

PRAGUE, 29 November 2022

## Record budget will enable major railway projects to start in 2023

Upcoming construction season presents a number of significant challenges and milestones for Správa železnic. Construction of several line sections to Prague Airport, including the modernisation of Masaryk Station, should get into full swing. The long-awaited start of the modernisation of the Praha-Smíchov and Praha-Bubny stations and the acceleration of the project preparation of high-speed lines are expected. Mid-2023 will bring major relief for passengers on the first corridor, where long-distance trains will return. Financing of the constructions should be based on the record budget in the history of Správa železnic in the estimated amount of CZK 61.9 billion, with the possibility of increasing up to CZK 70.4 billion thanks to the expected EIB loan.

Financing of key railway constructions is secured for next year, despite the difficult economic situation: *"I consider it extremely important that we maintain the pace of rail modernisation and, in some cases, accelerate it. We have a big task ahead of us in the form of high-speed lines, the connection of Václav Havel Airport to the railway or the implementation of the ETCS system. All this is possible thanks to the current financial framework,"* points out Minister of Transport Martin Kupka.

*"Next year, for the first time, the railway is expected to receive the highest amount of funding of all transport sectors. The projected budget is strongly pro-investment and allows not only to cover all ongoing projects, but also above all to start new major constructions. Thus, up to CZK 48.5 billion could be gradually allocated to investment activities alone next year,"* said Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic.

### Constructions in 2023

Next year will be a major step forward for the planned line Praha-Letiště Václava Havla – Kladno (Václav Havel Airport Prague – Kladno). The main works between the stations **Kladno** and **Kladno-Ostrovec** will start, and we expect to start construction in the section **Praha-Bubny – Praha-Výstaviště** and the launch of tenders for the construction **Praha-Ruzyně – Kladno** and **modernisation of Praha Masarykovo nádraží (Prague Masaryk Station)**, which will be significantly expanded and, thanks to the newly built platform, will offer a better connection not only for passengers, when, among other things, the transfer links to metro B will be shortened, but will also enable a direct connection of Hybernská Street with Na Florenci Street.

The extensive **modernisation of Praha-Smíchov station** and the **double-tracking of the Braník Bridge** should also start in the capital next year. A major reconstruction will also begin in Brno, where we will launch a tender for the **modernisation of Brno-Královo**

**Pole station**, which includes the construction of a new station building. The implementation itself should start in 2024. The builders should also focus on the modernisation of another part of the third corridor **within the optimisation of Karlštejn – Beroun section**. The actual implementation should start in 2024. The **installation of the European Train Control System (ETCS)** on the network of Správa železnic.

In 2023, the construction works started at the end of this year will get underway.

**Optimisation of the line between Mstětice and Čelákovice** is the last section on the very busy suburban line from Prague to Lysá nad Labem that has not been reconstructed yet. Expected **electrification and double-tracking of the line Střelice – Zastávka u Brna** will be built on the already completed first stage of the construction between Brno and Střelice.

## Preparation of high-speed lines

Intensive preparation of new high-speed lines (HSL) will continue next year. Design work is underway on almost 200 km of lines and more sections will be added next year. In 2023, the documentation for zoning decision for several lines will be completed, along with documentation for EIA proceedings. Preparations for Design & Build tenders will start and procedures for property settlements will be set up.

## Construction preparation of conventional lines, level crossings

The budget for 2023 will also allow for the smooth project preparation of construction on conventional lines, which will include the purchase of the land affected by the construction. Actions to improve safety at level crossings, including the construction of grade-separated crossings, will also be able to proceed at an accelerated pace.

## Station buildings

Currently 68 station buildings are being reconstructed and are in various stages of development. These are mainly renovations of large listed buildings in České Budějovice, Prague Main Station, Plzeň or Pardubice. For the upcoming period, Správa železnic is preparing the reconstruction or repair of more than 130 other buildings. These include buildings in Karviná, Cheb, Klatovy, České Velenice, Svitavy, Letohrad, Čáslav, Hlinsko v Čechách or Lovosice.

## Overview of the current construction season

The pro-investment budget will allow for a smooth continuation of the current construction season next year. It was mainly in the spirit of extensive modernisation of the first corridor between Prague and Brno and completion of new line sections on the fourth corridor, i.e. between the capital city and České Budějovice. A part of the third corridor between Prague and Plzeň in the section between Prague Smíchov and Radotín was also modernised. In terms of safety, the installation of the highest level of ETCS system between Olomouc and Uničov was completed, where live operation will start on 1 January as the first ever line in the Czech Republic. This busy regional line has undergone extensive modernisation and complete electrification.

On the first corridor, the **modernisation of the line between Brno, Adamov and Blansko** will end on 11 December and after a year of intensive construction work, regional transport and the fast train line R19 will return there. The section has been completely reconstructed. The Adamov station and the stops Bílovice nad Svitavou, Babice nad Svitavou, Adamov stop and Blansko město were modernised. From January, there will be completely unrestricted traffic between Prague and Kolín, where the modernisation of the line between **Velim and Poříčany** will be completed. The main benefit of the construction is the line capacity increase through new branch lines in Cerhenice and Tatce, which, thanks to the insertion of new switches, enable trains to switch from one track to another. This helps, among other things, to manage traffic more efficiently in case of emergencies.

The **reconstruction** of the line **between Brandýs nad Orlicí and Ústí nad Orlicí** will be completed in the middle of next year, which will bring a major change for passengers on the line between Prague and Brno. All long-distance trains will again use the first corridor instead

of diversionary route via Vysočina. The **modernisation of the Pardubice railway junction** will continue until mid-2024, but it will not have a major impact on traffic.