

2 July 2007

Revitalization of train transport in Europe – European Railway Companies launch a new Initiative.



Seven European high speed operators Eurostar (UK, France and Belgium), Deutsche Bahn (Germany), SNCF (France), SNCB (Belgium), NS (Netherlands), ÖBB (Austria), SBB (Switzerland) and subsidiaries Thalys, Lyria and Alleo announced on 2 July, 2007 the start of Railteam-its purpose is to give travelers seamless high-speed train travel across international borders in Western Europe. The growing high speed rail network will triple between now and 2020. However, despite the continuing growth of the high speed rail network, many international travellers are unaware of the benefits of using high speed rail as an alternative to air or road.

The objectives of Railteam are: working together to offer a much simpler way to book and travel on European's high-speed network, increase levels of comfort, punctuality and reliability offered by the high-speed services, strengthen sustainable development and mobility. Types of services which will be offered by mid-2007 include:

- Facilitating tickets, rates and platform changes at “hubs” such as Brussels, Frankfurt or Charles de Gaulle airport. From today, if for any reason, a traveler misses their connection because of a late running service, Railteam will ensure they can hop on the next train, irrespective of the ticket type they have.
- Harmonising rates, on-board services, in-station services to increase awareness of high-speed services. Guarantee the lowest prices possible to the customers.
- Access to top notch services – waiting rooms, internet access, multi-lingual information onboard trains and in stations will ensure international travelers know where, when and how to connect onto other services.
- Combining passenger loyalty schemes and determining passenger rights
- Combining marketing and communication activities to encourage usages of high-speed services in Europe

The Western European high speed rail network already links over 100 major urban destinations in Europe via over 5,000km of track. The network will stretch to 7,591km by 2010 and to 15,358km by 2020. As Railteam is about easy, faster and seamless journeys, Railteam partners will better coordinate connecting departure and arrival times, to reduce transit times for travelers, Railteam will also provide frequent travelers and “trainmiles” programme in the future as well as text messaging about timetables and service disruption. Railteam members are investing 30 million euro in a new distribution system that will allow international travelers to find an attractive combination of prices, make a reservation, pay, and allow receive their ticket from any distributor of European rail in one transaction.

The new system will go live in 2009. Hopefully with travel on high-speed trains becoming easier and smoother, increasing numbers of travelers will opt for environmentally friendly high speed train travel



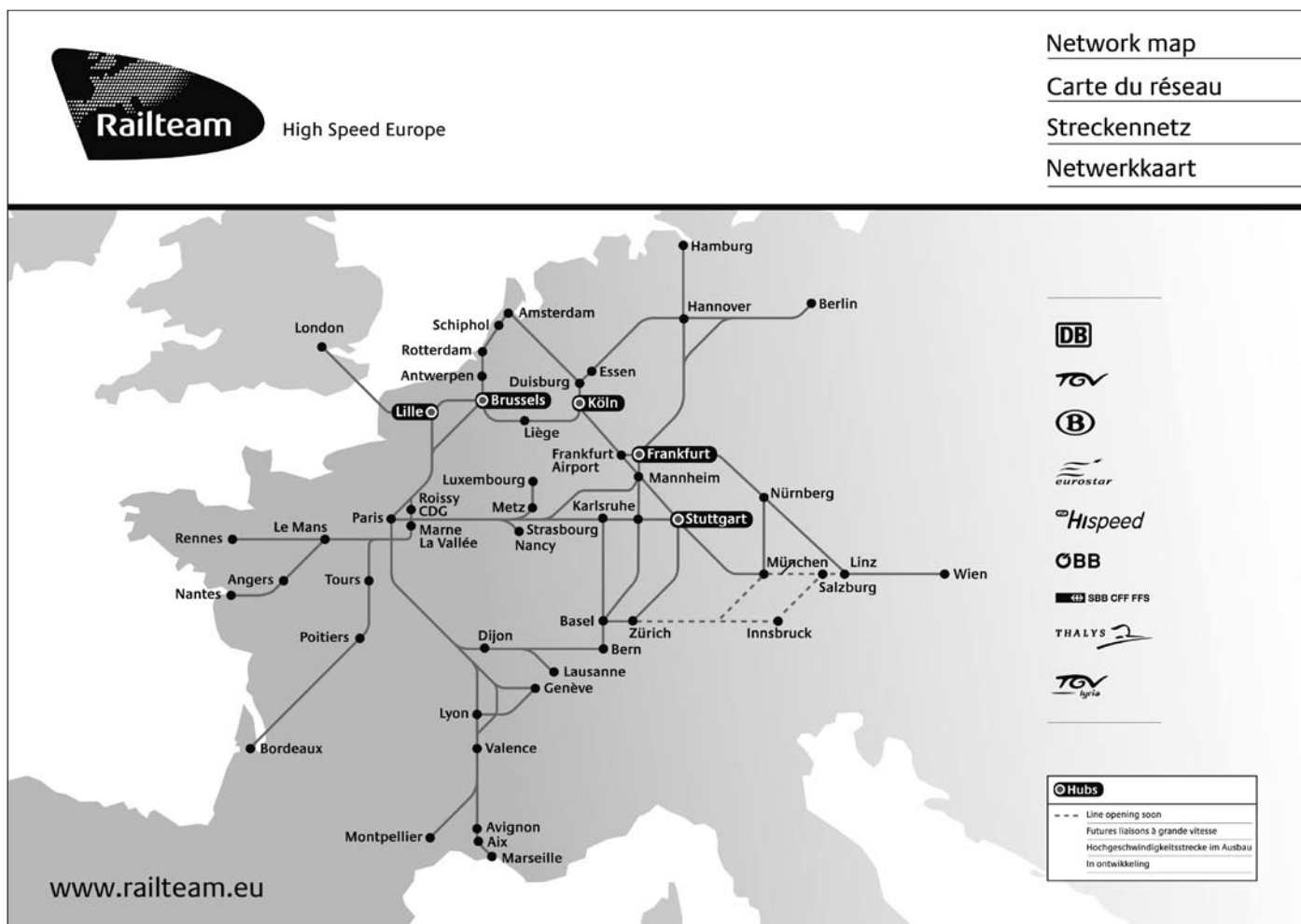
Presidents of European Railway Companies Launch Railteam Alliance



Railteam BV's structure, situated in Amsterdam, will be administered by 3 persons and the alliance will be open to all new European railway cooperators which fulfill entry criteria and quality conditions. The EU already welcomed the Railteam initiative which comply with EU's free competition regulations. Guillaume Pepy, CEO of the French Railways, and the head of the alliance commenting on this new partnership said "Our ambition is to bring high-speed Europe to customers. By combining German and French services, we have a large network and top level quality service on offer. We aim to be the rail alternative for customers looking for an alternative to the airline offer."

within Europe. High-speed rail journeys release around 10 times less CO₂ than flying to the same destinations. By traveling with Railteam the passengers will make an intelligent environmental choice. By 2010, the Railteam members expect 25 million international travellers to be using their European rail network.

Iga Pocztarek



Host



www.railteam.com

Links

- <http://www.sncf.com/>
- <http://www.bahn.de/p/view/index.shtml>
- <http://www.tgv.com/UK/>
- <http://www.b-rail.be/main/index.html>
- <http://www.eurostar.com/dynamic/index.jsp>
- <http://www.nsinternationaal.nl/>
- <http://www.oebb.at/vip8/oebb/de/>
- <http://www.sbb.ch/>
- <http://www.thalys.com/>
- <http://www.tgv-lyria.com/>