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## Electrostate IV



The Czech electrostate is losing some of its charge. For years, the interests of the electricity lobby have guided much of government policy. With the appearance last year of a loose anti-ČEZ coalition, the tide began to turn, although there isn't necessarily a causal relationship. ČEZ began losing the PR battle when its rates and profits surged as people were being laid off and companies were closing down (in part due to high energy rates). ČSSD is now turning electricity prices into a key campaign topic. More importantly, ČEZ is losing its grip on Parliament. It was forced yesterday to support a drastic cut in the solar subsidy, after it failed to find backing for a more ČEZ-friendly version. It also lost an important vote on free carbon credits. Whether this signals a permanent shift in the fortunes of the Czech electrostate, or merely an impending vote of no-confidence in CEO Martin Roman, isn't yet clear.

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