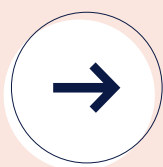


# SARIO Newsletter



## SLOVAKIA AT THE CIFIT 2026 FAIR



Within the **national pavilion**, 6 companies from **SLOVAKIA** presented themselves at the **CIFIT fair** in **Xiamen, China**

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## ECONOMY



The number of commercial flights in Slovakia increased by 37% year-on-year in August, representing the highest growth among EU countries

### SLOVAKIA EXPERIENCES RECORD GROWTH IN AIR TRAFFIC

The number of commercial flights in Slovakia increased by 37% year-on-year in August, representing the highest growth among EU countries. Across the entire EU, the number of flights grew by only 2.3%. Behind the significant Slovak growth is mainly the expansion of connection offerings from Bratislava. Low-cost airline Wizz Air contributed significantly by opening a base at the Bratislava airport, alongside new routes by Ryanair. (SOURCE hnonline.sk)

### SPP WILL INCREASE GAS RESERVES

SPP aims to have 17.5 TWh of natural gas in storage facilities at the start of the heating season, which will be a record volume. As of September 22, it already had 16.8 TWh stored and aims to reach its goal in the first half of October. SPP also states that it is meeting the set milestones ahead of schedule and purchases gas from a diversified portfolio of foreign suppliers. Storage volume increased significantly compared to 2021, when it stood at 8 TWh. When fully filled, Slovak storage facilities can cover approximately 70 to 75% of the country's annual consumption. (SOURCE energie-portal.sk)

### SLOVAK ECONOMY ACCELERATED GROWTH, DRIVEN BY SERVICES

Total market production in Slovakia grew by 3.8% year-on-year in July, following a 2.2% growth in June. This is the fastest growth rate this year. Services made the largest contribution, with production rising by 8.6%. Year-on-year, industry also grew by 1.3%, trade by 1.8%, and construction by 2.6%. In the first seven months of the year, market production grew overall by 2.1%, with industry being the only main sector to record a decline. (SOURCE teraz.sk)

### INFLATION SLOWED TO LOWEST LEVEL IN NEARLY TWO YEARS

Harmonized inflation in Slovakia slowed to 3.1% year-on-year in August, the lowest figure since September 2024. Month-on-month, prices according to the harmonized methodology remained unchanged. Housing with energy saw the highest year-on-year price increase at 9.5%. On the other hand, food and non-alcoholic beverage prices fell by 2.5%, dampening overall inflation. Average harmonized inflation over the last 12 months slightly dropped to 3.9%. (SOURCE teraz.sk)



Unit 4 of the Mochovce Nuclear Power Plant entered energy commissioning on September 21, which is among the final major stages before commercial operation

#### MOCHOVCE 4 ENTERS FINAL PHASE BEFORE LAUNCH

Unit 4 of the Mochovce Nuclear Power Plant entered energy commissioning on September 21, which is among the final major stages before commercial operation. In the coming months, the reactor's output will be gradually increased, and experts will test technological and safety systems. Upon reaching approximately 20% capacity, turbogenerators are to be synchronized to the Slovak electricity grid, and the first megawatt-hours will flow into the grid. The reactor has an installed electrical capacity of 471 MW. Before commercial operation, the unit will also have to undergo a 144-hour run at 100% nominal capacity. (SOURCE sita.sk)

#### OKRUHLIAK TUNNEL BROKE THROUGH

Construction of the R4 Prešov northern bypass expressway reached a significant milestone — the Okruhliak tunnel has been broken through in both tubes. The nearly 2-kilometer tunnel was excavated continuously 24 hours a day, seven days a week, using a combination of drilling, blasting, and mechanical excavation. Secondary lining construction is now ongoing in both tubes. On average, approximately 600 workers work on the construction daily, and the National Motorway Company plans to invest tens of millions of euros in 2026. The section also includes 12 bridges where work continues on load-bearing structures, insulation, and road surfaces. (SOURCE sita.sk)

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## COMPANIES & INVESTMENT



The Volvo Cars Košice plant reached another major milestone — the number of employees exceeded 1,000, and the first work shift was launched (PHOTO volvocars.com)



### **VOLVO NEAR KOŠICE GAINS MOMENTUM, TEST PRODUCTION AROUND THE CORNER**

The Volvo Cars Košice plant reached another major milestone — the number of employees exceeded 1,000, and the first work shift was launched. Following the completion of construction work and technology installation, the factory is preparing for test production of electric vehicles, set to begin in the coming weeks. Series production is scheduled for 2027. Approximately 95% of production workers are Slovaks, and the company aims to hire around 300 more people by the end of this year. According to the automaker, the project is progressing on schedule and the plant is gradually transitioning to the next phase. (SOURCE hnonline.sk)

### **VISIONFLOW RAISED €2 MILLION TO DEVELOP AI PLATFORM**

Slovak startup VisionFlow raised €2 million in an investment round, with €1.4 million provided by the state-owned Slovak Investment Holding in the form of a convertible loan. The investment originates from Recovery Plan resources and aims to support further development of the platform for data preparation and management for AI and computer vision. Over half of the funds will go toward product technology development. The company also wants to expand development capacity and strengthen sales activities. It plans first pilot deployments in 2027, followed by expansion into the European market. (SOURCE hnonline.sk)



ZSSK signed a contract for the delivery of eight new electric trains for long-distance transport valued at €266.2 million excl. VAT (PHOTO skodagroup.com)

### ČSOB AND 365.BANK WILL MERGE LEGALLY, BRANDS REMAIN FOR NOW

ČSOB and 365.bank will legally merge as of November 1, 2026, and all activities of 365.bank will transfer under ČSOB. 365.bank will remain preserved as an independent brand for several months until client migration to ČSOB systems occurs, which is planned during 2027. After the legal merger, 365.bank clients will automatically become ČSOB clients, but will continue to use their existing electronic banking, cards, and other services without changes for now. (SOURCE teraz.sk)

### ZSSK ORDERED NEW LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS FOR €266 MILLION

ZSSK signed a contract for the delivery of eight new electric trains for long-distance transport valued at €266.2 million excl. VAT. However, the contract will take effect only after funding is secured, with the carrier planning primarily to utilize future European funds. The first trains should be delivered between 2032 and 2033, primarily serving the Košice — Žilina — Bratislava route with potential extension to Austria. Units will reach speeds up to 200 km/h, and each train will offer 566 seats. (SOURCE sita.sk)

### STELLANTIS WILL REDUCE GAS CONSUMPTION

The Stellantis Slovakia plant in Trnava launched a new biomass boiler house designed to reduce its natural gas consumption by approximately 50%. The new heat source has an output of 9 MW and utilizes sustainably sourced wood chips. Total investment in the boiler plant and associated heating infrastructure reached €17.5 million. The project is also expected to reduce emissions by approximately 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually. The infrastructure includes 3.9 kilometers of pipelines connected to key production technologies at the plant (SOURCE trend.sk)

### SLOVAK STARTUP SUTRO ACQUIRED BY SWEDISH COMPANY LOVABLE

Slovak entrepreneur Tomáš Halgaš sold his second tech startup — Sutro was acquired by Swedish firm Lovable. Sutro developed technology similar to the Lovable service, enabling users to create software using artificial intelligence without advanced technical knowledge. Swedish Lovable is among fast-growing European tech companies, with annual revenue of approximately €350 million according to Denník N. (SOURCE e.dennikn.sk)

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## SARIO NEWS



← ↑  
Lukáš Merga, SARIO expert for China, highlighted Slovakia as an attractive investment destination and detailed opportunities for business and investment cooperation

# SLOVAKIA PRESENTED ITS INVESTMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AT CIFIT 2026

SARIO's dispatched expert for China, Lukáš Merga, and the Deputy Director of SARIO's Investment Projects Department, Michal Körmendi, attended the international China International Fair for Investment and Trade (CIFIT 2026) in Xiamen, Fujian Province, from September 7 to 11, 2026.

CIFIT is a major Chinese event focused on investment and international economic cooperation, bringing together representatives of the public sector, investment and trade agencies, multinational corporations, investors, and technology companies from China and other countries.

This year's fair again featured expert conferences, thematic forums, investment presentations, and networking events. For Slovakia, the fair represented an opportunity to present its investment and business environment, as well as its potential for technological cooperation. Slovakia was presented through a national pavilion hosting 6 Slovak companies. The national pavilion provided space to present Slovakia's investment and

business environment, as well as for direct negotiations with representatives of Chinese companies and other potential partners.

A significant part of the program consisted of expert presentations and B2B meetings. Lukáš Merga presented Slovakia as an attractive investment destination at the 'Global Business Lounge at CIFIT — European Countries Investment Roadshow' and outlined options for investment and business cooperation.

He followed up the presentation with individual B2B negotiations with Chinese companies. He also presented the advantages of the Slovak economy at the 'International Low-Altitude Industry Matchmaking Conference', focused on

drones, low-altitude technologies, and related industrial solutions, discussing Slovakia's potential to become a strategic hub for developing this industry in Europe.

The 26<sup>th</sup> edition of CIFIT took place for the first time at the newly built Xiamen International Expo Center. It attracted participants from 129 countries and regions and was visited by over 100,000 attendees.

Xiamen is among the key economic centers of southeastern China and serves as an important platform for international trade, investment, and financial services. In 2025, the city's GDP reached RMB 898 billion and foreign trade volume hit a record RMB 960 billion. Xiamen Port also plays a major role.

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Following the regional presentation, SARIO consultants presented Slovakia's business and investment environment



# JAPANESE BUSINESS MISSION IN KOŠICE

**On September 21—22, 2026, a business mission organized by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan in the Slovak Republic visited Košice. Approximately 30 representatives from Japanese companies, primarily from logistics, industrial manufacturing, and other sectors, participated in the two-day program.**

The Japanese mission aimed to explore eastern Slovakia and its business and investment potential in detail. Japanese entrepreneurs had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the economic environment of Košice and the region, existing investments, available infrastructure, the technology and innovation ecosystem, as well as opportunities for further business expansion.

The program opened with a reception of the Japanese delegation at the Historical Town Hall of Košice, welcomed by city representatives. Subsequently, Business Košice presented the economic potential of the city and region and opportunities for business development.

Following the regional presentation, SARIO consultants presented Slovakia's business and investment environment, options for establishing and expanding business activities of foreign investors, and SARIO's support throughout individual phases of the investment process. This

was followed by a final presentation from CTPark, a leading commercial real estate developer, showcasing its property portfolio, available industrial and logistics spaces, and locations for potential investors. The event concluded with active discussions and questions from Japanese participants.

The goal of the mission was to introduce the business environment in Slovakia to Japanese companies and create space for new trade and investment opportunities. Some participating companies are considering establishing a branch in Slovakia to coordinate activities toward Ukraine. Slovakia's strategic location and logistical connections to the region represent an attractive potential for these companies.

The program also included visits to established Japanese companies and industrial operations in Košice, including Minebea Slovakia and PST CLC Mitsui-Soko. The delegation also visited U. S. Steel Košice, which is transitioning under

the Japanese group Nippon Steel. The visits allowed Japanese participants to observe the operations of major industrial companies and existing investments tied to Japan in Slovakia.

An important part of the second day was a networking lunch with local companies, providing space for individual negotiations, exchange of experiences, and establishing new commercial and cooperative contacts between Slovak and Japanese companies.

Given the interest of Japanese companies, the program also included a visit to the Technical University of Košice and a meeting with a representative of Košice IT Valley, where Japanese companies learned more about the local technology and innovation ecosystem and potential for cooperation in IT and human resources.

The business mission confirmed the interest of Japanese companies in Slovakia as a base for further development of their activities in Central and Eastern Europe.

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## EVENTS



**OCTOBER 4 — OCTOBER 9, 2026**  
Business mission to IAC Antalya, Turkey

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2026**

Webinar — Perspectives of trade development with Latin America

**SEPTEMBER 29 — SEPTEMBER 30, 2026**

Webinar — Delivery terms in foreign trade INCOTERMS

SMEs

**OCTOBER 4 — OCTOBER 9, 2026**

Business Mission to IAC Antalya, Turkey

SMEs

**OCTOBER 6 — OCTOBER 9, 2026**

International Engineering Fair MSV Brno 2026

SMEs

**OCTOBER 10 — OCTOBER 18, 2026**

Business mission to Thailand and Australia

**OCTOBER 16, 2026**

10 Years of CETA — Stronger trade relations between Slovakia and Canada



**OCTOBER 10 — OCTOBER 18, 2026**  
Business mission to Thailand and Australia

→  
**NOVEMBER 3 — NOVEMBER 7, 2026**  
Business mission to South Korea for Robotworld 2026



**OCTOBER 17 — OCTOBER 21, 2026**  
National pavilion at SIAL Paris 2026

SMEs



**OCTOBER 27, 2026**  
Slovak Industry Vision Day 2026, Bratislava



**NOVEMBER 3 — NOVEMBER 7, 2026**  
Business mission to South Korea for Robotworld 2026

SMEs



**NOVEMBER 5 — NOVEMBER 10, 2026**  
National pavilion at CIIE 2026 in Shanghai

SMEs



**NOVEMBER 7 — NOVEMBER 14, 2026**  
Business mission to the Philippines and China



**SLOVAK  
INDUSTRY  
VISION  
DAY 2026**



**OCTOBER 27, 2026**  
Slovak Industry Vision Day 2026, Bratislava

**NOVEMBER 9 — NOVEMBER 13, 2026**

Business mission to Web Summit Lisbon 2026, Portugal

SMEs

**NOVEMBER 12 — NOVEMBER 13, 2026**

Rebuild Ukraine 2026

**NOVEMBER 16 — NOVEMBER 21, 2026**

Business mission to Singapore Fintech Festival

SMEs

**NOVEMBER 17 — NOVEMBER 21, 2026**

Business mission to Helsinki, Finland

SMEs

**DECEMBER 3 — DECEMBER 4, 2026**

Business mission to ADOPT AI Summit 2026 in Paris

**DECEMBER 7 — DECEMBER 11, 2026**

Business mission to Ethiopia and Rwanda

**JANUARY 25 — JANUARY 28, 2027**

International Fair World Health EXPO Dubai 2027

SMEs

**NOVEMBER 16 — NOVEMBER 21, 2026**

Business mission to Singapore Fintech Festival



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