WB Night Trains Connection Possibility

Transport Community Treaty - 8th Technical Committee on Railway
Developments of night train services between 2000 - 2019

• Challenges:
  – Outdated rolling stock
  – High-speed railway lines made domestic night train obsolete on several routes
  – strong competitors appeared:
    • Long distance coach: market opening since 2010 in DE, FR, IT
    • Low cost airlines: Airline liberalisation in EU since 1995
• Night train operation ceased between 2000 and 2019 by the following operators:
  – NS
  – SNCB
  – DB AG (2016)
  – SNCF (only 3 domestic lines have remained)
• But ÖBB took over some lines from DB in Western Europe
  – Berlin / Hamburg – Zurich
  – Munich – Rome / Milan
• ÖBB investing in Night Train services
• Few private operators (Snälltåget, RegioJet) started operation of night trains
Overview of operating night train in Europe (2019)

Changes in 2020:
- New night train Vienna – Brussels
- Impact of COVID-19 on night trains:
  - Night train Paris – Venezia (Thello) disappeared
  - Night trains on Iberian peninsula

But strong political support on member state or EU – level for the introduction of further night trains
Challenges to operate night trains

- Expensive rolling stock (e.g. sleeping cars, couchettes)
- "Ideal night train timetable" constraints
  - Departure window between 18-22 in the evening, arrival window between 7-9 in the morning
  - Capacity bottlenecks in the morning and evening rush hours exist at a number of major stations
  - Ideal timetable not always possible
- Operational constrains
  - Split / join operations cause delays
  - Reduced speed due to freight trains and access restrictions to high speed lines
  - Track maintenance works may trigger frequent timetable changes
Current developments

• Political support:
  – European commission launched study about the night trains and possible funding
  – Some member states will subsidize international lines (e.g. Sweden)

• Operational developments
  – Initiative from ÖBB, DB, SBB and SNCF to introduce new trains until 2024
Current developments

- Operational developments
  - Snälltåget will offer a new night train Stockholm - Malmö – Berlin from 2021
  - RegioJet will offer again the seasonal night train Prague – Ljubljana – Rijeka and Prague - Poland - Ukraine
The future challenges to night trains

- Covid-19 and climate change discussion has an impact on night trains and their competitors
  - Assumption, that there will be less business trips after Covid, up to 50% replaced by video calls
  - Holiday trips will be more domestic or in neighbor countries, no need to fly
  - Reduced capacity of airlines, currently 40% of the capacity before Covid
  - Less airline capacity in the long-distance market
  - Long distance coach operator FlixBus stopped currently all operations in Europe

- Climate change may trigger a shift to sustainable transport modes
  - Night trains are always explicitly mentioned as one measure
  - CO₂ taxation schemes makes flying more costly (revision the EU Emission Trading System Directive 2003/87/EC concerning aviation is ongoing)

- This may trigger opportunities for night trains
## Current connections in Western Balkan region

### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - WIEN (VIENNA) TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departure Time</th>
<th>Arrival Time</th>
<th>Service Duration</th>
<th>Station 1</th>
<th>Station 2</th>
<th>Cost 1</th>
<th>Cost 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>05:45</td>
<td>08:45</td>
<td>BAS</td>
<td>Blagus VIB</td>
<td>24.99</td>
<td>39.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - LJUBLJANA TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departure Time</th>
<th>Arrival Time</th>
<th>Service Duration</th>
<th>Station 1</th>
<th>Station 2</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00:50</td>
<td>09:05</td>
<td>08:15</td>
<td>BAS</td>
<td>Bus station</td>
<td>Non-bookable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - SARAJEVO TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departure Time</th>
<th>Arrival Time</th>
<th>Service Duration</th>
<th>Station 1</th>
<th>Station 2</th>
<th>Cost 1</th>
<th>Cost 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>17:25</td>
<td>07:25</td>
<td>BAS</td>
<td>East Sarajevo Bus station</td>
<td>Non-bookable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>19:15</td>
<td>07:45</td>
<td>BAS</td>
<td>East Sarajevo Bus station</td>
<td>20,50</td>
<td>29,39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: Polazak.com
### Current connections in Western Balkan region

#### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - PODGORICA TIMETABLE
**FRI., 08.01.2021.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>Non Bookable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:10</td>
<td>Topcider → Railway station</td>
<td>Non Bookable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:00</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>Buy a ticket! → 23.99 EUR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - PRISTINA TIMETABLE
**FRI., 08.01.2021.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:35</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>Joe Travel</td>
<td>Non Bookable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>Keyco</td>
<td>Non Bookable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:45</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>31. Maj</td>
<td>Non Bookable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:30</td>
<td>BAS - Central bus station → Bus station</td>
<td>Buy a ticket! → 15.99 EUR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### BELGRADE (BEOGRAD) - ISTANBUL TIMETABLE
**DEPARTURES ON: SUNDAY, 10.01.2021.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Novi Beograd - Sava centar (auto-put) → Beyazit - Kapı Carsi</td>
<td>NERNEX</td>
<td>Buy a ticket! → 50.99 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Data source: Polazak.com
How ERA may support night trains?

- Vehicle authorization for cross-border rolling stock (e.g. Talgo train sets in Bosnia produced for night train services)
- Harmonization / reduction of national rules
- Assess the present day situation in the Wester Balkans
- Invite experts on the subject matter to a dedicated meeting
- Organize meetings between WB6 railway undertakings and from neighboring countries in the EU (e.g. Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania)
- To facilitate the set up of a pilot night train service in line of the Western Balkan investment plan and Smart Mobility strategy together with the TCT (e.g between Vienna and Istanbul)
Further documents

• Research for TRAN Committee - Passenger night trains in Europe: the end of the line? (2017) :

• UIC Study night trains 2.0 final presentation. New opportunities by HSR? (2016) :

• http://www.night-trains.com/

• EC Mobility Strategy:
  https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/mobilitystrategy_en

• Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans:
Making the railway system work better for society.

Follow us on  🦅 ERA_railways

Discover our job opportunities on  era.europa.eu