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## An Interview with Václav Pačes, President of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic

*At the beginning of June 2005 the Czech government approved the conceptual document, long in preparation, entitled "Long-term Basic Direction of Research", in which seven priority research spheres were stipulated: sustainable development; molecular biology; energy sources; materials research; the competitiveness of the machine tool industry; information society; security research. How does the Czech Academy of Sciences perceive these priorities and to what extent do they reflect priorities in European research?*

The government has the right to specify the priorities of research and a wise government will specify them after carrying out a thorough analysis. Though an analysis was admittedly carried out, I feel there was a lack of reflection upon the long-term needs of our society and our economy. For instance, they conducted this type of analysis for Switzerland at one of the best European universities, ETH in Zurich. This university is now changing its research programmes in order to better meet future requirements, and surpris-

ingly, does not lay emphasis on technology and on traditionally very advanced machine tool engineering – these will move to Asia over the long term. It focuses more attention on architecture for instance, given the need for environmentally friendly buildings and the consumption of small amounts of energy, and also on sociology and other social sciences. These are lacking in our priorities. The Academy of Science has drawn attention to this, but in vain. This is why we ourselves are going to try to increase support for research in the sphere of the social sciences, for instance in the sphere of cultural inheritance, Czech studies, etc. The first step in this direction could be the Josef Dobrovský prize for financing trips by foreign colleagues at institutions in this country specialising in these areas, and we are giving consideration to introducing this at the Academy too.

*At present we hear a lot being said about the need to support applied research oriented according to the requirements of practice and capable of being utilised in specific industrial spheres. Could you*



*given any concrete examples of successful cooperation of scientific and research institutions (and universities) with industrial companies?*

There are many examples. I regard the most important to be the creation of the many small companies which have come into being on the basis of the results of our work. I am closest to biotechnol-

# Innovation, Science and Research in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic research and development is undertaken by several groups of institutions:

- the institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences
- universities
- departmental research institutes
- private research institutes (most of which are members of the Association of Research Organisations).

While the first two groups of organisations concentrate on pure research, the third and fourth focus on applied R&D. Most of the private institutions were established through the privatisation of research institutions working under the aegis of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. These institutes were usually controlled by the state or trade unions.

Financial support for research and development on the part of the state is at present 0.56 % of GDP and there is the promise of further growth. Private sources invest approximately the same amount. In the relatively complex system of support for R&D from the state budget, from the point of view of the cooperation of R&D institutions and private companies the largest roles are played by collaborative research programmes. These mainly involve the following programmes:

- Tandem (Ministry of Industry and Trade) – this programme is designed for the joint projects of private companies and academic institutions
- Research centres (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) – selected centres receive

support over several years for the implementation of research solutions depending on their thematic orientation

As well as this there are other programmes for the support of industrial research (POKROK), agricultural, health, environmental research, etc. The National Research Programme and the National Research Programme II which is being prepared (c.f. [www.msmt.cz](http://www.msmt.cz)) have a special status. Their objective is to support R&D in spheres where the CR enjoys a high level of expertise and has the opportunity to produce results. The topics were selected on the basis of the Technology Foresight method.

The following activities also play a part:

- the programme for investment incentives into technology centres and centres of strategic services
- programmes using structural funds in the CR, e.g. the Prosperity programme, the aim of which is to support the creation of centres for the transfer of technology, science and technology parks, and business incubators
- the joint activities of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Association of Research Organisations aimed at finding points of contact between pure and applied research.

Although many parameters rank the CR amongst the top of the new member countries of the EU, there is still great potential for improvement. An important role is to be played by a key document which is preparing the future development of the CR – the Economic Growth Strategy. One of its five basic pillars is the advancement of R&D

and innovation as the basic building blocks of a knowledge based economy. A concrete action document which should provide assistance in realising the measures proposed therein is the National Innovation Policy passed by the Czech government in July of this year. Its measures are aimed at more effective support of R&D, increased effectiveness of the state administration in the sphere of R&D and innovation, the reinforcement of human resources for R&D and innovation, and better utilization of the results of R&D to the benefit of the citizens of the CR. An important role in the utilization of the potential of companies is to be played by tax relief for entrepreneurs who invest their own resources in R&D. As of 1.1.2005 a statutory amendment will allow for the amount which a company devotes to its own R&D to be deducted from its tax base. After the results of this legislation have been evaluated consideration will be given to expanding this tax relief to the taxes collected on R&D from universities and institutions of the Czech Academy of Science. The third important measure is the transformation of so-called beneficial organisations into public research institutions. A new Act would offer individual institutions (e.g. those of the Czech Academy of Sciences) greater freedom and the opportunity to implement the results of R&D and to establish cooperation with various civil organisations.

Miroslav Janeček  
President of the Association  
of Research Organisations

## Czech SMEs in the 6th Framework Programme

In the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6) the support of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is focused on two directions. The first one is the requirement that 15% of the budget for thematic priorities must be allocated to SMEs participating in standard projects (mainly STREP projects, Integrated Projects, Networks of Excellence). The second direction consists in creating special projects for SMEs (including SMEs without research capacities) – Cooperative Research Projects for individual SMEs and Collective Research Projects for SME associations.

*The absolute number of Czech teams in Cooperative Research proposals and financed projects can be assessed as successful.*

The absolute number of Czech teams in Cooperative Research proposals and financed projects can be assessed as successful. The Czech Republic is less successful in project leadership. Sometimes proposals are prepared fulfilling all criteria but not selected for financing. According to my opinion, a growing experience of Czech teams will lead to a change in this situation and the first Czech coordinators will emerge. We should approach Austria whose proposals result in several projects realized under its coordination within every call.

As an example of Czech participation in this type of projects the Percatech project in the sector of fish farming can be mentioned. The main objective of this project is to secure the breeding Eurasian perch juveniles. This will support sustainable development of Eurasian perch produc-

tion. The project is focused on the optimisation of the brood stock management considering environmental, nutritional and population variables and production of juvenile population with improved potentialities. An economic study will be elaborated to specify the cost of production of juveniles using different farming systems. The project is coordinated by the French University Henri Poincaré. The consortium consists of four universities, one research institute and six SMEs. The Czech Republic is represented by the University of South Bohemia (Research Institute of Fish Culture and Hydrobiology) and

one SME – Rybarstvi Nove Hradky. This company is the biggest fish producer among the SMEs in the consortium and plays a dominant role in project. Its participation in the project allows to increase the volume of perch production mainly for export. The perch is a very favourite fish in Switzerland. 90% of all European production is exported to this country.

Collective Research Projects are intended for groups of enterprises. All three planned calls were closed, results of the first two calls are available.

The evaluation procedure has two stages, 52 and 105 proposals, respectively, proceeded to the second stage. One proposal was submitted from the Czech Republic. Total number of participants from the Czech Republic in the proposals was 11 and 47, respectively.

22 and 21 proposals, respectively, were selected for financing, the Czech one was not chosen. The number of Czech teams in financed projects was 4 and 8, respectively.

Submitted proposals cover a broad variety of technological fields ranging from life sciences, information technologies, management sciences to building and manufacturing technologies. Czech teams are represented in projects selected for financing in the following branches: textiles, heat pumps, foundry industry, building industry, food safety, waste water treatment and stone production.

The Collective Research Projects seems to be the domain of larger countries. In this context, the one Czech attempt to submit a proposal is encouraging.

As an example of Czech participation in this type of project the Oil-free Powertrain project in the sector tribology can be mentioned. The aim of the project is to find a technical solution enabling a power transmission without any liquid lubricant needed in the powertrain. The project has a total budget 2,5 MEUR and it is planned for 3 years from November 2002 to November 2005. It is coordinated by the German Engineering Federation VDMA. Two Czech associations participate in the project – the Automotive Industry Association and the Association of Manufacturers and Suppliers of Engineering Technology, as well as four SMEs – Aldis Hradec Králové, Kovosvit DS Písek, Retos Varnsdorf and Cetos Hostivar. SMEs involved in the project expect that their participating in the project enables them to improve their products and their market position. Project details can be found at <http://www.oil-free-powertrain.de/>.

Martin Skarka  
Technology Centre AS CR



# The Protection of Industrial and Intellectual Ownership in the Czech Republic

The protection of industrial and intellectual property in a modern economy based on knowledge, R&D and innovations plays an irreplaceable role. The use of patents and other protection instruments allows companies to see a return on their investments

The harmonisation of Czech law on the protection of industrial ownership with the equivalent system of the member countries of the European Union took place at the beginning of the nineties. The Industrial Property Office is the central body of the state administration for the protection of industrial ownership and is the sole organisation in the CR where inventions, product samples, industrial samples, registered trademarks, appellation of origin, and the topographies of semiconductor products are registered and resolved.

## Patents

Patent applications for inventions are currently the most advanced protection of the original idea in industrial ownership. This is so far the most sophisticated system for the protection of the results of technical creative activities by means of industrial rights yet created. If a patent is breached, full civil and criminal liability is established.

After the entry of the Czech Republic into the European patent system on 1.7.2002, 2003 saw an anticipated decrease in foreign patent applications. The marked decrease in the number of these applications submitted in 2004 to the National Property Office, however, is not directly linked with the attractiveness of the CR for the foreign industrial and business communities. The CR has become part of the EU internal market, which is fully covered by the European Patent Office.

With the advent of globalisation and internationalisation it is less and less conceivable for industrial and business circles that considerations regarding production and sales would take only a single European country into account. More and more it is taken for granted that protection must be acquired over broader geographical areas, and not simply local regions. With the centralisation of research and licensing proceedings, which was the original idea of the European patent system, this system is best realised.

In 2004 the National Patent Office awarded 1,514 patents, most of which (1,221) were to foreign applicants, especially from the USA and Germany. Last year the European Patent Office awarded 876 patents with effects for the Czech Republic, and the National Patent Office received 102 translations of these European patents, which resulted in their becoming fully valid in the CR. At the end of 2004 a total of 9,807 national patents applied to this country.

The activities of domestic applicants abroad by means of the National Property Office recorded a slight increase last year – 90 international applications under the terms of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and 35 European applications. In 2004 the drop continued in the overall number of applications in patent proceedings. In a survey of patents a decision had been taken on 3,763 applications, with a patent awarded in 40 % of cases.

## Utility models

For items with a lower level of inventiveness or less economic significance a simpler, faster and less expensive protection can be used, the utility model. Utility models are new technical solutions which can be utilised in industry and which exceed the framework of specialist knowledge. The basic difference between a utility model and a patent resides in the respective procedures. In the case of utility models a registration principle is applied, which examines only whether the basic conditions for protection

have been met. The protection of new technical solutions by means of their registration as utility models remained steady in 2004, not only in respect of the number of applications but also in respect of the fact that they are used in the vast majority of cases by domestic applicants. The effective term of protection is some 5 years. Only 6% of applicants was foreign.

The total number of applications of utility models rose slightly on previous years to 1,213, though the spread of spheres remained the same. Most applications were for solutions in the sphere of transport, packaging, and the storage of products, followed by medical and hygienic aids. The average length of proceedings did not exceed 3 months. In 2004, 1,104 utility models were registered and at the end of the year there was a total of 6,663 valid utility models in the CR.

## Industrial designs

In 2004 the legal protection of the design of industrial products by means of their registration in the national register of industrial designs was slightly influenced by the similar regulations of communitarian law. This can be seen in the slight drop in applications in the CR on previous years, the result of the precedence given to the system of industrial designs by the Community. There were 622 new industrial designs registered and the total number of newly protected variants was 2,329. At the end of the year there were 4,930 national industrial designs valid in the Czech Republic and more than 70 thousand industrial designs recorded in the European Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market. This is a new phenomenon which national industrial designers must take into account.

## Registered trademarks

The constantly high number of trademarks applied for and registered is a trend which goes back to the beginning of the nineties and bears witness both to a healthy market environment and the tendency to increase the share of brand goods on the market, which come with a clear quality guarantee and maintain a relatively fixed circle of clients. With the growth in the volume of brand goods there is naturally an increase in clashes between registered rights. Registered trademarks reproduce each other, are falsified, and are the subject of speculations which are far from reflecting honest business activities and the good ethics of economic competition.

In 2004 the Office was submitted 10,407 national applications for registered trademarks, of which the vast majority were from domestic applicants (9,365). Foreign applicants represented only a 10% share of national applications. The Office received approximately 6,510 applications for international registered trademarks by means of the Madrid system for the international registration of trademarks. Last year there were 8,658 national trademarks and 7,145 international trademarks registered.

There is a considerable increase in the number of rights of registered trademarks valid in the CR. As well as the roughly 114,000 international registered

trademarks with effect in the CR and 95,000 national trademarks, a large number of rights apply in the CR as a member of the EU, which are recorded for the EU by means of the Community trademarks registered at the European Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market in Alicante, Spain. There were more than 200,000 such trademarks at the end of 2004.

## Other instruments

A tradition in the CR going back many years in the sphere of public law protection of geographical labelling, itself the result of more than thirty years of national legislation of these items of industrial ownership as well as membership in the Lisbon Treaty for the protection of appellation of origin and its international registration going back the same length of time, has meant that in 2004 there were some 940 places of origin protected in this country. With the entry of the CR into the EU this protection was extended to 659 places of origin and geographical labels protected by a record in the register held by the European Commission. Furthermore in 2004, 31 associations of producers and several producers from the CR requested a record of registered labels in the European register. Under the terms of the Treaty on Access the EU provided the protection of geographic labelling to Budvar beer (Budějovické pivo, Českobudějovické pivo, Budějovický měšťanský var). Protection of the topographies of semiconductor products is, as in the case of software, practically unused. At present software cannot be patented in the CR, and so there are no foreign applications sent here.

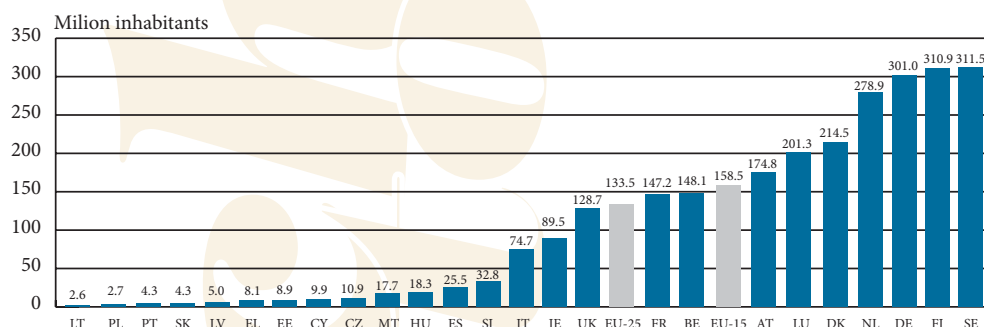
## Increasing awareness

In recent years efforts in the sphere of industrial ownership have focused more and more on increasing awareness of the importance of the protection of technical and creative activities. As well as the National Property Office other organisations active in this sphere are the Association of Innovative Entrepreneurship (AIP) and the Czech Inventors' Association. Their activities concentrate both on the corporate sphere and, as is traditional, on university students.

Representatives of the organisations referred to above participate at various national and international exhibitions and conferences, either independently or jointly. In 2004 the Office presented the Czech patent system at the invitation of the Swiss Patent Office, where it participated in an exhibition of inventions in Geneva, and at the invitation of the German Patent Office at the IENA exhibition in Norimberg. In the sphere of international cooperation the Office for many years has been an active member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation, a special-purpose organisation of the UN.

Pavel Dlouhý  
Vice-chairman of the ČSVZ

Patent applications to the EPO per million inhabitants from the EU-25 Member States, 2002



Source: Eurostat, European Patent Office

## Successful Czech Case Studies

### Filtering out harmful gasses

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and furans are highly carcinogenic substances that can cause serious harm to human health and the environment. It is therefore vital that they be eliminated from the emissions produced when Europe's incinerators burn hospital and other hazardous waste.

A EUREKA project with partners from the Czech Republic and Germany has developed a new system to intercept and treat these substances before they are dispersed into the atmosphere. In the Czech Republic about 90% of incinerators face the threat of closure as they currently fail to meet EU emission limits. This system will therefore help avert a potential crisis.

„It is essential to offer the ability to trap harmful substances using existing equipment so that incinerators can comply with emission limits. If plants had to close there would be an even more damaging effect on our environment,” says Petr Jirsa, technical director at the project's Czech lead partner, SMS Cz.

„The new technology is based on the ‚active coal‘ principle, which effectively intercepts and filters harmful substances such as polychlorinated dibenzene-dioxins. It requires low investment and operating costs and uses existing absorbents in a new process. This results in a dramatic cut in emissions: from 1.25 down to 0.1 ng/m<sup>3</sup>,” explains Jirsa.

The EUREKA project partners investigated the different types of active coal (sorbent) on the market and determined the optimum technological conditions for their use to effectively filter different kinds of burning material in order to fulfil the requirements set by EU Directives. „We found that several conditions are critical, particularly moisture and temperature,” says Jirsa. „For example, the effectiveness of the sorbent reached its peak at temperatures around 115 to 135 degrees Celsius, but then decreased as the temperature rose further. To combat this, we devised a special cooling exchanger with continual temperature regulation to ensure that the optimal temperature is maintained.“

The partners are now using the results in a pilot plant in Pilsen in the Czech Republic and will soon expand to another location. They then plan to supply the new system to Bulgaria and Lithuania and are looking to further their research by developing a new device to fully automate and optimise the process while minimising the amount of coal used.

*edited from www.eureka.be*

### Lasers for the future

The Prague suburb of Kobylisy is a centre of excellence in the sphere of research into high power lasers and their applications. It is the location of PALS (Prague Asterix Laser System), a state-of-the-art European research facility conceived as a laboratory providing the basis for experimental research. The research is centred around the high-power iodine laser system Asterix IV developed at the Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics in Germany, which is the brightest source of man-made electromagnetic radiation ever produced and ranks amongst the three largest civilian laser systems in Europe.

The Czech Republic's Academy of Sciences became operator of the Asterix laser following an agreement with the Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics. To exploit the new powerful tool for laser plasma research, two Czech academic institutes, the Institute of Physics and the Institute of Plasma Physics, united their forces and in November 1998 established a joint laser research laboratory, the PALS Research Centre. Successful operational tests were crowned by the official launch of the completed laser system in June 2000. Since 2003, PALS is a member of the LASERLAB consortium,

which provides support to EU researchers in the field of laser research within the 6th Framework Program of the European Commission. For the period January 2004 through December 2007, the European Commission and the LASERLAB consortium signed a contract on the „Integrated European Laser Laboratories“ project amounting to EUR 14 million. The researchers are granted access to the participating laboratories on the basis of proposals which are reviewed by an external panel of referees.

Projects vary greatly from close-to-application research to physical and exploratory studies: A recent project of a Polish team has as its objective the development of a laser-based ion implantation method for modification of materials' properties, and utilization of soft laser radiation for industrial lithography and chip production. A project of a UK team measures x-rays opacity of iron. Iron determines to a large extent the energy coming out of the sun and the stars as it is the maximally opaque element found there.

*David Kolman*

*CZELO - Czech Liaison Office for R&D, Brussels*

### The construction of the Wirelessinfo virtual research centre

At the beginning of 2000 a group of Czech organisations drawn mainly from the SME sector successfully prosecuted the idea of the Wirelessinfo project (mobile technology for forestry and agriculture) as part of the 5th Framework Project for Research and Development (5FP) in the sphere of information technology. At that time this was the first project with a Czech coordinator. The project was extended to thirty three months. Work on the project brought a host of positive results in the sphere of technological developments, as well as a new view of the development of corporate strategies.

In the sphere of technological development orientation on use of open source solutions, i.e. system which are freely available on the internet for design companies to use when creating their applications, become crucial. Another important aspect was orientation on the use of open standards, allowing for ease of communication between various information systems. Use of these principles led to the creation of a host of innovative applications which in the short or longer term found applications in practice (it must be realised that research solutions often far outstrip current possibilities) and led to the creation of commercial products. The following solutions are worth a mention:

- A map server for management of the regional plans for woodland development. This system was one of the first GIS systems in Europe to be recognised by the EU JRC research centre as a system compatible with the EU INSPIRE standard, the role of which is to ensure the interoperability of GIS systems throughout Europe.
- The Prefarm server for support of precise agriculture. Thanks to this system, the service organisation MJM, which was one of the project designers, is one of the organisations in Europe providing these services to the largest extent.
- The MapLog vehicle monitoring system, which is the first system of its kind in the CR constructed entirely on a web solution.

From a strategic point of view the most important finding was that by using funds for science and research even small organisations can assert themselves on the market with innovative solutions and can in a certain sphere play the role of technological leader and compete with larger organisations. This is important above all at present, when most small and medium enterprises are undercapitalised. Most companies do not have time

for the conceptual development of new solutions, the development of which is necessitated by the fact that the solution must be put onto the market as quickly as possible. This can later cause problems, both with maintenance and with the further developments of the system. Research grants lead to the design organisation focussing on a solution with a long-term developmental perspective and on the utilisation of technology which will enter the market over the next few years. This ensures the creation of a solution with a long service life. Paradoxically, this method of work sometimes results in a situation arising in which development is faster than in the case of development motivated by the attempt to put a new product on the market as quickly as possible.

The findings made during the course of a solution led to a situation in which for several members of the original consortium orientation on this type of research became part of the company's developmental strategy. However, this strategy requires a combination of resources and the earmarking of employees who will concentrate exclusively on acquiring new projects. This activity is demanding both financially and in terms of expertise, and none of the organisations could attempt it on their own. The combination of resources led to the creation of capacities which allowed for this. The members of the team then jointly or individually participated on the solution of other research projects within the framework of the 5FP (Premathmod, Regeo, Aforo, Davinci).

Gradually a team of cooperating Czech organisations came into being linking the university and several private organisations. As it became clear that cooperation was paying off, a decision was taken to formalise matters. On the basis of previous experience an agreement was reached to establish a non-profit federation of legal entities with the title of the first joint project, Wirelessinfo. Masaryk University and several private companies were present at the birth of this federation. Currently the following are involved in the activities of Wirelessinfo: MJM Litovel, Help Service Remote Sensing and Lesprojekt services. This federation brings together research workplaces, IT companies specialising in innovation, as well as organisations which apply the results of R&D in practice. This resulted in the creation of what is today called an Innovation Centre, or Innovation Cluster. The research potential of this group was boosted by subsequent cooperation with the Geodetic Topographical and Cartographic Research Institute in Zdíby, which currently cooperates closely with the federation and which may, depending on negotiations currently underway, become a full member. The main aim of the group is mutual cooperation in the sphere of science and research, both on a national and international level. At present the federation helps combine capacities and offers the opportunity of involvement in research and innovation activities, either jointly as a federation, or by assisting individual members become involved in research and coordinating mutual cooperation on these research projects. In the just under two years the federation's activities have successfully been established, it has acquired international renown and has been involved in national and international research. At present on the international level Wirelessinfo is working on one project within the framework of 6FP (ami@netfood) and two projects of the European Space Agency ESA (Voice and Ami4for). As well as this Wirelessinfo is involved on one project within the framework of research in the sphere of information society (Navlog) and its members are participating on the solutions of another three national projects (Data Management, MobilDat, Geoplans). The project outputs are then applied directly in practice by the individual users.



A significant shift is gradually taking place in terms of Wirelesinfo activities. Wirelesinfo will participate on the design of research projects such as CRAFT. These are projects which are intended to assist the application of the results of R&D in small and medium enterprises. It is significant that Wirelesinfo will operate in the role of research organisation and not of an SME. It seems that Wirelesinfo is beginning to focus on research and contracts as a new commercial activity.

The experiences of just under two years shows that the collaboration of research organisations with the private sector can bring interesting results which also prove their worth in practice. Moreover, the organisation is gradually creating a position for itself as one which in the short term can play an important role in European research, and help the active participation of individual member organisation both in research and in the consolidation of market status and international renown. It is playing an active role in international organisations and is involved in their activities.

Karel Charvát  
Czech Centre for Strategic Studies

### Putting research into practice

ENVI, s.r.o. is a small company based in South Bohemia. Established in 1992 it has a clear priority to support research and put its results into practice. From the very beginning of its activities the company has been involved in close collaboration with the Botanical and Microbiological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, the University of South Bohemia and other scientific and research institutes. Activities of the company are centred around three business lines - ecological-mechanical engineering, solar technologies and consulting.

Soon after its establishment, the company focused on the practical introduction of technological innovations. The successful implementation of innovations in the sphere of ecological-mechanical engineering include the development and construction of a special sediment-extracting machine - a floating suction dredge. The company is holder of patent No. 539-96 for a dredge head for suction dredges. Currently, four ENVI machines extract coal slurry in the sedimentation basins in coal mining region of northern Moravia.

In 1998, ENVI, s.r.o. initiated the creation of the independent entity ENKI. This spin-off focuses its activity entirely on the field of science, research, development and education and has great potential for the development of innovative programs. ENKI also contributed to the establishment of the Innovative Centre in Třeboň. The company has put a great deal of effort into the development of solar technologies based on the use of Fresnel lenses. A special solar collector was developed and has been recently released and installed on several sites. Optical screens for optimising temperature conditions on the façades of structures are ready to go into operation. ENVI participated in both financing research in this field and its first implementation in the Czech Republic. At present, these products are being attested in Belgium. The company assembles standard solar collectors, photovoltaic panels and heat pumps. Using its research potential, the company is also providing counselling services, design work, energy audits and consulting services in the area of EU funds and programmes for environmental projects.

edited from [www.envi.cz](http://www.envi.cz)

## The Czech Republic Chairs EUREKA Programme

The Czech Republic officially has taken over the Chairmanship of the EUREKA Initiative from the Netherlands at the EUREKA High Level Group meeting at the end of June 2005 in Maastricht. The Czech Chairmanship of this European inter-governmental cooperation in the field of applied research, development and innovation started on 1 July 2005 and would end on 30 June 2006. It should be noted that the Czech Republic is the first country from Central and Eastern Europe to chair EUREKA. This is also the first time the Czech Republic has been a chairman within the framework of a programme and cooperation of European-wide scope and significance. This fact strongly underlines the undisputed political aspect of the Czech EUREKA Chairmanship.

The EU faces a difficult task, that of ensuring the competitiveness of Europe on global markets. One of the routes to European modernisation towards this goal involves an essential investment in science, research and innovation. EUREKA has been working to this target in Europe for twenty years, and represents a functioning system of public-private partnership financing research and innovation. The EUREKA Initiative, along with the Framework Programme of the European Com-

mission in the field of research, contributes to the implementation of strategy of the European Research Area.

EUREKA was established in 1985 on the basis of a common initiative of France and Germany. After 1990 the countries of Central and Eastern Europe joined the programme, and these days EUREKA represents the inter-governmental cooperation of 35 member countries and the Commission of the EU. The Czech Republic became involved in EUREKA in 1995 and so far has participated on 188 projects, of which 103 have successfully been completed and their results were commercially utilised. Within the context of its application in the Czech Republic, the EUREKA programme's first priority is to support projects which increase exports of Czech enterprises.

During the Czech Chairmanship activities of the EUREKA Initiative will focus on the three most important issues. Firstly, the Czech Chairmanship will address the necessity to highlight the role of industrial sphere in the programme activities. Secondly, closer cooperation will be achieved between EUREKA and the programmes of the EU. And thirdly, the Czech Chairmanship will encourage all EUREKA member countries to take upon

themselves obligations related to concrete support and to increase the financing of projects from their national resources.

Within the scope of chair activities the Czech interests will concentrate on the utilisation of EUREKA as one of the tools of the National innovation policy, and on strengthening the position of the Czech Republic in the context of the European research and innovation policy.

The strategy and objectives of the Czech Chairmanship, including organisational matters, are pursued in cooperation with governmental organisations and the Association of Innovative Entrepreneurship of the Czech Republic.

During the one year period of chairmanship the Czech Republic will host regular meetings of EUREKA National Project Coordinators and EUREKA High Level Group. These meetings will take place in Prague, Brno and Karlovy Vary. In June 2006, at the end of the Czech Chairmanship, the Ministerial Conference will be organized in Prague. It is anticipated that this conference will announce the new strategy of the EUREKA Initiative.

Dr. Svatopluk Halada  
Head of Czech EUREKA Chairmanship Secretariat



### The Region of South Bohemia - Permanent Office in Brussels

The Region of South Bohemia - Permanent Office in Brussels has a new director. In the middle of June Petr Šebek took over the reins of the office from the previous director. Along with the Prague House in Brussels, the Region of South Bohemia - Permanent Office is the oldest and most stable of the representations of

Czech regional and local authorities.

Petr Šebek comes to Brussels with the aim of continuing building an effective and useful institution for the region which will be a respected partner amongst organisations in Brussels.

"In terms of its developmental plans the Region of South Bohemia is concentrating on involving the region in the trans-European transport network, on utilisation of the natural and cultural potential for the development of tourism and services, and on support for R&D as the prerequisite for future economic prosperity. These are also the main themes around which the Region of South Bohemia - Permanent Office wishes to create a profile for itself in Brussels," explains Jan Zahradník, the Governor of the Region of South Bohemia, regarding the mission of the office.

Contact: Petr Šebek, director; Lenka Pavlátková  
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CZELO is a part of the Technological Centre of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. The aim of the office is to support the continued involvement of Czech science, research and development in European programmes and projects as part of the European Research Area (ERA).

CZELO offers its services free of charge to all organisations in the Czech Republic. These involve the following above all:

- The provision of up-to-date information on opportunities for the financing of research both within and outside of EU framework programmes;
- The organisation of presentational events of Czech R&D;
- The mediation of meetings between Czech researchers and the relevant officials of the European Commission for consultation regarding concrete research projects;
- Informal discussions of draft projects with the European Commission;
- Organisation of the basic auxiliary infrastructure for meetings of representatives of Czech research with potential project partners;
- The mediation of contacts with potential partners to research consortia by means of a group of liaison offices for R&D in Brussels.

RNDr. Ivo Šanc, CSc was appointed director of the CZELO group.

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## Electoral Congress of the Economic Chamber

On Thursday 26 May 2005 the 17th congress of the Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic was held in Olomouc. The congress is the supreme body of the Chamber, which comprises the general assembly, made up of representatives of district chambers, and representatives of trade associations. The ordinary congress is convened once a year, and in exceptional cases an extraordinary congress may be called. The total number of delegates at this year's congress was over 200.

The 17th congress was an electoral in nature. Delegates from the ranks of members of the chamber voted for the president, five vice presidents, members of the Board of Directors, the Supervisory Board, and members of the arbitration commission. The term of office in each case is three years, and the election of president and vice-presidents takes place in secret.

The only person standing against the current president, Jaromír Drábek, was the chairman of Prague Chamber of Commerce, though he withdrew his candidature in his opening speech in favour of Jaromír Drábek, citing as his reason his satisfaction with the current management of the chamber with Drábek at its head and his wish to continue cooperating with it. In the vote for vice-presidents that followed, Petr Kužel was voted one of the five members of the presidium. A successful candidate for the post of president of the chamber must receive an absolute majority of votes: Jaromír Drábek received 190 votes of the 203 valid votes present.

In his opening speech, the president of the chamber said that he wanted to continue with his twelve-year long work for the chamber, which he began on a regional level in Jablonec nad Nisou. He emphasised that business autonomy needed to be

reinforced and the interests of entrepreneurs supported. "It is a year before elections to Parliament and the political parties, while drawing up their election manifestos, are asking us what we expect from them. But I propose another approach: we don't want pre-election promises, but actions right up to the elections. The political parties should prove to us over the next twelve months whether they really mean their so oft-declared support for business seriously," said Jaromír Drábek.

Again in reference to politics he added that the chamber should request a reduction of the administrative burden on businesspeople. "Apart from this we should focus on the control activities of the state, with which we are very dissatisfied. This concerns the tax offices, social administration and the labour offices above all. For instance, the tax office should concentrate on the pivotal duties of the businessperson, not bully them regarding trivialities," said Drábek. He also criticised constant legislative changes and the passing of new acts which are made unclear by the legislative framework. "We are no longer in a post-revolutionary phase, when each new idea demanded that a new Act be passed. Amendments should be given careful consideration, they should contribute to the simplification of legislation, not to the further blockages of new regulations".

The members of the presidium are as follows: Petr Kužel, Jan Wiesner, Pavel Bartoš, František Holec and Zdeněk Somr.

Last year the Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic accepted its own medium-term strategy in which it intends to become a strong autonomous business organisation by 2010 after the model of the traditional chambers of commerce of sur-

rounding countries.

The congress was informed of everything which had been done in the previous year in this respect. Jaromír Drábek maintained that many measures had already been taken. "In November 2004 the chamber became a statutory participant during the committee stages of new bills and decrees with an impact on the business environment, this year we have negotiated an amendment to the Employment Act, specifically to paragraph 13, which, in its original wording, basically made cooperation between large companies and small trades people impossible. In January the Minister of Finance issued systematic instructions for the financial directorate, which instructs tax offices to tolerate small mistakes in tax returns which could be made because of the hasty way in the VAT Act was passed in April 2004," said Drábek.

Thanks to the initiatives of the chamber, Drábek added, the problem of reducing the administrative demands on businesspeople was being addressed, discussions were taking place on the necessary to introducing editing duties for tax administrators, and a duty was accepted to evaluate the impact of draft Acts on the business environment.

Viktorie Plívová  
Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic



Jaromír Drábek  
President of the ECCR

## The Conference "ONE YEAR ON" Assessed the Impact of the Czech Republic's Membership of the European Union



Speakers at the Conference including Vladimír Špidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

On 24 May 2005 the Economic Chamber of the CR and the Euro Info Centrum Praha, in cooperation with the Federation of Industry and Transport of the CR, organised a conference devoted to evaluating the impact of the CR's membership of the EU. The top representatives of the institutions referred to participated and the main guest was the commissioner for employment and social affairs, Vladimír Špidla.

Vladimír Špidla reminded Czech entrepreneurs that membership of the European Union offered them a potential which had to be used. The objectives of the Lisbon strategy, in his opinion, should be met this year. However, the commissioner drew attention to the fact that the target expenditure on

science and research of 3% of GDP could not be achieved without the cooperation of the private sector. Špidla suggested that the Czech Republic was the Holland of Central Europe – "Holland was always so strong that its own boundaries were too small, which is why it always operated in the wider environment". He went on to say that the Czech Republic, too, throughout history had been part of various integration groups and was always their strongest region.

The president of the Economic Chamber, Jaromír Drábek, drew attention to the problem of the transition period in most EU countries restricting the free movement of workforces from new member countries. These restriction have been introduced by the members of the former European "fifteen", with the exception of Great Britain, Ireland and Sweden. Jaromír Drábek emphasised that these restrictions were no longer justified and were needlessly complicating the positions of Czech companies and individuals on the European market.

The European dimension of the Economic Chamber and the activities of the Information Sites for Entrepreneurs were presented by the secretary of the Chamber, Vladimír Šiška. The aim of the Information Site project is to provide informa-

tion and knowledge-based support to all Czech businesses and businesspeople, with the aim of increasing their competitiveness in Europe and the world. Already more than 19,000 queries from Czech businesspeople have been taken within the framework of the project, which has been running since September 2003. Most of these queries relate to the conditions of doing business in the EU or the programmes of assistance from the EU.

The conference set itself the target of not only evaluating but also discussing with the business public new opportunities and hitherto unused chances. Ondřej Hradil, representative of the Czech Business Representation in Brussels (CEBRE), spoke of concrete opportunities for Czech businesspeople. He stressed the importance of lobbying, frequently still perceived as in a negative light.

More than 160 people participated at the conference, mainly from the business world. Thanks to this level of interest and the positive reception the conference received, the Centre for European Integration of the Economic Chamber is planning another event on up to the minute European topics.

Jana Moravcová, Centre for European Integration  
of the Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic

## CEBRE Seminar: "A Recipe for Success When Applying for Public Contracts in the EU"

After the conference on the theme of "Public Procurements in the EU", which was organised by CEBRE in March 2005 in the Senate for more than 250 participants from Czech companies, on 8 June 2005 a follow-up seminar was held at the Confederation of Industry of the CR, which examined in more detail the legislation covering the awarding of public contracts in the EU from the point of view of the supplier.

The enormous interest shown in the seminar is

proof of the fact that companies hanker for practical advice on how to proceed, step by step, as suppliers. The aim of the seminar, intended for top and middle management, was to analyse in detail the effectiveness of participating in tenders, the creation of a requisite method for putting a bid together, important aspects of a bid, frequently made errors, remedies, etc.

Eva Svobodová  
Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic



Tomáš Machurek  
law firm Fiala, Profous, Maisner & spol.



# News from the *Czech Republic*

## SMEs ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN TECHNOLOGICALS PROJECTS

Grants to the tune of a quarter of a million crowns are now available to small and medium enterprises in the Czech Republic which participate in the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. Businesspeople can request assistance with part of the costs of preparing a draft project solution regardless of whether their projects have been supported by the EU. They only have to attain a certain number of points, which is stipulated by the new programme of the state agency CzechInvest for the support of the participation of small and medium enterprises in the 6th Framework Programme. The CzechInvest office is accepting applications for this grant. Businesspeople who meet the conditions of the programme will receive a grant of some 50 - 75 percent of total eligible costs for feasibility studies, wages and overheads, as well as expenses incurred on consultation. The maximum level of support is CZK 250,000 (8000 €)

## THE STATE MAY PARTIALLY COMPENSATE FOOD PROCESSORS FOR RESTRICTED ACCESS TO EU FUNDS

The government is giving consideration to a subsidy which would compensate domestic food processors in part for their restricted access to European funds. The state would put approximately 210 million crowns (7 000 000 €) aside for this purpose this year. The subsidies would have been approved by the EU. The Czech Federation of Food and Drink Industries stated that companies are losing hundreds of millions of crowns because of limited opportunities to receive European subsidies. They put the blame on the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

## THE STRATEGY IS A REALISTIC OBJECTIVE, CLAIMS MARTIN JAHN

The ambitious target of the Economic Growth Strategy – to attain the average level of the European twenty five in terms of GDP per capita by 2013 – is being discussed with excitement. Let us assume that the growth in Union GDP and the course of the crown develop similarly as from 2001 to 2006. In order to attain the average of the EU in 2013 our GDP would have to grow at a rate of 4.5 to 5 percent. In units of spending power, i.e. if we take into account the strengthening of the crown, for instance, when calculating GDP, this means a rate of growth of 7.8 percent per year. The ambitious target of matching the advanced countries of the EU will thus be met if there is an acceleration of economic growth in the CR. The CR must direct resources from the state budget and Union funds to support for products and services with high added value, on making the environment more attractive so that domestic companies remain and new foreign companies arrive, on new highways, motorways, and on support for innovation.

## INTEGRATED SUPERVISION OF THE FINANCIAL MARKET WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN 2006

Integrated supervision of the entire financial market should be established from Spring 2006 and would mean a considerably speeding up of the process against the initial estimates of 2010. The Czech National Bank is to become the umbrella institution of its joint plan with the Ministry of Finance. If the proposal is passed the present plan, recently accepted by the government, will terminate. According to this, of the four supervisory bodies, two should be established next year, on the understanding that the Czech National Bank will take responsibility for asset management and finance companies, and a Commission for the Financial Market will be created with the transfer of supervision of insurance and supplementary pension insurance from the Ministry of Finance to the Securities Commission. The creation of an integrated institution will be postponed until such time as the euro is accepted.

## THE CR AND HUNGARY LOCK HORNS OVER THE MICROSOFT TECHNICAL CENTRE

The Czech Republic and Hungary are battling over the construction of a technical support centre for Microsoft for the region of Europe, the Middle East and Africa. A decision could be made as early as this year. Even though Microsoft is considering other locations for this centre, the Czech Republic and Hungary have a temporary edge over countries which are not part of the post-communist block. Even were the CR not to win the project, an expertise centre should be created in the country over several years, which would supply services for the entire corporation.

## FOREIGNERS INVEST 16 BILLION IN CZECH REAL ESTATE

The Czech Republic has become the favoured destination of foreign real estate funds. In the first half of the year foreign investors spent almost CZK 16 billion (EUR 520 million) in the Czech Republic. Year-on-year this is an increase of 75 percent. At the same time the appreciation of Czech property has fallen from 7.9 percent at the end of last year to the current 7.5 percent. However, in Western Europe this type of investment brings a return of 4.5 to 5 percent per annum. The cooling down of the Western European real estate market has contributed to the attractiveness of the Czech Republic.

## CZECHINVEST RECEIVES INVESTMENT FOR 25 BILLION CZK

In the first six months of this year the Agency for the Support of Business and Investments (CzechInvest) brokered seventy new investment projects of foreign and Czech companies worth just under 25 billion crowns. Over the next few years these projects should create almost eight thousand new jobs in the CR. The agency spokesperson, Jana Višková, said that approximately one third of investment projects comprised investment in technological centres and strategic services.

## BUSINESSPEOPLE COMPLAIN OF DISCRIMINATION

Businesspeople and companies from the Czech Republic complain more than their colleagues from the rest of the countries which entered the EU last May that when entering markets or attempting to win public contracts in EU countries they are discriminated against. Forty five companies and people have already contacted the Czech Solvit Centre, an organisation which is concerned with out-of-court settlements of problems relating to EU law with complaints, a figure which is higher than Poland (33 complaints) and considerably higher than Hungary (13 complaints) or Slovakia. Businesspeople also avail themselves more of the services of the Czech centre than is normal in Western Europe (where complaints submitted to the Soviet Centres relate more to problems in the social sphere). Businesspeople are not only discriminated against in the countries of the EU-15, but in the newly acceded countries too.

## THE CROWN SHOWS ITS STRENGTH

Excellent results and the outlook for foreign trade have catapulted the crown up to record highs. During the course of one day, 8 August, the Czech currency strengthened against the euro by almost 30 hellers and broke through the CZK 29.40 per euro boundary. Over the next few days it reached as high as 29.25, thus achieving a three-year maximum. Foreign trade ended in June with a surplus of CZK 7.5 billion (242 million €), which is the highest June surplus in the history of the CR (the market had reckoned with a surplus of just over CZK 4 billion). This testifies to the high competitiveness of the Czech economy – while in comparison with the same period a year ago imports have increased by only 0.4 %, exports are up by 4.7 %. The statistics are very encouraging, since they confirm that the crown can get even stronger without this causing fundamental harm to the economy.

## THE CR AND SLOVAKIA HAVE THE MOST STABLE GROWTH

Over recent years the Czech Republic and Slovakia have the most stable and high economic growth of all countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In each of the last seven quarters the economy of these countries has grown by at least one percent, which no other country has achieved. Along with Ireland the CR and Slovakia have achieved the highest rates of growth. According to the analyst with Raiffeisenbank, Michal Brožka, it is a good sign that the Czech and Slovak economies are reporting both stability and high levels of growth. On the other hand it would not be a bad thing if they attained greater quarterly fluctuations but higher annual growth, he suggested.

## FEWER AND FEWER SMALLER COMPANIES

Year after year sees fewer and fewer tradespeople and small and medium businesses. The figures of the statistical authority and the regional governors confirm this trend, and place the blame on government policy. Last year the number of entrepreneurs decreased and the trend is continuing this year. After the first half of this year there are thirty thousand fewer companies and small traders than in 2003. Small companies are giving way to larger ones, which have acquired a stronger and stronger position on the market since entry into the EU, with the majority recording record revenues and profits in recent days. This is of concern to the regional governors, who regard thriving smaller companies as more valuable to the regions than foreign investment. "Ten smaller companies create a more stable work and business environment than one, be it good quality investor", says Stanislav Juránek from South Moravia.

## SCIENCE HAS RECEIVED MORE PROMISES THAN MONEY

A significant increase in investment in research has been one of the ten main priorities of the last three cabinets. The promises made have been met only in part. Instead of the twelve and a half billion three years ago the state was to offer grants to science of more than eighteen billion. And during the course of the governments of Vladimír Špidla, Stanislav Gross and Jiří Paroubek more daring promises were made. The most important of these the government approved two years ago in the national Policy for Research and Development for 2004 – 2008, which espoused the EU Lisbon Strategy requiring that member countries increase public expenditure on R&D to one percent of GDP by the year 2010. The chairman of the Academy of Sciences, Václav Pačes, warns that, though the government is increasing average expenditure on science by 10 per annum, prices are rising too, and the real increase is only a half of this figure.

## THE GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTES LICENCES TO TRADE WITH GREENHOUSE GASES

At a meeting of the government ministers decided on the distribution of licences to trade with greenhouse gases for individual enterprises. Although the greater share will be enjoyed by power companies, which will take some two thirds of the licences, the variant which has apparently been selected is advantageous for the chemical and refinery industries above all. The cabinet has distributed licences, including reserves, for the emission of 97.6 million tons of carbon dioxide between companies. Last autumn the government originally proposed the distribution of 107.88 million tons, including reserves, but after meetings with the European Commission the total volume fell by a tenth. The authorities then looked for ways of redistributing the licences amongst the individual businesses.

Source: ekomail, www.novinky.cz, www.ihned.cz

(interview with Václav Pačes from page 1)

ogy and would cite the company ExBio, which was created on the basis of the results of the Institute for Molecular Genetics and which very successfully produces and sells monoclonal antibodies. The workplaces of the academy have concluded around 600 business contracts with various companies. Many applications are concerned with healthcare, for instance the JODNew programme for diagnosing carcinoma of the thyroids, or the electronic notebook for the blind, realised in co-operation with the Union of the Blind. Practical applications are being generated by institutes of social sciences. The direct user in this case is society as a whole. Most of these and other projects were created on the basis of pure research, and many of those involved say that they could never have achieved these results if someone had been telling them what to do or if they had not been able to concentrate one hundred percent on their own work.

**To what extent is basic research supported? It is even necessary?**

Basic, or to express it better, pure research, does not receive much support in the CR, and yet it is very necessary. Above all, without the solid foundation of such research before long it would not be possible to carry out applied research, since specialists would be lacking. The results of applied research is usually the appearance of various improvements to products or production processes, but the real discoveries are almost always the results of studies of the basic problems. And it

is these discoveries which bring the greatest economic effect. Someone once calculated that the discovery of penicillin paid for all the bio-medical research in Great Britain. The hydrophilic gels and contact lenses of Otto Wichterly were also not the result of applied research. They were created on the basis of good quality scientific work in the sphere of polymer chemistry and the scientist's own inventiveness. The most valuable thing the Academy can give this society is the inventiveness and initiative of individual scientists. And this is best achieved in a pure (basic if you like) research environment.

**How can we manage to obtain young scientists or to persuade them not to leave the Czech Republic for better equipped workplaces and higher salaries abroad? What can the Academy of Sciences do in this respect? Are there any European solutions in this sphere? Do you have an idea of how many graduates of doctoral studies programmes remain in research?**

It is a well-established practice that a scientist leaves to work abroad after gaining their PhD. This is called a post-doctoral attachment and it is an important part of the career of most scientists. Young colleagues gain a wealth of specialist knowledge on these attachments. Some choose to remain abroad, but many of them return home and bring new ideas, topics and experiences with them.

**What level is financial support from the state budget or state agencies or institutions for research and development in the CR in comparison with other European countries? Do Czech**

**scientists and research institutions manage to obtain finance from other, for instance, private resources?**

The Czech Republic invests pathetically limited resources in science. And yet it has been shown over and over again that investment in training and research is the best investment. Unfortunately it is investment which shows a return only over the long term. We have to realise that the state invests in crowns, but science is carried out for euros and dollars. Most of what we buy, be it instruments, chemicals or foreign literature, we buy abroad. This country is also lacking in risk capital, which is an important engine of research, especially in the successful United States.

**To what extent are Czech research institutions involved in research on a European level? How successfully are they involved in European research programmes, including the framework programmes?**

We receive some resources from the programmes of the European Union, but here again we can only be more successful after a huge boost in domestic resources. It is only this way that we shall become more competitive. Society should invest in science and scientists should be more strict with themselves and support only the best quality projects. But unquestionably investment should be made above all in pure research.

Thank you very much for the interview.

Martin Petříček  
Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic



Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic  
(ECCR)

The Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic is the self-governance institution in the Czech Republic. Within its structure it embraces more than 60 active district and regional chambers as well as 70 professional associations covering the entire territory of the Czech Republic and the entire scale of enterprises, from the largest to the smallest. This network ensures daily contact with the entrepreneurs, monitoring of their interests, and efficient representation vis à vis the Czech Government. The ECCR provides custom and certification services, legal and legislative services, and representative and information services. It plays an important role in supporting exports, European integration, and SMEs. Its Court of Arbitration resolves commercial disputes relating to foreign and domestic trade.

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Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs'  
Associations of the Czech Republic

The Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of the Czech Republic is an independent, voluntary and open lobby group promoting and coordinating entrepreneurial, employers' and professional interests in negotiations with Parliament, Government, public administration and Trade Unions. At present the organization has the following members: The Association of Entrepreneurs of the Czech Republic, The Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic, The Union of Agriculture of the Czech Republic, The Association of Textile, Clothing and Leather Industries, The Association of Building Entrepreneurs of the Czech Republic, and The Union of the Czech and Moravian Producer Cooperatives.

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Confederation of Industry  
of the Czech Republic

The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic is a non-governmental, voluntary federation of employers and entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic. It represents and defends the interests of employers in the sphere of social policy during tripartite negotiations with the Government and Trade Unions. It strives to define, support and assert its members' interests in order to achieve prosperity and favorable business environment. It also provides consultation and information services for its members that focus on international relations, trade opportunities, production cooperation, legislation, collective bargaining, European integration, education and training. It is a full member of the International Organization of Employers (UNICE).

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- Protects the interests of Czech business community vis à vis the EU institutions
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CEBRE – Czech Business Representation

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