

The Diabolo tunnel is part of the railway link between the existing station underneath the airport of Brussels (3 tracks, now in blind tracks) and the high speed line (under construction) between Brussels and the North (Antwerp, the Netherlands). It will allow a strait link between Antwerp and the airport, and better links without going back from Brussels and the South (France, Luxemburg) to the airport. The tunnel has 2 tubes and a length of 1,5 km of which 1 ,1 km bored under the airport. The finishing works are going on. Opening on 08.06.2012, total amount of the works : 329 M € (value design-contract).

The railway link Schuman-Josaphat is part of the Regional Express Network foreseen for Brussels and its surroundings. It is in fact a doubling under the Eastern part of the city of the North-South railway link put into operation in 1952 (6 tracks, daily on saturation). The tunnel itself will be about 2 km long in one tube. It has been carried out by various methods all linked with cut-and-cover, locally adapted to the drastic and divergent environmental conditions imposed by the various building permits (one for each intervening local community), notably as far as the accesses to the worksite are concerned. The tunnel links in the South to the line Brussels-Luxemburg at the combined station Schuman (railway-metro), which has to be fully renewed without disturbing the operation of railway and metro ; at this spot the tunnel passes underneath some buildings occupied by the services of the European Union. In the North, the tunnel links underground to another existing railway line ; this will happen by pipe-jacking of the roof.

Perspectives : end of the civil engineering in 2015 ; opening foreseen for 2016.  
Estimated value of the works : 216 M € (design-construction).

The railway tunnel Liefkenshoek is fully located in the port zone at the North of the city of Antwerp, and will allow a better service for the 2 sides of the river Scheldt under which it passes, as well as the docks and access channels to the port on both banks. It is located nearby the road tunnel Liefkenshoek, built with immersed caissons, and opened to traffic (toll) in 1990. The railway tunnel has a total length of 8 km, of which 5,5 km in 2 bored tubes.

Perspectives : one tube bored, end of the civil engineering in 2013 ; opening foreseen for 2014.

The urban part of the motorway between the city center and the airport of Brussels-National includes still a number of grade crossings with traffic lights, specially the one in front of the NATO buildings. An underpass of 200 m is under construction in open cut. Opening foreseen in 2013.

The tunnel Oosterweel in Antwerp is part of the North closing of the first (closest) motorway ring road, at this moment only closed by the Liefkenshoek tunnel, located too far in the North and badly linked to the Western motorway network. This toll tunnel, with a length of at least 2 km to pass underneath the river Scheldt and the oldest part of the port, is subject to numerous politico-technical discussions, which did not yet lead to a widely accepted localization of its Eastern exit ; the tunnel could so become much longer.

The idea of an underground link between the South-East and South-West parts of the Brussels motorway Ring (« Périphérique Sud ») was launched in order to avoid the detour along the Southern part of the Ring, much further away from the zones to be deservied than the rest of the Ring. Such a solution, half underground and half in an existing railway open cut (in operation) was thought about in the years 70 to close the Ring, but not accepted for local political opportunity reasons. The “long” tunnel, which would be able to fulfill this function, could have a length of 8 to 12 km, depending on the localization of the Eastern exit, and include one or two intermediate exits. The idea, launched by IRF Belgium, has at this moment gained no agreement, neither political nor financial.

Studies started through an international group for the realization of the line to the North of the metro of Brussels, between the North station (now train-premetro-bus) and the Bordet station in Evere (now train-tram-bus), over a length of 4 km, fully underground, with several stations.

The port of Antwerp needs a second railway access on the right bank of the river Scheldt. This new access, 8 km long, will include various tunnels.

The possible lengthening of the runway of the airport of Antwerp implies the putting in tunnel of an important road. The tunnel would have a length of 800 m. Works will start at the end of 2012. There is a possibility that this tunnel would be integrated in the corresponding section of the second motorway ring, which could have a length of 8 km, mostly in cut-and-cover tunnel.

A better (railway and road) link to, and the lengthening of the runway of the airport of Charleroi (« Brussels-South ») imply to put underground some road and railway sections.

Belgian contractors have also recently contributed to the realization of the road tunnels of Grouft (photo 5 ?) and Stafelter in Luxemburg (2 x 2 tubes, respective lengths of 3.000 m and 1.800 m, total amount 300 M €, opening foreseen for 2015) and of the Coentunnel in the Netherlands.