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Subject: The extension of the Prague metro line A

Reference: Your letter to the President of the European Commission of November 2012
Your email to Directorate General Regional and Urban Policy of 7 December 2012
Your letter to Directorate General Regional and Urban Policy of 14 December 2012

Dear Ms Hruběšová, Ms Peiskerová, Ms Valentová, Mr John

The Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) herewith replies to your letter that we received on 26 November 2012, to your e-mail from 7 December 2012 and to your letter from 14 December 2012, by which you informed us that the project of extension of the metro line A and related buildings in Prague has been changed.

The project of extension of the metro line A in Prague was proposed for co-financing from the Cohesion fund under the Operational programme Transport. I would like to clarify that the project as submitted for co-financing does not include the mentioned P+R facility. The project consists only of the extension of the metro line A including supporting construction works to ensure connection of the new route to the existing infrastructure and other public areas.

We are of course aware of the situation relating to the P+R facilities at Dlouhá Míle and Veleslavín. However, based on the above paragraph, the decision on the construction of a P+R facility in both locations is under the full responsibility of the national authorities. This is fully in line with the principle of subsidiarity and shared management.

As already mentioned in our letter from 6 September 2012 sent to Mr Jiri John (Ref. Ares(2012)1039944) and in order to get a full picture, we have contacted the managing authority of the Operational programme Transport (hereafter OPT MA) to obtain further information regarding the mentioned P+R facilities and the Kladno-Prague railway line.

Ing. Jiří John
Chairman of the Civic Association
Veleslavín – Vokovice, a place for living
Ke Dvoru , 774/3
16000 Prague
Czech Republic

M.D. Martina Peiskerová

K Červenámu vrchu 10/151
Prague 6 Veleslavín-Vokovice
Czech Republic

According to the OPT MA information, the construction of the P+R at Dlouhá Míle has been hold up as no further extension of metro line A in that direction is considered. The benefits of the P+R facility at Dlouhá Míle can only be fully exploited if it is connected to the suburban and urban transport system (road, rail, tram, subway etc.) and provides for modal interchange. The update of the strategic plan of the City of Prague suggests that the extension of line A behind Motol station is not realistic at the moment and only a "territorial reserve" is preserved for further extension of the metro line A in a long-term perspective. This means that the P+R at Dlouhá Míle could only be served by road network (Prague ring road). The proposed Veleslavín facility may however deliver the connectivity between different modes of transport for at least a transitional period.

Concerning the modernisation of the railway line Prague-Kladno, the OPT MA states that a new feasibility study is currently being prepared. The study is also including the connection of the Prague airport to the railway network. It appears that the original technical design of the Prague-Kladno railway line was financially and economically unrealistic. This new/updated feasibility study aims at finding an economically and financially efficient solution that is in line with environmental standards. The aim is to construct a competitive railway connection between Prague and Kladno with the connection of the Prague airport. The final proposal should also include the mobility solution for this part of Prague. Outputs from the feasibility study are expected to be available in mid-2013. It may be that instead of the P+R at Dlouhá Míle, a new more suitable location for the P+R facility will be sought. After putting the new P+R facility into operation, the P+R at Veleslavín, if constructed, can be consequently reduced, proportionally to its degree of utilisation.

As regards the potential residual capacity of the Veleslavín P+R, which according to the information that you provided will be offered for commercial lease, this issue does not concern the Structural funds, as explained above. This question should therefore be addressed to the relevant national authorities.

Finally, you mentioned also the possible incompatibility of the Czech EIA law with the EU environmental legislation. In this respect, please be informed that this has been taken up by the Directorate General for Environment, who will decide on the necessary steps. This means in general that in case of wrong transposition of the EU legislation into national law the Commission can launch a so called infringement procedure.

Taking into account the above and the application form submitted to us, I would like to inform you that we consider the project of extension of Prague metro line A compliant with EU policies. The project may therefore receive financial support under the OP Transport.

Yours sincerely

Jack Engwegen

Cc: Charlie Grant, Head of Unit, DG REGIO/B.4
Mr Georges-Stavros Kremlis - Head of Unit, DG ENV/A.3
Eva Hrubešová
Markéta Valentová
M.D. Martina Peiskerová



COMMISSION EUROPEENNE
EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EUROPAISCHE KOMMISSION
B - 1049 BRUXELLES - BRUSSEL

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BELGIQUE-BELGIE
P.B.-P.P.
1957

Ing. Jiri John
Chairman of the Civic Association
Ke Drorru 774/3
Veleslavu - Vokovice
160 00 Prague
Czech Republic