**FOREWORD**

Rail Baltica Growth Corridor project has now come to end. In Berlin, June 14th, the project partnership and stakeholders of transport development discussed on project results summarized in the Rail Baltica Growth Strategy. During the project’s lifetime the committed team of cities, regions and stakeholders analyzed, lobbied and promoted Rail Baltica, EU core network corridors and the North Sea Baltic corridor. Parallel with our work the Rail Baltic rail infrastructure project has taken major steps forward as well. The key role of cities as hubs of Rail Baltic has now a tested framework to continue fruitful cooperation. The work of RBGC is intended to be continued following the Growth Strategy outlined at the Berlin conference. The preparation in key branches like Rail Baltic Branding and the governance model has already begun. Thanks to our experienced, effective and motivated project partners we now have good prospects in building of new projects that contribute in strengthening the North Sea-Baltic corridor.

**GROWTH STRATEGY**

The Rail Baltica railway in a multimodal transport corridor constitutes an important economic growth potential to the cities and regions. As the largest transnational transport project of its time in the region, Rail Baltica has potential to bring internal cohesion to the Eastern Baltic Sea Region and make it an integral part of the European green transport network. This is the key statement of the RBGC partnership summarized in the project final output — Rail Baltica Growth Strategy. The Strategy is available on the RBGC web page [www.rbgc.eu/materials](http://www.rbgc.eu/materials).

---

**NEW LOGISTICS STUDIES**

The RBGC project and Bothnian Green Logistics Corridor (BGLC) project jointly ordered a study to identify the lower level strategic transport nodes in the Baltic Sea Area using the nodes of the TEN-T Core Network as a starting point.

**RAIL BALTIC BRANDING**

The Rail Baltic Branding project is an umbrella initiative forming the first systematic approach towards branding the Rail Baltic railway connection.

**TEN-T DAYS 2013**

The EU will invest €26 billion for co-funding transport projects to build cross-border missing links, remove bottlenecks and make the transport network smarter.
After three years of transnational cooperation in the RBGC project the final conference Rail Baltic Corridor – Partnership for Growth in Berlin, June 14th, summed up the results and recommendations to establish the railway link from the Baltic countries to the continental Europe. The event culminated in the declaration of the Rail Baltica Growth Strategy and a joint declaration by the RBGC partnership – Rail Baltica Memorandum. Rail Baltic Growth Strategy concludes the work that has been done in RBGC within the partnership and in close collaboration with a wide group of European, national and local stakeholders.

In the realignment plan of the TEN-T Core Network Corridors, Rail Baltica is defined as part of the North Sea-Baltic Corridor, which runs from the major ports of Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Antwerp through the Netherlands and Belgium, Germany, Poland, the three Baltic States, and reaches Finland via ferry connection across the Gulf of Finland. The North Sea-Baltic Corridor connects Rail Baltica to the leading sea ports and railway hubs in the Western Europe, which gives important strategic value to this currently missing north-south transport connection in the Eastern Baltic Sea Region.

In the Rail Baltica Growth Strategy the RBGC consortium declared its support to the European Commission’s plan to develop corridor forums for the core network corridors to strengthen the multilevel governance of the road and rail infrastructure development and its effective coordination. The RBGC partnership also committed itself to the further transnational co-operation to create an effective governance structure for the cities, regions and non-governmental stakeholders along Rail Baltic to support the work of the Core Corridor Forum. The Rail Baltica Growth Strategy also presents the cross-border development zones as the subsections of Rail Baltic corridor.

As the final result of the RBGC project, the Rail Baltica Growth Strategy concludes the first phase of the collaboration of cities, regions and universities in the promotion of the Rail Baltic transport and growth corridor. RBGC project contributed in the collaborative work in building of partnership, knowledge base, and arenas for the joint work in promoting Rail Baltic and other key investments in rail connections from Berlin to Warsaw and up to Tallinn and Helsinki. The Rail Baltic line is not yet a mission completed, although during the project time from 2010 until today it took important steps forward. In coming years the project needs especially commitment of national stakeholders. Regional and cross-border partnerships’ determined co-operation is essential as the intermodal services are developed in the cities along the corridor.

All the elements are there to continue transnational collaboration of cities and regions in cooperation with transport sector players and specialists. The stakeholder consortium is established but can be still strengthened. The strategy is to continue and sharpen the alliance to support and promote Rail Baltic and other key investments in the North Sea-Baltic corridor. Effective coordination between the modes of transport and connections to the strategic ports and hubs to feed the corridor are critical elements in the development of North Sea-Baltic core network corridor.

Rail Baltica Growth Strategy is available at www.rbgc.eu/materials
ESTIMATING LOWER LEVEL STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NODES AND LINKS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

The RBGC project and Bothnian Green Logistics Corridor (BGLC) project ordered together a study from Ramboll Finland to identify the lower level strategic transport nodes in the Baltic Sea Area using the nodes of the TEN-T Core Network as a starting point. The aim of this study was to identify the most important strategic freight and passenger nodes in the Baltic Sea Area through coherent and transparent methodology.

The TEN-T Core Network should be conceived as a functional network reflecting the long-term needs of the Community. The TEN-T core network main nodes in the Baltic Sea Area defined by EU are presented in the following map with green and red colours.

**Results**

Results of the study can be seen on the map with purple, yellow and blue colors. According to the basic principle in the configuration of the network, the strategic nodes in freight transport have been connected to the national network at least by a railway link. Similarly, strategic nodes in passenger traffic have been connected to the national network at least by a road link. However, the major nodes in passenger and freight traffic have both road and rail connections.

This Core network is quite dense in northern Poland and Germany and also in the Baltic countries. The situation is somewhat different in the Nordic countries and especially in Finland, Norway and Denmark. There are only a few TEN-T Core nodes in these countries and the TEN-T Core network is also very scattered. In this case, quite a few new strategic nodes have been identified by this study, which have been connected to the national network by strategic road and railway links.

As a conclusion, it can be noted that the number of TEN-T Core nodes is fairly small in the Baltic Sea Area. The TEN-T Core network also provides connections to the main border crossing points to Russia and eastern Europe. This means that most of the new strategic nodes are located along the existing TEN-T Core network and significant extensions to the existing network are not necessary.

The results of this exercise can be used as one of the data sources when defining the connections between the Core network and other regional networks, for example how various transport routes should interact and were the future intermodal hubs for cargo and passengers should be located.

**Ulla Tapaninen**
Expert in international logistics, City of Helsinki

**Jukka Lindfors**
Project manager, Council of Tampere Region
The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Days in Tallinn on 16-18 October focused on the launching of the EU’s new infrastructure policy. The EU will invest €26 billion for co-funding transport projects to build cross-border missing links, remove bottlenecks and make the network smarter. Under the supervision of EU Commission Vice-President responsible for transport Siim Kallas, the new TEN-T Core Network Corridor maps were published. The historic moment of revealing the maps of the nine Core Network Corridors took place at the opening session. The nine Corridors will underpin the EU’s Single Market and increase the European internal cohesion.

The new policy sets the focus on a core transport network for Europe. Its aim is to concentrate spending on a smaller number of projects where real EU added value can be realised. “Transport is vital to the European economy. Without good connections Europe will not grow or prosper. This new EU infrastructure policy will put in place a powerful European transport network across 28 Member States to promote growth and competitiveness. It will connect East with West and replace today’s transport patchwork with a network that is genuinely European”, Vice-President Kallas said.

One of the most visible and discussed topics of the TEN-T days in Tallinn was Rail Baltica. In the new European Core Network Rail Baltica is part of the North Sea – Baltic Corridor which runs from the major port cities of the Eastern North Sea coast to the Eastern Baltic Sea Region ending in Helsinki. Rail Baltica themes were particularly featured in RB Express conference train covering the way from Vilnius to Tallinn in the framework of the TEN-T Days programme. RBGC project experiences and results as well as continuation strategies were presented and discussed on board. Project Manager Malla Paajanen gave a presentation on the Rail Baltic Branding project funded by the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility. Additionally, the RBGC and RBGC-Russia projects had a joint stand in the TEN-T Days exhibition area.

During the TEN-T days, the stakeholders of the new North Sea – Baltic Corridor had their first get-together meeting organized by the EU Commission’s representatives Senior Adviser James Pond from DG MOVE and Rail Baltica European Coordinator Pavel Telička who chaired the meeting. The RBGC project core partners participated in the meeting together with a large group of other stakeholders representing the Corridor. The meeting is expected to have continuation in a few months after the European Coordinators for the nine Corridors have been nominated. With an important linkage and relevance to the RBGC Strategy, Commissioner Kallas signed in Tallinn the TEN-T financing of 11,3 MEUR for the co-operation project of the ports of Helsinki and Tallinn, the TWIN-PORT project. The financing is directed to improve the ferry operation fluency in both ports and to improve the ferry capacity between Helsinki and Tallinn.

The TEN-T Days took place for the 6th time. The event gathered to Tallinn more than 1,400 people, including Transport Ministers, Members of the European Parliament, CEOs and stakeholders from all the transport sectors. For more information about the TEN-T days, please visit www.tentdays2013.eu

The RBGC project core partners received the Seed Money funding for the Rail Baltic Branding project. Seed Money is the EU funding to prepare projects that contribute to one of the priority areas or horizontal actions of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

The Rail Baltic Branding project funded by the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility produces further project application strategies for three branding perspectives:

1) Branding Rail Baltic through cities’ and regions’ economic growth strategies;
2) Branding as soft investment in the Rail Baltic engineering project;
3) Case Rail Baltic in the academic and applied supranational place branding research.

The Rail Baltic Branding project is an umbrella initiative forming the first systematic approach towards branding the Rail Baltic railway connection. The project strives to build a positive image to Rail Baltic as an environmentally friendly and sustainable transport solution with considerable cohesive and economic potential.

Aalto University Foundation is the Lead Partner of the Rail Baltic Branding Seed Money project consortium, and City of Helsinki, Latvian Transport Development and Education Association, Kaunas City Municipality Administration and Tallinn University of Technology are the partners. In its immediate and concise core partnership the project collaborates intensively within a broad stakeholder community and forms a wide network of branding and transport experts.

The Rail Baltic branding project strives for an efficient interplay between decision-makers, research, and business life, which embeds branding efficiently in the infrastructure and service development of Rail Baltic. The branding method acknowledges the different stakeholder roles of decision-makers, developers and operators, and the business sector and citizens as users.

Rail Baltic Branding uses the triple-helix environment of cooperation in supranational branding. The project will run for one year starting in the end of 2013.