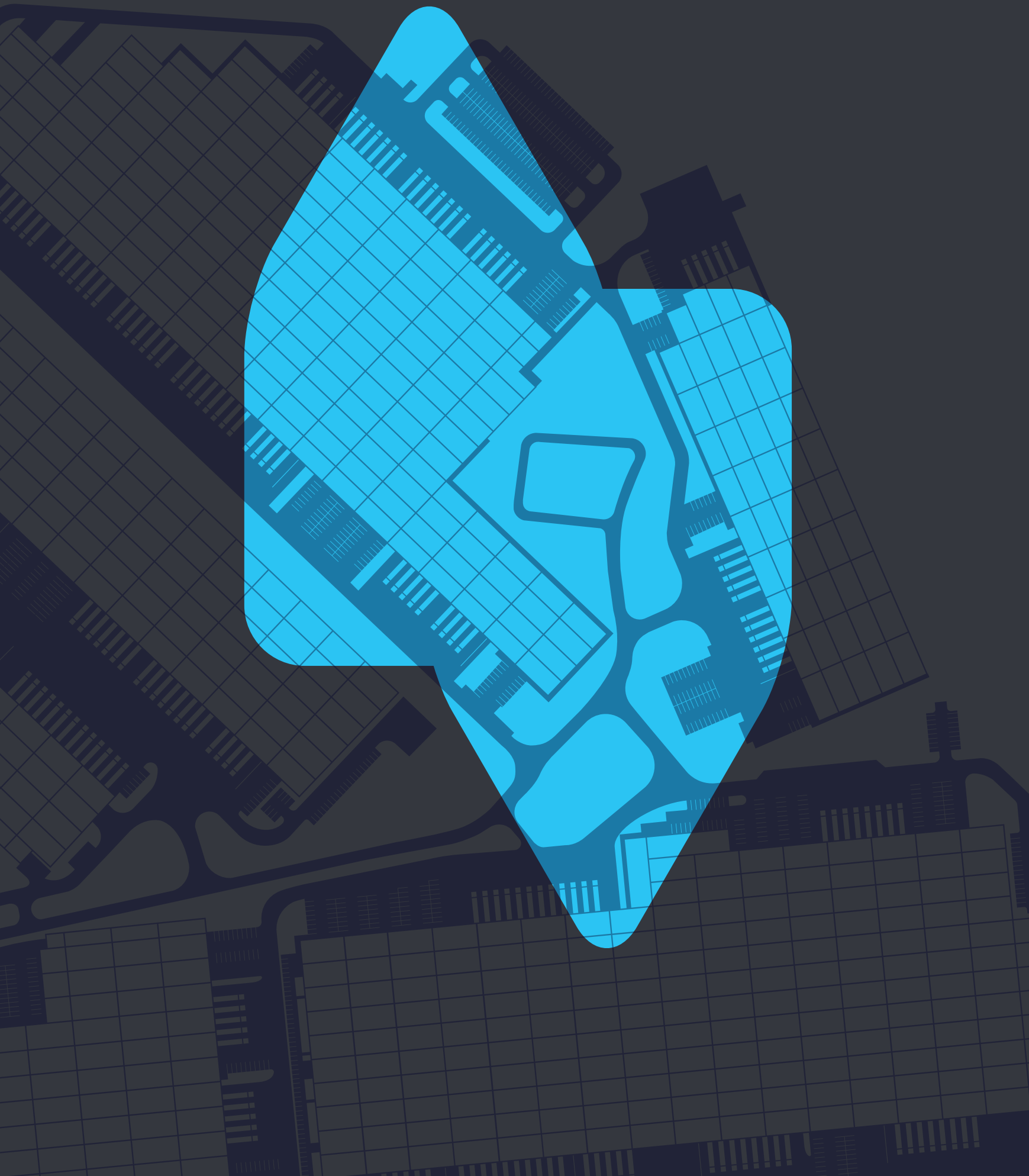


Spaces

The Accolade Group Magazine
Year 1/2020



Editorial

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am immensely pleased to introduce the first issue of our corporate magazine mapping the activities of Accolade in past years. We want to show you the full scope of our business. In the following pages we will take you to the various countries where we are present, to companies that operate within our facilities, and to meet our employees.

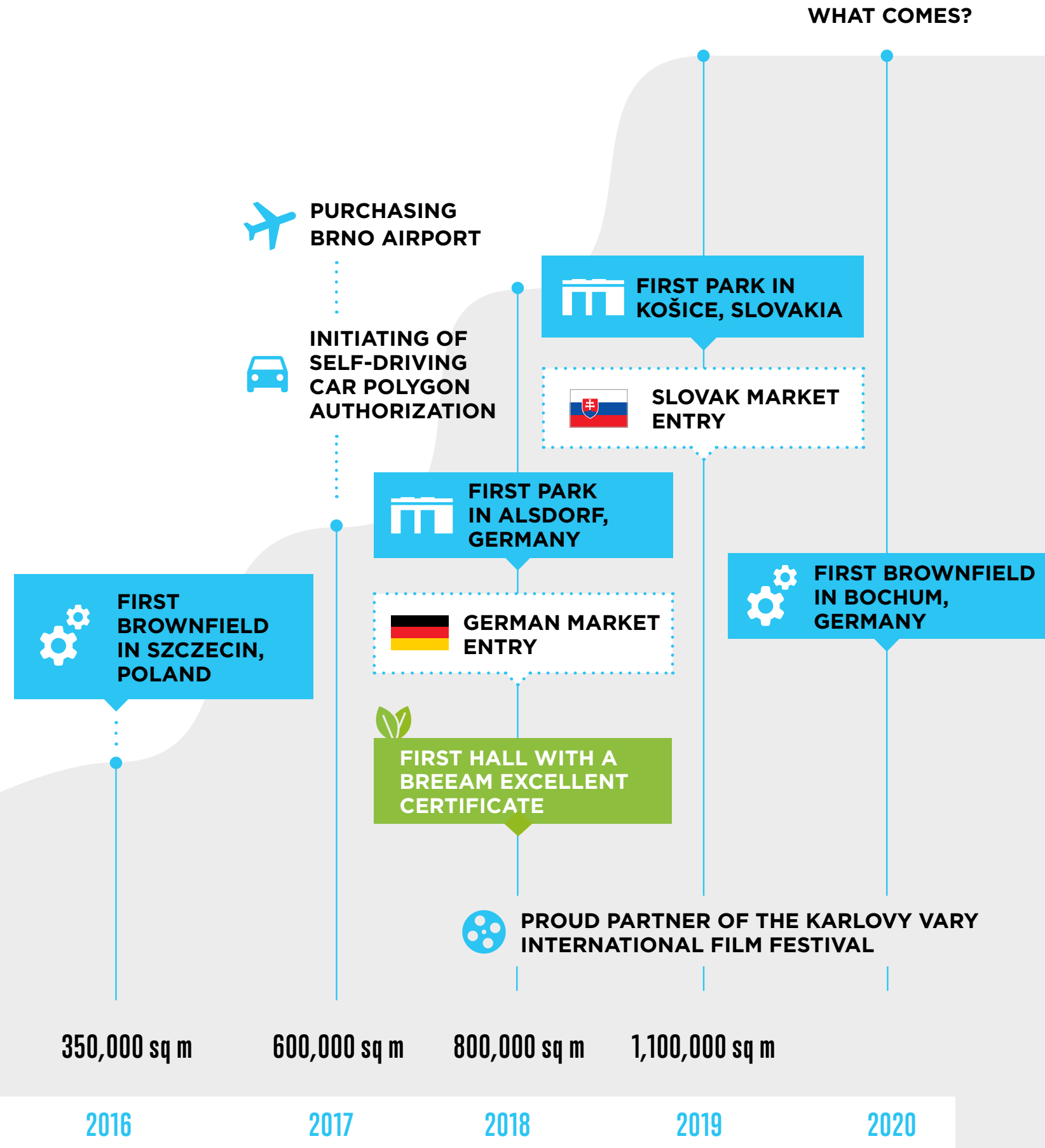
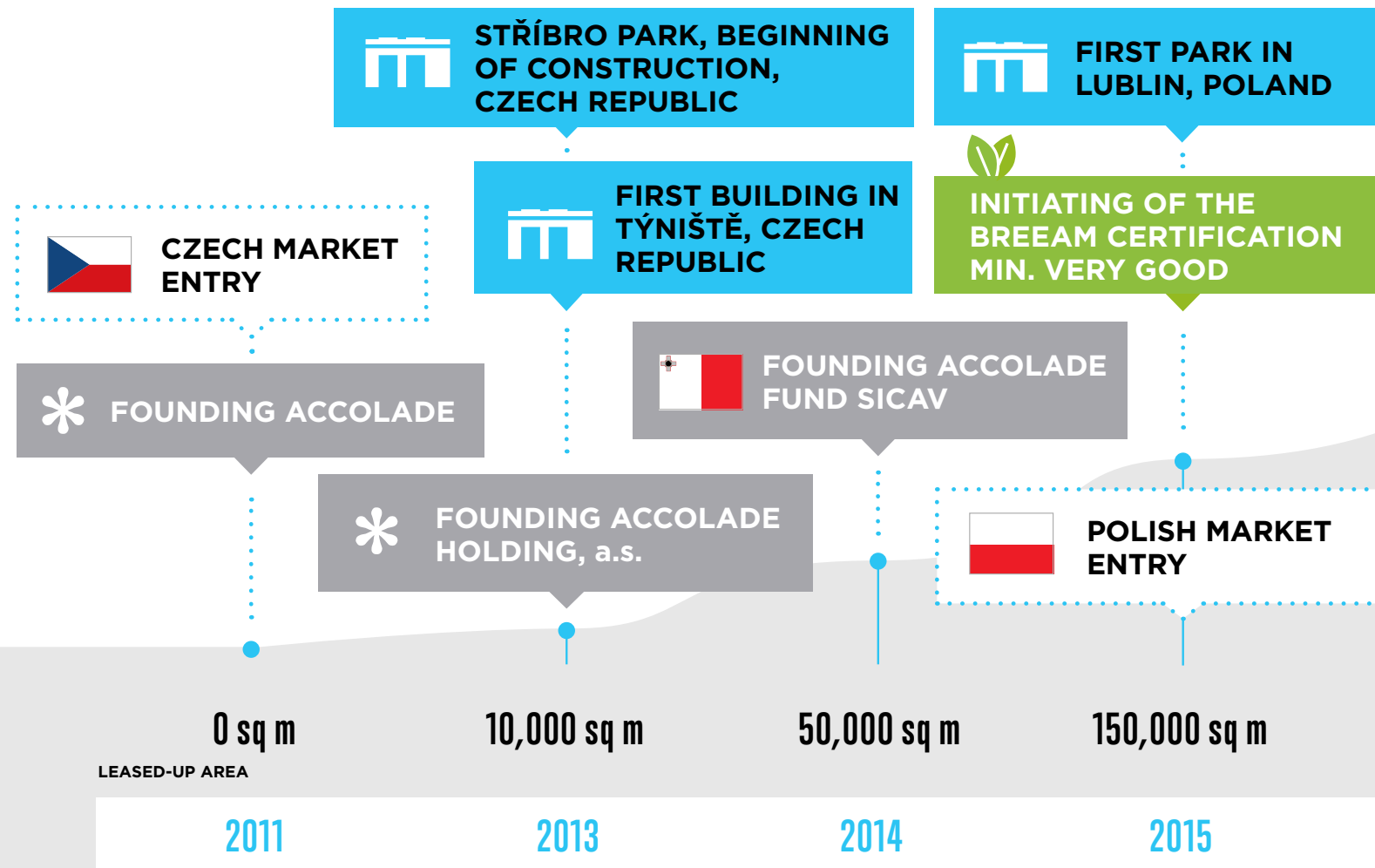
We are immensely happy that you support our vision – one of economic development in strategic Central European hubs and of fostering their uniqueness embodied in educated people and illustrious industrial tradition. We want to build on it and develop it into the 21st century. We are pleased to see that many locations where we were the first to arrive and successfully unlock their potential are gaining a foothold on the real estate market thanks to us. This applies to both stalwarts on the Czech and Polish markets and to new sites in Germany and Slovakia.

It is also thanks to you that we have been able to build a unique portfolio of modern properties that is currently playing a key role in paving the way for the next industrial revolution. Our goal is to continue improving our existing sites, rejuvenate traditional industrial facilities that may be decayed and unused for a long time, expand into additional markets and, most importantly, remain a good partner to everyone around us.

I wish you pleasant reading.



Milan Kratina
CEO, Accolade Group



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The Architects of Next Industrial Revolution



You have been involved with Accolade ever since the beginning. How did the idea of Accolade come into existence?

I founded Accolade in 2011, at a time when the real estate market was slowly recovering from crisis and any development on the industrial market only occurred when a developer had already pre-leased the premises. Competition was less tough in terms of obtaining land suitable for development, so I thought that I could provide the contractual backing for the land that was intended for future development, go all the way to obtaining the zoning permit and then sell the land and project to end users or developers. I was successful because I went for locations that I trusted in the long-term perspective rather than catering to acute business demand. I worked with farmers, small land owners, people who received property in restitution and small municipalities. I was often the first person ever to address them and discuss the future economic development. It's great that, less than a decade later, the development has become reality, so that, for example, the Stříbro and Kostelec areas are today a prosperous region with zero unemployment, minimum crime rate and new civic amenities.

“The real estate Cinderella has turned into a rich bride in a few years.”

Over time, I succeeded in securing an extensive portfolio of land for future industrial parks and I started thinking about what to do next. Investments in commercial properties were the domain of international capital at the time, and I thought that Czech capital could fare just as well. The breakthrough was Zdeněk Šoustal's arrival and the purchase of the first industrial hall in Týniště nad Orlicí, which had been leased long-term to Assa Abloy (Alpha Corporation today). That was just a step away from setting up a fund. Nowadays Accolade Group has both land for future development and existing industrial complexes that have been leased long-term and form the basis of the Accolade Industrial Fund.

Why did you focus on industrial properties right from the outset?

I believe that industrial properties are extremely interesting, as they underwent a major change in the past decade. With a bit of a hyperbole, you could say that the real estate Cinderella has turned into

a rich bride in a few years. Every real estate fund manager wants a fully leased large industrial park in their portfolio these days because this is the future: The future of industry, logistics and, most importantly, retail. Industrial halls and warehouses are an excellent example of how real estate can adapt to the current trends.

Today, we have classic manufacturers and often also their development hubs in our schemes, with offline retail complemented by e-commerce. I like to say that we develop facilities for the fourth industrial revolution.

If you look back, what major milestones do you see in Accolade's history?

It was the signing for the first sites of the future industrial parks in 2012 and 2013. Then founding the Accolade Fund in 2014 when Zdeněk and I succeeded to build a fund structure and address the first qualified investors. Working with external distributors such as Conseq and Česká spořitelna helped a lot. We have more than 800 of them today and can develop our activities further thanks to them. Every year was marked by a major decision that pushed us forward. We tapped Poland's real estate market in 2015, and Accolade holds a total of 490,000 sq m of storage space there today. Brno Airport, which we want to turn into a regional transport hub, became part of Accolade Group in 2017. As a result of cooperation with the municipality of Stříbro, we made major progress towards building a polygon for testing autonomous cars in late 2018. In 2019, we expanded into the German real estate market where we acquired two projects in North Rhineland Westphalia, and also to Slovakia where we bought land near the airport in Košice in the summer. We have a lot of plans in the pipeline and I am looking forward to what the upcoming years will bring.

Where do you want to steer Accolade in the years to come?

We are currently present in four countries: Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and Slovakia. At the same time, this places great demands on us because we need to understand each of the markets and have an excellent team. Our portfolio includes both new structures and schemes in revitalised brownfield areas. The latter case in particular requires special know-how, which is something you do not gain overnight. We believe that we will build a European portfolio of sustainable and environmentally sound buildings with a high ratio of regenerated brownfield areas, while also setting up a financial

institution that will be a long-term owner of the infrastructure. The best occupiers, the best sites and the most sustainable facilities.

Is there a favourite scheme of yours that you remember fondly?

We have several exceptional properties and each of them has a different story. The Alpha Corporation hall in Týniště was the first property we acquired. The parks in Cheb, Szczecin and Zielona Góra have grown big with excellent tenants and they continue growing. In addition, they have set the bar high for industrial development – they obtained high-ranking environmental certificates. We contribute towards improving the quality of life wherever we work: we give people a chance to find jobs, revitalise brownfields and contribute to new urban infrastructure: mostly nurseries, schools and gyms. We become part of the community. It's great to see how the entire environment changes in a few years.

Why did you decide to sponsor the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival?

KVIFF is one of the best-known events in the CEE region. We have been active in the Karlovy Vary area for a long time and our tenants are the largest employers in the region. When a major sponsor left unexpectedly two years ago, we said we would support the KVIFF. This gives us a great opportunity to support a high-profile event and meet our trade partners in an informal setting.

You manage a rapidly growing real estate company and have to travel often. You have a family and two little children. What do you do in your spare time, that is, if you have any?

I have to admit that I split my time between my business and my family. That being said, I need to relax too, so I play football as part of the 'jungle league'. Of course, the results in the world's lowest-ranking league (under the auspices of the football association) are of paramount importance. Ultimately, it's all about the joy of the game in football fields that have seen better days.

What was the most absurd situation you had to address?

Construction law in the Czech Republic can be like the novel *Catch XXII* at times. The urge to avoid making decisions and taking responsibility is deeply rooted in officials. This causes quite bizarre situations sometimes. We did a project involving a dispute over partridges nesting in a field. The field was farmed so no partridges nested there. Relevant authorities issued statements that confirmed this. Still, the final report by an official said: "There are no partridges in the area of interest, but if any occur there the development is forbidden." This is hard to work with; luckily, a higher authority annulled this decision on the grounds of nullity.

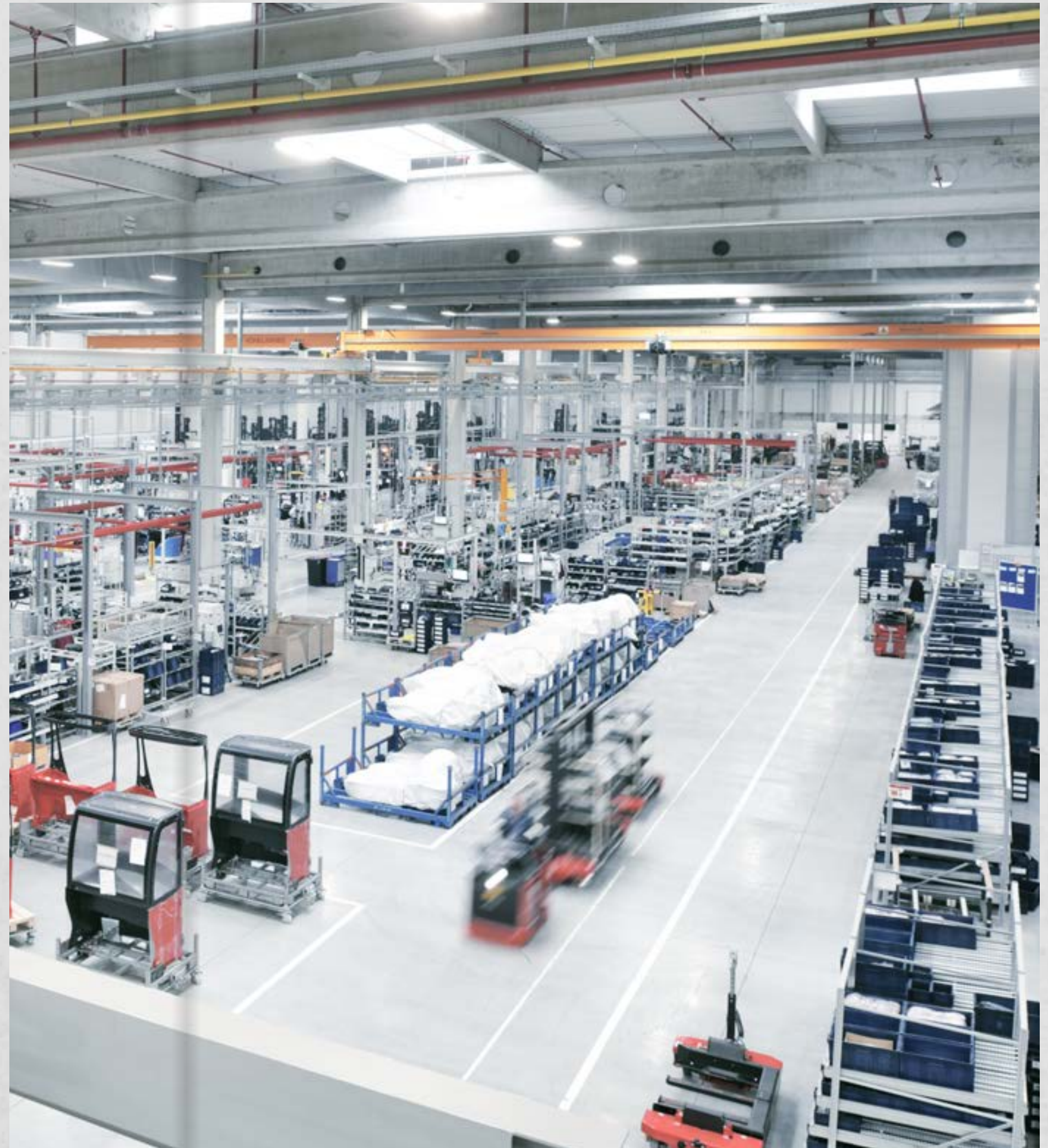


Revitalisation of brownfield areas in Brno Airport

Kion's Smart Factory

Ostrov u Stříbra Industrial Park

Kion, Europe's leader and the world's second largest manufacturer of warehouse technologies, has three manufacturing plants in the Czech Republic. The plant producing trucks (ITS) was commissioned in 2016, followed in 2018 by the plant that makes automated conveyor systems (SCS) in Ostrov u Stříbra in an industrial park owned by Accolade Group. The 55,000 sq m smart factory is equipped with advanced technologies that make it one of the world's most modern and largest plants producing industrial storage equipment. Even though more than 5,000 items are in stock on the premises, the factory has just 400 employees, with the rest taken care of by robots and automated processes controlled by robust software systems.



“In Stříbro, we produce storage trucks for Linde Material Handling and Fenwick for global distribution and the Dematic automated conveyor systems for clients such as Amazon and international airports. We should hit our maximum production capacity in 2025, reaching five times the volume of last year’s production. We have invested a total of CZK 580 million in the plant since 2015 and we have a lease agreement signed for 15 years. We are happy here, so we expanded our facility in 2019 and moved the manufacturing of another product over here from France (hand-operated electric trucks). Over the course of the next two years, we plan to invest about CZK 300 million and move the production of another truck model (Retrak) over from Germany,” says Michal Kříž, the head of the Kion ITS plant in Stříbro. Jiří Čmolík, the head of the Kion SCS plant adds: “For this year, we plan on opening the third hall where our automated conveyor system (SCS) division will re-locate and expand.”

More than just storage

The truck manufacturer uses more than 5,000 production items, with just a small portion located in Stříbro. The great majority is supplied just-in-sequence or just-in-time from any of its 300 suppliers just days prior to the planned assembly.

The company aims to set up a paperless factory, so most of the office work is done in electronic form. The individual systems for customer orders, communication with suppliers, monitoring production stock and the individual processes all the way to the final product distribution are all online and interconnected. The Kion Stříbro manufacturing plant has highly evolved internal logistics in order to manage everything efficiently at a high tempo.

“We are actually a smart factory pilot project for the entire group. We have developed certain new things here, which are not operational yet in other plants or were only installed elsewhere based on our deployment: from the Kanban automated electronic system to improved storage put-away and picking to a control programme, which is quite common in the automotive industry but not so much in our field. People do not work with paper; we try to control all processes electronically, with everything shown

on computer screens. The truck designs are so variable that if we were to print all the blueprints for our workers, they would get lost in a sea of paper,” explains Zdeněk Volný, Logistics Manager at KION Stříbro.



Production and distribution automation

Kion uses bar codes for internal identification in Stříbro where workers at the supply reception scan the codes for specific packages of parts and the system automatically determines where the goods will go in storage or manufacturing process. The factory uses a controlled (also known as chaotic) put-away system. The central component store is in the centre of the hall and of the production line it supplies; the line runs around it in a loop that starts on the side of the hall by the reception bays and ends at the shipping section. Kion plans on experimenting with modern logistic technologies such as pick-by-voice and pick-by-vision (using goggles with a scanner) in Stříbro.

The material moves from storage to the individual production sections, some of which are fully robotic or automated, and manual work is used where automation is not efficient. People work mostly in the final assembly stage or the set up and adjust processes. Logistic trains supply larger units to the production line in 25- and 45-minute sequences. Their routes and exact supply destinations are controlled by software. The Stříbro plant makes the Retrak chassis, cabins and posts. Everything is combined in two ‘weddings’. Then it is load-tested by computer at the test tower and sent for the final audit and output control. Shipping is managed by ERP software from the German headquarters, determining where a completed truck will go from Stříbro within about three days.



Facts and figures about Kion in Stříbro:

Total area of the production plant:	55,000 sq m
Total investment by Kion:	CZK 580 million
Kion Stříbro employees:	400
Trucks with production parts per day:	6-7

Cheb: A Modern Industry Phenomenon

Over the course of the past five years, Cheb, a border town with more than 30,000 inhabitants, has become a sought-after location for distribution and manufacturing sites of globally renowned brands that serve the German and Czech / Central European markets from there. Accolade has significantly contributed to the development.







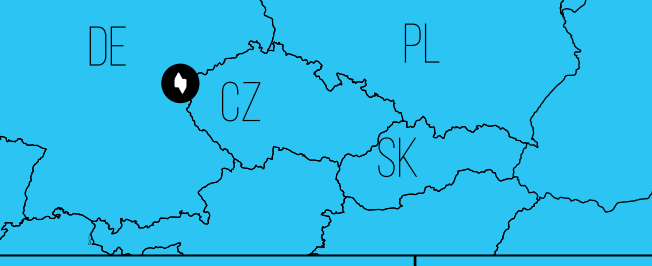
In 2015, we have started the construction of a new production facility for BWI, Chinese producer of premium shock absorbers for luxury German and Swedish car manufacturers. After this initial success, we managed to quickly sign lease agreements with other prestigious and important companies such as the logistics company DHL that leases two halls in Cheb for its clients: cosmetic giant Estée Lauder, multimedia company Sky, service provider in the clothes hanger industry TFS, connection technology and power accessories manufacturer GPH Nexans, one of the biggest German e-shops Real Digital and Tchibo, that leases 73,000 sq m from our portfolio for its central e-commerce distribution warehouse.

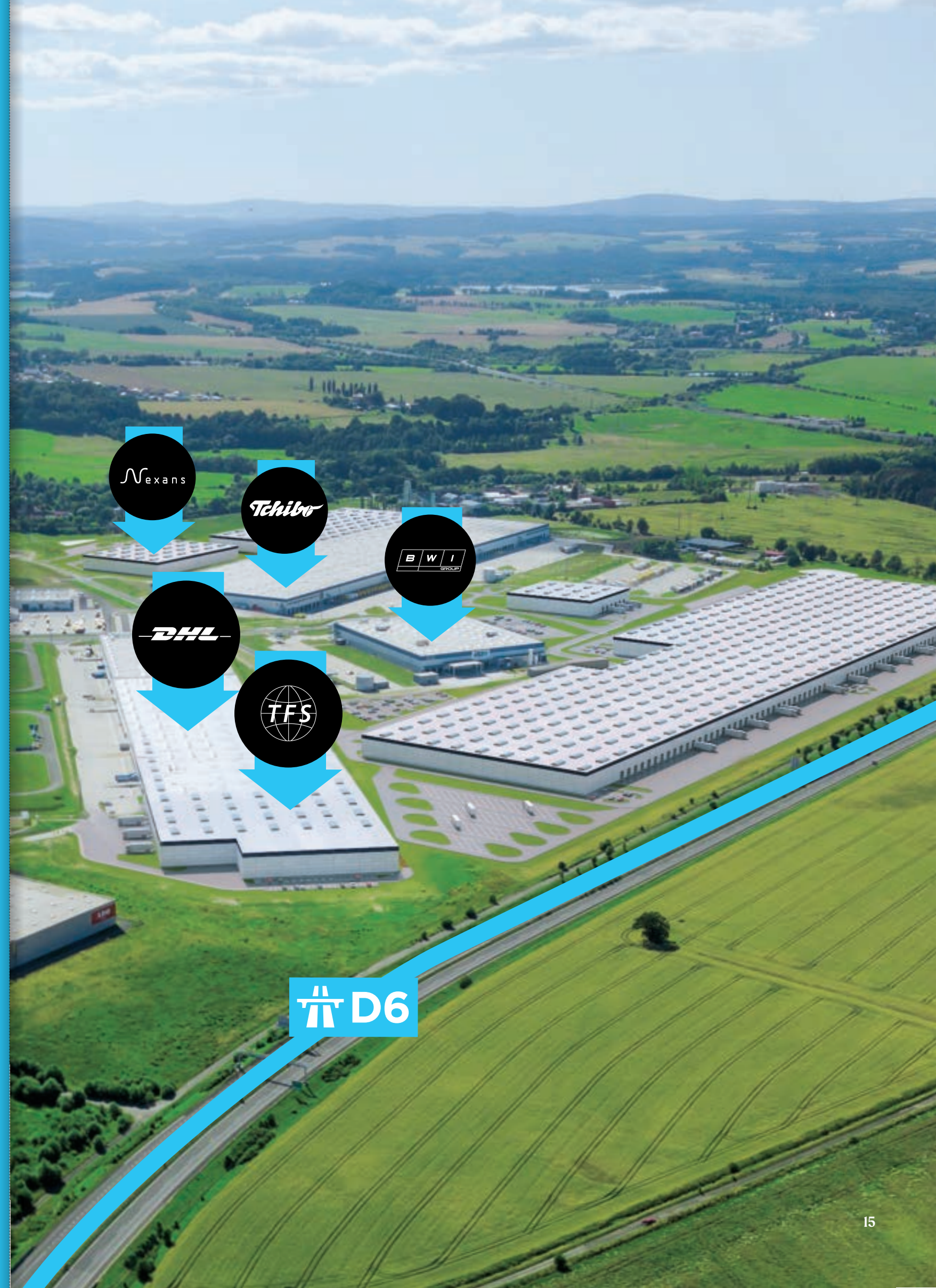
Accolade's properties have won many prestigious awards. *Construction & Investment Journal* voted Cheb the Best Industrial Zone in Central Europe for 2017. Experts also highly appreciate the BREEAM Excellent rating that makes DHL's hall for Estée Lauder one of the best-rated green facilities in the Czech Republic and all of Central Europe.

Milan Kratina, CEO of Accolade, said on the occasion: "We will continue investing in the development of the Cheb industrial zone. As of now, we are leasing almost 190,000 sq m of industrial space there and we plan to more than double the area. Interest among other prospective clients is huge, so I expect Cheb to become home to one of the largest industrial parks in Central Europe. We estimate the value of our rental buildings in Cheb to exceed CZK 5 billion over time.

The group also invested in other land in 2019, specifically, in the former Strojirny Cheb property. The facility has a long and storied history. It made equipment for various industrial sectors as early as before World War II. It met its highest profile during World War II when it served Germany's Luftwaffe, which could rely on weekly supplies of up to five aircraft thanks to the Cheb plant, including the Henkel 177 strategic bombers and the Messerschmitt 262 fighters. A mechanical engineering plant was set up on the site in the 1950s, and operations have continued there to a scaled-down extent since the privatisation of 1992.

"The Cheb area is one of the most attractive, if not the most attractive location for occupiers in Central Europe today. In particular, the Strojirny plant possesses a powerful genius loci, which just a few industrial facilities in the Czech Republic can match," adds Milan Kratina.

Cheb Park	Tenants
187,619 sq m	     
	
Industrial park Cheb I:	302 000 m ²
Strojirny Cheb:	71 000 m ²



Location, Location, Location

DHL is one of Accolade's most important tenants. The logistics company rents its storage facilities in the Czech Republic (Cheb) and in Poland (Szczecin).

We spoke to Filip Kozák, the head of DHL's Central European real estate division, about the properties that the company leases in the Czech part of Accolade's portfolio and how happy they are there.



Why did you choose Accolade's storage facilities in Cheb?

Towards the end of 2015, we signed a contract with Germany's Sky for who we distribute goods (set-top-boxes for satellite TV) on the German market. The developers at Panattoni offered to build us a new hall to our specifications in the Cheb industrial zone set up by Accolade Group. We liked its location close to the German border, the availability of enough workforce and the favourable terms of the lease. Panattoni is an experienced developer and they met all contract deadlines so that we could start using the storage to the full. Accolade was the investor, so our future lease agreements were made with Accolade ever since the beginning.

“We have already expanded four times in the Cheb industrial zone.”

You enlarged your footprint in Cheb several times after 2016. What was the reason for your expansion?

We have already expanded four times in the Cheb industrial zone. Our leasable area has grown from the initial 12,000 sq m to the current 51 000 sq m. In addition to Sky, we also provide logistics for the Western European customers of a major cosmetics company in Cheb. We benefit from the connection to the German motorway network, improving our transport costs. Our arrival in Cheb really helped the entire local industrial zone overall. We put it on the map of logistics sites and other companies took interest in it as well.

Basic figures about DHL in Central Europe:

Total number of warehouses:	62 in the CEE region
Total leased area:	800,000 sq m in the CEE region
Total area leased from Accolade:	approximately 100,000 sq m
Goods that DHL distributes from Accolade warehouses:	satellite TV accessories, cosmetics and toiletries, electrical installation components

Your Cheb storage facility for a leading cosmetics company received one of the highest environmental ratings in the Czech Republic (BREEAM Excellent). What makes it exceptional?

The hall was developed using the principles of sustainable building. During its construction, the consumption of all resources was reduced in a targeted way and preference was given to materials from local sources that do not burden the environment. The facility is intended for cosmetics products, which means flammable liquids (alcohol) in many cases. The interior is fitted with above-standard safety measures that minimise the risk of fire. This means primarily ADR cubicles with special ventilation, floors, barriers to counter spillage etc. In addition, the warehouse features modern equipment such as roller tracks for transporting goods that save workers' steps, multiple roof lights for more natural light and energy-saving LED lights that turn on in the warehouse depending on where people and trucks are moving. This is our contribution to the DHL Go Green programme.

Do you work with Accolade anywhere else?

Yes, we also lease warehouses in Szczecin, Poland for TE Connectivity, our client. We provide value added services to them and distribute their goods in the West. Again, the location suits us - it is close to the German border, it has enough workforce and the financial and technical terms satisfy us. As in Cheb, a final building permit for the local industrial zone was available, so we only had to wait for six months before our warehouse was completed, and the risk of delay or even of the project not starting at all was minimised. Another trait that Cheb and Szczecin share is that the leaders of both cities actively support economic development and are helpful to investors and newly coming companies.

How do you rate the management of the facilities you use?

We are happy both in Cheb and Szczecin; the logistics park management is helpful and flexible. And they never forget to send us the bill on time.

BROWNFIELD

The rebuilding of
industrial tradition



Brownfield

We seek locations we can breathe a new life into. People often think that former industrial facilities are lost forever. Not for us. Not in the least. In fact, revitalising the old into the new is one of the cornerstones of our corporate culture.

413,231 sq m

total area of revitalised space in Poland

50%

of our Polish parks are revitalised brownfield areas

197,026 sq m

total area of rejuvenated Czech space

22%

restoring sites with an industrial tradition is crucial for us in the Czech Republic too



A facility that once manufactured military aircraft and then cables was rejuvenated **in Szczecin**. Today, the site hosts a light manufacturing and logistics plant. With an area of more than 235,000 sq m, it plays a major role in our portfolio and, even more importantly, in the development of business and industry in and around the city.

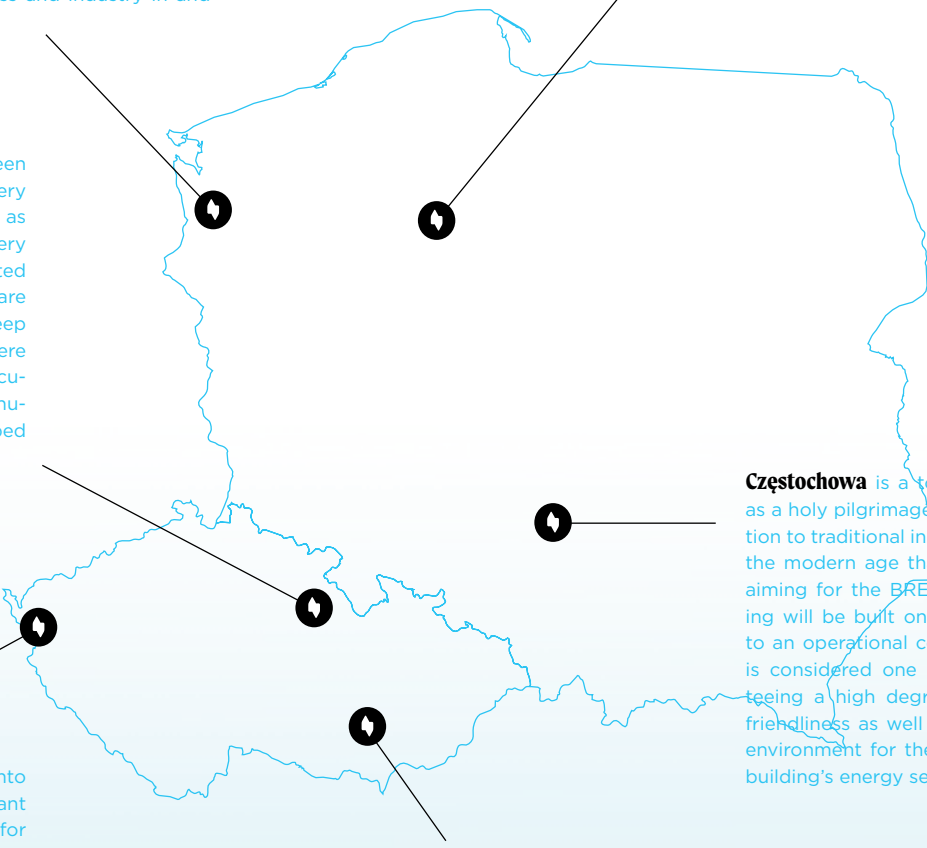
The city of **Bydgoszcz** with its unique Mill Island, situated in the very heart of the city, has been an industrial hub since the middle ages. In place of a derelict chemical factory, we built 50,000 sq m of a modern logistic park there.

Preserving industrial tradition has been in the heart of our business since its very beginning. Our first hall can serve as a proof. Production of textile machinery and metal casting has been connected with **Týniště nad Orlicí** since 1911. We are immensely glad that we helped to keep traditional industries in places where they are deeply rooted. Currently, security solutions for the biggest car manufacturers in the world are being shipped out from our hall.

We decided to breathe a new life into the former mechanical engineering plant **in Cheb**. The site produced equipment for various industrial sectors from the 1920s, and during World War II it manufactured strategic bombers and fighter planes. A derelict plant will now turn into the background for one of the biggest players in online retail.

We also keep rejuvenation of brownfield areas in mind while working on our airport facility **in Brno**. The days of old aircraft bunkers, the infamous military courtyard and unsightly shards of reinforced concrete are over. Out of use for years, the facility will get a facelift this year. It will turn into a new air transport hub.

Częstochowa is a town known primarily as a holy pilgrimage destination. In addition to traditional industries, it is entering the modern age thanks to us. A facility aiming for the BREEAM "Excellent" rating will be built on an unused site next to an operational coke plant. The rating is considered one of the best, guaranteeing a high degree of environmental friendliness as well as excellent working environment for the employees and the building's energy self-sufficiency.



Building in Harmony with Nature

We always treat our environment responsibly before, during and after the development of a project.



Illustration: Maria Makeeva

How do you build a 'green industrial park'?

We build in harmony with nature. We always treat our environment responsibly before, during and after the development of a project. As part of the preparatory work, we remove the top soil and transfer it to more suitable places where it can be used for farming or for reclaiming waste deposits. To the maximum extent possible, we use recycled material, high quality and sufficiently insulating structures and a number of advanced technologies that cut operating costs, primarily the consumption of energy and drinking water. We pay close attention to the landscaping and the overall design of each

scheme. As a result, our properties feature green areas, artificially undulating terrain, rainwater retention tanks and local species of vegetation, whether shrubs, trees or meadows. Please note: We intentionally do not mow the lawns in order for them to retain moisture and protect small animals from summer heat. As a new feature, we provide habitats for birds, beetles and small insects. We install bird-houses, insect hotels and lizard refuges. For these projects, we bring dendrology experts and nature conservation groups on board to help us.



BREEAM Certification is Key

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method is an internationally recognised certification process that rates a building's environmental impact. It involves comprehensive assessment of the property from a total of 10 viewpoints, paying the greatest attention to energy efficiency (18.18%), human health and environment quality (18.94%) and the use of environmentally sound construction materials (13.13%). The aim of the certification is to encourage conserving natural resources, reducing energy demand of buildings, improving the working environment, giving preference to using certified construction materials and reducing the overall carbon footprint. The highest rating possible is 110% and the scale ranges from Pass to Outstanding, the latter bestowed on projects rated at 85 per cent or more.

Source: Arcadis, 2019

Case study: Estée Lauder's environmentally sound distribution centre in Cheb

A hall with a total leasable area of almost 32,000 sq m was built in our park in Cheb at the turn of 2017 and 2018, and DHL leased it to serve their client, the cosmetics company Estée Lauder. Shortly after completion, the hall obtained the BREEAM Excellent award and became a pioneer in terms of the highest environmental ratings for industrial schemes in the Czech Republic.

So what makes the building exceptional?

- 63 out of the total 149 parking spaces are intended for shared cars.
- 99% of site waste was reused on site or recycled.
- Construction materials were selected with great emphasis placed on quality and long service life as well as on their overall carbon footprint and entire lifecycle.
- Energy saving lighting – the entire hall is fitted with power-saving LED fixtures, it has roof lights that let natural daylight in and is also fitted with motion sensors, which are connected to artificial lighting and turn the lights off in the areas where no motion is sensed.
- The savings of primary energy sources are as high as 73%.
- The savings of drinking water for toilet flushing, showering and hand washing are as high as 63% thanks to water saving fittings.



- The interior is fitted with special flammable substance detectors that will launch an alarm in the event of a leak of flammable volatiles.
- A ribbon-shaped lizard refuge was built on the premises as a symbol of combating breast cancer, which Estée Lauder supports.
- Flowers such as wild thyme and saffron were planted on the premises, making the park bloom in season.



Modern industry can really help municipalities to develop



The industrial park in Ostrov u Stříbra is one of the oldest and largest schemes in Accolade's portfolio. The first halls were built in 2014 after many years of negotiations with the officials of the municipality of Kostelec where the land belongs officially. During that time, Accolade and the town's leaders built a well-functioning model of cooperation, as explained in our interview with Mr František Trhlík, a long-time mayor of the town.

Can you remember when you first met Mr Kratina?

I certainly do; I remember it very well, as it was a really hectic period. There was a high unemployment rate in the Tachov area during the recession in 2009. We set up a task force in Stříbro along with all involved authorities – from ministries to the Plzeň Region to the Labour Authority to trade unions to MPs and CzechInvest, and we tried to attract the right investors to our region and convince them that we were ready and could offer them the best terms. At that point, we met Mr Kratina, and I can say he and his colleagues were highly professional and conversant with our local environment.

What did you have to address – and what did you actually resolve – together to the benefit of both the town and the industrial zone?

Foresight was key during the preparation and execution of the overall zoning restructuring in Ostrov u Stříbra along the D5 motorway approach road. That meant addressing land ownership issues and ensuring that the zoning reflects business needs and trends. This happened between 2003 and 2005. I have to say it was not always easy. We were looking for respect and trust together so that all sides would benefit – the town, the investor and developer, the people and the entire Kostelec administrative area.

What did you as the mayor of Kostelec appreciate most during the negotiations with Accolade?

It was mostly Milan Kratina's down-to-earth attitude and the professionalism of his executives with whom we discussed the conditions for our cooperation in 2013, the visions and plans for the various parts of the Ostrov u Stříbra industrial zone, including how to minimise adverse impact on the environment and the municipality as such.

What have been the effects of the industrial park on the development of your community and Ostrov u Stříbra?

It has a proven positive effect in terms of employment of locally and in the region, and in terms of economic benefits for the development of Ostrov u Stříbra and the entire administrative area. We can invest more funds in renewing municipal assets, infrastructure, civic amenities and social culture across all six towns administered, and we do indeed. That being said, we also perceive issues such as traffic and noise, and we focus on safety – we are planning a video surveillance system and an Ostrov bypass road together with Accolade and the Plzeň Region.

“Foresight was the keyword during the preparatory period.”

What is the greatest benefit from the industrial park for your town?

The change is obvious in the development of the entire administrative area, but we see the greatest change in the character of Ostrov u Stříbra where we channelled the highest investments to show the people that we care about them, and to let them see the benefits from the industrial park and a better standard of life despite the issues.

News from Czechia

Czech Republic is Accolade's home market and in 2019 the real estate fund's portfolio encompassed 463,346 sqm of industrial space leased long-term across 11 locations: Týniště nad Orlicí in the east of Bohemia, Stará Boleslav in the north of Bohemia, Pavlov and Hořovice near Prague, Prague-Leťňany, Karlovarská Business Park by Prague ring, Uničov near Olomouc, area around Brno-Tuřany airport and Stříbro, Cheb and Přeštice in west Bohemia. All schemes are fully occupied by renowned tenants from among logistics, manufacturing and retail/e-commerce companies. These are primarily Czech offices of international companies, the greatest percentage of which are German businesses. The combination of good accessibility (from Bavaria and Saxony to Central Europe) and lower payroll costs is still attractive for them.

Accolade is preparing the infrastructure for the development of Industry 4.0, building on the strong Czech industrial tradition and transforming it in the new millennium. In this context, Accolade is involved in many strategic projects: the development of the Brno-Tuřany Airport and of the polygon for autonomous vehicles near Stříbro in the Czech Republic, and the rejuvenation of brownfield areas into viable land in Poland.

Illustration: Maria Makeeva

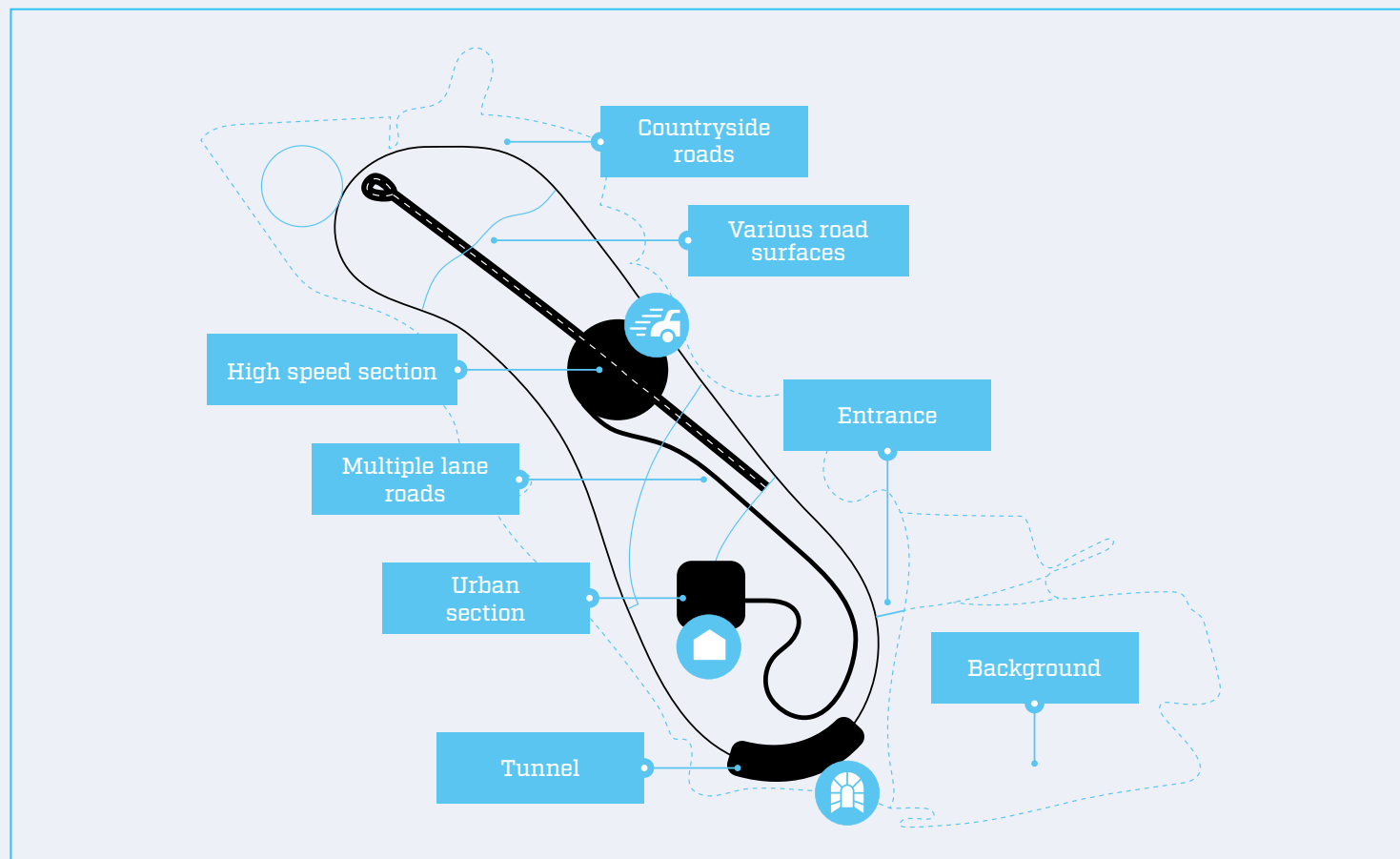
Polygon for autonomous vehicles near Střibro

The Czech polygon for the testing and certification of autonomous cars should be completed near Střibro in Western Bohemia by 2022.

“The polygon will be a centre of excellence for research and development. It will attract the best car developers from across Europe to Střibro. As part of preparation of the project, we will address Czech and German universities, and we expect to work primarily with private development centres. Of course, we would really appreciate support from the town and the region since the polygon project will be a great impetus for the development of Střibro, the Plzeň Region and the Czech Republic as a whole,” says Milan Kratina, CEO of Accolade.

The polygon will allow for testing all types of traffic situations, including European ones. “The polygons used for testing today are capable of simulating

mostly strictly geometrical, right-angle cities such as New York City. Systems verified in this way are completely lost in Prague’s Old Town, in Lisbon streets or in the centre of Rome. So this is exactly the type of environment that we will be able to evoke in Střibro,” Milan Kratina explains the idea behind the domestic simulator. In addition to narrow city streets, the facility will be capable of simulating motorways, Class I roads, countryside roads and tunnels. The polygon will be ready for testing of technologies that will be available on the roads in the near and distant future. It will be able to verify the constant communication between vehicles in the developed urban environment, including communication with urban infrastructure items. Of course, it will also be possible to perfect common assistance technologies such as traffic sign recognition, adaptive cruise control, obstacle detection and others. The goal is to contribute towards the development of entirely autonomous car, capable of operation without human interaction.



International Airport in Brno

The Czech Republic’s second largest airport became part of Accolade at the close of 2017 and since then it has been the destination of major investments aiming to turn the Tuřany facility into a regional hub for both passenger and cargo transport. To that end, Accolade invested in safety measures and started building a multimodal centre for logistics and manufacturing companies to use.

Completed and firmly committed investments in passengers’ comfort and safety as part of the airport revitalisation amount to CZK 40 million. The airport has procured a new pushback tractor, its first covered passenger stairs and also a special airport fire truck. The new equipment needs its place, so new garages were built as well. The new backbone water and gas infrastructure is under construction now. A new defrosting truck has also improved the technical standards of the airport, helping ensure that everything works smoothly and safely in the winter.

Passenger transport was reinforced with new routes. Aside from the traditional flights to London, the airport also added new flights to Bergamo. The greatest volume of passenger traffic is attributable to chartered flights from June to September. In relation to this, the capacity for handling passengers outside the Schengen Area is being increased, and investments also go into new X-Ray equipment and forbidden substance detectors. The airport hall’s ventilation and air-conditioning system has been upgraded in both public and back-office areas. Financing is prepared for enlarging the outdoor car park, and the departures and arrivals hall will undergo revitalisation including adding new shops and refreshments facilities for passengers in the near future.

Demand for flights from Brno is growing

The Tuřany airport handled 543,633 passengers in 2019. Increased demand for flying thanks to the growing purchasing power of Czech citizens and good security situation around the world, new scheduled routes, a record-breaking July, well-managed Boeing 737 MAX crisis and overcoming the milestone of 500,000 passengers handled again: This could be the summary of the year 2019 for the Brno-Tuřany Airport. Overall, the airport in Tuřany handled 543,633 passengers last year, an 8.5% increase over 2018.

„The Tuřany airport handled 543,633 passengers in 2019.“

While the number of passengers handled just barely exceeded half a million in 2018, for 2019 the airport can boast steadily increasing demand for flights from Tuřany. Despite the crash in February of BMI Regional, the UK company that provided regular flights to Munich, the number of passengers grew also thanks to new scheduled flights and a successful summer season. In addition, this past July broke a record with 117,255 passengers handled. The grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft did not affect these figures significantly.

“A total of almost 376,000 passengers used the seasonal flights, which marks a 4.5% increase over last year. We handled 167,500 passengers (18.6% more) on scheduled flights. Most of them flew to London. During the summer, most people flew to Greece and Turkey,” Zdeněk Šoustal, member of the Board of Directors of LETIŠTĚ BRNO (Brno Airport), comments on a successful season.



News from Poland

Poland was the first CEE country where Accolade ventured outside the Czech Republic in 2015. Why our country's northern neighbour? Poland is a regional 'superpower' with the largest real estate market whose industrial property segment totals more than 16,000,000 sq m and, unlike the Czech market, did not suffer from a major economic downturn in the past decade. Poland steadily attracts new companies that develop their business in the country and see it as the gateway to the Central and Southeast European markets.

As of early 2020, Accolade's portfolio includes ten industrial parks in:

- Szczecin (current leasable area: 183,316 sq m),
- Bydgoszcz (current leasable area: 87,532 sq m),
- Zielona Góra (current leasable area: 123,237 sq m),
- Lublin (current leasable area: 73,503 sq m),
- Kielce (current leasable area: 53,732 sq m),
- Białystok (current leasable area: 42,132 sq m),
- Legnica (current leasable area: 50,328 sq m),
- Konin (current leasable area: 5,906 sq m),
- Minsk (current leasable area: 15,046 sq m),
- Częstochowa (current leasable area: 31,658 sq m).

Again, Accolade placed its bet on development locations with great transport accessibility, extensive background

of previously built industrial infrastructure and enough qualified workforce.

Kielce

"Accolade's arrival in Poland represents major sectoral diversification of our portfolio because our local tenants are different from those on our home market in the Czech Republic. City logistics and background for e-shops prevail in Poland whereas manufacturing sectors, mostly automotive and mechanical engineering have a strong position in the Czech Republic. We want a robust portfolio, resilient to any sectoral fluctuations," says Milan Kratina, Chairman of the Board, Accolade. Accolade's Polish industrial parks are interesting in that a half of them are in fact revitalised brownfield areas. For example, the site in Szczecin used to be an aircraft and then a cable factory, and the site in

Bydgoszcz was initially a chemical and explosives factory. The local municipalities were interested in reclaiming the areas so they could be used for business again, and this worked with a great deal of success. In addition to facilities that the Group already owns, Accolade also invests in land in selected Polish regions where it wants to build more industrial facilities in cooperation with Panattoni and offer more prime space for lease. These are primarily the industrial zones near the towns of Białystok and Mińsk Mazowiecki in the northeast of Poland, Konin in central Poland and Legnica in the southwest of the country.

Współpraca



Szczecin, a port with 400,000 inhabitants on the River Odra, is one of the gateways to the Baltic Sea. It has been providing contact between the Nordic countries and continental Europe as well as between Germany and the Slavic countries in the east for centuries. This still holds true today. In addition, Szczecin has been in a specific position for Czech international trade. A part of the local port was leased to the Czechoslovak Republic under the Treaty of Versailles between 1919 and 1957, and so a large part of our international trade took place there. Even though the lease was passed on to the Polish state in the 1950s, the cooperation continued and has to date. You can drive the 515 km from Prague to Szczecin along Czech, German and, for a brief stint, Polish motorways in a passenger car within 5 hours.

The Mayor of Szczecin, Piotr Krzystek says that the centre of the West Pomerania region wants to be a city of industry and logistics and that it welcomes all investors with true interest in cooperation. During their August visit, Milan Kratina, Lukáš Répal and Michal Białas were indeed welcome guests to the local city hall. The Czech investors from Accolade have been working in Szczecin since 2016.

"I have fond memories of the Szczecin scheme because it was the first project I worked on at Accolade and in Poland. Prior to that, I had worked in the Near East for three years and was in charge of Dubai Mall, one of the largest shopping centres in the world, and the difference between the flashy luxury and a construction site by the Baltic could not be starker. The facility was built in just six months and I could not believe that we actually handed the first hall over to Pierce in the spring of 2016," remembers Lukáš Répal, COO of Accolade.

Milan Kratina, Chairman of the Board of Accolade, adds: "The Szczecin municipality was really interested in us turning a neglected brownfield of a former

airplane factory into a modern warehousing facility that would fit in with their strategic city development concept.

In the first phase, we launched just under 54,000 sq m on the market, and phases two, three and four followed soon thanks to high tenant demand. The scheme currently comprises 150,000 sq m and rates as one of Poland's medium-sized logistics facilities. We will complete an additional 70,000 sq m in the first half of 2020, effectively increasing the total leasable area to 235,000 sq m."

Since the property had served for industrial manufacturing in the past, it was necessary to first clear away the remnants of the former industrial activities, in part decontaminate the property and do earthwork to allow for the construction of a new industrial scheme. Interlocking pavement is used throughout the park, thanks to which rainwater

is absorbed in the soil beneath instead of flowing away. The tenant mix in the Szczecin industrial park differs from that in Accolade's industrial properties in the Czech Republic. Nordic companies account for a large portion, with Szczecin serving as a gateway for the development of their business in Poland, Germany and Central Europe.

The Szczecin halls are home to e.g. Danish manufacturer of fishing tackle Svendsen Sport, Sweden's largest online seller of motorcycle parts Pierce, Swedish retail lingerie chain Change Lingeire, online seller of car spare parts Autodoc and the world's leading provider of logistic services, German company DHL. After Lublin and Bydgoszcz, the Szczecin park was Accolade's third successful project in Poland and the company plans on further expanding its activities on the local market.

Sustainable Development is More Important than Fighting Competition



VIVE Textile Recycling offers a wide range of services today – from sorting used clothes to selling them across an extensive chain of shops to transport and logistics activities. How did your story start?

It all started in 1992 when Bertus Servaas, our current Chairman of the Board, acquired a 25% interest in a small wholesale warehouse of used clothing in Górki Szczukowskie near Kielce. Unfortunately, a fire interrupted the company's growth in 2002, burning virtually the entire operation down. Despite that, Bertus managed to rebuild the company and even expand it greatly over the course of two decades.

“We launched an innovative technology of controlling the sorting process”

VIVE Group is currently one of the largest operators in the region, focusing on innovation, developing new ways of doing business and a sustainable development policy.

Your company is currently the leader in the field of textile recycling in Poland and Europe. How do you fight competition, and what is most important for you?

VIVE Group's objective is not to fight competition – it is our own development. This is why we have been able to remain the leader. What we find very important is development based on innovative solutions and the circular economy model.

We constantly improve the recycling process – we launched an innovative technology of controlling the sorting process by voice on the market in 2016. Aside from that, we produce alternative fuels from textile, as well as WOOTEK, a textile composite used for the production of fully operational, modern and highly usable items from waste.

We also develop other divisions of our company. VIVE Logistics operates in the field of TSL services and works on extending its fleet. By the end of 2020, we expect the company to have 100 modern trailers.

An extremely important aspect that sets us apart from our competitors is that we pursue a sustainable development policy.

Your company focuses on recycling. How do you care for the environment other than giving a new lease of life to discarded clothes?

Recycling is the foundation of our business, but you should keep in mind that it is also one of the ways to protect the environment. The problem is in people's awareness. Educating the society, in particular the youngest generations, is crucial. It must be done so that we all are aware of the importance of caring for the environment and of the ways to protect it. Examples of VIVE's activities in this field include the “I Care About The World From A Young Age” project and the “Tailor-Made Recycling” competition.

In addition, we should mention our current plans for textile upcycling, which is a form of secondary recycling of discarded textile resulting in products that have a value higher than the actual material. Many educational projects have been implemented as part of this trend (such as “TRANSPLANT” and “BOW RE: TIED”), largely in connection with the fashion industry (in cooperation with fashion designer Mariusz Przybylski).

As part of TSL, we train our drivers to drive sustainably, reducing fuel consumption and extending the service life of tyres and brakes. We cooperate with socially responsible companies that embrace recycling. We also use top quality fuel to pollute the environment as little as possible.

Now it is the time for a funny story. Would you like to share an amusing anecdote related to clothes sorting, the distribution centre or logistics?

In a large organisation, funny stories happen every day. The workers in charge of sorting clothes will occasionally come across rather peculiar pieces of clothing. The biggest surprise we had was when a large dress, which was labelled with a countless sequence of XXX... for size, turned out to actually be an extremely large pair of trousers.

Accolade and its Recipe for Success



Accolade has grown in an unprecedented way in recent years. You tapped Poland five years ago, Germany two years ago and Slovakia last year. What made you do this?

For us, international expansion is mostly about diversification, which is crucial for our rapidly growing real estate portfolio. We are a Czech business and we really love the Czech Republic, but ever since the beginning we all agreed that we wanted to expand abroad. Poland was the first step in 2015, and since then we have been catering to the local great demand for manufacturing and warehouse space. We are flexible, and the fact that we can respond quickly in various locations across Poland is our added value. Then again, we do not just want to be a Czech-Polish structure and we expand into additional markets as well: We acquired the land for our first two projects in Germany in North Rhineland Westphalia in 2018, and we tapped Slovakia by buying land near the Košice Airport last year.

How do the markets differ? What makes them attractive to you?

The common denominator for our expansion across the four countries is the great growth potential of all our sites. In the aftermath of the crisis, we bet on locations that have a long industrial tradition and good transport access. We intentionally went for locations where we were the first or the only one who could offer growth to the local companies. We have been using this approach to this day, both in the Czech Republic and in other countries. Poland is a regional 'superpower' in Central Europe; the country's real estate market is large and we want to be present in all the regional centres. The structure of our parks there is somewhat different from the Czech Republic. While our parks in Bohemia often involve multiple projects tailored to larger tenants (BTS – Built-to-Suit), our Polish portfolio has been more "multitenant" since the beginning. The cities of Alsdorf and Bochum in Germany, where we have land and will develop halls for our first occupiers, boast great transport access to Western Europe and obviously the rich industrial heritage of North Rhineland Westphalia. Slovakia's Košice has great access to Poland, Ukraine and Southeast Europe. Compared with our other sites, it also has a higher unemployment rate and strong educated workforce, so development is still ahead and we want to be there when it happens.

You have successfully discovered entirely new loca-

tions. In the Czech Republic, you helped towns such as Cheb and Ostrov u Střebra to develop. You did the same in Szczecin and Lublin in Poland. What is your recipe for success?

We choose locations where we see the potential for future development and where the officials leading the municipality have the same goal. We talk to them about continuing the local tradition – often industrial – by launching a new phase that brings different companies to the location and generates new jobs – and, importantly, this reduces our dependence on a single sector. We are introduced to mayors who realise that they can effectively help their communities to develop, and I am happy when we achieve this together. Sadly, I also have to say that the Polish law on real estate markets, investment incentives and brownfield regeneration is more flexible and much friendlier than Czech legislation in most cases.

How did the tenant mix across your portfolio change over the past few years?

Five years ago, we were a little concerned about having a portfolio dominated by the automotive industry and the related manufacturing and logistics. We strive for a balanced tenant mix, consisting of one-third manufacturing companies, one-third logistics companies and one-third e-commerce and retailers, and the enormous growth of online commerce has helped us in that respect. We fight to win each significant manufacturing business these days to keep our tenant mix diverse yet balanced.

What does working at Accolade mean to you personally? What do you like best about it?

I have been with Accolade for four years, so basically since the beginning of the rapid growth. I experienced the development of the scheme in Szczecin that encompasses 150,000 sq m today and will grow to 220,000 sq m this year. Then I was entrusted with our overall expansion in Poland where we are currently present in nine locations. Given the size of our Polish portfolio, we needed to set up a local team, so we opened an office in Warsaw two years ago, which is led by Michal Białas and currently employs 10 colleagues. In my position as the COO, I am in charge of the entire portfolio's operation across four countries. We are growing dynamically while han-

“We choose locations where we see the potential for future development and where the officials leading the municipality have the same goal.”

dling asset management for a total area of 1,113,037 sq m. One reason why we manage is that we are a young company and we all pull together. I am genuinely happy about our friendly and open atmosphere and I try to encourage it as much as I can.

How would you describe Accolade as a company? What makes it attractive?

Compared with other real estate companies active in the Czech market, many of which are celebrating their 20th or 25th anniversaries, we are young – and we have an entirely new approach as a result. We realise that we have huge responsibility towards our investors, tenants in our schemes and the banks that finance our activities. In addition, as we expand internationally, we grow in terms of human resources and take various nationalities on board.





Germany and Slovakia,

OR CONQUERING INDUSTRIAL EUROPE

2019 was a major milestone in Accolade's history. By acquiring projects in Germany and land in Slovakia, Accolade has greatly diversified its portfolio and expanded its offer of industrial properties in attractive locations in Western and Eastern Europe.

Two new German projects

Two projects on the western border of Germany, specifically in Alsdorf near Aachen and in Bochum in the Ruhr area, became part of Accolade in 2019. Totalling 27,000 sq m of space and CZK 930 million in value, the two schemes will offer their future tenants excellent access to Europe's backbone trade routes and major ports, Rotterdam and Hamburg. While the one in Alsdorf is a Built-to-Suit ("BTS") scheme that enlarged Dachser's local network of logistics centres upon completion in June 2019, the project Accolade acquired in Bochum is actually a brownfield - a former Opel factory. The scheme will undergo overall revitalisation, including extensive redevelopment and construction of new space for logistics and light manufacturing. In this case, the tenant is also known; it is Fiaveley, an international manufacturer and supplier of rail transport equipment that will open its research and development centre there. The new space will be available in 2020. Both schemes will be certified to Germany's DGNB Gold environmental standards.

Expansion in Slovakia

Slovakia is the fourth country where Accolade started operating. Having acquired 8 hectares of land near the Košice Airport from Penta, Accolade will complete the first of two halls with a leasable area of 36,000 sq m. The primary reason for this acquisition was its excellent location, which will benefit the scheme's future tenants. Košice has great development potential and may become the regional transport hub for the east of Slovakia and Poland, Ukraine and the southeast of Europe. Accolade's property is located right on the D1 motorway close to the Košice Airport. The future occupiers can benefit from the proximity of a city with 250,000 inhabitants and a 10% unemployment rate, making the

"The Košice Airport has great development potential and can become the regional transport hub."

local workforce more accessible. "Our clients usually offer attractive jobs with a higher pay. In addition, Košice can offer cooperation with three universities, whether in terms of relations with industrial companies or availability of highly qualified graduates," Milan Kratina said.

Brno Airport? The World at Your Fingertips!



MILAN

Inhabitants: 1.3 million
Country: Italy
Language: Italian
Time zone: GMT + 1
Currency: EUR (Euro)



The city of commerce, fashion and football. This is Milan in a nutshell. It is Italy's wealthiest city and one of its most developed even though it was almost levelled several times in history. It is also the country's second largest city and centre of the Lombardy region.

Tourist attractions

Piazza del Duomo and **Piazza della Scala** are the two squares that form the city's centre. In **Piazza del Duomo**, you can visit the **Palazzo Reale di Milano** as well as the **Duomo di Milano**, the best-known example of the Gothic style and the world's fourth biggest cathedral. Another symbol of Milan, the legendary **La Scala** opera house, is in the other square. Since **Leonardo da Vinci** lived in the city for a period of time, you can see his Last Supper fresco there. If you still have not had enough of history, be sure not to miss **Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio**, the city's oldest basilica, and the **Castello Sforzesco** castle. You can also relax while sailing the city's **Navigli river** canals.

Fashionistas should certainly visit the annual Fashion Week. Just pay attention to which shows are open to the public. In the meantime, football fans can visit AC Milan or Inter Milan – even if no match is on. The San Siro stadium runs guided tours at EUR 17.



***TIP FOR YOU:** Make sure to always buy tickets well in advance.

Instagrammable Spots – #instamilano

Photographers who love hunting for attractive and photogenic locations should definitely visit places such as the **Terrazzo Aperol**, the **Brera District**, **10 Corso Como**, **Villa Necchi** and the modern **Piazza Gae Aulenti** business centre surrounded by skyscrapers.

Trips from Milan

The good news is that this vibrant city has excellent connections to the rest of northern and central Italy, so it is easy to take a one-day trip from Milan to **Lago di Como**, **Lago Verbano** and **Lago di Garda** or to **Bergamo**, **Venice**, **Florence** and **Bologna**.



Food

Milan is also a hub for good eating and drinking. Tourists can visit both family-run trattorias and luxury restaurants and bars along the Navigli. So if you want to find out what costoletta Milanese or risotto alla Milanese is, try one of those. The typical Italian ice cream is available literally on every corner.

LONDON

Inhabitants: 8.3 million
Country: United Kingdom
Language: English
Time zone: GMT + 0
Currency: GBP
(British Pound)



London is the capital of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is a place where many cultures, both exotic and European, clash and mingle.

Tourist attractions

London's must-see sights include the obvious choices such as **Buckingham Palace**, **Palace of Westminster** and **Westminster Abbey**. In addition to these sights, London has something to offer film and sports lovers too. At **Madame Tussauds Wax Cabinet**, you can meet identical wax 'twins' of famous celebrities, sportspeople and even the members of the royal family. The recently very popular **Platform 9 ¾** can be seen in the modern building of the **King's Cross train** station. After a busy day, you can relax while riding the **London Eye** or walking in **Hyde Park**.



Instagrammable Spots - #instalondon

The best London and sunset vistas are available on the top floors of **The Shard**. **The Churchill Arms** is likely the most decorated pub in London - it is the place for a great photo or drink. Other notable places are **Camden Town**, **The Sherlock Holmes Pub**, **Neal's Yard** and **Notting Hill**.

Food

In addition to classic restaurants such as **The English Restaurant** and **Boys of London** that offer genuine British meals, you can also sample Indian food from booths in **Camden Town** and Asian cuisine in **Soho** and **China Town**.



Trips from London - where next?

If you are going to spend some time in London, we recommend also visiting other nearby towns. **Brighton** offers its beach as well as other attractions such as the **Clock Tower**, an aquarium, museums and cafés. Another city worth visiting is **Oxford** with its university, gallery and parks. The port town of **Dover** with its white cliffs and castle also deserves a mention.

Being a Sponsor

We believe it is important to reach beyond our own field of activity, which is why we seek to support activities in various fields of science, culture and the non-profit sector.

We would like to show you what we got involved in last year.



Accolade brought the best party and burgers to the KVIFF



As it did last year, Accolade decided to support the development of Czech culture again and became the main partner to the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, one of the traditional and most respected film festivals in Central Europe.

It is one of the oldest category A festivals along with the likes of the Cannes, Berlin and Venice events. Every year, the festival presents about 200 films from around the world, and it regularly attracts famous and influential filmmakers. Actresses Patricia Clarkson



and Julianne Moore were the brightest stars of last year's edition. The KVIFF is intended for both fans and professionals and offers its visitors a carefully prepared programme, good background and a wide range of services.

"We build the infrastructure for the biggest stars of the Czech and global industry across Central Europe. This is why we find it natural to support those who do the same for the stars of the silver screen. In addition, it is a good opportunity for us to spend time pleasantly with

our trade partners and present our activities to the general public," Milan Kratina, CEO of Accolade,



"We build the infrastructure for the biggest stars of the Czech and global industry across Central Europe. We find it natural to support those who do the same for the stars of the silver screen."

comments on the group's partnership with the festival. This year's edition meant a lot for the group from the organisational viewpoint. Accolade opened its own café for the public where people could sit and chat, and have a cup of coffee or even a burger, which was hugely popular and became a treat for many a visitor. Accolade made the greatest mark together with Forbes. Their Pulp Fiction theme party was rated as one of the best of the week and it welcomed more than 400 people from the art, business and sports sectors. Aside from its own events, Accolade also gave an interview to Czech Radio in its minibus and organised a public debate with Mall.cz in their park.

The first edition was held in Mariánské Lázně in 1946. The festival relocated to Karlovy Vary in 1947 and the Crystal Globe Award was first bestowed as part of the festival competition one year later. It is one of the earliest festivals included in category A (i.e., non-specialised festivals with a competition for feature-length fiction films) along with the festivals in Cannes, Berlin, Venice, San Sebastian, Moscow, Montreal, Shanghai and Tokyo. Every year, the festival features about 200 films from around the world.

FUTURE FOR THE FUTURE

Neuron Endowment Fund



This year, Accolade decided to support those who are brave enough to change the future and became the general partner to the NEURON Endowment Fund for the Support of Science and Technology. Its goal is to support scientists, popularise science and develop modern-day sponsoring in the Czech Republic.

Since 2009, the Fund has been bestowing the NEURON Awards in the fields of biology, computer science, physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine and

“We believe that scientific knowledge is the driver of any successful society.”

social science, including prize money. Since 2010 the Fund has supported Czech science to the tune of more than CZK 60 million financed exclusively from sponsors' contributions.

“We build the premises for the next industrial revolution and we believe that scientific knowledge

is the driver for any successful society. In the current age of multiple challenges, science is the answer to the most important questions of the future, and the least we can do to promote it is support Czech scientists,” says Milan Kratina, CEO of Accolade.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAUREATE,
PROF. JIŘÍ FRIML, PH.D., DR. RER. NAT.

The Man who Understands Plant Language

Meet biologist and plant specialist Jiří Friml, the new laureate of the Neuron Award for a lifelong contribution to science in Biology in 2019. He received the Award for his long-term research into auxin, a plant hormone that makes plants more resilient than people.

When did biology become your passion?

Biology was my interest since an early age. I grew up in the countryside and used to watch birds with old Russian binoculars. Science has fascinated me ever since I first encountered it.

What are you trying to understand in your field?

Plants – how they work. Why do two plants of the same species – one that grows in the mountains and its identical twin that grows in the valley or in a greenhouse – look completely different, even though they are the same plant?

Please describe your biggest discovery in layman's terms.

My colleagues and I found out how plants adapt their development to the environment. How they know where up and down is, and where sunlight comes from. Based on that, roots can grow downwards and sunflowers can follow the sun.



Source: www.nfneuron.cz



ČESKÁ SPOŘITELNA – ACCOLADE

Cycling Team

Accolade has been a proud co-sponsor of the Česká spořitelna – Accolade Cycling Team along with Česká spořitelna since 2016. The team was founded in 1994, so it celebrated its 25th 'birthday' this year. In the meantime, its members took part in four

editions of the Olympics. Radim Kořínek joined the team in 2009 with the brief at the time – and now – of conquering marathon races. And it has been a success! The team members have won both team competitions and elite categories. This season started earlier as a result of past successes, yet

also in a gloomy mood because of Tomáš Višňovský's sickness. Matouš Ulman and Jaroslav Kulhavý turned the fortunes around soon, however, coming third in the renowned Brazil Ride 2019 in Brazil. Other great successes include Matouš Ulman's 3rd place in the Czech Championship and Tomáš Višňovský's victory in the Slovak Championship. Višňovský also came third in the Carpathian Epic in Romania and won the UCI event in Holešov. Tereza Neumannová, the team's one and only female who joined this year, won the ladies' road cycling category and became the best Czech cyclist in the Cross Country World Cup in Nové Město nad Metují.

“Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, the team took part in four editions of the Olympics over the years.”

Bike for Life

The team considers its excellent results in the domestic Bike for Life competition series one of its most valued feats this season. Cyclists need to be on top form all the time for 15 individual races. Bike for Life is a weekend affair for everyone – all age groups and performance levels. Every year, more than 25,000 cyclists including 7,000 children embark on BfL routes. Tomáš Višňovský won the Bike for Life series for the first time in his career and is the first ever domestic bicycle racer to achieve



2019 BIKE FOR LIFE RESULTS

1. **Tomáš Višňovský**
Česká spořitelna – Accolade Cycling Team
2. **Pavel Boudný**
Etixx sport
3. **Matouš Ulman**
Česká spořitelna – Accolade Cycling Team
4. **Filip Rydval**
Česká spořitelna – Accolade Cycling Team

this. He was really happy because he only took part in eight races, in effect losing the option of deleting subpar results. In addition, the team came second in the team category. The rest of the team even made it to

the podium in the Elite category. Matouš Ulman confirmed his qualities and underscored the team's stamina in the entire series by coming third. Kateřina Drhová came third overall in the female category.



INTERVIEW

Tomáš Višňovský

“We train for about 25-30 hours a week. We race every weekend in the season. In all, we log about 20,000 kilometers every year.”



How did you start cycling? What made you do it, and at what age?

For me, it was my father who took me on mountain trips. Later on, he brought me to mountain bike marathons; that's when I actually started racing. I was around seventeen at the time.

How demanding is cycling as a sport? How long and often do you train?

Cycling is a high-performance sport. This means that we place emphasis on physical prowess. We train every day and we rest about once every two weeks. Before the season, we undertake intensive training camps in the warm climate of Mallorca and Gran Canaria. There, we train for about 25-30 hours a week. We race every weekend

in the season. In all, we log about 20,000 kilometers every year.

I believe you need to work on your condition constantly to stay in shape after the season, e.g. during the winter. Do you play any other sports during those periods?

When the season is over, I relax away from the bike for about two weeks. I play other sports as part of general training because just cycling the entire season can make for asymmetric strain. I do hiking and ski mountaineering; I also work out or play ice hockey. I go back to cycling in December in Mallorca. I don't have much room for other activities.

How do you rate your personal and your team's successes this season?

The 2019 season was my most successful to date. I won a stage race, marathons in the UCI series and finally the entire Bike for Life series at the end of the summer. There were some races that did not go as well as I would have liked, but that is part of sport and it motivates me for the next season. In

terms of teamwork, we are a great bunch of people who complement each other, whether racing or not. We are quite even performance-wise so we can help one another out during a race.

What do you see as your greatest cycling success?

This is hard to say because I had multiple goals at the start of the season. I am really happy to have won the Carpathian MTB Epic stage race in Romania. It was really difficult due to the elevation above sea level, tough terrain and harsh weather. It all added up. To an extent, it was also a mental struggle due to having to concentrate and evaluate the various situations, whether during the downhill bits or in terms of tactics during a stage. I faced a defect after the prologue so the overall victory got harder to reach. But I was well-motivated in the following days; I caught up with the lost time and entered the final stage as the overall leader.

I kept the yellow jersey and increased my lead. When I finished, it was a huge relief and we could celebrate victory in the team.

What are your plans for the next season? What races and qualifications are you in for? What do you want to achieve next year?

We set our sights on races in Europe, from Spain to Cyprus. Other than that, the goals remain the same.

It was my goal to come within the top 20 in the World Championship and I knew I could do it, yet I didn't make it; and I want to win stage races again. We will set our goals in the team in the upcoming months. I would be really happy to win the races I won during this season again.

“I do hiking and ski mountaineering; I work out or play ice hockey.”

Accolade Santa came early to MELA, o. p. s.



By providing social services and offering jobs and activities, we

motivate our clients to pursue activities that allow them to be part of their natural social environment and live their lives like their peers.

- Sheltered Living
- Day Care Facility
- Social Rehabilitation
- Social Therapy Workshops
- Civic Advisory Bureau
- Čajovna Ve Dvoře

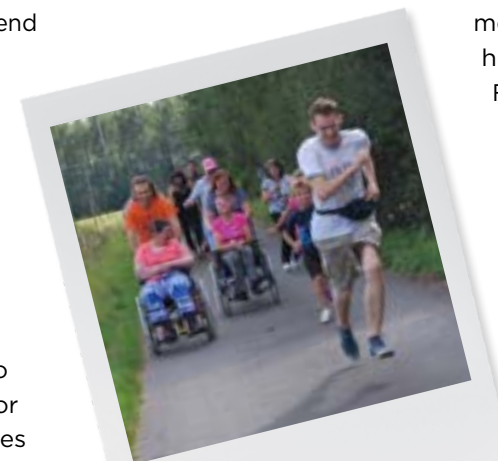
Accolade has been supporting MELA, o. p. s., a charitable association, ever since the beginning. This year, the group involved its investors and trade partners through an unusual gift: on their behalf, the non-profit organisation was given new equipment for its sheltered residence and therapy centre.

MELA is a non-profit organisation formed in early 2008 and operating in Kolín and Sedlčany. It offers support to people suffering from mental disabilities and chronic psychiatric diseases on their way to self-sufficiency and independence outside institutions. Disabled clients face issues achieving social inclusion and

finding jobs. It is important to support these people so that they can overcome, albeit in part only, the impact of their disabilities and live ordinary lives as much as possible. MELA's social services and work and activation pursuits intend to integrate its clients into ordinary life and help them develop the same abilities as their peers.

"We are genuinely grateful for any help. The generous pre-Christmas gift from Accolade and its investors was really very nice, and we want to express our clients' gratitude for it. Our users are of various ages and with various handicaps. Most of them have no families to help them in life at this point, so they stay with us during Christmas. The new kitchen along with the other equipment donated for our sheltered living and day care facility will make their lives easier and, even more importantly, better overall," says Petra Orsáková, Executive Director, MELA, o. p. s. The organisation provides five important services in addition to running Čajovna Ve Dvoře (Backyard Tea-room) in Sedlčany where some of its clients work. The Sheltered Living service allows disabled people to live ordinary lives. The Social Therapy Workshop helps people with mental and combined disabilities tackle and develop working skills and habits. To that end, they maintain gardens and clean homes with an assistant's accompaniment or wash car interiors in the Sedlčany centre. The Civic Advisory Bureau

helps people to find solutions in difficult life situations. The Day Care Facility provides ambulatory care and support to people with mental and combined disabilities, hearing impairment, chronic mental illnesses and other health issues. Staying at the Day Care Facility helps its users avoid social isolation and loneliness. Social Rehabilitation is focused on improving the clients' economic, social and cultural self-sufficiency and independence. For example, instructors work with clients on



"The new kitchen along with the other equipment donated for our sheltered living and day care facility will make their lives easier and, even more importantly, better overall."

the topic of managing finance and encourage communication with their biological families.

All of the aforementioned services place emphasis on helping the users to learn how to live with their health issues and overcome the adversity of destiny in their everyday life – simply put, teaching them the abilities to tackle life.

We are Accolade



