



Press release

Franconia-Thuringia Express inaugurates with ultra-modern Siemens trains

18 Desiro HC double-decker trains enter service in Franconia and southern Thuringia in December • more seats, high level of comfort, cutting-edge technology • 30-minute service intervals between Nuremberg and Bamberg • over 10,000 additional seats per day • eight more trains coming as of June 2024

(Bamberg/Nuremberg, October 19, 2023) The movement to modernize regional transport continues to gain momentum: When the timetable changes in December 2023, 18 new Desiro HC double-decker trains from Siemens Mobility will inaugurate service for the Franconia-Thuringia Express. With a top speed of 160 kilometers per hour, 380 seats, spaces for 36 bicycles, WiFi service, high-frequency windowpanes that significantly improve cellphone reception, as well as an electronic passenger information system with 27 monitors, the new Franconia-Thuringia Express operated by DB Regio Bayern offers a special experience for its passengers. The new trains will operate on many routes in the future, such as between Nuremberg and Bamberg daily between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. every 30 minutes in both directions. The trains will provide over 10,000 additional seats on this route. DB Regio Bayern and Bayerische Eisenbahngesellschaft (BEG), which plans, finances and controls regional and S-Bahn transport on behalf of the state of Bavaria, presented the new train today together with Siemens Mobility at the Bamberg main station, followed by a press tour through Franconia. The states of Bavaria and Thuringia are investing a total of €320 million in the new train fleet to expand regional transport capacities.

The new, red Desiro HC will begin service for the Franconia-Thuringia Express in two stages: In December 2023, 18 new four-car trains will start operating on four routes in Franconia and southern Thuringia. The second stage will follow in June 2024, when eight new six-car Desiro HC trains, specially designed for a top speed of 190 kilometers per hour and fitted with 634 seats, start running on the VDE 8.1 (German Unity Transport Project Number 8) high-speed line in the direction of Erfurt. They will be among the fastest regional trains operating in Germany. Passenger access to train cars has been optimized for serving the region's busiest stations with a platform height of 0.76 meters.

Bärbel Fuchs, Managing Director of BEG: *"Passengers on the Franconia-Thuringia Express can look forward not only to more comfortable new trains, but also to a big improvement in service: On most of the lines, the regional trains will run more frequently than at present. For example, we have ordered and financed 20 percent more regional express trains in order to provide daily half-hour service between Bamberg, Erlangen, and Nuremberg when the new timetable takes effect. And two trains will run every hour between Bamberg and Kronach in the future, providing half-hourly connections for most stations on this route as well. As of June 2024, we will connect Coburg with Bamberg and Nuremberg on an hourly basis via the new high-speed line. The new trains will also provide extremely fast connections five times a day from Franconia to Erfurt, where there are interesting connections to many parts of eastern and northern Germany."*

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Hansrüdiger Fritz, CEO DB Regio Bayern Regional Management: *“The timetable change in December 2023 will mark the beginning of a new era for the Franconia-Thuringia Express. We will be significantly expanding our offering of climate-friendly rail service with the addition of the new trains. On the high-volume Nuremberg-Bamberg route, we will be providing between 100 and 200 additional seats per train. At the same time, a train will run from Nuremberg to Bamberg and back every half hour during the day. Passengers will benefit from greater comfort and convenience, such as WiFi service and highly dependable cell phone reception. We are delighted to be working together with the states of Bavaria and Thuringia as well as Siemens Mobility on the further modernization of our train fleet, and excited that we will be operating even faster trains beginning in June 2024.”*

Dr. Elmar Zeiler, Head of Commuter and Regional Trains at Siemens Mobility: *“Siemens Mobility is proud that our Desiro HC double-decker trains will be making a significant contribution to strengthening rail and driving the mobility transition in our home region of Franconia and Thuringia. The proven Desiro HC trains are especially powerful and comfortable and are highly popular with passengers.”*

Two-stage concept: The new trains will begin service on these routes

Following the timetable change in December 2023, the four-car Desiro HC will serve as the standard train on the following routes:

- the Nuremberg-Bamberg-Würzburg/Saalfeld Regional Express (on the Nuremberg-Bamberg section in double traction, i.e., two multiple-unit trains coupled together)
- the Nuremberg-Bamberg-Coburg/Saalfeld Regional Express (also operating in double traction on the Nuremberg-Lichtenfels section)
- the Bamberg-Kronach regional train (mixed operation with current trains until June 2024)
- the Nuremberg-Bamberg-Coburg Regional Express via the new VDE 8.1 high-speed line will continue to operate with the existing double-decker trains until June 2024.

Following the minor mid-year timetable change in June 2024, the especially powerful six-car Desiro HC trains will run on the Nuremberg-Bamberg-Coburg-Sonneberg/Erfurt regional express route, via the high-speed VDE 8.1 line. The complexity of developing new trains for this particular route accounts for the two-stage commissioning process.

Note: Construction work will still be taking place between Bamberg and Nuremberg from December 10 to 16, and buses will replace the trains. During this period, the new trains will not operate on this section of the route, but only on the remaining sections served by the Franconia-Thuringia Express.

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Note to editors

Photos of the event will be available from 2 p.m. today at <https://sie.ag/3SfV6R>

Additional information

Deutsche Bahn has more information about the Franconia-Thuringia Express and the new trains available on its website.

The Franconia-Thuringia Express: <https://regional.bahn.de/regionen/bayern/ueber-uns/wir-und-unsere-partner/franken-thueringen-express>

Four-car Desiro HC fact sheet: https://assets.static-bahn.de/dam/jcr:ed258e4e-379b-4c86-aed7-f44dcc9b263/20230503_Steckbrief%20Desiro_HC_4tlg.pdf

Six-car Desiro HC fact sheet: https://assets.static-bahn.de/dam/jcr:6121d2ef-d2f5-433c-b5e4-f38fc0a02c39/20230505_Steckbrief%20Desiro_HC_6tlg.pdf

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