# Eurostar travel chaos deepens after fatal accidents and cable theft near Lille



Eurostar passengers encountered severe travel disruptions beginning on June 24, 2025, following two tragic incidents near Lille Europe where two individuals were fatally struck by trains. These events caused extensive delays and cancellations between London St Pancras International and Paris Gare Du Nord, leaving many travellers stranded for up to seven hours. Eurostar acknowledged the disruption, announcing delayed and cancelled services and advising passengers to reschedule their trips. The chaos was compounded by the fact that some trains, scheduled to arrive in Paris by early evening, remained stuck in tunnels late into the night. Passengers expressed significant frustration over the prolonged delays, poor communication, and insufficient support, with many demanding full refunds and compensation for the ordeal.

The disruption was intensified the following day by a separate issue: the theft of approximately 600 metres of copper signalling cables near Lille, which further delayed services. This compounded the aftermath of the previous day's tragic accidents, forcing Eurostar to cancel several trains and reroute others through slower alternative routes. This rerouting caused knock-on delays across the network, affecting not only London-Paris services but also trains running to Brussels and Amsterdam. As a result, passengers faced ongoing delays ranging from 40 minutes up to two hours, while the operator struggled to manage the backlog and maintain service levels. The cable theft highlighted vulnerabilities in rail infrastructure, as such incidents—often driven by high copper scrap prices—have increasingly disrupted transportation networks, despite modern signalling using fibre-optic cables that lack scrap value.

The disruption near Lille is not an isolated case for Eurostar. Historical precedents reveal repeated operational challenges when incidents occur in this crucial transit corridor. For example, in November 2014, an overhead power line failure outside Lille left over 1,200 passengers stranded overnight, leading to multi-hour delays and a series of train cancellations. Similarly, in September 2009, a power failure outside Lille brought services to a halt for several hours, causing passengers to endure long waits on immobilised trains with minimal communication or assistance. In both cases, Eurostar offered refunds and complimentary return journeys, but passengers reported dissatisfaction with the handling of information and support during the crises.

More recently, in March 2025, an unexploded World War II bomb discovered near Gare du Nord station in Paris caused significant disruption to Eurostar services, shutting down the line for several hours and leading to travel chaos for thousands of passengers. The presence of this wartime ordnance underscored the complexity of managing a major European rail hub that handles an enormous volume of daily travellers and occasional unexpected emergencies.

The cumulative impact of these incidents raises serious questions about Eurostar’s preparedness and resilience in the face of emergencies. Passengers have repeatedly criticised the company’s customer service during disruptions, citing poor communication, insufficient food and drink provisions, and inadequate explanations for lengthy delays. In the most recent situation, travellers expressed particular frustration over the lack of air conditioning and basic amenities while stranded in stations or onboard stalled trains. These issues have prompted calls for Eurostar to revise its operational and crisis management protocols, improve real-time information sharing, and establish clearer compensation policies that genuinely address passenger inconvenience.

Eurostar now faces heightened pressure to restore confidence in its service reliability and customer care standards. As it works to resolve the current disruptions and repair damaged infrastructure, the operator must also demonstrate tangible improvements to prevent a recurrence of such travel chaos. For the many passengers disrupted by these consecutive days of severe delays and cancellations, the hope remains that lessons will be learned and that future journeys will be handled with greater efficiency and empathy.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/eurostar-passengers-stranded-for-hours-amid-new-travel-chaos-between-the-uk-and-france/), [[5]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/939174e4-fb37-4ae6-bc41-e67f4791beea), [[5]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/21/eurostar-passengers-trapped-on-trains-overnight-number-more-than-1200), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/sep/26/eurostar-train-travel-paris-brussels), [[6]](https://www.wsls.com/news/2025/03/07/unexploded-wwii-bomb-in-paris-halts-eurostar-travel-to-london-and-trains-to-northern-france/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/eurostar-passengers-stranded-for-hours-amid-new-travel-chaos-between-the-uk-and-france/), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/21/eurostar-passengers-trapped-on-trains-overnight-number-more-than-1200), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/sep/26/eurostar-train-travel-paris-brussels), [[5]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/eurostar-passengers-stranded-for-hours-amid-new-travel-chaos-between-the-uk-and-france/), [[5]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/eurostar-passengers-stranded-for-hours-amid-new-travel-chaos-between-the-uk-and-france/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/939174e4-fb37-4ae6-bc41-e67f4791beea> - Eurostar services faced severe delays and cancellations for a second consecutive day on June 25, 2025, due to a cable theft near Lille. This incident compounded previous disruptions caused by two individuals being struck by trains on the same track section the day before. Multiple trains between London and Paris were delayed by up to 90 minutes, and three services in each direction were cancelled. The cable theft led to trains being rerouted through slower, alternative routes, causing long queues at Paris’s Gare du Nord and affecting services to Brussels and Amsterdam as well. Eurostar is offering affected passengers options to rebook or request refunds. The company has not provided an immediate estimate for repair completion. Cable thefts, often motivated by high copper scrap prices, have become increasingly problematic for rail infrastructure, though modern signalling systems typically use fibre-optic cables, which have no scrap value. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/939174e4-fb37-4ae6-bc41-e67f4791beea?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/21/eurostar-passengers-trapped-on-trains-overnight-number-more-than-1200> - In November 2014, hundreds of Eurostar passengers were stranded on trains for hours overnight due to an overhead cable problem outside Lille in northern France. The power outage affected nearly 700 passengers on the 6.01pm London to Paris service and around 600 on the 6.04pm London to Brussels train. After not moving for many hours, the passengers were only able to complete their journey when diesel trains arrived to tow the stricken trains to their destinations. The Paris train arrived six hours late, while the Brussels train was nine hours late. The spokesman added: “There was a failure of the overhead power line just outside Lille. The passengers on the Brussels train are entitled to twice the amount of a complete refund plus a free return trip, while those on the Paris train can claim an entire refund plus a free return trip.” The knock-on effect of the overnight disruption meant Eurostar had to cancel three trains on Friday. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/21/eurostar-passengers-trapped-on-trains-overnight-number-more-than-1200?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/sep/26/eurostar-train-travel-paris-brussels> - In September 2009, Eurostar refunded nearly 1,000 passengers after they were left stranded by a power failure outside the French city of Lille. The 19.32 St Pancras-Paris service and the 19.34 service to Brussels were brought to a halt near Lille around 9pm. After a wait of several hours, the Paris train carrying 500 passengers was towed into Lille, where another train ferried customers to the French capital, arriving just after 5am. Travellers on the Brussels service completed their journey by bus, arriving at the Belgian capital around 4am. The disruption followed an incident last month on a Eurotunnel car shuttle, operated by a different company, which left nearly 500 passengers stranded under the Channel for five hours following a power failure. This morning Eurostar customers said they were left in darkened carriages with no instructions from staff until they were eventually shepherded from the trains. A Eurostar spokesperson said services were running with minor delays this morning and blamed the lack of communication on the power failure. “We did not have power onboard our trains so we could not make any announcements. The train managers walked down the trains trying to explain what happened but these are 400 metre trains with 500 passengers on them and it is difficult to explain to everyone in detail what happened.” Eurostar is also offering a complimentary return journey to Paris and Brussels for affected passengers. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/sep/26/eurostar-train-travel-paris-brussels?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di> - Eurostar passengers faced a second day of major delays and cancellations after two people died on the track in France on Tuesday, and then cables were stolen near Lille on Wednesday. There were severe delays and last-minute cancellations in both directions between London and Paris. Trains between London St Pancras and Paris Gare Du Nord were either delayed or cancelled until 11:30am CEST. Predicted delays ranged from 40 minutes to 2 hours. Trains that were running were also being forced to take alternative routes, causing extended journey times. Services on the London-Brussels-Amsterdam route were running without delays. Today's delays were caused by the theft of around 600 metres of copper cables overnight along the track bordering Mont-de-Terre station, between Lille and Lezennes, according to reports in French media. It has disrupted dozens of high-speed services with French regional train operator TER Hauts de France saying delays were expected until early afternoon. It comes after the LGV Nord high-speed line between Lille and Paris was closed for much of Tuesday following the deaths of two people in separate incidents on the line. Eurostar said the effects of Tuesday's disruption had continued into Wednesday morning, then the cable thefts compounded the problem. ([euronews.com](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2025/06/25/eurostar-warns-passengers-to-cancel-or-postpone-journeys-after-cable-theft-causes-major-di?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.wsls.com/news/2025/03/07/unexploded-wwii-bomb-in-paris-halts-eurostar-travel-to-london-and-trains-to-northern-france/> - In March 2025, an unexploded World War II bomb was discovered in Paris, leading to hours of travel chaos and the closure of the Eurostar line. The bomb was found by workers on a bridge-replacement project near Gare du Nord station. Bomb disposal services arrived within the hour and set up a 200-meter security perimeter, later extended to 500 meters. The discovery caused significant disruption, with passengers arriving at Gare du Nord greeted by signs warning of disruptions, lines of passengers seeking information, and ticket exchanges. Gare du Nord is the busiest rail hub in both France and Europe, hosting 700,000 travelers per day. The discovery of unexploded bombs from World War I and II is not uncommon in France, though such widespread disruption is rare. ([wsls.com](https://www.wsls.com/news/2025/03/07/unexploded-wwii-bomb-in-paris-halts-eurostar-travel-to-london-and-trains-to-northern-france/?utm_source=openai))