



JRC SCIENCE FOR POLICY REPORT

RIO Country Report 2017: Czech Republic

*Research and Innovation
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Srholec, M.

Sanchez-Martinez, M.

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Summary

The Czech Republic's economy has converged back to a sustainable growth path after the 2008-2009 crisis. GDP grew year-on-year by 2.6% in 2016 and it is expected to reach 4.3%, 3% and 2.9% in 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively ([European Commission, 2017c](#)). Inflation is forecast to be close to the 2% target, up from near zero for several years, amid growing real wages. The government finances have improved: the general government deficit turned into a surplus of 0.6% in 2016. Regarding innovation performance, the European Innovation Scoreboard 2017 classifies the Czech Republic among the "moderate innovators", below the EU28 average but ahead of Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece (EC, 2017a). Weak performance exists in the research dimension in areas such as publication citations, foreign doctorate students, and public-private co-publications, whereas for innovation performance weak areas include innovativeness of SMEs, knowledge-intensive services exports, and venture capital expenditures.

Challenges for R&I policy-making in the Czech Republic

1. **Reforming the governance of public research:** Governance of the R&I system suffers from a lack of coordination, fragmented division of competences and poor evaluation standards.
2. **Opening the labour market for researchers:** Human resource management practices in the public sector could be improved by reducing scholar in-breeding, intensifying competition both internally and from abroad and making careers more attractive for young people.
3. **Strengthening public-private linkages:** Despite the sustained policy efforts, linkages between public and private R&D sectors could be further improved. Knowledge transfer incentives are set at the level of individual organizations. A national strategy for knowledge transfer is lacking.
4. **Deepening innovation capabilities and demand-driven innovation:** the current policy mix is dominated by R&D subsidy programmes with limited efforts devoted to supporting venture capital or business angels and revolving funds.

Main R&I developments in 2017

- **Action Plan for Human Resources Development and Gender Equality in Research and Development in the Czech Republic for the years 2018-2020.**
- **[The position of the Deputy Prime Minister for Science, Research and Innovation has been cancelled by the new Government](#)**
- **[The national RDI budget for 2018 and outlook for 2019 and 2020.](#)**
- **[Interim and ex-ante evaluation of large research infrastructures](#)**
- **[New TA CR programmes launched and announced](#)**
- **[Funding from the OP Research, Development and Education \(OP RDE\) is gaining speed.](#)**
- **[New methodology for evaluation of research organizations](#)**

Smart specialisation

Czech regional authorities, consisting of 14 self-governing regions at the NUTS3 level, had seldom engaged in RDI policy before the launch of the RIS agenda. The only exception was the South Moravian region. Several other regions are attempting to emulate this model with various degrees of success with the help of the RIS3 agenda. National Innovation Platforms running under the Government Office for Science, Research and Innovations are instrumental in identifying applied research priorities. Since the Government approved the updated National RIS3 strategy in July 2016 followed by the EC in September 2016, it is too early to evaluate its impacts on the economy and society at large.



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