kelebia (– Budapest).** One pair of Beograd – Budapest day trains will be withdrawn in December 2012, leaving the route with a sole pair of day trains plus one overnight train pair. Trains currently average 45 km/h south of Subotica owing to poor track condition, and spend around one hour at the border, making the service extremely unattractive.
- To FYR Macedonia:
  - **(Niš – Beograd –) Preševo – Tabanovci (– Skopje).** Two very slow train pairs remain: these are formed of badly maintained rolling stock and offer very poor connections in Niš to/from Sofia (Bulgaria).
- To Romania:
  - Kikinda – Jimbolia (– Timișoara). Two daily train pairs remain at present.
  - **(Beograd –) Vršac – Stomora Moravita (– Timișoara / București).** The line on the Serbian side of the border has been closed for track repairs since 21 July 2012, but did not reopen on 10 September as expected. The sole pair of trains between Beograd and București is expected to be cut from the 2013 timetable, presumably as a result of a failure to repair infrastructure on the Serbian side of the border. The situation is exacerbated by both countries' shortage of serviceable rolling stock suitable for overnight trains.
- Slovakia:
  - To Czech Republic:
    - (Trenčín –) Horné Srnie – Vlárský průsmyk (– Bylnice – Brno). Currently served by one train per week, on Sundays in this direction.
  - To Poland:
    - **(Žilina – Čadca –) Skalité-Serafínov – Zwardoń (– Katowice).** Only two local train pairs traverse this section, despite the completion of electrification in 2002.
- Slovenia:
  - To Croatia:
    - **(Ljubljana –) Buzet – Rakitovec (– Pula).** The likely removal of the sole remaining seasonal train pair from the December 2012 timetable will create a 6 km gap between the Slovenian and Croatian networks.
    - (Metlika –) Rosalnica – Kamanje (– Karlovac). The two pairs of weekday trains will cease in December 2012.
    - **(Ljubljana – Pivka –) Ilirska Bistrica – Šapjane (– Rijeka).** This border crossing was threatened with closure, but HŽ has announced that the two pairs of long-distance international trains will remain in 2013. The recently rebuilt parallel dual carriageway road remains a long-term threat to the route.
  - To Hungary:
    - **(Ljubljana – Pragersko –) Hodoš – Bajánsenye (– Zalaegerszeg – Budapest).** Despite much of this strategic route having been upgraded between 2000 and 2009, the through daytime Ljubljana – Budapest train will be withdrawn in December 2012, leaving the route with an overnight train and three pairs of local cross-border services, none of which have offer good connections. Daytime passengers will in effect be forced to take longer and much more expensive routes via Austria.
- Spain:
  - To France:
    - **(San Sebastián –) Irún – Hendaye (– Bordeaux – Paris).** Most trains terminate at Irún or Hendaye owing to the change of gauge. Onward connections continue to deteriorate following major SNCF timetable changes

in December 2011 and consolidation of the Portugal – Spain overnight trains in October 2012.

- To Portugal:
  - **(Madrid –) Fuentes de Oñoro – Vilar Formoso (– Entroncamento – Lisboa).** The sole surviving night train pair (there are no other trains between Madrid and Lisboa) has been threatened and reprieved at regular intervals in the last few years. It was combined with another train and re-timed (for operational reasons rather than the benefit of passengers) in October 2012.





## Appendix III: cross-border rail service good practice and success stories

### 1. Local international trains.

The three-country border area comprising Liberec County in the **Czech Republic**, the Oberlausitz-Niederschlesien region in the **German state of Sachsen** and the province of Dolnośląskie in **Poland** has experienced a rail renaissance in recent years:

- The Dresden – Wrocław international service via the Görlitz (DE) – Zgorzelec (PL) **border crossing was restored** in 2008 after a 4-year gap. Cheap regional tickets are valid on these trains within Germany;
- The Harrachov (CZ) – Jakuszyce (PL) (– Jelenia Gora) line **reopened** on 28 August 2010, restoring a rail link between the two countries in this region. The many outdoor activity enthusiasts who flock to this hilly recreational area benefit from an enhanced seasonal weekend service. **Good connections** to/from Liberec are provided;
- **Modern rolling stock** is used on all the rail routes within Germany (following tendering), the cross-Zittau routes to/from the Czech Republic (following **joint tendering** by German and Czech authorities) and the Liberec – Tanvald – Harrachov lines (co-funding provided by Liberec County);
- The frequency of the core Zittau (DE) – Liberec (CZ) international service has improved to hourly following joint tendering. **Tickets** (of all applicable tariffs) **are sold by bilingual on-train staff without surcharge**;
- **Special international tariffs** ensure that short cross-border single and return journeys cost only a little more than the domestic rate applicable in the origin country. Good value EURO-NEISSE unlimited trip one-day **tickets are valid on all regional public transport in all three regions**, following typical German traffic association (Verkehrsverbund) practice. Prices range from 160 CZK (6.40 EUR) for one person if purchased in the Czech Republic, to 23 EUR for a group of up to five people if bought in Germany;
- **User-friendly information** is available on several websites, the most comprehensive of which is that of the Zweckverband Verkehrsverbund Oberlausitz-Niederschlesien (ZVON) transport association in Germany: maps, timetables and tourist information are available here in the three national languages, plus English and the minority Sorbian language. Leaflets are also published in these languages.

For more information:

<http://www.zvon.de/en/EURO-NEISSE-tickets/>

<http://www.cd.cz/mezinarodni-cestovani/jizdenka/cestovani-v-prihranici-s-nemeckem/-9560/>

(for general good practice in terms of ticketing and information provision in Czech border regions).

### 2. Regional international trains.

The Öresund rail link between **Copenhagen, Denmark, and Malmö, Sweden**, represents good practice for a number of reasons:

- **The train is significantly cheaper to use than the road crossing**: a one-way train ticket from Malmö to Copenhagen costs 107 SEK, whereas the one-time bridge toll for private cars is 360 SEK;
- Malmö Central station was recently rebuilt to increase line capacity and approach speed;
- The regional rail service – jointly tendered by authorities in both countries – is **attractive to users**, with a combined frequency of three trains per hour as far as Malmö. The service is **fully integrated** into Skåne County's rail network, with trains continuing to destinations in southern Sweden, including as far north as Göteborg;
- Long-distance trains from Copenhagen to Stockholm supplement the regional service.



### 3. Long-distance international trains.

Unlike many other important cross-border routes in western Europe – where the opening of domestic high-speed lines has been accompanied by ‘global pricing’ and cuts to direct international daytime and overnight sleeper trains – the major rail border crossing between **Germany and the Czech Republic** at Schöna (Sachsen) can be considered good practice *at present* for a number of reasons:

- Trains run over the core Berlin – Dresden – Praha section every two hours, with seven pairs of EuroCity day trains and one pair of sleeper (night) trains;
- Most trains run through to/from Hamburg or the Baltic coast of Germany;
- Most trains run beyond Praha to/from Brno, then either (i) Bratislava and Budapest, or (ii) Wien and the south of Austria. By **reducing the need to change** trains, long-distance passengers are more likely to choose rail;
- All day trains are formed of **comfortable rolling stock with a mixture of open saloons and compartments**, thus providing a choice for passengers, plus a **restaurant car** is also available to all passengers. **Electrical sockets** are provided in five pairs of day trains. These are important considerations if the aim to achieve significant modal shift from planes and motorways (under construction between Dresden and Praha) to non high speed trains is to become a reality: many passengers will trade off speed against comfort and amenities;
- Train lengths vary with demand (across the route, and by time of day/year), minimising both overcrowding and the wasteful conveyance of excess capacity. Dresden, Praha and Břeclav stations are used to attach/detach carriages during locomotive changes;
- There are **no compulsory reservations** or spurious supplements on the day trains;
- **Standard kilometric pricing** to/from almost any station in continental Europe applies to journeys involving the day trains, especially useful if travelling at the last minute or if flexibility is required;
- Cheaper non-flexible **yield-managed tickets** are also sold by each of the national operators (DB, ČD, ZSSK, MÁV and ÖBB) to/from a more limited range of destination stations, but these have not replaced the aforementioned ‘walk-up’ tickets;
- All the operators listed above sell **online tickets for self-printing**;
- The aforementioned **national railway companies cooperate rather than compete** with each other, ensuring the validity of flexible tickets in all the day trains. This might change in the future if DB chooses to stop working with ČD, a move that would threaten both the cross-Praha trains and through ticketing;
- Much of the route within the Czech Republic has been upgraded for 160 km/h operation, leading to a reduction in journey times;
- The service is supplemented by a local service every two hours between Bad Schandau (DE) and Děčín (CZ). **Cheap tickets** are available. The Elbe–Labe day ticket is **valid on almost all public transport** in the Vekerhsverbund Oberelbe and Ústí nad Labem County areas. Good connections are provided at both ends of the route.

The long-distance EuroCity service should be maintained in its current form with full cooperation between national operators, but there is room for further improvement:

- Space for bicycles should be provided on all trains;
- Electrical sockets should be fitted to the Hungarian long-distance rolling stock;
- Reliability modifications to the Slovak dual-system locomotives used between Praha and Budapest are required to improve punctuality;
- The removal of ‘temporary’ speed restrictions (imposed as a result of deferred track maintenance) in Slovakia and Hungary is urgently required, together with longer-term upgrades to 160 km/h;
- The Berlin – Dresden route should be upgraded from 120 km/h (or less) to 200 km/h without delay;
- Modern multi-system locomotives could be used to avoid the need for loco changes.

