

EQUITY NOTE: PANNERGY NYRT.

Recommendation: BUY (under revision)

Target price (12M): HUF 1,908 (under revision)

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Highlights

Financial results and management guidance: production in 2023 was 4.4% lower YoY and 4.7% below management's plan. Group revenue for the year was HUF 9.668 billion (+35% YoY), while revenue from heat sales amounted to HUF 9.23 billion, which is 48% higher YoY. **EBITDA increased from HUF 3.612 billion to HUF 3.93 billion (+8.8% YoY). The company slightly missed the target EBITDA range of HUF 3.95-4.15 billion originally set for the financial year 2023 and it is also below our 2023 EBITDA estimate of HUF 4.08 billion.** Net income increased from HUF 1.31 billion to HUF 1.716 billion (+31% YoY). **Overall, the company delivered a solid financial performance in 2023, the EBITDA miss is largely the result of unfavourable weather conditions as the average temperature in September and October was significantly higher compared to historical values.** Looking ahead, the company expects to achieve minimally lower (-1% YoY) level of heat sales this year as it did in 2023. **The target EBITDA range is between HUF 3.9-4.1 billion for 2024 (+1.8% YoY on a midpoint basis).**

Proposals for the GM: we note that **the board does not recommend dividend payments this year, which we view as prudent given that the remaining total contractual cost of the new Miskolc well is estimated to be over HUF 2 billion.** On the other hand, the board proposes to purchase treasury shares up to an amount of HUF 1.5 billion (~5.3% of current market cap and ~5.8% calculating with the post share capital reduction share number), which is up 67% YoY (from HUF 900 million). However, the company intends to make a significant portion of treasury share purchases over 2025, following the completion of the new Miskolc well scheduled for 2024. There is also a GM proposal to reduce share capital via cancelling 2 million ordinary shares owned by the company (18 million shares post reduction).

Valuation and target price: we place our 12M target price of HUF 1,908 and BUY recommendation under revision and we expect to provide an update regarding this along with the evaluation of the company's Q1 production report. We also intend to include the impact of the new Miskolc well into the valuation, the project is expected to be completed by the commencement of the 2024/25 district heating season, licensing and preparatory works were taking place during the review period and the preparation of the annual report.

Financial highlights of the earnings report:

Revenue for 2023 was HUF 9.668bn (+35% YoY), while revenue from heat sales amounted to HUF 9.23bn, which is 48% higher YoY. Electricity sales were down by 46% to HUF 342 million but it is worth noting that: (A) HUF 341 million of this is related to the Berekfürdő project, where electricity sales were up 93% YoY due to higher volume (2,084 MWh vs. 1,844 MWh) and prices and (B) the YoY decrease is solely related to the divestment of the company's Debrecen utility distribution system, which is basically a pass-through item with no material margin.

In 2023, heat sales reached 1,705,275 GJ, a decrease of 4.4% YoY and were 4.7% lower than the management's plan of 1,789,697 GJ. The somewhat weaker performance is largely related to unfavourable weather conditions as the average temperature in September and October was significantly higher compared to historical values. Total annual heat sold in Győr amounted to 967,962 GJ (-3.6% YoY) and accounted for ~56.8% of all heat sales (slightly higher than in 2022). Heat sales in Miskolc were also lower YoY by 5.6% (715,809 GJ vs. 758,127 GJ) and accounted for ~42% of total heat sales (slightly lower than in 2022).

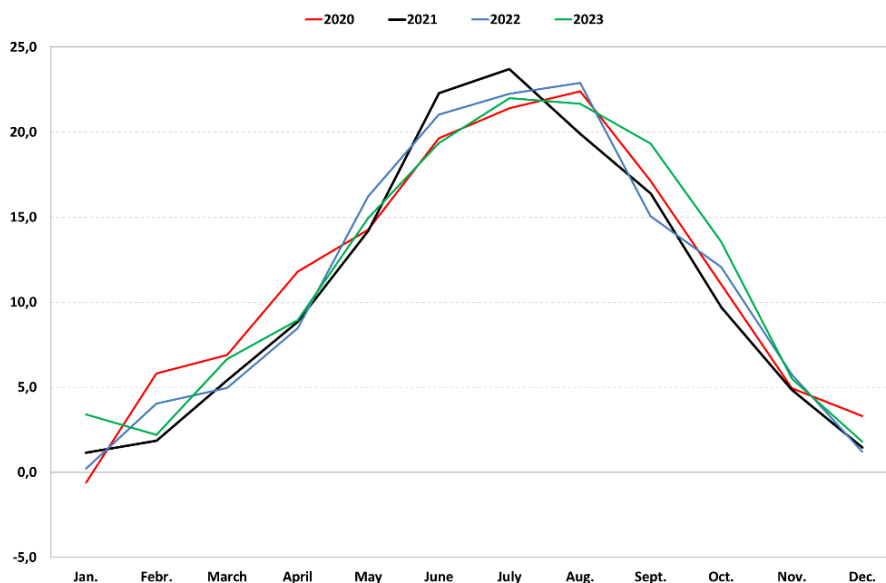
Direct costs amounted to HUF 6.625bn (+31.3% YoY), which is mainly the result of the significant increase in electricity costs (+162% YoY) to HUF 2.83bn (~43% of direct costs vs. ~21% in 2022). The impact of high electricity prices did not occur in the base period as the company was still able to purchase electricity under better terms that were concluded in earlier periods. In any case, these higher costs are recognized in regulatory pricing. There has been also an increase in direct depreciation, maintenance, operational and facility management costs. The cost increases were somewhat offset by a drop in "Cost of goods sold, mediated services" item, which is the result of the divestment of the Debrecen utility distribution system already mentioned.

Depreciation increased from HUF 1.716 billion to HUF 1.845 billion (+7.5% YoY), of which HUF 245 million was for intangible assets, HUF 699 million for lands and buildings, HUF 889 million for machines and equipment and HUF 12 million for investment properties. Overall, gross profit margin increased from 29.4% to 31.5%.

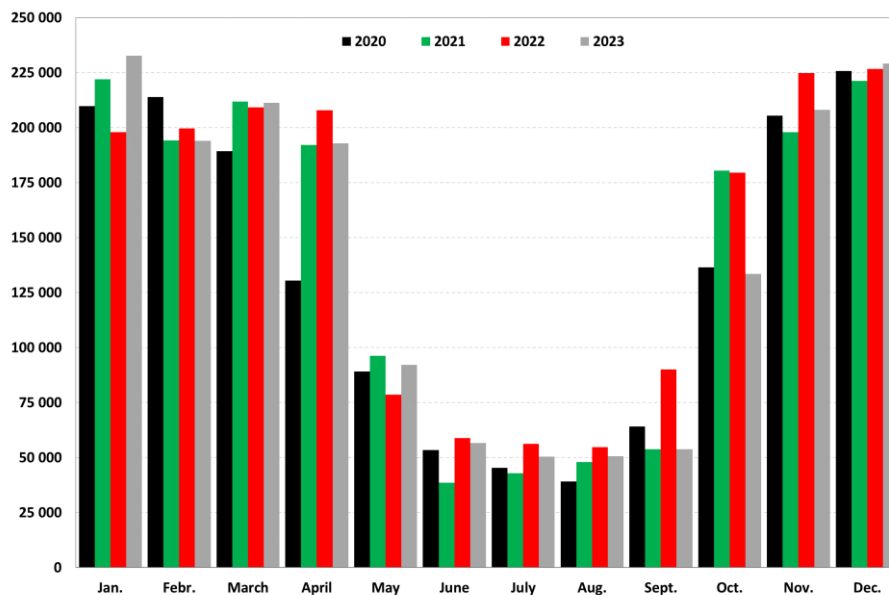
The Group's administrative and overhead costs increased by 18.2% YoY including an increase of 32.9% in indirect personnel-type costs in line with labour market processes and increased headcount (at the end of December 2023 the Group had 17 employees compared to 14 end of December 2022). Consultancy and office related costs were also up somewhat. Other incomes were down by 57% to HUF 320 million, the decrease is mainly related to (A) no unique tangible asset sale transaction took place in the review period and (B) compensations and penalties received relating to insured events and projects implemented in earlier periods as well as ex-post discounts were significantly lower YoY. At the same time, other expenditures amounted to HUF 597 million (+62% YoY).

This brings EBIT to HUF 2.078 billion (+9.6% YoY). EBITDA amounted to HUF 3.93 billion (+8.8% YoY), while the EBITDA ratio decreased to 40.6% from 50.6%. This means that the company slightly missed its EBITDA target of HUF 3.95-4.15 billion originally set for the financial year 2023. This is also below our 2023 EBITDA estimate of HUF 4.08bn.

Combined average monthly temperatures (°C) in Miskolc and Győr



Consolidated heat sales (GJ)



The company reported a net financial loss of HUF 241 million (HUF 587 million financial income and HUF 828 million financial expenditure), which is HUF 239 million lower than it was in 2022. The lower YoY financial loss was partially the result of HUF 185 million income generated by securities held for trading (discount treasury bills and short-term government securities).

Overall, the company reported HUF 1.716 billion net income after tax, which is significantly higher than the HUF 1.31 billion net income in 2022 (+31% YoY). Looking ahead, the company expects heat sales to reach 1,773,116 GJ in 2024, which is a slightly lower target compared to 2023 (1,789,697 GJ). **The EBITDA target range is between HUF 3.9-4.1bn for 2024 (+1.8% YoY on a midpoint basis).** This includes the successful boring of the 3rd Miskolc well, the project is expected to be completed by the commencement of the 2024/25 district heating season. As noted by the company, licensing and preparatory works were taking place during the review period and the preparation of the annual report. The company booked HUF 382 million in relation to this as investment in progress under tangible assets. None of the grant (up to HUF 994 million) has been drawn yet and **the remaining total contractual cost of the project is estimated to be over HUF 2bn.**

The company has a net debt of HUF 7.733 billion (~2x net debt / EBITDA), which is 26.5% lower on a YoY basis, but it is slightly higher compared to H1 2023 net debt (+3.5%). The YoY decrease is primarily the result of (A) significantly higher level of **cash and cash equivalents of HUF 1.514bn** (mostly short-term fixed bank deposits) and (B) decrease in both long-term loans and short-term credits.

We place our 12M target price of HUF 1,908 and BUY recommendation under revision and we expect to provide an update regarding this along with the evaluation of the company's Q1 production report. We also intend to include the impact of the new Miskolc well into the valuation.

Financial highlights of the 2023 report

P/L Table consolidated (million HUF)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	4 679	5 648	5 923	6 439	7 145	9 668
Net other revenue	407	192	132	215	380	-277
OPEX	2 903	2 982	3 320	3 776	3 913	5 461
From which:						
* SGA	456	457	501	512	582	688
* Depreciation	1 317	1 468	1 660	1 595	1 716	1 845
EBITDA	2 231	2 666	2 735	2 878	3 612	3 930
EBIT	906	1 198	1 075	1 283	1 896	2 078
EBT	525	782	262	964	1 416	1 837
Income Taxes	90	47	25	67	106	121
Net income	434	728	236	897	1 310	1 716
EPS (HUF)	24	41	14	55	82	112

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EPS (HUF)	24	41	14	55	82	112
EBITDA (HUFm)	2 231	2 666	2 735	2 878	3 612	3 930
Gross profit rate	20,4%	25,8%	24,4%	24,5%	29,4%	31,5%
EBIT rate	19,4%	21,2%	18,2%	20,0%	26,5%	21,5%
EBITDA rate	47,7%	47,2%	46,2%	44,7%	50,6%	40,6%
ROE	4,6%	7,3%	2,4%	9,1%	12,8%	15,6%
ROA	1,7%	2,8%	0,9%	3,3%	4,8%	6,4%
ROS	9,3%	12,9%	4,0%	13,9%	18,3%	17,7%

Announcements and proposals for the General Meeting:

There are several proposals for the GM (18 April 2024); we only highlight those, which may have an impact on the valuation of the company.

- 1) **Dividends:** the **board does not recommend dividend payments** considering the financing needs of investment activities planned for 2024. We view this as prudent given that the remaining total contractual cost of the new Miskolc well is estimated to be over HUF 2bn.
- 2) **Share repurchases (proposed):** the **board proposes to purchase treasury shares up to an amount of HUF 1.5bn** at a share price of at least HUF 1 and no more than HUF 1,908. The period would be almost one year (2 May 2024 – 17 April 2025). The shares may be purchased solely in trading at the stock exchange and the portfolio of treasury shares may not exceed 25% of total shares issued. We note that **the budget available for share repurchases is up 67% YoY** (from HUF 900 million) and the upper limit purchase price per share is up ~14% (from HUF 1,670). However, **the company intends to make a significant portion of treasury share purchases over 2025, following the completion of the new Miskolc well scheduled for 2024.**
- 3) **Reduction of share capital by cancelling some of the treasury shares:** the board proposes to reduce the company's share capital of HUF 400 million by HUF 40 million via **cancelling 2 million ordinary shares owned by the company** (treasury shares). After the reduction, the share capital of the company would be HUF 360 million (18 million shares). The company held 4,898,120 treasury shares on 27 March 2024, which is ~24.49% of total, which would decline to ~16.1% post reduction assuming no new purchases in the meantime.

Other notable highlights:

- 4) **Share repurchases (current):** the company has spent so far (up to 27th March) HUF 873.1 million on share repurchases, which is ~97% of the authorized amount under the program approved last year. Overall, this means that PannErgy purchased under the program 687,532 shares (3.44% of total shares and 4.55% of total non-treasury shares) for an average price of 1269.9 / share. The program is valid until 13th April 2024 with a limit of HUF 900 million at a price not exceeding HUF 1,670 and 25% of total shares (24.49% at the moment).
- 5) **Prevailing administrative prices:** the currently applicable administrative prices can be seen below.

Location of the wells	Company names	in effect until 30 September 2023	in effect from 1 October 2023	Change
Szentlőrinc	Szentlőrinci Geotermia Kft.	6 715 HUF/GJ	4 737 HUF/GJ	-29,5%
Miskolc	Miskolci Geotermia Kft.	5 211 HUF/GJ	3 703 HUF/GJ	-28,9%
Miskolc	Kuala Kft.	5 211 HUF/GJ	3 703 HUF/GJ	-28,9%
Győr	Arrabona Koncessziós Kft.	6 225 HUF/GJ	4 494 HUF/GJ	-27,8%

Source: Hungarian Official Gazette, issue 139/2023

Risks surrounding PannErgy's economic activity

1. **Price risk:** The administered price is set at a level that takes into account the cost of doing business and providing a fair profit. However, the administered price setting has inherent risks related to the administrative authority.

Moreover, at the moment PannErgy provides heat at a lower cost than its peers (natural gas). However, if natural gas prices fall significantly, then consumers who do not have mandatory purchase agreement with PannErgy could switch to other sources of heat.

2. **Environmental risks:** Extreme weather conditions during the heating season could harm the company's profit target. If the winter season is too short or too cold – due to global warming or other extreme weather conditions – the costs are higher, as the output from the drilling wells drops.

3. **Operational risks:** Maintenance costs increased significantly at the Győr Project in 2016 due to scaling issues concerning the tubing and pumps, and this has reduced production. Although the problem was dealt with, we identify it as a source of risk in the future as well. This could be a risk to our depreciation forecast as well.

4. **Improving energy efficiency risk:** It is not necessarily a PannErgy-specific risk, but in the long term, the building of passive houses and the coming investment – which increases the energy efficiency of houses and flats – could decrease demand for heat.

Notes:

[The initiation report, which contains the assumptions of the models used, is available here.](#)

[The valuation methodology used in this present equity research note to determine our price targets and recommendations is available here. \(Also available in Hungarian\)](#)

This investment recommendation has not used proprietary models.

The risk warning, which includes the adequate explanations of the length of time of the investment to which the recommendation relates as well as a sensitivity analysis of the assumptions, is indicated in the part of this recommendation where the length of time and the risks of the investment are presented.

Any information relating to the date and time for the price mentioned in this recommendation is revealed in the part of the recommendation where the given price is indicated.

OTP Bank Plc's recommendations and price targets history for PannErgy in the past twelve months:

Date	Recommendations	Target Price	Publication
02/09/2022	BUY	HUF 1,420	Equity note
06/10/2022	BUY	HUF 1,670	Equity note
15/10/2022	BUY	HUF 1,670	Equity note
23/11/2022	BUY	HUF 1,670	Equity note
02/01/2023	BUY	HUF 1,670	Equity note
18/01/2023	BUY	HUF 1,747	Equity note
27/03/2023	BUY	HUF 1,747	Equity note
17/04/2023	BUY	HUF 1,747	Equity note
18/07/2023	BUY	HUF 1,747	Equity note
20/09/2023	BUY	HUF 1,747	Equity note
05/10/2023	BUY	HUF 1,908	Equity note
17/10/2023	BUY	HUF 1,908	Equity note
01/17/2024	BUY	HUF 1,908	Equity note

Period	Recommendations	Percent of recommendation
2023Q2	BUY	100%
	HOLD	0%
	SELL	0%
2023Q3	BUY	100%
	HOLD	0%
	SELL	0%
2023Q4	BUY	100%
	HOLD	0%
	SELL	0%
2024Q1	BUY	100%
	HOLD	0%
	SELL	0%
2024Q2	BUY	100%
	HOLD	0%
	SELL	0%

[The list of all recommendations made in the past 12 months is available here.](#)

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