



Betuwe line

A dedicated freight railway line across the Netherlands will provide easier and more environment-friendly transport options into the port of Rotterdam, helping to consolidate its position as one of Europe's key transport and distribution hubs.

What is the axis?

To facilitate the movement of maritime freight into the heart of Europe, a new 160 km railway is being built across the Netherlands, linking the busy port of Rotterdam to the existing German rail network at the Dutch/German border.

Around three quarters of the Betuwe line will be newly constructed, while the remaining section linking Maasvlakte to Kijfhoek will be upgraded. Work on this section, known as the port railway line, entails doubling the existing single track and electrifying the line, as well as the construction of a rail bridge and tunnel.

The main section of the Betuwe line requires the construction of a new 112 km line from Kijfhoek to the Dutch/German border near Zevenaar. For much of the route, it will run alongside the existing A15 motorway, hence this section is known as the A15 line.

What are its expected benefits?

Among the project's many benefits, it will increase the transport options for freight companies wishing to move goods across the Netherlands. Dependence on existing constrained road and inland waterway networks often causes congestion along key routes.

The line will also improve freight links between the Netherlands and the rest of Europe, boosting Rotterdam's development as a major centre for transport, distribution and production. The line has been designed to move up to 74 million tonnes of freight a year, although initially it is only expected to attract half this amount.

By moving freight off the roads, the scheme will also deliver benefits to road users and to the environment. The shift from road to rail will be particularly significant along the route of the A15 line.

What is its current status?

Work to upgrade the port railway line started in 1997. The Dintelhaven rail bridge was completed in 1999 and the Botlek tunnel – the first ever bored Dutch rail tunnel – in 2002. The whole line will be fully upgraded, electrified and installed with the latest safety equipment. In 2004, this section was opened officially and is now in full use.

Construction of embankments, tunnels and bridges for the A15 line began in 1998. Almost all of the substructure is now finished and works on the superstructure commenced in 2003. Track-laying started at the end of 2003, together with electrification and safety equipment installation. The whole line is expected to be complete by 2006.

Priority section	Type of work/status	Distance (km)	Timetable ⁽¹⁾	Total cost as of end 2004 (million EUR)	Investment up to 31.12.2004 (million EUR)	TEN-T contribution, including studies, up to 31.12.2004 (million EUR)
Betuwe line	Rail (upgrade)	160	1998–2006 (2007)	4 685	4 130	135
TOTAL		160		4 685	4 130	135

⁽¹⁾ In brackets, completion date listed in the 2004 guidelines, if different from the date notified in 2005 by the Member State.

Priority section	Other priority axes
Rail in preparation	Motorway of the sea
under construction	Rail
completed	Inland waterway

