

# Rail Baltica: Construction of railway bridge over Neris River in Jonava district accelerates

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Industry news

Rail Baltica



With the installation of piles now being undertaken, the construction of the longest railway bridge over the Neris River in the district of Jonava is gaining momentum as part of Rail Baltica, the largest railway infrastructure project in the Baltic States. Construction of the main railway line on the most mature section of the railway, from Kaunas to the Latvian border, started this year. This section also includes a level crossing and engineering structures as well as car access roads that are under construction.

“The bridge over the Neris River is one of the most complex objects of the Rail Baltica project and a highly complex engineering structure. Pile installation is intensifying daily at the bridge site. To speed up the installation works, plans soon include using additional equipment necessary for the installation of the piles,” says Vytautas Tilinskas, Head of Project Implementation for Rail Baltica at LTG Infra.

The construction work is being carried out by the Italian company Rizzani de Eccher. The aim is to complete the piling work by spring of next year. Under the right weather conditions, one to two piles are installed per day. The site is being worked on by a rotary drilling machine, which can reach a height of 27 metres.

“It is estimated that 40–60 cubic metres of concrete will be needed for each pile, depending on the length and diameter of the pile. After drilling the pile installation site, the metal frame of the pile reinforcement is first installed and then the concrete is poured. In total, the bridge has been designed with 376 piles. The pile diameter is mainly 1.5 metres, but there are also 1.8-metre piles. The longest poles will be as deep as 33 metres,” says Tilinskas.

Once the piles are in place, concrete will be poured, and the grate – the upper connecting part of the pile foundation, which will support the bridge structures – will be built. The next stage of construction will be the construction of the piers, abutments, supports, and the finishing works.

The bridge over the Neris River will cross the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 area, therefore special attention is being paid to environmental protection during construction. To avoid any impacts on the biodiversity of the Neris, exceptional technical challenges were addressed and active cooperation with the State Service for Protected Areas was pursued. By withholding from any invasive solutions, fish will be able to migrate freely in the riverbed and aquatic vegetation will flourish. To protect the local biosphere, no work will be carried out in the protection zone of the Neris River during fish and bird migration.

Due to the complexity and sophistication of the project, intensive preparations were made for the main construction works. Preliminary work – such as stump and brush clearance, site preparation, demining, preparing the construction base, and the installation of approach roads to the bridge columns – has been ongoing since September 2022.

The bridge over the Neris River will be the longest not only in Lithuania but also in the Baltic States – it will be nearly 1,510 metres long. The bridge, at 40 metres high, will require 11,500 tonnes of reinforcement and 74,000 cubic metres of concrete.

#### About Rail Baltica

Rail Baltica is one of Europe's largest high-speed infrastructure projects, aiming to establish a modern and sustainable rail link that connects the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania with the European rail network. It is also a part of the trans-European transport corridor.

Rail Baltica will be a fully electrified, double-track railway with a standard gauge of 1435 mm and will be equipped with ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System) and designed to meet European standards. With a design speed of 249 km/h, Rail Baltica will significantly reduce travel times between the Baltic States and major European cities. It will serve as a modern infrastructure for passenger, freight, and military mobility, promoting accessibility and facilitating business, tourism, and cultural exchange. Additionally, the project will enhance the Baltic region's position as a vital transit hub, fostering stronger trade connections and promoting regional cooperation.

#### About RB Rail AS

RB Rail AS is a multinational joint venture of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania established to lead and coordinate the implementation of the Rail Baltica Global Project, the first infrastructure development project of this scale in the Baltic region. More about Rail Baltica global project: [www.railbaltica.org](http://www.railbaltica.org)

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