

EU2022.CZ, ECONOMY, POLICY AND STRATEGY

For your notes

CZPRES: Croatia is member of Schengen area

Thursday, December 8 | ČIANEWS

The interior ministers of the European Union member countries approved Croatia's entry into the Schengen area with effect from January 1, 2023. Their decision was announced on December 8, 2022 by the Czech Presidency (CZPRES) in the Council of the EU, stating that after more than ten years, Croatia becomes the 27th member of the European free movement zone. The ministers did not agree on the admission of Romania and Bulgaria. ■

EU to expand allowances to iron and fertilizer importsTuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU (CZPRES) announced the reaching of a preliminary agreement between EU member states and the European Parliament on the introduction of a carbon duty to be paid by suppliers of iron, steel and fertilizers when imported into the Union. CZPRES, which represented the member countries at the meeting, further stated that the agreement must be confirmed by the ambassadors of the EU member countries and the EP. It should apply from October 2023. It introduces the obligation for importers to purchase special certificates that will balance the difference between the price of emissions in the exporting country and the cost of emission allowances in the EU. ■

Válek concluded CZ PRES health agenda at EPSCOMonday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Minister of Health Vlastimil Válek (TOP 09) concluded the substantive agenda of the Czech Presidency at the meeting of the Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Protection (EPSCO) on December 9, 2022. As part of CZ PRES, the health ministers adopted, among other things, the regulation for health data (EHDS) and the draft regulation on blood, tissues and cells (BTC). They also adopted the Revision of the Council's recommendations on cancer screening and approved the conclusions on vaccination as a tool for disease prevention. The minister said that improving the quality of oncology care was one of the priorities of the Czech presidency. He added that the goal was, among other things, to restore citizens' trust in vaccination. V. Válek handed over the imaginary scepter to the Swedish Minister of Health Acko Aknarberg Johansson. ■

SP: Energy support for firms needs to be notified to ECThursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Support for large companies with energy prices needs to be notified to the European Commission (EC) as soon as possible. In reaction to the presented government support, this statement was made by the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (SP). Specific conditions also needed to be clarified. Vice-president Jan Rafaj perceives this support as a certainty for companies' planning in 2023. The chosen concept based on the Temporary Crisis Framework is not limited by capping. He added that additional support had to be very targeted, such as a complementary programme according to the Temporary Crisis Framework or kurzarbeit. Support for large companies will be launched on January 1, 2023 via the price-capping mechanism (CZK 5,000/MWh of electricity and CZK 2,500/MWh of gas, excluding VAT). ■

CR provides CZK 38.3bn for research, below EU averageWednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2021, the state supported research and development with CZK 38.3bn from its budget, which represented 2.0% of the budget expenditure. According to the Czech Statistical Office, these expenditures remained almost identical compared to the previous year (+ CZK 0.2bn), but their share in the state budget and GDP decreased. The most important provider of public support was the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, from whose budget CZK 15bn went to research. Hospitals received CZK 1.3bn and CZK 1.2bn was made available to support international cooperation in this area. In the area of specific objectives, the state released the largest amount of funds to support R&D in the field of industrial production and technology. This amounted to CZK 4.6bn. The Czech Republic was below the EU average of 0.75% in terms of the share of state expenditure on R&D to GDP (0.63%). ■

NKÚ: Mobile services among most expensive in EuropeMonday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The prices of calls and mobile data in the Czech Republic were also among the highest in Europe in 2021. While in Poland, Germany and Austria the price of a package containing 100 calls (188 minutes) and 2 GB of data was on average CZK 338, it cost customers in the Czech Republic CZK 1,151. The price was higher (+ CZK 17) only in Hungary. This was reported by the Supreme Audit Office (NKÚ) as part of the inspection of the Czech Telecommunications Office (ČTÚ). The ČTÚ auction of radio spectrum frequencies from 2020, which was supposed to lead to lower prices and increased competition, did not meet expectations. The three existing large operators shared the frequencies without significant competition. Income from the auction in the amount of CZK 5.6bn was significantly lower than the ČTÚ had planned (CZK 7bn). The NKÚ further found that the cost of providing basic postal services doubled between 2013 and 2020, even though their volume fell by half. ■

MZV: V. Bálek is President of UN Human Rights Council

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations in Geneva, Václav Bálek, has been elected President of the UN Human Rights Council. The Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MZV) announced that this is the first time that a Czech representative will chair the main intergovernmental body of the UN in the field of human rights. The chairman is expected to be a neutral arbitrator who works for all member states of the Council. According to the ministry, the Czech Republic is well acquainted with these parameters for the performance of the function from its presidency of the Council of the EU. ■

ČLFA members provide EUR 2.7bn loans in H1 2022

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

European non-banking companies represented in the Eurofinas association provided new loans of EUR 249bn (up 14% year on year) in the first half of 2022. They increased in all categories for personal consumption. The funding of used cars grew dramatically, by more than one-fifth, to EUR 31.5bn. Members of the Czech Leasing and Financial Association (ČLFA, the Czech Republic's representative to Eurofinas) financed business investments and household loans in the amount of EUR 2.7bn (up 14.7%). Among other things, the association recorded a decrease in consumer funding of new cars by 10.6% to CZK 1.8bn but a 3% increase to CZK 2.1bn for used cars. Eurofinas board member and ČLFA board chairwoman Jana Hanušová said that Eurofinas expected private consumption to grow 3.7% in 2022 and to stagnate in 2023. ■

V. Válek: Shortage of Nurofen for children is Europe-wide

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

According to Minister of Health Vlastimil Válek (TOP 09), the problem with the lack of Nurofen in the form of syrup for children is a pan-European one, not only in the Czech Republic. The minister called on the State Institute for Drug Control (SÚKL) to act more quickly in the area of drug shortages and also to negotiate with manufacturers to deal with it. According to him, 300,000 packages of the medicine will be available before Christmas, the delivery of which was arranged on December 13, 2022. He added that the amendment to the Medicines Act, which will address their shortcomings, is in the comment process. ■

P&P: Rents in offices significantly grow after ten years

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Office tenants are preparing for the first major price hike in a decade. The consulting company Prochazka & Partners (P&P) reported that lease agreements usually contain inflation clauses that give landlords the option to increase the rent by inflation. The rate of increase then depends on whether the rent is paid in Czech crowns or euros. While in the first case, the increase can be up to 18%, in the case of the euro, in which most contracts on the office market are denominated, an increase of approximately 8% can be expected. However, it is necessary to take into account up to 50% increase in service charges compared to 2021. This will be especially noticeable in offices with lower rents, where charges have normally accounted for 25-30% of the nominal rent. Currently, they may reach levels of 50-60%. ■

Sales of industry in SR up 7 pct

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Sales in industry in Slovakia in October 2022 increased by 7% year-on-year. A positive result was recorded by 13 of the 16 monitored sectors. The result was most significantly influenced by sales growth in the production of metals (+21.1%), means of transport (+9.2%) and electrical equipment (+28.6%). A more significant decrease was recorded in the supply of electricity and gas (-17.8%). Sales in the construction industry decreased by 2.5%. In summary, for the ten months of 2022, sales grew by double digits in transport and storage (+25.6%) and in information and communication activities (+14.6%). Industry grew by 7.7% and construction fell by 2.5%. The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic informed about it. ■

SZÚ: CR on verge of respiratory infection epidemic

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The State Health Institute records an increase in the incidence of acute respiratory infections, including influenza, in all regions and all age groups in the 49th week of 2022. It currently reached a value of 1,754 per 100,000 persons, which represents a week-on-week increase of 20.4%. In the case of so-called flu diseases, the infection rate increased by 112% and it can be assumed that the number of patients will increase. The Institute further informed that it is mainly influenza type A that circulates in the Czech and European population. According to it, the Czech Republic is on the verge of an ARI epidemic. ■

CzechTourism: No. of tourists in hotels up to 1.3 million

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In October 2022, 1.3 million people visited hotels in the Czech Republic, up 23% y/y; 51% of the guests were from abroad. This was reported by CzechTourism based on data from the Czech Statistical Office, adding that there were 8% fewer visitors to hotels in October 2019 compared to the same period before the wedding. The largest number of visitors were Germans, whose number increased by 5% compared to October 2019 to 192,000. Germans were followed by Slovaks (61,000, +22%) and Poles (44,000, +24%). ■

For your notes

No. of visitors to accommodation facilities in SR up 60 %

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The total number of visitors to tourism accommodation facilities in Slovakia in October 2022 increased by almost 60% year-on-year to 449,000 guests. Compared to October 2019, this is a decrease of 21.6%. Guests spent more than 1.1 million nights in tourism facilities. The average length of stay was 2.5 nights. In total, 4.1 million visitors stayed in tourism establishments from January to October 2022. The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic informed about it. ■

ACEA: ŠKODA registrations in EU+EFTA+UK up 15%

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first eleven months of 2022, ŠKODA AUTO recorded a 9.6% year-on-year decrease in registrations on the EU+EFTA+UK markets to 491,167 new cars. Its market share dropped from 5.0% to 4.8%. The brand reported 45,332 registrations in November, up 15.4% year on year. Its market share remained at 4.5%, according to data published by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA). ■

ACEA: Luca de Meo will be new president from January

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) has elected a new president. As of January 1, 2023, Renault Group CEO Luca de Meo will replace BMW Group CEO Oliver Zipse in this position. Commenting on his appointment, Luca de Meo said that his aim is for Europe to rapidly implement policies to ensure that decarbonisation is achieved. ■

AutoSAP: Production grows to 1.12m cars by November

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first eleven months of 2022, 1,118,639 cars were manufactured in the Czech Republic, up by 9.3% year on year. ŠKODA AUTO made 636,054 cars, of which 65,248 were e-cars. Hyundai increased its production by 15.5% to 296,900 cars. E-cars made up more than 19.9% of them. Toyota manufactured 185,685 cars (up 36.1%). In this period, 4,859 buses (up 12.9%) and 1,557 motorcycles (up 59.9%) were produced. The segment of electrically powered cars exceeded 11% of the domestic production of all motorised vehicles. The production of electric cars totalled 124,202, while 44 electric buses were made, according to the information provided by the Automotive Industry Association (AutoSAP). ■

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

Govt approved regulation on calculation of levies from excess income of electricity producers

Thursday, December 8 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The government approved the draft regulation of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, which establishes the method of determining the amount of excess income from the sale of produced electricity. The Minister of Industry and Trade, Jozef Síkela (STAN), said that the introduction of the national regulation is necessary for the implementation of the tax on excess income. It will be intended to cover the costs of assistance for households and businesses with high energy prices. The application of the levy on the excess income of electricity producers follows on from the setting of ceilings for producers' market income depending on the type of energy source used. The amendment to the Energy Act, of which the aforementioned draft regulation is a part, introduces into the Czech legal system a part of the EU Council Regulation of October 6, 2022, which deals with high energy prices in an emergency situation. ■

Large companies will pay CZK 6,000 and 3,000/MWh

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Following the price cap, large businesses will pay the same prices as the government has previously set for households and small businesses from January 1, 2023, until the end of the year. This means CZK 5,000/MWh for electricity and CZK 2,500/MWh for gas supply (both amounts are without VAT and distribution fees; with VAT it will be CZK 6,000 and 3,000). Its regulation was approved by the government on December 14, 2022. It will be possible to combine the capping with subsidy assistance under the Temporary Crisis Framework. However, the total state aid for one company must not exceed EUR 4m, i.e. roughly CZK 100m. As in the case of small companies, the capping will apply up to 80% of the highest monthly consumption of the last five years. ■

ÚOHS: EC revised guidelines for broadband networks support

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On December 12, 2022, the European Commission (EC) adopted a revision of the communication on state aid for broadband networks. The new rules take into account developments in technology, regulation, and the market, as well as the EU's current political priorities in the digital area. State aid measures for the deployment and use of broadband networks in the EU will be assessed according to these rules. The new guidelines will enter into force after publication in the Official Journal of the EU in January 2023. The main objectives of the amendments to the guidelines are to align the thresholds for public support for fixed networks with the latest technological and market developments, to establish a new assessment framework for the deployment of mobile networks (including 5G networks), to increase motivation for greater use of broadband services and to simplify the rules and clarify concepts important for the assessment of state aid. ■

For your notes

EP supported simpler rules for permitting RES

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On December 14, 2022, the European Parliament (EP) approved faster permitting of new renewable sources. This is part of the REPowerEU plan proposed by the European Commission in response to Russia's outbreak of war in Ukraine. MEP Mikuláš Peksa (Pirates) said that the plan envisages the faster connection of solar and wind sources, battery and other energy storage, or perhaps heat pumps. As a result, the share of renewable sources in the total energy consumption in the EU should rise to 45% by 2030 instead of the originally predicted 40%. The rules could apply from 2023 in case of quick approval in the so-called triilogue. ■

EP agrees with EC's plan to support cross-border rail

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The European Parliament (EP) has supported the European Commission's (EC) action plan to support long-distance and cross-border passenger rail transport, which is part of a package of measures for efficient and more sustainable travel. The plan has ambitions, for example, to double high-speed rail transport by 2030 and remove obstacles and missing connections. MEP Mikuláš Peksa (Pirates) said that the plan also provides for the support of alternative fuels, such as hydrogen locomotives or battery-powered trains. It is also important to support digitization, which could make the use of railway infrastructure across European countries significantly more efficient. ■

Amendment to Energy Act will simplify RES production

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic finally approved the amendment to the Energy Act, which was prepared by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Minister for Regional Development Ivan Bartoš (Pirates). It will simplify the permitting and operation of renewable energy sources. Mr Bartoš said that the permitting of building modifications that install renewable energy sources in existing buildings and new RES production plants that are not part of the building has also been simplified. ■

SUBSIDIES, INVESTMENTS, EU MARKET

Primoco wants to earn CZK 1 bn, plans robotic hall

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Primoco UAV aims to sell CZK 1bn worth of machines and services in 2023, with an EBITDA margin of 40%. It plans to build a production hall that will allow it to increase production capacity to 250 aircraft per year. The investment will amount to hundreds of millions of korunas. A significant part of it will go into the robotization and machinery of the modern factory. For 2022, the company expects the best financial results in its history. Founder Ladislav Semetkovsky said that the company has sold 22 aircraft for CZK 396m and generated EBITDA of CZK 74m YTD. A major factor in the interest in Primoco's drones is the decision by European states in particular to increase defence spending following the outbreak of armed conflict in Ukraine. In addition to the One 150 aircraft, Primoco UAV also supplies aircraft equipment in the form of cameras, sensors and other technologies, control stations, crew training, spare parts or service. ■

ENERGO-PRO invests in PV, yields up 79%

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first three quarters of 2022, ENERGO-PRO registered a total volume of electricity generated from hydroelectric plants at 2,048 GWh, representing an approximately 8% year-on-year increase. The average sales prices of electricity on the free market increased in all three countries of its activities. Consolidated yields totalled EUR 1.24bn (up 79%). The highest increase was recorded by the electricity distribution and supplies segment, especially in Bulgaria, mainly due to an increased average sales price. The EBITDA grew 62% to EUR 246.7m due to an increase in the EBITDA in the segment of production and the segment of electricity distribution and supplies in Georgia. CAPEX totalled EUR 74.2m (up 62%). The company invested in new customer connections, the network, and new photovoltaic projects (PV). ■

Pilulka launches Adyen, unifies payments in 5 countries

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Pilulka has switched to a new technological solution for payments. All card transactions are now done via the Adyen payment platform. It supports multiple payment options and guarantees high security for payment processes. It will unify payment processes within online purchases/online payments and via payment terminals across five countries in which Pilulka currently operates. ■

ČVUT & CAFT train FVE technicians, designers

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Experts from CTU UCEEB's Photovoltaic Systems research team, in collaboration with the Guild for Accumulation and Photovoltaics (CAFT), are in charge of training assembly technicians and designers of photovoltaic systems (PV). This is to prepare them to get a certificate of professional qualification for an Electrician for Photovoltaic Systems (26-014-H), which is a prerequisite to work on PV installations supported by subsidies. By the end of 2022, more than 200 technicians will be trained, and additional interested persons can apply for dates in January 2023. In addition, those interested can also participate in a one-day course for designing photovoltaic systems with software support, suitable for designers and assembly-group heads. ■

For your notes

Škoda will deliver 15 more trams to Germany

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

Škoda Group will deliver another 15 modern one-way three-unit trams to the transport company Cottbusverkehr from Cottbus, Germany. The companies have already concluded a contract for seven trams in 2021. The transport operator will appreciate, among other things, the low operating costs of the product from the Škoda ForCity Plus platform. President of Region West Mike Niebling believes that Škoda Group's presence in the German market will continue to strengthen. He said that in addition to the modern trams it currently produces for seven German cities and the push-pull trains already running from Munich to Nuremberg, the company also has fully emission-free buses in its portfolio. ■

GA ČR and NCN to support six projects from CR and Poland

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

Based on the WEAVE initiative and in cooperation with the Polish agency Narodowe Centrum Nauki (NCN), the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic (GA ČR) will support six new projects from January 2023. Grants were awarded to the Institute of Photonics and Electronics of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Charles University, the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, the Institute of Analytical Chemistry of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, the Institute of Botany of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic; Masaryk University's National Sciences Faculty was successful twice. Scientists from both countries will participate in solving the three-year projects, and each of the agencies will finance the costs of scientists from their own country. ■

Tropic Square secured EUR 550k for hardware development

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Tropic Square startup has become part of the HORIZON-ORSHIN group of cyber security experts. The main goal of the project is the unification of the rules for the safe design of digital solutions and the setting of a methodology for their verification. Tropic Square will provide know-how from the development of a transparent secure element chip. For the three-year project, which started in October 2022, the EU provided 3.8 million euros, of which EUR 550,000 was awarded to Tropic Square for the development of hardware resistant to security threats. The HORIZON-ORSHIN association is led by Technikon, an engineering company based in Austria. ■

DLA Piper advised Cube IM on MVV Energie CZ acquisition

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

The law firm DLA Piper provided legal advice to Cube Infrastructure Managers (IM) during the acquisition of 100 % of the shares of MVV Energie CZ, the Czech subsidiary of the German energy company MVV Energie AG. The Luxembourg-based European infrastructure investment fund bought the business through its Cube Infrastructure Fund III. The transaction was signed in August 2022. As ČIA NEWS already reported, Cube III Energy CZ became the owner on December 9, 2022. The turnover of MVV Energie CZ in the financial year 2020-2021 was CZK 2.1bn. ■

Fiala: SŽ should have a record budget of CZK 70bn

Monday, December 12 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

Prime Minister Petr Fiala and Minister of Transport Martin Kupka (ODS) attended the commissioning of the modernized line between Brno and Blansko. Trains are returning to the section after a one-year break. During the reconstruction of almost 20 km of track, interstation sections, stations, stops and a large number of tunnels and bridges were reconstructed. P. Fiala informed that in 2023 the Railway Administration (SŽ) will have a record budget in the expected amount of CZK 70bn. According to him, the government is aware that the Czech Republic often lags behind its neighbors in the speed and quality of transport. This is also why it is bypassed by European long-distance routes, which until recently traditionally ran through its territory. ■

Cube III Energy CZ acquired MVV Energie CZ

Monday, December 12 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

From December 9, 2022, Cube III Energy CZ became the new owner of MVV Energie CZ. It provides its services to customers in 15 cities in the Czech Republic. In fiscal year 2021, it sold 692 GWh of heat and 171 GWh of electricity. Its turnover in the 2020-2021 financial year was CZK 2.1bn. According to Jörg Lüdorf, chairman of the board of directors of MVV Energie CZ, the entry of the new owner, which is part of the European investment company Cube Infrastructure Managers, will help the company grow further and expand its portfolio of services focused on sustainable energy solutions of the future. ■

STV GROUP represents BENELLI ARMI in CR

Monday, December 12 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2022, STV GROUP took over the sales representation of the complete product portfolio of the Italian company BENELLI ARMI. It concerns not only the sale of shotguns for customers from the armed forces of the Czech Republic, but also the supply of spare parts or the provision of service. BENELLI ARMI is the largest manufacturer of combat shotguns in the world. In 2019, it succeeded in the tenders of the NATO Support and Procurement Agency for the complete rearmament of the French and Portuguese armies, and in 2022 the rearmament of the Australian army is taking place. M4 shotguns are also used by the American armed forces, in total BENELLI has already delivered over 40,000 of them. The weapons are modular, one can choose shotguns with different mechanisms, barrel lengths or magazine capacities, along with a varied portfolio of accessories. ■

For your notes

ČD offers more connections and services, fares 10% up

Sunday, December 11 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Czech Railways' (ČD) new 2022/2023 timetable came into force on December 11, 2022. The changes concern not only the expansion of connections and services, modernised lines, but also ticket prices. ČD informed ČIANEWS that they are increasing the price by 12% on average. There will be more trains with Wi-Fi, bicycle transport offer, barrier-free (6201 connections) or with the possibility to power travel electronics. One of the many changes is a more regular distribution of long-distance train routes from Ostrava via Český Těšín and Nawsie to Čadca and Žilina. The company is adding a second connection on the Prague-Zurich route. ■

PAK to help Moravská Třebová with investment projects

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Pardubice Region (PAK) will help Moravská Třebová with the financing of its investment projects. These relate to the major repairs of regional roads in the city, subsidy applications in the field of rainwater management, modernization of public lighting, waste management and the construction of cycle paths. PAK also promised help in obtaining European subsidies for the reconstruction of the premises of the former Miltra factory into a multifunctional community cultural center, the price of which the city calculated at CZK 300 million without VAT, and for the renovation of the museum at a cost of CZK 80 million. ■

AGEL Nový Jičín hospital uses REACT-EU

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2022, the AGEL Nový Jičín Hospital continues the electronicization of health care and investments in the modernization of medical technology, both from its own funds and through subsidy projects within the REACT-EU Integrated Operational Program. This stems from the annual report published in the commercial register, stating that in 2021 it increased net turnover to CZK 2.45bn from CZK 2.16bn and profit after tax to CZK 269.25m from CZK 142.13m. During this period, the company made a significant investment in a new linear accelerator for the Radiotherapy workplace. ■

LINET invests in DWH and laser

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

LINET reported net sales of CZK 4.81bn for the financial year ending March 31, 2022. The pre-tax result amounted to CZK 788.87m. Foreign sales amounted to CZK 3.7bn. The hospital bed manufacturer and developer further said in its annual report that it plans to further ramp up production for relevant projects for the fiscal year 2022/2023. The company will focus on a strategy of optimizing and streamlining business processes. The most significant asset additions included a profile and sheet laser with a purchase price of CZK 25.67m. The company also invested in the acquisition of a DWH system. ■

Unicorn to supply platform, modules for CorNet

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Unicorn Systems has succeeded in a European tender and will supply the platform and business modules for the CorNet programme, the basic pillar of pan-European coordination in electricity supply safety. It is under the umbrella of two regional coordination centres: the Bavarian company TSCNET Services and the Brussels-based firm Coreso. Both help ensure the safety and stability of the operation of the electricity distribution system in 18 European countries. The Czech IT solutions provider will supply its Griffin platform. In collaboration with Artelys, it will provide a calculation module for analysing the power network. ■

ŠKODA AUTO assessing position on Chinese market

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS

As part of its normal business processes, ŠKODA AUTO continuously reviews its position on international markets and adapts its business strategies to its development. This was stated for ČIANEWS by the head of communications Tomáš Kotera, who said that this also applies to China. The automaker is in discussion with joint venture partner SAIC Volkswagen and is evaluating how best to position the brand in the Chinese market against the background of China's transformation towards electromobility. He added that it has not yet been decided whether the strategy for the Chinese market will need to be modified. ŠKODA AUTO boss Klaus Zellmer said in an interview for the Automobilwoche website over the weekend, according to the kurzy.cz website, that the carmaker from Mladá Boleslav is considering leaving China. ■

ČEZ to secure EUR 790m from EIB for expansion + greening

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) will grant ČEZ a loan of EUR 790m for the expansion of the national electricity distribution network, including the installation of automatic and remotely controlled energy supply systems. The new infrastructure will make it possible to connect renewable resources with an output of up to 2.2 GW to the network, which will contribute to the energy independence and ecological transformation of the Czech Republic. This is the largest EIB loan for a Czech company. Financial director Martin Novák said that the number of renewable sources from ČEZ tripled year-on-year in 2022 and the company received 80,000 requests for new connections. The EIB has so far provided ČEZ with approximately EUR 2.6bn. After accounting for the new loan, EIB investments in the Czech energy sector reached EUR 3.45bn. EIB Vice-President for the Czech Republic Lilyana Pavlova added that the loan, among other things, supports the implementation of the European Commission's REPowerEU plan, which aims to make Europe independent of Russian fossil fuels significantly earlier than 2030. ■

For your notes

Schneider Electric testing smart tech for buildings

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Schneider Electric's development and technology center in Napajedla is testing products and technologies for smart homes with a focus on efficient energy management in a new laboratory for CZK 4m. It also recently introduced a mobile application for controlling smart homes and a cloud service for the automation of homes and entire buildings, as well as a special system for energy management. The director of the center, Marek Provalil, said that the tested products have sales of EUR 100m. Production takes place mainly in Latvia, but also in Germany and Switzerland. He added that the company was experiencing shortfalls in chip deliveries, so the development center had the task of proposing changes to the electronics for several products. The adjustment averted a loss in sales of almost CZK 200m per year. Development takes place with the aim of being as sustainable as possible and ensuring maximum cybersecurity. ■

Thein fills 10% of job positions thanks to AI

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Thein Group has filled 10% of open positions using artificial intelligence (AI) principles. The business, which focuses on developing technology companies in the ICT, cybersecurity and Industry 4.0 sectors from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, has been using this innovative tool in recruitment for more than a year. Thein uses AI to automatically match CVs or LinkedIn profiles to currently open positions and to assess whether a candidate is a good fit for the position. In the next stages, the candidate is contacted by a recruiter. The use of AI speeds up the recruitment process and the robot also saves recruiters' capacity. ■

Dachser invests in warehouses, connects Poland + Belgium

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Dachser Czech Republic closes 2022 with a 17% increase in turnover compared to 2021, according to preliminary financial results. The number of shipments will reach 1.25 million and the tonnage will climb to 621,000 tonnes, up 11% y/y. Despite the turbulent year, the logistics provider has invested in expanding warehouse capacity in the Czech Republic. It has also launched seven new picking lines to Poland, Belgium and Germany. The company also grew in terms of staff, with the number of employees increasing by 9% to almost 650. Dachser also launched an emission-free supply project in Hradec Králové, where it will shut down the city centre using electric cargo bikes. ■

Daytrip's turnover grows, wants to expand

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Czech Daytrip platform registers a turnover for 2022 of over CZK 480m. The turnover for the pre-pandemic year 2019 was already surpassed in September. Since its establishment seven years ago, it has transported 700,000 passengers, more than 200,000 of whom in 2022. Due to the ongoing interest from investors, Daytrip continues expanding its services to other countries. As ČIANEWS reported earlier, Daytrip received CZK 150m from Euroventures and J&T Ventures and Nation 1 VC funds in February 2022 for development and expansion. Among other things, it plans to hire more team members, especially to develop the platform. Daytrip connects passengers with a network of more than 5,100 drivers in 90 countries. It provides door-to-door transportation by a private car. ■

Prague Airport defends ACI accreditation

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Prague Airport has renewed its ACI Airport Health Accreditation, awarded by the global industry association Airports Council International (ACI), for the next twelve months. The ACI evaluates airports on a criteria-by-criteria basis and assesses the protective measures and other tools they use to combat coronavirus. Jakub Puchalský, a member of the board of directors of Prague Airport, said that despite the gradual relaxation of protective measures when travelling, the company still pays attention to the set processes and measures and as an example he mentioned the recommendation to use a respirator in closed areas of the airport. ■

FVE Carport produces 878 MWh; ČEZ will use brownfields

Wednesday, December 14 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

ČEZ's Carport PV plant at the Dukovany Nuclear Power Plant produced 877,823 kWh of emission-free electricity in its first year of operation. The roofing of 322 parking spaces consists of 2598 double-sided photovoltaic panels capable of using the underside when reflecting light rays from parked cars. The 831 kWp resource attracted hundreds of drivers and became the most used parking area of the plant. ČEZ Group is preparing new renewable energy sources with the main share of PV power plants with a total capacity of up to 6,000 MW by 2030. They will be built on brownfield sites, on former mine sites, on degraded industrial sites and on soils of low credit ratings. The carport concept may find application in a number of other projects. ■

Hyundai launched two V2G pilot projects in Europe

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Hyundai has launched two V2G (Vehicle-to-Grid) pilot projects as part of its goal to achieve carbon neutrality in Europe by 2035. This technology will provide electric car owners and society with benefits in the form of using energy from renewable sources stored in accumulators and transferring it back to the electrical grid. The Dutch city of Utrecht wants to become the world's first region with two-way electricity distribution, and the South Korean brand is working with local mobility provider We Drive Solar here, operating a fleet of IONIQ 5 electric cars as part of a new V2G-powered mobility service. In Germany, Hyundai works with Next Kraftwerke, which acts as an intermediary between energy suppliers and the electricity grid. ■

For your notes

Air Montenegro to fly Bratislava to Podgorica from June

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On June 17, 2023, the M.R. Štefánika – Airport Bratislava (BTS) will start direct flights to the Black Mountain metropolis of Podgorica. The route will be operated by Air Montenegro. Tickets can already be purchased on its website. It will fly twice a week, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. ■

Carvago: European used market fell by 10 pct

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The European used car market saw sales fall by more than 10% year-on-year, median prices fell compared to January this year, average mileage increased by more than 10% and dealers are offering used cars at a discount. This follows from the analysis of the European online used car market Carvago, with the fact that the interest in loans is decreasing and in 3Q 2022 only a third of the cars on the market were financed in this way. Sales director Zbyněk Müller said that with the rising costs of everyday life, interest in the discounted car category rose by 36% compared to 2Q and 3Q. During its CarAudit technical inspection, Carvago found that in the past six months, used cars with a discount had up to a fifth more technical defects than cars without it. ■

MZe to support farmer with CZK 2.7bn, may apply to PGRLF

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Ministry of Agriculture will support farmers with a total of CZK 2.74bn in 2023. Of this, CZK 1.88bn will be directed to livestock production, CZK 305m will be allocated to crop production. This was announced by the Ministry of Agriculture (MZe), adding that the Principles for providing national subsidies in 2023 were approved by Agriculture Minister Zdeněk Nekula (KDU-ČSL). The minister also stated that the subsidies will be lower than in 2022 due to the budget possibilities. He added that farmers can also receive funding from the Support and Guarantee Agricultural and Forestry Fund (PGRLF), where the budget has been increased by CZK 1bn. ■

MENDELU coordinates cooperation within BIOEAST UniNet

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Mendel University in Brno (MENDELU) signed a memorandum of cooperation with the international initiative BIOEAST. The initiative brings together Central and Eastern European institutions to promote environmental sustainability, circular bioeconomy and job creation, especially in rural regions. The subject of the Memorandum is the creation of a Network of Bioeconomy Universities in the BIOEAST macro-region (BIOEAST UniNet) for the development of university cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. The project is supported by the European Commission. MENDELU will coordinate the cooperation within the network. Currently, five other universities from Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria and Lithuania are involved in the network. The activity is supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. ■

TRENDS, DIGITALISATION AND INNOVATION

Smartlook innovates crash reporting, maximum anonymity

Thursday, December 15 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2023, Smartlook will offer advanced crash reporting on the market. It will enable developers and testers to identify problems with mobile application crashes more easily. Thanks to a combination of crash reporting and visual error recordings, they will no longer have to look for crash causes only based on stack-trace statements. CTO Ondřej Machek said that the feature was maximally anonymous and thus beyond the framework of GDPR requirements. Thanks to a so-called wireframe mode, it is possible to see only outlines of individual elements on the recording, not additional data or sensitive information. Its low-demanding performance is enabled by an effective code that can be easily implemented into a given application. In addition, Smartlook will allow the integration of the function with Slack and software for error trackings, such as Jira and Youtrack. ■

CAR4WAY to expand its car-sharing offer with Audi brand

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Carsharing company CAR4WAY has added 150 Audi cars to its portfolio. Specifically, the A4 Avant and Q3 SUV models. CAR4WAY owner Pavel Louda said the Audi cars will complement the existing 1,600 ŠKODA and Volkswagen cars on the streets of Brno and Prague and will be delivered by the end of 2022 from the Louda Auto dealership, which owns the car-sharing company. All cars meet the highest environmental standard, Euro 6. One shared car can replace an average of 8 to 12 private cars on the streets. ■

DX Heroes works with Fintech Hub to accelerate innovation

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Czech-Slovak project Fintech Hub, which plans to contribute to the acceleration of digital financial services in Europe, has established a cooperation with DX Heroes. The startup helps development teams to streamline their collaboration and set up a healthy technology and working environment for the best possible developer experience. As part of the Fintech Hub program, the company will transfer its know-how to startups with growth potential and help them set up development processes, among other partners such as Tatum and Superface. ■

For your notes

Orange offers online protection on other networks

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Orange Slovakia has expanded the basic free Smart device online protection service with the option to protect the customer's mobile smart device in other mobile networks, including public Wi-Fi networks and roaming. The new service is for a fee and is available for both Android and iOS devices. It can be used through the free My Orange application. The operator informed that it is also available for flat-rate business, with the possibility to manage the user's access rights. ■

Photon Energy expects slight effect of price regulation

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Photon Energy Group expects only a moderate impact of recent electricity price regulations on results in the Czech Republic and Hungary. The company informed about this with the fact that in Slovakia and Romania the negative impact will not be felt at all, and in Poland there could be a slowdown in plans for new projects. In Australia, no regulatory measures have been taken and are not expected. The newly installed capacities in Romania and Hungary should, according to the company's expectations, lead to significant growth in sales and EBITDA in 2023 and subsequent years. ■

easyJet to operate 3 flights between Prague and Lisbon

Tuesday, December 13 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

From March 31, 2023, easyJet will fly to Lisbon, Portugal three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday). This was announced by Prague Airport. The airline has more than 300 aircraft. It operates on almost 1,000 routes at more than 150 airports in 35 countries. ■

Czech Republic will launch a digital wallet in a year

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS

The Czech Republic should launch a digital wallet, the so-called eDokladovka, which is to be used for electronic proof of identity in the EU, at the turn of 2023 and 2024. The news server iDNES wrote that in the first phase it will contain a citizen's and driver's license. This was announced by the Deputy Prime Minister for Digitization Ivan Bartoš (Pirates). ■

Deloitte honoured six companies in Best Managed Companies program

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Deloitte has launched the Slovakia Best Managed Companies programme in Slovakia for the first time in 2022. It awarded six private companies representing the highest standards of quality and performance - AGEL CS, DYNAMIK HOLDING, I.D.C. Holding, KOSIT, Ryba Žilina and Sygic. The award is given in more than 45 countries around the world, including Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria. The programme's partners include global bank Citi, software company Asseco Solutions, the Republic Union of Employers, Matej Bel University, Technical University in Košice and MAFRA Slovakia. ■

NEWS FROM SLOVAKIA

MPRV SR: Up to EUR 4bn for agriculture and food industry

Monday, December 12 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic (MPRV SR) paid one billion euros to farmers through the Agricultural Payment Agency (PPA). The PPA received permanent accreditation, thanks to which it can pay subsidies, on October 15, 2021. Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic Samuel Vlčan said that thanks to the already approved plan of the Common Agricultural Policy for the period 2023-2027, agriculture and the food industry can receive up to 4 billion euros. ■

Slovakia's trade deficit reached EUR 2.5bn in 10M

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Total exports of goods in Slovakia in the first ten months of 2022 increased by 17.7% y/y to EUR 85.1bn and imports by 24.7% to EUR 87.6bn. Thus, the foreign trade balance was passive in the amount of EUR 2.5bn, when in the same period of the previous year it was active in the amount of over EUR 2.1bn. This was reported by the Slovak Statistical Office, adding that exports to EU countries increased by 18.7% and accounted for 80.6% of total exports. Imports from the EU increased by 21% and accounted for 62.7% of Slovak imports. ■

PMÚ issued opinions on state aid to farmers

Friday, December 9 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Slovak Antimonopoly Office (PMÚ) has issued a binding opinion on minimum state aid schemes for the pork, beef, veal, poultry, sheep, goat and egg sectors. The Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is the aid provider under these schemes. The legal basis is a regulation of the European Commission. ■

For your notes