

We stand
on the side
of customers

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Foreword of the ČEZ Ombudsman

Dear customers, colleagues, and friends,

As in every previous year since the ČEZ Ombudsman was established, I present to you the annual report for 2025 – the 2025 Annual Report on the Activities of the ČEZ Ombudsman. As I noted in last year's report, with each passing year it is becoming harder to find cases in which my colleagues and I can provide customers with substantial help. That means identifying any error that may have occurred in handling a customer's claim or grievance and then persuading the relevant CEZ Group company of that fact and asking it to remedy its error and compensate the customer appropriately.

Such situations have not disappeared completely, but there are fewer and fewer of them each year. This applies in particular to the "traditional activities" of CEZ Group companies – namely customer service related primarily to the supply of electricity, but also gas, telecommunications, and financial services. The error rate is truly minimal in those areas.

On the other hand, I see room for improvement in areas that do not have a very long history in energy companies, particularly the supply of physical equipment: primarily photovoltaic power plants, heat pumps, and other equipment, as well as related services. Although the situation in these areas is also improving each year, the lack of operational experience and the fact that procedures have not yet been fully refined are naturally evident in individual cases.

The number of submissions with which customers contacted me in 2025 was in line with the long-term average. Considering that there were no dramatic developments in energy prices during the year – in fact, prices declined slightly – and that energy was therefore not a major concern for many people, this is not an insignificant figure.

Surprisingly, falling prices can also lead to customer dissatisfaction, especially among people who, fearing uncontrolled price increases, locked in a fixed price. They then looked for every conceivable way to get out of unfavorable contracts without a penalty. On a human level, I understand that everyone tries to find the solution that is most advantageous for them. At the same time, each of us must take responsibility for our decisions. We therefore should not seek certainty only until something more advantageous appears, only to then forget that we had previously preferred certainty.

The total number of submissions that my colleagues and I have dealt with since the ČEZ Ombudsman was established is approaching 12,000. The total number of cases in which we have helped complainants secure fulfillment of their requests is nearly 1,100. However, there are types of complaints where, even with the best of intentions, we have a hard time finding something to work with when negotiating with the relevant companies. We certainly feel that we are on the customers' side, but without good arguments it is very difficult to succeed. We very much regret that some complainants whose complaints are assessed as unjustified conclude that we are on the side of the energy companies because we are "theirs." But we are not "theirs". The ČEZ Ombudsman is a unit of ČEZ, a. s., reports directly to the CEO of ČEZ, a. s., and not to the directors of the companies with which the customer is in dispute. For a complaint to be assessed by the Ombudsman as justified, the complainant must be in the right and must have arguments and evidence to support their claim.

In 2025, after eleven years, I decided to discontinue the regular customer satisfaction survey on the work of the ČEZ Ombudsman. Not because the results were unfavorable. In fact, quite the opposite: in all four areas covered by our questions, customer satisfaction was unexpectedly high and increased each year. At the same time, however, the number of respondents decreased significantly. I see the reason primarily in the fact that people are oversaturated with feedback requests literally at every turn. A further reason was that customers whose submissions had been assessed by the Ombudsman as justified were more likely to respond. Whatever the case, the fact remains that with only a few dozen responses, the survey is not sufficiently representative. Much more meaningful feedback for us comes from complainants' immediate reactions after they receive our statement. And we receive plenty of those.

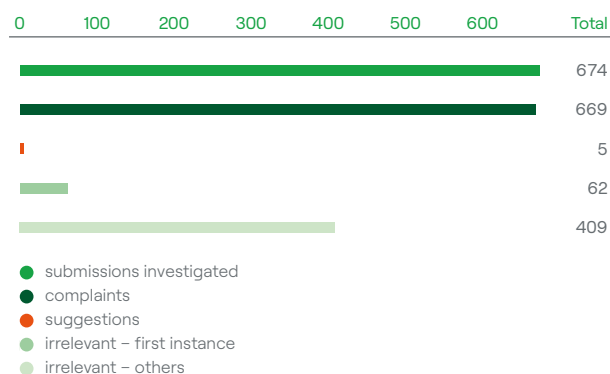
As in all previous years, last year we continued identifying systemic measures that would benefit both customers and the relevant energy companies within CEZ Group. Avoiding repeated mistakes and misunderstandings in business relationships is clearly beneficial for all parties involved. The number of measures we have identified and the companies have adopted during our work is approaching sixty.

Dear customers, colleagues, and friends,
In concluding this foreword, I would like to repeat what I have already stated above: my colleagues and I are here for you, and we try to resolve each submission from you to your satisfaction. However, the entity that can ultimately grant your request is not the ČEZ Ombudsman, but the relevant CEZ Group company with which you are trying to resolve your customer dispute. And that company will not do so simply because the Ombudsman asks it to. It will do so on the basis of clear, conclusive documentation that I need to have from you.

Josef Sedlák
ČEZ Ombudsman

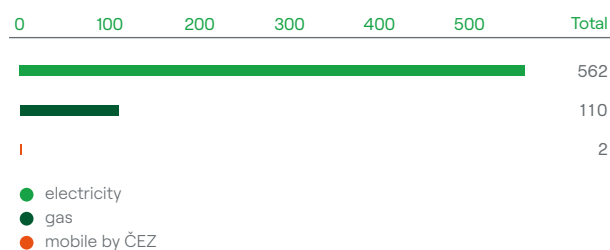
Statistics – 2025

Submissions Received by the ČEZ Ombudsman



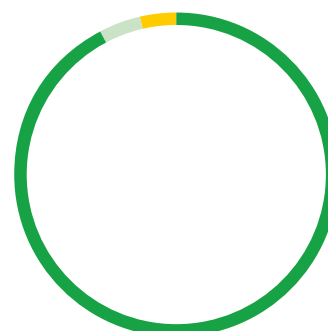
In 2025, the ČEZ Ombudsman received 674 submissions, of which 669 were complaints and 5 suggestions for improvement. 62 complaints were considered irrelevant because the requirement had not been met that the matter first be handled as a claim or grievance through the standard processes of the relevant CEZ Group company; 409 complaints were irrelevant for other reasons.

Comparison of the Number of Complaints by Commodity



In 2025, the number of submissions decreased compared with 2024, but submissions related to gas almost doubled.

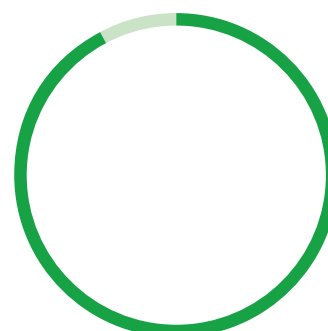
Numbers of Closed Complaints by Validity



	Number
unjustified	609
justified – specific approach	28
justified – recognized by CEZ Group	22

In 2025, a total of 659 complaints were closed. Of these, 609 complaints were assessed as unjustified; in 28 cases, the ČEZ Ombudsman recommended accommodating the customer even though no error was identified on the part of any CEZ Group company; and in 22 cases, the complaint was recognized as justified by CEZ Group companies after discussion with the ČEZ Ombudsman.

Complaint Resolution Times



	Number
within 30 days	609
over 30 days	50

The time limit of 30 calendar days set for resolving complaints was met for 609 complaints, i.e., 92.4% of the 659 complaints closed in 2025.

Categories of Complaints Reviewed by the ČEZ Ombudsman in 2025

Breakdown of Complaints Reviewed into Main Categories



	%
● contractual matters and payments	29
● metering and unauthorized consumption	26
● technology	20
● other	16
● electricity distribution	9

The largest number of complaints fell into the Contractual Matters and Payments category (29%). Of these cases, 90% concerned grievances about contractual fines and sanctions, distribution rates, the start and end dates of electricity or gas supply, and products and services provided. The remaining 10% concerned advance payments and other payments.

In the Metering and Unauthorized Consumption category (26%), 94% of complaints related to consumption metering, disagreement with the amount of invoiced electricity or gas consumption, and meter readings when transferring points of consumption to new customers or terminating contracts. The remaining 6% concerned unauthorized consumption.

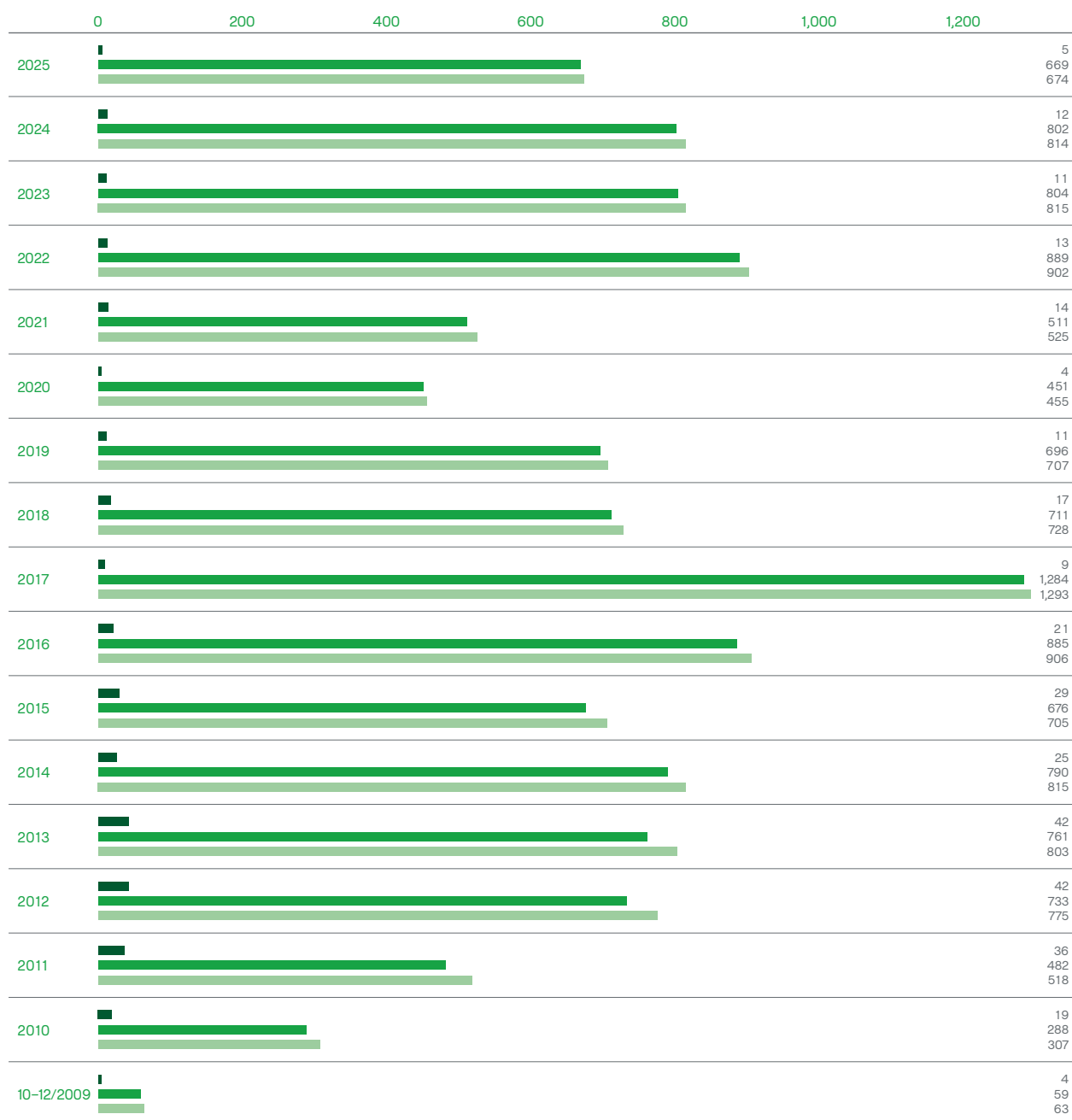
Because the number of complaints concerning equipment deliveries has been steadily increasing in recent years, the Technology category (20%) was newly added. This category includes complaints concerning the installation, operation, and servicing of solar systems, battery storage systems, heat pumps, water storage tanks, EV charging stations, and other equipment.

In the Other category (16%), 61% of complaints could not be clearly assigned to any category. 32% of complaints concerned requests for an installment plan or a deferral of the due date of a receivable. The remaining 7% of grievances concerned the conduct of employees of individual CEZ Group companies.

In the Electricity Distribution category (9%), 61% of submissions involved connection conditions, 22% concerned property-related matters, 11% related to damage to appliances, and 6% concerned voltage quality complaints.

Overview – 2009 to 2025

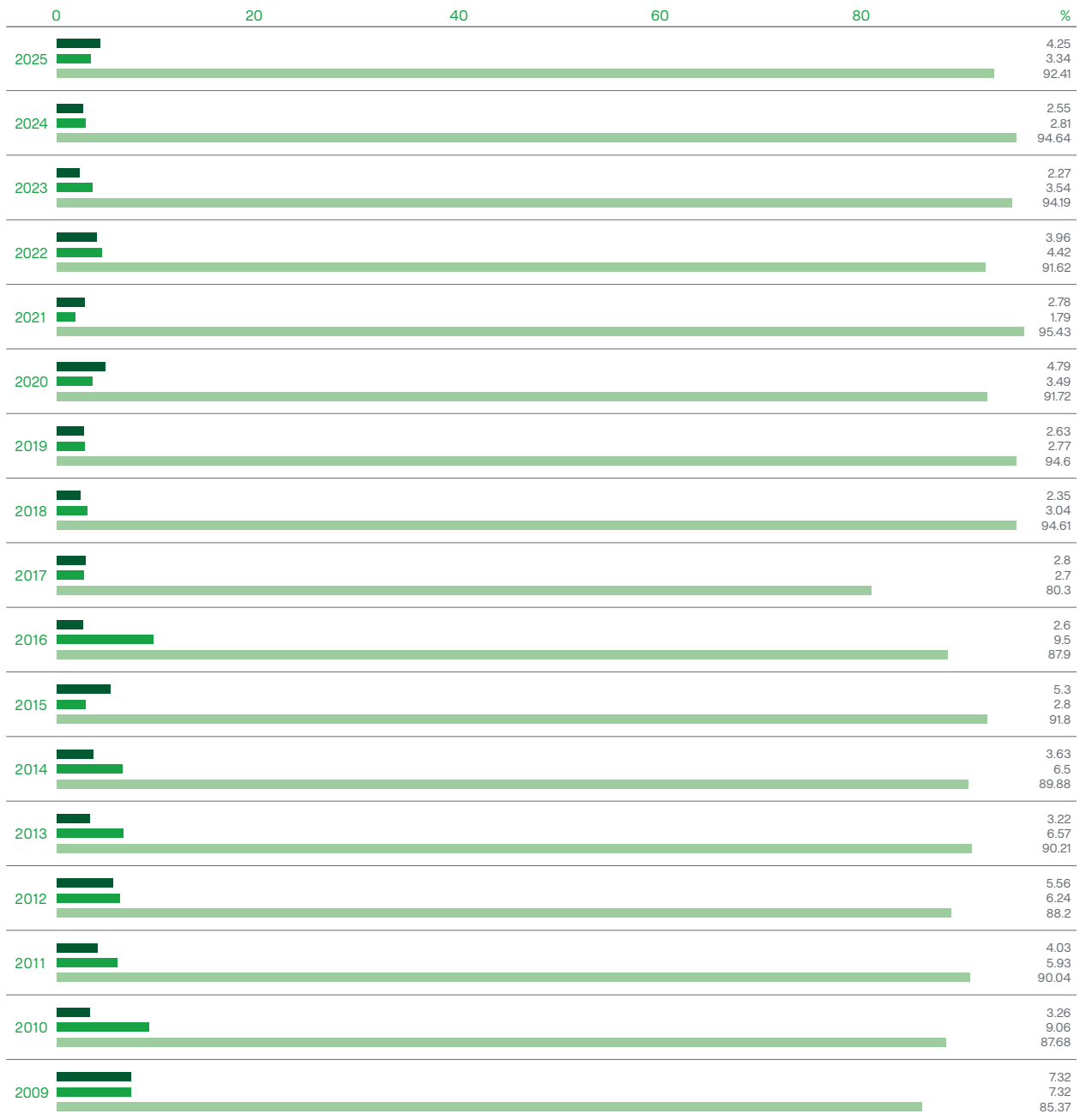
Trend in the Number of Submissions Received (October 2009 – 2025)



- suggestions
- complaints
- submissions investigated

Over the period of the ČEZ Ombudsman's activities (October 2009 to December 2025), a total of 11,805 submissions were received, of which 11,491 were complaints and 314 were suggestions for improvement. With the exception of 2009, when the ČEZ Ombudsman began its activities, the ČEZ Ombudsman received an average of 734 submissions per year.

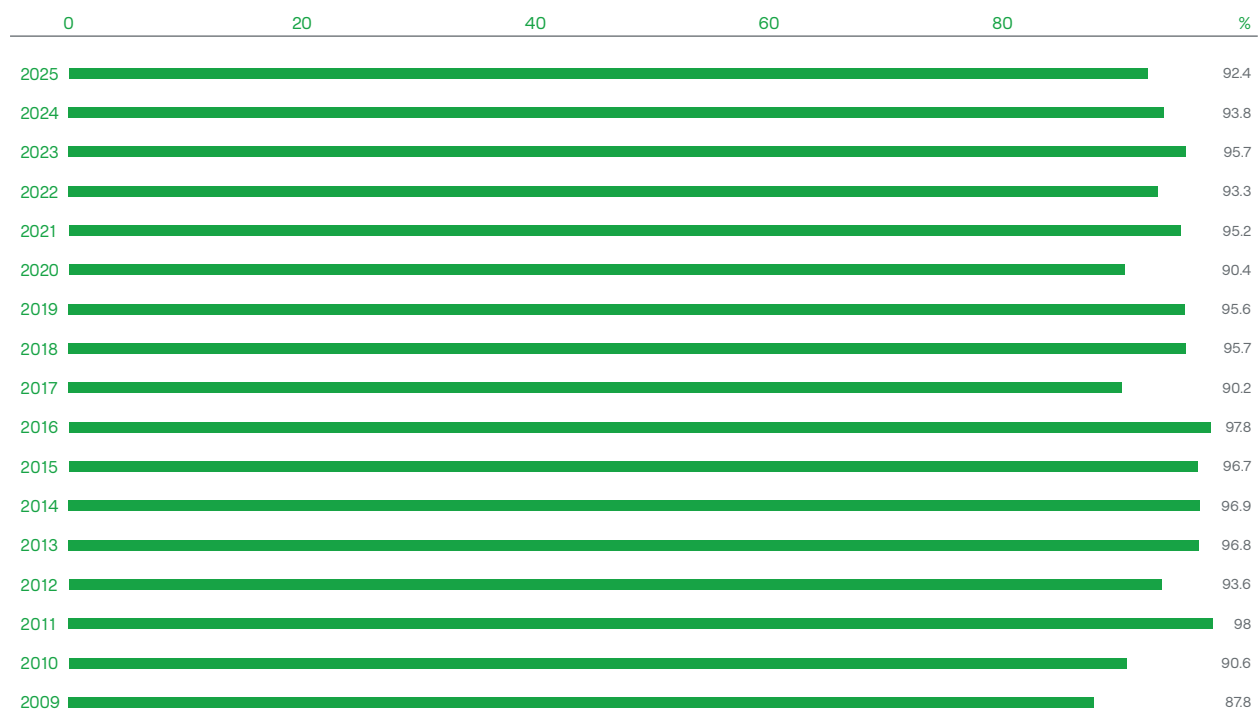
Comparison of the Share of Justified Complaints (October 2009 – 2024)



- justified – specific approach
- justified – recognized by CEZ Group
- unjustified complaints

In 2025, the total proportion of unjustified complaints was 92.41%.

Proportion of Complaints Resolved within 30 Days (October 2009 – 2025)



With the exception of the first year of the ČEZ Ombudsman's operation, the 30-day time limit for resolving complaints was met in more than 90% of cases. The overall average is 94.2%.

People's Stories

Mr. Libor from the Louny region asked the ČEZ Ombudsman to discuss with ČEZ Prodej the possibility of waiving the CZK 22,000 outstanding balance on his final bill.

In his request, he stated that the outstanding balance was so high because his advance payments had been insufficient, he had not expected such high consumption, and the company had rejected his offer to pay the debt in 44 installments. He went on to argue that the company should in fact waive the outstanding balance because he was a long-standing loyal customer and had paid so much over the years that, in effect, he had already prepaid. Now, having just retired, he is unable to pay such a high amount from his income in a single payment. The Ombudsman found through his investigation that the customer had been repeatedly warned during the billing period that his advance payments were insufficient. Given that he did not respond to these warnings, it was entirely logical that the company rejected his request to pay the outstanding balance in installments, and no one should have been surprised by that decision.

Although Mr. Libor had caused the situation himself, the Ombudsman took into account the fact that the family's financial situation had sharply deteriorated due to the reduction in regular monthly income, and asked the company to allow him to repay his debt in a reasonable number of monthly installments in an affordable amount – in this case, 11 installments of CZK 2,000 each.

Ms. Jindřiška from the Olomouc region was trying to resolve the issue of a damaged inverter at her photovoltaic power plant. The equipment was still under warranty, but it was also very likely that the damage had been caused by an error on the part of the customer or one of her family members.

As part of the handover of the power plant, Ms. Jindřiška signed a protocol confirming that she understood the instructions provided and the other information communicated regarding the operation of the equipment.

As part of the service intervention after the incident was reported, the supplier replaced the inverter with another one and left it with her for several days on a trial basis to see how the entire system would behave. Once it had been established that no other problems were occurring, the financial aspect of the complaint was addressed. The company was entirely right to request payment for the new inverter because there was a high probability that someone in the household had made a mistake. Specifically, another high-power electrical device had been connected to the electrical circuit to which the inverter was connected, causing the damage.

In her submission to the ČEZ Ombudsman, Ms. Jindřiška referred to her lack of technical expertise and the somewhat unclear information she had received at the customer service center. In such a situation, the Ombudsman faces a very difficult decision. Unlike recorded calls to the customer service line, the content of communication at customer service centers cannot be verifiably confirmed in any way.

The Ombudsman took into account the fact that the customer was not in a very good financial situation and had purchased the photovoltaic power plant as a way to achieve long-term savings at a time when she was approaching the end of her active working career and expected the family budget's income to decline.

On this basis, he recommended that the company allow the customer to keep the loaned inverter free of charge, and the company accepted this recommendation as part of its customer-friendly approach.

Life brings all kinds of situations, including those in which things go wrong from beginning to end, with all parties involved contributing to the outcome. One such situation is the story of Mr. Jaroslav from the Beroun region, who decided to improve his family budget by installing a photovoltaic power plant – to save on electricity costs and sell surplus electricity to the grid. The first complication arose when applying for a subsidy. Due to unclear communication between the customer and the energy company, the process dragged on and the subsidy granted was lower than originally expected.

He was then informed that, contrary to initial assumptions, a connection allowing him to feed surplus electricity into the grid would not be possible, and that this option would become available only within a three-year timeframe.

At that point, Mr. Jaroslav began to wonder whether his investment would pay off and started looking for a way to withdraw from the agreement. ČEZ Prodej agreed to the withdrawal on the condition that it would deduct the costs incurred for the pre-implementation inspection from the deposit to be returned to the customer.

Mr. Jaroslav was not satisfied with this, however, and filed a complaint with the supplier. The complaint was assessed as unjustified, so he then filed a submission with the ČEZ Ombudsman. In that submission, the customer listed all the obstacles that had arisen in the energy companies' handling of the project. He also added that the technician had informed him during the inspection that the inspection would be free of charge.

In this case as well, namely in dealings between sales representatives or technicians and customers, the Ombudsman has no way to reliably establish the content of the communication. Another factor that influenced the final outcome was minor administrative errors on the part of the companies involved, although in many cases they were closely related to unclear communication from the customer. The Ombudsman took all these facts into account when recommending that the company not seek to recover the cost of the pre-implementation inspection from the customer and return the deposit in full.

In very simple terms, the Board of Directors of the energy company ČEZ established the Ombudsman's office to protect the customers of its subsidiaries. In other words, to prevent them from being wronged by CEZ Group. However, this protection does not mean that the ČEZ Ombudsman is "a lawyer who defends the customer's interests by every possible means, despite knowing that the facts are completely different and that the person being defended does not always tell the truth in an effort to protect himself".

This is the view of how the Ombudsman should operate that Mr. Petr from the Karviná region, who complained about the rejection of his complaint, considers correct. It concerned a penalty for unauthorized feed-ins from his photovoltaic power plant over a period of two months. Unscheduled feed-ins into the distribution grid by a customer affect the quality of electricity supply in the area concerned. The distributor must respond immediately to each such feed-in and balance deviations in the network in order to meet its primary obligation: ensuring a smooth, high-quality supply of electricity. In particular, the distributor must respond to feed-ins that exceed the agreed limits. Balancing the distribution network is not insignificant, given the number of customers, and also entails costs. Therefore, the Energy Regulatory Office has set a fixed price for exceeding reserved capacity, which compensates the distributor for the costs of balancing the network. ČEZ Distribuce responded to Mr. Petr accordingly and quite rightly rejected his complaint.

In a submission to the ČEZ Ombudsman, the customer stated that the feed-ins had occurred unintentionally during the first two months of the power plant's operation, when he did not yet have sufficient operating experience with the equipment. He requested a "review of the company's actions and a waiver or possible reduction of the penalty charged, taking into account the principles of proportionality, prevention, and good morals". During his investigation, the Ombudsman found that the feed-ins had not occurred during the first two months of operation, but only after more than six months of operation, shortly before the customer entered into an electricity buy-back agreement, which allowed him to sell the surplus electricity properly. Based on this finding, and asking what had happened to the good morals to which Mr. Petr referred in his submission, the Ombudsman assessed the submission as unjustified. Shortly afterward, the customer told the Ombudsman that this is not how he thinks the Ombudsman should work.

Practical information and the principles governing the work of the ČEZ Ombudsman are available at:

www.cez.cz/ombudsman

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