Asset management is an essential part of the road to the future

On September 3 and 4, 2025, Vilnius (Lithuania) hosted the Baltic Road Association conference "The Road to the Future." Industry experts, decision-makers, researchers, and business leaders from across the Baltic States and Europe gathered to discuss innovations and challenges facing the road sector in the future.

The Baltic Road Association was established in 1932. Its activities were suspended during World War II, but resumed in 1989. The Baltic Road Association conference is held every four years in one of the three Baltic countries and serves as a milestone for the achievements of four years of daily cooperation – knowledge exchange and work in various thematic and research working groups.

The Road Asset Management Working Group was established relatively recently within the Baltic Road Association and is one of the newest, addressing topics such as

- classification of listed assets: main groups, groups, elements, asset sets;
- information volume;
- asset linking and measurement reporting systems;
- asset information collection, maintenance, and preservation.

This working group serves as an excellent platform for applying the experience gained in the MERIDIAN project – it provides both practical information on various technical solutions for asset management that have been researched and analysed within the project, and experience, such as the use of equipment purchased within the framework of MERIDIAN, the data obtained and the opportunities they offer in the use of various digital systems. Similarly, the knowledge gained in the project allows us to identify future challenges for the further modernization of asset management systems and cost-effective decision-making on road management.

At the conference, the Road Asset Management Working Group, including MERIDIAN experts Jānis Vilciņš and Mairis Čukurs, shared insights and information gained as a result of the working group's collaboration – commonalities and differences in road asset management among Baltic road administrations, the convenience and application of tools in decision-making processes, challenges in ensuring the volume, relevance, and availability of information, and proposed solutions. The biggest challenges for the future are

- ensuring that information on the current status of assets is always up to date,
- updating data with a certain regularity,
- ensuring that data sources are reliable,
- paying sufficient attention to the verification, validation, and control of information,
- ensuring the frequency and regularity of updates,

- moving towards a unified data environment, interoperability, and data comparability across different time periods.

As emphasized by the Baltic experts in their presentation, asset management cannot and should not be the responsibility of a single colleague or department. Every employee in the company and every stakeholder involved in any stage of the road management and development cycle must understand and recognize their contribution to traceable and transparent asset management. An asset information system helps to transfer information and store it in one place that is accessible to all employees.

PHOTOS:

[1] Coo-authors of the presentation Mairis Čukurs (LV) from the left side and Mehis Leigri (EE)

[2] MERIADIAN expert Mairis Čukurs and the representative of the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia Tālivaldis Vectirāns.

[3] On the floor – the Road Asset Management Working Group: Tomas Kliukas (LT), Mairis Čukurs (LV) and Mehis Leigri (EE).

[4] On the floor – the Road Asset Management Working Group: Mairis Čukurs (LV) and Mehis Leigri (EE).