



## Market update



Sentiment in global credit markets held steady in December and into the New Year. The COVID-19 vaccination programmes, the expectation of further government spending through the present lockdowns, an eventually smooth transition of Presidential power in the US and high levels of liquidity provided by the largest Central Banks appear to have mitigated, in the minds of investors, the risks posed by new COVID-19 mutations. Commentators expect a synchronized global economic growth acceleration going through 2021. Uneven vaccination programme efforts across the world and a truer picture of corporate creditworthiness only emerging when forbearance protections are removed may mean volatility in credit markets rising from present levels.

The high proportion of Czech GDP that is exported has shielded the country from a worse outcome from the recent and present COVID-19 "lockdown" phases. Unemployment has risen to only 4.0% and wage growth continues. It is the consumption arena where more economic damage is evident. Czech CPI ticked down to 2.3% year-on-year in December, though the Central Bank's measure of "core" inflation remained at 3.5% year-on-year. Combined with Czech M1 money supply growth at 17% year-on-year and rising commodity prices, this "core" inflation may sustain headline CPI at over a 3% level in 2021.

Mark Robinson, Member of the Investment Committee

## Portfolio update



The Fund delivered a +0.46% return to unit-holders in the month, meaning that on a pre-audit basis, the 2020 net return of the Fund hit our target of +3.0%. Our activity in recent months has aimed to capture higher running yields while minimizing the risk taken. The running yield of the portfolio rose to 4.1% at the year end.

We continued to diversify the portfolio in December, rotating out of holdings where returns have dropped relative to their risk whilst rotating into opportunities with a better risk-reward profile. We invested in a short-term bridge loan well-secured by residential real estate assets and increased our position in another very well-secured short term loan to a non-profits institution, thereby boosting our return. We sold half of our position in diversified industrial player Czechoslovak Group and reduced our holding in the reverse repo secured by the Wood Retail Real Estate Fund. Further diversifying investments are planned for January.

Lubor Žalman, Founder of the fund

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