

Press release

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Royal visit to Fosters Viaduct at Millau

The Duke of Edinburgh visited the Foster and Partners designed new Millau viaduct under construction in southern France yesterday. The Royal visit to Millau underlined the British link with one of Europe's largest single infrastructure projects. The Queen and Prince Philip were on the last day of their three-day state visit to France to mark the 100th anniversary of the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France.

The new viaduct will complete the A75 motorway linking Paris to Barcelona spanning between the high plateaux to the north and south of the Tarn Gorge. This multi-span cable stay road viaduct has 7 masts spaced at equal intervals along its 2.5km length. The steel road deck lies 260m above the River Tarn with the highest mast reaching 340m from the top to the bottom, higher than the Eiffel Tower.

Foster and Partners won the design competition for the Millau viaduct in 1996, in collaboration with an engineering consultancy group led by renowned French engineer, Michel Virlogeux. The 310m Euro project started construction in October 2001 and is due for completion in January 2005. When complete it will hold the record for the highest motorway viaduct in the world.

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