
European Sleeper marks successful launch of Paris – Brussels – Berlin night train with first departure from Paris

Utrecht [30 March 2026] – On Thursday 26 March, European Sleeper marked the launch of its new Paris – Brussels – Berlin night train with a departure event at Gare du Nord in Paris. Guests from across the rail sector, public institutions, and the wider travel community gathered to witness the return of this direct overnight connection between the three cities. The following morning, the train was welcomed by officials and partners at Berlin Hauptbahnhof.



Chris Engelsman and Elmer van Buuren (founders of European Sleeper) in front of the Paris-Berlin night train. Image Credit: KeepFocus Photography

As the train departed from the majestic Gare du Nord in Paris at 18:03, it quietly re-established a route that had almost disappeared from Europe's rail network, offering travellers once again the possibility to fall asleep

in Paris and wake up in Berlin, and the other way around. The route forms part of European Sleeper's growing network of night trains across Europe, including the existing Brussel-Amsterdam-Berlin-Prague route and the night train to Milan from September 2026. The Paris–Berlin service will operate three times per week, bringing the total to six departures per week in each direction between Brussels and Berlin.

From launch event to actual departure

The launch began with a reception and welcome in Paris, bringing together partners, policymakers, and supporters of night train travel. Following the official welcome, a series of speeches brought together voices from across the journey.

Chris Engelsman, co-founder of European Sleeper, reflected on the ongoing revival of the night train in Europe, saying, "Building a network doesn't happen overnight. But step by step, we are proving that night train connections between major cities can work, for travellers and as a sustainable business."

Elmer van Buuren, co-founder of European Sleeper, added, "This train is also about opening up the European rail market, creating space for new entrants and better integrated cross-border services."



Olivier Bancel (SNCF), Anne Dubost (European Sleeper), Jean-Luc Crucke (Belgian Federal Minister for Mobility, Climate and Ecological Transition), and Chris Engelsman and Elmer van Buuren (founders of European Sleeper) celebrating the Paris-Berlin night train launch in Paris. Image Credit: KeepFocus Photography

Belgian Federal Minister for Mobility, Climate and Ecological Transition, Jean-Luc Crucke, highlighted the broader impact, stating: “Not only does it help bring European citizens closer together, it also offers a meaningful and sustainable alternative in favour of low-carbon tourism. For its part, the Belgian government has committed to supporting these initiatives and to removing any technical and regulatory obstacles to the development of these trains.”

SNCF's Olivier Bancel concluded with a forward-looking perspective, sharing, “Partnerships like this show what is possible when we align around a common purpose, to make rail a natural part of how Europe moves again.”

The programme moved gradually from formal moments into a more informal gathering, with guests sharing drinks and conversations before heading to Gare du Nord. At 17:24, the train arrived at the platform and guests took time to experience the compartments and onboard atmosphere.



Sabine Wendt (visitBerlin), Chris Engelsman and Elmer van Buuren (founders of European Sleeper), and Piet Heirbaut (Belgian Ambassador to Germany) celebrating the arrival of the night train in Berlin. Image Credit: KeepFocus Photography

Arrival and welcome in Berlin

The following morning, the train arrived in Berlin, where a welcome moment marked the completion of the first journey. Guests were received by the Belgian Ambassador to Germany and the CEO of visitBerlin, reflecting the international nature of the connection and the shared interest in strengthening sustainable travel between the two capitals.

The Belgian Ambassador to Germany Piet Heirbaut noted: “Today, the European Sleeper shows us Belgians that Europe is coming closer together. It connects the metropolises of Berlin and Paris with the Belgian capital, which more than any other stands for the European Union.”

The CEO of visitBerlin Sabine Wendt added: “The new direct connection between Paris and Berlin is a strong signal for the comeback of night trains in Europe. Demand for travel to Berlin is clearly growing, with around 50 percent of guests already arriving by rail. This connection makes travel between the two European capitals

significantly easier and gives new momentum to international city tourism.”

Made possible through collaboration

European Sleeper worked closely with a wide range of operational and infrastructure partners to make this connection possible. This includes its operating partner Train Charter Services, onboard service provider Wagon Plastron, and rolling stock and leasing partners such as Alstom and RAILPOOL, alongside new partners including RDC Deutschland Gruppe. The company also thanks the infrastructure managers in France, Belgium and Germany for their cooperation in integrating the service into existing timetables.

Comfort and choice onboard

On the Paris–Berlin night train, European Sleeper offers its familiar travel classes. Fares start from €39.99 for a comfortable seat. A bed in a Classic couchette compartment is available from €59.99, including reservation, luggage, and bed linen. For more comfort, travellers can choose Comfort Standard from €99.99 or Comfort Plus from €129.99, including breakfast. This range makes the journey accessible, whether travelling on a budget or with a preference for more space and ease.

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About European Sleeper

European Sleeper is a 100% community-owned Dutch–Belgian railway company, fully focused on night train operations between major European destinations. The company is responding to the growing demand for international rail travel and, since launching in 2023, has built a trusted reputation as one of Europe’s few independent international train operators.

European Sleeper’s cooperative ownership model enables anyone who believes in sustainable European train travel to support its ambition to expand night train services across Europe. European Sleeper is currently running a sharefunding campaign that gives individuals and organisations the opportunity to invest from €160 and become part of Europe’s growing night train movement. The company aims to secure a total of €1.1 million, with more than €976,000 already funded.

Notes to editor

Representatives of European Sleeper are available for interviews regarding the Paris-Berlin route, the company’s sharefunding campaign, sustainable mobility trends, and the cooperative ownership model.

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