



# Press Release

Utrecht, February 28, 2019

## 2018, a good year for Dutch rail passengers

2018 was a good year for Dutch rail passengers. The rating they gave train journeys has never been this high before: 86% of passengers were satisfied. Passengers were on time more often, with a punctuality figure of 92.6% (91.6% in 2017), and 95.1% of passengers had a seat during peak times (95% in 2017).

Running trains between Amsterdam and Eindhoven every ten minutes was a success and the new Sprinter trains improved the level of comfort. The performance of the high-speed line (HSL) was poorer than last year, though, and NS and ProRail will continue to give performance improvement on this line their full attention and effort. The score given to the stations rose to 76% (73% in 2017), partly due to the renovation of a number of important stations. NS wants to build on that performance level in 2019. This is the year of the midterm review, in which the government assesses the performance of NS halfway through the franchise.

NS is embarking upon upgrades for a large number of stations this year. NS initially has its eye on improving the experience at 98 stations. This year, NS will be opening new Station Living Rooms (*Stationshuiskamer*) at nine stations, taking the total number of such facilities to 25. This includes Emmen, Tiel and Boxtel stations. Passengers can relax here, with facilities like Wi-Fi, up-to-date journey information and the option of eating or drinking something. NS will have opened a total of 35 of these Station Living Rooms by 2021. At other stations where there are no facilities yet, NS is looking at the possibilities for working together with local businesses and partners to open a Kiosk or provide a comfortable waiting area with coffee. Within three years, NS and ProRail want to provide new, modernised toilets at 92 stations that passengers can use by making contactless payments. This means that 90% of passengers will go past modern and accessible station toilets. Last year, NS announced that 222 stations would get a water tap.

Roger van Boxtel, Chairman and CEO of NS, presented the plans today at Bilthoven station, one of the stations where the improvements are already visible. "The train has the wind in its sails. We want reliable, comfortable and clean modes of transport in the Netherlands. Not only our trains but also our 400 stations are major factors in determining the experience for our passengers. After successfully tackling large stations in Rotterdam, Breda, Arnhem and Utrecht, we now also want to make stations in smaller cities and towns more comfortable."

### Performance on the track

2018 was a year with good results. In addition to the phased introduction of 118 new Sprinter trains with a total of 20,000 seats, we announced at the end of 2018 that we had ordered 88 more Sprinter trains. Passengers are more satisfied with travelling by train than in 2017: 86% of passengers gave a score of 7 out of 10 or higher (80% in 2017). Punctuality for passengers has never been as high as it was in 2018: 92.6% of passengers reached their destinations on time (91.6% in 2017). Seat availability at peak times was 95.1% (95% in 2017\*).

NS ran more trains on the high-speed line in 2018. Growth in rail passenger numbers between Schiphol and Rotterdam was about 15%, once again substantially higher than elsewhere. That is



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why NS extended the Intercity direct trains from six to seven carriages and increased the number of trains per hour from four to five. The Intercity Brussels also started running on the HSL sixteen times a day and the Eurostar runs on the HSL to London twice a day. Because of increased passenger numbers, this brought seat availability at peak times down to 94% (96% in 2017). The high-speed line remains a challenge. Both the rolling stock and the infrastructure require increased attention. Punctuality for passengers on the HSL was lower, at 82.5% (83.5% in 2017). Despite the high-speed line performing less well in a number of areas last year, passengers were more positive about travelling on the HSL: 83% of passengers gave a score of 7 out of 10 or higher (77% in 2017).

*Figures achieved by NS for the main KPIs in 2018*

	Score in 2018	score in 2017	Minimum value for 2018
Customer satisfaction	<b>86%</b>	80%	74%
Punctuality for passengers	<b>92.6%</b>	91.6%	88.9%
Punctuality for passengers on the HSL	<b>82.5%</b>	83.5%	82.1%
Chance of getting a seat	<b>95.1%</b>	95.0%	94.3%
Chance of getting a seat on the HSL	<b>94.0%</b>	96.0%	91.2%

### Financial results

Financially, NS finished 2018 with revenue of €5,926 million, an increase of 15.7% with respect to 2017 (€5,121 million). Of that, €2,824 million was realised abroad. Most of this increase in revenue, namely €574 million, was due to the start of the West Midlands franchise in the United Kingdom. Full consolidation of the WestfalenBahn franchise in Germany also contributed €86.3 million to the growth. Furthermore, passenger revenue in the Netherlands showed organic growth of over 5%. Last year, NS invested €898 million, of which €831 million was in the Netherlands, including in procurement and upgrades of trains and the development of stations such as Assen, Rotterdam Alexander and Zaandam. Abroad, new trains have been included in an operational lease arrangement. NS achieved a profit from operating activities of €195 million (€57 million in 2017\*). The profit from operating activities excluding exceptional income and expenditure was €205 million, €74 million more than in 2017 (€131 million). A net profit of €116 million was recorded in 2018, as opposed to €47 million in 2017.

*Financial key figures for NS in 2018 (in € millions)*

	2018	2017
Revenue	<b>5,926</b>	5,121
Abroad	<b>2,824</b>	1,989
Result from operating activities	<b>195</b>	57
Abroad	<b>40</b>	51
Underlying result	<b>205</b>	131
Abroad	<b>62</b>	35
Net profit margin	<b>116</b>	47
Abroad	<b>21</b>	35
Investments	<b>898</b>	618
Abroad	<b>67</b>	79

\* Figures for 2017 have been adjusted to enable a proper comparison



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### **Door to door**

Passengers made 4.2 million trips by public transport bicycle in 2018 (2017: 3.1 million). In 2018, NS increased the number of bicycles by 6,000 to a total of 22,500 public transport bicycles to be able to meet the growing demand. 6% of rail passengers use the car to get to the train, parking at or near the station. Over 500 extra P+R spaces were added at five stations in 2018. The number of P+R spaces close to stations is now over 47,000 (2017: 44,000). As of December 2018, NS Zonetaxi is available at an additional 244 stations. Passengers can now make use of this service, which is offered in cooperation with local taxi companies, at 377 stations.

### **Operations abroad**

In 2018, Abellio achieved revenues abroad of €2,824 million (€1,989 million in 2017), of which €2,467 million came from Abellio UK and €357 million from Abellio Germany. Abellio UK achieved an operating result of €41.0 million (€45.4 million in 2017\*) and net profit of €26.2 million (€29.3 million in 2017\*). Passenger growth has fallen sharply in the United Kingdom in the past two years. This also increased the financial pressure on the British franchise system. For Abellio UK, it means among other things that Greater Anglia has to pay more to the Department of Transport for its franchise without any equivalent increases in passenger numbers and revenue. These developments and the impending Brexit are creating uncertainty in the results we can expect for the United Kingdom. A healthy financial situation for our operations in the United Kingdom has our full attention.

Although the current franchises in Germany produced positive results from their operating activities, Abellio Germany had a negative operating result in 2018 of €1.4 million (€5.2 million positive in 2017) and a net loss of €5.7 million. This was caused by mobilisation costs of €7.0 million for the Rhein-Ruhr-Express (RRX) and Dieselnetz Sachsen-Anhalt (DISA) franchises that started in December plus the franchises still to be started in 2019 and 2020.

### **2019 and beyond**

2019 will be an important year for NS. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management will be reviewing the performance of NS on the main rail network in what is known as the 'midterm review'. That is another reason why it is important to maintain the high level of our performance. The first of the new Sprinter trains started operating in December 2018. The first New Generation Intercity (ICNG) trains, which start running in 2021, will be leaving the factory in 2019. NS has made a number of suggestions for improvements in the 2020 timetable. NS wants to cut journey times and improve changeovers in key areas. We also want to increase the number of trains per hour where possible.

The connection between Amsterdam and London will be expanded this year in any event from two to three trains a day. Eurostar and NS are holding talks with the relevant authorities about the requisite passport controls in the Netherlands. In 2019, we want to work out the details of an improvement to the connection with Berlin, liaising with the authorities and Deutsche Bahn.

For Abellio UK, 2019 is going to be a year of change: new trains will start running in a number of Abellio franchises, there will be major changes in the timetables and there will be improvements in the service provided. There will be a clearer picture of the effects of Brexit. It is in the interests of the British railways that there should be clarity about the long-term developments. The British government has commissioned an independent review of the rail sector. Recommendations for legislation are expected after 2019 that could be used to modify the system in the longer term.

\* adjusted for change of accounting principle regarding the United Kingdom railway pension schemes



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The Netherlands will have to take further major steps over the coming decades if the country is to remain accessible with a high quality of life. By investing in mobility, beginning with the infrastructure. That deserves a higher priority, both in the Netherlands and in the rest of Europe. To that end, together with over twenty other parties from the Dutch transport sector, NS is involved in the Mobility Alliance.

For full NS Annual Report & Financial Statements (in Dutch), please check [www.ns.nl/jaarverslag](http://www.ns.nl/jaarverslag).

**To the editor**

In case of further queries, please contact NS Persvoorlichting via

T: +31 (0)30-2357070

E: [persvoorlichting@ns.nl](mailto:persvoorlichting@ns.nl)