



Vides pārraudzības valsts birojs
Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

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Espoo focal point:
Mr. Kaupo Heinma
Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia
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**Regarding the notification on Environmental impact assessment
of the Rail Baltic railway project**

Environment State Bureau (hereinafter – the Bureau), acting as a competent authority on environmental impact assessment (hereinafter – EIA) in Latvia would like to thank the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia for notification about initiation of EIA of the construction of European-standard railway line Rail Baltic in the section “*Pärnu-Estonian-Latvia border*” (hereinafter – the Project).

The Bureau acknowledges receipt of the notification.

As it is already mentioned in the notification, Estonia has carried out a strategic environmental impact assessment for the planning documents of the Rail Baltic railway route – county plans of Harju, Rapla and Pärnu counties, and Latvia has participated in the transboundary consultations. In addition – Estonia has participated in the transboundary EIA consultations initiated by Latvia for the construction of Rail Baltic in the territory of Latvia. Taking this into account – most of the concerns in relation to the scope and scale of the Rail Baltic project have been addressed through extensive public and transboundary consultation efforts (by both countries) in previous years. Therefore – main sensitive issues in the transboundary context were already identified, bilaterally discussed and solved.

Nevertheless – considering the scope of the Project, affected territory, as well as the transboundary nature of the European-standard railway line Rail Baltic – the Republic of Latvia intends to participate in EIA process.

We do not have specific additional comments for the scope of the assessment at this stage, but we kindly ask you to take into account the outcomes of EIA that was carried out for the Rail Baltic railway line in the territory of Latvia and the adopted route by development consent that was issued by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on August 24, 2016.

We also express our apologies that we have not yet received answers from institutions that were involved in the consultation process, therefore we can not exclude that there might be some additional comments or suggestions regarding the scope of EIA or other EIA matters. If received, those comments and suggestions will be summarized and sent to the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia in the beginning of August.

In addition, we shortly give you an overview of the national requirements for EIA procedures in the Republic of Latvia. We would like to draw your attention that Latvian legislation, in particular the Law on Environmental impact assessment, designates at least 30 days long term for the process of public consultation when elaborated EIA report is discussed. The time is being counted from the day a publication is published in a corresponding newspaper (national, regional, local) which will be ensured by the Republic of Latvia after receiving information from the Republic of Estonia. A public hearing meeting of the intended activity shall be held. According to the national legislation, a public hearing meeting shall be held no sooner than 7 days after publication is published and no later than 10 days before the ending of public consultation process. We kindly ask you to prepare EIA summary and information to the extent and scope necessary for the transboundary EIA (including graphical materials and maps in relation to the transboundary impact aspects) in Latvian.

We are looking forward to our successful bilateral cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Indra Kramzaka



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