



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Regional railway holding company BeNEX procures modern trains for Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg**

- **From December 2024, 23 modern Siemens Mireo trains will serve passengers on the Nuremberg–Regensburg–Plattling regional railway line.**
- **BeNEX rail operator agilis was awarded the contract for operating the entire Regensburg-Danube Valley rail network in May.**
- **The financing of the trains is backed by a guarantee from the Free State of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.**

New regional trains will soon run on the Nuremberg–Regensburg–Plattling line. Private rail holding company BeNEX has ordered 23 new four-car Mireo trains from Siemens for the regional railway line connecting Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg along the Danube. The trains will enter service in December 2024 for a period of 24 years. The line is part of the Regensburg-Danube Valley network. In May 2021, rail operator agilis, a subsidiary of BeNEX, won the contract for this regional rail network in a Europe-wide call to tender.

agilis leases the newly acquired trains using a special-purpose, fixed-term model. A consortium of banks finances the total investment cost. The corporate and investment banking arm of the Crédit Agricole Group (Crédit Agricole CIB) and Norddeutsche Landesbank-Girozentrale (NORD/LB) are participating in the consortium alongside the European Investment Bank (EIB), which has granted a promotional loan of around €90 million. In the consortium, Crédit Agricole CIB acted as lead arranger and sole agent, and NORD/LB as arranger.

Under the leasing structure, the loans are transferred to a special purpose vehicle and secured by a debt service guarantee from the Free State of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg during the operational phase. Once the current transport contract expires in 2036, the Bavarian and Baden-Württemberg public transport companies can therefore reassign it to a service provider until 2048 while continuing to use the lease agreement for the trains because it is financed for 24 years. The trains are specifically tailored to the region's mobility needs.

In Germany, regional rail transport is co-financed by the federal states. Europe-wide calls for tender are regularly held for contracts lasting between ten and 15 years to stimulate competition among suppliers. The debt service guarantee significantly reduces the cost of capital for the bidders participating in the calls for tender. As a result, the bid prices are lower, which is an advantage for the federal states.

BeNEX Chief Executive Dr Michael Vulpius says the following about the regional rail project: "The procurement procedure of the Free State of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg for the Regensburg-Danube Valley regional railway network has clearly defined future regional mobility needs, while providing a basis for financing the shift to cleaner transport on attractive terms. With the contract awarded to the smart bid with Mireo put together by quality leader agilis, the company is looking forward to contributing to passenger satisfaction and further passenger growth. We would like to thank the three banks involved for their seamless cooperation in the financing of the project and the trust they have shown us."

EIB Vice-President Ambroise Fayolle welcomes the modernisation project: "We are delighted to support the modernisation of local transport links between Nuremberg and the Regensburg area. Attractive

regional trains foster the transition to climate-friendly mobility by encouraging commuters to switch from road to rail, thus avoiding the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and congestion caused by the use of private transport.”

## Background information

**BeNEX** GmbH is part of listed infrastructure investment company International Public Partnerships Ltd. (INPP). In Germany, the company's shareholdings include regional rail operators nordbahn (Schleswig-Holstein), metronom (Lower Saxony), ODEG (East Germany), cantus (Hessen) and agilis (Bavaria). INPP is a long-term investor in infrastructure projects. It has invested over €2.5 billion in more than 130 projects involving utility and transport companies, schools, courts and police headquarters in the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia and North America.

The **European Investment Bank** (EIB) is the long-term lending institution of the European Union, owned by its Member States. It makes long-term finance available for sound investment in order to contribute towards EU policy goals. In particular, it finances projects that support the transition to a climate-friendly economy.

**Crédit Agricole CIB** is the corporate and investment banking arm of the Crédit Agricole Group, the twelfth largest banking group in the world measured by Tier 1 capital (The Banker, July 2021). Nearly 8 600 employees in Europe, North and South America, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and Africa work with the bank's clients and support them worldwide in meeting their financial needs. Crédit Agricole CIB offers companies and institutional clients a variety of products and services covering capital markets, investment banking, structured finance, commercial banking and international trade. The bank is also a pioneer and market leader in the field of climate finance and provides its clients with a comprehensive range of products and services in this segment.

With total assets of €117 billion, **NORD/LB Norddeutsche Landesbank** is one of Germany's leading commercial banks. As a public bank, it is part of the S-Financial Group. Its core businesses cover specialised lending in energy and infrastructure, including rail transport. Currently, financing volumes for infrastructure projects amount to around €4 billion. The bank supports its clients from its headquarters in Hanover, Braunschweig and Magdeburg, in addition to branches in ten other locations in Germany and abroad.

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