

Labor Action

**16**

MAR

12:24 UTC

Belgium Tactical: Unionized railway workers to strike nationwide from 22:00 (local time) on March 16; reconfirm itineraries

Current Situation

- Unionized railway workers at Belgium's national rail operator, Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer Belges (SNCB), plan to stage a nationwide strike from 22:00 (local time) on March 16, throughout March 17.
- The unions participating in the strike actions are Confederation des Syndicats Chretiens (CSC) - Transcom and Centrale Generale des Services Publics (CGSP) Cheminots.
- SNCB expects significant disruptions to regional, national and international services during the strike period. Further details regarding the impact of the strike action can be found [here](#) (in French).
- Eurostar services from and to Belgium will also be impacted on March 17 and 18. Details are available [here](#).
- The strike actions aim to oppose pension reforms, increased productivity demands, and cuts to rail staff, including the potential dissolution of HR-Rail.

Source: [SNCB](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. Based on precedent, the proposed labor actions are expected to be widely adhered to.
2. As such, significant disruptions to rail travel, including last-minute cancellations and delays, are anticipated during the strike period on national as well as international routes.
3. Overcrowding on other available public transport services are likely to occur in areas experiencing significant travel disruptions. Additionally, traffic congestion on major motorways is likely as more commuters will potentially resort to personal vehicles. Residual disruptions are anticipated to persist on March 18 after the strike ends.
4. Although no associated demonstrations have been announced as of writing, pickets and spontaneous protest actions are likely to be held in the vicinity of major train stations, including in Brussels, during the strike. Such protests are likely to transpire largely peacefully.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Belgium on March 16-17 are advised to reconfirm itineraries due to the slated rail strikes and allot for associated travel disruptions.
2. Those intending to travel with Eurostar via Belgium on March 16-18 are advised to reconfirm itineraries due to the strike.