

# The construction of the Rail Baltica railway line must be accelerated

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“The geopolitical importance of the Rail Baltica railway line has grown even more since the war began in Ukraine, so a specific plan is required to build it sooner than planned,” stressed Minister of Transport Tālis Linkaits when meeting the management of Rail Baltica joint venture RB Rail AS.

“So far, Rail Baltica has been a particularly crucial connectivity and mobility project in the region, but with geopolitical changes, the significance of the project is particularly high. The new railway line will provide a fast and reliable transport corridor for freight and passenger transport from the Baltic States to Western Europe,” stated Tālis Linkaits. The Minister therefore expects a clear plan from the management of RB Rail to speed up the construction of the new railway line, including removing obstacles to the project and addressing issues with stakeholders to move forward expeditiously.

“Although we see active construction at Riga Central Station and the future Riga Airport Station, overall progress is not sufficient. There is a deviation from the planned schedules in the design process; it is especially significant for the Riga section. Given the complicated nature of this stage, speeding up decision-making is essential,” outlined the Minister.

The Minister of Transport pointed out that the Latvian government promoted the project as a priority by providing the necessary financial and administrative support. The Minister called on RB Rail to mobilize as much as possible for the implementation of the project, involving service providers, cooperating with local and regional governments, other project partners and finalising the works for the start of construction of the main route.

There is the plan to perform construction works on the main route of Rail Baltica in sections where the first one is the southern direction from the Lithuanian border to Riga Airport. Work is scheduled to begin next year. Train traffic could start in this direction in 2027. Lithuania also aims to maintain its ambition to build a European-width gauge railway line by the end of 2026.

Tālis Linkaits emphasises the development of the southern section and the construction of a new two-level road and railway

bridge over the Daugava River near Salaspils as project priorities to start cargo transportation along the new railway line and ensure cargo reloading in Salaspils distribution facility.

Within the framework of the Rail Baltica project, construction works at Riga Central Station and Riga Airport are planned to be completed by the end of 2025. When creating the new railway line, a decision was made to establish Rail Baltica regional traffic with 17 regional stations, which will be developed as mobility points.

<https://www.sam.gov.lv/en/article/construction-rail-baltica-railway-line-must-be-accelerated>