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Subsidy cuts no one has seen



The ruling coalition gave first-reading approval on Fri. to the austerity package, and it happened without anyone catching sight of tens of billions of crowns in planned cuts to subsidies. It's like Mrs. Columbo, who is spoken of but never seen. Finance Min. [Zbyněk Stanjura](#) of ODS told Právo that the government's approach to this is that a good reason must be given to keep any specific subsidy. Anything that doesn't conform to the original intent of the subsidy can either be canceled outright or substantially lowered, he said, or the contribution of the applicant can be increased. Pres. Zdeněk Zajíček of the Czech Chamber of Commerce said that companies will be [more careful about investing](#) as a result of the austerity package, in part because of uncertainty about which subsidies will be cut. In the [March revision](#) to its policy statement, the government promised transparency in the subsidy process. Perhaps Petr Fiala and his ministers will still deliver on this, but the doubts are increasing by the day.

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