

## **Abstract**

The subject of this diploma thesis is a comparison of the liberalisation of passenger rail transport on the example of the Czech Republic and Austria. Based on the legislative framework of the European Union, which both countries have to follow not merely in the field of transport policy, the aim of the thesis is to compare the situation in the two neighbouring Central European countries. Regarding the research, literature and other sources, the thesis focuses on a comparative analysis of how the two countries, comparable in terms of size and population, approach liberalisation. In this thesis, I conclude that the liberalization of the EU passenger rail market process in the Czech Republic and Austria through railway packages is undertaken by different methods. Whilst in the Czech Republic the “vertical separation” is used, where the infrastructure manager and carrier are two different subjects, which leads to business competition objectivity, in Austria the infrastructure manager and the carrier remain in one holding arrangement in relation to the subsidiary companies. It is important to analyse both of the approaches continuously, especially with regard to the period of 2023-2033, which is to be the last transitional decade, followed by absolute liberalisation of the passenger rail market. Subsequently all transport lines will have to be competed by the customer. Yet we can say that market liberalisation and the entering of the competing carriers to the market have improved the quality of rail travel.