

PRESS NOTE

**WEBUILD: TBM AURORA BEGINS EXCAVATING MELITO TUNNEL
ON NAPLES–BARI HIGH-SPEED/HIGH-CAPACITY RAIL LINE**



Credits: Webuild Image Library

- *After completing Grottaminarda Tunnel, TBM Aurora begins excavating Melito Tunnel for about 4.4 kilometres under the Southern Apennines*
- *Melito is last of three tunnels along Apice–Hirpinia Section, with Rocchetta Tunnel having been completed in May by TBM Futura*
- *Naples–Bari rail line one of 21 projects Webuild is delivering in Southern Italy, employing more than 10,300 people*

MILAN, September 25, 2026 – Work on the Naples–Bari high-speed/high-capacity rail line has reached another milestone with the start of excavations of the Melito Tunnel, the last of three to be done along the Apice–Hirpinia section of the line. Once completed, the entire rail line will strengthen connections between the regions of Campania and Puglia and integrate Southern Italy into Europe’s major transport corridors.

Webuild, which is building the section on behalf of RFI (FS Italiane Group), is deploying a tunnel-boring machine (TBM) named Aurora for the tunnel’s excavation. The large and innovative machine has a 12.5-metre-diameter cutterhead, a length of approximately 100 metres and a weight of 1,600 tonnes. After having completed the previous tunnel – the approximately two-kilometre-long Grottaminarda – Aurora was dismantled in order to cross the Ufita River and then reassembled for its final underground journey through the Southern Apennines for approximately 4.4 kilometres.

Powered by 18 motors capable of generating a combined output of 6.3 MW, Aurora will operate at a maximum depth of approximately 130 metres, installing more than 22,200 precast concrete segments to form the tunnel’s permanent lining. More than 140 highly skilled workers will be involved in operating and maintaining the machine, working around the clock, seven days a week.



The start of excavations on the Melito Tunnel follows the opening last July of the Naples–Cancello Section, also built by Webuild. The section connects the line to the Italy's national high-speed rail network at the Afragola High-Speed Station.

The Melito Tunnel is the second-longest tunnel on the Apice–Hirpinia Section, which extends through the provinces of Avellino and Benevento for a total length of 18.7 kilometres. Of this total, 13 kilometres pass through tunnels, accounting for nearly 70 percent of the entire route in this section. The start of excavation work comes only a few months since another significant milestone was achieved by Webuild on the same section: the completion last May of the Rocchetta Tunnel. At 6.5 kilometres, it is the longest tunnel on the route after being excavated in just 18 months by TBM Futura, the second TBM employed on the project.

The Apice–Hirpinia Section also includes the construction of Hirpinia Station, set to become a strategic hub connecting the inland areas of Campania to the national high-speed rail network. With the completion of civil works on the station – which spans two levels and features four tracks – construction of access roads, including four roundabouts, eight road links, and a new parking area is progressing.

Webuild is working on four sections of the Naples–Bari line: Naples–Cancello, Apice–Hirpinia, Hirpinia–Orsara, and Orsara–Bovino. This commitment is generating a significant impact on employment across the region, with more than 3,000 jobs created and approximately 2,800 companies involved. Part of the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Corridor of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), a strategic axis connecting Southern Italy with Northern Italy and the rest of Europe, the future Naples–Bari line will include 145 kilometres of new railway.

The Naples–Bari line is one of the 21 projects that Webuild is delivering across Southern Italy, with a total awarded value exceeding €16 billion. These projects employ 10,300 people, both directly and indirectly, and have involved 8,000 companies since construction activities began.

Webuild is a global leader in the construction of large, complex infrastructure for sustainable mobility, hydropower, water and wastewater treatment and management, and green buildings. Its primacy is reflected in the 2026 rankings of trade publication Engineering News-Record (ENR), which confirmed its leadership in the water sector and placed it among the top 10 global contractors in transportation. Webuild helps deliver projects that transform communities and regions, creating lasting social, economic, and environmental value. Active in approximately 50 countries with a workforce of more than 85,000 people, direct and indirect, Webuild boasts more than 120 years of history and over 3,700 completed projects. Its track record includes 13,686 kilometres of railways, 895 kilometres of metros, 82,708 kilometres of roads and highways, 1,023 kilometres of bridges and viaducts, 3,466 kilometres of tunnels, and 320 dams and hydropower plants. Webuild has delivered some of the world's most iconic projects, including the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the expansion of the Panama Canal, the Long Beach International Gateway in the United States, the Second Bridge over the Bosphorus in Turkey, and the Riachuelo environmental restoration system in Argentina. It has also contributed to the development of advanced urban mobility systems in major cities, including Copenhagen, Paris, Rome, Milan, Naples, Doha, Thessaloniki, and Riyadh. Today, Webuild is engaged in the construction of some of the most strategic infrastructure projects in Italy and elsewhere, such as the New Genoa Breakwater, the Brenner Base Tunnel, the Pedemontana Lombarda Highway, Rome Metro's Line C, and sections of the Genoa–Milan, Verona–Padua and Naples–Bari high-speed/high-capacity railways, as well as the Palermo–Catania–Messina line. It is also involved in the Snowy 2.0 hydropower scheme in Australia, key sections of the Grand Paris Express in France, and the expansion of the Riyadh Metro in Saudi Arabia. As of December 31, 2025, Webuild reported total revenues of €13.6 billion. As of June 30, 2026, its total order backlog amounted to €53.7 billion, with more than 95% of its construction backlog related to projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Headquartered in Italy and subject to the direction and coordination of Salini Costruttori S.p.A., Webuild is listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (WBD; WBD.MI; WBD.IM).

[More information at www.webuildgroup.com](http://www.webuildgroup.com)





Contatti:

Francesca Romana Chiarano
Senior Manager - Relazioni con i Media
Tel. +39 02 444 22147
email: f.chiarano@webuildgroup.com

Francesco Squitieri
Responsabile Comunicazione (Campania, Calabria, Puglia)
Tel. +39 335.5494594
email: f.squitieri@webuildgroup.com