
Electrification goes live in northern Portugal

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Prime Minister António Costa and Housing & Infrastructure Minister Pedro Nuno Santos attended ceremonies on July 16 to mark completion of two electrification schemes on routes north of Porto. Both projects are part of the government's Ferrovia 2020 investment plan.

A 14.2 km section of the Porto - Pocinho Douro Valley line has been wired at 25 kV 50 Hz between Caíde and Marco de Canaveses at a cost of €10,5 m. This will enable the Porto suburban network to be extended as far as Marco de Canaveses. Electrification of the rest of the line has been proposed, but for now passengers continuing up the valley on the popular tourist route towards Régua and Pocinho will need to change to connecting DMU services at Marco de Canaveses.

A 44 km section of the Minho line between Nine and Viana do Castelo has also gone live. This forms part of a wider upgrading of the Porto - Vigo route which crosses into Spain. Electrification has been undertaken at a cost of €16,5 m and paves the way for direct inter-city trains between Viana do Castelo and Lisboa.

Regional services to and from Porto are to be accelerated by around 12 min, while the Porto - Vigo journey time is expected to fall by around 10 min thanks to investment in track renewals and resignalling. This is also intended to allow 750 m long freight trains to use the route.

Electrification work is already underway over the 48 km between Viana do Castelo and Valença on the border with Spain.

(Railway Gazette)