

NIK on EURO 2012

Preparations for EURO 2012 Football Championship have been progressing. Still, substantial delays, as well as abandoned and mismanaged investments, can threaten proper organisation of the event.

An audit carried out by NIK has shown that the stadiums where EURO 2012 matches are to be played will be ready on time. However, in some of them irregularities have been found with regard to compliance with the construction law (in Poznań), while in others delays can occur as for their completion (in Warsaw and in Gdańsk). The modernisations of the Polish airports have been progressing, too, but they will be completed after the planned deadlines. The most serious delays have been found at the airport in Poznań.

According to NIK, the most significant negligence can be observed with regard to the modernisation of road infrastructure. In its previous audit reports (of 2009 and of 2010), NIK alarmed about difficulties with the construction of roads, and now several new problems have been detected. Fourteen sections of roads, 403.9 kilometres long in total, will not be ready before the Tournament, including seven key sections of motorways, 318.9 kilometres long (five on A1 and two on A4). Additionally, seven sections of express roads, 85 kilometres long, will definitely not be ready on time (one on S2, two on S8/S7, one on the Poznań ring road, and three on S5). Three sections of the A18 motorway and six sections of the S5 express road will not be constructed before the Championship, either. Timely completion of two sections of the A2 motorway, 50-kilometres long, is also seriously threatened, transpires from the NIK report.

Since the S8 and S5 express roads, which are the key connections between Warsaw and Wrocław, and between Gdańsk and Poznań respectively, will not be ready before EURO 2012, it may be necessary to implement the programme for revitalisation of railway connections between the host cities, which is being developed by PKP PLK S.A., a company managing the railways in Poland.

Still, even if football fans opt for a train, they may come up against some difficulties. NIK pays attention to several important investments that have been limited by PKP PLK S.A. The company has not provided funds for financing the modernisation of the Warszawa Wschodnia station and of the western section of the Poznań Główny station - line E20. While the Polish Railways (PKP S.A.) have serious delays in the construction of the Poznań Główny and Warszawa Zachodnia railway stations, and in the development of the Warszawa Wschodnia and Warszawa Stadion stations. Until the end of 2010, repairs on the Warszawa Zachodnia station were not started yet, and its location is of key importance for the passenger movement in Warsaw. It is the first and the final station for trains travelling to the east and to the north, as well as the place where passengers change for buses, both international and domestic.

Football fans can also have problems with travelling around the very host cities. In all the four agglomerations, NIK has found delays and cuts in investments related to local transport. For instance, in Gdańsk four key connections, including the one between the airport and the seaport, will be completed after the Tournament. Similarly, the Integrated System for Traffic Management TRISTAR will not be ready for EURO 2012.

NIK also observes that the 2011 budget does not provide sufficient funds for the implementation of the EURO 2012 Safety Programme and for the promotion of Poland as the organiser of the Championship. The cost of 86 projects necessary for providing safety during the event is estimated at PLN 200 million, while in the budget only three-quarters of the sum have been allocated for this purpose.

In the coming months, NIK will commence another audit of the preparations for EURO 2012 to examine, among others, the tender for the construction of the A2 motorway sections realised by the Chinese company named Covec and its progress.