

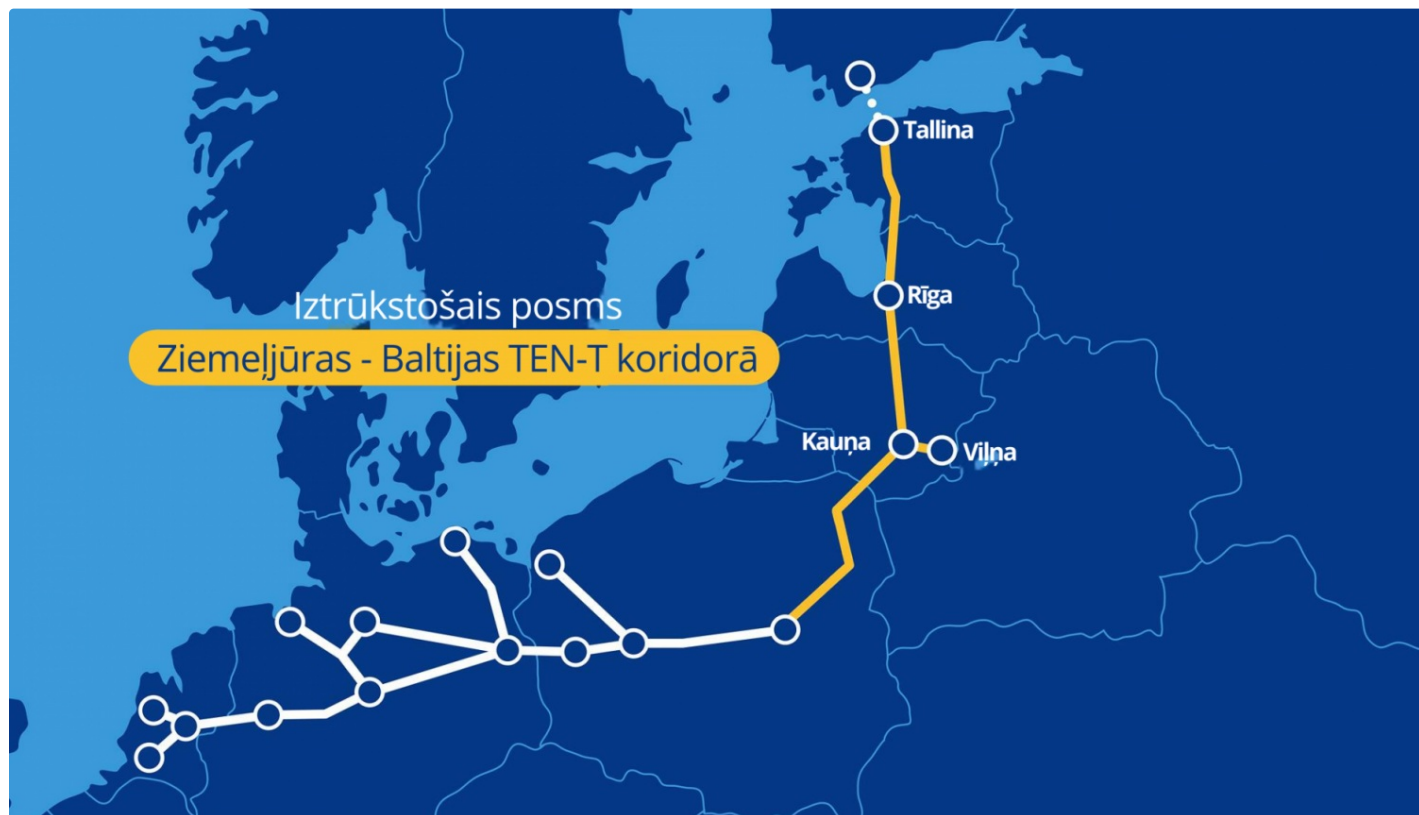
# Rail Baltica

Status: In implementation

Published: 21.07.2020.

Updated: 09.03.2023.

SKLOIS



**Co-financed by the Connecting Europe Facility of the European Union**

Rail Baltica Global project is an initiative of great significance and added value both in the Baltic Sea region and Europe as a whole. *Rail Baltica* is an essential part of the European standard 1435 mm gauge Trans - European Transport Network (TEN-T) North Sea - Baltic Corridor – a new electrified high speed double standard gauge railway line equipped with European Railway Traffic Management System ERTMS connecting Tallinn with the Lithuanian - Polish border and further up to Warsaw via a modernized railway line corresponding to the technical requirements of *Rail Baltica*. It will link Europe's largest ports of Hamburg, Rotterdam and Antwerp with the Baltics.

Rail Baltica - part of TEN-T North Sea-Baltic Corridor

Completion of the whole TEN-T network is set for 2030. Rail Baltica as a vital part of it targets completion within the next 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework.

Rail Baltica project

the largest infrastructure project in the Baltic region over the last 100 years

for both passenger and freight traffic

length: 870 km (~265 km in Latvia)

max speed: 249 km/h (passenger), 120 km/h (freight)

project is implemented in parallel in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

financed 81-85% by EU, Connecting Europe Facility instrument and co-financed by the Baltic countries

## History

*Rail Baltica* project is sometimes described as a symbolic return of the Baltic countries into Europe – up until WWII the Baltic countries were already connected to other European capitals by a 1435 mm gauge railway line while since the middle of the 20th century the Baltic countries have been mainly linked to the East-West railway axis using the Russian 1520 mm gauge.

At the beginning of the 90ties after the initiative of 11 Baltic Sea countries an international high-speed railway line Tallinn - Berlin was first marked in the cartographic materials of the region and discussions on spatial planning started regards connectivity of the Baltic countries with Central Europe by way of a North - South railway line.

In 2017 all three Baltic parliaments ratified the Inter-Governmental Agreement for the *Rail Baltica* project.

In 2018 the European Commission signed the Implementing Decision on the *Rail Baltica* cross-border project on the North Sea-Baltic Core Network Corridor hereby ensuring the commitment of the EC and all EU member states to implement the project.

*Rail Baltica* project is a key EU infrastructure project included in the transport net priority lists, marked on the main transport corridor development maps and is gaining momentum in fostering security in the Baltic region.

## Project Status

18 May 2020. November 2019, an international tender for the construction of the overpass, access roads, embankment, a 6-km long section of railway tracks and overpass over K. Ulmanis street for the Rail Baltica station at the Riga International Airport was announced. The international competition takes place in two stages. It is planned to sign a contract with the winner of the tender by end 2020 and start the construction works in 2021. Tālis Linkaits, Minister of Transport of Latvia, “Rail Baltica station at the Riga International Airport will be the first high-speed rail - air connection hub in the Baltics. The Rail Baltica project is one of the catalysts for Latvia’s economic development and will connect the Baltics with the European railway network. Active construction phase will start at the end of this year with Riga Central Station and will continue with construction works at the Riga International Airport and the main line of Rail Baltica.”

6 April 2020 Two contracts for the design and design supervision services for the remaining two sections of the *Rail Baltica* main line in Latvia have been signed. The first section from Vangaži to the Latvian-Estonian state border is assigned to a company consortium INECO-ARDANUY. The contract amount is 13 523 414,78 EUR. The second section of the line from Misa to the Latvian-Lithuanian state border is awarded to another company consortium IDOM, Consulting, Engineering, Architecture S.A.U. The contract amount is 6 903 802,5 EUR. Thus, design works are now ongoing for the whole length of the *Rail Baltica* route in Latvia (~265 km). [Read more.](#)

27 January 2020. The high-level pan-institutional Coordination Council of the *Rail Baltica* project and comprehensive and smooth development of the project-related territory in Riga noted that the planned reconstruction of the Riga Central Railway Terminal is a vital catalyst providing opportunities for international mobility and development of a multimodal transport hub in the capital of Latvia. “*Rail Baltica* is a project of the century and it has to be implemented in time and space so as to bring the utmost benefit to the inhabitants of Riga. All involved parties have to acknowledge and make use of the opportunities the project creates for the economy, our country and Riga”, said the Minister of Transport Talis Linkaits while opening the Council meeting. The *Rail Baltica* project has now firmly entered into the design phase thus synergies and fast and smooth information exchange between the state and the Riga municipality is very important.

5 September 2019 Memorandum on public involvement in the design and construction of *Rail Baltica* has been signed between the Rail Baltica project implementers - the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia, SIA "Eiropas Dzelzceļa līnijas" and RB Rail AS and representatives of several non-governmental organizations in Latvia. The memorandum of cooperation will ensure regular meetings and exchange of information on the progress of the project, technical solutions and insights into the future plans and challenges - not only the layout of the main track developed during the design process, but also facilitate evaluation of alternatives and the exchange of opinions on the *Rail Baltica* design and construction management, including the location of regional stops in Latvia.

5 July 2019 Two design contracts to commence design works on the 123 km long central section (i) from Upeslejas through Riga to Misa and (ii) from Vangaži through Salaspils to Misa have been signed. The first design contract (56 km) worth 12 989 200 EUR was signed with a group of two Spanish companies – IDOM Consulting, Engineering, Architecture (IDOM) and Ingeniería y Economía del Transporte (INECO). The second contract (67 km) worth 12 024 529 EUR was signed with the association of Egis Rail (France), DB Engineering & Consulting (Germany) and the Latvian company Olimps. 85% of the funding necessary for these Rail Baltica design works is provided by the European Union and 15% by Latvia.

29 May 2019 Contract on Design and Construction of the complex development of *Rail Baltica* Riga Railway Bridge, Railway Embankment and Riga Central Passenger Station is signed with the winner of the tender – joint venture "BESIX RERE GROUP" (N.V. BESIX S.A. (Belgium) and LLC (SIA) "RERE BŪVE" (Latvia)). Implementation of the contract will result in a modern, multi-modal traffic hub in the centre of Riga improving mobility, safety and accessibility, as well as connect two parts of the city. The new bridge will also allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the river. The total contract value is 430.5 million EUR. Along with the introduction of a European standard gauge railway to the centre of Riga, an aesthetically attractive station infrastructure and multi-modal transport hub will be created. 85% of the funding necessary for these Rail Baltica design works is provided by the European Union Connecting Europe Facility and 15% by Latvia.

26 October 2018 European Commission adopted the Implementing Decision on the *Rail Baltica* cross-border project on the North Sea-Baltic TEN-T Corridor. [Read more.](#)

13 July 2018 The Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA), joint venture of three Baltic states RB Rail AS, the Ministry of Economics and Communication of Estonia, the Ministry of Transport of Latvia and the Ministry of Transport and Communication of Lithuania signed the 3rd Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Grant Agreement for the construction of *Rail Baltica* railway infrastructure. The total value of the Agreement is nearly 130 million euros - the CEF contribution in the amount of 110 million euros, which is 85% of total eligible costs.

13 June 2018 The joint venture of the three Baltic States RB Rail AS announced an open competition [Architectural, landscaping and visual identity Design guidelines for \*Rail Baltica\*](#). The aim of the open competition is to work out the technically and economically most feasible set of criteria, rules, typical solutions, conceptual drawings and guidance – the architectural, landscaping and visual identity design guidelines for *Rail Baltica* (ALG). Thus, the ALG will enrich the Rail Baltica Design Guidelines from the viewpoint of landscaping, urban design and visual design standpoint. The ALG as part of the Design Guidelines will be mandatory for all stakeholders involved in design and construction of the Railway.

03 May 2018 The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of Estonia, Ministry of Transport of Latvia and Ministry of Transport of Lithuania approved the Design Guidelines for *Rail Baltica*, the common design standard mandatory for design, construction and operations of the *Rail Baltica* infrastructure. The Design Guidelines manual prepared by Systra determines the key requirements and standards for the *Rail Baltica* railway alignment, track, embankments and earthworks, bridges, overpasses, tunnels and similar structures, energy, control-command signalling system, telecommunications system, *supervisory control and data acquisition* (SCADA), infrastructure facilities, environmental requirements, building information modelling (BIM), architectural and landscaping requirements, reliability, availability and maintainability and safety (RAMS) requirements, as well as other elements. The approval of the Design Guidelines for Rail Baltica project is one of the essential milestones for the project implementation.

20 March 2018 the first *Rail Baltica* construction design and supervision contract of *Rail Baltica's* airport Riga railway station, related infrastructure, and viaduct was signed during a formal event. It was signed by the European gauge project implementer in Latvia SIA "Eiropas Dzelzceļa līnijas" and the winner of the open international tender – partnership of suppliers from three countries „PROSIV” („Sintagma” (Italy), „Prodex” (Slovakia) and „Vektors T” (Latvia)).


29 August 2017 An open competition “Preparation of the operational plan of the railway” has been announced, with the aim to prepare the overall Operational Plan Concept for *Rail Baltica* railway corridor, on short, medium and longer term. The major targets of the Plan are reduced operation costs for the infrastructure lifetime and optimised transport plans for final customers. This shall allow to ultimately transfer the maximum of market share to the rail and to *Rail Baltica* in particular, going in line with the European Union funding instrument Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) objectives. The results of the Operational Plan study will be used to refine and improve the technical solutions and planning of the implementation of Rail Baltica. It will also serve in the optimization of investments during the construction phase.

24 April 2017 The *Rail Baltica* Global Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) was presented during the *Rail Baltica* Global Forum confirming that the *Rail Baltica* project is financially and economically viable. The study reaffirms the project's economic feasibility and highly beneficial nature, providing the necessary updated parameters for the project's continued EU and national co-financing. The key aim of this study is to re-assess the economic case for *Rail Baltica* in light of the amended route alignment and expanded project scope since the initial 2011 AECOM study, and to provide new parameters for long-term project financing. The study suggests that the total estimated cost of the project is 5.8 billion in all three countries while measurable project socio-economic benefits have been estimated at 16.2 billion euro. Furthermore, it is assessed that the project would create a GDP multiplier effect worth an additional 2 billion euro. In addition, there will be substantial unmeasurable benefits (mostly of a catalytic nature).

Detailed technical study and environmental impact assessment of the Latvian section of the European gauge railway line *Rail Baltica* has been concluded. The aim of the Detailed technical study was to determine the alignment of the railway line *Rail Baltica* in the territory of Latvia and to carry out relevant studies and preparatory works for the design of the railway line, expropriation of land and commencing construction as well as to conduct environmental impact assessment of the railway line Rail Baltica. Based on the study results and its acceptance by governmental institutions, the railway line Rail Baltica has been defined as an object with the status of national interests.

18 November 2016 The 2<sup>nd</sup> Grant Agreement under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) in the total value of 225 million euros for the construction of the *Rail Baltica* high-speed railway was signed by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA), joint venture of the three Baltic states RB Rail AS and the Ministry of Economics and Communication of Estonia, the Ministry of Transport of Latvia and the Ministry of Transport and Communication of Lithuania. The CEF contribution will be of a maximum amount of 191 million euros which is 85% of total eligible costs.

8 October 2016 RB Rail AS, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia, Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania, Rail Baltic Estonia OU, Estonian Technical Regulatory Authority, SIA “Eiropas Dzelzceļa līnijas”, Rail Baltica Statyba UAB and Lietuvos Geležinkeliai signed the Agreement on Rail Baltica Contracting Scheme, which defines the procurement roles of the joint venture RB Rail, implementing bodies and beneficiaries.

2015 



23 November 2015. The 1st Grant Agreement under the Connecting Europe Facility(CEF) in the total value of 540 million euros was signed by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA), joint venture of the three Baltic states RB Rail AS and the Ministry of Economics and Communication of Estonia, the Ministry of Transport of Latvia and the Ministry of Transport and Communication of Lithuania for the construction of the *Rail Baltica* high-speed railway.

<https://www.sam.gov.lv/en/projects/rail-baltica-0>