



# The NRLA

Via Lötschberg, Gotthard and Ceneri, the New Rail Link through the Alps

## The NRLA

The New Rail Link through the Alps (NRLA) is the centrepiece of Swiss transport policy. Switzerland has constructed a series of high-performance rail links through the Alps, comprising three base tunnels and several auxiliary structures. Thanks to the NRLA, more trains can run through the Alps and with much shorter travel times. The high quality of passenger and freight travel is assured.

The NRLA provides the basis for transferring traffic from road to rail, with the aim of protecting the Alpine environment.

## Transport policy

Switzerland lies mid-way along Europe's main north-south transport axis. The NRLA creates a major alternative to road for freight and passenger transport through the Alps.

The Swiss electorate has on several occasions voted in favour of shifting freight transport through the Alps from road to rail. This is efficient, saves space and protects the environment.



## History

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>1963</b>      | A commission examines various projects for a railway tunnel through the Alps  |
| <b>1989</b>      | The Federal Council selects the project involving base tunnels through the Lötschberg and Gotthard/Ceneri                             |
| <b>1992</b>      | The Swiss vote in favour of the New Rail Link through the Alps (NRLA)   |
| <b>1995–1998</b> | Political debate on redimensioning the NRLA and new financing options   |
| <b>1998</b>      | The Swiss vote in favour of introducing a heavy goods vehicle charge and of modernising the railways (FinöV): NRLA funding is secured |
| <b>2007</b>      | Lötschberg Base Tunnel opened   |
| <b>2016</b>      | Gotthard Base Tunnel opened   |
| <b>2020</b>      | Ceneri Base Tunnel to be opened   |

| Facts and figures   | Lötschberg                               | Gotthard                                  | Ceneri                                     |
|---|--|---|--|
| Length  | 34.6 km                                  | 57.1 km                                   | 15.4 km                                    |
| North portal  | Frutigen (BE)                            | Erstfeld (UR)                             | Camorino (TI)                              |
| South portal  | Raron (VS)                               | Bodio (TI)                                | Vezia (TI)                                 |
| Main tube excavation from   | September 2000                           | November 2002                             | March 2010                                 |
| Opened  | 2007                                     | 2016                                      | 2020                                       |
| Construction costs 1998 prices <sup>1</sup> / actual <sup>2</sup> | CHF 4.3 bn / 5.3 bn                      | CHF 9.4 bn / 12.21 bn                     | CHF 2.8 bn / 3.6 bn                        |
| Tunnel capacity/day   | 80 freight trains<br>50 passenger trains | 260 freight trains<br>65 passenger trains | 170 freight trains<br>180 passenger trains |
| Highest elevation   | 828 m a.s.l.                             | 550 m a.s.l.                              | 329 m a.s.l.<br>(south portal Vezia)       |

<sup>1</sup> 1998 prices = not incl. inflation, VAT or interest / <sup>2</sup> actual = incl. inflation, VAT and interest