



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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EUR 115 million of regional funds to improve railway connections in Puglia

The European Commission has approved an investment of €115 million from the European Regional Development Fund for two railway projects in Puglia. These projects are part of a strategic transport plan for the region to improve railway transport infrastructure and services for better accessibility, reliability and safety of rail travel. More than 900,000 inhabitants will benefit from these investments and more than 2000 jobs are expected to be created during their implementation.

Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn who signed the approval for this investment said, *"These railway development projects are a concrete example of how Structural Funds can help boosting competitiveness in Puglia and improve people's daily life. With the switch of many transport activities from road to rail, Italian citizens will also benefit from improvements to the environment."*

The project "Electric railway line Bari-Taranto" foresees the electrification of the 121 km long Bari-Taranto Railway Network running parallel to the Bari-Taranto standard railway line. The project "Modernization of the FSE railway line" is expected to speed up the modernization of the standard railway network managed by Ferrovie del Sud-Est (FSE) in the area of Salento providing a better signalling and safety equipment of 92 km of the railway, including the purchase of 4 trains.

Both investments come through the EU co-financed Programme 2007-2013 for the Puglia region under the priority axis "Transport networks and links". The European Union, through the European Regional Development Fund, will finance €44.2 million out of a total investment of €75.9 million for the project "Electric railway line Bari-Taranto" and €70.9 million out of a total investment of €121.5 million for the project "Modernization of the FSE railway line".

Background

These are "major projects", of which the total investment (VAT included) is above €50 million and thus subject to a specific decision by the European Commission, whereas other types of projects are approved at national or regional levels.

In April 2013 the Commission already approved a first railway investment between Taranto und Bari, a 10.5 km of new double track line from Bari to Sant'Andrea Bitetto which is part of the regional railway infrastructure programme as well. The European

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Union, through the European Regional Development Fund, finances €64.3 million out of a total investment of €120.6 million.

Italy has been allocated approximately €29 billion in total cohesion policy funding from 2007-2013.

More information:

[EU-funded 'Major Projects'](#)

[EU cohesion policy in Italy](#)

Project contacts

["Electric railway line Bari-Taranto"](#)

["Modernisation of the FSE railway line"](#)