

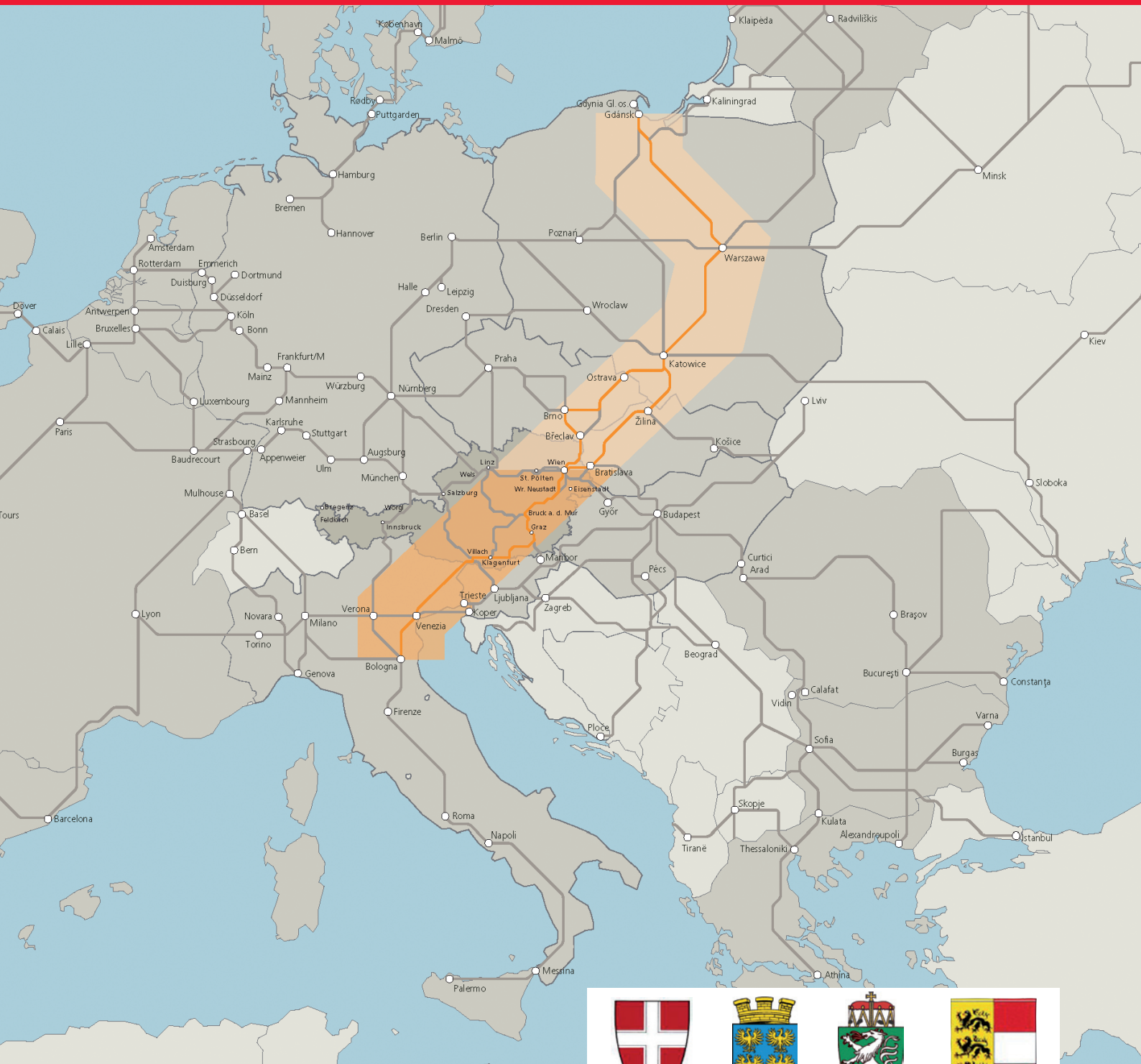


Austrian Ministry  
for Transport,  
Innovation and Technology



# The Baltic-Adriatic Corridor

Austria's measures in creating a continuous high-performance rail connection between the Baltic and the Adriatic



## From Poland to Po-Land: The Baltic-Adriatic Corridor encourages EU integration

The Baltic-Adriatic Corridor, one of the most important north-south routes in Europe and the easternmost crossing of the Alps, connects the Baltic Sea with the Adriatic. It runs through Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Italy and thus traverses Europe's former fracture line to connect upwardly mobile economic regions in three new member countries with

economically important agglomerations in Austria, and northern Italy. Consequently it contributes to the European process of growing together once again. The corridor forms important hinterland connections from the Baltic and the Adriatic to the economic areas Warszawa, Upper Silesia and Moravia, east and south-east Austria (Wien, Upper Styria, Graz and

Klagenfurt-Villach) as well as northern Italy. In addition it represents an important connection to other priority axes of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T): for example at the junction Vienna with the TEN 17 axis Paris-Vienna-Bratislava. It is thus one of the most important trans-European railway axes for both passenger and freight traffic.

## TEN priority axis No 23 between Gdańsk and Vienna/Bratislava

As early as 2004 the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor between Gdańsk and Vienna/Bratislava was declared a high-priority rail axis (TEN project No 23). Accordingly the development of the rail infrastructure in this section of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor was (and still is being) pushed ahead. The goal is to substantially reduce travel times and transport costs. Speeds of 160km/h for passenger trains and 120 km/h for freight trains should be standard in the future.

For the following reasons the extension of the TEN priority project No 23 from Vienna/Bratislava through southern Austria and northern Italy as far as the Adriatic is a logical step:

- The investments in the priority axis No 23 both planned and already made can only develop their full economic and ecological effect when there is a continuous connection in the flow of freight and passengers towards the south.
- With the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor Europe obtains an additional, transalpine north-south connection that relieves the demands made on other transport axes.
- Through the extension of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor the new EU member countries Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia in particular will be provided with enormously improved access to the economic and population centres of eastern Austria and northern Italy.



## Letter of Intent: Neighbouring countries advocate extension of the TEN axis No 23

The states through which the route runs, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Italy join forces in advocating the extension of the TEN priority axis 23 from Vienna/ Bratislava via southern Austria to Italy. The joint goal is to establish a high-

performance rail infrastructure along the entire length of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor. The "Letter of Intent" signed in 2006 is the joint international statement of commitment to this project.

The major current infrastructural


bottlenecks are on Austrian territory. In contrast in Italy there are fewer stretches that need to be improved. In Poland, Czech Republic and in Slovakia numerous sections have already been upgraded.

**Letter of Intent**

on the Development of the Baltic-Adriatic Transport Corridor including the extension of the existing Pan-European Transport Corridor VI  
Gdansk – Warszawa – Katowice – Zilina with branches to Poznań and  
Breclav/Brno, to Bratislava/Wien – Graz – Klagenfurt – Udine –  
Trieste/Venezia – Bologna


Signed in Luxemburg, October 12, 2006

**For the Republic of Austria:**



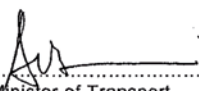
.....  
the Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology

**For the Czech Republic:**

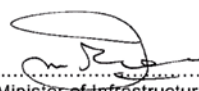


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the Minister of Transport

**For the Republic of Italy:**

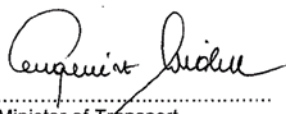


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the Minister of Transport



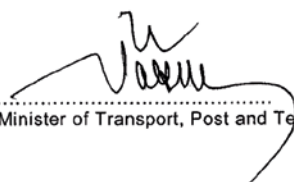
.....  
the Minister of Infrastructure

**For the Republic of Poland:**






a.k. 

.....  
the Minister of Transport

**For the Slovak Republic:**



.....  
the Minister of Transport, Post and Telecommunication

With the "Letter of Intent" the neighbouring countries advocated the extension of the TEN priority axis No 23.

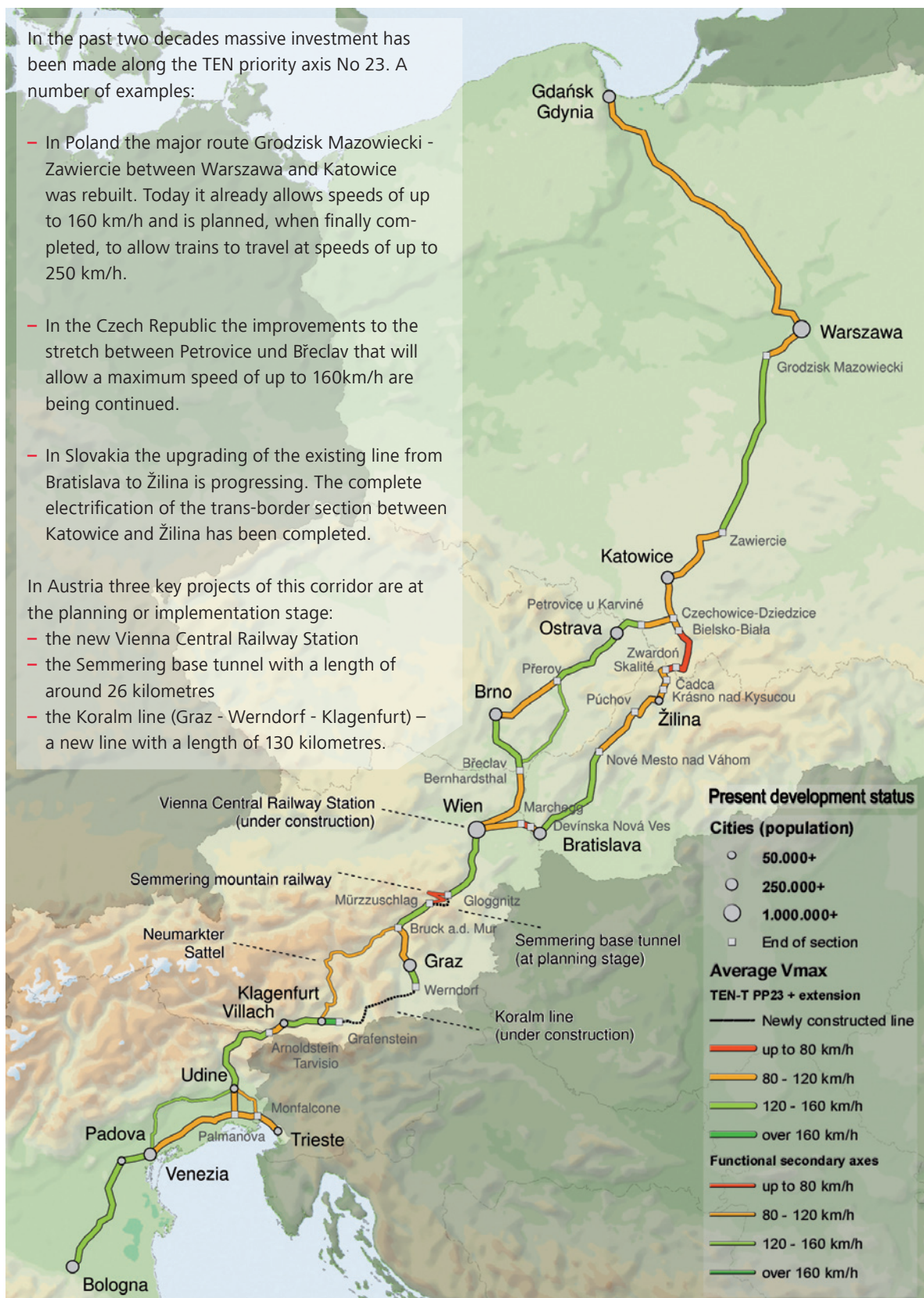
## Current state of development of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor

In the past two decades massive investment has been made along the TEN priority axis No 23. A number of examples:

- In Poland the major route Grodzisk Mazowiecki - Zawiercie between Warszawa and Katowice was rebuilt. Today it already allows speeds of up to 160 km/h and is planned, when finally completed, to allow trains to travel at speeds of up to 250 km/h.
- In the Czech Republic the improvements to the stretch between Petrovice und Břeclav that will allow a maximum speed of up to 160km/h are being continued.
- In Slovakia the upgrading of the existing line from Bratislava to Žilina is progressing. The complete electrification of the trans-border section between Katowice and Žilina has been completed.

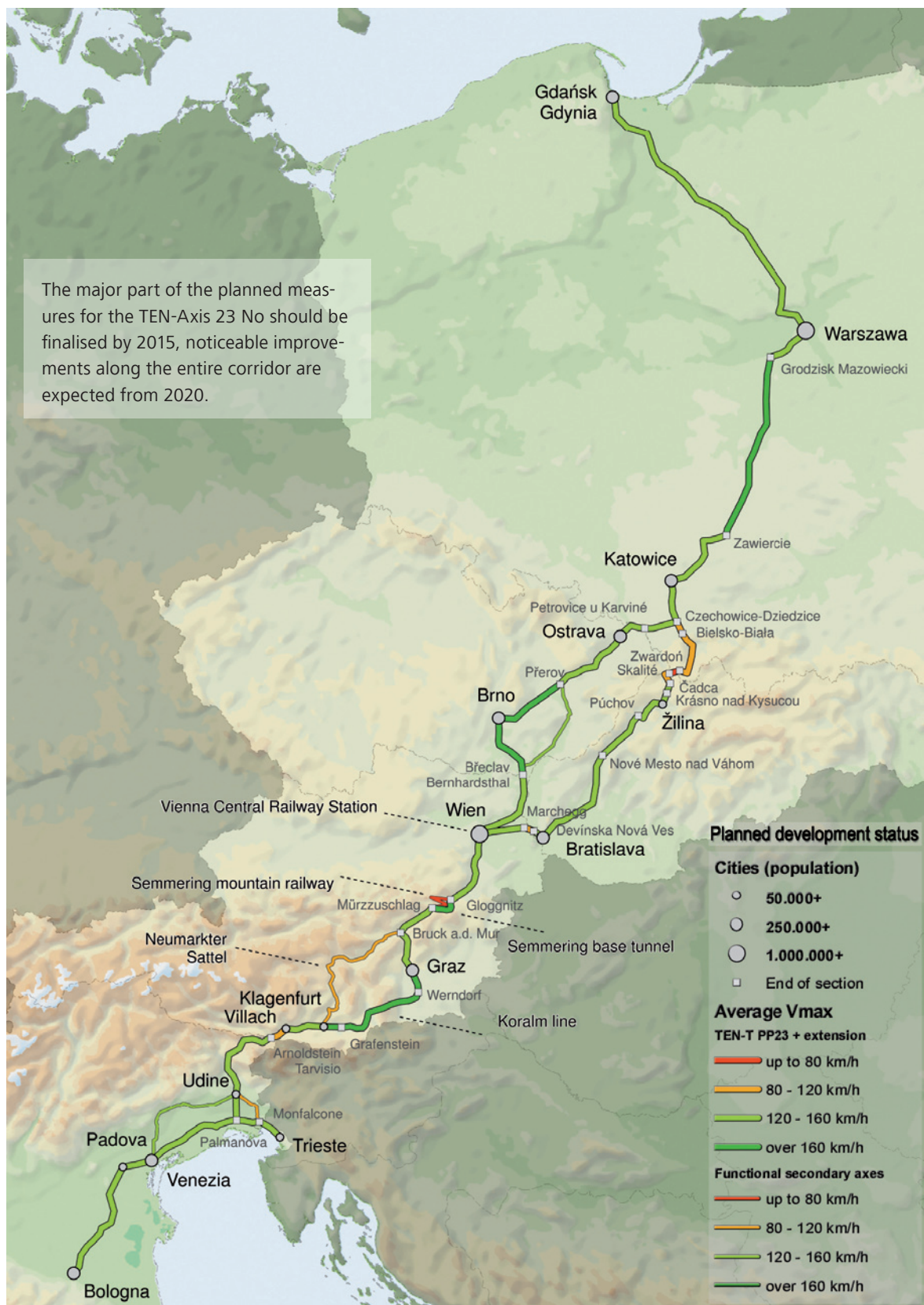
In Austria three key projects of this corridor are at the planning or implementation stage:

- the new Vienna Central Railway Station
- the Semmering base tunnel with a length of around 26 kilometres
- the Koralm line (Graz - Werndorf - Klagenfurt) – a new line with a length of 130 kilometres.



## Targeted level of development for the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor

The major part of the planned measures for the TEN-Axis 23 should be finalised by 2015, noticeable improvements along the entire corridor are expected from 2020.



## Advantages & potential of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor for Europe

### Important European freight traffic axis with growth potential:

With a freight traffic volume of 24 million tons per year in the area Semmering/Wechsel the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor is one of the most important Alpine crossings in Europe. It thus almost matches the Gotthard in Switzerland (26 million tons annually). The corridor connects traditionally economically strong regions with emerging economic areas in three new EU member states. A high-performance rail connection from the Baltic to the Adriatic is therefore a necessary precondition for further economic development along the corridor route. By transferring the flow of freight traffic to the more environmentally friendly rail system the corridor additionally makes an important contribution to achieving climate goals as formulated in international agreements.

### Considerable potential in the area of passenger traffic:

There are numerous conurbations and agglomerations along the Baltic-Adriatic axis. The continuous high-performance rail connection therefore offers enormous potential for connecting and transporting passengers. In addition, the population in areas presently poorly served by rail transport will be provided with massively improved access to the rail system.

### Sensible connection of freight traffic by water and rail:

A continuous high-performance corridor offers the landlocked countries of Central Europe rapid connections to the Baltic and Adriatic ports. Thus when fully completed it represents an exceptional opportunity to reduce the strain on the currently severely



stressed north-south connections that begin at the North Sea ports.

### Connections with important Trans-European axes:

The Baltic-Adriatic Corridor crosses many major transport axes thus

allowing efficient transport links to other important European economic regions. It crosses a total of seven of the ten Pan-European corridors and six of the 30 priority TEN axes. This close linking makes the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor into a backbone of the Central European transport infrastructure.



*The linking of water – road – rail will become increasingly important*



- **node area Gdańsk/Gdynia/Malbork**
    - towards Rīga, Tallinn, Helsinki (Ia, PP21 "Motorway of the Sea")
  - **node Warszawa**
    - towards Rīga, Tallinn, Helsinki (I and „Rail Baltica“ PP27)
    - towards Berlin, Moskva (II)
  - **node Katowice**
    - towards L'viv, Kiev (III),
  - **junction Žilina**
    - towards Košice, L'viv (Va),
  - **node area Brno/Břeclav**
    - towards Praha, București, Constanța, Sofia, Athina, Istanbul (IV and PP22),
  - **node area Bratislava/Wien (Twin City Region)**
    - towards Praha, Constanța, Athina, Istanbul (IV and PP22)
    - towards Budapest, L'viv (V)
    - towards Paris, München, Budapest (PP17 and "Main Line for Europe")
    - towards Rotterdam, Constanța (VII and „Rhine-Main-Danube Axis“ PP18)
  - **node area Bruck a.d. Mur/Graz**
    - towards Maribor, Ljubljana, Koper, Zagreb (Xa, "Pyhrn-Schober Axis"),
  - **node area Klagenfurt/Villach**
    - towards Ljubljana, Zagreb, Beograd, Sofia, Thessalonki (X, Tauern Axis)
  - **node Udine/Triest/Venezia**
    - towards Lyon, Milano, Budapest, L'viv (V, PP6 and PP21 "Motorway of the Sea")
  - **node area Verona/Bologna**
    - towards Berlin, München, Roma, Napoli, Palermo (PP1)
    - towards Lyon, Milano, Budapest (V, PP6)
- Note:*  
I, II, III etc. = Pan-European corridors  
PP 21, PP 22 etc. = Priority axes

## Austria as a bottleneck on the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor. What needs to be done?



*In Austria the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor crosses the Alps*

The Baltic-Adriatic Corridor runs for about 455 kilometres through Austria. Currently it only meets the requirements of an efficient international long distance transport connection in a number of stretches. This is due above all to topographical

conditions: in Austria the corridor crosses the Alps. In addition, large sections of the line date from the era of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and since that time only sections have been brought up to date. In particular three bottlenecks on Austrian terri-

tory massively limit the efficiency of the corridor:

- node Vienna
- crossing of the Semmering
- the Neumarkter Sattel, a mountain pass where the railway line is bypassing the region of Graz in a big loop



*The new Vienna Central Railway Station as a through station*





*The stretch leading over the Semmering is 150 years old and is Europe's oldest mountain railway*

To eliminate these bottlenecks in the corridor Austria is currently pushing ahead with three key projects as well as a number of other construction plans. These are anchored in the federal government's infrastructure framework plan (2009 - 2014). There is therefore a clear statement of commitment to implementing these projects.

The new **Vienna Central Railway Station** will be erected as a through station. With the creation of a high-performance north-south and east-west connection this railway station will become Austria's most important hub for regional, national and international travel traffic and a central node in the trans-European rail network.

This project with an investment volume of around 0.9 billion € is already under construction as part of the TEN priority axis No17 (Paris - Bratislava). In the future around 1,000 trains and 145,000 people will use the new

Vienna Central Railway Station daily. The station will start operations (initially at a limited scale) at the end of 2012 and will thus reorganise rail traffic far beyond the borders of Vienna. Train passengers will experience a new level of quality. As an international node Vienna Central Railway Station will appeal to new markets and will connect people.

The 26-kilometre-long **Semmering base tunnel** will eliminate the diversion taken by the mountain route that has been in existence for 150 years along with all its restrictions, and on this stretch alone will result in a reduction of travel time of almost half an hour. Additionally, as it will be built as a flat line (0,85% gradient rather than up to 2,5% at present), the Semmering base tunnel will allow the unrestricted travel of heavy freight trains with just a single locomotive. The new route was decided upon in 2008. From a current perspective con-

struction should start in 2012/13, the targeted completion date is 2022. The investment volume amounts to around 2.8 billion €.

The **Koralmbahn railway** will be a new 130-km-long, two track, electrified line that will directly connect the south-east Austrian cities of Graz and Klagenfurt. It thus avoids the mountainous stretch of existing southern railway line over what is known as the Neumarkter Sattel and at the same time integrates Graz (Austria's second-largest city) in the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor. The travel time between Graz and Klagenfurt will, as a result, be reduced from almost three hours to less than one hour. This fundamental reorganisation of the spatial structure and of accessibility results in additional potential for the southern provinces amounting to hundreds of millions. Work on the Koralmbahn line has been going on since 2001. Since the end of 2008 work has been underway on the

first section of the 33-kilometre-long Koralm tunnel, the main part of the Koralm line. The total investment volume amounts to around 5.2 billion €. By the end of 2008, 800 million € of this had already been invested.

At the same time as the Koralm line the node Graz will be developed to provide a better link between the two main axes Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and Corridor Xa (Graz - Maribor - Zagreb). In addition the Pyhrn-Schober-Axis and the Styrian eastern railway line (Graz - Szentgotthárd) will be connected to the nodes. Due to the anticipated increase in traffic facilities at Graz Main Railway Station have to be adapted. Construction work on this extensive infrastructure project was started in May 2009. Completion is scheduled for 2016.



The new node at Graz connects the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor with the Corridor Xa

Austria unambiguously commits itself to three key projects and at the same time advocates the recognition of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor as a high-priority TEN-axis and part of the high

priority European transport network ("TEN-T core network"). As a result this axis with its strategic importance for European integration would receive appropriate recognition from the

EU. Funds from TEN subsidies would facilitate the speedier implementation of the projects and would thus secure the long-term development of the infrastructure.



The 33-kilometre-long Koralm tunnel is among Europe's longest tunnels

## The advantages of the Austrian Baltic-Adriatic Corridor projects at a single glance:

- Elimination of the greatest bottle-necks along the entire corridor.
- Important contribution to the creation of a continuous high-performance transalpine connection between the Baltic and the Adriatic.
- Intermodal linking of traffic flows and connection to numerous other main European axes.
- Important contribution to the elimination of disadvantages that result from the location of the southern federal provinces – especially through the construction of the Koralm railway and the incorporation of the Graz area in the corridor.
- Vienna Central Railway Station: construction of the most important railway hub in Central Europe. Trains from the north, south, east and west no longer terminate at stub end terminal stations but can be connected internationally.
- Reduction of the travel times in 2025: between Vienna and Graz from about two-and-a-half hours at present to one-and-three-quarter

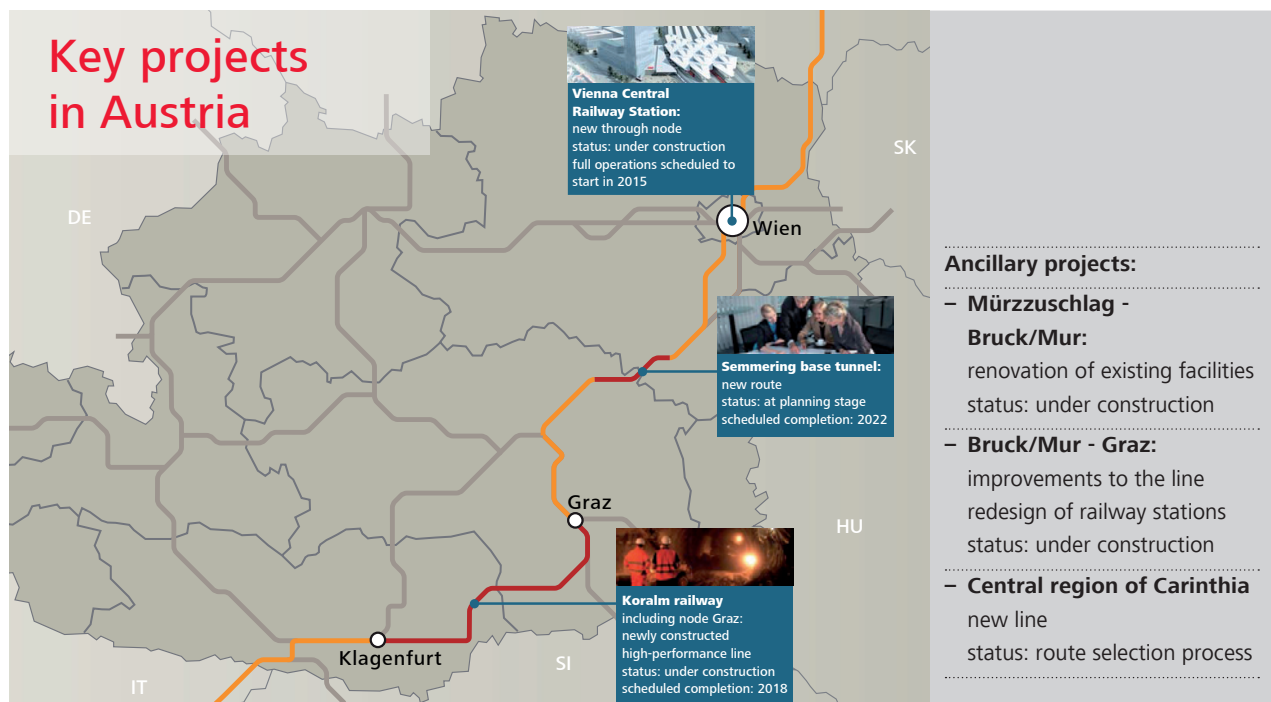


hours; between Graz and Klagenfurt from almost three hours at present to less than one hour, and between Vienna and Klagenfurt from around four hours at present to about two-and-a-half hours in the future.

- More rail freight transport thanks to the fact that the route is conceived as a flat line and to the massive

reductions in travel time. Increased competitiveness of rail as compared to truck, improvement of the modal split.

- High potential for accessing new markets in passenger traffic through the clearly increased attractiveness of the route and better access to the line.



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