



Spring/summer 2024

NEWSLETTER

Czech-Liechtenstein Society

Member of Europa Nostra



CONTENTS

- The CLS has elected a new chairman
- What is it like to study an Erasmus programme in Liechtenstein?
- Petr Svoboda in an interview for Forum24
- Activities of the LG Group

Introduction by a new Board member

Dear readers,

In April this year I was elected by the General Assembly as a member of the Board of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, which is an honour and a great commitment for me at the same time. I spent part of my childhood in the vicinity of the historical heritage of the Liechtenstein family, in Lednice and later in Litovel (near the Slatinice spa). Gradually I noticed where the family coat of arms appeared and what the family stood for (industrially, economically or culturally), not only in Moravia. Thanks to a lucky coincidence and perhaps also my own industriousness, I was offered to bring to life the project of the National Centre for Theatre and Dance, i.e. the renovated winter riding hall and Baroque theatre at the Valtice Castle.

This has taken me right into the heart of the family's heritage, allowing me to study and understand in much greater depth and detail the whole of its 700-year work and legacy. Today, I run a cultural institution in Brno, where the Liechtenstein legacy is not so evident, although this city has undoubtedly



Director of the Brno City Museum Zbyněk Šolc



been strongly influenced by their creative work.

The Brno City Museum is the second largest municipal heritage institution in the Czech Republic and the custodian of several important Brno monuments, such as Villa Tugendhat, Špilberk Castle and now also the Arnold Villa. This year, the house built in 1862 by Josef Arnold and located near the UNESCO-protected Villa Tugendhat, opened its doors to the public. This has been made possible thanks to a significant financial support from the EEA Funds financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Nearly CZK 38.5 million were provided for the project. The Arnold Villa has thus become an important architectural site, which has been given the title of the Centre for Czech-German-Jewish Dialogue. One of the programme's themes is cultural and human reconciliation with the past of Brno and Moravia, which is an extremely strong theme in the Czech-Liechtenstein relations too.

And it is Liechtenstein that plays an important role in the development and work on the preservation of history, the restoration of monuments and the maintenance of cultural heritage in the Czech Republic, especially in South Moravia. The Brno City Museum appreciates this role very much, contributes to it, and that is why it became the first institutional member of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society. Projects in the field of education and maintenance of historical continuity, as well as the lively contacts of museum staff, are a great contribution not only to the renewal of mutual cooperation between memory institutions, but also to further exhibition projects. Liechtenstein's support in this area is absolutely essential.

Liechtenstein, as an important partner of the countries forming the EEA Funds, financially supports a wide range of projects. The Czech Republic has been a beneficiary of these funds since 2004, when it joined the European Union and thus found itself in the European Economic Area. In the previous periods, i.e. between 2004-2009 and 2009-2014, our country received support of more than € 240 million. This is, of course, a huge amount of financial assistance for the development of cooperation between the two countries.

Another important point is the already mentioned area of education, which received over € 6 million of the € 240 million in the aforementioned period. This gives the young generation, students and professionals, not only from museums but also from colleges and

universities, a huge opportunity to link their projects to foreign partners. Liechtenstein plays an important role in this. It is related to the opportunities of meetings for young scientists, historians and students, who can thus find partners abroad, in the European area that is very diverse and rich in historical events and developments. These included projects in the field of forestry, for example, such as „The Vitality of Trees“, submitted by the Mendel University in Brno, or the project „Digitisation in Education in the Pilsen Region and Liechtenstein“, submitted by the Pilsen Region.

When the Arnold Villa has already been mentioned, then it should be said that its focus is shaped by the project related to activities that favour meetings of people, seminars and conferences, as well as educational programmes. Programmes aimed at education, cultural and historical awareness among young people, schoolchildren and students are an integral part of the Brno City Museum's exhibitions and expositions. The activities organized in the Arnold Villa will be enriched by these educational activities. Of course, educational projects with a foreign partner or projects that strengthen international democratic relations are welcome. And this is the topic I want to focus on in the management of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society.

When I look around myself, my personal circle of heritage and relations with the Liechtenstein family is actually closing, and I believe that this simple human understanding (without the overlay of political and legal problems) can be passed on. ■

The Association in the Media

At the end of March, Petr Svoboda, the chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, gave an interview to the Forum 24 daily. The editor-in-chief was interested in his attitude towards the Liechtenstein family, which he described through the work of his grandfather. The latter worked for the Princely family in the interwar period as a judicial councillor and central director of the Liechtenstein estates and remained loyal to the family even after the February 1948 communist coup. It was his grandfather's experience that also influenced Peter Svoboda's relationship to the Liechtenstein family, his view of the management of their former estates and the development of activities within the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, as you will read on page 9.



Members of the association visiting Villa Tugendhat in Brno

■ Petr Svoboda remains the chairman of the association

The Czech-Liechtenstein Society celebrated its sixth anniversary this April. Coincidentally, the mandate of the current Board expired at almost the same time, so the celebration had to be an election one. Where there is an election, there is also summarizing and reflection. In the midst of the rolling landscape in the meditative environment of the monastery in Vranov u Brna, near the Liechtenstein family tomb, the chairman Petr Svoboda told the members about the activities of the association. He succeeded and will lead the Czech-Liechtenstein Society for the next three years.

Like the person of the chairman, the appointments to other roles in the Board has hardly changed. Only Jana Tepperová, who received an applause as farewell by the members present, was replaced in the Board by Zbyněk Šolc, director of the Brno City Museum. Jana Tepperová,

Newly elected Board of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society

Petr Svoboda, Chairman
Zuzana Holendová, Vice-Chairwoman
Daniel Herman, member
Pavel Juřík, member
Richard Svoboda, member
Zbyněk Šolc, member

head of the Department of Public Finance at the University of Economics, remains a member of the association.

In Vranov u Brna, the association stated that it has managed to carry out a rich programme year after year. Members regularly visit thematic exhibitions in the Czech Republic and Vienna, organize lectures, are regular guests at the Lednice-Valtice Music Festival and this year they may even visit the Principality itself. This will be the second time in the history of the association, and also this time the delegation will be received by H.S.H. Hereditary Prince Alois at the castle in Vaduz.

And the social life? Some meeting participants called for more active communication among members, others wondered aloud about stronger „marketing“ to promote the existence of the association and its mission, and the more conservative ones named „the time“ as the cause of the difficulties associated with more frequent meetings. The diverse membership, ranging from Opava to Brno, Prague and other places as far as Liechtenstein, is both an advantage and a disadvantage. Some of the members always have to travel quite far for joint activities.

Finally, the good news for the Czech-Liechtenstein Society is the interest of young people who have recently expressed their willingness to become (active) members. In a way, this corresponds to another, but related phenomenon: student societies of major universities from Prague to Brno and Ostrava are showing interest in lectures on the Liechtenstein economy, blockchain, etc. It's great: Fewer and fewer people put the demagogic equations according to which the Liechtenstein family = only the Lednice-Valtice area or Liechtenstein = only banks and low taxes.

The annual and, at the same time, electoral meeting of the association, held on the monastery grounds in Vranov u Brna, received a symbolic spiritual ending. In the words of the chairman Petr Svoboda: „A common mass for the family that has done so much good for this country...“ ■



South Moravian town of Vranov nad Dyjí



■ Exhibition in Kolín reveals the cultural wealth left by the Liechtenstein family in Bohemia

Dozens of people are heading to the Kolín Regional Museum. They are gradually filling the foyer of the Veigert House, where the opening of the new exhibition „Liechtenstein – 400 years of the Princely House in Bohemia“ is about to begin. The exhibition, co-authored by Pavel Juřík, a member of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society (CLS), maps the traces of the Liechtenstein family on their former estates in the wider surroundings of Prague.

The ugly February weather drives half-frozen visitors into the Veigert House a few dozen minutes before the official opening of the exhibition. The waiting is made more pleasant by a solo lute player who evokes the atmosphere of the past centuries with period melodies.

As the clock strikes, the hall falls silent. The last arriving people look for free space in the packed foyer. The director of the museum and the distinguished guests



Solo by lutenist Přemysl Vacek
© Archive of the Regional Museum Kolín, Vít Klouček

say their welcomes, and, also, the Honorary Consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic, Daniel Herman, speaks: „*Making cultural wealth accessible to the general public completes the knowledge of specific places, periods and personalities. This creates a mosaic that shows what an important legacy our ancestors have left us.*“ All the speeches are united by one idea: the mutual relations between the Czech Republic and Liechtenstein must improve and old disputes must be overcome.

A sculpture of miraculous Madonna

Then the door of the main hall opens and people walk among the hundreds of exhibits. These include the oldest forestry textbook written in Czech, a hunting knife and old banknotes valid after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There are also many previously unexhibited family portraits, paintings of Liechtenstein mansions, sculptures and archive documents. The Liechtenstein family contributed to the diversity of the exhibition from their own collections. „*We were able to establish cooperation directly with representatives of the family, who provided us with reproductions from their extensive collections free of charge. Some of them were unknown to us,*“ adds Vladimír Jakub Mrvík, the curator of the exhibition.

A sculpture of Madonna, which is said to have miraculous powers, receives the most attention. The wooden statue



View of the exhibition in the Kolín Museum
© Archive of the Regional Museum Kolín



Replica of Tismice Madonna (left)
© Archiv Regionální muzeum Kolín, Vít Klouček

from the 15th century was supposed to protect the village of Tismice from the Hussite armies and Swedish pillaging during the Thirty Years' War. Although the original work was stolen by an unknown perpetrator in the 1990s and a replica of the famous artefact now stands in Kolín, it does not seem to have lost its power even after all these years.

Traces of the Liechtensteins in Bohemia

Before leaving the museum, visitors can enjoy a glass of beer from the brewery in Kostelec nad Černými lesy, which still uses Liechtenstein technology in its recipes.

About the exhibition Liechtenstein – 400 Years of the Princely House in Bohemia

The exhibition presenting the historical influence of the Liechtenstein family in Central Bohemia has been organised by the Regional Museum in Kolín. Valuable exhibits were supplied by a number of Czech institutions and dozens of reproductions also came from the private collections of the Princely House of Liechtenstein in Vienna and Vaduz. Those who are interested can visit the exhibition until 15 September this year.

The final refreshment thus symbolically completes the wide range of impressions which the exhibition in Kolín leaves on its visitors.

As it is evident also from Daniel Herman's comments, the exhibition focusing on the princely family's activities in Bohemia really brings stories that are new and unknown to the wider public. „*The Liechtenstein cultural heritage is mainly associated with South Moravia and Silesia. This exhibition shows that the Liechtenstein family left cultural wealth also in the Czech regions that should not be neglected,*“ Herman concludes. ■



From the left: director of Kolín Museum Vladimír Rišlink, exhibition co-author Pavel Juřík, CLS chairman Petr Svoboda, honorary consul Liechtenstein in CZ Daniel Herman; © Archiv Regionální muzeum Kolín, Vít Klouček



MUNI has approximately eighty partner universities abroad, but Erasmus in Liechtenstein was an obvious choice

The micro-country in the middle of the Alps had attracted Matěj Horák's attention for a long time, so when he was to choose a stay abroad during his university studies, he did not hesitate. The University of Vaduz expanded his knowledge gained at the Faculty of Economics and Administration of Masaryk University in Brno and gave him an insight into financial practice. In addition to varied study activities, he had the opportunity to meet the Head of State and have an open discussion with one of the princes. As he himself confirms, he has been using the knowledge gained in Liechtenstein until these days.

What is it like to live in a country smaller than Brno?

Looking back on it, one could compare it to living in a Czech district with one capital city. However, it did not feel smaller than Brno. Because of the different landscapes and high mountains surrounding the country, it feels a bit bigger than it actually is.

Were the costs of living not limiting for you there?

The prices are really higher there. However, if you don't use extra services like restaurants or hotels, then it's not that difficult. As a student, I stayed in the dorms, and when I wanted to save money, we went shopping to Austria. You get used to a slightly different lifestyle.



Matěj Horák

- Master programme student in Finance at MUNI in Brno
- Bachelor degree from the Faculty of Economics and Administration at MUNI
- Spent half a year on the Erasmus Programme in Liechtenstein

So what was your student life abroad like?

I attended various exhibition openings, there were constant fairs and exhibitions in the city, professionally I got educated at different events in banks. The university also held seminars and student events, at which I sometimes helped out. In my spare time, of course, I went to the mountains, explored the Alpine surroundings and discovered the beautiful mountain lakes.

What were the local people like that you met at the events?

Of course, the more people you meet, the harder it is to generalise. Anyway, in my experience the Liechtensteiners are very hospitable, tolerant and kind. I would compare their openness to that of the Czech countryside. One might think that a society in such a small country would be closed, but this is not the case at all.

We have learned that you have also met the princely family?

I even had this opportunity twice. The first time was at the opening of the Artex stock exchange, where works of art are traded, where I met the Prince and the Hereditary Prince. The second contact was made possible by the Swiss Study Foundation, which arranged for the students to meet Prince Nikolaus. When I was preparing for the meeting, I came across the Czech-Liechtenstein dispute. And since Nikolaus had been a diplomat for many years in the past, I asked him about the relations between the two countries. The Prince confirmed the interest of the Princely House in their further development, especially in the care of cultural monuments and the settlement of disputed property issues. We had a very open discussion.



University of Vaduz © Liechtenstein Marketing

Let's go back to university life. Why did you choose Vaduz for your studies?

There were a lot of options, because our school has around eighty partner universities. But I had been interested in Liechtenstein for a long time. A country with a well-developed financial sector suited my field of study and I was also attracted by the beautiful nature. It was an obvious choice for me.

How does the lectures there differ from the Czech ones?

The difference lies in the family atmosphere that prevails there. There are about thirty students attending lectures and you know practically everyone. This gives you a lot of space for questions and consultations with the teachers, which is the main thing. Plus, most of the teachers come from practice and have a slightly different perspective on things than the teachers here.

Where did your classmates come from?

I came across students from all different parts of the world: from the U.S., Russia, Peru and India.

And someone from Europe?

Among Europeans, I met mainly people from the German-speaking region, i.e. Austria, Switzerland, Germany and only rarely from Liechtenstein. But that may be influenced by who I met.

What do you see as the added value of Liechtenstein from a study perspective?

For finance and economics students, I see an advantage in the financial sector, which works really well there. In addition to that, you have the opportunity to get a more inside view of the country, which you probably don't get in cities in larger countries.

How do you feel about Erasmus in general? Should everyone do it to broaden their horizons?

For me it's an absolutely great project and the added value is huge. I still find that I have a lot to build on from my stay. I'm not saying that Erasmus should be compulsory, but every student should at least think about some form of foreign placement. ■



Matěj Horák at a lecture in Vaduz



■ Calendar of events

The Association in Vaduz

The Czech-Liechtenstein Society will travel to Vaduz between 13 and 15 June. In the picturesque town surrounded by Alpine peaks, the participants are scheduled to visit the castle, the parliament building and museums, but they can also look forward to important personal meetings.

As the programme's highlight, the members of the association will be received by HSH Hereditary Prince Alois, followed by wine tasting at the Princely Winery in the company of Marie-Pia Kothbauer, Princess of Liechtenstein and Ambassador to the Czech Republic and Austria.

In addition, the participants will visit the Czech Honorary Consulate, where they will be welcomed by the Honorary Consul and also a member of our association, Thomas Zwiefelhofer. During the visit, the visitors will also be able to learn about the business activities of the Liechtensteiners through Hilti, a major player in the production and sale of tools for the construction industry.

Find out how the trip went in the autumn issue of the newsletter.

Invitation to the 9th Lednice-Valtice Music Festival (LVHF)

Eight concerts will take place over fourteen days in the historic buildings of the Lednice Valtice area and nearby towns. At the end of the summer, the festival will present the Martinů Voices chamber choir, which regularly performs at the most important Czech music festivals, together with the Benda Quartet string ensemble. The



Martinů Voices Chamber Choir
© Jakub Cabalka (Puf Creatif)



Liechtenstein Parliament in Vaduz

world-renowned violin virtuoso Maxim Vengerov and the Prague Philharmonia Orchestra will then perform at the Valtice Castle Riding Hall and together they will open the festival with Mozart concerts. The programme, which this year will be enhanced by the 20th anniversary of the Czech Republic's accession to the EU, was inspired by the Masonic Garden in the Lednice Park.

In addition to the concerts, the festival also organises accompanying lectures, educational concerts for local schools or art workshops for children. We would like to invite you to the 9th Lednice-Valtice Music Festival and we are looking forward to seeing many of you at one of the concerts between 14 September and 12 October. Tickets can be purchased at www.lvhf.cz.

Lecture by Daniel Herman for the community of historians

In April, Daniel Herman visited the Liechtenstein town of Schann at the invitation of the historians' community, and gave a talk on relations between the Czech Republic and Liechtenstein. „*The Principality of Liechtenstein was spared the two totalitarian regimes that swept through our country in the 20th century. It has always remained faithful to the values on which it was founded, and this is still the case today. Those not so distant years show that the lived tradition is not just a reminiscence of past times, but that a modern and successful state grows from the lived Christian roots and principles, which can be a great inspiration for us,*“ was one of Herman's thoughts.

The event was also attended by H.S.H. the reigning Prince Hans Adam II and the Princess Maria-Pia Kothbauer. ■



Daniel Herman



Petr Svoboda, chairman of the CLS



■ Head of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society: The property agreement is also good for the Czech Republic. I wish the Prince would live to see it

The chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, Petr Svoboda, follows his grandfather, who worked for the Liechtenstein family and managed their property until the communist coup. “I will look after it for you,” the grandfather refused the possibility of emigration, but then watched the confiscation of the princely property. In an interview for the daily FORUM 24, Petr Svoboda talks not only about his grandfather, but mainly about Czech-Liechtenstein relations, which are shadowed by the reluctance of the Czech courts to recognise the Liechtenstein’s claims for the return of their property.

Your grandfather worked for the Princely House of Liechtenstein. How did this happen and what did he do for them?

My grandfather worked for the Princely House for over twenty years. He started at the Central Directorate in March 1925, when he joined as the Princely judicial officer. After some time, he was appointed Princely Judicial Councillor.

With effect from 1 October 1937, he was appointed by His Serene Highness Prince Franz I to the post of Central Director of the Central Directorate of the Princely Liechtenstein Estates in Olomouc. He continued to perform this role during the war, although afterwards, under the pressure from the occupation authorities, he again acted externally as a judicial councillor, because the Nazi occupation authorities could not imagine that someone of Czech nationality would manage employees of German nationality.

What followed after 1945 and especially after 1948?

There is a memory in our family that after the communist coup, Prince Franz Josef II sent a car with a driver from Vaduz with a message for my grandfather to pack up the whole family and go to Vaduz. Grandfather thanked him and said: “No, I’ll stay here and I will look after it for you.” My involvement in the whole thing is to some extent a follow-up to my grandfather’s words and an effort to fulfil his legacy.

How do you feel about the settlement proposed by the Foundation?

Even the results of independent surveys show that there is a preference across society for an amicable settlement. I’m all for it. It is far better to discuss and agree on things than to argue for years. Litigation has one winner and one loser, but consensus has two winners; it is a win-win solution.

What is the goal of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society?

Our goal or mission is to continue the almost eight-hundred-year-long tradition of the Czechs, Moravians, Silesians and Liechtensteiners living together. After all, this princely family is one of the noble families that have been firmly rooted in the region of the Czech Crown Lands for centuries.

Do you believe there will be a deal anytime soon?

I would reserve the use of “anytime soon”. I am an older man and life has taught me that expectations need to be modulated, but I would dearly like to see the reigning Prince Hans Adam II live to see it. His father, Franz Josef II, wanted very much to have the label of being Germans tied to the Nazis removed from his family. I would very much like to see that happen. ■



You can read the full interview by scanning the QR code.



■ Liechtenstein Group: What does business look like across generations?

The Liechtenstein Group (LG) has had a successful year in terms of business. The group, owned by the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation, operates on four continents and has long-standing investments in agriculture, forestry, renewable energy and real estates. This year, two food production companies were added to its portfolio. On the one hand, it manages businesses that have been owned by the Liechtenstein family for many decades, if not centuries, and on the other hand, it also invests heavily in the same fields. LG's headquarters are in Vienna.

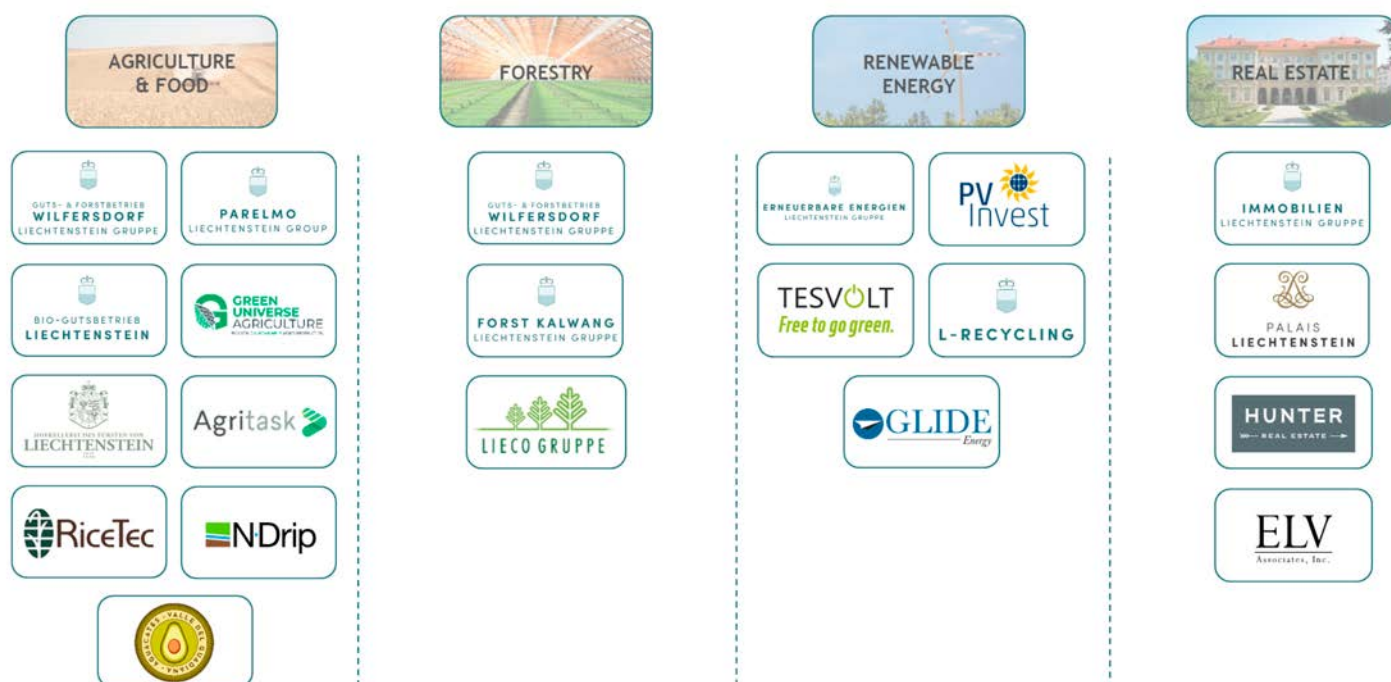


Rice grown by RiceTec © RiceTec

We can only write about LG today and marvel at its achievements thanks to Hans Adam II. In fact, it was the current Prince who in the 1970s took over the administration of the remaining princely estates, which were rather limited after the two world wars, and in a short time turned them into a successful business group.

RiceTec

First, Hans Adam's rice business began to thrive. In the early 1970s, he bought a cattle ranch in Texas and turned it into a rice farm. He sold that, bought two more ranches, repeated the process and sold them again. A decade later, he started a rice breeding program, which he then transformed into a separate company called RiceTec. Today, it focuses on the development and production of rice seeds and supplies more than 50 percent of the rice seeds for the U.S. market. In addition to the US, it is also the market leader in India and Latin America.



Range of companies and investments of group LG



Tree planting by Lieco © Christoph Weiermair

Lieco

The success of Lieco is also due to the person of Hans Adam. Since the 1980s, the company has focused its business on the production of tree seedlings and comprehensive forestry services. As with most Liechtenstein companies, its success lies in its emphasis on sustainability and environmental protection. The climate is complicating the work of foresters around the world, and Lieco Gruppe brings technological solutions to help nature adapt to the changes.

TESVOLT

As a representative of the renewable energy sector, we mention a younger company, TESVOLT, which specializes in the production of battery storage systems. Its storage systems can be connected to all energy sources: solar, wind, hydro or biogas - for example, linking photovoltaics to battery storage will help ensure a more reliable regional electricity supply that is also more climate-friendly. This will also help to lighten the load on the electricity grid. In addition, this April TESVOLT

started construction of a new gigafactory in eastern Germany. It will be one of the largest facilities for stationary battery storage systems in Europe.

In addition to its original Austrian activities, which include the aforementioned RiceTech and Lieco, but also PV Invest, which is involved in the construction of photovoltaic and small hydropower plants in Europe, the Wilfersdorf farm and forestry company and the Liechtenstein property management company, the group is currently very active in Spain, for example, where it has invested in an avocado farm. Furthermore, it is investing in Israel, where it owns a stake in the irrigation company N-Drip. In Germany, it has a successful partnership with TESVOLT. And most recently, in April, the Group invested in the US company PowerPollen, which has developed a unique pollination technology. These are just some of the many investments made by the princely group. *„We are thinking long-term and across generations, in line with the priorities of the Liechtenstein family. It follows from the nature of our core. After all, our aim is to ensure that the industries in which we operate are fit for the future,”* says LG's CEO, Johannes Meran. The people of the princely group have a lot of work ahead of them and, as they say, they still have plenty of ideas. ■



Corn pollen spraying in Iowa, U.S. © PowerPollen



... take a look at our Instagram account @czechliechtensteinsociety

We continue our Instagram activities! Join us and follow @czechliechtensteinsociety!



16. 2. 2024 - Yesterday, the vernissage for the unique exhibition „Hercules of the Arts - Johann Adam Andreas I von Liechtenstein and Vienna around 1700“ took place at the Garden Palace in Vienna. The hereditary prince Alois also attended the opening ceremony. “In the person of Johann Adam Andreas I von Liechtenstein were combined entrepreneurial thinking and the typically Baroque delight in the fine arts. To us as a family it is a matter of particular concern to give the general public experience of this unique symbiosis in the Garden Palace he commissioned and had built”, introduced the hereditary prince the theme of the exhibition in the press release of the Garden Palace. © palaisliechtenstein.com ■



19. 4. 2024 - We would like to share with you a tip on a new publication by Marek Vařeka: “Karl I., Prince of Liechtenstein 1569–1627, Finance - Property - Politics.” This book offers a deep insight into the life of the first prince of the Liechtenstein family. The author delves into the personal life of Karl I. and his economic thinking and political strategy. Readers have a unique opportunity to gain comprehensive information from historical periods that have shaped the future of our country. ■



29. 4. 2024 - “A good business is the best art,” claimed one of the most famous artists of all time, Andy Warhol, whose words have not lost their significance over time, but rather gained importance. According to Deloitte, the annual return on investment in art can be as high as 7%, often exceeding the returns of traders in commodities such as gold. However, various barriers have long hindered the art trade, primarily the prices of some artworks that are often unattainable for people. An innovative solution is offered by the Liechtenstein project Artex, which is emerging as the world's first art exchange. Artex makes art trading accessible to ordinary people, offering works by the most renowned world painters. ■