EU FUNDS AT WORK

New crane lifts Brčko Port

In July 2026, the Port of Brčko in Bosnia and Herzegovina completed a modernisation programme backed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the EU.

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The new crane is earning revenue for Brčko. PHOTO: RIKON

The Port of Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina's only international river port, reported an increase in cargo throughput by 60% in 2025 from the previous year, while the port ended the year with a profit of about BAM 250,000 (€128,000). In the first six months of 2026, the port generated BAM 1m (€500,000) from cargo handling alone, equivalent to around 70% of its planned full-year volume. The port handles mainly bulk and general cargo, with coal, grain and iron among its key commodities.

A new portal crane supplied by Latvian manufacturer RIKON is currently the port's main source of revenue, according to director Perica Josić. It was delivered and put into operation in March 2024, while the wider modernisation programme, including improvements to cargo handling areas and road and rail access, was formally completed in July 2026.

Double jib

The RIKON crane is an RPS-720 double jib level luffing crane, equipped with a 150-tonne hopper designed specifically for the Brčko project. It has a maximum lifting capacity of 27 tonnes and a 33m outreach. RIKON says it has a nominal working capacity of 550 tonnes per hour when operating with an 11 m³ grab.

The equipment replaces ageing port machinery. Brčko previously relied on two portal cranes with a lifting capacity of 6.5 tonnes that were more than 50 years old. The modernisation was financed through a €10m EBRD loan and a €3.08m EU investment grant through the Western Balkans Investment Framework.

River connection

Brčko is located on the Sava River in northeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, close to the Croatian border. The Sava provides a navigable connection towards the Danube and the wider European inland waterway network. The port's location also gives it access to road and rail networks linking Bosnia and Herzegovina with neighbouring Croatia and the wider region.

The project included the construction of a 263m track linking the railway directly with the quay, reconstruction of about 4.5 km of industrial railway between Brčko Novo station and the port, including 2.87 km of new track, and reconstruction of connections serving the industrial zone. A 900m access road to the port was also reconstructed.

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The new rail connection is already changing the way the port operates. According to Josić, wagon movements that previously took almost two hours can now be completed in around 15 minutes. The direct rail connection to the quay also reduces shunting and gives the port a more efficient link between the vessel, rail network and road transport.

The new infrastructure is also giving the port more scope to use storage as part of its logistics offering. Luka Brčko has around 14,000 m² of open storage space. Josić said the port is working with customers to bring larger quantities of cargo into storage during periods when the Sava has sufficient water levels for navigation, before distributing the goods progressively according to demand. This could allow the port to make better use of favourable river conditions while relying on rail and road connections to move cargo when needed.

