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Where to hide the bribe



There are rumors in business circles, as we wrote on [Oct. 16](#), that the bribe for buying Net-4Gas was up to Kč 8bn. That's [roughly the amount](#) now being talked about for energy subsidies for large industrial companies next year. The acquisitions of Net4Gas and RWE Gas Storage CZ are being funneled through ČEPS electricity-grid company, which is the one that would have to make the accounting arrangements for any black money. Industry Min. Jozef Síkela (STAN) spoke on Czech TV on Oct. 1 (at [12:55](#)) about shifting from a "price cap" to an "income cap" for natural-gas transit and requiring consumers to compensate ČEPS, as the new operator, for the drop in fees from Gazprom. [MP Václav Král of ODS](#) explained that consumers will now pay 75% of the network-maintenance costs based on a new [allocation key](#), instead of 27%. This change has never been explained by the ERÚ regulator, Král said. Yet if someone needed to hide a bribe, he couldn't exactly be entirely transparent about it, could he?

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