

## Czech Republic: EIB signs a CZK 1.3 billion loan with Central Bohemia Region to improve healthcare and other key infrastructures at #EURegionsWeek



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- More than half of the loan will back healthcare infrastructure
- Financing will also cover transport, social care, education and energy efficiency of public buildings
- New partnership will support regional cohesion

The European Investment Bank (EIB) signed a CZK 1.3 billion loan (equivalent to €48 million) with Středočeský kraj, the Region of Central Bohemia in Czech Republic, to improve healthcare, transport, social care and education infrastructures, as well as to increase energy efficiency of public buildings.

EIB loan will cover the construction, modernisation and optimisation of the medical facilities of the region. It will enable the medical infrastructures to achieve higher efficiency, increased service quality, energy savings, as well as improved emergency preparedness, notably to cope with pandemics such as the COVID-19.

Investment in the transport sector will include improvements of the intra-regional connectivity, which will result in safer roads and reduced traffic congestion. The project will also contribute to improve the quality of public services in the sectors of education and culture, thanks to the construction and rehabilitation of dedicated buildings.

**EIB Vice-President Lilyana Pavlova** said: *Supporting cohesion so that each European region can achieve its full potential is one of the original raisons d'être of the EIB and is now more than ever one of our priorities. I am very pleased to announce this partnership with the Central Bohemia Region of the Czech Republic during the European Week of Regions and Cities. I am convinced that our joint projects will contribute to build sustainable and resilient infrastructure that will enable the region to cope with current and future health, economic and climate challenges. Together we will enhance the attractiveness of the region and increase economic opportunities and the quality of life of all citizens."*

*"In the next four years, the loan will be drawn in the Central Bohemia Region on the basis of individual applications and contracts. The first drawdown should be this year for a total of 52 projects, of which 17 are projects in the field of healthcare (CZK 2 billion), 15 projects in the field of road transport (CZK 449 million), 2 projects in the field of education (CZK 176 million), 4 projects in the field of social affairs (CZK 255 million) and 14 projects in the field of energy savings (CZK 152 million)," specified **Gabriel Kovács, Deputy Governor for Finance (ANO 2011)**.*

This new EIB financing contributes to the Central Bohemia regional plans for development and land-use, which seek to improve the backbone infrastructure of the region and thus boost the economy and improve the quality of public services in the region. The energy efficiency measures included in the project for the rehabilitation and construction of new public buildings are in line with the Central Bohemia Energy Policy. The EIB is also providing technical assistance through its European Local ENergy Assistance (**ELENA**) for deep energy efficiency renovation projects in buildings of organisations administrated by the Central Bohemia Region. As Cohesion Priority Region, Central Bohemia is also receiving EU support to implement its development plans.

The Central Bohemia Region Development Programme 2014-2020 comprises five development priorities for the Region: entrepreneurship and employment, infrastructure and territorial development, human resources and education, countryside and agriculture and environment.

### **About the Central Bohemia Region**

The Central Bohemia Region is located in the centre of Bohemia. It is the largest region of the Czech Republic in terms of size, number of municipalities and population. Its area is 10,929 km<sup>2</sup> and the region represents almost 14% of the territory of the Czech Republic. The region features a high proportion of municipalities with a population of up to two thousand (1,031 municipalities), in which 40.9% of the population lives. As of 30 September 2017, the Central Bohemia Region had a population of

1,348,840 and was the most populous region in the Czech Republic. The population density was 123 people per square kilometer. Economic activity and employment of the population, their average wages and household income have been increasing in the Central Bohemia Region for a long time and the numbers are the second highest in the Czech Republic, with Prague being the first.