



## Axis between Ghent and the coast



Construction of a third and fourth track between Ghent and Bruges and a third track between Bruges and the Dudzele (Zeebrugge) fork junction

### Description

With its two tracks, the railway line that links Ghent to Bruges has four sections of track: Ghent – Landegem, Landegem – Aalter, Aalter – Beernem et Beernem – Oostkamp. Today, about 300 trains travel along this line.

The simultaneous presence of slow freight trains and ever-faster passenger trains on these sections of track is creating more and more delays. The expected growth of freight traffic to and from the port of Zeebrugge on each track also necessitates the expansion of the capacity between Ghent and Dudzele.

### *Between Ghent and Bruges:*

- 2 additional tracks are being built, with the existing tracks running centrally between these new tracks;
- the following infrastructure is being added between the old and the new tracks: drainage for this wide track bed, all track equipment (cable trenches, poles for overhead line system) and 8-metre wide “island platforms” at the stops and stations.

*Between Bruges and Dudzele:*

- one additional track is being built;
- the Bruges-Sint-Pieters stop is being upgraded.

*Between Ghent and Dudzele:*

- all level crossings are being removed by building specially adapted replacement infrastructure (bridges, tunnels and parallel roadways). Most of the existing bridges must be adapted as well, and a few of them will be completely renewed;
- all stops and stations are being upgraded excepted in Beernem where a new station building is being constructed;
- sound barriers are being installed where needed.



*Click to enlarge*

## TUC RAIL's mission

In order to guarantee the correct functioning of these programmes, modern and appropriate management tools were used, such as: planning management, drawing up of annual budgets and programme-specific budget management, risk management, drawing up of reports.

The mission entrusted to TUC RAIL, in realising this programme to extend the capacity of the various rail infrastructures managed by Infrabel, is a complete mission that entails the following tasks:

1. Project Management of works under the programme (budget, planning, risks, etc.);
2. Preliminary studies and accomplishment of all administrative steps necessary to obtain the permits required to carry out the works;
3. Studies and monitoring of the works in direct cooperation with the various internal and external services (civil engineering, tracks, overhead lines, signalling, etc.);
4. Management of all work contracts (attributing contracts, managing contracts, etc.);
5. Obtaining the approvals required to authorise commercial running.

## TUC RAIL's solutions when developing these programmes

When developing these types of programmes, TUC RAIL proposes solutions for safety, the environment, spatial planning, etc., all of which are subject to compliance with the relevant preconditions.

With respect to the construction of the above-mentioned additional tracks between Ghent and Zeebrugge, TUC RAIL has succeeded in:

1. formulating a vision to make practical use of the space between the existing tracks and the new additional tracks, both for track equipment and to create open spaces that allow light to enter;
2. reducing compulsory purchases to a minimum thanks to a well thought-out route and the adoption of alternatives to conventional embankments;
3. converting the areas surrounding the stations and stops, with an emphasis on accessibility to the platforms and space for people, bicycle storage and car parking;
4. keeping sound pollution to a minimum thanks to the installation of sound barriers;
5. improving local mobility for all means of transport thanks to the addition of new cycle paths;
6. preserving to a great extent the existing architectural heritage while contributing to its refurbishment;
7. offering local residents information by means of information sessions and dialogue concerning legal rights

(public enquiries) with regard to requests for authorisation and building permits, both before and during the works being carried out.

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