

EU2022.CZ, ECONOMY, POLICY AND STRATEGY

 For your notes

MMR: Adjusted rules for EU funds sent to EP

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

The European Parliament's Regional Development Committee decided on September 15, 2022, not to add its own amendments to the European Commission's proposal for a comprehensive set of measures governing the rules for the use of European funds (FAST-CARE). According to Regional Development Minister Ivan Bartoš (Pirates), the proposal reflects many of the Czech suggestions. The minister appreciated that the EC proposal increases the amount of pre-financing in the new programming period. This will help the Czech Republic's cash flow. On the other hand, the EC did not include some key suggestions from the member states, such as extending the date for eligibility of expenditure for projects ending in the 2014-2020 period. The final form of the text will be known after the procedural completion of the approval of the proposal between the EU Council and the European Parliament. Czech Ministry of Regional Development has said that this could happen during the Czech Presidency of the EU Council. ■

Fuel margins down but higher than last year

 Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The monitored indicative margin for diesel fell from CZK 5.3 to CZK 3.6/l in August 2022 (the average in 2021 was CZK 3.4/l), according to price inspections by the Ministry of Finance (MF). This was the second lowest measured result since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine. For Natural 95, the margin fell only slightly, from CZK 5.6 to CZK 4.8/l, which is well above the 2021 average (CZK 2.6). MF will not proceed with the introduction of price regulation on distributors and filling stations for the time being after the evaluation of the price data. It will wait for the European parameters of the so-called windfall tax, which, according to the European Commission, should also apply to the fuel sector. ■

MZe: EU must support sustainability and technology in agriculture

 Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Food security and the role of European agriculture and food industry in sustainable global food production were the main topics of the informal meeting of EU agriculture ministers in Prague. The ministers agreed that the European Union must now proceed in a coordinated manner and support a sustainable increase in agricultural production and accelerate the use of modern techniques in agriculture. The meeting was chaired by Czech Minister of Agriculture Zdeněk Nekula (KDU-ČSL) and also attended by Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski and the Ministers of Agriculture of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. ■

AČN expects production growth to reach CZK 53.8bn

 Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Association of Czech Furniture Manufacturers (AČN) expects further growth in the value of furniture production to reach CZK 53.8bn in 2022. Exports will see a weaker increase from CZK 39.57bn in 2021 to CZK 40bn in 2022. Imports will rise to CZK 31.2bn from CZK 29.8bn. AČN expects Czech companies to strengthen their position in the domestic furniture market by CZK 1.37 billion to CZK 13.8bn. The share of foreign trade balance in total output will fall to 16.36%. Import growth will weaken in H2 2022. Poland (CZK 3.9bn), Germany (CZK 3.8bn) and China (CZK 3.1bn) account for the largest share of furniture imports. Germany (CZK 7bn), France (CZK 1.5bn) and Slovakia (CZK 1.4bn) account for the largest share of exports. ■

Moody's awards Baa2 rating to ČD bonds worth EUR 500m

 Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Baa2 rating to ČD's planned EUR 500m bond issue. They are intended to finance growing capital expenditure needs over the next 18 to 24 months, to repay maturing debt and to support liquidity. The rating reflects the company's strong market position in the Czech Republic and high revenue visibility due to the contracts it has entered into with the government and 14 municipalities to operate passenger rail services. It also reflects solid operating performance in 2021 despite the continued severe impact of the pandemic. Upward pressure on the rating would likely result from sustained improvements in the railways' operating performance. It would have the opposite effect if performance deteriorates and is not adequately offset by stronger sovereign support or growing strategic importance to the country. ■

Pirates want lower tax on fruit and indexation of allowances for parents

 Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

A permanent reduction in VAT on vegetables and fruit from 15% to 10% and a regular increase in the parental allowance are proposed by the Pirates as further measures to help families and households. MP club chairman Jakub Michálek said that in the Czech Republic, tax on fruit and vegetables is the highest in Central Europe, namely 15%. In Poland, it is 5%, in Germany 7%, in Austria and Slovakia 10%. According to Mr Michálek, the proposal does not encumber the state. It is associated with the shift of disease-causing sugar-sweetened beverages from a reduced to a standard rate. Valorization of parental allowances in connection with inflation should then be approached similarly to, for example, old-age pensions. According to the Pirates, the windfall tax promoted by them can be a source of financing. ■

Jahn: Automotive industry faces bankruptcy

Saturday, September 17 | ČIANEWS

The situation in the Czech automotive industry is very serious and critical, particularly for smaller and medium-sized companies with energy-intensive operations. ŠKODA AUTO board member for sales and marketing Martin Jahn added for ČIANEWS that many companies were close to bankruptcy. For the time being, ŠKODA AUTO does not know the details of the government solution. Still, the proposed programme is not ideal with regard to its being very late and to the limitations imposed by the European Commission. The planned compensations will also hardly cover the difference in the costs of some suppliers. Many companies will probably not even be eligible for the relevant assistance. Jahn added that he wanted quick measures to stabilise the supply chain and carmakers. Inaccessible and expensive energy would have a massive impact on the income of the state budget and redundancies in the automotive industry. ■

GDP up 3.7% in Q1, wages drop 10% in real numbers

Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the second quarter of 2022, the Czech economy kept its growth supported mainly by capital expenditures. The Czech Statistical Office (ČSU) added that increased prices across the economy accelerated further. GDP grew by 3.7% year on year and 0.5% quarter on quarter. The growth was driven by higher stock and investments. GVA increased by 3.4% year on year. Services, in particular, did well. Consumer prices were 15.8% higher year on year. Prices of food, housing and energy were behind the ongoing acceleration of their dynamic. The dramatic increase in consumer prices caused a solid drop in households' purchasing power. The average wage in the second quarter grew by 4.4% year on year nominally, but its real decrease totalled 9.8%. ■

Industrial prices up 25.5% year on year

Sunday, September 18 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In August 2022, prices of agricultural producers grew by 38.3% year on year. Industrial producers increased their prices by 25.5%. Construction work prices were 13.4% higher, while market services for companies were 6.5% more expensive, according to figures published by the Czech Statistical Office. In month-on-month terms, agricultural prices dropped by 2.3%, and industrial prices were 0.1% lower. On the other hand, construction work prices grew by 1.3%, and services were 0.8% more expensive. According to preliminary data by Eurostat, prices of industrial producers in EU countries grew by 37.8% year on year in July; they were 26.8% higher in the Czech Republic and increased by 43.5% in Slovakia. ■

ACEA: ŠKODA registrations in EU+EFTA+UK down 20.5%

Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first eight months of 2022, ŠKODA AUTO registered a 20.5% year-on-year decrease in registrations of new cars on the EU+EFTA+UK markets, with a total of 346,016 registrations. As a result, its market share dropped from 5.3% to 4.8%. The brand recorded 40,809 registrations in August, up 11.8% year on year. Its market share increased from 5.0% to 5.4%, according to figures published by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA). ■

CzechToll collects CZK 1.23bn in e-toll in August

Thursday, September 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In August 2022, CzechToll collected CZK 1.23bn on toll, up 10.3% more year on year. Of this sum, foreign carriers paid over CZK 608m (49.4% of total toll). The number of transactions grew by 11% to 96m. The number of on-board units issued to carriers exceeded 574,000. At the end of August 2022, almost 712,000 vehicles over 3.5 tonnes were registered in the system, with more than 539,000 bearing foreign licence plates. In the long term, the highest number of foreign vehicles comes from Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary. ■

ČNB: Foreign debt up to CZK 4.57 trillion at end-2Q22

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The foreign debt of the Czech Republic at the end of Q2 2022 was CZK 4,566.9 billion (i.e. 74.3 % of GDP). Compared to the same period of the previous year, it is CZK 338bn higher. This was announced by the Czech National Bank (ČNB). The deficit of the investment position vis-a-vis abroad (the balance of financial assets and liabilities of Czech residents in relation to non-residents) increased by CZK 57.5bn to CZK 1,127.3bn. In a year-on-year comparison, it was CZK 278.6bn higher and in relation to GDP represents 17.5 % at current prices. ■

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

MPs approve lower diesel tax until the end of 2023

Sunday, September 18 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On September 16, 2022, the Chamber of Deputies approved the continued decrease in excise tax on diesel by CZK 1.50 per litre until the end of 2023. Therefore, at the end of September, the announced repeated increase in the rate should not be taking place. The proposed decrease in the tax is the technically highest possible allowed to the Czech Republic by a European Union directive. Referring to the Finance Ministry, the Ministry of Transport informed that the total negative impact of this measure was CZK 9.6bn per year: CZK 8.7bn for the state budget and CZK 0.9bn for the State Fund for Transport Infrastructure (SFDI). ■

For your notes

Senate approved lower tax on diesel until end of 2023

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On September 20, 2022, the Senate of the Czech Republic approved a bill amending Act No. 353/2003 Coll., on consumption taxes. It among other things extends the period of reduced consumption tax on diesel fuel, from October 1, 2022 to the end of 2023. The rate will therefore remain at CZK 8.45/l. According to Finance Minister Zbyňek Stanjura (ODS), the reason is mainly the competitive environment. The main competitors are carriers from Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and also Turkey, where excise duty is at the lowest possible level. According to the estimate of the Ministry of Finance, the impact on the budget amounts to approximately CZK 9.5bn. ■

Government accepts comments on export insurance regulation

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Government Office has accepted for comment a draft government regulation on the implementation of certain provisions of the Act on Insurance and Financing of Exports with State Support in relation to the guarantee provided under the state support for the economy in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. It is submitted by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The draft Regulation is submitted, inter alia, in connection with the amendment to Act No 58/1995 Coll., on Insurance and Financing of Exports with State Support. ■

SUBSIDIES, INVESTMENTS, EU MARKET

ORLEN to buy REMAQ, enters mechanical recycling

Thursday, September 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

By acquiring the Central European company REMAQ, ORLEN Unipetrol has entered the segment of mechanical recycling. With recycling activities, the group can get and process plastic waste and bio-waste and make new petrochemicals and biofuels from them. PKN ORLEN board chairman Daniel Obajtek said that the acquisition would bring the group closer to meeting the goal of emissions neutrality by 2050. He added that in accordance with the group's strategy, ORLEN Unipetrol was striving to recycle up to 400,000 tonnes of plastic and organic waste annually in 2030. ■

ENERGO-PRO increased revenue by 68% and profit by 18%

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

ENERGO-PRO generated 1.4 TWh of electricity in H1 2022, up 7% y/y. The increase was due to improved hydrological conditions in Turkey and Georgia, which more than offset below-average hydrological conditions in Bulgaria. Consolidated revenues increased by 68% to EUR 699.1m. Operating profit before depreciation, amortization and tax was EUR 111.3 million (+18%). Capital expenditure was EUR 50.3m (+105%). The increase was mainly due to higher costs in the electricity distribution and supply segment in Georgia and Bulgaria, which included investments in photovoltaic projects. ■

Allwyn is officially operator of British National Lottery

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Allwyn Entertainment from the KKCG Group has become the operator of the British National Lottery. It was decided by The Gambling Commission. The commission selected Allwyn already in the spring of 2022. However, Camelot, which operated the lottery before that, appealed against the decision. Allwyn is committed to investing in the National Lottery to support its growth and drive innovation across products and channels. ■

IMMOFINANZ buys retail portfolio from CPI

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

IMMOFINANZ acquires 53 retail properties in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary from its majority shareholder CPI Property Group (CPI). The acquired portfolio has ca. 217,000 m2 of lettable area and is fully let with an occupancy rate of 99%. The total purchase price amounts to EUR 324.2m. The purchase agreement was signed together with the transfer of 36 retail properties in the Czech Republic and Poland, which have 108,000 m2 of lettable area. The purchase price of these properties, amounting to EUR 191 million, was financed from existing funds. IMMOFINANZ expects the transfer of the remaining 17 properties in Hungary and Slovakia to take place by the end of this year. ■

CERVA Group takes over Austrian LITZ-Konfektion

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

CERVA Group has completed the acquisition of the Austrian company LITZ-Konfektion. CERVA CEO Miroslav Rous said that the acquired company will contribute to further development with its experience, knowledge of the Central and Western European markets and innovative approaches to the development of materials for protective workwear. LITZ has headquarters in Austria and Germany and production facilities in Europe and Southeast Asia, where more than 500 people now work. CERVA plans further investments in Central and Western Europe, with Austria as one of the priority destinations. ■

For your notes

Liberec Region to buy 43 e-cars for CZK 43.5m

Wednesday, September 21 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

The Liberec Region will buy 34 electric cars for schools, social organisations, health services and the regional authority in the next two years. Specifically, there will be 18 passenger cars, 10 multi-seater passenger vehicles, three commercial vehicles, two medium-sized vans and one truck up to 3.5 t. Five charging stations should also be created. Jiří Ulvr (Mayors for the Liberec Region), regional councillor for the Department of Economic and Regional Development, European Projects, Spatial Planning and Rural Development, said that the total cost of the project is CZK 43.5m. The region will pay CZK 32.1m from its budget. The amount of CZK 11.4m will be paid by the local government and a pre-financing contribution from European sources. ■

DPP to open tender for cable car vehicles designed by Anna Marešová Designers

Monday, September 19 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

The Czech studio Anna Marešová Designers has won the competition for the new design of the cable car to Petřín, opened by the Prague Public Transport Company. The studio is also the author of the concept for the DPP's T3 Coupé excursion tram. The next step in the Petřín cable car modernisation project will be the preparation of a public tender for the purchase of new vehicles, which the DPP plans to announce by the end of 2023. The winning design of the vehicles will be part of the tender. The first passengers could ride the modernised Petřín cable car at the end of 2024. ■

Iveco invests CZK 342m in development

Wednesday, September 21 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

Iveco Czech Republic (Iveco CR) has spent over CZK 342m on research and development, especially in the field of electromobility in bus transport. With regard to the introduction of mandatory autonomous driving features in buses from 2024, it also invested in the ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance System) project. The company announced this in its annual report, adding that it produced 4,365 buses in 2021 despite problems in the supply chain (down 3.47% y/y). It is launching an electric suburban bus in 2022. In 2021, Iveco Czech Republic reported a turnover of CZK 31.14bn and an operating result of CZK 2.33bn. ■

Prague Airport handled 3.8 mln pax in summer

Wednesday, September 21 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

Prague Airport handled more than 3.8 million passengers from June to August 2022, down a third from 2019. Nearly 7 million passengers passed through the airport from January to the end of August. Greece was the most popular country in terms of passenger numbers, followed by Italy and Spain. The airport expects to handle just under 4 million passengers in the 2022/2023 winter schedule. Air Moldova will offer direct services to Chisinau from the end of October 2022, Eurowings to Oslo and Madeira and to Hurghada and Marsa Alam from the beginning of November 2022. Fly Erbil will now offer flights to Erbil, SalamAir will offer flights to Muscat and Salalah, SAS to Copenhagen and Wizz Air to London Luton Airport and Bucharest. For the full year 2023, the airport expects to handle 12.7 million passengers. ■

Prologis acquires EUR 1.59bn worth of space in 7 cities

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

Prologis has added 1.14 million m² of urban logistics space in Europe. The value of the transaction amounts to EUR 1.59bn. Through its PELF fund, Prologis acquired 128 buildings and six development projects in seven EU countries from operator Crossbay. The locations are Rome, Milan, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Madrid, Barcelona, Nuremberg, Berlin, Paris, Brussels and Lodz. With a current portfolio occupancy of 95%, Prologis now expects to expand its customer base by more than 110 companies as a result of the transaction. Centres from which to serve densely populated zones are increasingly important for customers following the COVID-19 pandemic and as the e-commerce segment expands, according to Prologis. ■

Rohlik.cz delivered 22m+ purchases, expands to Spain

Wednesday, September 21 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

Rohlik.cz has delivered more than 22 million purchases to nearly 1 million customers across the country in eight years of operating its delivery service. The best-selling product is rolls, with more than 33 million sold. The online supermarket is celebrating its eight-year anniversary with a special gin called GINesis, produced by artisanal community distiller Tosh Distillery. Rohlik Group is also currently operating in Hungary, Austria, Germany and Italy and is about to launch its service in Romania and Spain. ■

Campiri offering caravan hire in Spain, targeting Poles

Tuesday, September 20 | [ČIANEWS](#) | [Information Source](#)

The Campiri platform digitizing motorhome rental is now providing customers with an all-inclusive travel package in Spain with a base in Malaga. It includes round-trip tickets, caravan hire and a detailed tailor-made holiday plan. It offers clients up to 30 new and refurbished cars in maximum equipment. Invia is the exclusive seller of the packages. Campiri CEO Lukáš Janoušek said that in the next phase of expansion, the company will focus on Polish clients with an offer of departures from Polish airports. It is also expanding its operations in Athens, Greece, where by the end of 2022 eight more will be added to the current two motorhomes. The aim of the platform is to completely digitize the entire caravan rental process. It wants to inspire sustainable travel. ■

For your notes

Airline bookings from Europe up 140% in summer

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Airline ticket bookings on Kiwi.com from Europe for summer 2022 have seen a 140% increase compared to summer 2021, beating summer 2019 figures by 92.5%. Most bookings (56%) were for June and July. A total of 28% of tourists with return tickets spent between one and two weeks on holiday. The most popular destinations were traditionally Italy, Spain and Greece. London was the most visited city. The average price of a ticket from Europe was €175, up 42% y/y and down 11% on 2019. Global travel tech company Kiwi.com reported that Barcelona, Vienna and Rome Fiumicino were the busiest airports and low-cost airlines were the most common choice. ■

Tesco 18% use of short-time workers, CR average is 10%

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

9.9% of women in the Czech Republic work part-time, compared to 48.1% in Germany and 73.8% in the Netherlands. The average in Western Europe is 35%. Eurostat data was published by Tesco, where 18% of employees work part-time (85% of whom are women). This represents a total of almost 1 500 workers. Three years ago, the figure was 10.5%. Part-time work is mainly used by mothers with young children. It is common for two or even three female colleagues to share one job. ■

Kolín Hospital receives EU subsidy for MR

Sunday, September 18 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On September 16, 2022, the Kolín District Hospital commissioned a new nuclear magnetic resonance site. The new equipment was provided by Siemens Healthcare. The acquisition price is CZK 62.66m. The new premises for the equipment were built by Realitní a stavební společnost for CZK 36.5m. The investment in the structure and equipment will be fully covered by the REACT-EU subsidy programme of the Czech Ministry of Regional Development. ■

Russian aggression cost JUTA markets worth CZK 250m

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

JUTA plans to increase its sales volume in 2022 despite the effects of the conflict in Ukraine, which cost the company approx. CZK 250m due to the loss of the market and potentially another CZK 50m due to threatened receivables. The textile company is also harmed by the rising cost of energy, materials and raw materials and a secondary reduction in the volume of orders for companies that supplied markets affected by the conflict. High energy prices also worsen the competitive position compared to companies from the EU, whose prices are many times lower. And also compared to companies from Asia, which, in addition to low energy prices, also have available and cheaper raw materials. The company announced this in its annual report, stating that it reported a turnover of CZK 9.23bn and an operating profit of CZK 1.01bn. ■

UPS had a turnover of CZK 7.2 billion

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The net turnover of the United Parcel Service Czech Republic (UPS) increased year-on-year from CZK 6.61 to 7.21 billion in 2021. Profit after taxation amounted to CZK 1.02 billion. The annual report further states, among other things, that the reduction in intra-Community transport was due to the fact that Great Britain left the EU and therefore moved to the worldwide segment. Margin was down year-over-year, but the decrease was offset by a 25% increase in volume due to higher demand in the B2B and consumer markets. The group also informed that it has temporarily suspended its activities in Belarus, Russia and the Ukrainian market following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. ■

MZe: Timber harvesting down to 30 mln m3

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Raw timber harvesting in Czech forests in 2021 reached 30.26 million m3, down by 5.49 million m3 y/y. This was reported by the Ministry of Agriculture (MZe). A significant share of this volume was accounted for by the processing of incidental logging in the amount of 26.28 million m3. The average economic result of forest owners reached CZK 4,488 per ha due to the increase in raw timber prices and state budget subsidies. Compared to previous years, the area of restored forest stands increased to 49 790 ha (+9504 ha). Last year, the Ministry of Agriculture paid almost CZK 1.8bn (+ CZK 613.7m) in subsidies for forest management. CZK 3.3bn was spent on mitigating the effects of the bark beetle calamity. ■

TRENDS, DIGITALISATION AND INNOVATION

ZČU's system to help robotise smaller firms

Sunday, September 18 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

A system developed by scientists from the NTIS Research and Development Center at the University of Western Bohemia's (ZČU) Faculty of Applied Sciences can teach an industrial robot to move using an example of a human production operator. The tracking device can be fitted to any work tool. The device will help small and medium-sized enterprises robotise production. The technology was created within the New Technologies for Intelligent Planning of Robot Movements in Industrial Processed project, supported by the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade's Trio programme. ■

For your notes

Partner in Pet Food will build a hall

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Partner in Pet Food CZ plans to build a new production hall in Veselí nad Lužnicí to expand the production of feed in pouches. The pet food manufacturer's annual report also shows that it increased its net turnover to CZK 3.41 billion in 2021 from CZK 3.13 billion in the previous period. Research and development costs amounted to CZK 32 million. It also invested in the acquisition of a CAMA 24 pack (CZK 16.51 million), a Doypack packer (CZK 13.9 million), a Manex automatic robot (CZK 5.72 million) or a pallet system (CZK 4.46 million). The company launched Shelma cat treats on the market and established the Swedish Bozita brand on the Czech market. ■

VUT develops 2nd generation of sample-testing robot

Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Scientists from the Brno University of Technology (VUT) have developed a second generation of an automated solution for the initial handling of samples called openTube2. For more than two months, the system was tested in real operation at the Department of Internal Medicine, Haematology and Oncology's Molecular Biology and Genetics Centre lab in the University Hospital Brno. The robot handled potentially infectious samples tested for Covid-19. The development of the system was possible thanks to financial support from a project by the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade and collaboration with SMC, opticontrol, Sipoch, KRD, MANN+HUMMEL and ABB Robotika. ■

UPOL: New nanomaterial can eliminate heavy metals in water

Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Researchers have developed a recyclable nanomaterial that can not only detect but also eliminate heavy metals, especially cadmium and lead, in water. Scientists from the Czech Institute of Research and Advanced Technologies - CATRIN of Palacký University in Olomouc (UPOL), VŠB-TUO and the Catalan Institute for Nanosciences and Nanotechnology in Barcelona participated in the project. Experts have already used the so-called graphene dots derived from the Nobel material graphene to prepare a paper detector. According to them, the test will prove the presence of heavy metals without expensive equipment within about 30 minutes. ■

Carvago unveils online auction platform for car sales

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

European online marketplace Carvago.com has unveiled a new online auction platform that allows customers to sell a car from the comfort of their own home and choose the best deal from the bids. Customers bid for their vehicle for free in the virtual auction and receive information about the highest bid after three days. Bids from dealers are valid for 48 hours. For dealers, the platform also opens the way to offer used cars from private buyers that are suitable for resale. The new portal will gradually be launched in all European countries where Carvago operates. ■

Comgate included deferred Twisto payments in gateway

Tuesday, September 20 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Comgate has implemented in its payment gateway the new payment method Buy in thirds from fintech Twisto. The service can thus immediately be offered to up to the customers of up to 12,000 e-shops. The method allows you to spread out a payment over CZK 1,500 for a purchase within three months directly from the shopping cart, without registration and without an increase. Director of Comgate Jakub Ouhrabka said that for merchants, a wider range of payment methods on the payment gateway increases the frequency and value of purchases, as well as the share of completed payments in the e-shop. Twisto's country manager for the Czech Republic, Jan Hanzlík, stated that the demand for BNPL services is growing both from e-shops and from customers. In 2021, Twisto mediated 8 million transactions in the Czech Republic and Poland. ■

GP: Foreigners' card payments up 47% to CZK 5bn in summer

Monday, September 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Foreign tourists spent almost CZK 5bn (+47% y/y) with payment cards in the Czech Republic in July and August 2022. Data from Global Payments (GP) also shows that the average value of a single transaction fell by almost 23% to CZK 1,575. According to GP economist Ondrej Stříbrský, this is due to the increased use of payment cards. The total number of transactions increased from 2.5 million in 2021 to almost 4.9 million (+91%). Germans spent the most domestically (more than CZK 1.2bn). The Slovaks came second with a record 730,000 transactions and spent almost CZK 600m. The third Irish ranked third with CZK 411m. ■

NEWS FROM SLOVAKIA

Slovak National Council sends energy amendment to second reading

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Slovak National Council has advanced to the second reading the government's draft amendment to the Energy Act. Natural gas suppliers and distribution network users would now be required to store a quantity of gas equivalent to 25% of their average annual supply in storage facilities at the beginning of November. The change is based on an EU regulation to ensure that gas storage facilities in the European Union are 80% full before winter. ■

For your notes

ŽSR and ŽSSK to receive financial assistance of almost EUR 44m

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Slovak Ministry of Finance (MF) has made EUR 35m available to the Slovak Railways (ŽSR) to finance the costs necessary for its operation until the end of 2022. ŽSR will use the funds to cover its operating and personnel expenses. The reason for the over-budget financing is higher prices for services and energy. At the same time, the Slovak Ministry of Finance has provided an additional almost EUR 9m to Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko (ŽSSK) to help the company compensate for the loss of passenger transport revenue during the pandemic. ■

Inflation in SR accelerated to 13.4% in August

Friday, September 16 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

According to the European harmonized methodology, consumer prices in Slovakia increased by 13.4% year on year in August 2022. In July, this figure was 12.8%. Month-on-month inflation reached 0.7%. The average rate of inflation over the last 12 months compared to the previous period was 8.8%, according to the Slovak Statistical Office. ■

SR's foreign trade with positive balance of EUR 1.88bn

Wednesday, September 21 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Slovakia's foreign trade surplus reached EUR 1.88bn in 2021, almost 50% less than in 2020. Despite the pandemic and disruptions in supply chains, exports of goods strengthened by 16.6% y/y to EUR 88.55bn. Imports were also significantly higher. The Slovak Republic imported goods worth EUR 86.68bn, up 19.4% y/y. The Slovak Statistical Office published the data, adding that it was a refinement of preliminary data from March this year. Slovakia exported the highest value of goods to Germany and neighbouring countries, with a year-on-year increase. Exports to Germany increased by 12%, the Czech Republic by 29.3%, Poland by 24% and Hungary by 35%. Exports to the USA (-1.4%), the Republic of Korea (-18.9%) and Norway (-22.1%) decreased. Almost 80% of the value of exported goods (+18.3%) went to EU countries. Imports also grew dynamically. From Germany it increased by 21.9%, from the Czech Republic by 15.8% and from China by 28.3%. Imports from EU countries increased by 15.1% (accounting for over 64% of total imports). ■

For your notes

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