

EU2022.CZ, ECONOMY, POLICY AND STRATEGY

For your notes

Pirates ask CZ PRES to talk energy with EUThursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Within the Czech EU presidency (CZ PRES), the Pirates are asking for talks with Germany and the entire EU about the commissioning of a maximum number of nuclear power plants, changes to emission allowances, and dealing with the increased electricity prices on the commodity exchange because of gas prices. According to the Pirates, the situation is so critical that states cannot cope with it on their own, and a joint solution on the level of the European Union is needed. They are also in favour of expanding the package to help Czech citizens and approving their proposal for an extraordinary solidarity tax on utility companies' profits due to the war in Ukraine so that the state does not continue indebteding itself. ■

MMR: CR advances to 4th position in EU fund withdrawalFriday, August 19 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

At the end of July 2022, the Czech Republic moved up three places to 4th place in the ranking of EU funds absorption. The European Commission has reimbursed 81.0% of the funds allocated to the Czech Republic for the 2014-2020 period. The largest amount of funds in relation to the total allocation went to the accounts of beneficiaries in OP Research, Development and Education. The Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic (MMR) also reported that the Czech Republic's revenues from the EU exceeded levies by CZK 65.3bn. After adding the advance from the National Recovery Plan (CZK 23.5bn), the Czech Republic is a net beneficiary of CZK 88.8bn for 2021. ■

MF: New EUSPA headquarters in Nová Palmovka in Prague 8Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The modern headquarters of the EU Space Programme Agency (EUSPA) will be located in the currently under construction Nová Palmovka building in Prague. The Ministry of Finance (MF) announced that it has agreed on the new location with the management of the City of Prague and EUSPA. The future lease agreement was signed on 23 August 2022 by the Minister of Finance Zbyněk Stanjura (ODS) and the Mayor of the capital Zdeněk Hřib (Piráti). EUSPA will move into the new building, which will include a data centre, in July 2025. ■

HK: State lowers entrepreneurial freedom in five yearsThursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The level of entrepreneurial freedom in the Czech Republic has decreased over the past five years, according to an analysis conducted by the Czech Chamber of Commerce (HK). The main reason is that the state has been imposing new duties on entrepreneurs that are unrelated to their business. Chamber president Vladimír Dlouhý said that the state imposed the fulfilment of duties on employers, which turned them into social insurance companies, as they must provide certain performance to their employees. The problem is also the companies' duty to enforce executions through wage deductions. At the EU level, a directive is being prepared according to which local companies should also become responsible for observing employees' human rights at foreign suppliers and customers. Concerning the high administrative burden, the Chamber has also asked the state to enable the digitisation of labour-law relations. ■

Analysts: Economic pessimism grows

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS

Pessimism in the Czech economy is accelerating. In reaction to statistical data, this statement was made by Banka CREDITAS chief economist Petr Dufek who added that the sentiment was decreasing in the industry, construction sector, commerce and other services. However, in terms of consumers, the mood improved, even though only slightly from the previous extreme scepticism. Czech Banking Association chief economist Jakub Seidler added that further development would be undoubtedly influenced by the development on the energy market that had escalated again in recent days when gas and electricity prices had hit new records. Fincentrum & Swiss Life Select chief analyst Richard Bechník stated that despite the expected cooling of the inflation dynamic as of next year, the impact on family budgets would still be palpable. ■

I. Bartoš: European subsidies to help HřenskoMonday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Through the IROP 2021-2027, the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic (MMR) offers opportunities to support Hřensko especially in the area of the Integrated Rescue System (IZS) and tourism. During a visit to the area affected by the largest fire in the history of the Czech Republic, Minister Ivan Bartoš (Pirates) informed that calls within the IZS will be announced by the department in August 2022 for ambulances and in September for firefighters and police. An amount of CZK 9.3bn has been prepared for the entire Czech Republic. In a few weeks, the program Restoration of municipal and regional property after natural disasters will be announced. At least CZK 30m is allocated in it. At the turn of 2022, traditional calls for tourism and the rural development program will be issued, where a possible specific bonification or partial allocation for the affected area is being considered. CzechTourism will help with the marketing promotion of Czech Switzerland. ■

SBK: Payments by cards issued in CR exceed CZK 385bn

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The volume of payment transactions at merchants using cards issued in the Czech Republic reached CZK 385.54bn in Q1 2022. Web payments amounted to CZK 93.05bn (Q1 2022: CZK 91.79bn). The volume of domestic payments was CZK 320.69bn, of which CZK 50.93bn was via the internet. For foreign transactions, the volume of payments amounted to CZK 56.69 billion. The number of payments at merchants increased from CZK 490.52m to CZK 581.28m. Of these, domestic transactions totalled 524.59 million and foreign transactions 56.69 million. ■

OTE traded 6.43 million emission allowances in July

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The number of traded emission allowances on the electricity and gas market in the Czech Republic for July 2022 reached 6.43 million. The total number of transactions amounted to 74. None of the transactions concerned aviation allowances. This was reported by the energy market operator OTE. ■

Prague to finish Nova Palmovka; EUSPA should move into it

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The city of Prague plans to complete the Nová Palmovka building in Prague 8 as soon as possible. The building, which will house the European Union Space Programme Agency (EUSPA) within three years, will be part of a new urban district that will include new schools, kindergartens, a square and more than 2,000 affordable rental apartments. Deputy Mayor Petr Hlaváček (STAN) said that more than 10% of the European economy is linked to satellite infrastructure. ■

J. Lipavský to discuss EU in Alpbach, Austria

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Foreign Minister Jan Lipavský (Pirates) will participate in the panel discussion on The EU's Geopolitical Awakening? as part of the Alpbach 2022 European Forum. The central topic will be the EU's role in the global world and its relations with other world players. J. Lipavský will then discuss with the foreign ministers of the Slavkov format countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria) in particular the prospects for further cooperation. This was announced by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ■

PM calls on Czech diplomats to help with energy

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On August 22, 2022, Prime Minister Petr Fiala (ODS) called on Czech ambassadors to look for all the possibilities that could help the Czech Republic in the field of energy. According to him, not only the supply of raw materials is crucial, but also the potential of investments in the transformation of the Czech economy or in cooperation in the research of new resources. He also said, among other things, that Czech diplomacy should continue to link economic, development and academic cooperation, as well as help Czech companies in entering new markets and orienting themselves on them. The Office of the Government of the Czech Republic further informed that a number of other topics were discussed at the ambassadors' meeting, including the war in Ukraine and its effects on Europe and the world. ■

SDA: Average age of passenger cars surpassed 15.7 years

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The average age of passenger cars in 1H 2022 in the Czech Republic reached 15.73 years. Within the EU, the Czech fleet is among the oldest. The Association of Automobile Importers (SDA) informed about it. Aging was caused, among other things, by a decline in new vehicle sales and the import of old used cars. The number of registered passenger cars increased in the Czech Republic by 36,511 to 6,366,654 in 2Q 2022. In addition, 616,122 light commercial vehicles, 190,452 trucks, 21,581 buses and 1,274,519 motorcycles are registered. ■

ERÚ: Unfair practices a problem, not payment calculation

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The mechanism for calculating advance payments for utilities is not problematic. The problem is contracts concluded using unfair business practices, which put the customer in a disadvantageous position. The chairman of the Energy Regulatory Office (ERÚ) Stanislav Trávníček stated this after a meeting with the Minister of Industry and Trade Jozef Sikela (for STAN), adding that an example could be changing the contract from fixed prices to spot prices. J. Sikela said that these contracts allow traders to transfer the risks arising from the current unstable and uncertain market situation to consumers only. This year, ERÚ initiated 200 administrative proceedings for violations of the law out of approximately 900 submissions received. ■

ATOK: TOP revenues in 1H up 17.9 %

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Revenues in the textile and clothing industry (TOP) for 1H 2022 reached CZK 31.8bn. Of this, CZK 27.1bn in the textile sector and CZK 4.7bn in the clothing sector. This represents a year-on-year strengthening of TOP by 17.9 % (textile industry +18.2 %, clothing +16.7 %). The end of measures related to the coronavirus contributed to the increase in sales, as well as the increase in energy prices and other production costs, which were reflected in product prices. Data from the Association of the Textile-Clothing-Leather Industry (ATOK) further show that employment fell by 0.4 % to 27,700. The average monthly salary in the entire TOP reached CZK 27,800 (+8.5 %). Exports of textile and clothing increased by 9.6 % y/y. In the case of imports, textile goods grew by 3.5 %, clothing goods by 15.1 %. ■

For your notes

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

MENDELU: Legislation slows down agrivoltaics

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

ZENERGO Energy, in collaboration with experts from the Mendel University in Brno (MENDELU), CTU's Faculty of Electrical Engineering and the Research and Breeding Fruit Institute Holovousy, is planning to build an agrivoltaic system on an area of 3 ha to produce permanent cultures. The plan is being complicated by the energy crisis related to the war in Ukraine and the shortage and high panels prices. The biggest hindrance is the non-resolved legislative framework for building PV systems in areas that belong to the agricultural land fund (ZPF). The Czech Ministry of the Environment is preparing an amendment to the act on ZPF protection. The MENDELU further stated that agrivoltaics represented a combined use of land mainly for agricultural production and its secondary use for electricity generation via PV systems. It has been gradually developing in France, the Netherlands and Germany. ■

Fiala to talk with Scholz about electricity prices

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS

On August 29, 2022, Prime Minister Petr Fiala (ODS) will take with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The main point on their agenda will be the high price of electricity in Europe and the form of a possible European solution for capping its price. ■

SUBSIDIES, INVESTMENTS, EU MARKET

IMMOFINANZ's portfolio grows to EUR 5.36bn

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first half of 2022, Immofinanz posted revenue from leases of EUR 144m. The results of assets management improved 3.0% to EUR 110m, while funds from operations grew 6.1% to EUR 78.7m. Pre-tax profit amounted to EUR 199.9m. As a result of the war in Ukraine and related sanctions against the Russian Federation, the administrator and developer of retail and office real estate wrote off EUR 12.9m from the sale of the Russian portfolio in 2017 as bad debt. With a 57.3% ratio of registered capital and conservative debt, with net LTV at 32.5%, IMMOFINANZ has a solid capital base. The portfolio's value increased 3% to EUR 5.36bn with a 94.3% occupancy rate. ■

The Ministry of Health wants to support medical care by CZK 7.61 billion

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Minister of Health Vlastimil Válek (TOP 09) together with Governor Vítězslav Schrek (ODS) and President of the Senate Miloš Vystrčil (ODS) presented the concept of medical care support, including the optimization of the inpatient care delivery system, at the Jihlava Hospital. The Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic (MOH) would like to support this area with CZK 7.61 billion. Financial resources to support acute rehabilitation care and subsequent inpatient care in the amount of CZK 4.3 billion from European funds have already been negotiated. Now the Ministry of Health is negotiating to obtain additional funds to support the reform of geriatric care, where up to CZK 4 billion should go, including CZK 3.3 billion from European sources. ■

BR Group buys Forez press shop, also uses bank sources

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Ostrava-based BR Group has purchased the plastic and metal press shop Forez from Lanškroun with approximately 350 employees. The contract was signed by both parties with final validity on August 23, 2022. The BR Group used both its own and bank sources for the purchase. The firms did not disclose the transaction value. Currently, the BR Group will have over 2,700 employees in the Czech Republic, with others working in its foreign branches. It is now the new employer of almost 3,000 people. Its turnover target for 2030 is CZK 10bn. ■

W.O.M. World of Medicine acquires MPH Medical Devices

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

German W.O.M. World of Medicine took over Přelouč-based MPH Medical Devices, a manufacturer of disposable plastic hoses for the healthcare sector. This follows from the data in the Commercial Register. As ČIANEWS reported, MPH Medical Devices reported a turnover of CZK 277.32m in 2020. ■

MMR supports kindergarten capacity with CZK 2bn from IROP

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Ministry for Regional Development (MMR) launched on August 23, 2022, two calls through IROP 2021-2027 aimed at increasing the capacity of kindergartens in areas with insufficient capacity. CZK 2bn have been allocated for them. According to Regional Development Minister Ivan Bartoš (Pirates), they will also help improve conditions in kindergartens, such as sanitary facilities, barrier-free accessibility or outdoor spaces. The ministry also informed that it plans to launch calls for primary schools in September 2022 and for secondary schools in autumn. ■

For your notes

Staropramen yields CZK 4.23bn, export boosts growth

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2021, Pivovary Staropramen recorded CZK 4.23bn in revenue. Despite the ongoing pandemic restrictions, there was still a 4.2% year-on-year increase. CFO Silvia Miklósová said that increased sales drove the growth in the premium segment. The EBITDA dropped almost 10% to CZK 535m. The company closed last year with an after-tax accounting profit of CZK 441m. Breweries paid the state over CZK 775m in direct and indirect taxes. The volume of beer sold on export markets, up 10% to 976,000 hl, also contributed to the results. ■

EAG acquires used-vehicle trading platform Fastback

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

EAG has acquired the European digital platform Fastback for trading with used vehicles. The acquisition worth hundreds of millions of korunas represents an entrance to western markets for the company, especially to France and the Benelux countries where Fastback has a strong position. Through its software, the platform connects sellers like dealerships, leasing companies and used-car dealerships with professional customers, such as used-vehicle dealers. After the transaction is completed, the EBITDA of the group's technological part will exceed CZK 200m. Apart from other acquisitions, EAG will now focus on the mutual integration of services from its portfolio and the use of synergies between them. Furthermore, EAG co-founder Jan Kranát is leaving the holding, as he accepted the offer of the Portiva Group, a majority shareholder of EAG, to buy his 22.5% share. ■

Fielmann invests CZK 1.8bn, builds plant in Chomutov

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

The German glasses dealer Fielmann will invest CZK 1.8bn in the Czech Republic in the medium term. By 2025, it wants to invest CZK 150m in its omnichannel business model. By 2022, it will open five new branches. It plans to sell 100,000 glasses annually via 20 boutiques and digital sales channels. In April 2023, the completion of the new production plant in Chomutov worth CZK 1.6bn is expected. Initially, the factory should make 2.5m pairs of glasses per year, with the production capacity increasing to 5m. It will create over 500 jobs; together with other expansion plans, it will be 700 positions in the Czech Republic. CEO Marc Fielmann said the construction would lower transport prices and improve the carbon footprint. ■

Pale FC invests in start-ups, wants CZK 20bn assets

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2021, Pale Fire Capital (FC) increased its consolidated turnover from year-earlier CZK 964.3m to CZK 1.58bn. The volume of assets grew from CZK 1.44bn to CZK 3.76bn. The investment company re-oriented itself from a primarily venture capital firm to a private equity firm focused on investments in technological start-ups. Last year, it invested hundreds of millions of korunas both in strengthening shares in existing firms and entering new ones. FAVI, Aukro, TeamIT, Munipolis, and Semantic Visions contributed the most to the turnover. By 2025, Pale Fire Capital wants to administer assets worth at least CZK 20bn in total. ■

Gevorkyan's EBITDA up 28 %, launching new CNC press

Monday, August 22 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

Global powder metallurgy supplier Gevorkyan reported revenue of EUR 27.15m and EBITDA of EUR 8.58m in its half-year financial results. In a y/y comparison, this means an 8.5% increase in sales and a 28.1% increase in EBITDA. The company expects 2H22 results to accelerate. Immediately after the successful listing of shares on the Prague Stock Exchange, it started the implementation of development plans. It launched a new nitrogen generator, is completing the addition of a new production hall, and commissioned a metal injection molding line. It is also putting a new CNC press into operation. Due to the fixation, the company is not yet influenced by the increase in the prices of electricity and fuel. ■

DTS to use CZK 14m for EU expansion, favors mandatory BIM

Monday, August 22 | ČIA NEWS

Digital transformation systems (DTS) received CZK 14m for expansion from Depo Ventures, Start Guide and Czech Founders VC funds. This was confirmed for ČIA NEWS by the CEO and director of DTS, Milan Moravec, who said that the company is preparing expansion primarily within the EU, but currently also has activities outside the Union. He added that DTS has a runway of 18 months and would like to raise another 2-3 million euros after that. He wants to build DTS into the biggest technology player whose software helps digitize the construction industry. DTS intends to advocate for the mandatory implementation of BIM (Building Information Modeling) processes in the digitization of the construction industry throughout the EU and in different types of projects. ■

Swiss Amcor is new owner of DGPack

Saturday, August 20 | ČIA NEWS | [Information Source](#)

DGPack, the Prostějov-based manufacturer of flexible packaging, has changed owners. After the Russian company DANAFLEX NANO, it is now Amcor Group, according to the entry in the Commercial Register dated August 1, 2022. The Swiss company has acquired 100% of the business by contributing CZK 1.073bn to the share capital. Guillaume Bruno Claude Taillandier and Jan Paul Moriaux expanded the pair of managing directors. ■

For your notes

TMMC produced over 6,000 hybrid vehicles

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Czech Republic (TMMC) produced almost 149,000 cars in 2021. cars; more than 6,000 of this total were with a hybrid system. Despite Covid restrictions, it has started three-shift production and production of the new Yaris model. At the same time, the preparation of the third generation of the Aygo model, which the company started producing from March 7, 2022, continued intensively. It was unable to assess the effects of the conflict in Ukraine, including sanctions, in the annual report for 2021. TMMC reported a turnover of CZK 32.54bn and an operating loss of CZK 832.52m. ■

Beiersdorf's sales up 7.6% despite pandemic

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Beiersdorf reported a net turnover of CZK 1.18bn for 2021. The economic result after taxation reached CZK 119.87m (+CZK 11.7m year-on-year). In its annual report, the seller of cosmetic products also stated, among other things, that in 2021, despite the pandemic, it increased sales by 7.6%. The company invested part of the funds generated in the NIVEA and Eucerin brands. The group has its headquarters in Hamburg and over 150 international branches. ■

ALSTOM invests CZK 121m in machines, targets Slovakia

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

ALSTOM Czech Republic (formerly Bombardier Transportation Czech Republic) posted a net turnover of CZK 2.87bn in 2021. Its pre-tax profit totalled CZK 181.9m. Investments amounted to CZK 121m, with the most significant shares directed at the renovation of machine tools and the completion of Hall C reconstruction. After a takeover by the ALSTOM Group, the company expanded its product portfolio and is gradually processing new production methods. In its annual report, the manufacturer of rolling stock components further stated that its medium-term objective was to support new production projects in the 2023-2025 period. It also plans to sell alternative traction vehicles and actively enter the Slovak market. ■

AGC supplies HUD windshields to Mercedes-Benz

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

AGC Automotive Czech supplies windshields with head-up (HUD) displays for the latest Mercedes-Benz GLC model of the new generation introduced in June 2022. They enable the display of operating information directly on the glass. Board member Luděk Steklý said that the extensive investment in a new production line at the plant in Chudeřice in the past years enabled the company to produce glass of such quality and acquire similar projects. It employs approximately 1,750 people and supplies glass to all major European car companies. ■

Colliers agrees with Panattoni on Shape Corporation hall

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Developer Panattoni will build a customized hall for Shape Corporation at Panattoni Park Pilsen West II. The American company plans to move its operations from its current premises in Brno and expand the production of deformation zones. The agreement between the developer and the manufacturer was brokered by Colliers International. Production is scheduled to start in H1 2023 and up to 700 employees will work in full operation in Nýřany on 36,400 m². The hall will meet the requirements under the BREEAM environmental certification. ■

CTP completes merger with Deutsche Industrie Grundbesitz

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Developer CTP has completed its merger with Deutsche Industrie Grundbesitz AG (DIG) and acquired 100% of the company. CTP had previously become the holder of 80.9% of DIG shares after launching a public takeover bid and delisting DIG from the stock exchange. The merger of CTP and DIG is expected to further strengthen CTP's position as the largest listed owner, operator and developer of logistics and industrial real estate in continental Europe. As part of the merger, the legal integration of DIG into the CTP Group has been completed. The original company DIG has been dissolved. ■

Koyo to supply bearings for Jaguar Land Rover e-cars

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Koyo Bearings received nominations for Jaguar Land Rover and MIBA projects. The Brno technical office of the company contributed to them. In the Jaguar Land Rover project, 3 different variants of roller bearings for the transmission of the electric car will be produced. All had to comply with the complex load cycle prescribed by the customer. For the MIBA customer, it is the supply of an inner ring with a cementation layer under the needle bearing of the balance shaft of a classic internal combustion engine. In addition to automotive systems, the Brno office analyzes a wide range of applications from giant bearings in wind power plants to small bearings in steering systems. ■

KB and KP opening fund with 120% return guarantee

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Komerční banka (KB) and Komerční Pojišťovna (KP) are opening a new secured fund, Stabilita 2. It is offered as part of investment life insurance Vital Invest and Vital Platinum Private. It ensures clients a return of 120 % of invested funds even in the event of a negative performance of the underlying asset. With positive performance it then offers 141 %. The basis is the SOLACTIVE EURO ESG 40 INDEX AR index. It includes companies from Belgium, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland. The subscription period begins on August 22 and ends on December 2, 2022. The maturity of the fund is six years. ■

For your notes

PAK: Funds can help finance Sezemice bypass

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Pardubice Region (PAK) plans to apply for a subsidy from the IROP call for the Sezemice bypass. The total expected cost of the project is CZK 270m. The route of the regional road should run northeast of the town in places of the existing agricultural areas and should connect Road II/298 with the future route of Road I/36. ■

KZ continues completion of Masaryk Hospital for CZK 1.4bn

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Krajská zdravotní (KZ) continues to build a pavilion on the grounds of the Masaryk Hospital in Ústí nad Labem on the Severní Terrace. The company is partially financing the completion of the hospital at a cost of almost CZK 1.4bn from subsidy sources. CZK 500m is drawn from the 98th IROP call, and it also uses financial investment support from the Ústí Region. At the same time, it has an investment loan from Komerční banka. The financing of the completion of hospitals in Děčín and Chomutov is ensured in the same way, where subsidies from the EU sources amount to CZK 150m. ■

DB Schenker wants hydrogen fleet; tests to start in 2023

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

DB Schenker has ambitions to build a fleet of electric vehicles with hydrogen-powered fuel cells. The company confirmed it during its visit to the site of hydrogen-powered truck manufacturer Hyzone. It should get the first one by the end of 2022, thanks to its collaboration with the leasing start-up hylane, which belongs to DEVK and specialises in providing comprehensive hydrogen solutions in the logistics sector. At the beginning of 2023, DB Schenker plans to start operating tests on several routes with selected clients. As of the third quarter of 2023, it intends to expand and commercialise operation, depending on factors such as hydrogen infrastructure and market acceptance. Together with its carriers, it strives to be carbon neutral by 2040. ■

Police signs contract with Porsche IA for 83 VW Crafters

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

On August 22, 2022, the Police Presidium concluded a contract with Porsche Inter Auto CZ for the delivery of 83 Volkswagen Crafter 50 XDR, 4x4 - Emergency vehicles over 3.5 t for CZK 214.56m. This stems from its publication in the Register of Contracts on August 22, 2022. ■

ÚOHS reviews EHS' and PMFE's control over M&M reality

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS) has initiated a simplified procedure on the basis of a proposal by European Housing Services (EHS) and PM Family Estates (PMFE) to authorise a merger between competitors. The concentration is intended to result in the appellants acquiring the possibility to jointly control M&M reality holding and its subsidiaries. The proposed merger is to take place mainly in the areas of real estate brokerage and brokerage of consumer credit, insurance and investment products. A decision has not yet been issued. ■

MŠMT aims to support teaching modernization with CZK 860m

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (MŠMT) recommended for discussion to the Monitoring Committee of the Operational Program Jan Amos Komenský (OP JAK) the project Support for the Curricular Work of Schools. This should significantly help schools with the professional development of teachers in the issue of modernizing the content, methods and forms of education. The expected amount of support is approximately CZK 860m. The Monitoring Committee of OP JAK should discuss the project in October 2022. The National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic will be the implementer, and funds from both OP JAK and the state budget will be used for its financing. The launch is planned for the beginning of 2023 and should take place over a period of 64 months. ■

EPC trades 374 TWh of gas; invests in RES

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

EPH holding's EP Commodities (EPC) traded more than 374 TWh of natural gas in 2021, up 41% yearly. The amount of electricity sold remained stable at 158 TWh. In its annual report, the company further stated that the fluctuations in the prices of emission allowances were reflected in the increase in their traded volume by approximately one-quarter to 188m tonnes. Revenue grew 225% to CZK 357.2bn, and net profit was 164% higher, totalling CZK 1.8bn. The EBITDA amounted to CZK 2.32bn (2020: CZK 871m). Among other things, EPC strives to expand its infrastructure to other European countries, such as the Benelux states, for trading electricity and to the Balkans. It is also preparing to open a branch in London. In addition, it further invests in supporting new activities in the area of renewable energy sources (RES). In 2021, the volume of traded RES energy increased six-fold to more than 473 GWh. ■

Kofola's GM to decide on 2021 profit distribution

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Kofola ČeskoSlovensko has called a general meeting (GM) to approve the 2021 profit distribution per rollam. The voting will take place from September 5 to 20, 2022. The proposed dividend will be published on September 5. The decisive date for a right to vote on profit distribution is August 29. As ČIANEWS reported, the Kofola Group posted EBITDA at CZK 1.13bn last year. Revenue grew 7.5% year-on-year to CZK 6.64bn. ■

For your notes

CK Sunflower Tours ceased operations

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The SUNFLOWER TOURS travel agency has announced its closure. The company stated that it was currently preparing a petition to declare bankruptcy. It is mainly due to losses during the two-year travel restrictions and bans due to the pandemic. According to the company, this year's sales did not help to improve the overall financial situation either. Slavia pojišťovna announced that all 90 clients that the travel agency has abroad would stay in their hotels until the end of their stay and fly on the originally planned routes. In total, the bankruptcy affects approximately 300 clients, most of them are those who paid for the trip and did not leave. The insurance company will return the money to them after the travel agency declares insolvency and provides it with all the information for the liquidation of this insurance event. ■

Alza.cz accepts complaints and returned goods through AlzaBoxes

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Alza.cz now enables its customers to return and claim goods via AlzaBoxes. The service is free and the first available in the Czech Republic. Implementation in Slovakia and Hungary is planned in the near future. The service is intended for goods that fit in the boxes. Bulky appliances must be delivered to branches in person or by courier. ■

ESG essential for 72% of investors, 50% favour RES

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The environmental and social impacts of one's business (ESG) are essential for 72% of representatives of Czech investment companies. The global average is 57%. Because of ESG, 41% of investors are willing to give up some of their profits, according to the Czech ESG Survey conducted by PwC Czech Republic, the Czech Capital Market Association and the CFA Society Czech Republic. At the same time, two-thirds of investors emphasise that companies should deal with the ESG issue, even though it may lead to a short-term decrease in profits. When making decisions about investments, there are demands for steps leading to lowering CO2 (68%), using renewable energy sources (RES, 50%) and managing water (29%). ■

Airline PLAY plans sales of up to USD 16m

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Icelandic low-cost airline PLAY plans to expand its fleet by four more aircraft in early 2023, increasing its workforce by 200 from the current 300. The carrier will start flying to Dulles International Airport near Washington in April. They expect to carry 800,000 passengers in 2022, the first full year of operations. Revenues are expected to reach USD 150-160m. In Q2 2022, the company carried 181,000 passengers with three-quarters of the flights full. Revenues in this period increased to USD 32.5m. The airline expanded its flight model to Iceland, combining a convenient Europe-US connection with a connection in Reykjavik. It also started flying to 14 new destinations and expanded its fleet to six Airbus aircraft. Flights from Prague to Reykjavik commenced on May 5, 2022. ■

Plzeňský Prazdroj ups of non-alcoholic beer sales by 25%

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the first seven months of 2022, Plzeňský Prazdroj sold 25% more non-alcoholic beers than in the same period last year. Both the basic, unflavoured version of Birell and non-alcoholic radlers, i.e. Birells flavoured with natural fruit juices, are growing. The number of male consumers of both variants is increasing and their current share is 54%. Marketing director Roman Trzaskalik said that non-alcoholic beers are clearly the fastest growing part of the beer market and will continue to grow in importance. Every eighth beer from Plzeňský Prazdroj is already non-alcoholic. ■

LBK: Metrostav & OHLA to build CZK 233m parking house

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Liberec Region (LBK) will build a parking house in the lower centre of Liberec. It will be built for CZK 233m, including VAT, by a consortium consisting of Metrostav DIZ and OHLA ŽS. Deputy governor Zbyněk Miklík (Pirates) said that the companies would build a complete parking house with 244 bays, including a green roof that would be funded from the National Recovery Plan. The Region cancelled the original contract worth CZK 196m in April 2022, as the Ukraine war caused an outage of supplies of iron ore and construction material. Therefore, the Region announced the tender with a higher estimated contract value. Construction should start in September. ■

Pump sales up 50%, manufacturers increase capacities

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In 2022, the sales of heat pumps in the Czech Republic will grow by up to 50% year on year to 45,000. This estimate was made by the Association for the Use of Heat Pumps, adding that it would be a record. According to data published by the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade, sales grew 25% to 30,000 in 2021 because of the energy crisis. Many manufacturers and suppliers plan to increase their production capacities, for instance, NIBE, Stiebel Eltron, Acond, AIT, AC Heating, Daikin, Mitsubishi Electric, Bosch Termotechnika and others. The Chamber of Renewable Energy Sources forecasts that by 2027 up to 500,000 households will switch to clean heating; at least half will be using pumps. Currently, approximately 160,000 are installed in the Czech Republic. ■

For your notes

MMR closes the third IROP call for cyber security, the other two are still running

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS

The Integrated Regional Operational Program (IROP) 2021-2027 administered by the Ministry of Local Development of the Czech Republic (MMR) concludes the third call for strengthening cyber security. This targets projects in the so-called less developed regions and over CZK 600 million is available from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). A week after the announcement of the call, the MMR registers three times more applicants than the funds are sufficient for. In the period 2014-2020, IROP provided subsidies for cyber security for CZK 1.3 billion. In the period 2021-2027, the MMR increased the amount of money to this area to CZK 3.4 billion. The ministry will seek further support for this segment. The fourth call for assistance in the so-called transition regions with the amount of CZK 1.7 billion from the ERDF remains open. The fifth call supports projects with a nationwide impact and the amount of funds from the ERDF exceeds CZK 1 billion. ■

French fashion brand JOTT entering Czech market

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

New fashion brand JOTT from Marseille is entering the Czech Republic. Representation for the Czech Republic was obtained by Urban Brands, which is now opening its first brick-and-mortar store in Chodov, Prague. The brand's products will also be available in the urbanbrands.cz e-shop from September. JOTT specializes in thin, ultralight and waterproof jackets that can be worn all year round. But it also has vests, polo shirts, dresses and other clothes usable for all four seasons. ■

OTE: Price of daily electricity market to rise to EUR 5,000/MWh

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The harmonized maximum price for the daily electricity market within the SDAC will be increased to EUR 5,000/MWh from September 20, 2022. The energy market operator (OTE) informed that the increase in the limit comes after prices reached EUR 4,000/MWh in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on August 16, 2022. The clearing spot price therefore exceeded the value of 60% of the harmonized maximum price for SDAC. ■

Hornbach increases turnover towards CZK 10bn, fits LEDs

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

In the financial year that ended on February 28, 2022, Hornbach Baumarkt CS posted a year-on-year increase in net turnover from CZK 8.85bn to CZK 9.95bn. Its annual report further states that its profit after tax totalled CZK 1.01bn. In connection with the Russian aggression, the hobby market chain noted that it did not have a significant direct exposition towards Ukraine, Russia or Belarus. However, the impact on the overall economic situation may require a revision of some estimates and affect sales volumes. The company is also looking for ways to minimise the environmental impact of its activities. Therefore, it wants to continue fitting LED lighting in its stores. ■

TRENDS, DIGITALISATION AND INNOVATION

ERA: NEO system to monitor aircraft in Budapest

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Ferenc Liszt International Airport in Budapest, Hungary, will use ERA's NEO multilateral surface system. The technology has passed factory acceptance testing. In collaboration with experts from HungaroControl, ERA is now preparing to install the system, which will replace the older generation of this solution. Through expansion and modernisation, the coverage of the airport's critical-space key parts should be increased. The system is designed for surface surveillance of aircraft and vehicles equipped with ERA SQUID surveillance units to ensure optimal operation and safety. ■

A&O innovates procedures on eurobonds, withholding tax

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Law firm Allen & Overy (A&O), in collaboration with Clearstream and Euroclear, has led a consulting project resulting in introducing new procedures to identify eurobond holders. They will also be used to verify their position to apply withholding tax. These certification procedures should enable Czech issuers to effectively perform and administer their duties that occur in connection with issues after introducing new rules to apply withholding tax as of 2022. A&O prepared the first draft and participated in the completion and finalisation of the procedures. ■

Passengera supplies infotainment to 25 Flixbuses

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Passengera has supplied high-speed internet and an infotainment portal to an additional 25 Flixbus buses. The vehicles are connected to the internet through two 4G/LTE antennas and two geofencing-technology modems that support up to eight SIM cards. The company is testing state-of-the-art technologies, including 5G and the latest Wi-Fi 6 standard, in several vehicles. Buses equipped with its solution are deployed nationally and on connections to France, Germany, Slovenia, Croatia and newly to Hungary. ■

ŠKODA unveils first sketches of VISION 7S

Tuesday, August 23 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

Carmaker ŠKODA AUTO has revealed the first exterior sketches of the all-electric VISION 7S. They show a robust SUV with a distinctively shaped nose and T-shaped headlights. It features a chunky chassis, large aerodynamically optimised wheels and a gently sloping roofline towards the rear. The study represents a new design language for ŠKODA. ■

For your notes

4Trans launches interactive map for CR and wants to expand in Europe

Thursday, August 25 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

4Trans now offers an interactive map as part of its services for truck carriers. The web application will allow drivers to search for gas stations, places to rest, refreshments or Wi-Fi availability. It also shows dangerous road sections. The map currently works on the territory of the Czech Republic. Logistics fintech is preparing its expansion to Europe. In the near future, they will focus on Slovakia, Germany, Poland and Austria. It also plans to introduce a database of shopping centers where you can park a truck. ■

NEWS FROM SLOVAKIA

Slovak government to support Intercable's investment with EUR 1.5m

Wednesday, August 24 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The Slovak government has approved investment aid of EUR 1.5m for Intercable in the form of income tax relief. Intercable plans to expand the production of automotive components in Kriváň, district of Detva, to include customized products for use in electric cars. As part of the investment plan, it expects to spend EUR 8.58m by the end of 2023. In direct connection with the investment, 82 new jobs will be created by the end of 2026. ■

Fitch Ratings kept Slovakia's credit rating at level A

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

The rating agency Fitch Ratings decided to keep Slovakia's credit rating at level A. Fitch praised Slovakia's membership in the EU and the eurozone, competitive exports, stable foreign direct investment and the quality of the country's management. However, due to the increased risk of energy supplies from Russia, the outlook is changing from initially stable to negative. The information was published by the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic. ■

Slovalco will cease operations, MF SR did not provide assistance

Monday, August 22 | ČIANEWS | [Information Source](#)

From September 2022, Slovakia will lose its only producer of primary aluminum with more than 70 years of tradition for at least one year. The Slovalco aluminum smelter will cease operations in response to the failure to implement a competitive framework for offsetting indirect CO2 costs. The Ministry of Economy (MH) of the Slovak Republic informed about this, stating that the department has taken all steps to reduce the fees in the final energy prices under its competence. According to the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, the company has been demanding compensation from the state for allowance prices for almost two years at the Ministry of Finance (MF) of the Slovak Republic, which did not comply. ■

For your notes

Lined area for taking notes.