

# One year on from start of construction, HS2 celebrates hitting 20,000 jobs landmark

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HS2 Ltd has today announced that according to its latest figures, over 20,000 people are now working on the project, one year on from the Prime Minister announcing the formal start of construction on Phase One from London to the West Midlands.

The latest employment figures demonstrate the crucial role that HS2 is playing in the UK's economic recovery, with work having continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Companies right across the country are now forming part of HS2's ever growing supply chain. Contracts have already been awarded to over 2,200 businesses, 97% of which are UK-based. A further £25bn worth of opportunities are expected to flow out into the wider supply chain over the coming years.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps MP, said: "While there have been some issues with the project in the past, hitting the landmark of 20,000 jobs underlines the unstoppable momentum HS2 now has.

"It's been an incredible year of progress as work continues across the country to deliver a new backbone of Britain's transport network, fit for the 21st century and beyond.

“Reaching this landmark is testament to the hard work and dedication of all those involved in the project.”

By providing work for tens of thousands of people in the UK right now, HS2 is helping the country to build back better after Covid-19, as part of the government’s Plan for Jobs.

HS2’s jobs boost is also benefitting those in need, with bespoke initiatives designed to upskill local people who are out of work with the training and accreditation they need to secure a job on HS2. 1,100 individuals who were formerly unemployed have now secured sustainable employment on HS2, and that number is expected to increase in the months and years ahead as the pace of major construction work increases and HS2’s journey extends north.

Mark Thurston, Chief Executive of HS2 Ltd, said: “We’re enormously proud of the progress we’ve made on HS2 since the Prime Minister gave us the go-ahead last year, and despite the challenges of the pandemic. We’ve already launched our first two tunnelling machines, with more to launch in the coming months, and construction of our stations and depots are well underway.

“HS2 is moving forward, creating jobs, enhancing skills, benefiting UK businesses and building a low carbon, high capacity railway that will change the way we travel in Britain.”

Reacting to the news Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: “It’s great to see so much having been achieved in only one year of HS2 construction, with the tunnel boring machines now working to connect London and Birmingham, and station sites being prepared all along the route. Congratulations to everyone involved, including HS2 Ltd and also the UK’s world-class rail supply sector involved in the scheme, on reaching this project milestone.

“HS2 is now supporting 20,000 jobs, and the project is truly showing itself as a vital investment for the UK economy, at such an important time when the Government is seeking to build back better post-Coronavirus.

“The widest benefits of HS2 will only be realised if the scheme is delivered in full. So now let’s get on with delivering the Eastern Leg too, so the whole of HS2 can be built, and the strongest levels of economic growth, jobs and investment unleashed both now and in the future.”

Alongside hitting the landmark of 20,000 jobs on the project and over 650 apprenticeships, HS2 has been making steady progress along the route since Boris Johnson visited the Interchange station site in **September 2020** [read

here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-heralds-formal-start-of-construction-as-a-22-000-jobs-boost-for-britain>].

Selected highlights of the past year include:

**October 2020:** Two huge modular bridges were moved into place at our Interchange station site in Solihull. One 2,750-tonne, 65-metre bridge structure, was installed in just two days. A second, 45 metre, 914 tonne modular bridge over the A446 in Solihull, was moved into place in only 45 minutes [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-completes-construction-milestone-as-914-tonne-modular-br>

[idge-is-moved-into-place-in-45-minutes](#)].

**November 2020:** HS2 invited businesses to tender for £12bn of supply chain contracts to be let over the next 18 months [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/businesses-invited-to-tender-for-gbp-12bn-worth-of-hs2-contracts>].

**December 2020:** HS2 showed off the progress at the Euston station site [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-construction-progresses-at-euston-as-towers-reach-ground-level>].

**January 2021:** Permanent construction of the huge Victoria Road Crossover Box in West London started [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-set-to-start-permanent-construction-of-huge-victoria-road-crossover-box>].

**February 2021:** Parliament gave approval to extend the route north to Crewe [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-accelerates-north-as-mps-give-go-ahead-to-next-phase-to-crewe>].

**March 2021:** Work began on the UK's longest railway bridge, with an expert team of ground engineers sinking the first of almost 300 piles that will form the foundations for the Colne Valley Viaduct [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-begins-work-on-uks-longest-rail-viaduct>].

**April 2021:** HS2 revealed the innovative treatment technology behind the ambitious Colne Valley 'rewilding' project to create 127 hectares of new grassland and woodland around HS2's Chilterns tunnel [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-reveals-the-innovative-slurry-treatment-technology-supporting-the-colne-valley-rewilding-project>].

**May 2021:** Launched 'Florence' – the first of ten Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) that will dig 64 miles of tunnel on Phase One [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/embargoed-historic-moment-as-hs2-launches-first-giant-tunneling-machine>].

**June 2021:** The Transport Secretary gave the go-ahead for the start of permanent works on HS2's west London 'super-hub' station, Old Oak Common [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/transport-secretary-to-give-the-go-ahead-for-start-of-permanent-works-on-hs2s-west-london-super-hub-station>].

**July 2021:** Excavation began for the first of five shafts that will provide ventilation and emergency access to the ten-mile long tunnels being dug under the Chiltern hills [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/excavation-begins-for-hs2s-first-barn-design-tunnel-vent-shaft>].

**August 2021:** Opened a new railhead near the village of Calvert which will help the project continue to

deliver construction material by rail to its biggest Buckinghamshire site without putting extra lorries on local roads [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-takes-extra-24-000-hgvs-off-bucks-roads-as-new-rail-freight-depot-opens>].

**September 2021:** Started work restoring one of the world's oldest railway buildings to incorporate it into HS2's new Birmingham Curzon Street station [read more here: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/news/hs2-starts-work-on-restoring-one-of-the-worlds-oldest-railway-buildings>].

*Photo credit: HS2 Ltd*