

RMT Study: High Speed, Low fares: June 2010

RMT supports High Speed Rail, but we want High Speed to be an affordable alternative to the car and plane and accessible to all of society. High Speed, low fares.

All of Europe's High Speed Networks are publicly owned and have resulted in significant modal shift from the plane and car to rail. Yet one of the reasons for this is that compared to the UK high speed rail fares offer value for money.

The debate about the future of High Speed must include how the government is going to make high speed affordable for all. This study shows that there is a long way to go. By comparing the high speed fares of five European countries this study has found that the UK has by far the highest high speed fares. The proposed sell of High Speed will make matters worse. The requirement of the successful bidder to pay a dividend to shareholders is likely to feed through into even higher fares for passengers.

In summary UK high speed rail is

- 138% more expensive than Belgium
- 106% more expensive than in France
- 72% more expensive than Italy
- 63% more expensive than Spain

Route	Distance (km)	Ticket Price (£)	Cost of ticket in £/km
London to Paris	341	106	0.31
Brussels to Frankfurt	727	91.50	0.13
Paris to Lyon	395	60.50	0.15
Milan to Rome	476	83.50	0.18
Madrid to Seville	390	73.50	0.19

This information was sourced from Rail Europe (www.raileurope.co.uk).

Ticket Price was calculated on the price of an afternoon single journey ticket for 1 adult booked one week in advance (queried on 22/06/2010 for a journey planned for 29/06/2010).

It is interesting to note that a single journey from London to Paris is more expensive than a return journey. A single journey costs £106 compared to a return journey which costs £94.50.

Route	Cost of ticket in £/km	Percentage difference between London to Paris £/km and other journeys £/km (%)
London to Paris	0.31	0
Brussels to Frankfurt	0.13	138.4615385
Paris to Lyon	0.15	106.6666667
Milan to Rome	0.18	72.22222222
Madrid to Seville	0.19	63.15789474

Average £/km in sample is 0.192 £/km

London to Paris £/km is 161% of the average £/km