

Czech Business Today

BRUSSELS HOSTS THE FIRST CZECH-BELGIAN DESIGN NETWORKING FORUM

In September, an exciting and groundbreaking event known as the "CZECH-BELGIAN DESIGN NETWORKING FORUM" took place in vibrant Brussels. This gathering, which successfully brought together creative minds, entrepreneurs and academics from the Czech Republic and Belgium, was further graced by the presence of esteemed representatives of European creative industry institutions and SMEs. The forum served as an exceptional platform for knowledge exchange, fostering innovation and internationalisation of the industrial design sphere, among other things, helping to develop sustainable business activities. This unique event, attended by more than 80 experts, provided an invaluable opportunity to share different perspectives and skills and strengthen cooperation between the Czech Republic and Belgium in this key area with a focus on strengthening the competitiveness of the industry.

The forum consisted of two pivotal segments: a panel discussion and B2B networking. The event featured compelling presentations and lectures from leading design professionals, who generously shared their insights and visions. Witnessing the amalgamation of distinct approaches and ideas contributing to design advancement in both countries was genuinely captivating. Subsequent discussions facilitated active engagement, encouraging participants to pose questions and deliberate on key topics.

A significant emphasis was placed on bolstering traditional Czech manufacturers while concurrently

nurturing the potential of Czech designers. The event also shed light on Belgian design's possibilities, needs, and capabilities, an essential element for future collaborations. During the B2B portion of the program, Czech enterprises seized the opportunity to showcase their products, not only to individual experts but also to prospective partners who were participants in the forum.

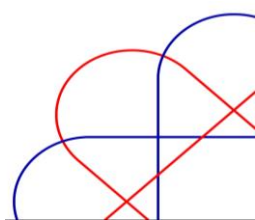
The event was infused with a vibrancy thanks to the enthusiasm and expertise of design professional, Pavlina Louženská, who led the proceedings. Her role as a moderator also added an inspiring dimension.

It is abundantly evident that such events pave the way for traditional manufacturers and emerging design professionals to thrive in foreign markets.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the Czech entities that actively participated, including SVIS Trade, ELTON hodinářská, Kovap Náchod, JUSTLOVE, Tkalcovna Kubák, Mikela da Luka, and Linda Havrlíková.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to UMPRUM, the Czech Centre in Brussels, and, most notably, the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU for their unwavering support throughout this remarkable endeavour.

Source: CEBRE



INVESTMENT CLIMATE - VALUABLE INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS IN CZECHIA

CzechInvest has released a new Investment Climate brochure, a comprehensive marketing resource for Czechia.

The publication provides an overview of the country's economic and political environment and highlights the key benefits, incentives and opportunities available to investors looking to establish a presence in the heart of Europe. With the publication of a new brochure on the investment climate in Czechia, Czech national investment promotion agency CzechInvest has taken an important step in providing valuable information to potential investors.

Do you want to know where we stand on FDI and who our biggest foreign investors are in different sectors?

The brochure serves as a strategic guide for both domestic and foreign investors. It provides a broad overview of the different sectors that are successful in the Czech market and is also full of data-driven analysis and research.

With the highest FDI per capita in Central and Eastern Europe, Czechia is one of the most developed and attractive countries, and not only for business.

Source: Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic



THE CONFEDERATION OF INDUSTRY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC CALLS FOR THE USE OF REVENUES FROM EU ETS TRADE FOR DECARBONISATION

From September 2023, Czech government discusses state budget with the aim to decrease public debt. As part of these discussions, government also discusses the use of revenues from EU ETS trade. This is related to ongoing review of the Act on the conditions for trading greenhouse gas emission allowances due to recasted EU ETS directive. Dissolving revenues from trading EU ETS allowances in the state budget was raised as one of the possible income sources for the state budget. The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (SP CR) opposes this, citing the future of our economy and the need for investment into decarbonisation.

Moreover, such a choice would contradict the principle that revenues from the EU ETS trade should be used where they are most needed, i.e., for decarbonising industry and energy sectors. In the end, EU ETS allowances are paid precisely by industrial and energy utilities. Relevant EU legislation clearly states that these funds should be used to decarbonise the economy, inter alia by allowing

decarbonisation of companies that fall within the scope of the EU ETS. Given the enormous investment costs of decarbonising the Czech economy, which will have to be incurred in the short future, it is essential that the amendment to the Act ensures that all the revenues from the auctioning of emission allowances are used for the decarbonisation of the economy, fully in line with the EU ETS directive. Dissolving the revenues in the general budget would jeopardise the success of the industrial transformation and the achievement of the Green Deal objectives.

SP CR has repeatedly drawn attention to the need to properly use the cohesion funding as well as revenues from the EU ETS trade, most recently during the inter-ministerial consultation on the draft act. SP CR has also contacted relevant ministers to stress that the EU ETS revenues must be used in line with the principles of the Directive, to fulfil decarbonisation targets. SP CR also calls for the early adoption of the act so that

companies falling under the scope of the EU ETS have clear information on the relevant procedures, particularly on the deadlines for the submission of emission allowances and on the rules for climate neutrality plans. SP CR also pointed out the need to set clear rules for compensation of indirect carbon cost to help the most affected energy-intensive industries in a way which corresponds to practice in neighbouring EU Member states.

Source: SPCR.cz



THE CZECH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS INVOLVED IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROJECT DIGIS (ERASMUS+ KA2)

The Czech Government has approved the Capital Strengthening of EGAP (Export For the last 3 years (2021 – 2023), the Czech Republic has been involved in the project: “Building up a Digital Skills Alliance for the Enhancing of programming Competencies”, abbreviated “DigiS”. The leader of the project is the Czech Chamber of Commerce and it is realised in cooperation with other professional partners: AVRAR (Association of Virtual Reality), Technological Center Prague, ROBODRON company, Smíchov Secondary Engineering School and College. Information about the project is available at: <https://erasmusplus-digis.com/>.

The Czech Chamber of Commerce is very well aware that the areas of drones and

virtual reality are the fastest growing areas among new smart technologies (Industry 4.0) with huge potential for further development in many sectors, bringing benefits for the European economy and society. These two sectors will contribute to creating new businesses and jobs, protecting the environment and improving quality of life.

The main output of the DiGiS project are two new qualification standards for professions: “UAS Developer and Operator” and “Virtual Reality Applications Programmer”. Practical teaching programs in the form of instructional videos were also created for secondary school students in EU countries. Information about educational modules you can see here: <https://digisplatform.eu/>

We would like to invite you to take part in the professional international conference about the DiGiS project. There will be up-to-date project results presented together with practical demonstrations in the field of drones and VR. The conference will be held concurrently with the virtual reality festival “FUTURE MIND FEST” in Prague (Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics, Czech Technical University in Prague (CIIRC)), November 2nd, 2023. More information:

<https://futuremindfest.com/en>

Source: Czech Chamber of Commerce



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



Partners of Project DIGIS :



CEBRE was founded in 2002 by the three most important Czech business organizations – Czech Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, Confederation of Employers’ and Entrepreneurs’ Associations of the Czech Republic with kind support of the Ministry of Industry and Trade via its Trade promotion agency CzechTrade.

EESC: COMPETITIVENESS AND INDUSTRY

In addition to enormous challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's brutal aggression against Ukraine, Europe is facing a historic structural transformation. Together with the Employers' Group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), I have been emphasizing that EU policymakers must strengthen the competitiveness of EU businesses. We have consistently advocated for a comprehensive programme to fundamentally deepen the Single Market and a more strategic approach to competitiveness, including a new "competitiveness check". EU companies urgently need favourable conditions to innovate, invest, employ, operate and trade. Among other things, it is crucial to reduce the cumulative burden of regulation in the EU, address labour shortages and skills mismatches, and reduce and prevent barriers to the Single Market.

Given all the challenges and urgent needs, I am glad to have been able to contribute in the EESC to work on a very important exploratory opinion which focuses on "Competitiveness and Industry". In this opinion, the EESC emphasizes, among other things, that:

- improving the competitiveness and productivity of industry is key for the EU to support economic growth and deliver on green and digital transitions;
- The EU must ensure the quality of public administration and a growth-enhancing regulatory framework, including cutting red tape, simplifying procedures, fighting corruption, as well as avoiding market distortions and unfair competition;
- It is key to further deepen the EU Single Market, which is and must remain the greatest asset for European industry;
- The EU must promote open, rules-based trade while reducing strategic dependencies and preserve the principles of free but fair trade and its open strategic autonomy;

- It is of vital importance to address the skills and ageing challenge, deal with labour market shortages and develop skills, including digital skills together with unleashing the full potential of the digital revolution;
- Last but not least, the EU must focus on boosting RDI, ensuring secure access to decarbonised energy at stable and competitive prices and developing modern, interoperable and strategic European infrastructure.

As a member of the study group that worked on this opinion, I supported the concept of OPEN strategic autonomy. In my opinion, it is essential that the EU remains open and resists any protectionist tendencies while reducing strategic dependencies through diversification, further trade and investment agreements, partnerships and cooperation with like-minded trading partners. I also insisted that the EU must reduce the regulatory burden because, as the opinion rightly points out, regulatory excess is a drag on the competitiveness of European industrial firms. Among other things, I also highlighted the key importance of addressing labour and skills shortages, as the lack of access to a workforce with the skills required by business and industry remains one of the key challenges to competitiveness.

This ongoing opinion on Competitiveness and Industry is scheduled to be voted on at the October EESC plenary session (25-26 October).



Source: Jana Hartman Radová, EESC Member of Employers' Group

FLASHNEWS

NEW SUPPORT FINDER TOOL FOR THE PROJECTS

The Ministry of Industry and Trade has launched the website www.podporapodniku.cz, offering entrepreneurs a support finder tool, simplifying orientation and choice of support for their projects. It uses a database from various providers with different sources of funding. They can opt for personalised recommendations or explore the lists of support options available for specific support areas.

PRAGUE GREEN DEAL SUMMIT: EMISSION REDUCTION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Green Deal Summit was held in Prague, organised by Hospodářské noviny with the support of the European Commission. Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the European Commission, gave the keynote speech, discussing the success of reducing greenhouse gas emissions while growing the economy. The main outputs of the event were the promotion of the Green Deal and sustainable finance and the discussion of the success of reducing greenhouse gas emissions while growing the economy.

HEAVIER VANS RUNNING ON ALTERNATIVE FUELS CAN BE DRIVEN WITH A CATEGORY B DRIVING LICENCE

The amended Road Act brings new changes for entrepreneurs. From the new year, it will allow alternative fuel vehicles, especially electric vans, of up to 4.25 tonnes to be driven with a category B driving licence.