

TRAVEL TO & FROM SWINDON FOR THE 2025 EPF CONFERENCE

Swindon is on the Great Western Main line about halfway between London and Bristol. There are fast and frequent trains from London Paddington taking just under one hour. There are also frequent fast direct trains from Bristol, Cardiff, Reading and many other towns along the Great Western Main line.

For delegates travelling from within the UK:

Train fares and times can be found at www.nationalrail.co.uk or from one of the many other agents selling UK rail tickets.

For delegates travelling from the European mainland:

By train: You would arrive by Eurostar at London St Pancras and then take the London Underground to Paddington. You can then use Circle Line or Hammersmith & City Line trains from Platform 1 (Westbound). Unless you have a through ticket which includes the London Underground connection, you can pay with a contactless bank card, mobile phone app or buy an Oyster Card costing £7.00. From Paddington, First Great Western run 3-4 fast trains each hour to Swindon with a journey time of about 55 to 60 minutes.

For both Eurostar (<https://www.eurostar.com/>) and *First Great Western* (<https://www.gwr.com/ticket>), the best prices can be obtained by booking as far as possible in advance.

Delegates wanting to do a bit of travel around the UK could buy an Interrail pass instead. Including the Eurostar supplements, for any 4 days within a month they currently cost from 272 to 343 Euros depending on your age.

By boat: Brittany Ferries run several daily sailings from Ouistreham (Caen), Le Havre, Cherbourg and St Malo direct to Portsmouth. There is a frequent bus service from the main road adjacent to the International Terminal at Portsmouth to near Portsmouth & Southsea station. It is then possible to reach Swindon by train in less than two and a half hours, roughly twice each hour, by changing TWICE either at Guildford and Reading or Basingstoke and Reading or, less frequently, with a SINGLE change at Trowbridge.

For delegates travelling by air:

From London Heathrow: You can take a Heathrow Express train and change at London Paddington for a connection to Swindon. A cheaper alternative is to take the Elizabeth Line and change at Hayes & Harlington and Reading for Swindon. Another cheaper alternative is the Rail-air link coach from Heathrow Terminals 2, 3 & 5 to Reading where

you can then take a fast train to Swindon. Through tickets for both from the airport can be bought from *First Great Western* at <https://www.gwr.com/tickets>.

An even cheaper coach service (though less frequent) is run by National Express (<https://www.nationalexpress.com>) from terminals 2&3 direct to Swindon taking about 1.5 hours.

Delegates travelling via Heathrow might want to consider a Britrail London Plus Pass. This gives you 2 days within 1 month unlimited rail travel in South-East England and as far as Bristol. Depending on your age they cost between £77 and £127. See <https://www.britrail.com/how-to-book/> for further information.

From London Gatwick Airport: *First Great Western* run a direct train service normally every half hour to Reading, where you can then make a connection onto a fast train for Swindon. The First Great Western Journey Planner, also offers a routing via London, normally at a more expensive price. So, you should check that you have chosen a ticket with a direct service from London Gatwick Airport to Reading.

From Bristol Airport: You can take the A1 Airport Express from outside the Arrivals' door at Bristol Airport to Bristol Temple Meads station and then take a fast train to Swindon. This connection is normally every half hour for most of the day and through tickets from the airport can also be bought from *First Great Western*.