

# PRESS RELEASE

## **More growth in EU cross-border night trains** **But many high barriers to entry must still be removed**

**BRUSSELS, June 17<sup>th</sup> 2021:** in ten days' time from now, on June 27<sup>th</sup> 2021, a new night train service of the long distance operator Snälltåget<sup>1</sup> will depart from Stockholm to Berlin. It will be the first night train that runs in regular traffic between Sweden, Denmark and Germany since the 1990s.

**Yesterday, the start-up Midnight Trains<sup>1</sup> announced plans to offer night trains between France & other countries. Clearly, private investors believe in night trains – and this will lead to modal shift. But more night time routes could be commercially viable – if only the high barriers to entry were removed.**

Night trains will not grow unless they are demand driven & passenger centric. The default setting should be commercially driven “Open Access” trains – so that there is an innovative market that can adapt to changing mobility needs.

**The EU & its Member States are best placed** to remove the barriers to entry by:

1. Reducing track access charges on a permanent basis, in line with recent EU Regulation 2020/1429.
2. Enabling fair access to rolling stock: non-discriminatory financing conditions for lease or acquisition; usable 2<sup>nd</sup> hand rolling stock must be made available.
3. Introducing “impartial retail”. That means: making all night trains services easy to search and book at all rail ticket sales channels.

It makes no sense that, if cross-border night trains can be done in a commercial manner, some Member States want to close any market by paying subsidy only to the dominant operator. The Netherlands is a good example of how **not** to do it: with night train subsidy only for the historical incumbents NS & ÖBB Nightjet.

To put it simply: new commercial operators will lead to more choice and the growth of night trains. ALLRAIL's President Dr. Erich Forster says: *“These 2 new night trains will each be a ‘Connecting Europe Express’ – with real passengers. But if the EU and its Member States want to grow the night train market further, then the high barriers to entry – as listed above – must still be removed”.*

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<sup>1</sup> Snälltåget: [www.snalltaget.se/en](http://www.snalltaget.se/en) & Midnight Trains: [www.midnight-trains.com/en/home](http://www.midnight-trains.com/en/home)