

New Eurostar treaties open up direct travel from Amsterdam to London

Direct high-speed train services from Amsterdam to London will be possible later this year, after new agreements were signed today (7 July).

For these services to operate, existing agreements between the UK, France and Belgium signed in 1993 have been modified to include the Netherlands. Representatives from all four countries signed the treaties at a ceremony in Brussels.

The Home Office-led treaty concerning Frontier Control arrangements extends the existing model of “juxtaposed border checks” to the Netherlands; whereby passengers are checked, prior to departure, successively by border officials from the departure and arrival countries.

This means UK Border Force officials will be stationed in Amsterdam and Rotterdam and able to carry out checks before boarding, as they already do in France and Belgium. It also allows for further cooperation between the police forces of the 4 countries involved in the fight against cross-border crime.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This important treaty shows that while we have left the European Union, our links with Europe are stronger than ever.

It will enable vital security and immigration checks to be carried out in the Netherlands, protecting the UK’s border and providing faster and more efficient journeys for passengers.

Alongside this, The Department for Transport-led quadripartite Security Arrangement will give responsibility for security to the government of the country in which the service is operating from. The Dutch authorities will become responsible for the security of Dutch stations operating UK bound services, and for train security, such as the screening of passengers.

These new arrangements will enable direct services between the Netherlands and the UK to start operating later this year, without the need to change trains at Brussels for immigration and security checks – making it easier for passengers to carry on their journey.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps said:

As we begin to emerge from one of the greatest international challenges of our time, we’re working hard to support the recovery

of international transport and tourism sectors.

Investment in modern, convenient and more environmentally friendly high speed rail links between major European cities will help drive this recovery so these sectors can flourish once again.

The signing of these treaties today will enable the launch of direct return services from the Netherlands to London, which is fantastic news for both the UK and our European neighbours.

Stientje van Veldhoven, Dutch State Secretary for Infrastructure, said:

Due to coronavirus these are challenging times, but we also have to plan for the near future. The new direct train service enables us to travel from Amsterdam to London in just over four hours. It's fast and convenient, and without the hassle of disembarking in Brussels for border and security checks.

A Eurostar train roughly has twice as many seats as an average airplane on the Amsterdam-London route and CO2 emissions are significantly lower. The train service to London therefore is a sustainable and competitive alternative to flying.

All 4 states have been working closely with Eurostar to provide support and guidance on security procedures and the necessary infrastructure arrangements at the 2 stations. The new agreements form an important step in further facilitating efficient rail traffic between close neighbouring countries.