

EBRD hires Hill International for supervision of Kosovo railway project

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Kosovo's railway network, EBRD

PRISTINA (Kosovo), December 14 (SeeNews) – US-based Hill International said it has been selected by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to provide construction supervision services for upgrading Kosovo's only international rail link.

Hill will work closely with the Kosovo's railway infrastructure company to provide professional services for construction supervision, contract administration, project controls and associated reporting and on-the-job training, the company said in a press release on Thursday.

"This project enhances Hill's rail portfolio and involvement in European transport corridors across the Western Balkans, which we believe will be a strong base for future investment in Kosovo and the neighboring countries," Hill's vice president and managing director for Balkans region, Panagiotis Methenitis said.

Earlier this month, the EBRD said the EU is providing an additional grant of 17.2 million euro (\$19.5 million) to co-finance a project funded by the lender for upgrading Kosovo's only international rail link. The funding will be used for the second phase of upgrade of the railroad between Fushe Kosova and Mitrovica.

In February 2018, Kosovo also received grant co-financing of 38.5 million euro from the EU through the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) for the first phase of works.

Both grants come on top of two senior loans of 39.9 million euro and 42 million euro provided in 2015 from the EBRD and European Investment Bank (EIB), respectively, to finance the three-stage modernisation of Kosovo's railway infrastructure.

The project, running southwards to the border with Macedonia and northwards to the border with Serbia, will improve the connection between Kosovo's railway network and the wider European network through European transport Corridor VIII and Corridor X.

The third, northern, section of the railway line from Mitrovica to the border with Serbia will also be upgraded and benefit from EU and WBIF financing.

"The Kosovo rail route 10 project is part of the Western Balkans core railway network, an extension of the Trans-European Transport Networks, which is part of the EU's wider efforts to promote transport connectivity in the Western Balkans," the EBRD noted.

(\$ = 0.87973 euro)