

Italy

Bicocca-Catenanuova railway line



TYPE OF TOOL
Project



MAIN SECTOR
Transport



THEME
Green



INFRASTRUCTURE GOVERNANCE PILLARS
Fiscal sustainability, affordability and value for money

In a nutshell



OBJECTIVE: The improvement and doubling of the Bicocca-Catenanuova track aims to increase the number of trains per day, reduce travel time and encourage the abandonment of road transport.



Agency in charge
Rete Ferroviaria Italiana; Webuild



Levels of government
National



Year of implementation:
2023



Current status:
Construction



Value:
€467 million

Overview

The Bicocca-Catenanuova railway line belongs to the Palermo-Messina line, part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Palermo-Messina, a high-speed connection, is part of the subproject Berlin-Palermo of the Scandinavian Mediterranean Corridor connecting Germany to the South of Italy, crossing through Austria. The upgrade of the 37 km-long track between Bicocca and Catenanuova consists of doubling the tracks (currently, only a single track is available and this causes delays) and upgrading the existing tracks to support higher speeds up to 160 km/h. This will reduce the travel time between Catania and Palermo from about three to two hours. After completion of the project, the railway will use a signalling system compatible with the European Rail Traffic Management System, thus complying with European standards and fit for integration into TEN-T. With the upgrades, the Bicocca-Catenanuova section's capacity should increase to 150 trains per day, with the travel time decreasing from 25 to 17 minutes between Bicocca and Catenanuova. An environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the project identified some mitigation measures, mostly related to minimising construction impacts. The costs of such mitigation measures were carried over to the cost-benefit analysis. Moreover, public participation was part of the EIA – in accordance with the European and national legislation. An environmental monitoring plan was also established, which includes plans to refurbish the areas of the removed existing tracks into bicycle and pedestrian areas with green spaces. Additional vegetation natural to the surrounding area will be planted along the tracks in riverbeds, across intersections, and in small spaces between the tracks and a parallel road. The environmental monitoring plan includes indicators such as vegetation, soil quality and fauna to monitor before, during, and after the construction phase, for the entire lifecycle of the work. It includes monitoring for potential future issues and existing issues, for example, water contamination was identified as an issue during the creation of the plan.

REFERENCES:

- OECD (2023), *Developing an Integrated Approach to Green Infrastructure in Italy*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d84bb8e4-en>.