



## Youth Wiki national description

# Youth policies in the Czech Republic

## 2021

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki>



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# Czech Republic

## Youth Policy in the Czech Republic

**State policy towards Children and Youth in the Czech Republic is a traditional field and focus of the public sphere** with many variations in time, political regime and social climate. Still, in the last decade, the field was significantly marginalized on the political and expert level and today is anchored only partially as a part of the educational policy and non-formal education. However, interconnecting of the non-formal and formal education is one of the state priorities within the Educational Policy Strategy till 2030+.

The first discussions on the overall Act on Youth started in the year 1986, still during the time of Socialist Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, as a complex field in the time of many social and political changes (Velvet revolution 1989, transformation to the liberal democratic country in the 1990s, joining the EU in 2004, economic crisis...), no specific overall Youth Act was accepted and since 2006, the discussion was silenced from the public sphere.

Since the end of the 1990s, four State Concepts on Children and Youth Policy (Youth Strategy) were in place. The last state Youth Strategy for supporting Young people was for the period 2014 – 2020 (for details see [Chapter 1.3](#)). Since 2021 there is no dedicated state strategy for youth in a complex way and educational elements of youth work are focused in the Educational Strategy 2030+.

Since 2001, the **public governance structure is quite decentralised on self-governing regional, and local level** with state delegated competencies and state service. That has an impact on the Youth Policy and Youth Issues in public policymaking. However, there is a central state authority in the field of Youth – the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (more on the decision-making structure see [Chapter 1.4](#)).

The Youth Policy is cross-sectorial with the strong position of each sector and public policy as Education, Culture, Public Health Protection, Employment, Social Issues... (for details see [Chapter 1.5](#)). Since 2021 there is no public policy coordination and the coordination is thus in the hand of the Government and the Minister responsible for the Youth agenda.

An effective overall cross-sectoral coordination of the Youth Policy and Youth Issues seems to be to some extent as the bigger challenge, as in many other countries. One complicating aspect is that within a particular sector, there are no policy structures focused primarily on young people and young people are only one of the target groups. (With the exceptions as of the administrative unit on Hygiene of Children and Adolescents within the Public Health Protection Policy at Ministry of Health and social-legal protection of children at Ministry of Social Affairs).

**[Present Governmental Programme statement from 2022](#) specifically mentioned support to youth work and youth voluntary activities, especially in the field of connecting formal and non-formal education.**

**Youth policy coordination became less important in the light of other state-wide and societal priorities.** One significant reason is that **each sector traditionally has its own mechanisms targeting young people** to some extent and its own experts in the field, who have a lower level of knowledge of the youth field and more limited capacities to follow new developments of the state youth policy (more on the evidence issue in [Chapter 1.6](#)). Another aspect could be a **general perception that young people after reaching the age of 18 years become adults** with full enjoyment of rights and duties as the rest of the population.

The Youthwiki project can also be a small, but nevertheless important stepping stone on the path to overcoming these challenges.

We thus invite all readers to critically read and work with the following chapters. **The authors would also appreciate any feedback, comments and updates on particular issues from all sectors and thematic fields concerning young people.**

You can contact the authors on the e-mail [youthwiki@crdm.cz](mailto:youthwiki@crdm.cz).

Thank you for your cooperation and we wish you an inspiring reading.

The team of the Analytical section of the Czech Council of Children and Youth

## 1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

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State policy towards **Children and Youth in the Czech Republic is quite a traditional field or focus in the public sphere** with many variations. Strong state centralisation and control came during World War II with the forced Nazi regime of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Shortly after WWII and after a short time restoration of liberal-democratic foundations, the communist regime replaced them again with strong centralisation in the period from 1948 to 1989. The Communist party controlled formal education as well as leisure time activities of children and young people. However, during those periods, many alternative activities were also happening in the shadows, which also strengthened **the spirit of liberty, decentralisation and a kind of privacy**, at least by some groups in the society, including traditional children and youth organisations.

During the 1990s, youth field was marked by the transformation of a totalitarian state into a liberal one. It brought extensive processes of privatisation of state and Communists party structures and activities with various effects – liberation, free space for new initiatives, struggles to continue good traditions and activities, but also forgetting or terminating many of them because of social and economic changes.

**Since the end of the 1990s**, the Concept of the State policy towards Children and Youth **started to be created regularly as a National Youth Strategy** (more on them in [Chapter 1.3](#)). Both spheres of Children and Youth issues are considered traditionally as interlinked and mutually supportive; however, it brings more attention to children's issues rather than to Youth or young adults' issues. During the 1990s, an influence of the Council of Europe's youth policy was partially present and it continues to play an important role in the Youth Policy operation.

There is **no single comprehensive Youth Act**, although it was discussed several times in the 1986-2006 period. Some special Acts focused solely on Children and Youth issues are in place, especially in the fields of justice and social-legal protection of children. More on national Youth legislation in [Chapter 1.2](#).

Since the start of the new millennium, a significant administrative transformation of the country was in place with new decentralisation of regions. **Many state competencies**, especially in the most relevant public policies targeting young people like education, social issues, housing, culture, public health etc., were **given to regional self-governing units** - the so-called 'kraj' (more on Youth-Policy decision making in [Chapter 1.4](#)).

The 1990s became to be called 'wild nineties' because of all the transformations and quick development in the context of a lower level of control and a strong spirit of 'absolute freedom' in contrast to the totalitarian experience in the previous decades.

Although the Czech Republic joined the EU in 2004, it followed the development of the EU Youth coordination since the release of the EU White Paper on Youth in 2001. Joining the EU and European cooperation also had a substantial impact on further formation and development of public policies targeting (not only) young people. The new political and administrative setting brought another wave of transformation of public policies. This was also due to the quite extensive use of EU Structural Funds for new public policy priorities, initiatives and programmes. More on Youth Policy Funding in [Chapter 1.7](#). The developing

European governance and the cross-sectoral nature of the EU Youth Policy brought a new environment and impetus to the Youth Policy as well as cross-border cooperation (see more in [Chapter 1.8](#)). More on the cross-sectoral approach in the Czech Republic in [Chapter 1.5](#).

Youth policy coordination became less important in the light of other state-wide and societal priorities. One significant reason is that **each sector traditionally has its own mechanisms targeting young people to some extent** and its own experts in the field, who have a lower level of knowledge of the youth field and more limited capacities to follow new developments of the state youth policy (more on the evidence issue in [Chapter 1.6](#)).

However, it seems that there is a gradual development from the Youth Policy point of view, even if there are many mistakes and inconsistencies at all levels. The **latest edition of the state Youth Strategy for the period 2014-2020** was an important step towards improving governance and youth policy performance, even if some coordination and monitoring mechanisms showed to be ineffective.

More about the recent development is in [chapter 1.9 on current debates and reforms](#) and in all last chapter on current debates and reforms in each policy field.

## 1.1 Target population of youth policy

There is no single general legal definition of *Youth* or *Young people* in the Czech Republic. The legal system defines 'Youth' in both Civil and Criminal codes differently and the same is true for other sectoral policies, such as social, employment or health policy. The general perception of Youth is also differing.

The **political definition of Youth was embodied** in the last available National Youth Strategy and included **young people between 13-30 years of age**. The overall State Strategy focused on the age group 0 - 30 years of age and thus encompasses children as well.

Youth Policy Strategy was agreed by the Government with the Strategy supporting Youth for years 2014-2020 ([Konceptce podpory mládeže na období 2014-2020](#), Governmental Decree no. 342 of 12 May 2014).

The previous governmental Youth Strategy 2007-2013 ([Konceptce státní politiky pro oblast dětí a mládeže na období 2007-2013](#)) considered Youth to be up to 26 years of age. No lower limit was set, as the Strategy focused on children as well. However, a category of 'social youth' aged up to 30 was also recognised, but not in the political sense.

In general, we can divide the age groups according to the following terminology

Children (dětí) 0 - 13/15/18 years of age. The upper limit differs according to the context. Legally 18 years of age is the end of 'being a child'.

Youth (mládež) 13/15 - 18/24/26/30 years of age. The lower limit is a sociological and political definition. By 15 years of age young people gain citizen duties. The upper limit is different in a spoken context. General public usually considers Youth up to 18 years of age or up to 26 years.

Juvenile (mladiství, dorost) 15-18 years of age.

In a sporting environment various other differentiations can be used, of younger youth (mladší dorost, 13-14 years), middle youth (střední dorost, 15-16 years) and older youth (starší dorost, 17-18 years). In some sports 'dorost' could be meant up to 15 years, in some up to 18 years, in some other up to 23 years of age. Often the term 'junioři' (juniors) is also used, where the upper limit is also different in various contexts.

In the health environment, 'dorost' is usually used up to 18 years of age, but experts also use it for those 19 years of age (up to 20 years of age).



Age limits linked to rights and obligations are split in several law acts

#### **Civil Code (Act No. 9/2012 Sb.)**

- Full legal competence is achieved at the age of 18 years, 16 years in special cases (*please see section [1.2 National Youth Law](#)*)
- Distinguishes only minors with limited legal competence and majors with full legal competence

#### **Criminal Code (Act No. 40/2009 Sb.)**

- Defines the Child as a person up to 18 years of age
- Uses the term "age close to the juvenile age" which is not defined by the law but is left to the court's discretion (ca. up to 20 years depending on mental and social maturity of the person)

#### **Labour Code (Act. No. 262/2006 Sb.)**

- Defines "juvenile worker" as up to 18 years of age

#### **Other responsibilities connected with the age of 26 years**

- Health insurance is no longer provided by the state even if the person is still a university student (No. 48/1997 Sb.; No. 592/1992 Sb.)
- Certain tax relief is no longer applicable (another threshold is set for 28 years in case you are engaged in a Ph.D. programme)

## **1.2 National youth law**

### **Existence of a National Youth Law**

**There is no one general Law on Youth** in the sense of a comprehensive Youth Act. The Children and Youth mainstreaming is used and therefore the specificity of the young generation is reflected somehow in most state (sectoral) policies.

### **Scope and contents**

Youth legal matters in the Czech Republic could be sorted in several areas with the following scope:

1. [Constitutional](#)
2. [International Treaties](#)
3. [Civil Code](#)
4. [Criminal Code](#)
5. [Employment](#)
6. [Education](#)
7. [Social](#)
8. [Health and other areas](#)

Generally, the following laws have a common aim:

- Define age limits and specific Youth categories.
- Offer reasonable ease in life situations.
- Protect Children and Young people from harmful influences.
- Impose an educational effect.

## Constitutional law in relation to young people

### **The Constitution of the Czech Republic (No. 1/1993 Sb.)**

Does not define a specific category of Youth although some civic rights are regulated by age (both passive and active voting rights).

### **The Charter on Fundamental Rights and Basic Freedoms (No. 2/1993 Sb.)**

The Charter grants additional rights specific to young people:

- Specific rights in protection of adolescents' health at work and to special work conditions.
- Protection for children and adolescents.
- Guarantees parents the right to care for and bring up their children, while reciprocally granting children the right to parental upbringing and care.
- Right to education, specifying that primary and secondary school education must always be free of charge.

### **International treaties (most relevant ones) in relation to young people**

International treaties are part of the 'primary' law acts, therefore they are a vital part of the Czech legal system.

#### ***International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights***

Juvenile justice practices are thus based on international standards.

#### ***International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights***

Focus in the youth field on adolescents in relation to work and employment (No. 120/1976 Sb.); both were ratified in 1976.

### **The [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)**

- Part of the Czech law since 1991 (No. 104/1991 Sb.).
- The Czech Republic has adopted all 4 optional protocols (1st in 2002, 2nd in 2013, 3rd in 2016 and 4th in 2019)

Other relevant conventions include:

- *Human Rights Committee,*
- *Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,*
- *Committee against Torture,*
- *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,*
- *The European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,*
- *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (No. 95/1974 Sb.),
- *The Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption* (No. 42/2000 Sb.),
- *The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention* (No. 90/2002 Sb.),
- *The European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights* (No. 54/2001 Sb.),
- *The European Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions concerning Custody of Children and on Restoration of Custody of Children* (No. 66/2000 Sb.),

- The *European Convention on the Legal Status of Children born out of Wedlock* (No. 47/2001 Sb.),
- The *European Convention on the Adoption of Children* (No. 132/2000 Sb.),
- The *Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children* (No. 141/2000 Sb.),
- The *Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction* (No. 34/1998 Sb.).

### **Civil legislation in relation to young people**

#### **(New) Civil Code (No. 89/2012 Sb.)**

- Full legal competence achieved by 18 years of age (exceptions granted by the Court to a person of at least 16 years due to the need of full legal competence – e.g. family business running).
- Until the age of 16 years, a legal representative can prohibit employment of a young person, if they believe it could be against the educational interests of the young person (parents also have a right to cancel an already existing contract, if the Court approves. The young person can contradict this through the Court in the process before approval).
- Young people aged at least 16 years can be granted full legal competence by the Court in case such necessity arises, e.g. marriage, youth entrepreneur, etc.
- In court, a child's opinion is given importance appropriate to their age and mental maturity; general personal mental maturity is considered by 12 years of age.
- Family law became part of the Civil Code and has been widely modernised. The Rights of Children are more precise.

### **Criminal law in relation to young people**

#### **Criminal Code (No. 40/2009 Sb.)**

- In relation to criminal justice, children are considered as persons of 18 years of age or younger.
- This serves as a complementary law to the Youth Justice Act.

#### **Youth Justice Act (No. 218/2003 Sb., as amended in 2019)**

- Specification that young people between 15 and 18 years of age are considered juveniles.
- Juveniles are subjected to limited criminal responsibility - prioritising preventive goals and punishment measures, with the exception of capital crimes.
- Specification of the role and function of Juvenile Courts in relation to:
  - Juridical personnel
  - Residential jurisdiction
  - Obligation to examine and consider the individual and social background and context of juvenile offenders
  - The need to align court decisions with the mental and psychological maturity of juvenile offenders
  - Obligation to consider the interests of the victim and prefer educational measures over punishments
  - Requirement for the juvenile offender and their legal guardian to both be present throughout any trial proceedings

- Option to postpone any punishment for up to one year in favour of finalising the education of the juvenile offender
- Punishment measures consist of community service, financial measures (with conditional delay), forfeiture, ineligibility, expulsion, imprisonment (with conditional delay).
- Protective measures could be granted, e.g.
  - Protective upbringing in the home environment
  - Special institutional upbringing
  - Therapy
- Educational measures could also be taken, such as
  - Supervision by a probation officer
  - Probation programme
  - Limitations on upbringing
  - Duties in upbringing
- Caution
- The Right of obligatory attorney is 18 years of age, in some cases 21 years if it is considered appropriate in view of the juvenile's level of intellectual and moral maturity and the circumstances of the case.

### **Employment law in relation to young people**

#### ***Labour Code (No. 262/2006 Sb.)***

- People below 18 years of age cannot work more than 8 hours a day and more than 40 hours per week.
- Children and young people can only be employed for work adequate to their mental and physical state and with 'special support', which is however not specified further.
- Young people cannot be employed in mining or quarrying, or carry out night shifts (10 pm – 6 am).
- Employers are obligated, for up to 2 years after a young person finishes secondary school, to provide specialized professional practice for them, again how to achieve this is not further defined.

### **Education law in relation to young people**

#### ***Education Act (Act No. 561/2004 Sb. on Pre-school, Elementary, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education as amended)***

- The Act defines the Czech Schooling and Education system and stipulates principles such as free access to primary and secondary education.
- The Act is accompanied by **the Act on Pedagogical workers (No. 563/2004 Sb.)**, which regulates the role and responsibilities of pedagogical personnel, including teachers.
- It enforces compulsory education for 9 years (*compulsory education starts commonly in the year during which children turn 6, and can be postponed no later than the 8th birthday of a child*).
- Homeschooling is possible on specific request and under certain conditions.
- Students have a right

1. to education and school services,

2. to information on educational processes and results,
  3. to vote for and to be elected to the school board,
  4. to establish self-governing school student bodies and vote for and to be elected for them
- Students are obliged to attend school, to accept and behave according to school rules, and to follow instructions given by the pedagogical staff.
  - Promotion of political parties and movements is prohibited on school premises.
  - The Education Act foresees three additional forms of educational provision:
    5. *Elementary art education*, including musical or theatre education, which is undertaken in the *Elementary Art School (Základní umělecká škola)*
    6. *Language education*, provided in schools entitled to conduct state language exams
    7. *Education developing personal interests* ('Hobby education' or also 'leisure-based education', sometimes also 'interest education' – *zájmové vzdělávání*), provided in Children and Youth Leisure-Time Centres, school clubs and after-school centres
  - Other forms of Youth Work and Non-Formal Education of Youth are not legally defined.
  - For more details see [Chapter 6](#) and [Chapter 10](#).

## **Social law in relation to young people**

### **Social-legal child protection Act (Act No. 359/1999 Sb., as amended)**

- Guarantees social and legal protection of children (up to 18 years of age) through a number of institutional provisions on different levels, with local authorities being granted extended competencies in an extensively decentralised framework for social and legal protection.
- Amended in 2012 to strengthen the interests of children being brought up in their own families, and to further and better support parents in bringing up their children.
- The main focus is the protection of children's rights regarding positive personal development, upbringing, and protection of the legitimate interests of the child, including the protection of their assets.
- It defines support services for children in difficult situations as well as measures to be taken to protect children and young people from domestic violence or other serious threats.
- It defines circumstances when a child should be removed from a dysfunctional family and placed under protective guardianship, how the rights of the child must be protected in such situations, and which procedure must be applied for a due process.
- Social workers have gained a wide array of supporting tools and measures that are at their disposal to support children and their families.
- In 2020, the government adopted an amendment. The aim is to modify the financing of facilities for children in need of assistance, support for alternative family care in order to motivate carers to accept especially children with disabilities and multiple sibling groups by adjusting the amount of foster care benefits.

### **Act on institutional and protective education in schools and on preventive educational care in school facilities (Act No. 109/2002 Sb.)**

- Defines the forms of institutional care for children: Diagnostic Institutes, Children's Homes, Children's Homes with Schools, and Educational Institutions.

- Institutional care offers services for children placed in institutional care, institutional education and/or protective education.
- Children are provided with board and lodging, textbooks and educational materials, health insurance, travel costs to schools and some pocket money, and are entitled to support for leaving the institution in question after having reached the legal age of majority.

There are also *Facilities for Children requiring immediate assistance* (often known as 'Klokánky', from a project of the private *Fund of endangered Children*), in which no more than 28 children may stay for no more than 6 months. These facilities are authorised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. However, complications sometimes arise when it is in the interest of the Child to stay longer - the Court has to make a decision about this.

### **Health law in relation to young people and other areas**

#### **Act on Public Health Protection (No. 258/2000 Sb., as amended)**

Regulates state and public Authorities' activity in the area of protection of public health and public hygiene. The field of public services of Hygiene of Children and Youth is introduced and regulated. For more details see [Chapter 7](#).

#### **Act on the protection of health against the harmful effects of addictive substances (No. 65/2017 Sb. as amended)**

Replaced The Act on measures to protect against the damage caused by tobacco, alcohol and other addictive substances and amending related laws (*No. 379/2005 Sb. amended, valid till 30.05.2017*)

Enable public drug policy. Prohibits e.g. selling or giving tobacco products, electronic cigarettes and alcohol to persons younger than 18 years. The consumption as such is not prohibited by age, but the Act delimits places where the consumption is prohibited as school facilities, sports facilities by the majority for children and young people up to 18 years of age, child social-legal protection facilities etc.

#### **Act on Gambling games (No. 186/2016 Sb.)**

Prohibits participation of young people below 18 years in lotteries and similar games, including prohibiting the entry of persons younger than 18 years.

Replaced the Act on lotteries and similar games no. 202/1990 Sb.

#### **The Act on Road Traffic (No. 361/2000 Sb. amended)**

- Defines specific protective measures as well as duties for young people and children.
- For example, cyclists under 18 years are obliged to wear a helmet while cycling on roads and streets.
- Gaining a driving licence for different motorised vehicles varies (in principle similar to other European countries, the age limit for smaller motorbikes is 15 years, for larger motorbikes it is 16 years, and for standard cars the limit is 18 years).
- Every child weighing up to 36 kilograms and measuring up to 150 centimetres must travel in a car seat.

#### **Voluntary service Act (No. 198/2002 Sb.)**

- Provides the basic legal framework for voluntary services; youth can volunteer under this framework from the age of 15 years, and abroad from 18 years of age. For more details see Chapter 2.
- Repeatedly criticised for being insufficient in the youth field.

## Revisions/updates

### Civil Code revision

The Civil code reform valid since 2014 represents the biggest private law change in the Czech Republic during the last decades and has abolished more than 100 specific laws and unified the legal base, introducing many comprehensive changes. This reform becomes directly relevant for Youth Policy through the inclusion of Family laws into the New Civil Code, which, however, does not specify youth as a legal notion. The New Civil Code is in effect since 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2014. Also, young people and children gained more Rights, or rather their Rights were made more specific.

### Criminal liability

Throughout the development of the Youth Justice Act, the potential lowering of the age of minimum criminal responsibility was discussed alongside lowering the age of consent (both from 15 to 14). However, neither change was introduced. By the beginning of 2016, the Minister of Justice picked up this question again, but in 2017 the change was not adopted by the Parliament.

### Education act

In 2020, an amendment was adopted. The reason for the change was mainly the discussed change in the completion of secondary education. The amendment to the law abolishes the obligation of the matura examination in mathematics. It was originally supposed to be compulsory from 2021. The obligatory graduation exam in mathematics has been a long-discussed topic for years.

### Volunteering

Volunteering is an area of law and policy-making of high importance for youth associations as well as organisations working with children and young people. While the Czech Council of Children and Youth as well as the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports have been working for several years on the preparation of a dedicated volunteering support law, it has not yet been finalised. The new Act on volunteering was being prepared by the Ministry of Interior but declined by the end of 2016. For further details [see Chapter 2](#) on Volunteering.

### Youth (Work) Act

There have been several discussions on a special Youth Act even in communist Czechoslovakia (first draft proposal in 1987). However, after the democratic change in 1989 it was seen to be very ideological, and therefore there have been several other tries for a Youth Act. The most recent was in 2006 when a Youth Act proposal was limited to only Youth Work standards, which again were not fully compatible with reality and the desired outcomes and therefore it was denied by the Parliament in 2006. Since that there has been no real discussion on the introduction of a specific Youth Act or Youth Work Act.

## 1.3 National youth strategy

### Existence of a National Youth Strategy

**Since 2021, there is NO National Youth Strategy anymore.**

Partial aspects of supporting Youth Work and non-formal education are mentioned in the new [Education Strategy 2030+](#) with the main priority in the field of connecting formal and non-formal education.

There were four Youth Policy Strategies of the Czech Republic between years 1999 to 2020. [The first governmental Youth Policy Strategy](#) was introduced in 1999 - 2002. [The second strategy](#) was valid in 2002-2007, the [third](#) between the years 2007-2013 and the last was a National Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020 (*Koncepce podpory mládeže na období 2014 – 2020*, Governmental Decree no. 342 of 12 May 2014).

Every new strategy was based on the evaluation of the previous document and its implementation, with the involvement of new needs, except the last 2014 - 2020 Strategy, which was evaluated in the mid-term 2017 and a final evaluation was executed in 2021 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The 2020 OECD Report "[Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice. Fit for All Generations?](#)" (OECD 2020) marked the last Czech Youth Strategy as the 6th most successful in the extent to which national youth strategies are inclusive, budgeted, monitored and evaluated.

## Scope and contents

[Strategy for the Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2030+](#) has 2 strategic objectives:

1. Focus education more on the acquisition of competences needed for an active civic, professional and personal life.
2. Reduce inequalities in access to quality education and pave the way for the maximum development of the potential of children, pupils and students.

Apart from strategic objectives, it has 5 Strategic lines.

The first strategic line "Transforming the content, methods and assessment of education" **focus also on non-formal education** and lifelong learning.

Non-formal education is defined as:

*Non-formal education is aimed at the development of knowledge, skills and competences in employers' establishments, private educational institutions, school facilities (e.g. leisure education, which provides participants with activities during their leisure time that focus on various fields), non-governmental organisations, memory institutions (especially libraries and museums), art and other cultural institutions, science centres and other organisations. Non-formal education includes some organised leisure activities for children, young people and adults, such as courses, retraining, training and lectures. A prerequisite for the provision of non-formal education is the participation of a professional lecturer, teacher, educator, trainer or trained leader. However, it does not normally lead to the attainment of an accepted level of education unless it is subsequently recognised by a competent authority or institution.*

### **The strategy aims also on:**

- supporting Leisure Time activities and youth work with educational elements
- interlinking different forms of education
- Innovative forms of work with children
- After-school care and school clubs
- Outcomes of non-formal education

Youth Strategy 2014-2020 consisted of:

1. **Pillars** determining the set principles upon which the expected impact of Strategy 2020 on young people is based.
2. **Horizontal priorities** taking into account the priority areas of intervention across all strategic and operational goals.
3. **Strategic goals** referring to a defined idea of how Youth Strategy 2020 should contribute to specific areas of youth policy in the long term, until 2020.
4. **Operational goals** are breaking down this vision in terms of the short, medium and long-term fulfilment of the strategic objectives.
5. **Measures** defining specific directions to take to achieve the desired operational goals.



## Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is the central state authority in the Youth Field.

It was responsible for implementing, coordinating and monitoring of the Youth Strategy 2020. The main coordinating body until the end of 2019 was the Youth Department at the Ministry and the Youth Chamber (see details in [Chapter 1.4](#)). Since 2020 it was Children and Youth Development Unit within the Department of primary education and youth. (Within the first part of 2020 the unit was within the department for further education and youth).

This administrative and governance order could be influenced by a lower level of competences in the formal manner of coordination and policy management across various sectors and policy levels (see analyses e.g. [Bárta, Boček, Husák 2014](#)). However, in general, an integrated cross-sectoral Youth Policy was in play. It was targeted and was working with its competence to implement decentralisation.

Thus, there is a huge variety of other National Strategies tackling particular Youth issues and more specific policies ([listed below together with the authority responsible](#)).

Responsibility for any Youth programme always lies with the initiating authority, unless it is transferred to another authority.

Responsible authorities range from ministries and their directly controlled agencies to the Office of the Government and its sections by various subtopics and by some issues to regional or local Authorities.

Since the end of 2013 there has been no state agency directly focused on Youth. Until the end of 2013 there was the National Institute for Children and Youth, which had been in operation since the 1950s with different competences and names. Most of the tasks of the Institute were transferred to other state agencies before its end. Since January 2022 there is a new department for Youth and Non-formal and Leisure based education within the National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic.

The Erasmus+ Youth Program and the European Solidarity Corps Program are managed by the [Czech National Agency for International Education and Research](#).

### Revisions/updates

The Education Strategy 2030+ is not expected to be updated, however, its implementation is accompanied by the **"implementation cards" for the 3 years period**. These cards focused on the priorities in that period in the line with the strategy and are built to state concrete steps and measures in the meantime.

The evaluation of the impact of the Youth Strategy 2020 on the target group was carried out **through national youth reports** at the mid-term in 2017 and by the final in 2021. Both reports are not publicly accessible.

On 12th of February 2018 the Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic published its [audit report](#) about the finances in the Youth sector which was very critical to the Youth Policy and the Youth Strategy implementation and evaluation. It also concludes that the Strategy does not have real indicators, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports did not have an outline of the implementation tools of other sectors and that the Mid-term evaluation from May 2017 was with mistakes and misleading information.

Further, the Supreme Office thinks that the Youth Strategy could not be evaluated according to the Governmental decision about the impact on the target population of young people because of the missing indicators. The Youth department opposed the Report in some aspects, however, the argumentation is not publicly available.

## 1.4 Youth policy decision-making

### Structure of Decision-making

#### Policy making

Policy making in the field of Youth can be differentiated at several levels based upon the division of power in the state. Legislation could be prepared on the ministerial level or by other legislative actors such as the Parliament or its members, but also regions and others declared by Constitution. **As there is no general Youth Act, any legislative decision-making in the youth field is usually done within the Parliament or lower legislative Acts within the Government or Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.**

In the House of Deputies exists a [Committee for Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sports](#) with its subcommittee on Youth and Leisure time activities. Youth policy focus as such is not so usual in Parliament's discussions, according to the minutes of the parliamentary committees. Other public policy topics impacting Youth are more common also in other committees as for social affairs, justice, culture etc.

Decisions on Youth Policy are usually made on a ministerial level by the [Youth Chamber](#) and [Children and Youth Development Unit](#) under the Department for primary education and youth. High-level decisions are made at the top executive level of the ministry by the vice-deputy minister responsible for Youth or by the minister or its cabinet. **The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is the central state authority in the field of youth.**

The state delegates many of the practical issues linked to the regional or local level to regions and municipalities. They should thus create and implement their own youth policy strategies and practices.

### Authorities involved in policy making

#### Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

The Ministry is [divided](#) into units managed directly by the Minister and to five sections led by the Deputies and the State Secretary.

Units directly managed by the Minister:

- Minister's Cabinet – the Office of the Minister (spokesperson, secretary, school ombudsman)
- Sports Department (as the field of sports migrated in majority to the National Sports Agency, created in 2020),
- and several other technical departments and units,

Sections managed by the Deputies:

I. Economic and Legislative Section – takes care of financial management or financing of regional education and directly managed organisations, with educational and other legislation, legal and administrative matters (including executive service for the Minister of Education) and awarding public contracts, as well as for the property of the Ministry.

II. Section for Education and Youth – includes that part of the educational system, which is administered mainly regionally, which means by the regions and municipalities. It contains units focused on a conception of the educational system except for higher education field, the operation of the school's register, educational content (programmes and standards) of schools from nursery to tertiary professional schools, individual, institutional and preventive education and further education of adults, as well as pedagogical workers. (Since 1st of January 2020, two previous sections on Education and Youth and Sports were cancelled and this new section was created including the youth issues).

III. Section of Higher Education, Science and Research – focuses on the area of higher education institutions and their financing and the area of research and development including financial support, research policy and international cooperation

IV. International and EU Affairs and Operational Programmes Section – coordinates and administers international and EU affairs, Operational Programmes of the European Union, i.e. Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme, Research and Development for Innovations Operational Programme and recently Research, Development and Education Operational Programme

V. IT and public procurement section – deals with public administration affairs and internal issues, as well as with statistical surveys and data gathering, preparation of analyses and information strategies

The actual execution of many administrative functions was transferred to the authority of the bodies of the region, or the municipality.

### **Department for Primary Education and Youth ([Odbor základního vzdělávání a mládeže](#))**

Youth agenda is managed by the Department for Primary Education and Youth and its Children and Youth Development Unit.

There was a full-fledged Youth Department in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports since 1987 to 2019 composed of two units:

- Youth Policy Unit
- Leisure-based and Non-formal Education Unit

However, since the 1st January 2020 a new Department for Youth, Non-formal and Further Education was created until the agenda migrated as a unit to the Department for Primary Education and Youth in summer 2020.

### **Other ministries**

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Industry and Trade
- Government authorities

### **Bodies in Parliament responsible for the field of Youth:**

Czech Parliament is composed of two Chambers – the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. In both Chambers, there is a Committee with the competence for the field of Youth.

- **Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic** ([Výbor pro vědu, vzdělávání, kulturu, mládež a tělovýchovu](#))
- Within the Chamber of Deputies until 2013 there was also the specific Subcommittee on Youth and Sport (Podvýbor pro mládež a sport). After the elections 2017 and with the new House of Deputies independent **Subcommittee on Youth and Leisure-time activities** ([Podvýbor pro mládež a volnočasové aktivity](#)) was set up which was re-established also in the current Chamber of Deputies in late 2021 after the election.

- Within the Chamber of Deputies, there are also youth-issues related bodies such as Subcommittee on foster care and Subcommittee for crisis situations in Family. Many of the Youth sector issues are also discussed in other committees as Constitutional, Budgetary, Foreign affairs etc.
- **Committee for Education, Science, Culture, Human Rights and Petitions of the Senate of the Czech Republic** (Výbor pro vzdělávání, vědu, kulturu, lidská práva a petice Senátu ČR)

### Regional public authorities with competencies in the field of Youth

The territory of the Czech Republic is divided by constitutional law no. 129/2000 Sb. on Act on regions into regions (higher units of territorial self-government), consisting of municipalities (lower units of territorial self-government). There are 14 regions, and they possess two jurisdictions

- Independent (self-governing)
- Delegated (state administration)

Public administration is provided by the regional authority, which is divided into departments and sections for particular spheres of activity. **Regions have to set up a Regional Committee for Education, Youth and Sport** according to the §78.

The bodies coordinating the delegated activities of the regional authorities are the respective ministries.

### Roles and competencies of regional authorities in the sphere of youth policy

Within the scope of their independent jurisdiction (self-governing), regional authorities can issue their own Decrees, usually focused on a particular issue.

The main responsibilities of Regions within state Youth Policy are:

- Elaboration, assessment and complementing of long-term objectives in the sphere of education and development of an educational system in the region
- Presenting the long-term objectives and an annual report for the previous year to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic and to the Board of Representatives of the region
- Dealing with the topics brought up by school councils operating at primary schools
- Cooperation with the Czech School Inspectorate (Česká školní inspekce)
- Performance of the tasks ensuing from the strategic documents of the region in the spheres of free-time activities, physical education and sports, crime prevention, and activities aimed at protection against misuse of drugs, at the problems of national minorities and the prevention of socially undesirable phenomena
- Ensuring conditions for the integration of disabled pupils into ordinary schools and educational institutions
- **Creating conditions for the development of free-time activities for children and youth. They should cooperate with non-governmental, non-profit organisations in implementing the state policy related to the young generation and sports**
- Responsibility for organising competitions announced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic
- Responsibility for implementing the funding programmes of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic in the sphere of the integration of the Romani community, education in the languages of national minorities and multicultural upbringing

## Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Municipalities have both their independent jurisdiction (self-governing) and delegated jurisdiction (state administration). Public administration is ensured mainly by the municipal authority, which can be divided into departments and sections for particular spheres of activity (Act no. 128/2000 Sb, on municipalities). Within the scope of their independent jurisdiction (self-governing), municipal authorities can issue their Decrees, usually focused on a particular issue.

Other institutional actors

**Czech Council of Children and Youth** (Česká rada dětí a mládeže, hereafter 'CRDM')

CRDM is a democratic, voluntary association, independent of any political parties or movements. The CRDM was established in June 1998 by eight organisations of children and youth, and as a national youth council in the Czech Republic, it is a reliable partner of governmental administration. The CRDM represents the interests of its members towards domestic and foreign bodies, organisations and institutions.

It is composed of around 100 non-governmental children and youth organisations with more than 216 000 individual members – the organisations range from small to big; 9 regional councils of children and youth are members of the CRDM as well. The CRDM respects the sovereignty and independence of all its member organisations in compliance with their statutes and has no supervisory or senior power towards these, but represents them in dealing with authorities, organisations and institutions both at the national level and abroad.

The mission is to promote conditions for quality of life and the overall development of children and young people in society and the state. The CRDM fulfils its mission by supporting non-formal education and activities of its members, especially by creating legal, economic, social and cultural conditions suitable for their activities.

The Council exercises the assignments and powers it is charged and endowed with by its members through the Council's bodies.

### Regional councils of children and youth

Regional councils associate children and youth organisations on a regional level; they serve as places for promoting individual associations and other organisations and provide regional authorities with advice on out-of-school upbringing and education. In 2020 there were 9 Regional Youth Councils active.

The following regional councils of Children and Youth exist:

- Rada dětí a mládeže hlavního města Prahy - <http://www.rdmp.cz/>
- Krajská rada dětí a mládeže Karlovarska - <http://krdmk.cz/>
- Plzeňská krajská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.pkrdm.cz/> (in 2022 won the price on Non-profit of the year by the Non-profit foundation)
- RADAMBUK - Jihočeská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.radambuk.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže kraje Vysočina - <https://www.rdmkv.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže Královéhradeckého kraje, z. s. - <http://www.rdmkhk.cz/>
- Jihomoravská krajská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.jmdeti.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže Moravskoslezského kraje - RADAMOK - <http://www.radamok.cz/>
- SPEKTRUM – Krajská rada dětí a mládeže Zlínského kraje - <http://www.spektrumzl.cz/>

### Children and Youth Associations

Non-profit organisations engaged in work with children and youth represent a necessary complement to school facilities for extra-curricular education. There is a vast plurality of

NGOs working with children and young people in the Czech Republic. The tradition dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when active participation in different associations and societies was an essential part of the social movement that led to the creation of an independent Czechoslovakia.

The state supports NGOs' work to a significant degree, however regions and municipalities also often have their financial schemes, and the private sector is too usually supportive to the activities of youth organisations. Associations thus often have motives to influence the Youth Policies.

### **Youth Associations related to political parties**

The experience with the exploitation of children and youth for the benefit of a totalitarian political regime resulted in a caution against any connection between political institutions and children and youth associations after 1990. By the end of the 1990s, however, youth organisations declaring their adherence to a political orientation (conservative, liberal, social democratic, and Christian democratic) were formed as a consequence of the creation of new political parties and movements. Small political youth organisations represent Young European Democrats with markedly fewer members (about 100), and membership of youth organisations related to other political bodies is even lower. By the end of 2015, the youth wings of political parties formed a common [Association](#) for strengthening dialogue among them. Since then it also follows that they have started to become more active in discussing topics related to young people, and not mainly to political ideologies as was the main trend earlier. Some of them are also members of the National Youth Council. However, their activity on this platform is rather low.

### **Youth Information Centres**

The Youth Information System Development Framework for the Czech Republic was completed in 2008 and since that undertook further development. **Since 2020 the state support and coordination was cancelled.**

Youth information centres are places that provide, on an anonymous basis and free of charge, complex and up-to-date information on various aspects of young people's life according to their demands and needs, proportionately to their age and capacities. The information shall be provided in compliance with the European Youth Information Charter and the Principles for Online Youth Information. The target groups of the youth information centres are, above all, young people up to 30 years of age. The YICs guarantee equal access to information for all young people.

The total numbers of YICs registered in the Czech Republic were 40 in 2008. By 15th of September 2019, only [16 were certified by the state](#). They are run mainly by school facilities for leisure-based education and by NGOs.

There was the **National Youth Information Centre ([Národní informační centrum pro mládež](#))** as a state unit under the National Institute for Education, Education Counselling Centre and Centre for Continuing Education of Teachers (NÚV), but since 1st of January 2020, it was cancelled as the NÚV was transformed into the National Pedagogy Institutet and the National Information Youth Centre was not transferred to the new institution.

Information centres were coordinating Czech national activities of the [European Youth Information and Counselling Agency \(ERYICA\)](#). Since 2020 there is no Czech Representation there.

Apart from this official system, there was and still is also an alternative [Association on supporting the development of the Youth Information Centres](#) which has its own strategy and goals on development. 8 Youth Information Centres were members in 2020.

## Main Themes

Since 2012, in response to the need for the creation, implementation and evaluation of Youth Strategy 2020, the Department for Youth of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports was coordinating 12 working groups focusing on the main topics in the youth field:

1. Rights of children and youth
2. Information for youth
3. Leisure-based and non-formal education
4. Leisure time
5. Youth mobility
6. Employment and employability
7. Lifestyle and health
8. Participation
9. Volunteering
10. Young people with fewer opportunities
11. Environment
12. Media and culture

Furthermore, a cross-sectional working group of youth researchers should have operated across all the themes.

With the abolishment of the National Institute for Children and Youth by the end of 2013, the coordination of these working groups became overloaded and also due to low activity of their members, they were not working anymore.

In 2014, the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue with Youth was set up and coordinated by the National Youth Council. The activities of this Group widely adopted the operation of the ministry's participation working group.

In 2015, a small group on linking youth work and social work was established to support better inclusion of young people and to facilitate the benefits and activities of providers focused on social work as well as youth work.

In 2015, a new working group on hate issues met within the framework of Ministry thematic working groups.

At the same time, other themes are tackled on a national level with separate Policy strategies with high importance and a direct link to Young people. Those are mentioned in respective thematic Chapters of the Youthwiki.

In 2018 The Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports set up a new cross-sectoral group on the evaluation of the state Youth Strategy, which operated in 2019 and was abolished when the Youth Department was dismissed from the Ministry since 2020.

## The National Agency for Youth

Since 2014 there has been **no specific National Youth Agency in the Czech Republic**. Until the end of 2013, the [National Institute of Children and Youth existed](#) under the direction of the Ministry's Youth department. The Institute was set up in 1953, and during its life, it changed name several times as well as its scope and competences. It was the central State Agency on Youth. Since the abolition of the Institute, its agenda has split among other public Agencies under the direction of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, however only in limited scope, and the direct management of the Youth Department was lost. The cooperation is thus instead in a bilateral manner. Since 2014 The public agencies dealing with some aspects of Youth were:

The National Institute for further Education ([Národní institut pro další vzdělávání](#)) for Youth Strategy issues, Youth research due to the [National Register of Research on Children and Youth](#) and Leisure-based and [Non-formal education and its connection to formal education](#).

The National Institute for Education ([Národní ústav pro vzdělávání](#)) running the National Youth Information Centre ([Národní informační centrum pro mládež](#)).

Since 1st of January 2020 both of these institutions [merged in National Pedagogy Institute \(NPI\)](#) and in 2021/2022 new department for Youth, Non-formal and Leisure-Time Activities was created with its residence in Olomouc City.

The Centre for International Cooperation in Education ([Dům zahraniční spolupráce](#)) for the Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps and Eurodesk.

## Policy monitoring and evaluation

There are no specific mechanisms dedicated to monitoring and evaluating the Youth Policy and the Youth Strategy, as there is no dedicated Youth Strategy.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has its own internal mechanisms, a partial role could be seen by the activities of the Czech Council of Children and Youth (National Youth Council), the parliamentary bodies and the new department at the National Pedagogy institute of the Czech Republic.

## 1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

### Mechanisms and actors

Due to high decentralisation, as described in subchapters [1.3](#) and [1.4](#), a horizontal, as well as vertical cross-sectoral approach, is latently integrated into public policy making in the Czech Republic's Youth field.

**Interdepartmental coordination of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport** is subject to [Rules of the Ministry](#). The main consultative body to enhance the coordination on the highest level is the Permanent consultation of the Management (*Stálá porada vedení MŠMT*). It is up to the current minister to select the members representing various sections and fields of the Ministry. Other consultative bodies can be under the heading of the Minister, Deputy or State Secretary. Other relations of the ministerial units should be on an informing and cooperative level. Cooperation on task realisation should be carried out in the easiest and most effective way. Only relevant tasks should be cooperated on in written form. When using the written form, there are internal rules of the Ministry. All units relevant to the topic need to be involved before any relevant decision proposal is made. There are also interim rules for preparation of materials of a fundamental nature and with obligatory discussion (usually issues with budgetary, legal or personal impact).

**Inter-sectorial cooperation in the youth field specifically** was given by the decision of the Government (Governmental Decree), in the field of Youth, concretely within the Decree adopting the Youth Strategy (for details see [Chapter 1.3](#)). However, since 2021, there is no follow-up of the 2014 - 2020 Youth Strategy and thus the cooperation is ongoing only on the general principles of inter-sectorial cooperation of the Czech state. Also, the Youth Chamber as a cross-sectoral youth policy body was dismissed.

### Ministries involved in the Youth Policy with their own tasks and responsibilities according to the Youth Strategy 2020:

- [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#)
- [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#)
- [Ministry of the Interior](#)
- [Ministry of Health](#)
- [Ministry of the Environment](#)
- [Ministry for Regional Development](#)
- [Ministry of Culture](#)



- [Ministry of Industry and Trade](#)

Other ministries including advisory bodies and government committees were supposed to adopt measures to meet the objectives of Youth Strategy 2020 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, on the principle of inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral cooperation through their grant programmes, ESF national projects and their representatives in the Youth Chamber as well as in the thematically focused working groups if applicable.

To enhance regular coordination and information flow on the Youth Strategy Implementation and the state of play of the Youth Field, the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports has established the Youth Chamber.

**Enhancing the horizontal coordination is also aided by bodies in Parliament responsible for the field of Youth** (see details in [1.4](#)). Czech Parliament is composed of two Chambers – the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. In both Chambers, there is a Committee with the competence for the field of Youth. In the Chamber of Deputies is also since 2017 a Subcommittee for Youth and Leisure-based activities. (earlier until 2013 for Youth and Sports).

Vertical cross-sectorial cooperation

### **Regional public authorities with competencies in the field of Youth**

The territory of the Czech Republic is divided into regions (higher units of territorial self-government), consisting of municipalities (lower units of territorial self-government). There are 14 regions, and they possess two jurisdictions

- Independent (self-governing)
- Delegated (state administration)

Public administration is provided by the regional authority, which can be divided into departments and sections for particular spheres of activity.

The bodies coordinating the delegated activities of the regional authorities are the respective ministries.

### **Roles and competencies of regional authorities in the sphere of youth policy**

Within the scope of their independent jurisdiction, regional authorities (self-governing) can issue their own Decrees, usually focused on a particular issue. They are also obligated to implement state policies, in youth regard especially education, free time, social etc. including the cooperation and support of Youth NGOs.

The main responsibilities of **Regions** within the state Youth Policy are described in the Subchapter [1.4](#).

Each **Region has to set up a Regional Committee for Education, Youth and Sport** according to the §78 of Act on Regions no. 129/2000 Sb.

Regions have also their cross-sectoral cooperation structures as the [Association of Regions of the Czech Republic \(Asociace krajů ČR\)](#). Within the Associations operates several [Commissions and Councils](#) eg. on Education and Sport, Social Affairs, Culture, but there is no on Youth.

### **Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

Municipalities have both their own independent jurisdiction (self-governing) and delegated jurisdiction (state administration). Public administration is ensured mainly by the municipal authority, which can be divided into departments and sections for particular spheres of activity (Act No. 128/2000 Sb., on municipalities). Within the scope of their independent jurisdiction (self-governing), municipal authorities can issue their own Decrees, usually focused on a particular issue.

There are several platforms of municipalities to support the negotiations, policy implementation and sharing of good practice:

- [Healthy cities](#) (Národní síť zdravých měst) tackling also Youth issues
- [Union of Town and Municipalities of the Czech Republic](#) (Svaz měst a obcí ČR)
- Association of local governments ([Sdružení místních samospráv](#))

## 1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

### Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

There is no specific policy commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy in the Czech Republic.

The National Youth Strategy 2014-2020 included only a measure to reflect the outcomes of Research on Youth Policy and to support the research in the field of Leisure-Time of Children and Youth. (Measure no. 2, DCB, Strategic goal no. 3). However, there is neither a public strategy on Youth Research nor a state institution devoted to the Youth Research nor a specific budget allocation for Youth Policy or Leisure-Time Research.

Independent Researchers can thus only compete in general Research schemes for basic or applied research support. The research needs are not primarily linked to Youth Policy directly, and the Youth policy can thus only react to the outcomes of this independent research.

[National Policy on Research, Development and Innovation for the Years 2016 - 2020](#) does not reflect Youth Policy needs. However, the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Affairs defined own sectoral needs including also particular Youth matters as issues linked to Juvenile offenders and child care.

The research policy also reflects the need of young people in their desires for knowledge and also open problems solving skills development by supporting them in their own research activities. It also focuses on supporting young researchers and their mobility.

The collection of data about young people is thus managed on the state level as other statistical services by the Act on state statistical service; there is no particular target group of Youth nor Youth Policy.

The evaluation and monitoring of the Youth Strategy 2020 describe subchapter [1.3](#) as well as information about the Audit report of the Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic from February 2018.

### Cooperation between policy-making and research

The collaboration between youth policy-making and research takes place in an ad hoc manner. Usually, the Ministry has some connection with actual youth researchers or youth research projects and their representatives. Youth Chamber meetings offer a place for presenting the research findings when appropriate.

EU Funds have supported most of bigger Youth Policy related issues research (e.g. from the project Keys for Life and K2, or by the [project SAFE](#) on measurement of volunteering initiated and organised by the Czech Council of Children and Youth, Catch EyoU and others).

Masaryk University in Brno also has a unique [Institute for Research on Children, Youth and Family](#). However, their activities are not linked primary to Youth Policy and are rather academically and social sciences focused.

Private and marketing surveys and research studies/reports on youth or relevant topics are also used from time to time but also somewhat on the ad hoc manner.

There were expected cross-thematic youth researcher working group within the implementation of the Youth Strategy 2014-2020, but the operation was complicated, and thus the connections run more on needs and ad-hoc bases.

The process of preparation of Youth Policy indicators was initiated by the Ministry several times since the Strategy came into force, however, there are no satisfactory outcomes yet. One of the side effects of the process is the creation of a project Youth in numbers ([Mládež v číslech](#)) within the National Register of Research on Children and Youth bringing on one online place basic time series about young people and youth policy issues. From the content side is the project Youth in numbers operated by the Analytical section of the Czech Council of Children and Youth and from the technical by the National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic.

## National Statistics and available data sources

There is no specific national statistical system on Youth or Youth Indicators. The only relevant data source in the Youth Policy is thus the [National Register of Research on Children and Youth](#) which is a non-systematic and non-obligatory collection of various researches and studies without any other systematic connection to Accademia, research organizations or [research outcomes register of the Czech Republic](#). The publically available time series about young people in relation to the Youth Policy are presented on the project [Youth in numbers](#) within the Register as well, however, since 2020 the project has been postponed for further evaluation of suitable approaches.

Relevant data are collected within the system of the State Statistical Service among state Authorities and the Czech Statistical Office. Youth Policy is not directly included in the State Statistical Service (based on the [Act No. 89/1995 Sb., on State Statistical Service](#)). Most of the data are publically available on the [Czech Statistical Office](#) websites, archives and Library. Czech Statistical Office publishes data, time series, analyses, reports or even scientific journal on Statistics and social matters.

There existed an institute of National Youth Reporting, which is usually issued during the preparation of a state Youth Policy strategy, to evaluate and monitor it. For details see [Chapter 1.3](#) on the evaluation of the National Youth Strategy.

The following reports are publicly available:

- [Annual Youth Report 1998](#)
- [Annual Youth Report 2013](#)
- [Mid-term evaluation of the Strategy 2008-2009](#)
- [Mid-term evaluation of the Strategy 2010-2011](#)
- The Mid-term Report 2017 discussed by the Government on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2017 is no publicly available.
- the 2020 Youth report was prepared and discussed internally within the state execution in 2021.

In February 2018 also The Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic published its [outcome report on the funding in the Youth field](#) and Youth Strategy issues were also partially tackled.

Relevant are also the [education statistics](#) collected and presented by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Also the Ministry of Social Affairs has [employment related statistics](#) and data about [social-legal protection of Children](#).

Also in statistical yearbooks and registers of various sectors we can find relevant data, especially about criminality and health.

In 2014, the Ministry also supported a popular publication promoting the evidence in the youth sector '[Without rose-tinted glasses](#)' ('Bez růžových brýlí').

In 2014, the Open Society Fund Praha and Youthpolicy.org carried out an independent Youth Policy Review in the Czech Republic in accordance with the international standards of Youthpolicy.org. This study, '[Youth and Public Policies in the Czech Republic](#)' ('Mladí lidé a veřejné politiky v České republice'), brings other perspectives and also compares international and national data in many areas and evaluates the impact of public policy in the youth field in the Czech Republic.

In 2017 an independent Survey on [Youth Political Participation](#) and Relations to Democracy among young people in the Central European Countries (so called V4 countries) was also carried out by the Czech Council of Children and Youth in cooperation with the Slovak Youth Council and the Hungarian independent association of sociologists Rubeus.

In 2020 and 2021 the Czech Council of Children and Youth and the Slovak Youth Council run project "[Youth Values](#)" supported by the Erasmus+ Programme and its strategic partnerships which focus on researching values and value patterns among young people in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and 18 youth organizations (12 from the Czech Republic and 6 from Slovakia).

In the youth Health field, the WHO [HBSC](#) research is carried out regularly at the Palacky University in Olomouc.

Also, civil society including religious organizations are active in researching particular issues of young people in the Czech Republic.

Of special importance is the NGO People in Need and its Programme '[One World in Schools](#)' which has been carrying out a [survey among Czech high school students](#) regularly every three years since 2009. Comparability of the results allows for development to be easily seen. Due to its long-term engagement, the data are often used by the state or other public Authorities. The surveys are mostly focused on upper-secondary pupils and students.

## **Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field**

There is no specific annual budget allocation for research in the Youth field. The Youth department can within its scope support semi-budgetary organizations or NGOs within the State subsidy programmes for Youth work. The ministries can acquire research when ask through the system of sectorial research needs in cooperation with the Technologic Agency of the Czech Republic. As of February 2022 16 research needs are identified to be proceeded within this scheme with the impact on youth and related policies research, however, there is no direct topic for youth policy and youth work field.

All research activities in those fields can compete for support within the [research, development and innovation budgets](#).

## **1.7 Funding youth policy**

### **How Youth policy is funded**

National level

The budget for the Youth Policy is allocated within the [State budget - Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, subchapter For the Free time and Leisure time activities of Children and Youth](#) (Youth work and work with children).

Subsidies were provided to non-governmental non-profit organizations (hereinafter "NGOs") for the implementation of projects that contributed to the fulfilment of the objectives of the Youth Strategy for the period 2014-2020.

The support was focused primarily on regular and long-term activities for the widest possible range of children and youth and on the support of activities and activities that helped develop, expand and improve the activities of individual NGOs.

The above-mentioned programs supported important national events for children and youth, training and education of workers with children and youth, projects aimed at developing volunteering and voluntary work with children and youth, international cooperation of children and youth, etc.

The structure of the programs has been in 2016 divided into 4 sub-programs to make projects more comparable in terms of their content and regional impact. It was about: 1. Program for "NGOs recognized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for work with children and youth" (hereinafter "P1" or "Program 1") 2. Program for umbrella organizations (hereinafter referred to as "P2" or "Program 2") 3. Program for NGOs with branch associations (hereinafter referred to as "P3" or "Program 3") 4. Program for NGOs without subsidiary associations (hereinafter "P4" or "Program 4")

The allocations were as followed:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Program 1	117 800 000 CZK	137 135 783 CZK	139 566 100 CZK	141 144 100 CZK	146 967 350 CZK
Program 2	18 154 000 CZK	19 415 450 CZK	18 289 520 CZK	19 139 560 CZK	19 255 237 CZK
Program 3	18 054 000 CZK	11 001 100 CZK	11 607 500 CZK	63 623 626 CZK	64 452 342 CZK
Program 4	13 733 600 CZK	11 198 900 CZK	11 939 294 CZK	12 217 568 CZK	12 921 317 CZK

Since 2020, the programmes have been divided into 3 and **for the years 2022 - 2023 there is an internal ministerial Idea Concept for the programmes for the period 2022 – 2023** sustaining this division for programmes for "Recognized organizations", "Umbrella organizations" and "Transregional organizations".

The calls have been issued for support in [2021](#) and [2022](#).

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports supported in 2020 and 2021 also activities in regard to helping to integrate young people "back to normal" after the COVID-19 Lockdowns with the subsidies for special "[Summer Camps](#)".

Different ministries also covered the performance of the tasks arising from the approved National Youth Strategy for 2014 - 2020 from their budgets.

There are also other public policies targeting young people with their respective budgets but there is no or only limited link to Youth Policy and its Youth Strategy.

Within the framework of their cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the individual ministries used their grant programmes to meet the objectives of Strategy 2020. Projects are currently implemented that are financed by the European Structural funds, which are under the responsibility of respective ministries, including activities resulting from the mandatory sustainability of such projects.

## Regional level

Since 2000, the Czech Republic comprises thirteen regions and one capital city with a regional status. Regions enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy, which also covers the area of youth policies.

All regions have produced regional development strategies and other conceptual documents in which youth issues are included.

To increase the implementation of the National Youth Policy on the regional level, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports provides since 2016 state Subsidy programme "The

Support of Youth on a Regional level" ([Podpora mládeže na krajské úrovni](#)). [The last call was open in 2019](#) with the allocation of 24 mils. CZK (between years 2015 - 2018 the allocation was only 7 mil. CZK/year).

## What is funded?

For the years 2022 - 2023, there is an internal Idea Concept Paper for the support to Youth Work NGOs, however, it is not publically available.

Main objectives arising from the national Youth Strategy 2014 - 2020 was to support the work with Children and Youth. Previously there was a Funding Framework for the [state programmes supporting the work with Children and Youth 2011 - 2015](#), subsequently for [2016](#) and later was introduced the [Framework for years 2017 - 2020](#) focused on Non-Governmental Organisations in the Youth Field. In 2018 changes were adopted for the year [2019](#), in 2019 for the year [2020](#) and in 2020 for the year [2021](#).

## [Funding Framework 2017 - 2020](#) for Children and Youth work

The [Funding Framework](#) is provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The support focuses on regular and long-term action determined by the widest range of children and young people and on promoting actions and activities which contribute to the improvement, expansion and development activities of various youth organisations and organisations working with children and youth.

Goals of the programmes:

- Creation of free time and other selected activities within the membership base of individual NGOs;
- Creation of free time and selected NGOs targeted activities intended for non-organised children and youth;
- Significant international and national events aimed at children and young people;
- Training and education of children and youth;
- Creating conditions for the development of non-formal education;
- Development of volunteerism and volunteer work with children and youth;
- Education of children and youth in other fields (e.g. participation, mutual tolerance, healthy lifestyle);
- International cooperation for children and youth;
- Multicultural education.

Structure of the programmes:

1. For the NNO recognised by the state for their children and youth work
2. For umbrella organisations (national and regional level)
3. For the NNO with branch associations (large youth associations)
4. For the NNO without branch associations

Non-supported activities (covered by other programmes and policies)

- For NGOs having the area of physical education and sport as their main activity;
- For NGOs promoting and integrating the Roma community and national minorities;
- For NGOs aiming at preventing drug use, crime and other negative phenomena;
- To support NGOs dealing with impact only, single-sided or activities (e.g. only organising children's camps with no relation to the year-round activity, operation or renting of hiking and camp bases or other real estate, equipment, etc.);

- For projects aimed at providing social services under Act no. 108/2006 Sb., on social services;
- To support youth information centres.

### **The Programmes of state support for the work with Children and Youth**

The programmes of the state support for work with Children and Youth 2019 ([Programy státní podpory práce s dětmi a mládeží pro nestátní neziskové organizace - výzva pro rok 2019](#)) are targeted for the Non-Governmental Organisations working with Children and Youth including the Youth organisations.

The programmes cover up to 4 fields:

1. Programme for the organisations " recognised by the state for the work with Children and Youth"
2. Programme for the umbrella organisations (including the action Youth for Regions - [Mládež krajů](#))
3. Programme for the Organisations with the subsidiary units

Programme for the Organisations without the subsidiary units

The allocation for 2019 is 182 000 000 CZK (ca 7 280 000 EUR).

The allocation for 2020 is 236 000 000 CZK (ca 9 440 000 EUR).

### **Investment Programme no.133710 ([Investiční program 133710](#))**

State funding for the development of the material-technical base of extracurricular activities for children and youth in 2016 allocated ca 25 000 000 CZK (ca 926 000 EUR). For 2020 is the allocation 14 000 000 CZK (ca 560 000 EUR).

### **Programme Support of Youth on regional level ([Podpora mládeže na krajské úrovni](#))**

This programme is devoted for Regions which further multiply the amount and run own supporting calls on their respective regional level.

[For 2019](#) the maximum allocation is 42 000 000 CZK (1 680 000 EUR) when up to 30 000 000 CZK is devoted for the work with Children and Youth and up to 12 000 000 CZK for regional rounds of state competitions.

[For 2020](#) the programme is cancelled and the support for Youth Work and Leisure Time Activities of Youth is optional on the region's authorities.

There was also a state funding **programme for support of [Youth Information Centres](#)** available only for state certified Youth Information Centres which fulfilled the quality criteria adopted by the Ministry in 2011. Each centre could gain support of maximum 350 000 CZK (ca 13 000 EUR) later 200 000 CZK (7 100 EUR). For 2019 and 2020 this programme does not continue.

### **Financial accountability**

Financial support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is financially accountable to the Ministry and its control mechanisms. Supported Youth organisations and entities need to send a final financial report to the Ministry to gain the award of the subsidy successfully.

According to Czech legislation, all forms of legal entities also need to have their own financial accountability or control mechanisms and independent control bodies within their structures.

The whole financial support scheme of the Ministry is accountable to the Ministry of Finance and the Government as a whole. Independent controls could be carried out at any time by

the independent Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic. Planned controls of the programmes by the Supreme Audit Office are carried out every three years. The latest regular control was [scheduled for the period May 2017 until January 2018](#).

The [latest Conclusions of the control](#) are available at the Supreme Audit Office website.

Also, subjects of subsidies (youth NGOs) may be checked by the Supreme Audit Office, and they are from time to time. All general regular controls, as well as case-by-case controls, can be found in the [Register of the Supreme Audit Office](#).

Legislation applying to the Ministerial Youth Work Support scheme:

- Act no. 218/2000 Sb. on Budgetary rules
- Government Resolution of February 1, 2010, no. 92 on the Principles for government subsidies from the state budget of the Czech Republic to non-governmental organisations by central government authorities, as amended by Government Resolution dated 19 June 2013 no. 479 and Government Resolution dated August 6, 2014, no. 657

## Use of EU Funds

EU Action programmes:

The Czech Republic is fully involved in the European programme Erasmus+ and its Youth Chapter. In the Financial period 2007-2013, it was similarly involved with the Youth in Action Programme.

EU Structural Funds:

No special category recognising Youth projects within the Structural Funds of EU in the Czech Republic was created. Thus no central data on EU-funded Youth projects are being collected. However, many projects applied by third parties focus on young people as one of or the sole main target group - but usually it is the decision of the applicant and it is usually connected with a special issue or theme (such as youth employment - see [Chapter 3.6, citizenship education of youth](#), Czech-German cooperation in the youth field from the Goal3, etc.).

On the system level, the European Social Fund was used to support Youth Policy implementation at a national level by three national projects:

- ESF national project '[Keys for Life - Developing Key Competences in Leisure-Time and Non-Formal Education](#)': 15 298 202 CZK from the EU budget (national co-financing: 2 699 682 CZK) conducted from 1 April 2009 to 28 January 2013, with an additional 4 m CZK annually for follow-up activities.
- ESF national project '[K2 - Quality and Competitiveness in Non-formal Education](#)' conducted from 1 October 2012 to 30 June 2015 with 57 m CZK.
- ESF national project '[Connecting Formal and Non-Formal Education](#)' conducted from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2021.

First two projects were focused on the validation and recognition of Non-formal and Informal learning. For details see [Chapter 6.4 on the Validation and recognition of Non-formal and Informal learning](#).

Regarding the support of Non-Formal and Informal learning and for leisure-based education and their infrastructures, the Youth Departments [informs](#) on opportunities from the European Funds and their related calls.

To support youth employment, the Ministry of Social Affairs initiated several EU funded projects on supporting internships and apprenticeships. The European Social Fund is also linked with the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme in respective regions. For more details see [Chapter 3.5](#).



The only possible way how to determine the whole amount of EU funds supporting youth in the Czech Republic would be to assess every single project ever funded separately by various Operational Programmes and Funds.

## 1.8 Cross-border cooperation

### Cooperation with European countries

#### European dimension of youth policy - European Union

The Czech Republic has been a full member of the European Union since 2004, and the majority of existing European Union legislation and jurisdiction has been introduced into the Czech legal system and is being applied.

The most notable exception might be the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*: the Czech Republic, Poland and the United Kingdom all managed to negotiate exceptions from implementing the Charter in full.

The Czech Government takes EU-wide cooperation and coordination in the youth sector very seriously.

*The Renewed Framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) has played a pivotal role in informing and supporting youth policy and the youth sector in the country. All the strategic goals of the National Youth Strategy 2014 - 2020 were linked to the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy and followed the recommendations of the adopted Council of EU documents in the youth field.*

On 26 November 2018 *EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027* was approved by the Council. It builds on the previous *The Renewed Framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)*. It aims to create a stronger link between the EU and young people through inclusive dialogue, an effective structure for sharing ideas and providing information on actions taken for young people, and to achieve results through targeted priorities and actions.

#### European dimension of youth policy - Council of Europe

The Czech Republic is an active member of the Youth Policy cooperation within the Council of Europe. For the mandate 2016-2017, the Czech Council of Children and Youth also had its own youth delegate for the Advisory Council on Youth by the Council of Europe (elected via European Youth Forum as one of the 7 representatives of National Youth Councils) for term 2016 - 2017.

The Czech Republic was until 2020 participating in the [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy \(EKCYP\)](#) within the Council of Europe. There are no partial agreements between the Council of Europe and the Czech Republic in the Youth field.

#### European cooperation in the field of youth policy

The main consulting partners for the preparation and development of the National Youth Strategy for 2014-2020 at the international level, within the framework of Czech – Slovak bilateral cooperation, were [IUVENTA \(The Slovak Youth Institute\)](#) and the Department of Youth and Community Programmes of the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport.

The National Youth Strategy for 2014-2020 also took into account the results of the analysis of national policies of the Visegrad Group countries and the outcomes of the Czech Republic's involvement in an international peer-learning project between the years 2011-2013, coordinated by Germany with the participation of the Czech Republic, France, Belgium, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Sweden (3 working seminars in Berlin, Rotterdam, and Prague were organised within this project).

The Czech Republic was one of the participants in the international peer-learning project on cross-sectoral youth policies initiated by Luxemburg and Latvia (2015). Two seminars in Luxembourg and Riga were organised in 2015.

### **Cooperation of the Visegrad Group and Eastern Partnership countries in the field of youth**

Visegrad Group V4: Czech and Slovak Republics, Poland, Hungary

Eastern Partnership EaP: Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus

In June 2015, a [Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministries of the Visegrad Group Countries responsible for Youth and the Ministries of the Eastern Partnership Countries responsible for Youth in the Youth Field](#) was officially signed.

In Autumn 2015, the [Framework Action Plan of this cooperation for years 2015-2017](#) was set up. New Action Plan after 2017 is not available as of November 2018.

Visegrad Cooperation in the Youth Field has been re-established in 2010. Under the Czech Visegrad Group Presidency (V4 PRES: 1 July 2011 until 30 June 2012) in May 2012, the representatives of EaP countries were for the first time invited to join the annual Visegrad Group (V4) meeting in the field of youth in Prague.

Participants agreed on developing cooperation between the V4 countries (CZ, PL, HU, SK) and EaP countries in the field of youth on 3 levels:

1. Ministries responsible for youth;
2. Youth in Action national agencies;
3. National youth councils.

The youth delegates were encouraged to participate actively in the programme including in its decision-making parts. The agreed Action Plan of V4 and EaP cooperation within youth national councils and NGOs includes youth mobility issues.

Since that time, annual meetings of V4 and EaP countries in the same format and under the respective V4 Presidencies have been held.

Cooperation between the V4 and EaP countries in the field of youth is implemented within the official programme of the V4 country taking the Presidency of the Visegrad Group (it is a one-year rotating presidency which starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> July and finishes on the 30<sup>th</sup> June of the subsequent year).

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports organised two working seminars for the V4 and EaP participants:

- Working Seminar on Youth Volunteering for the Visegrad Group and Eastern Partnership Countries (8-10 September 2014, in Prague)
- Working seminar on Health and Well-being of Young People for the Visegrad Group and Eastern Partnership Countries (5-7 October 2015, in Prague)
- Another Working Seminar on Social Inclusion was held in June 2016 in Prague.

## **International cooperation**

### **Czech-Slovak cooperation in the Youth field**

- This is enhanced by the Protocol between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on cooperation (actually last version for years 2012-2016, 24/2012 Sbm.).

### **Czech-German cooperation in the Youth field**

- This is based on the Intergovernmental Treaty on cooperation and Youth Exchange from 1990, effective since 1992. Since then, the common Czech-German Council on

cooperation and Youth Exchanges, including both states and also youth representatives, meets every year. In 2013 the common topic of cooperation in the Youth Field was set up. Until 2015 it was Healthy Lifestyle. Since 2016 a new topic has been selected at the meeting in Cologne – Citizenship Education in memorial places.

- During the first Czech-German Youth meeting in Polička in 1996, a common Declaration of both ministers responsible for Youth was signed on the intention to establish a [Coordination Centre for Czech-German Youth Exchanges](#). This centre, also called Tandem has been established the year after, in 1997, and has one office in Pilsen, Czech Republic, and second in Regensburg, Germany.
- In 1997 the common Czech-German Declaration was also signed. Following the Declaration the Czech-German discussion Forum was also established. The Coordination Council of this Forum also established the [Czech-German Youth Forum](#) in 2001, which is represented at the annual conferences and also runs its own Czech-German youth projects.
- One semi-regular common activity is the Czech-German Youth Meeting. The eighth edition took place in 2014 in Terežín and was focused on Youth Work in memorial places. In September 2016 the ninth meeting was held again in Polička to commemorate the first meeting after 20 years, to evaluate the common cooperation in Youth field and to make new prospects for the future.
- Since 2015 there is also a Common Protocol on Strategic Partnership between the Foreign affairs ministries of both countries targeting also the Youth field.
- Since 2017, financial support for the systemic development of Czech-German cooperation in the field of education and youth has been provided on the basis of new rules of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports within a special subsidy program. Cooperation was established with [Tandem](#), which was financially supported in providing comprehensive support for Czech-German cooperation in the field of formal and non-formal education.
- In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports approved the allocation of financial support to Tandem to provide comprehensive support for Czech-German cooperation in the field of formal and non-formal education in 2018.

### **Czech-French cooperation in the Youth field**

- Czech-French cooperation in the Youth Field is established since 1993 when was signed the Treaty on cooperation in Youth Field and Sport and on Youth Exchanges.
- The cooperation is targeted at young people up to 26 years of age and the age limit is not valid for experts and youth workers.

There are [intergovernmental Treaties on Working holidays](#) between the Czech Republic and:

- South Korea
- New Zealand
- Israel
- Chile

There is also an intergovernmental Treaty with Canada to make work stays for the Youth easier and intergovernmental Treaty with Japan on work holiday visas. Citizens of Japan between the ages of 18 and 30 who obtain a visa for work leave are entitled to reside in the Czech Republic for the period of validity of the visa and may perform work without a work permit.

Every year there is a **bilateral exchange of Youth volunteer workers from the Youth NGOs between the Czech Republic and Israel**, which is coordinated by the National Youth Councils and supported by state funds.

## Youth Policy cooperation within the UN framework

The Czech Republic is active within the UNESCO activities in the Youth field.

Since 2016, the Czech Republic began participating in the UN Youth Delegate programme as a national follow-up activity of the outcomes of the Structured dialogue with Youth on Youth Empowerment and Youth Participation. The UN Youth Delegate Programme in the Czech Republic is linked to the system of the Structured Dialogue with Youth according to the National Youth Strategy 2014-2020.

## 1.9 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic hit the Czech Republic and as the Youth Policy field was already in turbulent conditions, structural and personal changes undergoing at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports moved the activities of the Youth Policy to the operational level. By the end of 2020, the Youth Strategy terminated without any other strategic follow-up. The fields of Non-formal education and Youth Organizations were added as a part to the Education 2030+ Strategy with the aim of ensuring the predictability for youth organizations. Administratively the agenda is connected with the primary education field, which opens questions about the main focus group and options to target the 15+ old young people and their activities and participation. However, one of the main corresponding state priorities is to support the connections between formal and non-formal education. No special publicly available documents to the development are present, however between the years 2021 - beginning 2022 the Ministry prepares an internal Action Plan for the field of Youth for the years 2022 - 2023. The draft version was consulted with the representatives of interested umbrella actors from the field.

### Ongoing debates

The policy and structural changes in the Ministry lead to the "disappearing" of the youth policy from the public debate, however, the new government marked the priorities in further development in the Governmental statement to maintain and widen the support to youth work and for connecting formal and non-formal education. Since autumn 2021 also public and expert assemblies on the topic took place in cooperation with the NGOs and political level - especially the Senate and the new minister of education, youth and sports. Within the House of Deputies of the Czech Parliament also the Subcommittee for Leisure Time and Youth continue working in the period after the election 2021. The main focus seems to be to cope with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemics, mental health, social inequalities and practical steps to support youth work and its financing within the NGOs and youth organizations sector.

## 2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

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**Volunteering of young people and volunteering in the field of work with Children and Youth have long tradition** in the Czech Republic. It is estimated that around a half of all volunteering activities in the country are done by young people and youth organisations.

**Volunteering is seen as part of a civil society ethos and role**, and thus the state does not regulate volunteering as such. Legal regulation only applies to specific voluntary service activities. **No specific Youth volunteering public scheme** exists. There is also the historical aspect of abusing volunteering by the communist regime between 1948 and 1989 for ideological purposes of the Communist party and the Communist state.

However, for a long time the Czech NGO sector and youth NGOs have been very strongly motivated to improve the conditions for volunteering from the state, and have been calling for better recognition of volunteering and the introduction of benefits from the state for volunteering by individuals as well as on the level of voluntary organisations.

The public discussion on the Act on supporting volunteering thus started after the millennium and especially after the 2011 – The European Year of Volunteering, which was also promoted during the Czech EU Presidency within the Council of the EU in 2009. During the year 2011, many activities happened in the Czech Republic about volunteering, and state bodies started preparation on the proper legal matters. However, it was not possible to reach a general consensus in society and between various sectors and public policies. Therefore the **Government decided by the end of 2016 to stop the preparation of a separate legal Act on volunteering.**

The **state focused more on supporting the development of general volunteering and supportive regional infrastructure, and youth voluntary activities are thus supported within the state youth work schemes** and by regional, local and private actors.

The Czech Council of Children and Youth, as an independent National Youth Council of most of the nationwide youth organisations, carried out the **SAFE mapping project**, monitoring and calculating the value and social benefit of the voluntary activities and work in the field of Youth, with very positive outcomes.

State Youth Policy also has been working on the **recognition and validation of skills** gained through volunteering and Non-Formal and Informal learning and some positive achievements have been reached (for details see [chapter 2.8](#)).

## 2.1 General context

**Youth volunteering is an important part of Czech society.** However, there are only limited comprehensive studies on this subject. Volunteering is usually spoken about in general terms. Furthermore, legislation in this area is limited.

[In its report on volunteering in youth field from 2008](#), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports states 'Youth voluntary activities realised in the framework of non-governmental, non-profit organisations have a fundamental significance in the Czech Republic. [...] According to serious estimations, the **share of young volunteers under 30 years of age is 50 % of all volunteers.**'

According to the research [Political participation of Youth in V4 countries](#) realized by the National Youth Councils from the Czech Republic and Slovakia and Hungarian sociologists from Rubeus in 2017, for the age group 16 - 24 years:

- **11% of young Czechs participate regularly in voluntary activities**
- 20% of young Czechs participate in any voluntary activity but it is rather exceptional
- 30 % of young Czechs were involved in some voluntary activities but are not anymore
- **40 % do not have any voluntary experience.**

In February 2018, **3 695 non-governmental organisations active in the field of organising activities for Children and Youth** (CZ-NACE code 94 991, [NKU 2018](#) acc. to ARES 2018). 2219 were associations (60,05 %), 1386 were adjacent associations (37,51 %). The rest covers other legal forms as foundations (0,05 %), Funds (0,11 %), Church legal entities (0,03 %) and others.

### Historical developments

A Brief History of volunteering in the Czech Republic is given in the [Study on Volunteering](#) (Governmental policy concept towards NGOs until 2020). There is also an [alternative study](#) from the civil society sector.

Volunteering, as understood today, emerged in the period of the [Czech National Revival](#) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Organised patriotic activities led to the establishment of different clubs, foundations and Civic Associations. The organisations aimed at supporting art, culture, science, education, and also sport, singing, fire-fighting and other activities. Many of those are still active, e.g. *Hlávka Foundation*, *Sokol*, *Volunteer Firemen's Associations*, and *other*.

In the 1870s more than 3000 associations existed, in the 1890s more than 10 000 did. Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, church and social activities were based on voluntary aid.

In 1911 the [Scout movement came to Bohemia](#) and it gained a strong position in the field of youth work and youth engagement in societal development. Scouts actively participated in the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. In the first days and weeks of freedom and independence, the Czech scouts joined the services of the Czechoslovak government and ensured reliable and fast mail deliveries between different agencies. By WWII there were more than 60 thousand members (both men and women). After 1945, more than 200 000 people applied to become members of a renewed Scout movement, called 'Junák' in Czech, which was more than three times bigger than it was in 1938.

A distinctive dimension of youth volunteering was also within the [Czech Tourist Club](#) (Klub českých turistů). The Tourist Club was developed mostly by young members for various sports activities, but also for the protection of nature, development of a touristic marking system or construction of tourist lodging houses, etc. Marking tourist trails and their regular maintenance is still one of the most important Club member activities. Since 1889 they have marked trails for pedestrians, since 1997 they have also marked trails for skiers and cyclists, and since 2005 they have also covered horse tracks. The network of marked trails for pedestrians is considered the best in Europe, concerning its density, quality, and coverage of all the Czech territory.

**After the foundation of independent Czechoslovakia in 1918**, youth organisations and schools were the centres of social life of young people. These organisations were usually a part of a well-structured network including a wide range of centres, from local to provincial or national.

**During the Second World War**, many voluntary organisations were dissolved or transformed according to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia's administration goals. The German Nazi occupation created the Children and Youth Curatorium to influence Youth (for details see e.g. Kouřil 2015) which was the tool of Nazi power over Youth.

**In the Communist period after 1948**, youth organisations were reduced; church youth organisations especially were dissolved (Orel, YMCA, YWCA, Junák) and sometimes replaced with their communist substitutes (such as ČSTV, ČSM, Pionýr), or just subordinated to the regime's control. All organisations from a specific location were united into the all-state organisation, the so-called "National Front".

Only communist party members could acquire a higher level position, which led to weaker ideologisation on a local level where non-members of the communist party were acting.

As a specific model of a voluntary organisation in socialist times, we can consider the dissent organisations of regime opponents. They often had a high professional quality, were not centralised and managed to get out of the regime's control. Some Young people were also active there.

The volunteering organisational structure included work teams. A considerable part of management was moved to enterprises and different work places. The motivation for state-enforced volunteering were competitions and symbolic remunerations. Under political pressure and propaganda, volunteering was used for 'building' a socialist society (big socialist constructions, voluntary jobs, cleaning etc.). Non-participation in 'voluntary activities' was progressively penalised, and that devalued any spontaneous civil activity.

[Frič and Pospíšilová](#) (2010) describe the approach of socialism towards volunteering in three gradually merging and replacing phases:

- An agitation phase - characterised by enthusiasm for volunteering in favour of socialism that was awakened by propaganda.
- A repressive phase - characterised by enforcing volunteering through intimidation and blackmailing, which in turn caused a voluntary activity to lose its authenticity.
- A ritualist phase - Voluntary activities lost the sense, both functionaries and citizens were only simulating, to a certain degree, volunteering in favour of the regime and avoided it. The only thing that was left was a false ritual.

Changes came during the so-called '**Prague spring**' in 1968, but the subsequent Soviet invasion stopped most of them until the end of the regime. In the 1970s most civic activities and associations were officially banned, including Scouts, or even the oldest Czech ecological NGO Independent association of nature's friends (Nezávislé sdružení přátel přírody).

A current independent youth organisation existing from the communist era is the 'Brontosaurus Movement' ([Hnutí Brontosaurus](#)), established in 1974. The movement is promoting education and ecological responsibility.

'Pionýr' (Pioneers), which was the official youth organisation of the Communist party turned into an apolitical movement after the communist regime fell.

**After the Velvet revolution in 1989**, citizens started to be interested in the surrounding world and humanistic values, and a nongovernmental sector arose again. The idea of a civil society based on cooperation and mutual solidarity of autonomous and free citizens became the underlying issue (the main proponent of this idea was president Václav Havel). A new national network of organisations emerged. The majority of organisations kept their membership in big unions, but also registered themselves formally and gained a legal subjectivity.

Many associations abolished by the communists were re-established such as YMCA, Sokol, and Scouts or Junák. Many new associations were founded, covering culture, sport, children and youth, charities, social issues, and health.

New civil society and association legislative included:

- Laws on [citizens' associations](#) (Act no. 83/1990 Sb.)
- Act on [the freedom of religious faith, and the position of churches and religious societies](#) (Act no. 308/1991 Sb.)
- Later Act [on public beneficiary corporations](#) (Act no. 248/1995 Sb.) and [on foundations and funds, an Amendment of the Civil Code mentioning interest associations](#) (Act no. 227/1997 Sb.) were adopted.

### Professional voluntary centres

First emerged at the end of the 1990s. The first National Voluntary Centre was called [HESTIA](#), and it opened in 1999. It was founded with the support of the Open Society Fund and the Points of Light Foundation (as one of the national voluntary centres in 14 countries of the former communist bloc within the project called Programme for Volunteering Development).

There is also [Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic with emphasis on ensuring regional and professional accessibility of volunteering in the form of volunteer](#). The implementation period of the project is 2016 - 2021. The project also deals with the analysis of youth volunteering and gives examples of good practice of volunteer centers in the regions.

### Political and legislative influence

A significant contribution to volunteering development was the UN General Assembly's Resolution no. 52/17 from January 18<sup>th</sup> 1998, that was co-authorised by the Czech

Republic, designating 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers and encouraging a legal arrangement for volunteering.

The Act on [voluntary service](#) (Act no. 198/2002 Sb.) came into force on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2003. However, it only **concerns a small part of the voluntary sector** – voluntary service, not other forms of volunteering.

In relation to youth, it only includes a partial arrangement (consent of a legal representative is required for a child to join a voluntary service).

2011 was designated as the European Year of Volunteering in order to support active citizenship. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic helped promote and implement the issue during the Czech EU presidency. On a national level, it has been supported by the Ministry in the form of a special grant programme called '[European Year of Volunteering](#)'. Within the programme the Ministry financially supported NGO activities in the field of volunteering.

**In sum**, we can observe a long history of volunteering in the Czech territory. We can also see a fundamental disruption of the ethos of volunteering during the Second World War and in the communist era.

The Czech voluntary sector restoration started after the fall of communism. It was mostly due to NGO sector activities, without overall coordination or systematic legal and financial support.

For a long time, legislative embedment of volunteering has been unsuccessfully debated (unlike specific voluntary services, defined in 2002).

## Main concepts

There is **no specific definition on youth volunteering, nor volunteering as such**.

In the [State Policy toward Non-governmental organisations](#), it is only stated that volunteering is an extraordinary positive phenomenon which is essential and typical for civil society and it is a means of citizen participation in public and political issues.

The state policy differentiates two kinds of volunteering:

1. Voluntary service, which is marginal in numbers
2. Wide volunteering, which is not legislatively covered but is usually acted out within non-governmental organisations

The Act [On voluntary service](#) (Act no. 198/2002 Sb.), §2 defines **voluntary service** as follows:

'(1) Voluntary service is the following activity performed by a volunteer:

a) Assisting the unemployed, persons dependent on welfare, the disabled, the elderly, ethnic minorities, immigrants, persons released from prison, drug addicts, victims of domestic violence, and children, youth, and families in spending their free time;

b) Assisting during floods, environmental, or humanitarian disasters, protecting and improving the living environment, protecting and maintaining cultural heritage, and organising cultural and charitable activities;

c) Assisting in the process of implementing development programmes as well as in operations, projects, and programmes organised by international organisations and institutions, including NGOs.

1. Activities performed to satisfy the personal interests of an individual, activities performed as a part of a business or any other income generating activity, and/or performed by an employee, a member of a service, or a member of an organisation shall not be considered voluntary service.



2. Voluntary service shall be in its nature short-term or, should it exceed three months, long-term.'

§3 of the Act no. 198/2002 Sb. also defines, in a **narrow and utilitarian way**, the term **volunteer**:

(1) **A volunteer** may be any physical person who is:

- a) Over 15 years of age, should the activity in question be a volunteer service performed in the territory of the CR;
- b) Over 18 years of age, should the activity in question be volunteer service performed abroad and should such person have volunteered, based on his/her capabilities, knowledge, and capacity, to perform volunteer service abroad.

(2) A volunteer shall perform a volunteer service in keeping with a contract concluded with the deploying organisation; for a long-term volunteer service or in the case of a short-term volunteer service performed abroad, the contract shall be concluded in writing.

(3) Should the physical person be employed, be a member of a service, or a member of an organisation, or should he/she be a student, he/she shall perform the volunteer service in his/her free time, i.e. not as a part of the employment, service, membership in an organisation, or school.

(4) Military conscripts or persons serving the alternative civilian service shall not perform volunteer service.

(5) Members of a social cooperative cannot render voluntary services for their own social cooperative.

As seen above, it is possible to consider youth volunteering within the framework of the Act on voluntary service, since voluntary service is available to young people from the age of 15, or 18 in the case of voluntary service performed abroad.

**In practice, volunteering in the Czech Republic is implemented mostly outside of the scope of this Act.**

A commonly used distinction between formal and informal volunteering, or in other words, between volunteering performed within and outside of the organisational structures (mostly NGOs), is inapplicable in the Czech Republic, because so-called formal volunteering can be performed either within the scope of the Act on voluntary service, or outside of its scope.

The **only legal reference to 'youth voluntary service'** can be found in the Act [On the residence of foreign nationals in the territory of the Czech Republic](#) (Act no. 326/1999 Sb.)

It is a part of transposition of European legislation (Directive 2004/114/EC) facilitating obtaining a long-term residence permit in case of young people volunteering in a Czech host organisation.

The **definition of 'youth voluntary service'** according to the factual intention of this Act (no definition is contained in the Act itself) is:

'It is the voluntary service of a youth between 18 and 25 years of age aimed at acquiring practical and professional experience of a foreign national and carried out in a domestic host organisation, provided that the same is taking place as a part of a project under a programme or an initiative of the European Union or under a similar governmental programme and provided that the same is organised or coordinated by a legal entity accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and established in the Czech Republic or a legal entity established abroad but having its organisational unit in the Czech Republic.

- The duration of stay will be established for a period of 1 year, in exceptional cases, if a programme will take longer than one year, for a period that is adequate to the duration

of a programme. Duration of stay cannot be extended and the purpose of the stay cannot be changed.

- In the framework of the application procedure for a long-term residence permit, a foreigner will not be requested to prove his/her knowledge of the Czech language.'

## 2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

### Governance

In the Czech Republic, we can observe a **nondirective approach to the management of formal volunteering**. Formal voluntary activities fall within the scope of the **Act On voluntary service** (see [Chapter 2.1](#)); in detail, it concerns the condition that they take place in organisations that were accredited by the Ministry of the Interior (MI). In these cases, the responsible authority is MI, the Department of Security Policy and Crime Prevention.

Volunteering in the Czech Republic, however, takes place **mainly in non-accredited organisations** and therefore it is **not regulated by any specific law**, and this is true also in cases that are officially marked as formal volunteering. Methodologically, in some cases, organisations are supported with materials from various ministries in a specific field. Also, organisations themselves try to regulate voluntary activities through their own documents.

### Production of methodological materials in the field of social work, health care and emergencies:

- The Act [On social services](#) (Act no. 108/2006 Sb. as amended) refers to the Act on voluntary services, while rules for **voluntary activities in social services are governed by the [Standard of quality of social services](#)**.
- The position of volunteers is similar to that of other employees of organisations providing social services.

**The Ministry of Health (MH)** refers to the Act on voluntary service. It also **defines specificities of volunteering in health care through [methodological recommendations](#)**. These recommendations deal with various aspects of volunteering in medical facilities, from the introduction of voluntary programmes to their evaluation.

### [Methodological material](#) concerning volunteering in emergencies:

- Published by the Ministry of the Interior in accordance with the Act on voluntary service.
- The document provides an overview of the legal framework of volunteering in emergencies and a set of practical steps to be followed in emergencies to involve volunteers securely and effectively.

**Strategic goals in the field of youth volunteering** are also declared by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) in its [Youth Strategy 2020](#) (see [Chapters 2.3](#)).

One specific possibility of state volunteering is in the **Army Reserves**:

- Aktivní zálohy ([Army Reserves](#)) is created based on the Act no. 585/2004 Sb. on Army Obligations and its Arrangement (Army Law) and Act no. 45/2016 Sb. on the service of soldiers in reserve valid since 1st of July 2016.
- According to the legislation, a soldier in Reserve is a citizen who has reached at least 18 years of age and who voluntarily assumes the military obligation and successfully passes a six-week military training.

- For the voluntary service persons can gain a reward in the amount of 18 000 CZK (ca 700 EUR) a year. Higher Education Students can gain a bonus of 6000 CZK (ca 230 EUR) in the first year of voluntary service.

No other binding or methodological documents on volunteering can be found at a ministerial level.

**The main responsible authority in the volunteering field is the Ministry of the Interior**, which is responsible for implementation of the Act on voluntary service.

Other areas can be found where other actors (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) are engaged.

These cases are clearly identifiable efforts to influence voluntary activity governed by the Act on voluntary service, but also voluntary activity that takes place outside of the scope of the Act (especially in cases of methodological materials).

It necessary to add that in the case of cross-border volunteering (e.g. *Evropská dobrovolná služba*/European Voluntary Service) the responsible authority is MEYS's sponsored organisation *Dům zahraniční spolupráce* (The Centre for International Cooperation in Education).

Also in the field of volunteering not governed by the Act on voluntary service, we can see efforts of individual organisations to undertake a coordinated approach by creating their own codices or directives for work and definition of volunteers' statutes. These are based on self-regulation and fall under the Civil Law.

## Main actors

### Ministry of the Interior

Is responsible for the legal regulation of voluntary service.

Until 2017, the Ministry was [working](#) on a new law that would define volunteering in its broader sense, see also [Chapter 2.8](#). (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports were engaged in the process of preparation).

However, the initiative was abolished due to the different perspectives of various Ministries and sectors.

### Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Supports youth volunteering and volunteering for youth as one of the priorities in the last state [Youth Strategy](#) 2014 - 2020 (Strategical Goal Nr. 9 '*To create favourable conditions for volunteering for young people, including valuation and recognition of voluntary activities*'). The support to volunteering of young people is mentioned also in the [Education 2030+ Strategy](#).

### [Czech National Agency for International Education and Research](#)

A semi-budgetary organisation established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Administrates the programme Erasmus+ and the [European Solidarity Corps](#).

### Other non-state actors influencing youth volunteering

In February 2018, 3 695 non-governmental organisations active in the field of organising activities for Children and Youth (CZ-NACE code 94 991, [NKU 2018](#) acc. to ARES 2018). 2219 were associations (60,05 %), 1386 were adjacent associations (37,51 %). The rest covers other legal forms as foundations (0,05 %), Funds (0,11 %), Church legal entities (0,03 %) and others.

## Czech Council of Children and Youth (Česká rada dětí a mládeže, CRDM)

- Is an umbrella organisation of Children and Youth associations in the Czech Republic and the official National Youth Council.
- In 2020 CRDM has 97 [member organizations](#). In 2018 194 youth organizations were also members of the Regional Youth Councils within the CRDM.
- CRDM comments on a regular basis on relevant political processes and is one of the non-state proponents of the new Act on volunteering.
- Within the European Year of Volunteering in 2011, CRDM served as a leader of the working group dealing with volunteering for young people.
- CRDM supports awareness on volunteering among young people through various projects such as [ADAM](#) or [72 hours](#) for volunteering.
- Methodologically supports social, economic and political conditions for volunteering for young people, e.g. through the [SAFE project](#) which in the Czech context implemented the measurement of voluntary work by the International Labour Organisation, or [Roads to recognition](#) to support validation of educational outcomes gained by volunteering and others.

### Associations of Children and Youth

- Concerns the performance of youth volunteering.
- Majority of them are associated within the CRDM and regional youth council's structure.
- The overall list of CRDM member organisations can be found on [ČRDM webpages](#).
- In practice, each member who is more than 15 years old has his/her own voluntary role within the organisation – either regular in the form of any function, or occasionally, mainly in summer camps and other events throughout the year.

### National Association for Volunteering, z.s ([Národní asociace dobrovolnictví](#))

- It is a voluntary member association for organisations dealing with volunteering and voluntary programmes.
- Main activities focus on the [5P volunteer programme](#) dedicated to school-age children and supporting the social-legal protection of children.

### Volunteering in sport:

- Based on Ministry of Education [best practices report from 2011](#), there are around 200 000 of organised volunteers in the sport in the Czech Republic who ensure, nationwide, various activities necessary for the existence of organised sport. By the end of 2018, there will be filled by the data new [Register for sports](#) bringing more accurate information.
- It concerns both highly professional work (trainers, instructors) that demands certain education, and work that does not require professional competencies (organising, transport, maintenance etc.).
- Without volunteers' contribution, sport would become more unavailable.

A number of smaller organisations implement youth **voluntary programmes** not only on a national level but also **abroad**, such as INEX-SDA, AIESEC, *AFS Mezikulturní programy* (AFS Intercultural Programmes) and others.

### General distribution of responsibilities

There is no binding distribution of responsibilities between top-level and regional and local Authorities in the field of volunteering.

However, there are specific initiatives of the Ministry of the Interior to support the development of volunteering at a local level, especially with the EU-funded project '[Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic with an emphasis on ensuring the regional and professional availability of volunteering in the form of volunteer centres](#)' which is focused on supporting regional volunteering centres and creating guidelines for their operation in years 2016-2021. Part of the project is to create a national strategy for volunteering development. However, this is mostly in social services and public administration. There is also proposal of Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic 2019-2021.

Another initiative of the Ministry of the Interior funded by EU funds to support volunteering at the local level in the area of security was a project called '[Security Volunteer](#)' (2014-2017), providing financial support to municipalities to introduce volunteering to improve safety and security at a local level. There is a [manual](#) for municipalities on how to run such activities.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

As there is no youth voluntary scheme or regulation directly on youth volunteering, there is also no specific cross-sectoral cooperation on the issue.

There [were structures](#) during and after the European Year of Volunteering in 2011 when there were an Inter-sectorial coordination committee and 11 thematic working groups. One of them was dedicated to volunteering regarding work with Children and Youth. The Group is not formally active anymore, but informally the representatives are in touch, and they have been involved for example in the preparation of the Act on supporting volunteering when it was relevant. Some other thematic groups are still working in social or health issues. Some of them have thus found other task, some finished, such as the thematic group on culture when the guidelines for volunteering in culture were created.

Cross-sectoral cooperation is thus up to the needs of respective sectors and policy domain. Ministry of Interior is dealing with the issue.

## 2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

### Existence of a National Strategy

There **is neither a unified national strategy for youth volunteering and its development** nor any national strategy for volunteering in general.

The issue of youth volunteering is handled by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS).

One of the key documents that has deal, among other things, with the issue, was the [Youth Strategy 2014-2020](#):

- Youth volunteering forms part of the horizontal priorities, namely in point 4 '*Involving young people in the decision-making process and participation*'.
- Support of youth volunteering is one of the priorities, being considered as a tool for stimulation of active and responsible citizenship and, also, as a contribution to societal coherence.
- Development of volunteering is formulated in strategic goal no. 9: '*To create favourable conditions for youth volunteering including the valuation and recognition of volunteering*'.

National Concept (strategy) for volunteering development [is prepared](#) by the Ministry of Interior within the EU funded project in the period 2016 - 2021. It should focus on fields and regional accessibility of volunteering in the form of voluntary centres.

## Scope and contents and Responsible authority

The topic of youth volunteering is handled by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports with Strategic Goal (SG) No. 9 of the Youth Strategy and has three Operational Goals (OG) with various measures. Ministry of the Interior (MI) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) share responsibility with MEYS as follows:

### SG 9: To create favourable conditions for youth volunteering including the valuation and recognition of volunteer activities

SG 9: To create favourable conditions for youth volunteering including the valuation and recognition of volunteer activities

OG A: To promote volunteering	Responsibility	Co-responsibility	
Measure:	1. To promote the legislative incorporation of volunteering in publicly beneficial legal entities and in the position of the beneficiary organisation, as well as in state-subsidised organisations and educational legal entities	MI	MEYS
	2. To contribute to the legislative determination of conditions for volunteering by people in their employment, membership or other legal relations with their organisation	MI	
	3. To develop tools for the recognition of competencies obtained through volunteering and to encourage their use	MEYS	MI MLSA
	4. To support the development of methods to evaluate volunteer work for all areas of volunteer activities	MEYS	
SG 9: To create favourable conditions for youth volunteering including the valuation and recognition of volunteer activities			
OG B: To improve youth awareness of the opportunities for volunteer activities and their benefits	Responsibility	Co-responsibility	
Measure:	1. To reinforce the role of youth information centres and Eurodesk in the provision of information on volunteer activities and their benefits	MEYS	
	2. To reinforce youth awareness of volunteering options through	MEYS	

schools, educational facilities and NGOs

3. To promote the dissemination of good practices MEYS

SG 9: To create favourable conditions for youth volunteering including the valuation and recognition of volunteer activities

OG C: To promote the improvement of the quality of work with volunteers Responsibility Co-responsibility

Measure: 1. To support the system of awarding accreditations to organisations working with volunteers MI

2. To promote the certification of work provided by volunteers and its recognition MI MEYS

3. To support the announcement of grant programmes contributing to the quality of work with volunteers MI MEYS

4. To provide methodological support to organisations and institutions working with volunteers MI MEYS

MEYS – Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports MLSA – Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs MI – Ministry of the Interior

OG – Objective goal

SG – Strategic goal

**Project Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic with emphasis on ensuring regional and professional accessibility of volunteering in the form of volunteer centres of the Ministry of Interior.**

Period: 2016 – 2021

The project aims to create a more accessible and higher quality of services in the field of social inclusion through volunteering. Further setting up a favourable environment for the performance and development of volunteer activities, for the broadest possible involvement of Volunteers and voluntary organisations, promoting the importance of all volunteer activities and strengthening the recognition of volunteers and volunteerism in society in General.

One of the objectives is to draft "concept of the development of volunteering in the Czech Republic". The emphasis is on the provision of regional and professional accessibility of volunteering by the form of volunteer centres. The focus is on system support and development of volunteer activities, increased availability, and the professionalisation of the voluntary service centres and their clients.

## Revisions/ Updates

The Youth Strategy was valid in the period 2014-2020. On 3rd of May 2017 the mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy was approved by the Government. No changes were expected. Final internal evaluation of the strategy took place in 2021 and since that, there is no new Strategy after 2020. However, in 2021 - 2022 the Ministry is preparing an internal Action Plan for the field of Youth for the period 2022 - 2023, considering especially the voluntary youth work activities and their further development and support.

## 2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

### National Programme for Youth Volunteering

There is **no specific national Programme for Youth volunteering**.

The Czech Republic implements a European programme for young volunteers – **The European Solidarity Corps and the Youth Chapter of the New Erasmus+ Programme**.

On the national level, there exists only a concept of general 'Voluntary Service'. This concept is legally defined by the [Act on voluntary service](#) (no. 198/2002 Sb.) that came into force on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2003. Young people from the age of 15 can volunteer in the CR, and young people from the age of 18 can volunteer abroad under this framework in voluntary service as any other citizens.

Data concerning the individual level or youth participation in this programme are not available. **There exist no short-term or long-term goals concerning the number of (young) people in voluntary service.** [Lists of accredited projects under this framework](#) are published by the Ministry of the Interior.

### Children and Youth associations

Key actors in the sector of volunteering performed by young people are the **associations of children and youth**, mostly united within the Czech Council of Children and Youth (ČRDM) or its regional counterparts if the youth organisations are of regional and local and not pan-regional or state character. In practice, each member who is more than 15 years old has their own voluntary role within the organisation – either regular in a form of any function, or occasional, mainly in summer camps and other events throughout the year.

There were **57 426 volunteers aged between 15 and 26 years in the ČRDM organisations in 2015**.

### Volunteering in sport

Based on the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) [best practices report](#) from 2011, there are around 200 000 organised volunteers in the sport in the Czech Republic who ensure different activities necessary for the functioning of organised sport, especially for children and young people.

## Funding

The state is supporting youth volunteering within Children and Youth associations and organisations through [Programmes of the State Support of Youth Work](#). See details in [Chapter 1.7](#).

Since 2003, as the national volunteering authority, the Ministry of the Interior has provided grants to non-governmental, non-profit organisations that submit a project accredited as [set by the act](#) on **voluntary service**. **No division of youth volunteering and general volunteering is known**.

Since 2011, the support for organisations using the voluntary service framework has been stabilised at around 10 million CZK annually (ca 370 000 EUR).



These are funds from the Ministry of the Interior budget. Other funds have not been declared.

However, there are specific initiatives of the Ministry of the Interior to support development of general volunteering at local level, especially with the EU Funded project '[Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic with an emphasis on ensuring the regional and professional availability of volunteering in the form of volunteer centres](#)', which in the years 2016-2021 is focused on supporting regional volunteering centres and creating guidelines for their operation. Part of the project is to create a national Strategy for volunteering development.

There is also a [proposal of Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic 2019-2025](#).

## Characteristics of youth volunteering

**There is no official public data source on youth volunteering** in general.

Since 2005 in the Czech Republic, only a limited source of consolidated data on general volunteering has been available from the Czech Statistical Office (CSO).

This data shows e.g. the [number volunteers re-counted full time](#) (since 2008 around 25 thousand volunteers have full-time workloads within NGOs).

The economic value of their work would be around 45 million a year.

[Amount of volunteered hours within NGOs](#) is around 44 million a year.

There are also general [numbers on volunteers in 21 sectors](#) of industry, e.g.:

- Agriculture, forestry or fishery (from 400 to 1900 volunteers a year)
- Public administration, defence and compulsory social security (from 700 to 3400 volunteers a year)
- Cultural, entertaining and recreational activities (from 2500 to 9000 volunteers a year)
- 'Other activities' data (from 11400 to 22300 volunteers a year).

This summary indicates deficiencies of this approach to collection of data on volunteering in the CR.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in its [report on volunteering in the youth field](#) from 2008 states: 'according to serious estimations, **the share of young volunteers until 30 years of age is 50% of all the volunteers.**'

[A partial study was done by Frič](#) in 2015 for the concept of the State Policy Towards Non-governmental Non-profit Organisations until 2020. He claims that the amount of organised volunteers in the CR has been relatively stable since 1991 and around 30% of the population has been participating. According to him, the age category of volunteers between 15 and 34 years takes around 30%. However, his data are based on different sources, which should be taken into account when evaluating their comparability.

Furthermore, [partial information is provided by the Ministry of Health](#). In the Record of volunteers at healthcare providers in the year 2013, there were around 2400 volunteers who worked around 80500 hours. No data are available concerning the age of the volunteers; it is therefore impossible to state numbers of young volunteers in health care.

Other partial results are shown in the research done by Janíková, who carried out a questionnaire survey on volunteering in social services and found out that more than 50% of responding organisations had several years of experience with volunteers. A similar [study by Dostál and Vyskočil](#) from 2013 shows that one-third of volunteers working for ADRA voluntary centres were in the youth age category.

**The above-mentioned sources and information have shown several essential deficiencies.**

Firstly, there is **not a unified methodology** that would enable us to describe Czech volunteering in all its diversity: as we have seen, the Czech Statistical Office's data are also limited.

Secondly, **no detailed and continual data** are available, that would enable us to thoroughly analyse not only individual areas of volunteering but also a profile of volunteers in these areas.

**The SAFE project of the Czech Council of Children and Youth attempted in 2015 to solve the problem** of lack of data. Goals of the SAFE project (The System of Record Keeping and Valuation of Voluntary Work as a Tool for Improving Transparency and Effectiveness of NGO Economic Management) were:

- To improve transparency in voluntary work in NGOs in two areas in which volunteering is significantly used – work with children and youth and environmental protection;
- To research the specifics of many different types of voluntary work in these areas and take them into consideration during record keeping and quantification of the value of voluntary work not only directly in NGOs but also on the side of the public administration;
- To implement proven methodologies from abroad and adjust them into identified specifics in the Czech Republic.

The SAFE project took into account the International Labour Organisation's methodology for valuation and record keeping of voluntary work. Inspiration also came from abroad, from organisations which already counted and kept records of voluntary work for different purposes.

The new specific methodology for record keeping of voluntary work, compatible with foreign standards of measuring and record keeping, was **proposed and piloted between May 2014 and April 2015**.

Results are discussed with the Czech Statistical Office to arrange the methodology and to conduct a representative survey in 2023, and with the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic to define a methodology for value calculation and accounting of voluntary work.

The SAFE project worked with results obtained from more than 2800 volunteers working in 34 organisations in 2 areas – work with children and youth and environment.

**According to the findings of the SAFE project:**

- One volunteer works on average 324 voluntary hours a year
- The average hourly wage, counted by the weighted average methodology, was 143 CZK.
- In total, 2898 volunteers carried out work worth 110 million CZK. If re-counted to all 36 861 volunteers working in the monitored youth work organisations and environmental organisations, they carried out work in the overall volume of 11 959 563 hours per year that was worth 1 717 569 564 CZK.

Interesting data about volunteering were brought by [research on Civic Engagement in 2015](#) done by the Centre for Civic Education.

Different forms of civic engagement have been researched based on a huge data set provided by a private marketing company and weighted on the whole Czech society according to the data from the Czech Statistical Office.

They could categorise society into 6 segments according to the level of individual activity of any form in last year of the lives of those individuals, and it is also possible to follow the age categories, including Young people aged 15 – 24 years and 25 – 34 years of age.

According to this study, we can see that **young people are the most engaged part of society, especially in political activities (52.6% of the politically active are young people until 34) or as helping hands on different occasions (41.2% of the helping**

**hands are young people until 34).** Interestingly, young people aged 15 to 34 are underrepresented in the apolitical active engagements (only 33.2% of apolitically active).

The segments and generational share of them are as follows:

## Support to young volunteers

**Financial support for volunteers outside of the accredited voluntary service** is an issue of Civic Law agreement between the organisations and individuals and has thus no specific statute when this is not an agreement between those sides. There are no impacts on public social or health insurance nor on taxes.

Regarding the support of youth volunteering and volunteering in the youth sector, specific state-funded [insurance is provided and managed by the Czech Council of Children and Youth](#).

It consists of possibilities for:

1. Accident insurance
2. Liability insurance of youth organisations
3. Liability insurance of volunteers
4. Employees insurance by youth organisations

Accident and Liability insurance is provided free of charge (funded by a state yearly grant) for members of the Czech Council of Children and Youth, for members of the Regional Councils of Children and Youth and youth organisations which have been granted yearly support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Others can join this insurance as well, however for a small annual contribution per individual (still very favourable compared to other kinds of private insurance).

The Czech Council of Children and Youth manages the administration and public procurement on the private insurance company every three years. It brings favourable conditions for young people and youth volunteers under this Framework.

## Support under the voluntary service

Financial support of individual volunteers in the Czech Republic is officially possible only under the voluntary service according to the [Act on voluntary service](#), article 5 which states:

'f) should the nature of the service require so, on **compensation of costs associated with the necessary preparation** for the role of a volunteer in a certain voluntary service programme of a project, on **compensation of the travel costs abroad and back**, on **personal allowance** to cover for general expenses in the place of deployment, and on **provision of working equipment** and personal protective equipment;

(...)

(3) **The contract** concluded between the volunteer and the deploying organisation on a long-term voluntary service **may also include a provision** guiding that prior to deployment, the volunteer shall apply for the pension insurance, should he/she meet the conditions stipulated in the special instrument of law, **the deploying organisation shall pay, on behalf of such person, pension insurance premiums based on at least the minimum assessment base**, should the long-term voluntary service be performed for an average of over 20 hours a week.'

and, furthermore, as stated in article 7 of the Act a volunteer is entitled to insurance:

'(1) **The deploying organisation shall**, before the deployment of the volunteer to the volunteer service, **conclude an insurance contract to cover the liability for damages on property or health** caused by or to the volunteer in the course of the volunteer service. The volunteer shall be liable only for the damage he/she caused intentionally.

(2) **The deploying organisation shall**, before the deployment of the volunteer to the volunteer service abroad, **conclude**, based on the nature of the service and the particularities of the country of deployment, **a health insurance contract for the volunteer.**'

In other words, a volunteer is entitled in case of voluntary service performed under the Act no. 198/2002 Sb. as amended, to the following financial support:

- compensation of costs associated with the necessary preparation for the role of a volunteer
- compensation of the travel costs
- personal allowance (general expenses in the place of deployment)
- compensation of working and personal protective equipment
- insurance to cover the liability for damages on property or health
- health insurance
- and, if agreed with the deploying organisation, also pension insurance

### Quality Assurance (QA)

Legal quality assurance is valid only for the programmes of the voluntary service. If young people decide to volunteer under voluntary service and in social services or medical sphere, they also need to comply with the standards of those spheres (for details see [Chapter 2.4](#)), and they can use all the benefits of the volunteer within the voluntary service. Any other standards or benefits for young volunteers or youth volunteering are a matter of non-state actors and organisations working with young volunteers usually based on their mutual agreement.

Under the Act on voluntary service, article 6, quality assurance is ensured through the accreditation process:

'(1) The Ministry of the Interior shall accredit the deploying organisation (from now on only "the Ministry"). The Ministry shall provide the accreditation upon the proposal of an Accreditation Commission composed of one representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Finance, and the Government Council for NGOs. The Accreditation Commission is an advisory body to the Ministry of the Interior.

(2) **The Ministry shall accredit**, in keeping with Art. 1), **a deploying organisation, which is a civil association**, foundation, institute, social cooperative, public beneficial society, church or religious organisation or a legal person formed by a church or a religious organisation, which **is of good repute and integrity, and should such a subject prove that it has the necessary bodies, employees, or members as well as particular voluntary service projects or programmes and finance to organise and perform voluntary service** and to meet other obligations under this Act. The accreditation shall be granted for a period of four years.'

The Accreditation Commission is composed of representatives of different ministries and investigates the quality of the applicant organisation. The accreditation expires after a period of 4 years (and is subjected to re-accreditation) or after any change of facts decisive for granting of the accreditation throughout the whole period of accreditation validity. Different ministries cooperate, but the authority is the Ministry of the Interior.

The Ministry of the Interior maintains a [list of all accredited organisations](#):

'The Ministry shall maintain a list of accredited deployment organisations. The list shall be a public list and shall be made accessible electronically. The list shall include definitions and objectives of types of voluntary service the deploying organisation facilitates and manages.'

The register is available online, at the Ministry of the Interior's web pages and includes a list of accredited projects.

In the Act on voluntary service, as amended, no mechanism can be found that would impose upon any subjects to gather feedback from voluntary service participants. These mechanisms can be present on the level of deploying organisations, however, according to the law, they are neither obligatory nor centrally monitored.

Currently, no summary reports from the Ministry of the Interior's accreditation processes or grant processes can be found, with the exception of the [Frydlova's report](#) (2015) that sums up the support of the Ministry of the Interior for voluntary service in 2015.

The Ministry of the Interior publishes [information on granted accreditation](#) and [allocated grants](#), but no summary reports from these data are available.

Neither the Ministry of the Interior nor other central authorities monitor the level of social inclusion of voluntary service or volunteering in general, i.e. outside of the force of the Act on voluntary service.

### **There are no particular guidelines for youth volunteering.**

However, general volunteering and application of voluntary service are further regulated in a number of different areas administrated by different ministries in accordance with standards in those areas and sectors. If young people decide to volunteer in these areas under the framework of voluntary service, they need to comply with those sector standards as well.

Volunteering in Social Services:

- Since amended version 2007 of the [Act on social services](#) (Act. no. 108/2006 Sb.) volunteers can be deployed in social services, however, they need to operate only under the regime of voluntary service.
- There are [Standard of quality of social services](#) and their [Implementing regulation](#) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (no. 505/2006 Sb.) of the Act on social services. All volunteers deployed thus in social services, need to fulfil these standards as well including the duty of secrecy.
- Volunteers (both under the force of the Act on voluntary service - with accreditation – and outside of it) cannot perform a professional activity ([do not belong among defined people who directly provide social services](#)), and therefore it is unnecessary to provide documents on clean records or professional qualifications. They can only support the professional staff of the social services.

Ministry of Health (MH) also refers to the Act on voluntary service, however, defines specificities of volunteering in health care through [methodical recommendations](#). These methodical recommendations deal extensively with different aspects of volunteering in medical facilities, from the introduction of voluntary programs to their evaluation.

Similarly, MI published, in accordance with the Act on Voluntary Service, [methodical material concerning volunteering in emergencies](#). The document provides an overview of the legal framework of volunteering in emergencies and a set of practical steps to be followed in emergencies to involve volunteers securely and effectively.

### **Target groups**

As neither volunteering nor youth volunteering is regulated, there are no specific target groups.

The only document explicitly targeting young people is the Youth Strategy 2014-2020, that defines the age group as up to the age of 30.

The [Act on voluntary service](#) defines volunteers under the voluntary service as follows:

- at least 15 years old in the case of volunteering in the Czech Republic

- at least 18 years old in the case of volunteering abroad
- maximum age limit is not specified

The [Ministry of the Interior's document](#) on volunteering in emergencies states the age limit only in the form of recommendation: 'On the basis of experience from emergencies it is recommended that a volunteer is older than 15 years, ideally 18 years, especially in order to protect the volunteer as well as his surroundings against possible risks connecting with his/her involvement in aid'.

## 2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

### EU programmes

Young people in the Czech Republic are offered an opportunity to participate in [the European Solidarity Corps programme](#) (ESC), [EU Aid Volunteers](#) and the Youth Chapter of the [New Erasmus+ Programme](#).

Monitoring of participation in the EVS programme has taken place within the overall monitoring of youth programmes carried out by the [RAY research network](#). The CR is a member of the RAY since its [foundation in 2008](#), through its national agencies for European youth programmes. The RAY monitoring focuses on the impact of youth programmes on participants and on project leaders. Simultaneously, an ongoing census of all stays conducted within EVS or ESC stays was done by the Czech National Agency Youth between 2007-2013, within the programme Youth in Action. [Statistics on the Erasmus+ Programme](#) are collected as well and the National Agency is making them publicly available regularly. Annual Ministerial reports are created as well.

The national authority for these programmes is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The national agency responsible for implementation and quality control is [The Centre for International Cooperation in Education](#).

The EU Aid Volunteers programme started in 2016 in the Czech Republic. Some Czech NGOs such as the biggest [People in Need](#) are using the initiative.

### Other Programmes

The only cross-border voluntary programme the Czech Republic financially supports is voluntary service as defined in the Act no. 198/2002 Sb. as amended (See details in [Chapters 2.2](#) or [2.4](#)). The Act provides a legal framework for Czech volunteers working abroad but **does not regulate anything related to foreign volunteers coming to the CR**. It cannot be therefore considered as a bilateral or multilateral programme.

It follows that it is not possible to define countries for which voluntary service is relevant, this depends on the individual projects submitted between voluntary organisations. As explained in [Chapter 2.5](#), currently there are no summary reports from the accreditation processes, it is therefore not possible to comment on numbers of volunteers working abroad, numbers of youth volunteers, or their destinations.

It is not possible to define specific target groups. Available data suggest that cross-border voluntary service is not a frequent phenomenon as more than 92% of accredited projects take place in the Czech territory. Currently, there exists no quality control in this area.

Czech-German cross-border mobility by individuals as well as organisations, also in the field of volunteering and voluntary activities is promoted by the [TANDEM - The Coordination centre for the Czech-German Youth Exchanges](#). It operates info portal [ahoj.info](#) and [Volunteering centre](#) providing various Czech-German voluntary activities including European Solidarity Corps.

## Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

Youth voluntary activity of foreigners is permitted by the Act [On the residence of foreign nationals in the territory of the Czech Republic](#) (Act no. 326/1999 Sb.).

It is a part of transposition of European legislation (Directive 2004/114/EC) facilitating obtaining a long-term residence permit in case of young people volunteering in a Czech host organisation.

This Act enables a volunteer aged between 18 and 30 years coming to the CR to apply for a [long-term residence visa](#) (stay longer than 90 days) for the purpose of studies, i.e. a [long-term study visa](#). Volunteers then apply for a long-term stay for the purpose of a study (Article 42d of the Act no. 326/1999 Sb. as amended). This obligation is valid also for volunteers who do not need visa for entry into the CR.

Concretely, Article 64 of the Act enables applicants to gain a visa because of:

*'e) professional practice and voluntary service of young people aged 18 to 30 years or voluntary service designed to obtain practical, professional experience by a foreigner, undertaken in a domestic host organisation as part of a project, programme or initiative of the European Union, or a similar state programme and organisationally provided by or coordinated for this purpose by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports accredited legal person established in the territory or legal person established outside the territory, which has a branch in the territory.'*

## 2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

### Information providers

Authorities interested in raising awareness about Youth Volunteering opportunities (see also [Chapter 2.2](#)):

- Ministry of the Interior,
- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Health,
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

[Informační centra pro mládež](#) (**Youth Information Centres**) play a specific role in the system of support of children and especially of youth. These are places that are open to the public. Systematically classified information and consultancy is provided free of charge and anonymously. Mainly Centres for Leisure Activities and NGOs found and operate the Youth Information Centres. In 2016 there were 41 Youth Information Centres in the CR. Among them, 16 were certified by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2019. Since 2020 there is no national coordination of Youth Information Centres anymore. Also the national umbrella [Association of supporting the development of Youth Information Centres](#) stopped its operation.

[Eurodesk.cz](#) operated by The Centre for International Cooperation in Education is an important information source, especially about European voluntary opportunities, but not only.

[The International Centre for Cooperation in Education](#) serves as a National Agency for the Erasmus and ESC programmes and thus heavily works on promoting those offered youth volunteering opportunities together with other state, regional and public actors.

[Adam.cz](#) is an **info and news portal from the youth work field** and is operated by the Czech Council of Children and Youth. The operation is financed by the state subsidy. It provides systematically also information about youth volunteering and its opportunities. These can be also found on the website of the youth council [CRDM](#).

**Volunteering centres** are important information providers. There is the [National Association for Volunteering](#) and various regional, mostly NGO, structures. The scope and content varies from region to region.

In 2011, during the European Year of Volunteering, the new [information portal \(dobrovolnik.cz\)](#) on volunteering in general and on activities done during the year in the Czech Republic was established.

## Key initiatives

### [National Association for Volunteering](#)

- National Association of Volunteering, z.s. is an umbrella voluntary, non-profit, independent and non-political organization.
- It promotes volunteer programs of public benefit organizations working with children, youth, family and seniors.
- It seeks and cooperates with partners in the Czech Republic and abroad, especially in the field of volunteering of all age and professional groups and also with organizations with similar goals.
- It broadly supports the development of volunteering and volunteer mentoring programs in the Czech Republic and contributes to informal education, social activation and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

### [The European Year of Volunteering in 2011](#)

- among the key initiatives connected to youth volunteering
- main goal was to create conditions (by civil societies) for volunteering in the European Union
- ensuring better visibility of voluntary activities in the EU, especially through an exchange of experience and best practices
- included activities
  - The Week of Volunteering,
  - Volunteering in the CR, the travel exhibition
  - Final conference in Pilsen,
  - Best Practices Collection etc.
- working groups for individual areas of volunteering were created and different materials on volunteering were published
- follow-up activities were not presumed, also due to a lack of the overall legal framework
- activities subsequently dispersed into individual initiatives, supported by individual ministries
- only an informal cooperation currently continues, especially in the preparation process for the creation of a new Act on volunteering.

### **The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports**

The Ministry and thus state declares awareness about youth volunteering among its strategic goals in its recent strategical documents:

- The Concept of the [State Policy for Children and Youth for the period 2007-2013](#)
- [National Youth Strategy for period 2014-2020](#).



## Erasmus+ programme

Erasmus+ programme is administrated by [the International Centre for Cooperation in Education](#):

- it gathers information or raises awareness about the programme and its implementation, suitability and quality of services provided by the Centre.
- conducts proper research
- participates in the [international network of RAY](#) (Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of the Youth in Action)
  - carries out various international surveys aiming at the area of youth informal education within the Erasmus+ programme
- Both national and international activities of the Centre aim at youth volunteering, especially at the previous European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the current European Solidarity Corps.

### 4. Other initiatives

In other cases it is possible to speak about isolated information sources:

- occasional [Ministry of the Interior reports](#) on volunteering in general,
- [Ministry of the Interior reports on volunteering during emergencies](#),
- [Ministry of Health reports on volunteering in health care](#),
- [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs reports on volunteering in social services](#)

Specific groups can be targeted by individual information sources, divided by areas of occupation: emergencies, health care, social services. The information network for young people remains an independent area. It is aimed at young people and one of its goals is to raise awareness about volunteering.

From the point of view of the NGO sector the most important are two state-wide actions: 72 hours and Let's Clean the World, Let's Clean Czechia.

### 72 hours

- Project of the Czech Council of Children and Youth, inspired by international partners.
- It is a three-day-long project full of voluntary activities that has already taken place since 2012 in the CR.
- Usually, the October weekend, young volunteers from all over the Czech territory carry out activities that help others, nature or their surroundings.
- The aim is to engage as many young people as possible and show them that 'little is enough to do a lot altogether!', to persuade them that they alone are capable of changing things they do not like, to teach them how to cooperate and to perceive the world around them.
- Another aim is to strengthen relations in local communities and create values and motivation for meaningful leisure time.
- The project is for children, parents, young people, NGOs, but also for informal groups and individuals, for all who support the idea of volunteering and value helping others or their surroundings unselfishly; everybody can apply on the project's web pages and obtain materials and promotional support.
- In 2019, 600 actions took place with 27 597 people participating.
- The project is financed by the state grant on youth work by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

## Let's Clean the World, Let's Clean Czechia

- Organised by The Czech Union for Nature Conservation and civil association Ekosmák.
- The aim of the action that almost 50 thousand people participated in 2015 (children formed 63%) is not to clean all illegal dump sites in the Czech Republic, but rather to motivate the public to think about waste disposal and not contribute to the creation of new dump sites. In spring 2019 65 thousand people participated.
- On the interactive map on the Internet, an individual chooses a group that he/she will join, organisers provide packages with trash bags and gloves. On a given day (usually on Saturday) they gather together at a given location and clean it up.

## 2.7 Skills recognition

### Policy Framework

In the Czech Republic skills recognition gained outside of formal education is regulated by the Act [on verification and recognition of further education results](#) (no. 179/2006 Sb.).

It recognises a possibility to gain a professional qualification by other means than by study in formal education programmes and defines conditions under which it is possible to grant verification. In relation to this Act, the [National Register of qualifications](#) was created, in which conditions for granting relevant qualifications are available.

In the Czech Republic, no central authority exists that is responsible for recognition of further education, informal education or skills gained by volunteering.

The Act [on verification and recognition of further education results](#), Article 2, defines that recognition of results is executed by the authorised person. The list of institutions and persons authorised to examine and grant qualifications in relevant fields is published on the web pages of the [National Register of Qualifications](#) under each qualification.

Also, these authorised persons obtain their authorisation by [fulfilling the conditions stated by the authorising body](#), that is *'the relevant ministry, that is responsible for the given profession. For example, a baker will apply for his/her professional qualification at the Ministry of Agriculture, for authorisation for professional qualification of Catering and lodging services, he/she will apply at the Ministry of Regional Development.'*

The amendment of the Act on Voluntary Service from 2014 (for details see [Chapter 2.4](#)) declares an **obligation for deploying organisations to issue (on volunteer's request) a certificate of performed long-term voluntary service** based on a model certificate that is attached to the Act.

### Existing arrangements

Legal provision (Act on verification and recognition of further education results) allows acquired skills to be tested without the necessity of passing a formal education/course where these skills can be obtained.

In line with this provision, the National Register of Qualifications (NRQ) defines individual professions and skills required to obtain a qualification and to pursue the profession. In this field, volunteers can profit from their experience in any sector.

The NRQ recognises '[coordinator of volunteers](#)' as a professional qualification. Volunteering considerably contributes to the fulfilment of qualification conditions (as well as to other newly approved qualifications – see below).

It is not possible to obtain qualification directly by a certificate of long-term voluntary service performance, [the Youthpass certificate](#), [personal competence portfolio](#), or [other self-evaluating tools](#). Obtaining a qualification is always conditioned by passing an exam.

A lot of attention was paid to this issue in the CR. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports initiated two national projects ([Keys for Life](#) and [K2](#)) on the issue financed by EU Funds. In cooperation with the Czech Council of Children and Youth, the following professional qualifications were defined from the field of volunteering in NGOs and especially from the field of children and youth work:

- [Leader of leisure activities for children and youth](#),
- [Chief leader of recovery event for children and youth](#)
- [Independent leader of leisure activities for children and youth](#)
- [Coordinator of volunteers](#)
- [Guarantor of occupational safety of leisure activities for children and youth](#)
- [Expert in the field of international cooperation with children and youth](#)

Waiting for approval:

- Paramedic at recreational activities for children and youth

**Publication about [self-evaluating tools](#)** was published in 2012 by the National Institute for Children and Youth. The publication was developed within the project Keys for life in cooperation with the experts from the institute, youth workers and other experts from the youth NGOs and associations and experts from the National Institute for further education.

Within the Erasmus+ activities, it is possible to issue the [Youthpass certificate](#) that serves for recognition of informal education results in the European Union.

### **Personal competence portfolio (Osobní kompetenční portfolio, OKP)**

It was an initiative within the state project Keys for life which brought together experts from public educational institutions, youth work and youth associations. It is an online tool helping young people and volunteers to map and structure competencies gained during their out-of-school activities, mainly volunteering. It should support young people in the transition to the job market and facilitate the human resources environment about the recognition and validation of non-formal education and voluntary experience. The online app of the Portfolio is however no longer available. There is a wider discussion about the competence portfolio for pupils in the general education fields which could be possibly linked to the recognition of the competencies gained in the non-formal education - the discussion is still in the nascent state and takes the elementary education level into account. The topic is also partially in the public discussion for the high school education level in regard to the educational transformation according to the Education strategy 2030+.

## **2.8 Current debates and reforms**

### **Forthcoming policy development**

A policy process existed to prepare new [Draft law of the New Act on volunteering](#), however it failed. The aims of the process were:

- eliminate legal barriers and support volunteering system development
- introduce a new definition of volunteering and volunteers
- define forms of volunteering (as there is only an insufficient definition in the Act on voluntary service)

The Government Legislative Council approved the factual intention of the Government on September 10th 2015. Subsequently, the Government accepted it as well and assigned the Ministry of the Interior the task of submitting a draft of the Act on volunteering until June 30th 2016.

The Ministry of the Interior asked to postpone the deadline until autumn 2016 and as a reason stated the fact that it is necessary to resolve the situation whereby an Act on public beneficiary that is a follow-up law of the new Civil Code still does not exist.

During 2016 when the inter-sectorial comment procedure was closed, the Ministry of the Interior decided to propose to the Government to [withdraw the proposal, because the level of regulation was not favourable to the voluntary organisations](#) - so it was against the primary goal.

However, there are specific initiatives of the Ministry of the Interior to support development of volunteering at a local level, especially with the EU Funded project '[Concept of volunteering development in the Czech Republic with an emphasis on ensuring the regional and professional availability of volunteering in the form of volunteer centres](#)' which in the years 2016-2020 focus on supporting regional volunteering centres and creating guidelines for their operation. Part of the project is to create a national Strategy for volunteering development, however mostly in social services and public administration. Youth is not the main target of these initiatives.

Outcomes of the project are [publicly available](#) on the website of the Ministry of Interior including the draft of the new [Draft of the State Concept on the Volunteering development 2019 - 2025](#).

## Ongoing debates

Longer lasting public and expert discussion within volunteering is a question of How to measure the financial value of volunteering? It is linked to the practical issue of [how to project the value of volunteering into an organisation's accountancy](#). The point is how to determine the value of voluntary work per hour to be accurate and usable for co-financing projects by voluntary work.

One solution offered by the [SAFE project](#):

- The median of wages published by the Czech Statistical Office for the year 2014 (the most recent) in individual classification categories of the NACE occupation, was used for calculation of financial expression of the value of voluntary work. This way, an average wage of 143.76 CZK was calculated ( using the weighted average methodology). The Ministry of the Interior uses its own calculations and set a value of 71 CZK (as expressed in the Draft law of the prepared Act on volunteering).

An important negotiation has taken place between the Czech Statistical Office and the Ministry of the Interior on [specialised survey](#) aiming at volunteering.

The national centre for volunteering together with The College of Polytechnics Jihlava prepared thanks to public support from the Technological Agency of the Czech Republic an application called "[Dobrometer](#)" (A Goodwill meter") focused on the evidence of the value of volunteering and voluntary work. The application was presented in 2021 and is freely available to interested NGOs and other parties.

Volunteering in general, and of young people as well, enjoyed a wide boom during the COVID-19 pandemic and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Many youth organizations and other NGOs prepared a wide range of voluntary activities and possibilities how young people can help others.

Due to the nature of the state subsidy system for the youth work for NGOs a discussion started about better definition and criteria for supporting voluntary youth work in contrast to commercial youth work activities in order to provide effective support to youth volunteering and voluntary youth work.

### 3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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The main aspects of employment are incorporated within the Labour code, Employment policy and other work-related laws and policy areas.

The main aspects of entrepreneurship are incorporated within the Civil Code, Trade Act, Act on Agriculture, other relevant Acts mostly according to the field of business and within entrepreneurship policies.

The subsequent legislature does not distinguish between the general population and the Youth. Young people are entitled to the very same conditions, aid and support as the general public following the logic of equal access and opportunities, and the principle of non-discrimination based on age. However, **Young people are seen as one of the more vulnerable groups** or groups at risk in regard to the labour market. Also, in accordance with international standards and the Czech Constitutional Order, children up to 18 years of age have an extraordinary level of legal protection according to the [Labour Code](#) and the [Civil Code](#). (For details see [Chapter 1.2](#))

By [Government Resolution No.871 of 24 August 2020](#), the Government of the Czech Republic approved the document "[Strategic Framework of Employment Policy until 2030](#)". This is a basic strategic document defining the direction of employment policy in the 2020s. The strategic framework was developed on the basis of an analysis of labour market developments over the last ten years in order to capture the labour market response to the entire medium-term economic cycle. At the same time, new trends - population ageing and the potential impact of the Society 4.0 phenomenon - were reflected in its development. The Strategic Framework is a strategic framework document. It sets out the basic pillars of the direction of employment policy in the 2020s and the framework measures that will be used to achieve the set objectives. Specific measures will be defined in the implementing action plans.

The manner of **policy intervention into the labour market is rather more supportive than restrictive** and due to free-market ideology has only limited possibilities for governing the situation on the labour market.

**Many of the competencies are given to regional and local self-governing bodies** as regional offices and regional branches of state administration. On a national level, it is more or less coordinating and steering activities in regions and aims at the integration of the labour market within the EU.

**A Tripartite exists** in the form of the [Economic and Social Agreement Council](#). This is a joint voluntary bargaining and initiative body between government, labour unions and employer unions, and is responsible for social dialogue in the country. It is composed of the three parties: representatives of Government, entrepreneurs/employers and employees. Each party hosts seven members and the chair is the Prime minister.

Concerning employment policy, **Youth is usually an age group of up to 25 years of age, or university graduates under 30 years of age, generally with no long-term work experience.**

Lower youth employment is related to not only the **disadvantaged position of this group** in the labour market but also to **its low economic activity** in comparison to the rest of the society. The most prominent issues can be found among young people without primary education, NEETs and further with lower-educated graduates. Graduates from universities are affected to a much lesser extent. The economic crisis impacted youth unemployment by increasing it primarily in the youngest part of the generation. Since 2012/2013 however, the trend is declining, and the total and even youth unemployment are among the lowest in the EU in the last years.

The **Strategic Framework of Employment Policy recognizes young people as an important vulnerable group in the labour market.**

The causes of the problem we even earlier considered to be:

- **Lack of career guidance and advice** on the selection of a profession concerning pupils and students in schools
- **Knowledge and skills not satisfying the needs of the labour market**, in particular, an inappropriate subject structure of graduates
- **Lack of practical experience** of graduates entering the job market.
- **Incomplete expectations of young people on the functioning of the labour market and its expectations**

The strategic framework will be accompanied by the Action Plans to lay down concrete steps of actions and interventions.

## 3.1 General context

### Labour market situation in the country

The labour market of the Czech Republic has a **strong regional character**.

Various geographic, demographic, historic, social and economic factors in different regions influence the field of employment.

The Czech Republic is traditionally a heavy-industrial economy, however, all sectors are present. Strong industrial focus, openness of the economy, low unemployment rate and free labour places in the market are reasons for empowering the concept of the Industry 4.0 and the so-called digitalization revolution. [The National Initiative for Industry 4.0](#) was launched in 2015.

Conditions for new workers also differ regionally, which also impacts graduates and young people.

There is a gender gap in the Czech labour market in terms of pay-gap as well as lower rates of employed women, especially because of the long maternity leave and generally different priorities and ambitions among the majority of women.

The Czech Republic was in recent years **one of the leading EU28 countries with the lowest rate of general unemployment**.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
General unemployment	4 %	2.9 %	2.2 %	2 %	2.4 %	
	2016	2017				
Age	15-19	19-24	25-29	15-19	19-24	25-29
Youth unemployment	24.2 %	9.2 %	5.5 %	22.1 %	6.5 %	3.5 %
	2018	2019				
Age	15-19	19-24	25-29	15-19	19-24	25-29
Youth unemployment	18%	5.6 %	3.1 %	15.8 %	4.5 %	2.6 %

Source: [Czech Statistical Office](#)

In 2021 we could observe a slightly worsening trend due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, [the fluctuation](#) was comparable really low and diminished during 2021.

The situation of **Young people in the labour market is slightly worse than that of other age groups**. Also, the less educated parts of society have a worse position in the labour market.

**The economic crisis hit young people, however, since 2013 the negative trend was reversed** and by the end of 2016, the situation was nearly the same as before the crisis. The Covid-19 Pandemic, however, hit young people again.

Due to the communist era, the tradition of **entrepreneurship** was severed and nowadays the interest of young people in entrepreneurship is **rather stagnating**.

The **Activity status of the population by Age** is shown in the following Graph no. 1, provided by the [Czech Statistical Office](#) (2020).

## Definitions and concepts

The current employment policy is defined by the "[Strategic Framework of Employment Policy until 2030](#)" agreed by the Government and implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MPSV).

The manner of **policy intervention into the labour market is rather more supportive than restrictive** and due to free-market ideology has only limited possibilities for governing the situation on the labour market.

Concerning employment policy, **Youth is usually an age group of up to 25 years of age, or university graduates under 30 years of age, generally with no long-term work experience**.

On the basis of the agreement between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, for the purposes of statistical monitoring of **graduates, the definition is used of jobseekers as registered in the Employment Office** according to the place of their residence on a specific date (30. 4. or 30. 9. of the year), for which the time from the **successful completion of their study does not exceed 2 years**. This definition is valid from 1st January 2004. Previously, it was the applicant, whose total time of employment or similar relationship did not reach 2 years after successful graduation (preparation), regardless of the length of their registration at the Employment Office.

Otherwise, regarding employment, the Czech Republic is harmonised in terminology with EU and international standards.

Young people are seen by the government as a vulnerable group in the labour market.

In accordance with Czech law, a **person can start regular employment if they:**

- Are older than 15 years of age
- Finished compulsory elementary education (9 years of elementary school)

Only Children up to 18 years of age have a special level of protection in accordance with international standards and the Czech Constitutional Order (see [Chapter 1.1](#)).

The Czech legal system provides special conditions for persons between 15 and 18 years of age in the terms of night shifts and 12-hour shifts (both are restricted).

Since 2014, when the New Civic Code came into force, **young people older than 16 years of age can start their own business** if the parents and court are not against it.

**Special benefits are provided for students active in economic life up to 26 years of age (up to 28 years in the case of doctoral students)**, but these are primarily linked with the student status than age as such.

## 3.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

By Government Resolution No.871 of 24 August 2020, the Government of the Czech Republic approved the document "[Strategic Framework of Employment Policy until 2030](#)". This is a basic strategic document defining the direction of employment policy in the 2020s. The strategic framework was developed on the basis of an analysis of labour market developments over the last ten years in order to capture the labour market response to the entire medium-term economic cycle. At the same time, new trends - population ageing and the potential impact of the Society 4.0 phenomenon - were reflected in its development. The Strategic Framework is a strategic framework document. It sets out the basic pillars of the direction of employment policy in the 2020s and the framework measures that will be used to achieve the set objectives. Specific measures will be defined in the implementing action plans.

The Implementation is in the competence of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MPSV).

The manner of **policy intervention into the labour market is rather more supportive than restrictive** and due to free-market ideology has only limited possibilities for governing the situation on the labour market.

The Youth employment indicators are based on the European Scoreboard.

In this subchapter, we will investigate the main actors and their fields of competences, responsibilities and actions as well as their vertical distribution at regional and local level as the Czech Employment Policy is decentralised.

### Government of the Czech Republic

This is the central executive power in the state with the competence of accepting and implementing state policy, and it is accountable to the Parliament.

As an initiative and conciliation body on the labour market and employment policies the Government has the so-called **Tripartite** in the form of the [Economic and Social Agreement Council](#). The Secretariat of the Tripartite is part of the Governmental Office.

The Government also delegates the preparation, implementation and evaluation of Employment Policy to the [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#), the entrepreneurial area to the [Ministry of Industry and Trade](#) and the educational aspects to the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#).

### Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs ([Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí](#))

Among other areas, this is the central state authority responsible for Employment policy, its preparation, implementation and evaluation.

The Ministry is ensuring the state service in the field of Employment based on the [Act no. 435/2004 Sb., on Employment](#).

For the exercise of its jurisdiction given to it by this Act, for the purposes of employment the Ministry keeps a central register of:

- Applicants for employment,
- Job seekers,
- People with disabilities,
- Foreigners
- Registrations of authorisation to exercise artistic, cultural, sporting and advertising activities of children
- Work agencies



Within the scope of employment policy, it has three relevant directly managed organisations: The [Employment Office of the Czech Republic](#) (Úřad práce ČR), [The Czech Social Security Administration](#) (Česká správa sociálního zabezpečení) and [The State Labour Inspection Office](#) (Státní úřad inspekce práce).

Further, it is a founder of semi-budgetary organisations relevant to employment policy such as The [Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs](#) (Výzkumný ústav práce a sociálních věcí), The [Occupational Safety Research Institute](#) (Výzkumný ústav bezpečnosti práce), The [Technical Inspectorate of the Czech Republic](#) (Technická inspekce České republiky). There was also The Fund for Further Education (Fond dalšího vzdělávání – FDV), which terminated its activities and is closed since 2019.

Within the Ministry, there is no special unit dedicated directly to Youth. However, there is [Section no. 4 for employment policy](#) dealing also with the youth aspect.

### **Ministry of Industry and Trade** ([Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu](#))

This is the central state authority in the field of business and entrepreneurship, especially within Business and Investment Promotion in the areas of Manufacturing Industry and of Industrial Research and Development, including the use of European funds and Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Companies with the exception of regional business support and trading matters.

In the field of entrepreneurship the Ministry has three relevant subordinated organisations: The Investment and Business Development Agency CzechInvest ([Agentura pro podporu podnikání a investic CzechInvest](#)), CzechTrade ([Česká agentura na podporu obchodu CzechTrade](#)) and The Business and Innovation Agency ([Agentura pro podnikání a inovace - API](#)).

The mainstream policy on supporting business and entrepreneurship is on the support of small and medium-sized enterprises, start-ups and innovations which could be highly relevant to young people, to motivate them, help them or to guide them to start their own business.

### **Economic and Social Agreement Council** ([ESAC](#))

This is a joint voluntary bargaining and initiative body between the government, labour unions and employer unions, with those responsible for social dialogue in the country. It is composed of three parties, representatives of Government, entrepreneurs/employers, and employees; each party hosts 7 members and the ESAC is chaired by the Prime minister.

### **Employment Office Czech Republic** ([EO](#))

This is an organisation under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and its main responsibility is the implementation of the employment policy. As the Employment policy is decentralised in the Czech Republic it also has Regional Employment Office bureaus which are the main actors on a regional level in coordination with Regional Authorities.

### **The Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic** ([NPI CR](#))

This is an organisation under the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports. Its core activities are conceptual, analytical and methodical services for the Ministry, but the institute also develops other activities and provides services for both practitioners and the general public as well. Among other things, it is responsible for national curricula and their content.

It provides the following services related to Youth, Employment and Entrepreneurship:

- [National Europass Centre Czech Republic](#): The employees of the client centre of the National Europass Centre Czech Republic are prepared to answer every question, for example how to document qualifications, language skills and experience from a period of study or work abroad.

- [Practice Enterprises Centre](#) (CEFIF): The Practice Enterprises Centre – CEFIF – coordinates activities carried out by a network of practice enterprises active in the Czech Republic, and provides support and consultation services to pupils and teachers involved in practice enterprises. The centre is a member of the international network EUROPEAN – Pen International gathering practice enterprises from all over the world.
- [Infoabsolvent.cz](#) is an information service and analytical unit for graduates and their work opportunities. It helps by searching for education and professional pathways.
- [Education and work](#) is a web portal where job seekers can find educational opportunities or jobs.
- [National Register of Qualifications](#) is a system of nationally recognised qualifications and ways to achieve them, including through Non-Formal and Informal education.

### **Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs ([RILSA](#))**

RILSA is monitoring and analysing indicators of labour and social policies, namely [social and economic indicators](#) of the Czech Republic.

It is focused on:

- Long-term monitoring of issues of social differentiation and marginalization, social exclusion and poverty, as well as selected measures that help to prevent them and to restrict them;
- Long-term monitoring and evaluation of the factors that cause labour market imbalances and assessment of measures to remove such imbalances;
- Process monitoring of migration and integration policies for foreigners into the labour market and in society;
- Evaluation of social services policy in a broader perspective;
- Assessment of trends in demographic development and possibilities of family policy, follow-up with other public policies to stand for the social impacts of demographic changes;
- Evaluation of trends in the development of the capacities of public administration and governance in relation to social policy;
- Monitoring the development of social dialogue and working conditions.

### **Cross-sectoral cooperation**

Cross-sectoral cooperation happens on the governmental level including the tripartite. The mechanisms are varied according to the concrete needs and level of relevance. In the Czech administration if the cooperation is not covered by declared procedures, then there is a principle of finding the easiest way for cooperation. Many concrete projects aiming at implementing the Employment strategy have cross-sectoral aspects and cooperation included on their level of operation, usually based on the stakeholder-analysis within the project preparation.

### **Field and expert groups in education**

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports supports the activity of various field and expert groups within education, also involving various other actors, especially from the labour market, practice and academic environment. They are [coordinated by the National Pedagogy Institute](#). They mediate the communication between creators of educational programmes, in particular representatives of schools, enterprises and further education institutions. They enable the involvement of social partners in the development of those programmes. It ensures the compliance of these programmes with the labour market needs.

## Field groups

Field groups are groups of external experts who cooperate on the development of educational programmes for secondary vocational schools. They link the National Register of Qualifications with the initial education and help create conditions for the successful implementation of the European instruments. There are several groups for different sectors. In total 25 field groups gather more than 250 external experts.

Field groups represent an important partnership; its elements relate to several levels as follows:

- National, represented by 24 field groups, their activity focuses on the key issues of a more general nature;
- International, that relates directly to the area of quality assurance in education, to the activities concerning referencing qualifications to the EQF levels carried out by the advisory group of the EQF National Coordination Point, to the activities of the expert group of the ECVET National Coordination Point focusing on the implementation and practical usage of the system;
- Sectoral, represented by 25 field groups that support the development of educational programmes reflecting the labour market demands and implementing European instruments such as EQF, ECVET and EQAVET;
- Local and regional, which is given by the possibility to establish ad hoc groups that should solve particular and specific tasks.

## Expert groups

The main goal of expert groups is to solve tasks of a more general nature. The groups are summoned depending on the nature of the particular task that is being solved. After the resolution of the problem, the groups are dispersed. At present, there are 24 expert groups.

## 3.3 Skills forecasting

### Forecasting system(s)

Skills forecasting in the Czech Republic was part of the [analytical and survey activities](#) of the National Institute for Education (NUV) which employed several methods of forecasting. part of the agency migrated to the new National pedagogy institute of the Czech Republic and parts related to the labour market underwent the competence to the Ministry of Social Affairs and its activities.

The project [Labour Market Forecasting](#) (CZ.03.1.54/0.0/0.0/15\_122/0006097) creates a sustainable system of labour market forecasting and monitoring, which links the national and regional levels and whose results reflect the significant impacts of technological trends on the labour market and the specifics of regional development.

The project was designed primarily in response to the requirement to have a system for forecasting labour market changes, including forecasting skill needs. The outputs provided by the forecasting system thus represent one of the important tools for supporting the functioning of the labour market in a market economy.

Project implementation 1.1.2017 - 31.12.2022

The project offers a uniquely comprehensive source of information and data on the labour market and represents a quality support system for strategic decision-making by ministries. It targets the impacts related to the development of activities within the trend of digitalization and robotization, collectively referred to as Industry 4.0 and Work 4.0.

For career advisors, the project enables them to direct their recommendations towards their clients on the basis of high-quality predictions on labour market developments at the regional and national levels.

Last but not least, the project offers more effective targeting and content of retraining programmes according to analyses of the current state and forecasts of the labour market at the regional level

Taking into account the above, it can be summarised that the project offers a solution:

- Lack of regional information for mapping, analysing and modelling the labour market (including the development of key sectors, industries and occupations) in the regions.
- The lack of a system for implementing the outputs of these activities into education, innovation and development policies in the regions.
- The lack of a regional dimension in forecasting and medium-term analysis, which is crucial in the context of low labour mobility.
- Disparity between the quantitative and qualitative supply and demand of graduates for the labour market.

A special section on the needs and position of school absolvents at the labour market is devoted within the National Pedagogy institute, the [Infoabsolvent](#). The main focus of this section is in:

- Analyzing and informing on structures of pupils and graduates, educational programs, educational offer of schools
- The needs of the labour market, employing school graduates in the labour market
- Graduates transition from school to the labour market and to tertiary education
- Barriers in the transition to the labour market
- Career counselling

There are also initiatives in the social affairs and employment fields to predict the needs of the labour market in the future. However, the only publicly available [prognosis](#) is that made in 2010 for the future period 2011-2015 based on project funding.

National Register of Qualifications

- Is part of the skills forecasting system
- Provides an [overview of nationally recognised vocational qualifications](#) in the Czech Republic, which can be obtained by validation of non-formal and informal learning
- Qualifications are based on the skills required by specific jobs in the labour market
- In 2015, 921 qualifications were certified (NUV 2016)

The coordination system of skills forecasting is based on advisory and professional groups between creators of educational programmes, employers, and other relevant institutions which enhance cross-sectoral cooperation. At the national level, [25 groups coordinated](#) by the National Institute for Education were in operation.

## Skills development

- The forecasting system is linked and followed by the curriculum-creating system, and by the [Framework Educational Programme](#).
- [The National Register of Qualifications](#) opened new possibilities for apprentices to gain formal recognition and qualification of their skills and competences. The implementation of the whole system is continuing.
- In the field of Youth Non-formal and informal learning, two projects on the competences in the Youth sector have been realised – Keys for life and K2 - Quality and

Competitiveness (for details see [Chapter 2](#)). The two projects supported cooperation between non-formal education providers and employers, and new qualifications for the National Register from the Youth field have been established.

Public initiatives to support skills development

To support technic skills development in public, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports together with the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic introduced the initiative [Year of technical education and industry 2015](#).

Czech Republic is also working since 2017 on [increasing employer participation in VET](#).

Schools will now have to involve employers in the education by:

- consulting employers on drafts of school curricula;
- engaging employers in shaping conceptual plans for school development;
- ensuring part of practical training is implemented at the premises of employers authorised to perform activities related to the relevant field of education;
- allowing participation of experts from practice in theoretical training at school;
- allowing participation of experts from practice in the profile part of maturita examination;
- securing, in cooperation with the employers, continuing education and internships for teaching staff of theoretical and practical training at employers

## 3.4 Career guidance and counselling

### Career guidance and counselling services

The career guidance and counselling services in the Czech Republic are large sector involving public as well as private entities. The first state authority in this field was the Academy on Labour in first Czechoslovakia and in 1920 the Central Office of guidance agencies for job selection. It was one of the words first public structures in this regard. In 1963, a function of Advisor on education to career selection was created on general education secondary schools. Since 1990, and especially after 2000, there was a strengthened focus on out of school guidance.

The responsible state central authorities are Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. They created in 2010 also the [National Guidance Forum](#) as an advisory body of both Ministries bringing together 19 relevant platforms from the field.

The Forum aims at facilitating the public and expert discussions of various interests and opinion streams on Guidance and counselling to achieve also better regulation, standardisation, methodical help to all actors and advise the Ministries in policy and legislative matters.

Young people are relevant target group of most of the guidance services, however, depending on the actors the main target group may vary from the general population to guidance and career advisors, teachers, parents etc.

We can differentiate actors in Education, Out of School Education and for Labour market.

Career guidance in the formal education system is regulated by the [Decree no. 72/2005 Sb. as amended, On providing advice in schools and school guidance facilities](#).

Main actors providing counselling for young people:

·Infoabsolvent

·Employment Office Czech Republic, established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

·Counselling in Formal Education structures, Schools and School facilities

o Education Care Centres

o Special Pedagogical Centre

o Pedagogical-Psychological Advisory Centres

·Counselling in out of school Education and Youth sector

o Youth NGOs

Supporting networks:

o Czech Euroguidance Center

Infoabsolvent

This is an [online portal](#) providing information from education and transitions to employment run by the [National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic](#). It focuses on young people and graduates, parents, teachers, counsellors, public bodies and employers. It provides information as well as practical tips and tricks. It is the outcome of an EU-funded project with good sustainability and further development.

Employment Office of the Czech Republic

[Employment Offices](#) are established in every region and district (see also [Chapter 3.2](#)).

They offer a variety of services associated with employment:

- Requalification
- Job offers
- Joint consultation
- Investment encouragement
- Variety of subsidies
- Information point

Employment Offices are also responsible for the Youth Guarantee implementation, and counselling should be integrated into the Youth Guarantee in the Czech Republic.

The state Employment strategy 2020 also foresees more cooperation between the Employment Office counselling and school counselling.

Counselling in schools and school facilities

Schools are the closest contact with most of young people. Therefore they are seen as an optimal provider of counselling [services and interventions if necessary](#).

Based on the Act on Education, every school has its School counselling officer who can also provide career guidance. The quality counselling and activity are in the competence of every school. Experience shows that quality can differ quite significantly. However, there are national support systems to uphold and harmonise good services.

3 types of School Counselling Facilities exist:

### [Education Care Centre](#)

- Ensures preventive-educational care for children, pupils and students with a higher risk of behaviour disorders
- Offers aid to parents (legal representatives of the child) and schools

### [Special Pedagogical Centre](#)

- Provides services for disabled or impaired students

### [Pedagogical-Psychological Advisory Centre](#)

- Provides advisory activities for both students and parents
- Provides career consultation
- Provides higher education consultation

### Youth Information Centres

Private entities usually run by NGOs, Youth NGOs or Leisure time houses (Domy dětí a mládeže). They cooperate with the National Youth Information Centre and its career-counselling centre. They provide information to young people on various subjects, with working life and education at the core of them. There are usually no specific target groups of young people, the centres are open to everybody but specific projects can have the most problematic youth subgroups as a target. (For details see [chapter 1.4](#))

### **Czech Euroguidance Center**

The [Czech Euroguidance Centre](#) supports lifelong guidance in the Czech Republic through information and publicity activities, educational activities for guidance practitioners, and support for professional activities in the field of guidance and activities within the National Guidance Forum.

### **Funding**

Funding of the [Employment Office of the Czech Republic](#) is ensured by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and funded from the state budget. School Guidance structures are also funded from the state budget by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The main operation of resources is distributed via the Regions, as they are founders of public secondary education facilities. European social fund plays also an important role in the support of Employment Offices guidance as well as guidance within formal Education. For schools counsellors and advisors Ministry of Education run also specific [templates funding](#) to make it easier for schools to gain additional resources enabling wider activities.

Funding for school counselling

- Each school allocates means for the school counselling facility it operates
- Schools are funded from the budget of their founder
- Schools are established by the town or region and are funded from their budget
- Budget information is available from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
- EU templates funding for schools
- EU funded project to [support the further education of career guidance and counselling in schools](#)

## Quality assurance

Career guidance in the formal education system is regulated by education legislation (see [chapter 1.1](#)) and Decree no. 72/2005 Sb., On providing guidance in schools and school guidance facilities

Common standards on school counselling are in development and testing

In 2015 Testing standards for the area Psychodiagnostics were finalised.

Overall cross-sectoral policy coordination of career guidance is steered by the National Guidance Forum.

The Forum is the national platform for the promotion of lifelong career counselling in the Czech Republic and an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports as well as to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. It is composed of 19 governmental entities, state-established agencies, NGOs, universities, professional associations, educational institutions, commercial entities and other guidance and counselling providers.

To ensure the quality and standards of the professions in the field, the National Register of Qualifications (NSK) provides actually 3 types of occupational qualifications in the field:

1. Career Advisor for employment
2. Career Advisor for Education and Profession
3. Career Advisor for endangered, at risk and disadvantaged groups

The National Guidance Forum support among others also the creation of Regional action planning and the development of career guidance is one of the obligatory interventions.

There is a public web portal [JOBHUB](#), for career development, that offers:

1. Selfevaluation - to help with career development, and to find out what profession a person is suitable for
2. Life guide situations - descriptions of typical life situations that most often influence people's professional decisions
3. Catalog of career counselors
4. Information on the labor market - statistical data from the Czech Statistical Institute, description and development of individual market segments and typical occupations

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs runs also [project PIPS](#) – Support of information and guidance centres of the Employment Office of the Czech Republic (Podpora informačních a poradenských středisek Úřadu práce ČR). PIPS runs from 1st of January 2017 to 31st of December 2021 and aims at strengthening the capacities and quality of the guidance centres at the labour Offices in regions and selected local places.

The Employment Office of the Czech Republic run also an EU funded project on [Information and counselling centres](#), that offer career counseling services. The centres aims at prevention unemployment and early school leaving. They are intended for pupils, students, parents, educators and school career counselors or educators, but also for the general public. Counselors also visit pupils and students directly in schools, where they hold discussions for them.

All the projects aim at strengthening the quality as well as finding the adequate quality assurance mechanisms.



## 3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

### Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

There are three types of traineeships and apprenticeships:

- Part of regular education (provided by school)
- Part of requalification (provided by the Employment Office of the Czech Republic)
- Voluntary by employers, non-profit organisations and individuals

If relevant for the respective field of study, official basic guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships for schools are contained within the [Framework Educational Programme](#) (FEP) - national curricular document. Not every field of study requires traineeships and apprenticeships. **The FEP includes definitions of the educational programmes and specific conditions/requirements for every single educational programme.** Specific conditions also include the amount of hours needed to be spent in apprenticeships as well which activities qualify for apprenticeships and which do not. The MEYS can change FEP. In the Period 2017-2021, the [revision process of FEP was started](#). The National Institute for Education prepares the FEPs.

There are **no official guidelines for traineeships by employers**, unless they are participating in any state programme supporting youth traineeships and apprenticeships.

Cooperation among educational facilities, professional and sectoral organisations is up to each educational facility. The National Institute for Education provides national support. For the cooperation, a school facility might need the approval of the founder (mostly the regional or local authority). Many educational facilities operate their own workshops where the students learn (e.g. bakery, repair shop/garage etc.)

Regional Labour Offices can cooperate with external providers if they are chosen in accordance with legal requirements for Public procurement.

The Youth Guarantee and the Policy of the EU helped to materialise the discussion on traineeships and apprenticeships at a national level. Following the Strategy Europe 2020, the Youth Guarantee scheme became part of the National Employment Strategy 2020. Since that, the Fund For Further Education has also run state activities to support traineeships and apprenticeships such as the initial project 'Internship for Youth' from 2012 with the second edition until 2015, and the 'Way for Youth' project for the period 2016-2020. However, this project was closed by the 30th of June 2018.

In June 2018 the Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic [published outcomes](#) of their investigation on the Fund for further Education which specifically targeted on the project Traineeships for Jobseekers 2 (period 2014 - 2016). Few discrepancies have been found. It also commented on the situation when the most of the users of the projects were by 75 per cent students of tertiary education (last year of the Bachelor or Master programmes), and only 15 per cent were the high school students. Percentage of pupils from vocational training was scant even if it was supposed to be an important target group.

From practice, it has been shown that during the high employment young people out of the tertiary education have only limited interest in such project. The young participants however evaluated their activities within the project as very good, as well as the employers saw their participation in the project as important and relevant.

### Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

General facilitation of young people's participation in traineeships is not established; however, the projects of the Fund for Further Education help raise awareness on the issue.

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by educational facilities are part of educational programmes and schools are thus in charge of promoting their educational programmes. Good conditions are often used in the competition for potential students.

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by Employment offices are offered to their clients (job seekers). Unemployed persons can register on the list of job-seeking persons at the local Employment Office and their local Employment Office offers them relevant or accessible courses if they are available.

Employment offices are obligated to act following the Youth Guarantee scheme.

**EU-Funded Initiatives and projects on traineeships and apprenticeships** run by Fond of further education (closed since 2019). These projects already ended:

National Catalogue of Traineeships - provided information about traineeships, actual supply and demand of traineeships, template for traineeships

Way for Youth - supported the way to first employment

Education through practice - focused on improvement of existing work experience and skills, acquiring new knowledge and meet current labour market requirements, thanks to individual counselling learn to work better, become self-confident and become more attractive to employers.

## Recognition of learning outcomes

Traineeships and apprenticeships organised by the schools are generally not certified separately but only as part of the diploma students receive at the end of their studies if they have successfully met all the set criteria.

Traineeships and apprenticeships offered by Employment Offices or via their external providers can be completed by obtaining a certificate. Certain conditions must be met:

- Course/workshop must be approved by the MEYS
- The course must be conducted as authorized by MEYS (scale, extent, professionalism etc.)
- Participant must meet the set criteria (test, limited amount of absence, exam etc.)

Non-regulated and voluntary traineeships and apprenticeships can be awarded with any certificate; however, recognition is not guaranteed.

## Funding

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by the schools

- For school financing, please see the previous [Chapter 3.4](#)
- The conditions could be different at various schools, some institutions may have a very developed system of student participation in traineeships and apprenticeships, while some may have policies which can be used but are not directly dedicated only to traineeships and apprenticeships, and some are not offering any specific support.

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by the Employment Offices

- For Employment office financing, please see previous [Chapter 3.4](#)
- Funding of cooperation on traineeships and apprenticeships is regulated by legislation, requalification policy and active employment policy.

## Quality assurance

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by schools

- Must be following the accreditation granted by the MEYS
- [The Accreditation Commission](#) (AC) is responsible for quality assurance at higher education institutions
- [The Czech School Inspectorate](#) (CSI) 'evaluates and analyses operation in nursery, primary, secondary and vocational schools, as well as in school facilities (e.g. school

canteens, youth dormitories) which have been entered into the Register of Schools and School Facilities'

- The MEYS establishes both AC and CSI

Traineeships and apprenticeships provided by the Employment Offices

- For traineeships and apprenticeships provided by an external provider, Labour Offices are eligible to inspect the quality of the education provided
- For the traineeships and apprenticeships accredited by the MEYS, MEYS can conduct inspections of education provided

## 3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market

### Youth employment measures

Employment measures focused on young people are directly linked with the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

#### Youth Guarantee

Programme specification:

- Name: [Youth Guarantee](#) (Záruky pro mládež)
- Timeframe: 2014-2020
- Based in: Employment Policy Strategy 2020
- Institutions responsible for implementation and coordination: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; partner institution is Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Main implementers are the Employment Offices of the Czech Republic working on national, regional and local levels and directly in the field with the target group.

Main activities:

- personalised NEETs education and employment policy
- removing discrepancies between young people's abilities and labour market qualification demands
- increasing employment, decreasing unemployment
- preventing consequences of youth social exclusion

Target group characteristic:

- Young people (15–24–29 years of age), unable to find job, who are not actively seeking work, do not study, are not in training for a job. The Czech Republic is voluntarily offering the same conditions for young people up to 30 years of age while the capacities could be developed by the use of the European Social Fund by projects of respective Regional Employment Offices.

Number of participants:

- In total in 2016: 3 624 young persons
- According to the [annual report of DG Employment Office](#) in the year 2016: 1 465 within the Youth Employment Initiative (NUTS II Severozápad) and 2 159 in other regions of the Czech Republic not eligible for the European Employment Initiative.

Goals:

- Youth (15-24) unemployment rate reduction to 12.3%
- Low qualified (ISCED 0-2) unemployment reduction to 18.8 till 2020

## Financing

- Multiple sources (state budget, European Social Fund: Operation Programme Employment and Operation Programme Research, Science)
- 13 599 984 EUR ([till 2015](#))

## Quality assurance

- Annual updates based on regular activity and efficiency evaluation (*not publicly available*)
- Evaluation will be based on data and indicators from the information system, CZ Employment Offices, Operational Programme Employment indicators, Operational Programme Research, Science and Education indicators, etc.
- Evaluation outcome: [Activity Report by the Employment Office to the CZ Government](#)

Measures of the Active Employment Policy are equally accessible for all citizens including young people (non-discriminatory principle). The main providers are regional and local Employment Offices and their contact centres. The Offices of the Czech Republic also provide all social benefits of a non-insurance nature, which allows them to impact the target group in the case of their inactivity.

Youth employment is monitored with the same standards and categories as in the EU and according to international standards.

EU recommendations regarding youth employment are taken seriously and are integrated into the relevant Czech policies and support schemes.

At the national level, the measures were also realised by the Fund for Further Education (FFE), an organisation established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (till 2019, organization is closed since then). All projects were co-funded by the ESF. [Way for Youth](#) was a national EU-funded project supporting young people to get first and good experiences with the labour market including real placements. To support youth transition to labour market, FFE was operating the [National Register of Internships](#).

Previous projects 'Internships for youth' and 'Internships in business' were also realised for young people and students of any level before graduation.

Other employment measures are linked with the status of student up to 26 years of age (up to 28 years in case of doctoral students) which brings benefits:

Self-employment is a secondary activity and thus for the first year there is no need to pay deposits for obligatory health insurance

In the next years, health security benefits are paid only if a profit has been generated above the general limit and minimum deposits are not in force

The parallel model also works for obligatory public social security insurance

## **Flexicurity measures focusing on young people**

In the Czech Republic, flexicurity is demanded more by older parts of society or with the link to family issues rather than youth issues. Special attention is given e.g. to mothers with children up to 15 years of age, and the possibility to take care of sick children up to 10 years of age. There are thus no specific flexicurity measures focused on youth on a national level.

During the years 2016 and 2017 governmental proposals prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs have put a focus on the flexicurity measures in general; none of them was directly linked to young people, but rather to general employment conditions and rights, however with impact on young people as on general society.

One of the proposals passed, in effect from 1st of February 2018, will be the possibility of one week off for new fathers.

## Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

There are no specific national-level measures or initiatives on the reconciliation of private and working life of young people. Most such initiatives aim at young families and the systematic care of small children. Others are part of general social services or legal protection of minors.

## Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

One of the main tools on a national level is the programming of the European Social Fund and allocation of resources for relevant stakeholders on regional and local level (especially Regional and local Employment offices) who are responsible for the implementation and direct actions. Within ESF, the biggest allocation is for the [Operational Programme Employment](#).

Within the Financial Framework 2014-2020, 27 199 968 EUR was allocated in the Czech Republic within the European Social Fund for the Youth Employment Initiative. This was allocated within the first priority of the Operational Programme Employment for the NUTS II Region Severozápad which is the only one in the Czech Republic above the European Youth Guarantee limits for special action on youth unemployment.

The European Social Fund and Operational Programme Employment allocated 60.23%, 1 292 307 890 EUR, for the employment measures in 2014-2020. Investment Axes 1 and the second specific objective is to increase employment of supported young people through the Youth Guarantees schemes. Thus also other regions can apply and realise their own projects according to regional and local needs of young people in that place. The State Budget is usually used to co-finance successful projects.

In reality, all regional Employment Offices applied with their own Regional Individual Project scheme. The activities and scopes differ regionally, e.g. in the [South Moravia Region \(Jihomoravský kraj\) the Youth Guarantee project](#) supports young people up to 29 years of age. The [Plzeň Region \(Plzeňský kraj\) Youth Guarantee project](#) targets young people up to 29 years of age including those who lack work experience, or who have work experience, but only up to three years without the limitation of education. The projects are similar in other regions. Financing is usually at 85 per cent from the EU, 10 per cent from the State budget and 5 per cent from the Regional Authority.

### Relevant calls from EU programmes for the integration of young people in the labour market:

#### [Youth Employment Initiative for the NUTS II North-West and NUTS II Moravian-Silesian Region - Employment Offices of the Czech Republic](#)

Validity from: 18 July 2019

Validity until: 30 June 2020

Allocation in CZK: 50 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the employment of supported young people not in employment, education or training in the NUTS II North-West region

#### [International mobility and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth](#)

Validity: 30.10.2018

Valid until: 31.1.2019

Allocation in CZK: 101 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the quality and quantity of the use of social innovation and international cooperation in the thematic areas of the Employment Operational Programme.

### **Supporting the employment of target groups disadvantaged on the labour market**

Validity from: 27/09/2017

Valid until: 04/01/2018

Allocation in CZK: 298 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the employment of the persons supported, in particular the elderly, the low-skilled and the disadvantaged

### **International mobility for disadvantaged youth**

Validity as of: 3.8.2015

Valid until: 30.10.2015

Allocation in CZK: 120 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the quality and quantity of the use of social innovation and international cooperation in the thematic areas of the Employment Operational Programme.

### **Increase the employability of target groups on the labour market**

Validity from: 31/08/2015

Validity until: 31.3.2021

Allocation in CZK: 880 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the employment of the supported persons, especially the elderly, the low-skilled and the disadvantaged

### **Guarantees for young people**

Validity from: 8.6.2015

Valid until: 31.12.2018

Allocation in CZK: 1 339 000 000

Specific objective: To increase the employment of the young people supported through the Youth Guarantee Programme

## **Quality assurance**

There are no specific quality assurance measures on a national level for young people's integration into the labour market, apart from the Youth Guarantee scheme and those in internships and apprenticeships described in [Chapter 3.5](#).

## **3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities**

### **Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility**

Usual support to young entrepreneurs is provided by the [small and medium enterprise support policy](#), and support for starting entrepreneurs, for which measures age limit is not important. However, young people are a natural target group (even if not explicitly mentioned in legislation). The same principle thus also applies for EU Funds targeted at support of entrepreneurship and entrepreneur mobility.

There could be regional and local activities by the Regional Offices and Euroregions, however these are not usually linked with the age status. Many of the initiatives are under the EU-funded project for cross-border cooperation with the support of Regional offices.

## Employment - Your first EURES Job

The EU initiative Your first EURES Job is fully implemented in the Czech Republic. It is implemented by the National authority DG of the Employment Office of the Czech Republic and is very visible within the whole employment system.

It is composed of the public [online portal](#) and guidance and integration of the service within the network of employment offices.

There are several **cross-border EURES partnerships**

- [Czech-Bavaria](#) EURES partnership
- First partnership among 'new' and 'old' EU member countries since 2005
- [EURES-Tri-Regio](#) (CZ-DE-PL)
- [EURES-T Beskydy](#) (CZ-PL-SK)
- There is no cross-border EURES partnership with Austria

## Erasmus for young entrepreneurs

The Czech Republic is implementing this EU programme and it is the only opportunity for cross-border mobility targeted at young entrepreneurs directly.

There are 3 [contact places](#) in the Czech Republic in 2020.

Examples of open projects under this scheme:

- **'BE EUROPE - Business Tandem for Europe' Network** aims at building partnerships in the context of 'Erasmus for young entrepreneurs'. The network created is 'paving the way' for new business contacts between European companies and reduces the barriers and borders of international markets. The contacts and cooperation with European companies thus generated provide both novice and experienced entrepreneurs with new inspiration for their business. Newly formed relationships will help to strengthen their competitiveness.

## Cross-border Mobility in professional and vocational training and education (VET)

For more details on mobility in VET and Education see [Chapter 6.5](#).

In the context of European mobility, cross-border mobility in VET is based on **Erasmus+ opportunities**:

- **Pupil mobility** in vocational education and training - 2 weeks to 12 months
  - Internship in the organisation of vocational education and training - this is a combination of theoretical and practical training / practice
  - Internship in a company - this is only a work activity
- **Workers' mobility** in vocational education and training - 2 days to 12 months
  - **Teaching / training mobility** - allows teachers of vocational schools to teach at a partner school or the staff from enterprises to teach in an organisation involved in vocational training
    - ❖ Since 2016 it is also possible that the applicant can invite trainers from companies of other programme countries to teach in their organisation
  - **Professional development** - this helps to develop the expertise and skills of staff working in the field of vocational education and training through practical work experience or sharing of experience (job shadowing / exchange of experience) directly in an enterprise or other organisation involved in vocational training
- **Language preparation in VET** - at least 19 days not including travel days

- In the context of **Czech-German mobility**, there are opportunities supported by the Tandem - Czech-German Youth Exchange coordination centre. Mobility is for [pupils in VET](#) and lasts 2 weeks at minimum. Language and intercultural support are provided.

### Legal framework

There is no special legal Framework for Cross-Border Mobility in Employment, Entrepreneurship and Vocational Opportunities for young people.

## 3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

### Policy Framework

The Czech Republic does not have any specific national strategy for the development of the entrepreneurship competence or an entrepreneurship mindset among young people.

The Policy Framework is set for support of medium and small enterprises according to the Law no. 47/2002 Coll. [on the support of medium and small enterprises](#) and the [State strategy to support small and medium-size businesses 2014-2020](#). The Youth is not specifically mentioned there.

However, there are some private initiatives to increase the competences of youth in this sphere.

The Czech Republic has a goal of increasing the number of young entrepreneurs up to 35 years of age within the [Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2014-2020](#) (RIS3 Strategy).

#### Related strategies:

- [Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2014-2020](#)
- [National Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2012-2020](#)
  - Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Industry and Trade Strategy
  - Includes a part devoted to changes in education content with respect to creativity, entrepreneurship and key competencies
  - Stresses the importance of cooperation between schools and employers and the link between the system of vocational education and the labour market, and underlines the need to respect these elements during curricular reform and the establishment of the guidance system. ISCED levels 1, 2 and 3 are considered
- [Strategy for Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic 2007](#)
  - Emphasises the functional literacy of students and the development of key competencies
- [Youth Support Strategy 2014-2020](#)
  - Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
  - Includes commitments for the transition of young people between school and work and for creating conditions for their smooth integration into the labour market
- [Back to the Top: the International Competitiveness Strategy for the Czech Republic 2012- 2020](#)
  - Includes a chapter on education, with an emphasis on the need for education to address independent creative thinking, the ability to continue learning and the ability to cooperate



## Formal learning

The Czech Republic applies cross-curricular, compulsory and optional approaches at primary and lower level secondary education.

Entrepreneurship education is integrated as cross-curricular themes (CCTs) for ISCED levels 1-2 ('Morals, Character and Social Education' and 'Civic Education for Democracy') and 3 ('Morals, Character and Social Education').

Schools have full autonomy to decide on how to implement CCTs in their teaching.

They can be included in general subjects (such as civics, social studies), but schools can also arrange special courses, projects, excursions, etc. Nevertheless, CCTs form a compulsory part of curriculum at ISCED 1, 2 and 3 levels, although they need not be present in each grade. Although there are no separate specific subjects on entrepreneurship at ISCED levels 1-3, entrepreneurship is included in several compulsory or optional subjects:

- ISCED 1: 'Humans and their World' (compulsory) and 'Ethical Education' (optional)
- ISCED 2: The educational areas 'Humans and Society: Civics', 'The World of Work' (compulsory at grades 8 and 9). Creative thinking and self-evaluation are included in 'Ethical Education' (optional subject)
- ISCED 3: 'Humans and Society: Basics of Civics' and 'Social Sciences' (compulsory at grades 10 and 11), 'Man and the World of Work' (compulsory subject, includes procedures for setting up a pupil's own business), and 'Ethical Education' (optional).
- In school-based IVET, entrepreneurship education is integrated into the compulsory subject 'Basics of Civic Education'. It is also part of the cross-curricular themes 'Citizens in a Democratic Society' and 'Man and the World of Work'.

In the Czech Republic, the innovation strategy has only few relevant actions, and one of these highlights the importance of teacher education to support the introduction of new tools for entrepreneurship education. This recognises the primary role that teachers play in the delivery of entrepreneurship education and the significant focus that is placed on their training and support. This can be done most effectively through a combination of both initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) as illustrated through strategy commitments in the French and German-speaking Communities of Belgium, Finland and Bosnia and Herzegovina ([EURYDICE 2016](#)).

## Non-formal and informal learning

The Czech Republic has highlighted a number of different strategies including those relating to lifelong learning and youth, however the most relevant is the 'Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2014-2020' (RIS) which strongly links to the 'International Competitiveness Strategy 2012-2020'.

RIS aims to target funding activities to strengthen research and innovation, and links to entrepreneurship education are made through the introduction of tools to assess and develop entrepreneurial skills, supported by teacher education and alongside the implementation of activities to encourage practical teaching.

There are several (Youth) NGOs focusing their values and educational path on the importance of problem-solving competencies and other relevant skills.

Some of the Youth NGOs and initiatives are directly focused on supporting young entrepreneurs and entrepreneur education, such as [Junior Achievement](#), [Junior Chamber International Czech Republic](#), and they usually receive at least some support from public resources or EU programmes for their activities.

A very active role is played by the [Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Crafts CZ](#) which is running its own successful initiative without any public support [Svou](#)

[cestou - Young business](#). There are other private entities and individuals working with the topic e.g. [www.mladypodnikatel.cz](http://www.mladypodnikatel.cz) (Young Entrepreneur).

## Educators support in entrepreneurship education

### General school Methodological portal ([RVP.cz](http://RVP.cz))

Supports teachers in their (schools') initiatives in this regard, the national level is providing facilitation and good practice space for teachers as well as a place for sharing methodologies and methods.

Teachers can share their experience, as well as their practice-based teaching methods, using a special Internet forum, the 'Methodological portal', which also covers other subject areas.

In 2016 there were [285 support materials for entrepreneurship education](#) or education about entrepreneurship.

### The Centre for Practice Enterprises ([Centrum fiktivních firem](#))

This is an activity of the National Institute of Education and a member of the international network European-PEN International.

It offers students in upper secondary vocational education the opportunity to manage a 'practice enterprise' in order to develop their entrepreneurial skills. These companies are set up by students under the supervision of the teacher and in co-operation with the Centre.

### Projects to support entrepreneurship education

Several usually EU-funded projects on financial literacy or entrepreneurship education have been undertaken in recent years in order to support the curricula and methodical materials development, e.g. [mini-entrepreneurship at primary schools](#), etc.

### Further Education of Pedagogical Workers

Within the system of Further Education of Pedagogical Workers courses limited to financial literacy are available for all teachers, not for entrepreneurial skills as such.

Entrepreneurship might be taught as part of the requalification process conducted by the Employment Office by relevant jobseekers.

Entrepreneurship courses are mostly provided by private entities as paid courses or workshops.

[Information regarding entrepreneurship and its support](#) is available via the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

## 3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

### Access to information

The Czech Republic has [The Innovation strategy 2019 - 2030](#) and [The Strategy to support small and middle-size enterprises for the period 2021 - 2027](#). Both of them emphasise that knowledge about entrepreneurship and its opportunities, especially in the relation to the digital transformation is relatively low in the Czech Republic. Both see huge opportunities for promotion **through the school system** and social security system.

To raise the awareness and competencies among young entrepreneurs the goal of more involvement of risk capital and capital diversification is seen as viable to facilitate the young entrepreneurs' involvement and better access to real and practical information for their business endeavour as well as the national National Educational Curricula reform. Also, the [Education Strategy 2030+](#) reflects these objectives.

National curricula - the Educational Framework Programmes include already the issues of the labour market including entrepreneurship education. Students clubs, organisations and initiatives are too often focused upon.

From a state perspective, **young people are targeted like any other part of society by policies supporting small and medium-sized businesses.**

Relevant support and information on entrepreneurship and its aspects are also provided by subordinated organisations of the Ministry of Industry and Trade:

- The Investment and Business Development Agency CzechInvest ([Agentura pro podporu podnikání a investic CzechInvest](#)),
- CzechTrade ([Česká agentura na podporu obchodu CzechTrade](#))
- The Business and Innovation Agency ([Agentura pro podnikání a inovace - API](#)).

The CzechInvest Agency started with funds from the EU two projects devoted to provide information about and to support start-ups [Podporastartupu.cz](#) (Support of Start-ups) and [Czechstartups.org](#).

The National-wide contest "The start-upper of the Year" for young entrepreneurs and start-uppers was started in 2018 by the Czechstartups.org and the Czechinvest Agency.

Specific information is [provided by the Employment Offices](#) and career guidance system in case young people are registered as jobseekers and are interested in entrepreneurship.

The [Technology Agency of the Czech Republic](#) provides opportunities, consultations and info days and meetings to reach the right and specifically innovative target groups.

There are also private initiatives (online and offline) targeting young people with relevant information, which may be helpful for them (Examples in [Chapter 3.8](#) Non-Formal and Informal learning to entrepreneurship). The most visible and complex is by the [Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Crafts CZ](#) initiative called [Svou cestou - Young business](#). Other private entities and individuals are working with the topic, such as [www.mladypodnikatel.cz](#) (Young Entrepreneur).

## Access to capital

The Czech Republic has top-level policy measures to facilitate affordable funding for start-up creation. There is a project [Podporastartupu.cz](#) (Support of Start-ups) run by the CzechInvest Agency, and with the main funding coming from EU Funds. Through four independent activities - CzechStarter, CzechAccelerator, CzechMatch and CzechDemo, persons interested in start-up creation are provided with the help of experts and tutors.

There are schemes for [funding starting entrepreneurs](#) not dependent on their age from national, EU, and often regional and local funds. There is also a support structure to help people gain access to such funding.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade provides [current information on possibilities to acquire capital](#) or subsidy for entrepreneurs, and the CzechInvest Agency also has its own [on-line signpost](#).

Some regions, such as Moravskoslezský kraj or Jihomoravský kraj, specifically mention young people's access to their regional fund schemes. Zlínský kraj has initiated the project Start of Business ([startpodnikani.cz](#)). Also, more and more municipalities are focusing inline the national strategies to support SMEs and young people in starting their businesses.

The Czech Republic has a tradition of supporting young agricultural entrepreneurs. In 2015-2020 [support for young agrarian entrepreneurs](#) is being provided via EU funding for persons interested in starting their entrepreneur activity in agriculture up to 40 years of age. The maximum subsidy is up to 45 000 EUR.

The [Technology Agency of the Czech Republic](#) operates the programme ZETA to support applied research for young researchers. The Agency provides opportunities also in other programmes and calls from technical as well as social and humanities fields. The programme focuses on supporting cooperation between academia and companies by putting together students of MA and doctorate study programmes at universities and young research workers aged up to 35. Even if the programme is not directly linked to start-ups, it can be beneficial also for young entrepreneurs and their research colleagues in the innovation and applied research spheres which are important for technology and digital start-ups.

## 3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

### Special events and activities

- State central authorities are not usually running top-level events or activities to support young entrepreneurship, however, the relevant state agencies supporting entrepreneurship, investments, innovation, education, SMEs and similar do focus on the subject promotion to the general public. In line with the equal opportunities policy, no special youth-focused initiatives take place, however, young people are an important target subgroup which the agencies do operate accordingly. Activities are often initiated by private associations, and subsequently often supported by the public authorities which is in line with the relevant state policies. Such events and activities are e.g.
  - youth business fairs
  - public relations campaigns for introducing entrepreneurship to young people
  - initiatives to support activities to promote youth entrepreneurship in the field of social entrepreneurship.
  - Info days
  - Free consultation and support in specific areas for an interested public, including young people.
- Special events and activities as e.g. contests, seminars, trainings etc. are publically operated by the agencies devoted for support of entrepreneurship - for details, [see chapter 3.9](#).
- There are other private initiatives and activities, especially by the [Association of small and medium-sized enterprises and the self-employed](#), and public authorities are usually following these happenings, and sometimes also contribute with funding when the organising subjects apply for such support in eligible programmes for supporting entrepreneurship.
- Act no. 47/2002 Sb. [on the support of medium and small enterprises](#) and the [State strategy to support small and medium-size businesses 2021 -2027](#) set the Policy Framework for support of medium and small enterprises. Young people are not explicitly mentioned there as a target group. However, youth is included as part of the general public and users of these policies and positive side effects toward young people are mentioned in the strategies.
- The Czech Republic has a goal of increasing the number of young entrepreneurs up to 35 years of age within the [Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2014-2020](#) (RIS3 Strategy)

### Networks and partnerships

- In the Czech Republic, there are mostly privately-initiated networks or networks around the public agencies supporting entrepreneurship, youth NGOs, and Chambers providing support specifically for young entrepreneurs

- Publically-initiated networks are focused on entrepreneurs in general not depending on age limit. All relevant information can be found on web pages provided either by the [Ministry of Industry and Trade](#), state agencies to support entrepreneurship or by private providers
- The Youth receive no special treatment and are considered as an important part of the general public within the field, but not exclusive.
- State Policies for SME and Innovations have a goal to support the capital diversification claiming with part of the argumentation to provide and widen the access of young people to enterprise and business partnerships.

### 3.11 Current debates and reforms

#### Forthcoming policy developments

The Government has increased the minimum wage in general, in 2021 [the lowest threshold is 15 200 CZK](#) (ca 580 EUR) per month. It should correspond to more than 40 % of the average wage.

New Operational Programme Employment from ESF is in the final stage of preparation and first calls are expected in the second part of the 2022 year.

With the new Government since the end of 2021 and new relevant state policy strategies, a strong focus on their implementation is expected. Following the structural trends, impacts of COVID-19 and the Russian Invasion towards Ukraine urgent and robust actions are expected in 2022. A massive refugee wave coming to the Czech Republic's labour market, which is a significant part of the lower age, will also create urgent and strong actions in 2022.

#### Ongoing debates

Digital transformation and the impacts of COVID-19 and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine create an urgent need for the implementation of the new state policies expecting serious social transformation within the fields as Education, Labour Market, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Digital Agenda and Industry 4.0.

The debates are marked with the emphases on effectiveness and leveraging public support and interventions to strengthen society's flexibility and adaptability - young people are expected to play a significant role in those processes.

The discussions also focus on practical obstacles identification and their removal, making the access easier and adapting to today's circumstances.

## 4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

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Social inclusion in the Czech Republic is a relevant and politically important topic. The **central social inclusion policy is governed by the [Agency for social inclusion](#)**. The agency used to be a strong department of the Governmental office, but due to the transformation and strong regional and local character of the activities, it became part of the Ministry for Regional Development. See more in [Chapter 4.2 on the Administration and Governance](#). In the Youth field, it was one of the priorities of the Youth strategy till 2020 and several objectives and measures have been declared. Since 2021 there is no comprehensive youth strategy and aspect and focus on youth inclusion is mainstreamed within other public policies based on the equal and non-exclusion principles.

**Relating to young people, most social inclusion activities are supported within other legal scopes** than youth work, as far as youth work is not legally regulated in the

Czech Republic in most aspects and there is also no comprehensive state policy on the national level.

Leisure-based education and similar ways of non-formal education are regulated by the **Education, Social and Civic legislative**. Within education, inclusive education has been introduced in reality after long-lasting discussion since the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2016. New measures for school facilities for inclusion have been introduced by the state. Still, the implementation has not been consolidated. New Educational Strategy 2030+ emphasises removing social disparities as one of the 2 main strategic goals of the whole educational policy for the coming years. Social policy focus on the specific subgroups of young people as those steaming from institutional and foster care. For details approach in [chapter 4.4](#) and [chapter 4.7](#).

Direct social involvement and support for young people in the way of street work and Low-Threshold facilities for Children and Youth are regulated directly within the scope of **social services**. A special issue is the **field of young offenders**, which, however, seems to be innovative and offer specific activities and programmes on how to help this vulnerable group among youth with professional youth work linked to criminology and related circles.

Also, youth organisations are active in the field of social inclusion in their activities, but it seems to be rather natural and bottom-up, rather than taking any stimulation or steering from the state or public level. The state is thus not offering much specific support to foster youth inclusion through the youth work, even if it is a politically strong and discussed topic.

## 4.1 General context

### Main challenges to social inclusion

There is no general (policy) agreement on the main challenges to social inclusion of young people in the Czech Republic apart from seeing education as one of the most important drivers for successful social inclusion toward the society, labour market and adult life.

[State Education Policy strategy 2030+](#) emphasises the removal of social disparities in education as one of the two strategic goals of the whole educational policy. Most of the measures and initiatives of the educational policy framework, including the educational aspects of youth work - namely non-formal education, should be targeted at the social disparities and inequalities problematic.

[Social Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2030](#) does not set Youth as a specific target group but provides general areas supporting social inclusion (e.g. employment, access to housing, access to health care, etc.). Specific focus for inclusion measures is mentioned only for young people from the institutional and foster care services. Other areas are of social and inclusion services for young people are traditionally part of the general social services policy framework.

Based on various policy documents we can identify specific groups of young people at risk of social exclusion.

As **traditional groups**, the following are discussed:

- **Young people with criminal records and behaviour**
- **Youth with disabilities**
- **Youth with special needs**
- **Youth from families with low income**
- **Youth from families with a lower level of finished education**
- **Youth from families with a criminal record**
- **Youth from families with domestic violence**

As **newly discussed and urgent groups** the following are discussed:

### Roma youth

- Problematic inclusion of young people in education, labour market, living or even health care
- Problematic access of Roma Youth to Education (e.g. The judgement of the European Court of Human Rights in the case [D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic](#) in 2007 showed that Roma children often have limited access toward mainstream Education).
- Systemic inclusion of this group is problematic as data differs according to the ascribed status and voluntary subscribed status.

### Youth living in socially excluded areas

- According to the [Study on Socially excluded areas in the Czech Republic](#), conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2014-2015 there are some alarming findings:
  - 606 socially excluded location exist in the Czech Republic
  - 95 000 – 115 000 people are living in socially excluded locations
  - 43% of their inhabitants are less than 15 years old
  - 75% of the inhabitants of those areas have only elementary education
  - 80-85% are unemployed
  - Almost half of the inhabitants of socially excluded areas are young people and their access to basic principles of democratic society is jeopardised
  - The inhabitants come not only from ethnic minorities but also from the majority and some are even foreigners

### Young families and Single-mothers

- Family policy and children issues and rights are essential parts of the Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020
- Young families might face obstacles in their effort to fully integrate into society, especially regarding housing and childcare
- Housing
  - Average age for [Youth leaving the parental household](#) is 26.5 years
- Childcare
  - [Pre-school care is of insufficient capacity](#)
  - In the period 1996-2013, the number of kindergartens was reduced from 6 700 to 5 000 while the [number of children was maintained](#) (around 350 000)
  - Negative effect on parents who must take care of children while staying at home
  - Negative effect on children who do not develop in the collective of other children, especially dangerous for children already handicapped by a socially excluded background

### Youth with various Sexuality and Gender

- Women face [uneven Labour market conditions](#), esp. lower wage
- Maternity, causing lower representation of women in senior positions and lower economic activity (for details see [Chapter 3.1](#))
- Young LGBT community members [might face negative reactions or even discrimination](#) from the general public

- [Unequal rights for the LGBT community](#) compared to the general public regarding cohabitation, paternity or adoption

### **Youth cared for within the institutional care**

- There have been [observed several negative impacts of the institutional care](#) on the further life of Children and Young people cared for in an institution
- In 2014 the [impact of the institutional care on children was discussed in an expert conference](#) within the Parliament of the Czech Republic

### **The following specific issues were raised as well:**

#### **Digital gap among young people**

- Only marginally studied phenomenon
- Partial data indicates possible negative implications of digital gap for young people from socially excluded environment, as [reported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#):
- *'Within the ICLIS 2013 study mapping the digital competency of elementary schools, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Czech children performed perfectly, compared to other countries (placed 1<sup>st</sup>). However a strong tie between digital competency and socio-economic status was proved. Especially kids coming from socially excluded backgrounds might be threatened by low digital competency. In light of the spreading digitalisation, omitting this age category might have negative effects such as deepening the social exclusion of children with digital illiteracy.'*
- International PISA research
  - Verified the influence of social background on computer literacy of young people
  - Proved a strong connection between computer equipment in family and level of computer literacy of young people

#### **Distrust toward political institutions and thus low formal participation of young people**

- Already a recognised issue within the [National Youth Report 2013](#) and still valid, as the survey [of Slovak and Czech Youth Councils on Youth participation in V4 countries showed in 2017](#). It was also one of the outcomes from the Structured Dialogue with Youth on Youth participation and Empowerment in 2014-2015 as the [national report 2015](#) showed.

#### **Low citizenship and legal literacy**

- Already a recognised issue within the [National Youth Report 2013](#) and still valid, as the survey [of Slovak and Czech Youth Councils on Youth participation in V4 countries showed in 2017](#). It was also one of the outcomes from the Structured Dialogue with Youth on Youth participation and Empowerment in 2014-2015 as the [national report 2015](#) showed.

#### **Youth Radicalisation**

- Evolution of xenophobic and potentially radical rhetoric
- Due to recent events, esp. migration crisis and terrorist attacks within EU
- Might negatively influence the youth and lead to their radicalisation
- [Spreading of radical ideology](#) by meetings, marches/parades, happenings and on the Internet
- In 2015, the Czech Republic [detected an increase](#) in criminal activity with racial motives for the age category 21-29 years

There are no regular national surveys on young people's social inclusion. EU indicators for social inclusion are monitored by the Czech Statistical Office within the EU-SILC survey.



## Definitions and concepts

### Young people with fewer opportunities (mladí lidé s omezenými příležitostmi)

*'Young people who have a disadvantage in comparison with their peers because they are dealing with one or more obstacles e.g. social obstacles, economical obstacles, affliction, learning difficulties, cultural differences, health problems, geographical obstacles, etc. In specific contexts these situations prevent young people from effective access to formal and non-formal learning, transnational mobility and participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society.'* ([Youth strategy 2014-2020](#))

### Social inclusion

- Defined in [Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on Social Services](#), as amended
- Social inclusion is a process ensuring that people who are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion will reach possibilities and opportunities, helping them to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural life of society and live in a manner that is considered as ordinary in the society.
- General goals of the social inclusion in the Czech Republic are thus:
  - Ensuring participation in employment and equal access to all resources, rights, goods and services
  - Preventing the risk of social exclusion
  - Helping the most vulnerable
  - Mobilisation of all relevant actors

Definition of a socially excluded area (sociálně vyloučené oblasti) used by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs:

*'As socially excluded areas we mean a place (house, street, neighbourhood) with a concentration of persons with social exclusion indicators. These places are symbolically called "bad neighbourhoods" or "undesired addresses" etc.*

*Social exclusion is defined as gradual, escalating exclusion from full participation in social, material and even symbolic resources produced, shared and used by society to ensure good living conditions, organisation of social life and participate in decision making.*

*Social exclusion is characterised as a convergence of factors substantially limiting access to: (1) labour market, (2) public, social and education services, (3) social environment, (4) personal crisis solutions (debt, illness, etc.) and (5) political participation. Ethnicity plays a specific role in social exclusion.*

- In 2015 in the Czech Republic there lived 95 000 - 115 000 socially excluded persons concentrated in 606 socially excluded areas.

- Compared to 2006 this means an increase between 40 to 50 per cent in the number of inhabitants. Number of socially excluded areas increased by 80 per cent in the same period.

### Person with health disadvantages (osoba zdravotně znevýhodněná)

- Maintained ability to perform systematic work however their ability to perform present job is limited
- Caused by long-term unfavourable health lasting longer than 1 year and limiting physical, sensual or mental abilities
- Definition stated in [Act no. 435/2004 Coll. Employment Law](#)

### Endangered child

- Elemental, biological, mental, emotional, social or spiritual needs of the child are not satisfied or are in danger of not being satisfied

### Students with special educational needs

- Defined in the [Educational Act no. 561/2004 Coll. as amended](#).
- Child with health disability; health handicap or social handicap
  - Health disability (zdravotní postižení) = mental, visual, hearing impairment, speech impediment, multiple disabilities, autism and learning and behavioural disorders
  - Health disadvantage (zdravotní znevýhodnění) = health weakening, long-term illness, light health issues leading to learning and behaving disorders that must be taken into consideration in education
  - Social disadvantage (sociální znevýhodnění)
    - ❖ Social environment with low social and cultural status, endangered by socially pathological events
    - ❖ Deceased or assigned institutional upbringing
    - ❖ Asylum seeker status or complementary protection or party to international protection proceedings

The Czech legal system often uses **undefined terms or terms with more than one definition**:

- [Youth from socially and cultural handicapped environment](#)
- [Youth from socially excluded areas](#)
- [Youth with socio-pathologic tendencies](#)
- [Hazardous behaviour of youth](#)
- Delinquent youth (criminology)

## 4.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

Social Inclusion is a Cross-sectorial topic and thus governed by several institutions according to their competences. Most competencies are on the level of local and regional Authorities. The State is mostly for steering and offering its own capacities and resources for the implementation of state policies.

Regions and Municipalities can apply their own social inclusion strategies. On a national level, the Ministry for Regional Development is directly responsible and runs the [Agency for Social Inclusion](#). The Agency is a tool to assist municipalities at a local level in their social inclusion activities and policies. Cooperation between municipality and Agency is on the basis of a voluntary contract.

In national policies, ministries propose a political document and subsequent legal adjustments. When approved by the Government, the proposal starts being implemented within the sectoral policy.

Implementation is influenced by several circumstances like grant agencies, cross-sectoral cooperation among institutions and on a vertical level with local and Regional Authorities.

The Youth is often explicitly mentioned as a vulnerable group, however, it is also often only implicitly included as a target group (general population, socially excluded area, child care system, etc.).

## Main actors

Within the field of Social Inclusion we can differentiate between three types of actors:

1. Founded by the Government in order to deal with social inclusion (and subsequently with the inclusion of excluded young people)
2. Sectional bodies, dealing with inclusion within their own strategic and conceptual documents (for more details please see [Chapter 4.3](#))
3. Youth Policy actors (see [Chapter 1.4](#))

### Youth Policy bodies dealing with Social Inclusion

There are no specific central state authority units dealing with youth inclusion specifically within the youth work or the youth field. Main central state authorities are The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

#### Governmental bodies

##### [Government Council for Human Rights](#)

The Council was founded by the Government and is composed of representation of Ministries and local and regional authorities as well as invited private actors as Foundations, Czech Branches of International Organizations such as UNICEF and relevant NGOs. Its main task is to oversee abiding the Constitution and Charter of fundamental rights and freedoms. It also supervises human rights protection obligations derived from international treaties:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- European Convention on Human Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- United Nations Convention against Torture
- European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Council [creates subcommittees](#) (political and civil rights; economic, social and cultural rights, against torture or inhuman treatment, **children's rights**, rights of foreigners, human rights and biomedicine, sexual orientation, minorities, **anti-discrimination**)

- Committee for sexual minorities engages especially in legal aspects
- Committee for children rights is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the international Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Regularly publishes a report about the [human rights status in the Czech Republic](#) and the [fulfilment of obligations from international treaties](#)

##### [Inter-ministerial Commission for Roma Community Affairs](#)

Founded by the Government in 1997 with the aim of [coordinating Czech international strategy](#) regarding Roma (international strategy because of international influence on creation). Further, the Commission [participates on activities](#) by EU Roma Network, OBSE, Council of Europe and Visegrad 4.

Recently it has been supervising the implementation of 'Strategy of Roma integration 2020' and has also announced and supervised subsequent grant programmes.

It has created special committees:

- Committee for the Decade of Roma inclusion

- Implements action plan of the international initiative 'Decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015'
- **2 out of 5 national priorities regarded youth** (Inclusive education and Life situations and children's rights)
- Czech action plan also contains problematic issues of **Roma youth** identified in [Chapter 4.1](#); young Roma inclusion, education, housing, employment and health
- It cooperates with local administrations regarding implementation of adopted measures
- Monitoring committee
  - Mediates contact between the Commission and state organisation dealing with socially excluded regions

### **Government Council for equality of men and women**

Youth is not explicitly mentioned as a target group, however the Council proposed changes within document [Men and Women Equality Data collection optimisation Report](#) and thus data on young people's gender issues are monitored and are the responsibility of the Council.

It initiates its own and supports external research regarding gender equality and administrates its own grant programme on equality matters.

Under the Council operate 7 subject committees and working groups such as the [Committee for private and family life harmonisation](#) or the [Committee for domestic violence and violence against women](#), [Working Group on obstetrics](#).

### **Government Council for National Minorities**

This is an inter-departmental body with cross-sectorial competencies.

Members of the council are minority representatives (specifically Byelorussian, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Rusins, Russian, Greek, Slovak, Serbian, Ukrainian and Vietnamese).

It provides publication activities, e.g. an annual report about minorities' situation in the Czech Republic.

It has two sub-committees for Subsidy and for Local municipalities cooperation.

### **Government Board for People with Disabilities**

This is a permanent coordination and initiative council body of the Czech Government for the field of disabled citizens. It was established in 1991.

It concentrates on deepening [International cooperation of handicapped people's integration into society](#).

The current policy document is the [National Plan for the Support of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015-2020](#) which is based on the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) and mentions youth as a target group and requires [annual reports](#) on the implementation.

The Board also administrates initiatives in the [National Development Programme: Mobility for Everyone](#), [Life Without Barriers](#) and the subsidy programme Support of [Disabled Persons Associations' Useful Activities](#).

### **Social Inclusion Agency (SIA)**

SIA has been operating since 2008. It creates a bridge between central and local administration and is responsible for information transfer, assistance to local subjects with social inclusion, and surveying the situation on local levels and passing on the information. Its fields of action are [where social integration is necessary](#): housing, unemployment,

education, social services, security, family, and socio-legal protection of children as stated in the Social Integration Strategy 2030. The Agency operates as a department of the Ministry for Regional Development.

## Sectorial bodies

### **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MEYS)**

In 2016 MEYS introduced new School legislation amendments creating better conditions for social inclusion in Education, so called Common education (společné vzdělávání) which introduced support tools and measures for the inclusion of pupils with specific educational needs across the country. For details see [Chapter 6.6](#).

Important political strategies are implemented by the MEYS within the field of education and inclusion in education:

- [Education Strategy 2030+](#)
  - One of the main goals is to lower and balancing the inequalities in education, as Czech Republic is a country with one of the highest inequalities within OECD and EU.
- [Long-term Education and Education System Development Intention 2015-2020](#)
  - Strategic goal G: 'equal opportunities in education, consulting, children and students with special needs education'
- [Digital Education Strategy 2020](#)
  - Ensures non-discriminatory access to digital educational resources (adequately reacts to the digital gap phenomenon – please see [Chapter 4.1](#))
  - Deals only with electronic sources, not digital technologies in general.

### **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA)**

In the field of social inclusion, the Ministry implements the [Social Integration Strategy 2021-2030](#). Implementation and monitoring is supervised by the [Social Integration Commission](#).

The Ministry is responsible for related areas of inclusion of young people: housing, childcare, children's rights protection, employment, and the social security system including social benefits.

Social housing became an issue after the economic crisis and thus the [Social Housing Concept 2015-2025](#) was introduced. Youth is one specific target group with special attention given to young people up to 26 years of age, and those leaving institutional care, and the strategy also recognises the problem of housing issues for young LGBT people.

In order to more flexibly facilitate the inclusion of mothers after maternity leave into the labour market, the so called [Children Groups](#) were brought into force in 2014 by the Act no. 247/2014 Coll. The Ministry serves as [information](#) and [administrative](#) support in this initiative.

The Ministry also implements two main national strategies in the protection of Children's Rights: [National child abuse prevention strategy 2008-2018](#) and the [National children's rights protection strategy](#) accompanied by [Action plan for the fulfilment of the national strategy to protect children's rights 2012 – 2015](#), [National child abuse prevention strategy for the period 2009-2010](#) and [STOP child abuse](#). The goal was to create a functional [children's rights protection and rights fulfilment system](#), following a broader [endangered childcare system](#) reform (abroad, this complements insufficient pre-school education).

### **Housing Development State Fund**

The Fund is within the Ministry of Regional Development's competence. It manages concessionary loans for [housing young people](#) up to 36 years of age. Former programmes

were not funded and were thus [de facto not in existence](#) until the new generation of EU Funds came and was used to support the new generation of programmes. There is also [loan program](#) for the construction of rental flats and houses or for the reconstruction of buildings for a defined group of inhabitants (seniors 65+, health or income-defined persons), minors under 30 years of age and persons whose dwellings were destroyed by a natural disaster.

Loans are offered under favourable conditions like low interest, free early payoff, free consultation services etc. The allocated budget for year 2016 is 100 million CZK (3.7 million EUR).

The Fund is participating in the implementation of [Housing Concept 2020](#), where young people are specifically stated as a target group. Young people and young families are considered up to 36 years of age.

## 4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

### Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion of Young people

The Czech Republic does not have a separate strategy for the social inclusion of young people but social inclusion of young people is one of the key objectives of the [Youth Strategy 2014-2020](#) (For further details about the Youth Strategy see [Chapter 1.3](#)).

The first horizontal priority of the Strategy is **Equal opportunities**

Strategy 2020 guarantees the right of every young person to respect, support from the state, and equal treatment. In this context, Strategy 2020 facilitates the full integration of young people into society and gives support to both organised and non-organised young people, and to those who work with them, following the principle of equal opportunity so that they are ensured the same opportunities in everyday life, regardless of gender, disability, race, nationality, religious belief or other discriminating factors.

The Czech Republic has adopted **other relevant policy documents in regard to social inclusion and addressing specific risk factors and specific target groups or areas among the youth population:**

- [National strategy on Primary prevention of risky behaviour of children and youth for the period 2013-2018](#): primary prevention helps to facilitate social inclusion and prevent social exclusion. It differentiates between selective and non-selective preventive activities and focuses on various subgroups and age groups; for details see 'Related Strategies' below. It does not recall the Youth Strategy, however the Youth department was active during the preparation and is responsible for tasks on non-selective primary prevention activities. The responsible Authority is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.
- General [Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020](#): this is issue-oriented, particular attention is also given to Children and Youth, Youth from institutionalised care, delinquent youth, the family policy and access to education measures. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs holds authority over the implementation. It does not directly recall the Youth Strategy, nor the earlier State Concept in the area of Children and Youth for the period 2007-2013.
- [Strategy to combat social exclusion for period 2016-2020](#) also deals with issues of social exclusion and poverty and their risk to children, youth and families, and their specific situation in the socially excluded areas. It also targets low-threshold facilities for children and youth, issues of youth criminality, drug abuse, debt, etc. One of the specific goals is also oriented around youth - Specific objective 5.1.5: Reduce the risk of exclusion of children, youth and families in socially excluded areas. There are four indicators of fulfilment: Number of offences committed by children and youth in socially excluded areas, number of prescribed cases of institutional care, number of

interventions, number of realised case conferences. It does not directly recall the Youth Strategy, nor the earlier State Concept in the area of Children and Youth for the period 2007-2013. The authority over the Strategy is held by the Governmental Social Inclusion Agency.

- [Strategy of Educational Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020](#), emphasising lowering the inequalities in access to and within education for all, but especially to young people. For details see [Chapters 6 and 4.2](#). The Strategy is linked with the Youth Strategy and the Youth Strategy is considered a tool for better implementation of the Educational Strategy especially in the field of Non-Formal and leisure-based (acc. to The Educational Act) education of children and youth. The authority over the Strategy is held by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.
- [Strategy of Employment Policy until 2020](#), National strategy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, implemented also by the Employment Offices and with co-authority with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Time frame: 2013-2020. Youth is recognised and targeted in order to support employability of disadvantaged groups in the labour market. The main focus on youth is linked with the Youth Guarantee implementation and with the voluntary commitment of the Czech Republic to focus on young people up to 30 years of age. The Youth Strategy is not, however linked or mentioned in the Employment Strategy.
- [Social Housing Strategy 2015-2025](#), Youth is one of the specific target groups with special attention to young people up to 26 years of age, and those leaving institutional care, and the strategy also recognises housing issues faced by young LGBT people. Social Housing or help for housing are also considered as facilities for students, such as dormitories or boarding houses for secondary as well as higher education pupils and students. Youth Strategy as such is not mentioned and linked. The Authority over the Strategy is held by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.
- [Strategy of Family Policy](#) is a Strategy approved by the Government in September 2017 (actualized in 2019) with a 5-year validity. Every three years a National Report on Family should be introduced, starting in 2017. Each year a report on progress should be created and if necessary the strategy can be updated based on this progress report. The Strategy aims for support and inclusion especially of families with children and with the care of seniors. The target group is a functional family. The National Strategy on the protection of Children's Rights and the National Strategy for development of social services target those families with children at risk. The Family Strategy is cross-sectorial and in accordance with other valid governmental strategies including the Youth Strategy. One element is further developing the measures of the Youth Strategy, namely the introduction of a basic offer of free-time activities for children free of charge in order to ensure quality and accessible care for children and young people.
- [Strategy to prevent criminality 2016-2020](#) is within the scope of competences of the Ministry of the Interior. Although the Strategy is targeted at the whole population, Children and Youth are one of the most prominent sub-groups the Strategy is targeting. From the general Children and Youth population, young people from socially excluded areas and those who became a victim or are at special risk of becoming a victim of any criminal activity are targeted. The Strategy is linked with the National strategy on Primary prevention of risky behaviour of children and youth for the period 2013-2018, but it is not linked to the Youth Strategy 2014-2020.

## Scope and contents

The Youth Strategy clearly declares the inclusion of young people in the broadest sense of the Concept of social inclusion as one of the basic assumptions of the contemporary Czech policy towards youth. The main part of this document specifies 13 strategic goals of State policy in relation to young people. Strategic goals related to the inclusion of young people are in table 4.3.1 below with the division of responsible Authority on the state level.

As a specific goal, there is the SG 10: To facilitate inclusion of children and young people with fewer opportunities.

The definition of Young people with fewer opportunities used in the Youth Strategy is following the Youth in Action Programme Guide and states:

Young people who are disadvantaged in comparison with their peers, because they face one or more situations and obstacles such as social barriers, economic barriers, disability, educational difficulties, cultural differences, health problems, geographical barriers, etc. In certain contexts, these situations or barriers prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, trans-national mobility and participation, active citizenship, empowerment and social inclusion.

Objectives of the Youth Strategy related to social inclusion are threefold:

- To improve access to services in education, employment, health and social care for children and youth with fewer opportunities
- To improve access for children and youth with fewer opportunities to leisure-based and non-formal education
- To encourage the development of skills for children and youth to promote tolerance across cultural and social groups

Among concrete measures for improving the access of children and young people with fewer opportunities, we can find initiatives to improve the access to information by means available to them as well as to support organisations and institutions dealing with children and youth with fewer opportunities regardless of their legal status. The implementation measures should make children and young people aware of their own value and raise their self-esteem. In order to effectively target young people with fewer opportunities, the state should support social activation services for families with children as far as the family has an important influence on the level and attitude towards fully enjoying social and life opportunities.

Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities into leisure based and non-formal education should be implemented by measures such as promotion of the use of cultural, social and educational centres to provide opportunities for non-formal education. Leisure-based and non-formal education projects focusing on the integration of children and young people with fewer opportunities should be supported and further education and sharing of good examples of methodology for children and young people with fewer opportunities should be promoted.

The development of skills for promotion of tolerance across cultural and social groups should be implemented by supporting activities leading to the mutual recognition of traditions and cultures, eliminating prejudice and stereotypes as well as activities leading to the development and preservation of a sense of identity, culture, traditions and language.

Positive personal and professional role models that motivate children and young people at risk of social exclusion to full participation in the educational and employment process should be promoted and disseminated among youth. Sharing of national and international examples of good practice in improving social cohesion should be promoted as well. The development and application of pedagogical approaches in the field of education for tolerance and the prevention of racism and extremism should be stimulated by the promotion. The State should also promote cooperation between schools and educational institutions with organisations and institutions that help children and youth with fewer opportunities.



**Table 4.3.1: List of strategic goals regarding youth inclusion and the responsible state Authority**

Strategic Goals	Responsible Authority	
Main	Shared with	
SG 1: To facilitate equal access of children and youth to rights	MEYS MLSA	MC
SG 2: To facilitate equal access of children and youth to information	MEYS	MC
SG 6: To improve conditions for employment and employability of youth	MEYS	MLSA MIT MA MC
SG 8: To promote active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing the social and democratic life	MEYS	MC
SG 10: To facilitate inclusion of children and young people with fewer opportunities	MEYS MLSA MC	MC MI

**Source:** MEYS. 2014. [Youth Strategy 2014-2020](#).

Legend:

MEYS = Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport; MC = Ministry of Culture; MRD = Ministry of Regional Development; MA = Ministry of Agriculture; MIT = Ministry of Industry and Trade; MLSA = Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; MI = Ministry of the Interior

### Responsible authority

The main responsible state Authority in regard to the Youth Strategy is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, and also the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Culture in regard to social inclusion of youth. Other Ministries are co-responsible for the various sub-themes as visualised in Table 4.3.1. This is especially the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of the Interior.

It can be discussed whether in the case of general priorities such as access to information, rights and participation all relevant Authorities should be co-responsible and thus whether the principle of mainstreaming of youth could be better implemented to all sectorial policies and programmes. The Youth Strategy as such, however, does not require that.

The responsible Authority for other relevant Policy Strategies is mentioned in the short list above.

### Revisions / updates

The Youth Strategy 2014-2020 follows closely on the concept of State policy for the area of children and youth for the period 2007-2013, which also included several goals relating to the inclusion of young people, namely: information about youth and for youth; youth employment and employability; the protection of the rights of children and youth; participation of the young generation in social and political life; young people from ethnic minorities, young migrants and refugees; young people and housing; Youth and family

policy, the promotion and protection of the family; Youth, social pathologies, social prevention, and social integration.

Even in this case, it was a document that was built on cross-sectoral cooperation, explicitly referring to strategic and conceptual documents of other ministries, and had defined responsibility for each task by the departments. Some topics are already no longer present in the current Strategy, however, they could be covered by other public policy strategies. All of these areas are covered by the partial documents of other ministries, as shown above and in [Chapter 4.2](#).

The Youth Strategy is not expected to be updated or revisited until 2020 when a new cycle of the Youth Policy with new Strategy is expected to be created based on the evaluation of the implementation of Strategy 2020.

## Related Strategies

### National strategy on Primary prevention of risk behaviour of children and youth for the period 2013-2018

[\(Národní strategie primární prevence rizikového chování dětí a mládeže na léta 2013 - 2018\)](#)

Main goal

- Through an effective prevention system, operating on the basis of a comprehensive action of all related entities, to minimise and reduce risky behaviour among children and youth.

Specific goals

- A working system of primary prevention coordination on horizontal and vertical levels
  - clear coordination mechanisms, roles and responsibilities of individual institutions, including the establishment of rules of communication between them.
  - clearly defined transparent legislative coordination mechanisms, roles and responsibilities of individual institutions and their activities.
- Setting up an effective system of education for the primary prevention of risky behaviour for all entities - to participate in primary prevention in use, verification and subsequent implementation of project outputs [VYNSPI](#) and [VYNSPI II](#)
- Financially secure the area of primary prevention, maintaining a stable subsidy system
- The introduction of a national system for assessing the quality of primary prevention programmes (certifications) for all kinds of risky behaviour, which is designed for all providers of such programmes and which provides a comparable level of these programmes throughout the Czech Republic.

Target groups

- The general population of children and youth

This is a target group that is not identified according to individual risk factors. The age criterion defines the population of children and youth in the five target groups:

- Pre-school age (3-6 years)
- Younger school age (6-12 years)
- Older school age (12-15 years)
- Juveniles (15-18 years)
- Young adults (18-26 years)
- Specific groups of children and youth

These are groups of children and young people with an increased risk of behavioural problems (e.g. Children from families where there is criminal activity, dependence on alcohol, etc.). This group is targeted by selective primary prevention programmes. NEETs and young migrants are not included explicitly.

- Individuals exhibiting traits of risky behaviour

For example youth experimenting with drugs, truants etc.

This group is focused by programmes indicated in primary prevention.

- Other target groups
  - Parents
  - Public
  - Workers in the primary prevention of risky behaviour

Forms of risky behaviour within the Strategy:

- Interpersonal aggressive behaviour - bullying, cyberbullying, and other forms of risk communication through multimedia, violence, intolerance, anti-Semitism, extremism, racism and xenophobia, homophobia
- Delinquent behaviour in relation to material goods - vandalism, theft, graffiti and other crimes and misdemeanors
- Truancy and failure to fulfil school obligations
- Addictive behaviour - the use of addictive substances, netolism (internet addiction), gambling
- Risky sports activities, injury prevention
- Risky behaviour in traffic, accident prevention
- The spectrum of eating disorders
- Negative influence of sects
- Risky sexual behaviour

Responsible authority

- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
- Strategy is in coordination with the Crime Prevention Strategy for 2012-2015, National Drug Policy Strategy for the period 2010-2018 and the Standards of competences for providers of school-based primary prevention of risky behaviour
- Implementation is ensured by the cross-sectorial and vertical network of
  - Regional school prevention coordinator, worker of the office of the Regional authority
  - Methodologist of prevention, an employee of the school advisory facility
  - School prevention methodologist, teachers at schools and school facilities
- Implementation is supported by the [Ministerial subsidy programme for primary prevention](#)
- Evaluation is set up as ongoing complex data collection and analysis from the field.
- Previous Strategies: the Concept of prevention of substance abuse and other risky behaviours among children and youth for the period 1998-2000, 2001-2004, 2005-2008, and 2009-2012.

## 4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

### Programmes for vulnerable young people

The Czech Republic has no overarching youth integration programme dealing with all aspects of social inclusion of young people. However, a set of programmes and initiatives can be identified within state public policies which are focused on several issues facilitating social inclusion of young people. Some of them are interconnected, others only to some extent and some seem to be rather for solving particular issue.

In general, we see quite extensive decentralisation and privatisation of the activities connected to social inclusion, even if supported at the state level. The Czech Republic as such usually provides resources for other actors to realise their own programmes targeting goals of social inclusion, or wider projects with EU support as a public service for social inclusion.

Most important central level programmes:

- 1) **Inclusive Education** – based on Decree no. 27/2016 Coll. and other programmes supporting social inclusion of young people in education (primary, secondary, higher education, out-of-school education – for details see [Chapter 6.6](#)).
- 2) **Youth Guarantee** – support of youth employment – for details see [Chapter 3.6](#).
- 3) **On the Right Track** – support of youth offenders' social inclusion
- 4) **Programme for Youth** – offers favourable loans for young people
- 5) **Low Threshold Centres for Children and Youth Support**
- 6) **Social Activation services for families with Children Support**
- 7) **Ad hoc subsidy programme on social inclusion by youth work**

As social inclusion measures need to be done mostly on a local level, a major part of the central level programmes are also realised by the local parties, especially local Authorities, and some programmes are only supported by the state subsidy in order to secure social inclusion programmes on a local level, often by NGOs (for more information please see [Chapter 4.2](#))

#### **On the Right Track** ([Na správnou cestu](#))

Timeframe: 2016-2020 (previous systemic project with limited scope and only slightly different content in period 2012-2015)

Based on: [Act no. 257/2000 Coll., On Probation and Mediation Service](#) and [Act no. 218/2003 Coll., Youth Criminal Justice Act](#).

[The Ministry of Justice](#) is the responsible state Authority and the [Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic](#) is responsible for the implementation.

Project Objectives:

Developing multidisciplinary co-operation in the field of work with vulnerable youth and introducing a new short-term employment programme for juvenile offenders.

Adding juveniles and young violent offenders to the Against Violence Programme aimed at reducing aggression and recidivism and increasing the involvement of graduates in the Compensation Programme.

Increasing the qualifications of Probation and Mediation Service professionals to develop restorative programmes and procedures.

Goals:

Offender integration – Probation and Mediation Service strives for offenders' reintegration back into the society without further law violations. Integration is a process to restore offenders' respect for legal order, society and self-realisation.

Victim Participation – trying to involve the victim in the process of their own redress, to restore his/her feeling of safety, integrity and trust in justice.

Society Protection – contributing to society's protection by effective conflict resolution in situations connected with criminal proceedings and effective management of alternative punishments for young offenders.

#### Scope and funding

The Probation and Mediation Service and its youth programme are financed by the Ministry of Justice. The EU funded project, however, aims at supporting the quality by improving the preventive aspect, information base and relevant networks on local level - so called 'Teams for Youth' which are supporting the cross-sectorial and inter-institutional cooperation on local level with better involvement and influence on the environment of young people in place. EU financing of the project is at 77.56%. The project costs 42 665 000.40 CZK (ca 1 680 000 EUR). The project supports the Teams for Youth, Family groups Reflections as well as initiative 'Against violence' which will be piloted among young offenders and their victims in three areas with high levels of violence. The initiatives aim at finding ways and standards for lowering the level of violence among young offenders and their victims.

#### Quality Assurance

Feedback is gathered from youth worker specialists and providers at the Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic. All probation programmes need to have special accreditation from the Ministry to ensure their quality. Evaluation is done by the Council for probation and mediation. Feedback is also given to PMS centre directors.

One of the project outcomes should be new standards for lowering violence among young adult offenders and their victims.

Evaluation outcome: [Activity and management report](#).

#### **Housing for Youth**

Since 2018, there is loan program '[Programme for Youth](#)' for the purchase or modernization of dwellings for young people up to 36 years caring for a child under 15 years of age, which offers favourable loans for young people. Programme for Youth is a programme of the [Housing Development State Fund](#).

There were two supporting programmes for young people in the past - Programme 150 aimed at supporting young people up to 36 years of age by providing them with capital (loan) for reconstructions and modernisation of their own living place. Programme 600 was a favourable loan with the aim of helping young families with children (with parents up to 36 years of age taking care of children up to 6 years of age) buy their own living place.

#### **Low Threshold Centres for Children and Youth Support**

Low-threshold facilities for children and youth are a form of social service according to the [Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on social services](#). They provide ambulatory or field services to children and young people at risk of social exclusion. The service is designed for children aged 6 to 26 at risk of socially undesirable phenomena. The goal of the service is to improve the quality of their lives by preventing or reducing the social and health risks associated with their way of life, enabling them to better orient themselves in their social environment and to create the conditions to deal with their unfavourable social situation if they are interested. The service can be provided to people anonymously. The service includes educational and activation activities, mediation of contact with the social environment, social therapeutic activities and assistance in exercising rights and legitimate interests. The service is provided free of charge.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs offers every year a [subsidy programme to run low-threshold facilities for children and youth](#) based on the Act on Social Services. There were 245 projects supported in 2016 with the amount of 218 127 272 CZK.

### **Social activation services for families with children**

Social activation services for families with children are a form of social service according to the [Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on social services](#). They are mobile and/or drop-in services provided to the family with a child at risk of endangering their development or threatened in their development due to the impact of a long-term difficult social situation that parents cannot overcome without help and for which there exist additional risks to its development. The service includes educational and activation activities, mediation of contact with the social environment, social therapeutic activities and assistance in exercising rights and legitimate interests. The service is provided free of charge.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs offers every year a [subsidy programme to run Social activation services for families with children](#) based on the Act on Social Services. There were 260 projects supported in 2016 with the amount of 212 027 144 CZK (ca 8 315 000 EUR).

### **Funding**

Funding the social inclusion of youth is different according to the type, as shown above by each programme. There are activities which are based in the legislation and which thus have regular state budget funding. This is especially the case of activities which are classified as 'social services'. On the other hand most of the services are decentralised and also provided by private actors. Thus funding the projects with competition schemes seems to be most appropriate. On the other hand it has its other side as well and there is a critique that it does not help to provide long-term support which is needed in this area, as the results show quite late. State funding is also visible in the form of making education inclusive and in preventive activities.

Another relevant stream of funding is the European Social Fund (ESF) which became relevant for most new systemic projects, piloting new methodologies and approaches, and this on state as well as private actors level.

The programmes on social inclusion of young people in the Czech Republic are usually linked with the need of resources, thus most of the programmes as such are funding programmes.

The field of Youth seems not to have a stable stream of funding for the social inclusion of youth. But by changing the perspective, the Strategy on the primary prevention already sees youth work and subsidy to children and youth work organisation as funding the matter of youth inclusion preventatively. This could be true in a wider social perspective, however it does not help to create specific social inclusion programmes for vulnerable groups of young people.

### **Quality assurance**

The Quality assurance of the programmes differs. Those under the scope of social services or in the field of mediation are regulated by the Act on Social services, Act on mediation and Criminal Youth Act as described above.

All areas are working with the project logic and thus all state goals, aims, objectives and measures which could be indicated and thus evaluated. On the public side the outcomes are usually available in the annual activity reports. The systemic projects also include internal evaluation and quality assessment measures. They will, however be ready after the projects have been in progress for a longer time, or are finished.

## 4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

[Paris Declaration](#) from 2015 set a path for future development in inclusion and civic education of young people in Europe.

[Eurydice publication](#) might invoke an impression that the Czech Republic is rather inactive, since the Czech Republic did not start with implementation of any measures since the Paris Declaration approval. However, this impression is partially caused by the data collection method, where only changes after March 2015 were taken into consideration. Changes are taking place in the long-term and implementation is already ongoing. However, these ongoing changes were not taken into consideration by the Eurydice report.

### Intercultural awareness

Intercultural awareness in the Czech Republic in particular is dealt with in the context of curricular documents at the State level of framework educational programmes (FEP). Under these programmes, we can find several terms that are related to this phenomenon being used, these are: multicultural education, intercultural communication, and intercultural contacts. The term [intercultural learning is used in documents originating from the European level](#), or in the [context of the initiatives of NGOs](#).

Specifically, we can find in the multicultural education *FEP for basic education*, and *the FEP for high school*, where it is one of the cross-cutting issues. These are to be implemented by institutions providing basic education in the Czech Republic as their own school educational plans; these institutions handle them depending on the above FEP. The FEP for vocational education also contains the term multicultural competence, however, this does not appear as a separate cross-cutting theme, but as one of the minor topics listed under other thematic units. The FEP referred to above also considers [methodological materials](#), published on the website of the National Institute of Education.

However, the difference in name means also a difference in approaches and education methodologies and goals, as the National Institute for Children and Youth [mentioned in education for non-formal learning](#), and also the [publication More than Culture published in 2017 reminds us](#). Especially practical teachers are often getting confused and thus the topic is often purely taught.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has also supported the [specific grant programme, training of asylum seekers and the integration of immigrants](#) in the past. This programme allowed schools to get additional funding to cover the specific costs that may arise in the context of the specific needs of the education and integration of foreigners; the last such subsidy programme was opened in the year 2012.

Overall, therefore, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports provides the basic legal framework for educational curricula in the Czech Republic, part of which at certain levels of education is also a multicultural education, and at the same time through direct management by the organisation also seeks to provide methodological support for this type of activity. The main target groups in these cases are the school facilities as a whole, as well as teachers.

Schools are also informed about related materials [from the Council of Europe](#) and especially the Framework for [Competencies for democratic Culture](#) also became reflected by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in preparation for [calls 2017](#) from the European Social Fund.

In the field of non-formal education of Youth, there is the Youth Strategy *2014-2020*, in which the strategic goal number 5 supports raising cross-border mobility of young people and strategic goal number 7 supports intercultural dialogue. These goals thus contribute to intercultural awareness among young people. The responsible state Authorities are in this Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Culture.

With cross-border mobility, is also contained in the framework of European programmes for young people in the Czech Republic, implemented at the national level.

### **Out of school environment**

There are several NGOs and Youth NGOs dealing with intercultural awareness, activities and programmes. Among those leading we can name [People in Need](#) and its programme [Varianty](#) and [One World at Schools](#), [Multikulturní centrum Praha](#), [AFS Mezikulturní programy](#), [INEX-SDA](#). The last three mentioned have also realised the nationwide project [Stereotýpek v nás](#) (Stereotype-man in us) on multicultural and intercultural education and activities out of schools as well as in support for schools.

In the Czech-German environment there is also the Tandem - Coordination Centre for Czech-German Youth Exchange, which introduced in 2016 an approach on [diversity education](#) in cooperation with other NGOs partners.

### **Young people's rights**

Young people's rights are one of the topics covered by FEP for preschool, elementary school, high school and higher school education with schools and teachers as target groups. This topic is not supported by methodology materials or subsidy programmes, it is up to the teachers what information they teach. Usually the methodological [materials cover](#) the Human Rights point of view.

[The Youth Strategy 2014-2020](#) reminds us that the state Youth Policy should 'support equal access to rights for children and youth'. Measures to fulfil this policy objective are:

To raise the awareness of society in general of the rights of children and youth

- To promote public education on the rights of children and youth, with emphasis on mutual respect and dignity
- To support the creation of simplified texts relating to the rights of children and youth, making them user-friendly for them
- To support the development of pedagogical procedures to teach children and youth about their rights
- To support and motivate children and youth towards the active enforcement of their rights
- To raise awareness in children and youth of the existing forms of legal counselling and the options for their use

The Authorities responsible for implementation of these measures are the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Culture.

In 2014-2015 during the European consultation within the [Structured Dialogue](#) with Youth the topic was discussed among interested youth and youth organisations. As a national outcome, there is a [Report with national recommendations on how the situation is perceived from the Youth perspective](#) and how to improve it.

Rights in general are promoted by many NGOs, but there is also the [Civic Education Centre](#), an independent scientific-pedagogic centre formerly established by MEYS, now operated by Charles University which produces both methodological and scientific materials in the field of civic and citizenship education and Rights.

### **Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism**

In this regard it is hard to point out one responsible state Authority, however, the [Ministry of the Interior](#) (MI) has the competence over citizenship issues and the legal matters are in the competence of the Ministry of Justice and independent courts. Radicalisation and extremism are then in the direct competence of the Ministry of the Interior.



It regularly publishes reports about the extremism in CZ, either alone or in cooperation with the [Security Information Service](#), and its annual evaluation is based on the [Evaluation of the Fight against Extremism Concept](#). The Czech Republic works with national ([Fight against Extremism Concept 2016](#)) and European strategies ([The EU Counter Terrorism Strategy](#)) and implements both preventive and reactive measures.

Radicalisation prevention of both youth and adults is a top priority of the issued documents and they are addressed to both MI and Czech Policy. Measures to safeguard democracy in contrast to extremism and radicalisation contain 3 main components: (1) anti-conflict team (ACT) activities; (2) implementation of new police strategies to battle extremism and (3) joint initiative between the Ministries of the Interior, and Education, Youth and Sports and the NGO People in Need - Programme Varianty named "Can I understand it? Threats of neonazism", aiming at anti-extremist education, publishing [didactical materials](#) and realising further education for teachers on these matters.

As a key governmental initiative, we can name a campaign '[Hate free Culture](#)', organised since 2014 by the Social Inclusion Agency (department of the Governmental Office). This [Information campaign](#) via web pages and social media is sharing verified information about endangered population groups like immigrants, LGBT or minor religious groups, [verifying and disproving false information](#), supporting victims of violent crimes with extremist subtext, publicising spots with open support of peaceful coexistence and allowing them to mark themselves as '[hate free zones](#)', and promoting the culture of tolerance, respect and democracy. The target group is the general public, however, youth is one of the primary target groups, especially via social media.

## 4.6 Access to quality services

### Housing

Since 2018, there is a loan program '[Programme for Youth](#)' for the purchase or modernization of dwellings for young people up to 36 years caring for a child under 15 years of age, which offers favourable loans for young people. Programme for Youth is a programme of the [Housing Development State Fund](#).

There were two supporting programmes for young people in the past - Programme 150 aimed at supporting young people up to 36 years of age by providing them with capital (loan) for reconstructions and modernisation of their own living place. Programme 600 was a favourable loan with the aim of helping young families with children (with parents up to 36 years of age taking care of children up to 6 years of age) buy their own living place. There were 45 applications in 2016, and 17 contracts were finalised in the amount of 9 700 000 CZK (ca 390 000 EUR). For 2017, the allocation was 50 000 000 CZK (ca 2 000 000 EUR).

Due to a positive economic situation and low-interest rates, access to capital and mortgages was pretty easy in period 2014-2017. However, easy access to capital made the prices rise and the Czech National Bank introduced regulation on Banks in regard [to limiting the access to mortgages](#) in order to prevent potential economic problems.

**With rising the interests from the lowest positions since 2017, the situation rapidly changed and the topic of housing of Young people and rising housing prices especially in cities became top policy issue and social problems.**

For more details on the State Housing Policy please see [Chapter 4.2](#), especially the [Social Housing Strategy of Czech Republic 2015-2025](#).

An amendment to the [Youth Mortgage Act](#) is planned in the Czech Republic.

### Social services

Improving access to social services is one of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' main goals for upcoming years. Beyond improving access, another goal is to adjust the current

system and monitor the quality of social services. On a state level [Social Integration Agency](#) (SIA) also operates as part of the Office of the Government. It creates a bridge between central and local administration. It assists local bodies, [monitors the situation](#) in regions and passes the reports on to central level. Assistance is provided in [every field](#) of social exclusion and a coordinated approach is used, based on the [agreed Methodology](#) between the Agency, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Regional Development.

There is the [Social Services Development National Strategy 2016-2025](#) with several goals:

- Ensuring transition from institutional care into support of a person in natural environment
- Fulfilling patients'/receivers' needs through gradual social and healthcare services
- Modifying a way of engaging the social services system
- Creating a social services network, which reflects upon possible unfavourable social situations

Access to the services is seen still as not fully sufficient, however, the strategies aim for improvement when necessary.

### **One of the most accessible points for young people in need are Low Threshold Centres for Children and Youth.**

Low-threshold facilities for children and youth are a form of social service according to the [Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on social services](#). They provide ambulatory or terrain services to children and young people at risk of social exclusion. The service is designed for children aged 6 to 26 at risk of socially undesirable phenomena. The goal of the service is to improve the quality of their lives by preventing or reducing the social and health risks associated with their way of life, enabling them to better orient themselves in their social environment and to create conditions to deal with their unfavorable social situation if they are interested. The service can be provided to people anonymously. The service includes educational and activation activities, mediation of contact with the social environment, social therapeutic activities and assistance in exercising rights and legitimate interests. The service is provided free of charge.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs offers every year a [subsidy programme to run low-threshold facilities for children and youth](#) based on the Act on Social Services. There were 245 projects supported in 2016 with the amount of 218 127 272 CZK.

## **Health care**

The Czech healthcare system distinguishes patients by age and there are even special doctor specialisations. Children and youth patients up to 18 years of age visit doctors specialised in children and youth, providing regular check-ups, for prevention as well as are dealing with health issues according to personal and age needs. Hospitals provide specialised departments for treating children (up to 18 years).

- Long-term Programme for the Improvement of the State of Health of the population of the Czech Republic
  - From 2002
  - Contained a whole chapter dealing with youth which usually set goals to continue ongoing initiatives in prevention, support of free time activities, sport activities, prevention and lowering abuse of substances.
- [Health 2020: National Illness Prevention and Health Support and Protection Strategy](#)
  - Health issue discussed more generally
  - Determining inequality in society as one of the main risk factors for population's health

- Implementation based on [Action plans for Health National Strategy 2020](#), which specify the main goals into measurable and feasible targets.

## Financial services

The Czech Republic generally does not provide any special financial services to young people, or for the general population. In specific issues subsidy schemes are provided in order to reach some policy target e.g. in environmental issues. Otherwise the only social security system for people in need is the basic safety net.

- The system of social benefits also supports children and young people from lower income families:
  - Designated for [parents with children and youth up to 26 with lower incomes](#)
  - Families with income in previous year lower than 2.4 x family subsistence are eligible to apply for an additional 'child allowance'
  - For children and young persons without regular income and work
  - Three tariffs according age groups
    - ❖ 0 - 5 years of age (500 CZK per month, ca 18.5 EUR)
    - ❖ 6 - 14 years of age (610 CZK per month, ca 22.6 EUR)
    - ❖ 15 - 26 years of age (700 CZK per month, ca 26 EUR)
  - When the child is of full legal age, he/she can receive the benefit him/herself
- There is a possibility of tax reduction for parents of children and young people who are studying or in other preparation for a career.
- When the parents have children they can also apply for special tax bonus when applying the annual tax return.
- Working students or students in business can also get other social security and tax reductions, for details see chapter on employment and entrepreneurship

Except the above mentioned social benefits and social security and tax reduction possibilities, the Czech Republic has no central system providing financial aid for underage persons unless they are in a social and precarious situation - in those cases issue-based social subsidies are available via the regular social security system. Support of youth and children is provided through support of family, which is seen as a basic social unit.

Some systems provide support for young people indirectly, e.g. [financial support of Roma high schools and high schools pupils](#).

Some institutions may provide ad-hoc support, e.g. [Social scholarships](#), Housing scholarships etc. This is a voluntary decision and usually made by self-governing bodies on regional and local level, Chambers or higher education institutions.

Pupils and Students up to 26 years of age can also apply for discounts on public transports (trains and busses); children under 15 years of age have special children travel tariffs. Both are guaranteed by the Ministry of Transportation. From 1st September 2018, a nationwide [75 % fare reduction](#) for students from 6 (children aged 5 or less usually travel for free) up to 26 years of age and for OAPs over 65 years of age is in effect.

## Quality assurance

There is no centralised method of quality assurance of youth inclusion in services. The programme and policies have their own evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms, which have been described by each of them.

## 4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

### Policy/legal framework

The **Czech Republic does not have any unified legal Act covering all forms of youth work or youth issues**, despite the fact that there have been [numerous discussions](#) and attempts in the period 1986 to 1993 (Czechoslovak state dissolved and the Czech Republic emerged) and then until 2006. For details see [Chapter 1.1](#) and 1.10.

As a problematic issue, there was the [difference between professional and voluntary activities](#) toward children and youth. It was hard to find a common ground for voluntary activities with children and youth in free time. On the other hand, highly specialised work with children and youth at risk, in hard living and social conditions or related to justice and criminal youth, needed more structured support and quality assurance.

Work with children and youth is thus only partially regulated. The regulation is linked with the education policy, social services and conditions for juvenile criminal offenders. The system of institutionalised care of Children and Youth is fragmented and thus not really easy to understand. In a stricter sense it could even be considered not as youth work as such but providing services to youth or take protective measures on youth. **Within this strict sense, there is no legal regulation on youth work or social inclusion of youth in youth work.**

Legal Acts related to social inclusion of youth in specific situations

Linked to social policy areas:

[Act no. 359/1999 Coll., on Social-legal protection of children](#)

[Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on Social services](#)

[Decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs no. 505/2006 on the specification of the Act no. 108/2006 Coll. on Social services](#)

Linked to justice and criminal offenders:

[Act no. 218/2003 Coll. on the responsibility of Youth for criminal offences and on the judicial system in the cases of Youth](#) (in English the terms Criminal Youth Act or on Juvenile courts are used)

[Act no. 257/2000 Coll., on Probation and mediation service](#)

Linked to education in general and particularly with restoration after criminal offences by youth

[Act no. 109/2002 Coll. on the provision of institutional education or protective education at school facilities and on preventative educational care at school facilities and on amendments to certain acts](#)

[Act no. 561/2004 Coll., on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education \(the Education Act\)](#)

[Act no. 563/2004 Coll., on Pedagogical Staff and on the Amendment to Other Acts](#)

### Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

As the system, terms and concepts are fragmented it is hard to identify youth-work programmes as such.

In the traditional sense of the concept of Youth work done by voluntary non-state actors (youth organizations) as it is used in the Youth Field and Youth Policy, **there are no special state programmes on social inclusion of young people in youth work activities.** However, social inclusion is one of the principles reflected in the general programmes for youth work in non-state youth organizations.

This **reflection is done on the level of yearly priorities** within the [programmes for the period 2017 - 2020](#). Social inclusion of young people with limited opportunities is every year one of the priorities of the programmes. Thus the projects on social inclusion into regular free-time activities are desired and supported with the priority within the programmes. As a specific group linked to the priority are mentioned also young people from the children's homes.

Moreover, the programmes also state that the support resources for summer camps, which are strong youth work activities in the Czech Republic, can be used also for lowering the costs linked to the participation of young people from socially disadvantaged families.

As a separate youth work programme focused specifically and directly on social inclusion in youth work, there was only one **ad hoc subsidy programme in 2013 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports** (for details see [Chapter 4.4](#)).

The Programmes in general are governed with the principles of the National Youth Strategy, where the principles of equal opportunities and social inclusion for all young people are in place (described in [Chapter 1.2](#)).

**European programme Erasmus+** tackles social inclusion also as one of the mainstreamed and priority topics. The Czech National Agency promotes actively social inclusion among the projects funded by the Erasmus+ and within youth work in general. Eurodesk of the Czech National Agency for Erasmus+ published in 2017 a publication '[Social inclusion in Erasmus+ projects](#)'.

On the side of youth organisations, there are several country-wide **youth organisations** which are specifically tackling social inclusion in youth work. Eleven of them have cooperated on a national level within the **expert working group on social inclusion for free time and youth work activities by the Czech Council of Children and Youth**. The project had a motto: 'To have free time for everybody'. The group organised courses and education for youth workers, had an on-line clinic and produced **4 methodological materials for youth workers in youth organisations**:

- [Joint adventures](#) on the subject how to organise joint activities for children and youth groups with children and young people from disadvantaged environments.
- [Asperger syndrome – do I know what to do with it?](#) On the ways how to work with children and young people with Asperger syndrome in free time activities.
- [ADHD – do I know what to do with it?](#) On the subject of how to work with children and young people with Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- [Make an advantage from disadvantage](#) – ways and tips for leaders of children and youth collectives on how to work with members with special needs.

**In the social sphere** there are two kinds of social services stated and supported in the Act on social services – the Low Threshold Centres for Children and Youth (generally spoken about streetwork) and Social Activation services for families with Children. Both are described in the [Chapter 4.4](#) and on site, they are provided by non-state actors. The Low-threshold centres could be considered as a form of youth work, concretely streetwork. The social activation of families is more related to social services than real youth work.

The streetwork and activities of the Low Threshold Centres for Children and Youth are promoted and represented by the [Czech Streetwork Association](#) (in English also Czech Association of outreach-work).

**Within the institutional and education care**, there are four types of facilities:

**The diagnostic institution** (§ 5 of the Act) is a facility that further places children and youth into children's homes, children's homes with a school, protective education facilities based on a complex examination or directly provides preventive education care.

**Children's homes** (§ 12 of the Act) hold an educational and social function and are designed for children without serious behavioural issues who have been ordered into institutional education.

**Children's homes with a protective educational facility** (§ 13 of the Act) are established to provide care for children and adolescents with ordered institutional care in case of severe behavioural conditions or temporary/permanent mental disorders, as well as for children with ordered protective education and under-aged mothers who fulfil the above conditions. In general, this facility is intended for those who cannot be educated at a standard school, which is not a part of the children's home.

**Special educational institutions** (§ 14 of the Act) provide care for persons older than 15 years with severe behavioural issues and ordered institutional education or protective education. In exceptional cases, a child below 15 may be placed in a special educational institution. In relation to children, it fulfils the same tasks as children's homes.

As a Youth work initiative and programme we can also include the programme [On the Right Track](#) – a programme of mediation and probation of the delinquent youth as described in the [Chapter 4.4](#).

## 4.8 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

Since 2020, the Agenda of Social Inclusion falls under the responsibility of the Ministry for Regional Development, instead of the Office of the Government. It is based on a resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 552 of 30 July 2019 on the transfer of the social inclusion agenda from the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic to the Ministry for Regional Development.

### Ongoing debates

There is still a very strong debate about inclusive education after its reforms in 2017, as this topic became sensitive and a target of criticism from some political and professional groups. The discussions were a part of the [creation of a new Education Strategy 2030+](#) by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. However, more focus there is put on balancing regional disparities in education rather than on inclusion itself.

In November 2019, the Governmental Human Rights Commissioner declared also the intention to create the Child Ombudsman. The exact setting [is discussed](#) in relation to the need for ensuring the best inclusion of this new institution to the framework of the Czech Republic and its legislation and institutional order.

## 5. PARTICIPATION

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Policy encouraging democratic youth participation as such does not have a long tradition in the Czech Republic, mainly due to the historical experience during the communist regime, which did not allow for free expression of opinion. This is not only reflected in **generally low participation in children's and youth organisations, but also in political participation of the adult population** (see Mansfeldová, Kroupa, 2005). However, there has been a gradual improvement since 1989, when citizens became more aware of their rights and the need to engage.

**Youth participation is one of the utmost priorities of the Czech Youth Strategy 2014–2020.** The preferred approach is to support the participation from the bottom up. This, however, also leads to a lack of top-level systemic initiatives.

There is an ongoing discussion about supporting more participation and participatory mechanisms for the general public and civic society. Even some political parties are pledging to introduce the Law on Referendum and other mechanisms to enhance citizen participation. One of the examples that influenced the institutional order of the Czech Republic was the introduction of direct election of the President since 2013 and thus in January 2018 the historically second direct presidential election took place. The presidential election in 2013 also showed a higher interest from the side of Czech young people in comparison to Parliamentary elections.

Staying at Youth Policy level, youth participation is one of the priorities, however, only one wider systemic national initiative has been observed since 2014, with the establishment of the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue with Youth, an adaptation of the Structured dialogue from European to a national level. **Structured Dialogue with Youth thus became a national process and initiative to support young people in their civic, public and political participation at all levels of public governance, including the introduction of the UN Youth Delegate programme for Czech Youth.**

Within the Youth work field there have also been attempts at introducing e-participation tools, however because of the limited scope, they were more or less ineffective.

The narrative of youth participation changed in the last decade from a more educational to a more pro-active approach of young people and their empowerment in having an influence also on real political decision-making at all levels.

One of the predispositions of successful youth participation was identified in **citizenship education**. With the general restoration of the topic of citizenship education and its role and function in democratic society, young people, their organisations and representatives are more active also on a national level in shaping the political and expert discussions on the introduction of new state formal framework for supporting the citizenship education and its quality. The Government in 2017 held a public hearing to introduce a new state framework for citizenship education, however, after the October election 2017 the topic was further worked out by the Office of the Government and in summer 2018 paused by the prime minister.

Though there are **no state initiated researchers on youth participation**, several NGOs, including youth organisations, are active in this field and are thus creating pressure on the state to advance its activity in this field.

## 5.1 General context

### Main concepts

Policy encouraging democratic youth participation as such does not have a long tradition in the Czech Republic, mainly due to the historical experience during the communist regime, which did not allow for free expression of opinion. This is not only reflected in **generally low participation in children's and youth organisations, but also in political participation of the adult population** (see Mansfeldová, Kroupa, 2005). However, there has been a gradual improvement since 1989, when citizens became more aware of their rights and the need to engage.

The traditional governance structures for children and young people in the Czech Republic have always taken the form of **pupils' and students' self-governance in schools**. Successful approaches include school performances, leisure time groups, pupil assemblies and elections of their representatives. Gradually, the **National Children and Youth Parliament** and a network of local and regional parliaments have been set up, as has a system for provision of information and consultation services provision, both for the parliaments and the general public.

On the other hand the system of children and youth parliaments on the national level is still a [voluntary project of one youth organisation](#) called [DUHA](#), which brings a positive

side in the form of natural apolitical bottom-up youth participation, on the other hand it does not allow professional development or full use of the potential of the structure.

Previously, youth **participation** was [seen by the National Institute for Children and Youth](#) as a way to lead children and youth to develop communication skills and abilities, the ability to receive and process information, leading them to take responsibility for decision-making and awareness of their own rights and duties, usually realised by the children and youth parliaments which should represent legitimate interests of children and youth.

We can observe a different approach to that of the National Institute for Children and Youth in the [implementation of the Structured Dialogue with youth on the national level since mid 2014](#). Apart from the EU, Structured dialogue with youth gained in the Czech Republic, **also local, regional, national and international dimensions** and became part of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the Youth Strategy 2014-2020.

The [Structured dialogue with Youth in the Czech Republic](#) focuses on supporting activity of young people, their awareness of their needs and ability of youth to advocate for their needs in the scope of democratic society at various levels of public governance. It should be apolitical, balanced in terms of political ideologies, should reflect needs of young people, should be inclusive and open, outcomes should be made and the whole process should support the civic and political education of young people.

Also the national [outcomes of the Structured Dialogue with Youth on Youth Empowerment and access to Rights in 2014-2015](#) showed that young people perceive youth participation differently and that more political significance should be given to youth topics and to common experience among young people and decision-makers on public policy level as well as at schools.

A kind of step in-between was the completion of a youth participatory project “**Kecejme do toho**” ([Have Your Say](#)) which was brought up by young people in 2010 and helped facilitate youth participation during the creation of the National Youth Strategy 2014 and especially brought the youth agenda to contact with political parties on national level. The project also became a [best practice example by the Council of Europe World Forum for Democracy](#) and by the [EU Youth best practice projects](#).

Also around the elections to the Chamber of Deputies 2013 and 2017 there have been new youth participatory activities shifting the discourse in order to strengthen the more assertive approach of young people in the Czech Republic toward youth participation with emphases on real empowerment and on the power of political decision-making.

Current 8th cycle of EU Youth Dialogue is focused on space and participation for all young people. Topic of meaningful participation is still a persistent issue that needs to be discussed and strengthened.

Through the years, we can assess that youth participation gained new dimensions, also because new youth subjects and activities emerged and of course, young people changed. However, the formal participation of young people is rather low.

**Within the Youth Strategy 2014-2020 (see [Chapter 1.3](#)) there is no definition of youth participation**, although it is one of the strategic goals (no. 8) and desired outcomes.

## **Institutions of representative democracy**

The Czech Republic is a unitary state with parliamentary democracy based on a written [Constitution](#).

The Parliament (Parlament České republiky) has two chambers. The Chamber of Deputies (Poslanecká sněmovna) has 200 members, elected for a four-year term by proportional vote with a 5% election threshold.



The Senate (Senát) has 81 members, in single-seat constituencies elected by two-round runoff voting for a six-year term, with one third renewed every even year in the autumn.

The President of the Czech Republic was indirectly elected for five-year terms until 2012; beginning with the 2013 election, the president is now elected by direct two-round runoff voting, but this change did not influence the competences and the Parliamentary Republic order.

There are 14 self-governing regions with representation elected every 4 years.

Municipal elections also take place every four years.

**Voting is not compulsory.** It is direct, and postal ballot is not possible. However, it is possible to vote abroad for most of the elections (mainly for the Chamber of Deputies) at Czech Embassies.

Turnouts of young people in elections are not known exactly as the data are not collected and analyzed within the State statistical service. They can be thus only estimated based on various private or few academic surveys.

## 5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

### Young people as voters

The **age limit** giving the right to vote in all elections and referenda is set at **18 years**. There is no other special legislation for any specific group.

There are no exact statistics about the turnout of young people in the elections and not many studies deal with this subject in detail. Czech voting and statistical legislation does not allow the age of the voters to be collected centrally. However, thanks to the [data collected through surveys](#) it is clear that youth participation (of those aged 18-29) in elections is lower (47-52%) compared to the general population (58-64.5%).

	2002	2006	2010	2013
General Participation in %	58	64.5	62.6	59.5
18 - 29 years	49	47	52	51
30 - 39 years	53	64	58	53
40 - 49 years	64	70	67	61
50 - 59 years	58	68	63	63
60 - 69 years	63	77	69	69
70 years and above	65	71	75	66

The reasons young people give are also different from the general population: (in order of importance)

1. Holidays, away from home, free time;
2. No interest in politics, no understanding of politics;
3. Too much work.

Main reasons for absenting in elections in Chamber of Deputies 2013 according to age groups

	Illness, health, too old	Days off, away from home, free time	Too much work	No interest in politics, I do not understand politics	Distrust, dissatisfaction, voting does not make sense
18 - 29 years	5	45	28	38	16
30 - 39 years	11	21	22	25	20
40 - 49 years	13	26	28	18	14
50 - 59 years	13	2	16	8	22
60 years and above	58	6	6	11	28
Total	100	100	100	100	100

## Young people as political representatives

There is no special legislation dealing with young people as members of political parties. Party youth wings are registered as ordinary NGOs and no major party counts more than several hundred members. The majority of these NGOs are members of the national youth council.

The age limit for the right to **stand as a candidate in the parliamentary elections is set at 21 years**. To stand for the Senate and President, it is 40 years. **For the municipal and regional election, the limit is 18 years**. There is no other special legislation for any specific group, no provisions regarding any quota exist.

After the 2017 election, the [average age of parliamentarians](#) in the House of Deputies is 47.5 years, which is a decrease of almost than 2.5 years compared to the state in 2010. Only 10 MPs out of 200 younger than 30 were elected in 2017, which means just 5%.

Analyzing the data of the Czech Statistical office about age groups and [elections](#). We can observe some trends:

- More young people, especially in the category 25 - 30 years, run for the election.
- voters do not trust young candidates as much as in the early 1990s and in relative percentages and share in the population, young people are less elected then earlier. The positive trend is only by young women, which are elected more often but still not as adequately as it would be with an equal share in society.
- Young people in elected positions are mostly on the local level, in Parliament, they are more or less still an exception.
- Election 2017 to the House of Deputies shown that there is a significant difference between the voting preferences of younger generations and older ones. As the participation of young people in election is lower then the average, most representatives reflect the political preferences of older generations.

## 5.3 Youth representation bodies

### Youth parliament

#### National Parliament of Children and Youth ([Národní parlament dětí a mládeže](#))

The National Parliament of Children and Youth ([NPDM](#)), founded in 1997, is the top-level/nationwide project covering children and youth's parliaments and councils from regional and local levels.

NPDM is not established by a law, it is an independent participation project of a [youth NGO called DUHA](#), supported by public subsidies through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other projects or private donations. NPDM is, therefore, an autonomous group of children and young people.

It is a non-political entity which operates on democratic principles.

Membership and cooperation are voluntary and therefore not all youth parliaments and municipal youth councils cooperate regularly. However, NPDM tries to monitor this and is open to cooperate with all youth parliaments, councils and boards.

#### Structure

The [NPDM statute](#) regulates membership, elections, organisational structure of the NPDM, proceedings and quorum etc.

NPDM's members are elected representatives of children and youth from regional and local Children and Youth Parliaments. Representatives of children and young people meet and interact.

The leadership is elected annually by the Congress of regional representatives. For each county, two representatives are elected to the Bureau NPDM, one of which is also in the Council of NPDM. From these elected Council members a chairman and two vice-chairmen of NPDM are also elected for the season. Members of the Board may be elected as a person aged 12 to 26 years residing in the country.

#### Role and responsibilities

In § 2 of the Statute, NPDM defined its objectives as:

- To create a space for discussions of children and youth in the Czech Republic;
- Appropriately point out the problems of children and youth (e.g. through children's hearings, public events, etc.);
- Present the interests of children and youth in the areas of education, environment, health and social care, sport and culture, positive use of leisure time;
- House the lower levels of child authorities (regional councils, etc.) and promote their formation

#### Activities

NPDM holds roundtables, discussions with experts on various topics, and seeks to draw the attention of young people to their rights and responsibilities.

It contributes to public discussions and influences nationwide events concerning children and youth.

By means of diverse projects, it focuses on different groups of young people and their specific concerns.

It provides consultations to existing local and regional children and youth parliaments to solve their problems, and helps young people establish new parliaments in order to widen the network.

The NPDM seeks to defend the interests of children and young people at the national level.

It collaborates with various national institutions and carries out activities to develop and educate young people on issues that are of direct concern.

NPDM is a [member of the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue with youth](#).

NPDM also functions as a clinic for helping existing parliaments with their problems or helps new children and youth parliaments to establish and expand the structure.

## Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

The National Youth Council in the Czech Republic is the **Czech Council of Children and Youth** ([Česká rada dětí a mládeže](#), CRDM). It is a democratic, voluntary umbrella association, independent of any political parties or movements. It was established in June 1998 by eight organisations of children and youth. It is a reliable partner of government administration.

It consists of around 100 non-governmental children and youth organisations with more than 216 000 individual members (the amount slightly differs each year) – the organisations range from small to big, but usually have activity across the whole country. The 9 existing regional councils of children and youth are members of CRDM as well. Regional Youth Councils are umbrella organisations in regions bringing together local and regional youth organisations and branches of the nationwide youth organisations.

The mission of CRDM is to promote conditions for quality life and overall development of children and young people.

CRDM respects the sovereignty and independence of all its member organisations in compliance with their statutes and has no supervisory or senior power towards these, while representing them in dealing with authorities, organisations and institutions both at the national level and abroad.

### Structure

The board of the CRDM consists of 12 members representing member organisations. Board members are appointed by the General Assembly upon the proposal of a newly elected Chair of the Council, who aims at diversity and inclusiveness.

The mandate lasts 3 years, meetings are held on a monthly basis or more often if needed.

The board can appoint thematic working groups and commissions, e.g. Foreign affairs commission, Working group for Inclusion, State Working group responsible for main lobby activities etc.

The General Assembly meets at least twice a year and steers and gives tasks to the Chairperson and to the Board.

At least once in three years Congress meets, and among other things it elects the control commission and proposes the strategy of the Council, gives suggestions for the General Assembly and controls the board and the Chairman.

In General Assembly there is a weighted vote system according to the size of the organisation, at Congress every organisation representatives have one equal vote.

### Role and responsibilities of CRDM

Support of justified interests of children and youth in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, aims at assisting in the overall development of young people as regards their spiritual, psychic, physical and social aspects.

CRDM fulfils its mission by supporting non-formal education and activities of its members, especially by creating legal, economic, social and cultural conditions suitable for their activities.

It represents interests of its members towards home and foreign bodies, organisations and institutions, and provides support to member organisations, e.g. insurance, information, etc.

CRDM as a non-state actor does not have to be consulted by policy-makers, nor are its decisions binding on policy-makers. However, it has a significant informal power thanks to its membership and is able to influence the law-making process by advocacy, lobbying and youth representation.

It is responsible for leading and coordinating the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue with Youth since 2014, and it is also the National Correspondent for this Youthwiki project.

#### Funding

CRDM receives the majority of its funding from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in a state subsidy programme on supporting youth work (details in [Chapter 1.7](#)). However, it is able to secure an increasing part of its co-funding from projects and from private donors. Membership fees are only a small part of the funding.

### Regional councils of children and youth

Regional councils of Children and Youth are an independent, non-state associations of children and youth organisations on a regional level. Parallel to the National Youth Council, they serve as places for promoting the individual associations and other organisations and provide regional authorities with advice on out-of-school upbringing and education. They promote children's movement as such, enforce the requirements of member organisations, and serve as the place for mutual communication among members.

From 14 regions in the Czech Republic, In 2019 there were 9 Regional Youth Councils active.

The following regional councils of Children and Youth exist:

- Rada dětí a mládeže hlavního města Prahy - <http://www.rdmp.cz/>
- Krajská rada dětí a mládeže Karlovarska - <http://krdmk.cz/>
- Plzeňská krajská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.pkrdm.cz/>
- RADAMBUK - Jihočeská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.radambuk.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže kraje Vysočina - <https://www.rdmkv.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže Královéhradeckého kraje, z. s. - <http://www.rdmkhk.cz/>
- Jihomoravská krajská rada dětí a mládeže - <https://www.jmdeti.cz/>
- Rada dětí a mládeže Moravskoslezského kraje - RADAMOK - <http://www.radamok.cz/>
- SPEKTRUM – Krajská rada dětí a mládeže Zlínského kraje - <http://www.spektrumzl.cz/>

### Higher education student union(s)

**The Student Chamber of the Council of Higher Education Institutions** ([Studentská komora Rady vysokých škol](#))

The Student Chamber of the Council of the Higher Education Institutions (SK RVŠ) is a part of the Council of Higher Education Institutions (RVŠ). According to the [Higher Education Act](#) (Act No. 111/1998 Sb.), RVŠ – along with the Czech Rectors Conference – forms the official representation of higher education institutions in the Czech Republic.

SK RVŠ is responsible for the promotion of students' interests, which includes negotiations and communication related to higher education issues with stakeholders including the Parliament of the Czech Republic, the Czech Government, individual ministries and other public authorities.

The Student Chamber of the Council of Higher Education Institutions supports a freedom of study while preserving the quality of education, promotes solidarity and equal access to education without barriers on the basis of age, gender, disability, handicap or social

position, supports students' involvement in the governance and development of higher education institutions, and promotes an active international cooperation.

SK RVŠ was officially established in 1992, following the development of Czech universities after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. In the beginning of 1990s, the Council of Higher Education Institutions was established as the representative body of universities at the national level. SK RVŠ was established as a part of the Council of Higher Education Institutions, specifically representing students' interests. Since 1996, it has been widely recognised as the official student representative body in the Czech Republic.

As a member of European student organisations; i.e. ESU and EURODOC, SK RVŠ also represents students in relation to the institutions of the European Union and concerning European higher education issues.

Composition:

There are around 50 universities represented in the Council.

Every Higher Education Institution (HEI) can enter the Council after paying fees for its delegates. For an HEI, three delegates may be sent to the Council, one of whom is a student. Besides that, for each part (faculty) of a respective HEI, one more delegate may be deputed.

The HEI's delegates are elected for a three-year term by its self-governing body called the academic senate (this applies mainly to public HEIs).

The Council consists of the Assembly, Presidium and Closer Presidium and is headed by the Chairperson of the Council.

The Chamber's Chairperson, its two Vice-chairpersons and two more delegates of the Chamber are automatically members of the Presidium of the Council. In the Closer Presidium elected by the Assembly of the Council, the Chamber is represented by its Chairperson or Vice-chairperson.

The Student Chamber is active especially in substantial matters concerning different aspects of students' life, students' matters in general and study conditions. As far as respecting the Statute of the Council, the Student Chamber is allowed to deal under its own rules of organisation, and it is authorised to create its own committees as advisory bodies.

In the contemporary Chamber, there are three committees: on legislation, on social and economic affairs, and for educational and scientific activities.

Funding:

The Council is self-financed by the HEIs according to the number of their delegates. For each delegate, an annual membership fee is stated by the Board of the Council.

### **Czech Student Union ([Česká studentská unie](#))**

Since 2009 there have been private attempts to set up a statewide Czech Student Union on the model known from abroad. Since the beginning, it has been a very controversial project among HEI students and students' organisations, and most of them never participated in this project.

ČESU claimed that it was representing the interests of Czech HEI students. However, it was a private initiative and [membership was not public or known](#), if there was any.

ČESU became publicly known thanks to several scandals and problematic issues e.g. in 2013 ČESU organised the MISS Student competition and it was discovered that it was possible to buy [damaging pictures of young female students](#) participating in the competition on the internet. Studenta media also documented that under-aged young girls' pictures were part of the preparatory rounds.

Officially ČESU was [registered in 2014 as a labour Union](#) with the strong position of the Chairman. ČESU announced several projects like [Czech Student Parliament](#), however, no real activity seems to be happening. Also, the most recent date of the news on the ČESU website as of September 2018 was December 2015.

## **Student participation on HEI**

### **Academic Senates**

Public-academic institutes and HEI have a wide range of autonomy according to the Law on tertiary education.

Participation of students is ensured via the system of Academic Senates where students are elected on faculty and university level. Representation from University and possibly also from faculty level can be represented within the SKRVŠ.

### **Student Associations and University Student Unions**

Apart from the formal mechanism of student representative participation, universities also support extracurricular activities of students, and they are thus associating within student associations, initiatives and activities.

The situation with the development of ČESU showed that the cooperation of various students associations and activities on university level is important and most of the big universities and their student associations started to create University Student Unions and also Students Unions in Faculties. Though they have the same name, most of the University Student Unions were never members of the Czech Student Union (ČESU).

Students Unions usually represent student interests and interests of students' clubs and organisations coexisting around the institution.

Many of the student unions also organise or co-organise student music, cultural and educational festivals called [Majáles](#) (May fest for students). *Majáles* are significant public events in student life and lifestyle.

## **School student union(s)**

There is no uniform representative body of secondary school students in the Czech Republic, but there are several umbrella structures supporting high school pupils' participation initiatives, such as:

- [Association of Secondary School Clubs](#)
- [Czech High School Union](#)
  - Created in 2013
  - Brings interested representatives of High Schools Pupil Councils and Boards to the national level
  - Aims at representing High Schools students' interests on the national level, very active with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Parliaments and other educational stakeholders.
  - Member of OBESSU.

According to the Education Act, if pupils are interested in a 'pupil self-governing body' could be created, on a voluntary basis at any school in the Czech Republic, usually in the form of a Pupils Council or Parliament.

Another form of school self-governance is the School Council, where there are selected representatives of school leadership, parents and pupils.

## Other bodies

### Association of Secondary School Clubs ([Asociace středoškolských klubů](#))

This is a non-political youth civic association that aims at developing professional and extracurricular activities of youth under 26 years of age.

It currently operates in 65 schools in all regions of the Czech Republic with a membership of over 4,000.

Membership is based on the principle of individual membership in a club in high school, which is the basic organisational unit. The basic unit can be student self-government (council, parliament, etc.). Clubs may be established in secondary schools, leisure centres and communities.

The association has established wide international contacts due to its wide collaboration with MILSET - Movement of Leisure Activities in Science and Technology, EFYSO - European Federation of Youth Service Organisations and OBESSU - Organising Bureau of European School Students Unions.

It aims at promotion of youth participation in public affairs (regional self-government, parliaments and councils) and running of an information centre for youth.

### CEDU ([Centre for Democracy in Education](#))

Centre for Democratic Education originated as an informal group in 2007. The lecturer team decided to formalise it in autumn 2013. This NGO deals primarily with pupils' parliaments and systemic support for civic education.

Activities include, according to its current programme [School for Democracy](#):

- Networking school pupils' parliaments: within the network schools contact each other and share experience;
- Comprehensive methodical support: training workshops for teachers, experiential courses for children, methodological materials and publications for teachers and students, coaching and mentoring, etc.;
- Children in the Senate: pupils/students present their successful projects that emerged from mapping the school's participation.

## 5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

### Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

In the Czech Republic, there are no legal provisions or obligatory policy guidelines on public consultation in general, or in the youth field. There is only the [Manual for public engagement in the preparation of government documents](#), published in 2010 by the Ministry of the Interior which, however, has only a character of recommendation and does not reflect the special needs of young people at all.

Mechanisms for youth engagement in the youth policy are thus more or less traditional or non-formal. We can identify four basic mechanisms/levels of youth involvement in the context of Czech Youth Policy:

1. Young people and Youth NGO representatives can be appointed as members of the [ministerial thematic working groups for reaching the goals of the Youth Strategy](#) and thus contribute to Youth Policymaking. Three representatives of Youth NGOs, respectively of the Czech Council of Children and Youth, are members of the Youth Chamber as well (for details on Youth Chamber see [Chapter 1.5](#)).



2. Every three years, the National Youth Conference is organised, where young people, their representatives and youth workers can actively contribute to Youth Policy evaluation, implementation and re-shaping.
3. Young people and their representatives can directly approach the Youth Department with their needs or ideas as well as contact any other specific institution or political body dealing with the topic.
4. [Structured Dialogue with Youth](#) has been incorporated as a permanent mechanism for involvement in Youth Policymaking also on a national level (since 2014 via Youth Strategy 2020).

The [Structured Dialogue with Youth in the Czech Republic](#) serves as a permanent forum for common discussion on priorities and topics of the Youth Policy.

Coordination is ensured by the National Working Group for the Structured Dialogue with Youth together with the EU Structured Dialogue with Youth and Youth organisations.

In the period of 2010 to 2014, this function was only partially substituted by the project [Kecejme do toho](#) (Have Your Say), run by the Czech Council of Children and Youth in cooperation with the National Parliament of Children and Youth. The project was active until the end of 2015.

Structured Dialogue uses public consultation, workshops, discussions, online questionnaires, online discussions, essay competitions and other tools to reach young people and support them to participate in Youth Policy-making and reflecting on youth issues in the public space.

Young people and youth organisations are encouraged to organise their own projects and send their recommendations and outcomes ([publicly displayed online](#) on the website of the Structured Dialogue).

Based on the outcomes the Working Group also prepares National reports on actual topics when decided by the Group.

By tackling a specific topic, where specific target groups should be actively involved, the Working Group prepares a contact database of specific and wide stakeholders, to invite these specific youth groups, their youth organisations and the institutions working with these specific target groups.

## Actors

There is no general mechanism for selecting representatives of young people or youth organisations in public bodies dealing with their issues.

There are some relevant public bodies which could be targeted by young people or their representatives.

Advisory bodies of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports with representatives of Youth organisations:

- Youth Chamber ([Komora mládeže](#)) – details see in [Chapter 1.5](#).
- Council for Leisure-Based Education (Rada pro zájmové vzdělávání)
- Coordinating Council of Providers of Information for Young People (Koordinační rada poskytovatelů informací pro mládež)

Governmental bodies

- Governmental Council for Non-State Non-Profit Organisations ([Rada vlády pro nestátní neziskové organizace](#))
- Committee for the Rights of the Child ([Výbor pro práva dítěte](#)), a committee of the Governmental Council for Human Rights.

Semi budgetary organizations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports:

- Centre for International Cooperation in Education ([Dům zahraniční spolupráce](#))
- Since 2020 National Pedagogy Institute (until the end of 2019 National Institute for Further Education ([Národní institut pro dalšího vzdělávání](#)) and National Institute for Education ([Národní ústav pro vzdělávání](#)))
- Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Minorities ([Pedagogické centrum pro polské národnostní menšiny](#))
- Centre for Higher Education Studies ([Centrum pro studium vysokého školství](#))
- Centre for Evaluation of Educational Achievements ([Centrum pro zjišťování výsledků ve vzdělávání](#))
- Fulbright Commission ([Fulbrightova komise](#))

Parliamentary bodies

[Chamber of Deputies Committee for science, education, culture, youth and sports](#)

### Information on the extent of youth participation

There is no state systematic mechanism to monitor and evaluate all levels and tools of youth participation in Youth Policy Making or in public affairs.

In case of participation in the Structured Dialogue, National Working Group is collecting and publishing this information on its [website](#) and in National reports from the consultation.

### Outcomes

The only [publicly available outcome](#) of the consultation with youth is the National Report from the Structured Dialogue. (Reports exist since the end of 2015, before 2015 no such reports containing information about youth existed, and only EU national consultation reports are available). Outcomes from third-party projects in the scope of the Structured Dialogue and sent to the National Working Group are also published on the website of the Structured Dialogue.

[Outcomes](#) of the project [Kecejme do toho](#) (Have Your Say) are available on its website but they contain only the political recommendations and partially the process.

### Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

The only initiative from the state in this sphere is the [Structured Dialogue with Youth](#) described above. Within the system of the Structured Dialogue, non-state actors can also apply for support for their initiatives for local, regional and national level supported by the [KA3 Structured Dialogue with Youth from the Erasmus+](#) programme (EU funding).

Another non-state project supporting Youth Participation is [Youth Speak Up!](#) by Young Political Scientists Club. They support high school students in citizens education and participation and had organized also national discussion involving 20 successful young people across social sectors. They brought together 21 ideas for the future Czech Republic which created a political manifesto presented to political parties. Some parliamentary political parties and their Youth Wings supported the initiative and they set together an initiative of young members of parliaments and other young experts to work on the legislative changes in order to fulfil the most realistic points from the manifesto which are related to legislation framework. So, even if it is not a large-scale initiative or movement, it makes a significant contribution to youth political participation on the national level from the youth agenda perspective and also from young experts and politicians engagement and participation.

## 5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

### Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

There is no specific state policy strategy to increase youth participation in political and civil society.

Participation is one of the priorities of the Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020 (*Koncepce podpory mládeže na období 2014-2020*, Governmental Decree no. 342 of 12 May 2014) approved by the Government. Its fourth priority is called: *Involving young people in the decision-making process and participation*. For more on the Youth Strategy 2014-2020 see details in Chapter 1.3.

### Scope and contents

An effective youth-related policy is based on active cooperation between all interested participants and thorough consultation with young people.

Strategic and operational goals of Youth Strategy 2020 were developed on the basis of broad consultation with experts in the form of roundtables (2011-2013), and on discussions with experts and youth at the National Conference on Youth (November 2013), and take into account the outcomes of the structured dialogue with young people through the Czech Council of Children and Youth project “Kecejme do toho – Have your say” ([CZ link](#), [EN link](#)).

Youth participation became one of the 13 Strategic goals as well, specifically the Strategic Goal no. 8: To promote active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing social and democratic life.

For the scope see the table below which shows the strategic objectives and concrete planned measures within the Strategic Goal no. 8:

OG A: To motivate children and youth towards active, informed and responsible participation in public life, including discussion	Responsibility	Co-resp.	
Measure:	1. To stimulate interest in dialogue between children, youth and their partners in public life	MEYS	MC
2. To expand the options for involving children and youth in public life, with emphasis on supporting youth initiatives at a local level	MEYS		
3. To stimulate feedback on the impact of child and youth participation in public life	MEYS		
4. To support educational activities to develop competencies in children and young people for their involvement in public life, including civic education	MEYS		
5. To share good practices in the area of involving children and young people in public life	MEYS		

OG B: To ensure that children and young people are aware of the possibilities of participation	Responsibility	Co-resp.	
Measure:	1. To initiate mapping of channels providing information of the options for participation of children and youth	MEYS	MC
2. To support the production and use of information channels between non-profit organisations, schools, educational facilities and young people themselves in the area of participatory democracy	MEYS	MC	
OG C: To support children and young people in the use of diverse opportunities for participation, including new forms of participation	Responsibility	Co-resp.	
Measure:	1. To promote cooperation in the area of participation at all levels	MEYS	
2. To reinforce civic education programmes, particularly those targeting first-time voters, to improve political literacy	MEYS	MC	
3. To promote sharing of national and international examples of good practice	MEYS		
4. To motivate children and young people to become involved in specific forms of participation, particularly structured dialogue for youth and school parliaments	MEYS		

Legend: MEYS – Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, MC – Ministry of Culture

SG - Strategic goal, OG - Objective goal

Source: [National Youth Strategy 2014-2020](#)

## Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The government authority responsible for the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the Youth strategy is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in cooperation with other ministries in charge of different elements (social affairs, health, culture etc.).

There is a political aim of evidence-based Youth Policy-making within the national Youth Strategy 2020, however no real systematic structure of public youth research is in place (situation in 2016).

For details on the situation with the Youth Strategy 2014-2020 see [Chapter 1, especially 1.3](#).

## Monitoring and evaluation

Effective involvement of young people in the decision-making process in the areas of implementation and evaluation of Youth Strategy 2020 should be ensured by a National Working Group for Structured Dialogue with Youth established in January 2014, whose leadership was entrusted to the Czech Council of Children and Youth. Structured dialogue with Youth thus became a vital part of the Czech National Youth Policy, and covers not only the processes within the EU but also national processes and agendas.

The first monitoring report on the implementation of the Youth Strategy was discussed by the Government on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017, however it was not published until October 2017.

## Revisions/Updates

The current strategy was preceded by previous strategies with the similar scope and goals, see [Chapter 1 on Youth Policy Strategies](#).

The current strategy did not undergo any revisions/updates since its first introduction. No revision or update is planned until the respective period is over in 2020. From May 2020 there is expected to be a new generation of the governmental Youth Strategy in the post-2020 period.

## 5.6 Supporting youth organisations

### Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

Legally youth organisations work like any other NGOs according to the **(new) Civil Code (No. 89/2012 Sb.)**. There are no specific legal forms for youth organisations.

Until recently, their work was supported by the Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020 (*Koncepce podpory mládeže na období 2014-2020*, Governmental Decree no. 342 of 12 May 2014) approved by the Government (more information in [Chapters 1.3 and 1.1](#)).

### Public financial support

**At the national level**, youth organisations receive financial support mainly through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. In specific cases, they are supported by other ministries and public bodies.

**Funding framework 2017-2020** for work with Children and Youth was [provided](#) by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. In the recent years funding is guided by general principles approved by the government and specific calls follow the logic of previous funding framework.

The support focuses on regular and long-term activities determined by the widest range of children and young people and promotes actions and activities which contribute to the improvement, expansion and development activities of various youth organisations and organisations working with children and youth.

For details about the state funding programmes for the youth organisations see [Chapter 1.7](#).

Also the Erasmus+ Programme provides several activities to fund the youth participatory activities, especially within the KA3 action.

### Funds development in Youth sector 2007-2014 - Project SAFE analysis

An [analysis of voluntary work in the Czech Republic](#) by children and youth associations in free time was made by a collective of authors under the guidance of the Czech Council of Children and Youth. It shows in detailed numbers that '*development of public support for leisure activities of children and youth lags much behind the development of macroeconomic data.*' The Analysis covers the period from 2007-2014.

The most visible lag is in the development of support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS, state budget). The support from the MEYS and other ministries has been very unstable in the years after the economic crisis and has had a tendency to decrease, both in current and real prices. Regional and local budgets do not compensate fully for the decrease. Regional budgets also show considerable instability according to the political and economic situation in those Regions.

### **EU Action programmes:**

The Czech Republic is fully involved in the European programme Erasmus+ and its Youth Chapter. In the Financial period 2007-2013 this was similarly the case with Youth in Action Programme.

### **EU Structural Funds:**

No special category recognising Youth projects within the Structural Funds of EU has been created thus no data on EU funded Youth projects are collected.

However, there could be applications from issue-oriented projects with youth as a target group, e.g. on youth employment, education matters etc.

### **Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants**

There are no specific national or large-scale initiatives aiming to increase the diversity of young people participating in youth organisations. However, the inclusion of various subgroups such as Young Roma or Young people with a foreign or migrant background is politically promoted. However, the use of state subsidies is only possible within the existing schemes.

## **5.7 'Learning to participate' through formal, non-formal and informal learning**

### **Policy Framework**

In the Czech Republic, there is no policy framework or strategy which would apply specifically to social and civic competencies and their development. Only individual, not interconnected initiatives exist – either in formal or non-formal settings.

It is expected that at the central level the process of drafting a new national Strategy should start to support Citizenship Education in the whole society, including formal and non-formal education, youth and also the adult population. The expert committee, however, did not meet until the end of 2018, although it had been established in autumn 2016. In December 2016, the Government of the Czech Republic decided to move the responsibility, and the task of creating a new state Strategy on Citizenship Education was given to the Minister for Human Rights. In July and September 2017 the Minister organised open hearings with experts and relevant stakeholders in order to create a 'Basic framework on citizenship education in the Czech Republic', and as the elections were approaching in October 2017, it was clear that because of the sensitivity of the topic, there would be high interest from experts and civil society, and that there was not enough time and resources to prepare a proper state strategy before the end of the 2013-2017 Government. During the 2018 the proposal was coordinated by the Office of the Government, but in summer the activities were paused by the prime minister and the prepared proposal was not discussed in the Government.

### **Formal learning**

In the Czech Republic (ISCED levels 2 and 3), civic education is integrated into curriculum areas that can be organised into teaching blocks at the discretion of the school. Provision of a separate subject focused on citizenship education at ISCED levels 2 and 3 depends on the given school.

The 2007 [Framework Curricula](#) for compulsory and upper secondary education established civic competencies as key competencies that should be addressed through all teaching and learning activities taking place at school. Furthermore, the Framework Curricula established several cross-curricular subjects related to citizenship education:

- 'Democratic citizenship' (ISCED levels 1 and 2)
- 'Thinking within a European and global context'
- 'Multicultural education'

Cross-curricular subjects are defined in terms of thematic areas to be provided as well as knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values that should be developed in students, through subject teaching or in the form of individual projects, seminars, courses and through the general school atmosphere.

The taught time specifically allocated to citizenship themes cannot be clearly identified.

### **Main learning objectives**

The Framework educational programme Human and society in its educational field Citizenship Education defines the main learning objectives as follows:

*'It focuses on developing qualities, related to the orientation of students in the social reality and their integration into various social relations and relationships.*

*It paves the way for realistic self-cognition and discovering personalities of others and to understanding their own behaviour and that of others in the context of various life situations.*

*It introduces pupils to relationships within the family, society, economic life, and develops their orientation in the world of finance.*

*It enables pupils to understand the tasks of important political bodies and institutions and shows the possible forms of individual engagement in civic life.*

*Pupils learn to respect and apply moral principles and rules of social coexistence and to take responsibility for their opinions and behaviour and the consequences of these.*

*It develops citizenship and legal consciousness, reinforces their sense of personal and social responsibility, and motivates them to actively participate in democratic society.'*

### **Ongoing policy reforms to strengthen and modernise citizenship education**

In December 2014 the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament adopted the [Resolution to promote citizenship education](#).

Based on the Resolution, in 2016 the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports started Systematic support for citizenship education in schools by [experimental testing](#) to stabilise the role of pupils' parliaments in the citizenship education.

The main goals of the experimental testing are:

1. In pilot schools to verify the system of development of Pupils' parliaments and create consultative centres for support of other schools in the future; 21 schools of all types in the whole country (including socially problematic locations) will join the testing phase;
2. To identify themes, activities and tools for setting up calls for applications within the European Social Fund (OP VVV) and other subsidies;
3. To check how to best support the teacher who coordinates a pupil parliament at the school, and how to promote these activities to parents and to the local community;
4. To develop a system of effective assessment of pupils' parliaments.

The main responsibility for the testing lies with the National Institute for Education (NÚV) and expert and methodical guarantees are provided by the Centre for Citizenship Education (COV) and Centre for democratic learning (CEDU).

The pilot testing was closed in mid-2018 and the outcomes are expected to be discussed and published by the Ministry of Education after their inspection. In December 2018 non-formal presentation of the outcomes took place at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The Czech Republic is also active in the pilot testing of the [Framework of Competencies for democratic culture](#), developed by the Council of Europe. [Project #COMPETENCES](#) for further elaboration at a national level is run by the Centre for Citizenship Education with the support from the NGO Anticomplex.

Significant discussions about the future of the citizenship education in formal education sphere are held during the national curricula revision process (for details see [chapter 6.10](#)).

## Non-formal and informal learning

### Participative structures within formal education settings

There are no top-level policy regulations or guidelines requiring or encouraging pupils'/students' participation in decision-making in their educational institution. The only reference exists in the Education Act ([Act No. 561/2004 Sb.](#)), which provides for a possibility of pupil participation in the School Boards, however only from the age of 18.

According to § 21, paragraph 1, point c) of the Act, pupils and students have the right to elect and to be elected to the School Board, if of legal age.

§ 21 paragraph 1 point d) of the Education Act also says that *'Pupils and students have the right to form self-governing bodies within the school, to vote and be elected in them, work in them and through them to contact the director of the school, and the school director is obliged to consider the opinions and observations of these bodies.'*

In the 2016 reform of the Educational Act, the Rights of pupils were broadened to allow them to contact not only the director but also other bodies, and the director should now provide them with reasonable feedback on the input from those self-governing bodies. This widening was a direct implementation of the [country recommendation from the IV. cycle of the EU structured dialogue with youth](#).

There are no top-level or large-scale programmes aimed at training school staff and pupils to enhance their skills to participate in decision-making structures. The only actors running activities in this field are those actors described in [Chapter 5.3](#).

### Measures to encourage student participation in the local community and wider society

- There are no provisions forming part of the national curricula or education regulations/guidelines encouraging or obliging pupils at upper secondary level to take part in activities serving the (local) community outside school; neither are there any recent national or large-scale policy initiatives or programmes giving pupils/students the opportunity to participate in citizenship-related activities/projects outside school.
- Only private NGO national initiatives exist, such as e.g. [One World at Schools](#).

### Partnerships between formal education providers, youth organisations and youth work providers

- There is no policy/legal framework for partnerships between formal education providers, youth organisations and youth work providers. However, currently negotiations are running about an ESF project aiming at establishing such partnerships.



## Supporting non-formal learning initiatives focusing on social and civic competences

- There are no national/top-level programmes establishing, encouraging or supporting education projects related to the promotion of civic or social competences;
- Sources of public funding available for the development of such projects/youth work initiatives are described in [Chapter 5.6](#).
- Only particular projects by NGOs and Youth NGOs are visible.

## Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

- There is no universal system of quality assurance of non-formal learning activities/projects.
- An attempt to introduce a nationwide tool was made by the former National Institute of Children and Youth through its project [K2](#) - an assessment tool called 'Olina'. However, it was too much focused on processes not related to the core of youth work by youth organisations and therefore is not (fully) used.
- Each youth NGO has its own ways to ensure that their work is of quality.
- For example, in 2015, Junák – český skaut (Junak – Czech Scouting) got a high score in the Global Support Assessment Tool, which is a Quality Standard owned by the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) that assesses compliance of a National Scout Organisation (NSO) with international best practices in Good Governance and Quality Scouting.

## Educators' support

- [Asociace učitelů občanské výchovy a společenských věd, z.s.](#) The Association of teachers of civic education and social sciences serves as an inspirational space for the exchange of teaching materials and learning about current opportunities and trends.
- An interesting methodology for youth leaders was developed by the Pionýr (Pioneer) association – [it describes how participation can be promoted in a youth group](#)

## 5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

### Information providers / counselling structures

There is no central state body responsible for disseminating complex information about democratic rights and democratic values among young people.

However, every constitutional institution has developed a special website or programmes for children, young people, pupils and students in the scope of their fields and competences.

Brief overall information and current events in the field are provided by the [National Youth Information Center](#) (NICM), which was until 2019 a state unit and since 2020 it will continue as a non-governmental association.

Youth Information is also one of the priority fields within the Youth Strategy 2014-2020.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports certifies quality Youth Information Centres and these were eligible for an [annual state subsidy](#), lastly for 2018. Since 2019 there is no respective state support to Youth Information Centres.

### Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

[Studentské volby](#) - since 2010 the non-profit organisation People in Need has regularly organised so-called Student Elections.

Student Elections were subsequently held five more times (last time in September 2016 before the regional elections) and have become an established project already.

Since the first edition, People in Need has offered schools information materials and model activities that teachers can use directly with students in the class, for example when preparing for student elections.

In 2016 they added three documentary films that deal with the topic of elections, election campaigns, shaping political preferences etc.

[Vím, proč volím](#) project (I know why I vote) was run by the Czech Council of Children and Youth in 2013 and 2014 before the elections to the Chamber of Deputies and the European Parliament. A series of debates, an open-air festival and discussions with the candidates in all 14 regions were supposed to bring more young people to vote. The project also provided an analysis of electoral manifestos of political parties in relation to young people.

[Youth vote](#) is an initiative of the National Parliament of Children and Youth since 2016, motivating young people within the children and youth parliament network to organise debates with the candidates and to be interested in any kind of elections.

### **Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people**

There is no youth specific activity in this field coordinated by the state.

The office of the Government is running a campaign [Hate Free Culture](#) which is focused on the whole society including young people, schools etc.

### **Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication**

There is no youth-specific activity in this field coordinated by the state.

Within the [outcomes of the national consultation](#) on Youth Empowerment within the IV. cycle of the Structured Dialogue with Youth, several recommendations from the side of young people and youth workers were proposed.

## **5.9 E-participation**

### [UN e-Participation Index](#)

- In 2014, Czech Republic ends up at 122nd place out of 193 countries monitored.
- Its e-participation index has a value of 0.2549, which means less than 65 per cent of the world average, or about 55 per cent of the average Eastern European countries.
- In 2016 the Czech Republic moved up to the 76th place out of 193 countries monitored.
- In 2018, the Czech Republic moved to 92nd place out of 193 countries monitored, with an e-participation index of 0.6180.

The first attempt of the Czech government to promote e-participation was its resolution no. 879/2007, on the proposal of the establishment of a methodology for public involvement in the preparation of government documents. With this resolution, the government approved three pilot projects that could verify the possibility of public participation in the preparation of important documents from Czech public administration, including legislative documents.

Currently, a number of Czech municipalities and some regions are involved in the [E-participation scheme](#). This web service is operated for residents of Czech towns and villages including members of civic associations. Operation and its substantive content are coordinated in cooperation with the relevant municipalities, municipal authorities, civil society organisations and associations. Its aim is to streamline communication between local government and citizens. The user may be any citizen of the city or town or a member of a civic association.

None of the systemic projects or policies is specifically targeting young people. They are part of the overall target group, although they are most capable of taking part in e-participation activities. It is especially obvious in the case of online petitions or pressure groups aiming at cultivating a political environment (Rekonstrukce státu).

However, there were/are several individual projects of NGOs designed for young people:

- Our Space – Czech Youth Association Duha was a partner in this pilot project, financed under the ICT PSP Work Programme. Its aim was to provide new opportunities for engaging young citizens in politics in a manner that reduces the perceived democratic deficit and contributes towards the expected impacts listed under objective 3.5: eParticipation – empower and involve citizens in transparent decision making in the EU.
- [Kecejme do toho](#) – see [Chapter 5.4](#). – an e-platform was an integral part of the project.
- [Structured Dialogue with Youth](#) - also offers online participation opportunities for each consultation

## 5.10 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy development

Citizenship Education in the national curricula for basic education

There is an ongoing debate on citizenship education. In December 2014, the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament adopted [Resolution to promote citizenship education](#).

Based on the Resolution, in 2016 the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports started the Systematic support for citizenship education in schools by [experimental testing](#) to stabilise the role of pupils' parliaments in citizenship education.

The main goals of the experimental testing were:

- To verify the system of development of Pupils parliaments at pilot schools and create consultative centres for support of other schools in the future; 21 schools of all types in the whole country (including socially problematic locations) will join the testing phase.
- Identify themes, activities and tools for setting up calls for applications within the European Social Fund (OP VVV) and other subsidies.
- Check how to best support the teacher who coordinates a pupil parliament at the school, and how to promote these activities to parents and to the local community.
- Develop a system of effective assessment of student parliaments.

The main responsibility for the testing lied with the National Institute for Education (NÚV), later reformed into the National Pedagogical Institute, and expert and methodic guarantees were provided by the Center for Citizenship Education (COV) and Center for democratic learning (CEDU).

[The pilot testing](#) was closed in mid-2018. In December 2018 non-formal presentation of the outcomes was held at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Revision of national curricula is undergoing based on the Ministry of Education´s decision. [The National Pedagogical Institute](#) is responsible for the preparation. Within the revision process, many changes are discussed related to youth participation in school as well as regarding the citizenship education. In 2019 the first draft of the expert works on new curricula was presented via a webinar and the public debate was opened. The revised curriculum was presented in early 2021. However, [the cuts in hours for the new curricula \(in favor of digital education\) face a wave of criticism](#) in Spring 2021.

## Ongoing debates

### Citizenship Education Strategy

Discussion about [drafting a new national Strategy to support Citizenship Education](#) in the whole society, including formal and non-formal education, youth and also the adult population is going since 2014. Originally the responsible authority was the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. In December 2016, the Government of the Czech Republic decided to move the responsibility and the task of creating a new state Strategy on Citizenship Education to the Minister for Human Rights. In July and September 2017 the Minister organized open hearings with experts and relevant stakeholders in order to create a 'Basic framework on citizenship education in the Czech Republic'. After the October 2017 election to the House of Deputies of the Parliament and creating a new Government, the responsibility was moved to the Ministry of Justice. In spring 2018 took the responsibility the Office of the Government and prepared in cooperation with experts and representatives of various interests group from the field a proposal for the Government How to set up the Strategy. In Summer 2018 the Government did not discuss the proposal and the prime minister decided to pause the process, reconsider and continue later on. There is no available information about further development.

### Youth participation and the Structured Dialogue with Youth

By the end of November 2018, the Council of EU approved a [new EU Youth Strategy for 2019 - 2027](#). Its implementation impacts heavily also the topic of youth participation and changes on the EU level also the processes of the Structured Dialogue with youth creating new "EU Youth Dialogue". As the nationally adopted concept of the Structured dialogue with Youth became an important concept in the Czech Youth Policy, the new implications are discussed.

## 6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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Education is one of the traditionally strong public policy areas in the Czech Republic which also became one of the widely discussed in last years, because, in international comparison, **Czech pupils and students have started to show worse outcomes in some fields than earlier**, the attitudes of pupils toward school attendance showed lower rates and the overall wellbeing of pupils in formal education became questioned.

At the top political level the situation is complicated since the foundation of the Czech Republic in 1993 because the Ministers of Education, Youth and Sports are changing very often. In the period 1993 to 2018, **in 24 years, there have been 19 ministers** in charge of the Ministry, however since that the situation became stable and new widely recognized and supported Education Strategy 2030+ was precisely prepared, widely consulted and agreed by the Government.

The current situation is based on the amended legislation from 2004 at the pre-school, primary and secondary level and on legislation from 1998 at the tertiary level. The evolution of education and reforms toward a modern system guaranteeing quality all across the country could be by some considered rather slow. Education, as well as the general political development since 1990, **went through quite extensive decentralization** which brought many good outcomes but also some negative externalities and difficulties in common management. Also, the size of the population was changing significantly and the complex and rich system of educational institutions and facilities was following these trends.

In 2001, a White Paper on the reforms of education was prepared, but its implementation was not fully successful. Since 2014, there is was a complex strategy until 2020 based on an extensive array of evidence that facilitates development in the field. The three main

overarching priorities for this period focused on lowering inequalities in education, supporting the quality of education and teachers and providing responsible and effective management. However, the mid-term evaluation of 2018 was rather critical about the implementation.

The current two strategic objectives of the Educational Strategy 2030+ are:

- Focus education more on the acquisition of competencies needed for an active civic, professional and personal life.
- Reduce inequalities in access to quality education and pave the way for the maximum development of the potential of children, pupils and students.

Specific challenges are also present on the level of taught content and methods used for education and their modernization in most fields and subjects, and thus **a process of curricular content revisions started in 2017 with the timeline to 2026** to finish the whole-state implementation in all schools.

This opens up new possibilities and opportunities, as the foundation is rather solid, but definitely, **the field is very dynamic and requires adequate funding** and resources to reach the goals. In the OECD comparison, the Czech Republic is not the best funder of Education, however, **EU structural funds and resources, as well as policies and initiatives, are playing a very important part** in all areas of education.

The Czech Republic is however taking serious steps to improve the situation and use the opportunity for real impactful change - on the policy level, as well as with funding, which can be proved by the last years when serious investments in teachers' remuneration and school equipment were made. Also, the new state budget for 2022 proves that despite the general need for savings of public financing after the COVID-19, the educational fields remained untouched and is further supported also by the new government and Parliament since 2021.

## 6.1 General context

### Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

#### Overall changes and trends

Since 2004, the Czech educational system has been based on curricular documents specific to a given school, but with a clear connection to the [state curricular documents](#). The so-called Framework Educational Programmes serve as curricular templates on the nationwide level. The School Educational Programmes of individual schools on all levels of education are processed based on those national templates. A common concept of education is thus assured, as well as a space for school profiling in a certain way and for creative work in the area of individual curricular plans.

In the last decades there have been stable school numbers: [roughly 8500 schools within regional education and between 60 and 70 universities constantly between the years 2005/06 and 2015/16](#) (vyv\_b1.xls)

In 2016 the system of university accreditation changed and the [National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education](#) was established.

In 2016 a new systemic support of talented pupils and pupils with special educational needs according to the new [Decree number 27/2016 Sb.](#) began to be implemented.

In 2017 started a process of revision of the national Framework Educational Programmes which is supported by the new Educational Strategy 2030+ and should be finalized and fully implemented into schools by 2026.

Since 1st of September 2017 new obligatory preschool year started and the guarantee of a place in the kindergarten for Children older 4 years of age. On elementary schools also the obligatory swimming education started.

Since 1st of September 2018, the novel of the "Nutrition Decree" of the Ministry decreased the requirements for healthy food in schools.

In February 2019 started wide expert and public discussion process initiated by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in order [to create new Education Strategy for the Czech Republic in timeframe 2030+](#). The strategy was widely consulted with experts as well as the wide public and all interested actors - online as well as in regions, across all levels of education.

By 2021 there is a new [Educational Strategy 2030+](#).

## Organisation of the education and training system

[ISCED](#) table below clearly shows the following:

Primary and lower secondary education (6-14 years of age) is compulsory in the Czech Republic

At 14-15 years of age students transfer to the [upper secondary education](#) (secondary schools and apprenticeship schools) <sup>(1)</sup> by on own choice (submitting an [application](#)), followed by [passing an entrance examination](#)

[General education](#): Upper secondary education concluding with a school-leaving examination for 15-19-year-olds in the general branch is available as secondary education with a school-leaving examination, or [general secondary schools \(general secondary schools, general secondary schools with sports preparation, bi-lingual general secondary schools](#); a Framework Educational Programme for general secondary schools is also available [in English](#)) <sup>(2)</sup>

[Vocational preparation](#): Secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate is for 15-17-year-olds or 15-18-year-olds, and following their studies it is possible to attend a [two-year follow-up course](#) with the aim of acquiring a secondary education with a school-leaving examination; further school types include [conservatoires](#) (8 or 6 years; specialising in art disciplines) and secondary schools with vocational orientation (4 years), both concluded with school-leaving examination; vocational education is divided into several [wide groups \(group J, group E, group H, group L0 and M\)](#)

A school-leaving examination is the basic prerequisite for admission to a university; without passing it, there is no possibility of being accepted at a university

[School-leaving-examinations](#) have been centralised and common for all concerned educational institutions in the Czech Republic since 2009

The same centralisation has been in place in the case of the [final examination \(in the fields with the apprenticeship certificate\)](#) for vocational education since 2015

[University studies](#) are divided into structured and unstructured programmes in the Czech Republic

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<sup>(1)</sup> The only exceptions are eight-year and six-year general secondary schools, which combine lower and upper secondary studies, and if the student is admitted at 10 or 12 years of age, he or she continues until the school-leaving examination without the necessity of further entrance examination. These educational streams often offer a higher than standard number of language courses or other subjects (e.g. French general secondary schools, mathematical general secondary schools, etc.) and they have long been criticised for disproportionate elitism ([Straková 2010](#); Strakova.PDF)

<sup>(2)</sup> In August 2016 the Minister of Education issued a measure to the Framework Educational Programmes for general secondary schools in connection to the new regulation of pupils with special educational needs, as well as gifted pupils.

Structured programmes include Bachelor's degrees (3-4 years) and follow-up Master's degrees (2 years; title of Master)

Unstructured programmes include 5–6 years studies concluded with the title Master or Master of Science, alternatively Doctor of Medicine

Besides university studies there are tertiary professional schools, which provide vocational preparation over 3 or 3.5 years and the title Certified specialist; a requirement for admission is also the successfully passed school-leaving examination

## Main concepts

### Curricular documents

[Framework Educational Programme \(FEP\)](#): the main curricular documents on the state level; they are provided by the authorised organisation of the MEYS (National Institute for Education, NÚV) for all levels and sectors of the Czech regional education.

[School Educational Programmes \(SEP\)](#): documents processed on a school level with the aim of concretisation and specification of teaching at a given facility; it is following the general principles laid out in the FEP.

**Disparity** is a term used primarily to describe qualitative, but also quantitative, differences in education provision at both regional and individual school level.

**Formal education** takes place mainly in schools and can lead to the attainment of levels of education (primary and lower secondary education<sup>1</sup>, basic education, upper secondary education, upper secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate, secondary education with a maturita (school-leaving examination), post-secondary vocational education at a conservatory, post-secondary vocational education, higher education). Pre-school education, primary and lower secondary art education and primary and lower secondary language education also have the characteristics of formal education in the Czech Republic. Its functions, objectives, contents, organisational forms, and methods of evaluation are defined.

**Further education**, in state educational policy is understood pursuant to Section 2(a) of Act No 179/2006 on the certification and recognition of the results of further education and amending certain acts (the Act on the Recognition of the Results of Further Education). Under that provision, further education is defined as educational activities that do not meet the characteristics of initial education, i.e. formal education in the sense described above.

**Informal learning** could be interpreted as a process of the spontaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences from everyday experiences and activities at work, within the family and in leisure time. It also includes self-learning where the learner does not have the opportunity to verify their learning outcomes. Informal learning, unlike formal and non-formal learning, is not organised and institutionally coordinated. It is generally unsystematic in nature and lacks the formative influence of a teacher.

**Key competences** are the competences that everyone needs for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable living, a successful life in peaceful societies, and the ability to cope with life's demands with an awareness of the importance of health and active citizenship. They are developed within a lifelong learning perspective, from early childhood and throughout adult life, through formal, non-formal and informal learning in all contexts, including the family, school, workplace, neighbourhood and other settings. All key competences are considered equally important; each contributes to a successful life in society. Competences can be applied in many different contexts and in various combinations. Competences overlap and are interrelated; aspects essential to one area will reinforce competences in another area. Skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, communication and negotiation skills, analytical skills, creativity and intercultural skills are integral to key competences. The 2018 European Reference Framework includes eight key competences for lifelong learning: 1) communication in the mother tongue; 2) communication in foreign languages; 3)

mathematical competence and basic competences in science, technology and engineering; 4) digital competences; 5) personal, social and learning competences; 6) civic competences; 7) entrepreneurial competences; 8) cultural awareness and expression.

**Literacy** primarily means the ability to apply knowledge practically in a variety of life situations. Improvements in basic literacy skills pave the way for successful lifelong learning, and for learners and young people to succeed at school and in the workplace. We usually relate literacy skills to individual “subjects”. In this respect, we talk of literacy in reading, mathematics and science.

**Non-formal education** is aimed at the development of knowledge, skills and competences in employers’ establishments, private educational institutions, school facilities (e.g. leisure education, which provides participants with activities during their leisure time that focus on various fields), non-governmental organisations, memory institutions (especially libraries and museums), art and other cultural institutions, science centres and other organisations. Non-formal education includes some organised leisure activities for children, young people and adults, such as courses, retraining, training and lectures. A prerequisite for the provision of non-formal education is the participation of a professional lecturer, teacher, educator, trainer or trained leader. However, it does not normally lead to the attainment of an accepted level of education unless it is subsequently recognised by a competent authority or institution.

### **Pupils and students with special educational needs**

[Defined in §16 of the Act number 82/2015 Sb.](#)

'By a [child](#), pupil and student with special educational needs, it is meant a person, who for the fulfilment of his or her educational possibilities or for the exercise or use of his or her rights on an equal basis with the others needs the provision of supporting measures. By supporting measures it is meant the necessary adjustments in education and educational services corresponding with the physical state, cultural environment or other life conditions of the child, pupil or student. Children, pupils and students with special educational needs have the right to the provision of supporting measures by the school or education facility free of charge.'<sup>(3)</sup> [\[1\]](#)

'(2) [Supporting](#) measures consist in a) advisory help of school and school consulting facility, b) adaptation of the organisation, content, evaluation, forms and methods of education and school services including provision of education of subjects of special pedagogical care and including lengthening of duration of secondary or higher vocational education by up to two years, c) adjustment of conditions of acceptance to education and conclusion of education, d) use of compensation aids, special text books and special didactic tools, use of communication systems for deaf and deaf-blind persons such as braille and supporting or substitute communication systems, e) adaptation of expected outcomes of education within the limits set by the Framework Educational Programmes and accredited educational programmes, f) education according to an individual study plan, g) use of an assistant of the pedagogue, h) use of an additional pedagogical worker, translator of Czech sign language, rewriter for the deaf or the possibility of operation of persons providing the child, pupil or student support according to special legal regulations during his/her stay in school or educational facility, i) providing education or educational services in constructionally or technically adapted spaces.'

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<sup>(3)</sup> It is a considerable change, previously there were three types of pupils and students defined according to the Education Act of 2004: 'with health disability (bodily, visual, auditory, mental, autism, speech defects, concurrent disability with several defects, developmental disorders of learning or behaviour); with health disadvantage (health impairment, long term illness and lighter health disorders leading to disorders in learning and behaviour); with social disadvantage (from a family environment with low social-cultural status, endangered by social-pathological phenomena, with ordered institutional care or placed under protective care and pupils with the status of asylum seekers and party to asylum procedure).'



Their education and the education of talented pupils is regulated by the [Decree number 27/2016 Sb.](#)

### [Talented youth](#)

Defined in the [Concept of Talent Development Support 2014–2020](#) (pages 4–5): '... exceptionally talented is *an individual, whose distribution of abilities reaches extraordinary levels with high creativity in all scopes of activities or in particular intellectual areas, movement, artistic and social skills.*'

The concept follows the previous strategic material from the years 2009–2013.

## 6.2 Administration and governance

### Cross-sectorial cooperation

Cooperation mechanisms between departments are usually set ad hoc, based on current concepts and umbrella strategic materials. In the case that a certain strategic priority is the responsibility of more than one department, either concrete communication channels or an interdepartmental working group are set up. Should this need to last for a longer time, these groups can become more permanent, as is the case with [the advisory and working bodies of the Government Council](#), which often consist of representatives of different departments and sectors.

Thus we can see the interdepartmental cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) in the area of [prevention](#), alternatively in the area of [science and development](#); similarly [MEYS cooperated in the past with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#), and since 2018 renewed also the Council together with the Ministry of Culture. To support the cross-sectorial cooperation between the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Culture, a common memorandum](#) on cooperation in the field of cultural education, and using culture, creative and cultural assets in education was signed in 2021.

There are also Field and Expert Groups, for details, see [Chapter 3.3](#).

### Governance

Public administration in education is highly decentralised; different levels of administration and the schools themselves have a high degree of autonomy.

The **State Administration of Education** is carried out:

- at a central level by the **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), or in specified cases by other central government bodies** – the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence etc. – in the case of schools and school facilities founded by them and by the **Czech School Inspectorate**
- **regional authorities** at a regional level – especially for upper-secondary education
- municipal authorities of **municipalities with extended responsibilities** at a local level
- **heads of schools and school facilities** at institutional level, the school directors have quite extensive executive competences

In the case of **higher education institutions** (*vysoké školy*), the **administration body is represented by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports**. Apart from the areas mentioned in its title, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports also has science within its purview. As well as the Ministry of Education, state schools may also be administered by their founders – the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior.

## Main actors in policy-making

### Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

It is a central state authority in the field of education. For administration and organisation see details in [Chapter 1.4](#).

### Founders of schools

In the Czech Republic, schools can be founded by MEYS, region, municipality or a group of municipalities, church or a private person. The educational system in the Czech Republic is, however, relatively decentralised, and therefore the majority of [nursery](#) and basic schools are founded by the municipality, while secondary schools and tertiary professional schools are usually the responsibility of the region, and [universities are completely independent](#), and are either private (founded by a private subject), public (founded by a law), or state (founded by individual departments: this refers to police and military schools being the responsibility of the given ministries).

[The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#) (MEYS) belongs to the central bodies of the state administration; it is headed by a member of the Czech government. The authority of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is defined by the Act on the Establishment of Ministries and other Bodies of the Administration of the Czech Socialist Republic (number 2/1969 Sb.) in the current wording. MEYS is the main national authority in the area of education, non-formal education and youth work.

The regional council finds among others the Committee for upbringing, education and employment according to the [Act on Regions \(Regions' Constitution\) – number 129/2000 Sb., § 78](#): a) in connection with the demographic development and the development of employment it assesses and comments on the network of schools and school facilities, study and teaching disciplines and their changes within the authority of the region, b) it submits proposals on improving the quality of care provided by the schools and school facilities, alternatively pre-school facilities, which are founded by the region, c) comments on intents on providing subsidies in the area of youth, physical education and sport, d) discusses reports about the results of educational activities of schools, school facilities and pre-school facilities, which are founded by the region, e) fulfils other tasks in the area of upbringing and education, which they are authorised to by the council.

The [municipality](#) is obliged to create conditions for the fulfilment of the compulsory school attendance and further to provide conditions for pre-school education of children in the last year before the start of the compulsory school attendance.

The municipality (alternatively a group of municipalities) establishes:

- nursery school,
- basic school,
- nursery and basic schools with teaching language of an ethnic minority, if the municipality has a committee for ethnic minorities established,
- school meals facility serving them,
- basic art schools,
- school facilities for leisure-based education (e.g. school clubs),
- school purpose facilities (e.g. swimming schools, school farm, centres of practical training),
- if there are reasons and resources, then schools are also usually founded by the region (secondary schools, tertiary professional schools), or alternatively by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

## Tertiary education

**Higher education institutions** are self-governing institutions, which are separate legal entities (with the exception of the state schools, where beside MEYS, the administration office is also their founder – Ministry of Defence or Ministry of the Interior). The role of municipalities in this case is not directly defined. Higher education institutions have a high degree of autonomy and corresponding bodies defined by the Act on Higher Education Institutions. Higher education institutions are regulated by the [Act on Higher Education Institutions \(number 111/1998 Sb.\)](#).

Higher education institutions have guaranteed academic freedoms and academic rights. They are:

- the freedom of science, research and artistic creation and publication of their results;
- the freedom of teaching which lies primarily in its openness towards different scientific opinions, scientific and research methods and artistic directions;
- the right to learn, which includes the free choice of study focus within the study programmes and the freedom of expressing one's own opinions during the teaching;
- the right of the members of the academic community to elect representative academic bodies;
- the right to use academic insignia and to perform academic ceremonies.

At all higher education institutions, not only public ones, it is not allowable to establish or organise activities of political parties and political movements.

The self-governing authority of higher education institutions includes primarily:

- decision on its internal organisation;
- determination of the number of admitted students, conditions of their admission and admission procedure;
- creation and realisation of study programmes;
- organisation of studies;
- decision-making about the rights and obligations of the students;
- focus and organisation of scientific and other creative activity;
- labour-law relations and determination of the number of academic workers and other employees;
- habilitation procedure and procedure towards naming a professor;
- cooperation with other higher education institutions and international relations;
- founding of self-governing academic bodies;
- economic management and handling of property;
- determination of fees related to the studies.

### Directly managed [organisations](#) <sup>(4)</sup>

**National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic** (NPI - Národní pedagogický institut České republiky)

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<sup>(4)</sup> Until the year 2012 one of the organisations managed by the Ministry of Education was the Institute for Information in Education (ÚIV), which was cancelled on 31. 1. 2012. Its tasks and obligations, operation and development of the statistical information system in education, involvement in transnational information structures (in the projects OECD – INES and PISA and IEA – TIMSS and Eurydice) were taken over by the MEYS, Czech School Inspectorate and the DZS. One part of the ÚIV was also the National Comenius Pedagogical Library, which was merged with the Pedagogical Museum in the year 2011.

NPI is a semibudgetary institution of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports since January 2020. It was created based on merging the National Institute for Education and National Institute For Further Education. These two institutions dissolved by the end of 2019 and the new NPI is based on their perspective activities.

The National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic is an educational, methodological, curricular, research, professional and advisory institution for the solution of pre-school, primary, secondary and higher vocational education issues. It also intervenes in the field of basic arts, language, non-formal, leisure and further education.

Their aim is to ensure the systematic transfer of educational innovations from the central conceptual level to school practice in the regions. Regional centres of the Institute are a key element in that activities, acting as support centres for teachers in the region.

NPI also develop framework educational programmes for pre-school, primary, primary arts and secondary education, provide methodological support to schools and teachers and targeted training for teaching staff, support strategic management in schools and regions, and support educational leaders.

**The Centre for Determination of Results of Education** (CERMAT) prepares evaluation tools for the school-leaving examination, testing of applicants for admission to specialisations of secondary schools with a school-leaving examination and supports evaluation of basic school pupils.

**Centre for International Cooperation in Education** (DZS)

This is a contributory organisation of MEYS; it administers international activities in the area of education. Activities of the DZS are aimed at organisations and companies dedicated to education, science and research, for bodies of local administrations, but also for individuals (students, pedagogues, managers of all types of schools and other professionals) and for the MEYS itself.

DZS through its activities:

- contributes to international cooperation;
- awards grants and scholarships for international projects and mobilities;
- assists in the development of schools and further education of school employees;
- helps with further education of youth workers and educators of adults;
- informs about trends in education;
- supports career consulting;
- supports foreign students studying in the Czech Republic;
- supports Czech cultural heritage abroad;
- provides for the activity of Czech teachers abroad;
- issues publications, organises conferences;
- offers accommodation and conference services in its building Residence Dlouhá 17;
- administers the Erasmus+ Programme;
- cooperates closely with MEYS.

**Comenius National Pedagogical Museum and Library**

The National Pedagogical Museum is an important research and documentation centre oriented at the history of Czech education, pedagogy, teaching and scholarship in connection with the life, work and legacy of J. A. Comenius.

**The Comenius Pedagogical Library** – a department of the Comenius National Pedagogical Museum and Library – is a publicly accessible specialised library. The Pedagogical Library focuses on the areas of upbringing, education and schooling. Its

services are offered not only to teachers and students of pedagogical disciplines at secondary schools and higher education institutions, but also to students of social sciences.

**The Comenius National Pedagogical Museum and Library** was tasked with the construction of the Memorial Hodonín u Kunštátu, which was finished in the year 2016. The Memorial's aim is to honour the memory of all victims of internment in the camp, with special emphasis on the victims of the Roma Holocaust in the place of the former protectorate gypsy camp, to educate and inform about the dark history of roughly ten years of the camp, during and following the war, while emphasising the issue of the Roma Holocaust including connections with the Holocaust of the Jews and the elimination of the Czech nation in the period of the Second World War, and to provide detailed information about this camp.

**Czech School Inspectorate** (CSI, an administrative office with national authority, organisational component of the state)

The CSI processes conceptual intents of inspection activity and systems of evaluation of the educational system; in particular, it executes inspection activities in schools and school facilities according to the Schools Act, [so not on higher education institutions](#).

**The Centre for Higher Education Studies** (CHES, a public research institution)

This processes studies concerning the conception and development strategy of higher education and takes part in the operation of the distance study system (department National Centre for Distance Education). Its part was also the Centre for equivalence of proofs of education (ENIC/NARIC), whose activity was taken over by the Ministry of Education in the year 2014. 'The [Centre for Higher Education Studies](#) (CHES) was founded in 1991 with the restructuring of the Institute for the Development of Higher Education. Until the end of the year 2006 it was functioning as a contributory organisation of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. In January 2007 the CHES was transformed, according to the Act on public research institutions (number 341/2005 Sb.), into a public research institution whose founder is the MEYS.'

**The Fulbright Commission** was founded by an agreement between the government of the Czech Republic and the USA with the goal to support mutual understanding through educational, scientific and cultural exchanges based on governmental scholarship programmes and advisory and information services.

Other goals:

- increasing expertise in individual disciplines and registering new disciplines, where the mutual cooperation will help in their development;
- support of excellent personalities;
- founding programmes, which are co-financed by the involved institutions;
- deepening awareness about the programmes and further possibilities of study and research in the USA and raising the prestige of the programmes.

**Pedagogical Centre for Polish Minority Schools Český Těšín**, founded to provide support for the needs of schools with Polish as a teaching language in the Czech Republic, it is based on the identity and specifics of the Euroregion Těšínské Slezsko - Śląsk Cieszyński.

Activities:

- further education of pedagogical workers,
- support of minority schools,
- issue of methodological aids – Jutrzenka and Ogniwo
- competitions for pupils and students,
- life-long education,

- cross-border cooperation,
- European cooperation,
- pedagogical library.

**The National Library of Technology** is the biggest and oldest library of technology literature in the Czech Republic, with a capacity of more than 1.5 millions of volumes; its primary function is the provision of specialised information resources and services to students, pedagogues, and researchers in the fields of engineering and applied sciences, as well as to members of the general public with interest in technical information.

**Czech Anti-Doping Committee** is the highest body and exclusive specialised workplace with national authority providing for the anti-doping programme of the Czech Republic:

- o it proposes legal measures for the support of the fight against doping, especially limiting the availability of pharmacological and nutritional resources containing doping substances;
- o it represents the Czech Republic in international anti-doping institutions;
- o it issues directives for executing doping controls, including lists of forbidden groups of doping substances and methods according to WADA;
- o it carries out doping checks during sporting competitions, as well as outside of them and provides for analyses of collected samples in doping control laboratories;
- o it issues educational programmes and organises educational events for the support of sporting competition without doping.

**Higher Education Sport Centre of MEYS** assists in the following areas: athletics, basketball, handball, judo, canoeing (speed/slalom), figure skating, swimming, fencing, tennis, and volleyball

## 6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

### National strategy

**Lowering drop-outs from education** (with the identical definition as the Eurostat, meaning '*The proportion of persons in the age of 18–24 years, who reached education in the maximum level of ISCED 2 and are not in the process of formal education or vocational training.*') **was one of the indicators of the fulfilment of the [Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020](#)** (in the responsibility of the MEYS).

This figure is surveyed by the Czech Statistical Office by the annual Labour Force Sample Survey. The goal is to have less than 5.5% of persons fall into the aforementioned definition by the year 2020. This goal has already been reached. This goal was fully in line with the [Europe 2020](#) strategy, which states that there should be less than 10% of individuals leaving the educational system early, in the year 2020.

The average drop-out rate in the Czech Republic (6.7%), although lower than in the EU (10.6%), has been increasing recently. Moreover, in some regions (Ústí nad Karlovy Vary) it is multiplied (15%).

In the project Support to Regional Action Planning (P-KAP) implemented by the National Institute of Education of the Czech Republic, the document "[Early Leavers from Education in Relation to the Areas of Intervention of Regional Action Planning](#)" was produced in 2020, which seeks to unravel the causes of early departures in secondary and higher vocational education and also offers examples of good practice.

Earlier in 2015, a manual was also published for schools and interested persons called [Prevention and intervention of early school leaving. Manual of Measures](#). Drop-outs are one of the topics in the awareness of guidance teachers and school services.

Early leaving is still one of the aspects monitored and important on the policy level within the [Education Strategy 2030+](#).

### **Formal education: main policy measures on ELET**

**There are no real specific policy measures directly targeting ELET.** Within the EU Policy set the Czech Republic goal hold the level of school dropouts below 5.5 per cent. In past years, however, the level of school dropouts has risen slightly.

The issue of early leavings is **partially tackled by the Education and career guidance** which is considered as a prevention and intervention measure to tackle early leaving, as specified in the 2004 Education Act and Decree 72/2005 on providing guidance in schools and school guidance facilities. However, it is not explicitly considered as a compensation measure to tackle early leaving.

National financial support of schools and the services tackling early school leaving is provided by the [financial support of the MEYS](#), financed by the European Social Fund. It focuses on the resources for schools and teachers, which among other things also target **'the tutoring of pupils endangered by a school failure'**.

The state is also trying to fight the lower participation of Roma youth in education and their leaving school early with the [Grant programme Support of socially disadvantaged Romani pupils from secondary schools and students of Secondary Vocational Schools and Conservatories](#). The programme can support schools and individual young Roma students in studying and maintaining their studies. Schools can apply for national support, and it can be provided to individuals via schools. According to the [results of the 2017 call for applications](#), around 132 000 EUR (3 417 260 CZK) was allocated to applied projects with a direct impact on 686 pupils.

### **Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work**

There are **no specific measures at the state level** addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work.

Young people who left education can use other parts of the social **possibilities for requalification** by the Employment offices or use the experience from the non-formal and informal learning and youth work to reach some qualifications from the National Register of Qualifications according to the Act on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes Nr. 179/2006 Sb.

Supporting ELET is also part of the interventions of social services supported by the Ministry of social affairs.

More on validation and recognition in [Chapter 6.4](#).

### **Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions**

The policy areas of education, youth and sports (within one single ministry) cooperate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior on policy issues related to tackling early leaving. We can see the outcomes of the cooperation, for example, **since 2010 leaving education has been monitored**, which is part of the systemic [project VIP Kariéra II](#) – KP (follow-up of VIP Kariéra (2005-2008) as a joint initiative of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the National Institute for Education. The projects' objectives include prevention of early leaving and identification of groups at risk. The project also aimed at enhancing, rationalising and further improving the quality of career counselling, providing training and methodological support (e.g. e-learning training for career counsellors).

The outcome of the project is the ISA+ informational portal known as [Infoabsolvent.cz](#), supporting young people and adults in education, dealing with problems in education and with transfer to working-life or further education.

Multi-agency partnerships at the local/institutional level are a legal obligation in order to provide support to students who require specific additional support and their parents. They involve professionals such as school heads, teachers (including teachers specifically trained for guidance and those specifically trained as school-leaving prevention specialists), psychologists, social workers and labour officer workers. The involvement of speech therapists mainly concerns primary education.

There is no national way of monitoring and evaluating this multi-agency partnership cooperation on a local level: some local authorities may apply some, but it is not under state coordination.

No special link to National Youth Guarantee was found, however, the ESF calls supporting projects targeting young people and their support, integration and further education and qualification put emphasis on young people out of school, employment or education with clear aim to work out the impacts of early leaving on their future working and educational path.

## 6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

### Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

[According to the Ministry](#) of Education, Youth and Sports, the quality of non-formal education and its recognition was first dealt with on the state level in the Czech Republic by the National Institute of Children and Youth in the year 2009 through the national project '[Keys for Life](#)'.

During the four years of its running (until 2013), within the scope of the key action '[Recognition of non-formal education](#)', the '[Memorandum on the Support of Recognition of Results of Non-formal Education in Work with Children and Youth](#)' was created besides other things.

The memorandum was signed by the first signers at the '[Conference on the Recognition of Non-formal Education](#)', which took place in Prague from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011. Currently, the Memorandum has been signed by 41 representatives from the ranks of important employers and educators, and no further dissemination is publicly visible. The Memorandum opens up new possibilities for more intensified negotiations about future intentions, starting with the recognition of non-formal education and thus supporting the inner motivation for life-long learning in the people themselves.

The practical outcome of the project 'Keys for Life' in regard to recognition and validation of Non-Formal and informal learning outcomes is the 'Personal Competence Portfolio' ([Osobní Kompetenční Portfólio](#), OKP).

OKP enabled young people to gather their competencies gained during life and non-formal education (as well as professional qualifications and formal education) online and thus build a more appropriate CV. It helped young people describe their competencies and skills by providing basic model competence portfolios according to the basic positions, roles and activities within children's and youth organisations and youth work.

The OKP is however not anymore publically available and further discussions on how to link formal and non-formal education are one of the goals of the new Education Strategy 2030+. No clear systems or frameworks are however available as of 2022. The discussion behind the official state policy also lean on the modularization of further/non-formal education and thus easily facilitate the recognition of their outcomes.

National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic realized also the project [Linking formal and non-formal education, including Leisure-based education](#). As outcomes of the project were created [Methodic for the linking of formal and non-formal educational programmes for further inspiration and application](#).



However, still, there is **currently no unified system of recognition of results of non-formal education as such. But, there is a system of recognition of further education, in the scope of which it is possible to use knowledge and skills gained in non-formal education.**

Further education of the individual is possible according to the [Act no. 179/2006 Sb.](#) based on the [National Register of Qualifications](#), which defines what skills are necessary for given professions and who will carry out testing and in which way, which is a necessary prerequisite for the recognition of previous learning.

Altogether it is a **system whereby an individual has the possibility to acquire either comprehensive or partial qualifications required for the execution of a certain profession.** These qualifications are specified for each profession separately, as are the conditions for their acquisition (testing) and the authorities which are commissioned to execute the examination in this regard.

There are no specific target groups with regard to young people, though gradually it was possible to successfully push through [professions connected with youth work](#) into the National Register of Qualifications; see details in the [chapter 10.6](#))

### Connection to formal education and certification

**Official statement:** 'Within the National Register of Qualifications (NSK), it is primarily possible to acquire a so-called vocational qualification (VQ). That is the qualification that makes the applicant employable in the given profession, or alternatively to acquire the trade certificate (depending on the requirements of the specific profession). For example, the craftsmanship trades require the passing of the whole *comprehensive vocational qualification*, whereas the *vocational qualification* is enough for the free trades.

The applicant, who acquires the VQ, will be employable in that given discipline. If he/she would like to acquire an apprenticeship certificate, it is possible only in such case that a corresponding educational discipline exists, and the applicant acquires the VQs necessary for him/her to pass the final examination from the educational discipline in a school which teaches the discipline. If such information is not stated directly by the qualification, then this VQ is not part of any group of standards leading to a comprehensive vocational qualification.

Until 2015, qualifications corresponding to the school-leaving examination level were addressed by the project [NSK2](#). Also, for this level it should be possible to acquire a certificate of school-leaving examination, but probably not for all disciplines.

The project [NSK2 states](#) that after submitting a certificate of professional qualifications, 'the interested person will be allowed to carry out the prescribed examination (e.g. the final examination in disciplines with apprenticeship certificate), without the need to attend school education.'

Currently it is thus possible to also acquire certification of formal education, however, firstly the candidate needs to pass all partial examinations required for some of the professional qualifications and subsequently pass the final examination itself.

The total number of examinations passed [was rising](#) in the past by roughly 2000 examinations per month.

By the approval process of each sub-qualification, there was a specific role of the 'Sectoral Council' composed of representatives of employers, authorising authorities, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Further investigation on how qualifications gained through non-formal education can be integrated in the national qualification frameworks is being undertaken by NUV and its partners within the Strategic Partnership in VET Erasmus+ Projekt [NQF-in](#).

## Information and guidance

Information on the National Register of Qualifications can be found on the website with the instructive web address [www.narodnikvalifikace.cz](http://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz) (national qualifications).

The National Institute for Education also provides a web portal on Education and Work ([www.vzdelaniaprace.cz](http://www.vzdelaniaprace.cz)) to inform and motivate people to use the methods for requalification or recognition and validation of qualification. Individuals and employers can also be linked and supported in a direct job search or ways to reach the necessary qualification by validation.

No agencies or campaigns for raising awareness can be found at this time, however, it is assumed that both portals are being used as support measures by careers services and counselling in schools and employment offices.

## Quality assurance

Learn more about quality assurance in the validation of non-formal and informal learning in youth work in [chapter 10.6](#).

### Assurance for validation and recognition of Further Education:

One of the quality assurance tools is the [National Board for Qualifications](#), whose tasks also include 'monitoring of the labour market and demands of employers', as well as 'proposing the projection of changes in the content of qualifications into the content of educational disciplines.'

Another quality assurance mechanism is the system [granting authorisations to legal and physical persons in order to organise testing](#). The authorisation is being executed by a body of the respective ministry, however it is enough to fill out the application correctly, fulfil the given criteria and all proper attachments; the question remains about the quality of persons thus authorised.

No further quality assurance mechanisms currently exist.

No monitoring system currently exists.

## 6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

### Policy framework

There is no comprehensive top policy level framework for international mobility as the whole educational field is strategically covered by the [Education Strategy 2030+](#), which recognized international mobility as an important and integral part, however, does not bring a concrete strategic framework for it. International mobility is this based especially on strategies of relevant programmes, including Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps etc. and their strategic and action planning in the Czech Republic.

### Administration and implementation of mobility coordination

The MEYS founded a semi-budgetary organisation, the [Centre for International Cooperation in Education](#), which is the state subject for implementing student as well as non-student mobility programmes.

Specific offers of international mobility (especially, but not limited to students of higher education institutions) are provided for by the [Academic Information Agency](#), which works within the scope of the Centre for International Cooperation in Education.

In the Czech-German context, there are also [The Czech-German Youth Exchange Coordination Centres "Tandem" in Pilsen and Regensburg](#) bringing together young people from the Czech Republic and Germany with the goal of meeting of young people, creating and supporting their connections and friendships. Among other tasks, Tandem works in

arranging and supporting mobility of individuals (traineeships, job shadowing and volunteering) for pupils, those in secondary education [including VET](#), young people, youth workers, teachers, as well as volunteers.

For more detailed information on mobility policies and actions taken by the state, visit:

**Mobility Scoreboard, EU/EURYDICE:** [Vocational education and training](#)

**Mobility Scoreboard, EU/EURYDICE:** [Higher education](#)

## **Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education**

Secondary school students have the possibility to choose from the information of the Academic Information Agency (see above): scholarships announced by the [MEYS](#), [other scholarships](#), as well as other [events and competitions](#).

**From the Czech state perspective, the main programme for supporting mobility in secondary education is the EU Programme Erasmus+.**

In the scope of the Erasmus+ Programme, secondary school workers also have the opportunity to leave with the financial support of the EU, both in the area of general education (general secondary schools) and in the area of vocational education (vocational secondary schools and practical schools); projects in this area are designed to last for 12-24 months; the implementation of the programme and provision of information are in this case provided for by the [Centre for International Cooperation in Education](#).

Apart from secondary school workers, the Erasmus+ Programme also financially supports mobility in the area of vocational education and training, namely internships for [students](#) in an organisation of vocational education and training as well as practical training of students in enterprises for the duration from 2 weeks up to 12 months. Within the financial support of the Erasmus+ Programme it is also possible to leave for educational/training stays with the purpose of professional development of [workers](#) in the area of vocational education and training, for the duration from 2 days up to 2 months.

### **Higher Education Institutions**

The main possibilities for students mobility include the following [schemes](#), according to the information from the Centre for International Cooperation in Education:

- [AKTION](#) in the Czech-Austrian intergovernmental context,
- [CEEPUS](#) (Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies),
- [Erasmus+](#),
- [EEA and Norway Grants](#) (here it is possible to go to study abroad also during the study at a tertiary professional school or a conservatoire).

Other possibilities of study abroad are programmes such as [Freemover](#), various [intergovernmental agreements](#), or for example the [Fulbright scheme](#).

We can also observe rising numbers of international [summer schools](#). However, there is no central register of organised summer schools - neither of those organised by domestic institutions nor of those organised by foreign universities. Information in this respect is very fragmented and available only on selected websites. The exception is perhaps the not very well-updated website of the [NICM](#). Often the information is shared among students and active young people in mailing students networks or via social media and social networks, which are often supported or grouped around young people in various youth or student organisations.

Czech higher education students also have the possibility to study for a [double degree](#) or in joint degree programmes, in which it is possible to study part of the programme at the hosting institution and receive official recognition of this study not only in the form of recognition of attended subjects and their credit load, but also through gaining two

diplomas, or a diploma, which is issued by both the domestic and the foreign institution. Both mentioned cases offer the graduate a certain advantage in the labour market. However, currently, there is no centralised register of these programmes and so it is up to the potential student to find the information on the websites of the given institutions. There are also cases when students initiate by themselves a new such partnership between the universities or HEI.

Apparently, the most well-known programme used for the mobility of higher education students in the Czech Republic is the [Erasmus+](#), which offers opportunities for mobility for both students and employees of universities.

In the case of [students](#) of higher education institutions and tertiary professional schools, this is the financial support of study mobility, which lasts 3-12 months, or a practical training 2-12 months long, including an internship for graduates (Internships for graduates up to one year from finishing studies at a higher education institution.).

In the case of [employees](#) of higher education institutions, universities and tertiary professional schools this is the financial support for teaching stays in the length from 2 days to 2 months, alternatively for training in the length from 2 days to 2 months.

## **Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work**

The main state support mechanism in this area is the political support given by recognising the international mobility of youth as one of the priorities of youth policy in the Czech Republic (see section "[Political framework](#)" above).

On the implementation level, this document is followed up by the [financial scheme provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#) (for details see [Chapter 1.7](#)), with focus, among other things, on important international events and international and cross-border youth and youth work mobility.

Systemic support of youth mobility within non-formal learning and youth work is provided by the [Erasmus+](#) programme and its component focusing on youth. Support can be obtained for projects from 3 to 24 months long in the form of [youth exchanges](#), [European Voluntary Service](#), [youth workers mobility](#), or strategic European Voluntary Service.

Erasmus+ in the field of Youth is also implemented and administrated by the DZS. As promotion tools, the [Eurodesk.cz](#) portal and **magazine called 'Mozaika'** (*Mosaic*) play a role.

The Czech Republic is also supporting, via the Council of Europe, the [European Youth Foundation](#), and Czech Youth thus have the possibility to apply for their grants in the scope of their grant scheme. [Biannual priorities](#) for 2018-2019 are a) access to rights, b) youth participation and youth work, and c) inclusive and peaceful societies in accordance with the Czech Youth Policy.

Furthermore, there are [bilateral and multilateral agreements](#) between individual states in the area of youth. In 2017 there are the agreements with Slovakia, France, Germany and the cooperation within the Visegrád Group and the Eastern Partnership promoted also by the '[Memorandum of Cooperation between The Ministries of the Visegrad Group Countries responsible for Youth and The Ministries of The Eastern Partnership Countries responsible for Youth in Youth Field](#)' followed-up with the [2015-2017 Action Plan of V4 and EaP coordination - youth](#).

Cooperation and Grant support among youth is also offered by the [International Visegrad Fund](#) which is a joint fund of the V4 countries' governments.

*'The goal of the Fund is to facilitate and support development of closer cooperation among the V4 countries (and V4 countries with other countries, especially, but not exclusively, outside of the EU, with member states in Eastern Europe, with the Western Balkans and South Caucasus) with the help of grants supporting common cultural, scientific and*

*educational projects, youth exchanges, cross-border projects and the promotion of tourism.'*

The total budget for this programme is roughly 2.5 million Euros.

Czech-German youth activities, cooperation and mobility are supported and coordinated by the '**Czech-German Council on Youth Exchange and Coordination in the Youth Field**' which is based on the Czech-German intergovernmental Agreement on Good Neighborhood. It meets once a year alternately in the Czech Republic and Germany and brings together representatives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic and the Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (German Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth), representatives from youth organization structures (CRDM and DNK in Germany), Czech-German Youth Forum and other stakeholders from both countries active in the Youth field and school exchange. The Council also steers the activity of the [Czech-German Youth Exchange Coordination Centre Tandem](#) whose bureaus are in Plzeň and Regensburg.

Since 1997, Tandem has provided various support measures such as guidance, mediation of contact across borders, financial help for activities and promotion of the youth and youth-work mobility to the youth, civil society and education sector. Recently, Austria has also been involved.

Since 2014, Tandem has operated small-scale financial support **Start It Up with Tandem!** ([Rozjed' to s Tandemem!](#))

*'The goal of the Start It Up with Tandem! programme is to motivate Czech citizens working with children and youth in their leisure time to organise Czech-German youth exchanges. Through this programme, Tandem wants to support the meeting of children and youth in the ages of 8-26.'* This programme now enables cooperation with subjects in Austria, too.

Another inter-governmental, international structure supporting Czech-German cooperation including the youth field, youth work and youth educational activities (including scholarships) is the [Czech German Future Fund](#).

Since 2001 there has also been the Czech-German Youth Forum promoting common activities including youth work and youth mobility across both countries.

Since 2008 the [Czech-Polish Forum](#) has been in operation, which also provides small-scale support to civil society for common projects, including youth field.

The [Czech Council of Children and Youth \(CRDM\)](#), as a non-state actor, but with significant state and public subsidies, promotes the international youth participation and mobility with several projects, activities and initiatives.

[UN Youth Delegates Programme](#) coordinated by the Czech Council of Children and Youth and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is a project supporting the promotion of youth participation and youth mobility. The programme started in 2016 as part of the follow-up of the Structured Dialogue with Youth.

[EYCA - The European Youth Card](#) supports the European Youth mobility and meaningful spare time activities for youth by providing information, youth work activities and discounts, and in the Czech Republic it has been provided and operated by the CRDM since 2013.

[International volunteering by 72 Hours](#) - every October, CRDM organises a nationwide voluntary project '72 Hours' in order to promote and support volunteering, and the international dimension is present every year. With international partners, CRDM provides opportunities for young Czech volunteers to go abroad for voluntary activities and is hosting international volunteers in the Czech Republic to participate in voluntary activities in the Czech Republic.

[Czech-Israeli youth workers exchange](#) - every year around 10 Czech and 10 Israeli Youth workers from youth organisations and movements participate in common exchanges

focusing on the differences and commonalities in youth work in the Czech Republic and Israel.

International youth mobility and youth cooperation within the activities of membership in the European Youth Forum and Advisory Council on Youth by the Council of Europe (Mandate 2016-2017), within the BBC+ European Youth Councils' cooperation or with other individual partners such as German Federal Youth Council (DBJR), Bayern Youth Council, Saxony Youth Council, Slovak Youth Council, or other partners.

## Quality assurance

### Learning mobility quality assurance mechanisms on the national level

There is **no comprehensive national system of monitoring the quality of learning mobility** in the Czech Republic.

Many programmes and projects realised also include feedback questionnaires or feedback sessions, however, there is no external evidence to make any valid assumption about the quality in general.

There are only ad hoc research and evaluation activities, which are carried out for example by the [DZS](#), the international research group [RAY](#), which in the Czech Republic is a part of non-formal education, or by some academics (Bárta, Šmideková 2016).

### Learning mobility quality assurance mechanisms in HEI

Within the HEI, the [2015 ECTS Users' Guide](#) is used by external quality assurance agencies as the basis to assess the implementation of ECTS in all higher education

### Within IVET the country has taken actions that cover the following dimensions

#### Language preparation:

Preparation is provided usually in the form of lessons with a different length and content (content may differ according to the type of educational programme), depending on the organiser and the needs of both sending organisations and especially of participants. For long-term mobilities, online language preparation is provided.

#### For Tandem (Czech-German mobility)

The language and the intercultural preparation is a part of the so-called 'Preparatory days' before each trip, usually on the spot. The preparation is carried out by certified and trained Tandem language specialists ([jazyková animace/Czech-German language animation](#)) who have undergone specialised training on specific vocabulary.

Learners are taught through games and creative activities and training and intercultural education – the '[diversity method](#)'. Tandem puts big emphasis on this form of preparation, therefore during the preparation days Tandem's teaching staff are also presented. In this regard, Tandem requires pupils to write a resume on PC during the preparatory days. They then work with maps, timetables, and the websites of the city, where the mobility stay will take place. As a learning aid, peXmory (memory game) was introduced, for using and teaching technical terms. Tandem also puts a big emphasis on supporting German as a second language (language specialists visit primary schools and motivate pupils as well as school directors and parents).

#### Stay monitoring:

**With Tandem**, the monitoring of the mobility stay and the support at the place of the traineeship is carried out by:

- Members of the sending organisation / school (if attending) and the contact person directly at the workplace.
- Often through 'not on the spot' monitoring done by educators, directors of the sending school in the Czech Republic via phone, Skype and social networks.

**With DZS**, monitoring of the stay process during the stay abroad is ensured by the accompanying person from the sending organisation (in case that the stay participants are younger than 18 years) or by the responsible person from the receiving organisation. These persons also ensure the integration of participants in the host country.

#### **Feedback collection:**

**Tandem** collects feedback through reports from learners, accompanying persons and sending organisations. Discussions take place with organisers, teachers, school directors and representatives of the regions within thematic and evaluation workshops. **With DZS**, sending organisations to draft Final Reports upon completion of mobility projects within the Erasmus+ Programme.

#### **Transport, housing, catering**

Mobile learners' access to convenient and affordable facilities for housing, catering and transport all along the stay process is ensured by both sending and receiving organisations. All the above-mentioned aspects are standardised by the rules of the Erasmus+ Programme. These rules are set up at EU level and the countries apply them without changes at national level.

## **6.6 Social inclusion through education and training**

### **Educational support**

Reducing inequalities in education was one of the three principal goals of the Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020 as well as it is one of two strategic objectives of the Education Strategy 2030+.

For educational support, there is also a [strong legislative Framework](#) from early child care up to higher education – for details see the [overview at Eurydice CZ-17](#).

In general, there is a **principle of inclusion of children and young people with special educational needs to mainstream education**. Only in special, diagnosed cases children/young people can attend special schools with specialized support and reduced or adapted curricula.

Pupils/students with special needs should get legitimate support and more measures are in place to choose as Teaching assistants, Diagnosing and assessing children in school counselling facilities etc.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports aim to find an effective sharing model for staff within the education, social services and health care departments who work with learners with SEN. This would ensure that all learners' needs are met and that state budget funds are effectively spent on professional (teaching) positions in cases and activities where they are needed.

In 2016, the Czech Republic implemented major amendments to the [Education Act](#) of 2015 (Act No. 82/2015 Coll.), which significantly modified the rules for education, especially regarding inclusion. These subsidiary regulations include the following: • Decree No. 27/2016 Coll., on the education of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and talented pupils • Decree No. 197/2016 Coll., which amends Decree No. 72/2005 Coll., on the provision of counselling services and facilities in schools, and certain other decrees.

In 2019 these have been amended by the Decree No. 248/2019 Coll., on the education of pupils with special educational needs, with the main aim to lower administrative burden to schools and support diagnostic services. At the same time, misuse practices should have been abolished. The state Pedagogy Inspectorate found that many of the measures have been used in a wrong and less effective way, e.g. instead of the support, the pedagogy assistant provided education instead of the teacher and similar. The novelisation was praised and criticized at the same time, as it was also connected with the aim to lower

the budget for the inclusive measures, which was argued by the effectiveness of those public investments.

The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. guarantees that alternative communication and/or sign language will be available for those pupils who cannot use oral language. The Act on Sign Language, which was approved in 1998 and amended in 2008, legally recognises and highlights the importance of sign language for the education of pupils with a hearing impairment. It also recognises and highlights the use of other alternative communication systems, including specific systems of communication for people who are deaf and blind. The Act **guarantees deaf children's right to education by means of sign language and guarantees access to sign language interpretation for upper-secondary learners** and sign language courses for parents of deaf children. The use of sign language in the education of pupils with hearing impairment was already enshrined in the previous Education Act No. 29/1984 Coll. And its amendments.

**Other relevant policy documents:** National Plan of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021 – 2025 ([Národní plán podpory rovných příležitostí pro osoby se zdravotním postižením na období 2021–2025](#)) Long-Term National Strategy on Development in Education 2019 – 2023 ([DZ ČR 2019-2023, MŠMT ČR](#))

### **Subsidy programmes and subventions to enhance social inclusion of young people through education**

#### **State support for Higher Education Study inclusion**

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports provides several kinds of subsidies every year from [budget line II 'Social Affairs of Students'](#) based on the [Act no. 111/1998 Sb. On Higher Education Institutions](#) (HEI). Students fulfilling the criteria apply at their HEI and the Institution claims it from the Ministry, however, it needs to prove the claim. Students need to study their first HEI programme accredited in the Czech Republic in order to be eligible for specific support they need to meet other criteria (e.g. for boarding to have permanent residence in another city). The kinds of support and the funding in years 2014-2016 can be seen in the table below.

#### **Subsidy of the Ministry of Education within the budget line 'Social Affairs of Students' (in Thousands CZK)**

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Scholarships for PhD students	1 062 360	1 041 277	1 009 678
Grants for student accommodation and boarding	155 937	147 527	135 45
Contribution to social scholarships of public HEI	38 964	33 582	34 221
Grants for social scholarships for private HEI	1 551	1 240	1 084
Contribution to accommodation scholarships of public HEI	816 497	776 966	731 081
Grants for accommodation scholarships for students from private HEI	28 879	26 446	25 072

Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

#### **Subsidies to HEI for the study of students with specific needs**

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports provides **subsidies to HEI for the study of students with specific needs** every year from the [budget line IV 'International](#)



cooperation and others' every year. Among students with special needs are included students with disabilities, visual, hearing, and mobility impairments, students with a specific learning disorder, with an autism spectrum disorder and persons with other mental disorder or illness, including neurodevelopmental disorders, e.g. disturbed by language, speech and other communication skills, or suffering from a chronic somatic disease preventing standard ways of performing objective study obligations, or calling for organisational measures from the side of the school. The financial support in 2014 was in the amount of 46 600 000 CZK, in both 2015 and 2016 the amount of 51 300 000 CZK was provided.

### **Elementary school social inclusion subsidy programmes:**

#### **'Promoting school catering for elementary school pupils, whose family has been in a long-lasting unfavourable financial situation'**

The purpose of this grant scheme is [to support school catering for elementary school pupils whose family has been in a poor financial situation for a long time](#). It is not only about ensuring a regular diet for pupils but also about improving their conditions of stay at school. The side effects also include helping the family so that the pupil has the opportunity to take part in out-of-school activities which are usually organized after the lunchtime. Pupils are thus not excluded from the classroom because of not participating in extracurricular activities or the lunch, which in the Czech Republic is usually a common activity of the class collective.

#### **'Support for gifted pupils at primary and secondary schools'**

[A Grant Program](#) aims to support out-of-school education for gifted pupils, especially through new forms provided by organisers, primarily from universities, public research institutions, non-profit organisations and leisure centres using lecturers and leading experts from various technical and scientific industries. The allocation of the fund is 10 million CZK per year (ca 400 000 EUR).

### **The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports runs the following programmes enhancing social inclusion of young people to education:**

[Development program Compensatory teaching aids for pupils with disabilities](#)

[Subsidy Programme for the field of Prevention](#)

[Subsidy Programme to integrate the Roma minority](#)

Development program on Equipping school counselling facilities with diagnostic tools

[A development program to support school psychologists and special education teachers in schools and methodologists - specialists in school counselling facilities.](#)

[Funding of teacher assistants for children, pupils and students with disabilities and for children, pupils and students with social disadvantage](#)

### **Social cohesion and equal opportunities**

The reform of the educational system towards more inclusiveness described above is also viewed as a tool for strengthening social cohesion in society, as described in the [MEYS' statement](#) on this matter.

Apparently, the most closely connected to this issue in practice is the FEP system, as each FEP also takes into consideration the areas of social cohesion and principle of equal opportunities in many different ways, e.g. the [FEP for general secondary schools](#) accentuates these areas within the topics 'The human and the society' (pages 38-39), 'Personality and social education' (pages 66-69), 'Education on thinking in a European and global context' (pages 69-73) a 'Multicultural education' (pages 73-75)

In mid-2017, a [special call for applications for subventions from the ESF](#) was realized to build school capacities in the priority of equal access to pre-school, elementary and secondary education with an allocation of 700 000 000 CZK (27 500 000 EUR). One of the

activities supported were also the [Competencies for a democratic culture according to the Council of Europe Framework on competencies](#).

Since 2017 the process of FEP transformation started and it should be fully developed and implemented by 2026.

## 6.7 Skills for innovation

### Innovation in formal education

Innovations are at the heart of recent public policies of the Czech Republic. As they are very complex and specific fields interlinking education, business, civic and other sectors, there is a [National Innovation Strategy 2019 - 2030](#). **Support of Polytechnical education** is one of its priorities with many clear objectives and measures, as well as the support of the **centres of excellence** in the research and academic world.

#### Innovation in the content of education on the primary and secondary level

Education in the Czech Republic at the primary and secondary level is derived from national curricular documents, the Framework Educational Programmes (FEP), based on which the School Educational Programmes (SEP) are formed - the concrete curricula of individual educational institutions (more in [Chapter 6.1](#)).

Within the scope of the FEP for upper secondary education (general secondary schools and vocational education), we do not see innovation as a specific topic anywhere but specific competences in connection with innovation could already be tracked:

- competence to learn,
- competence to solve problems,
- and partially critical thinking

Further competences considered as part of education for innovation such as intuition, critical and lateral thinking, experimentation, hypothetical reasoning and risk assessment are missing directly. However, in detailed examples, it can be seen that (despite being called differently) competences in FEP already contain other above-mentioned skills within themselves, such as experimentation, hypothetical reasoning and risk assessment.

Present FEPs were prepared in 2005 and the update was started in 2017, more in [Chapter 6.10](#). Since January 2021 first part of the revision was accepted. This part is related to reducing some content for the primary school education and adding more [complex ICT thematic](#), including its bigger interconnection towards other educational fields.

The complex, so-called "[Big FEP Revision](#)" was launched in 2021 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the National Pedagogy Institute with the work of an expert group. The outcomes are set for the public consultation process in spring 2022 and further development is expected until 2023. In the period 2023 - 2026 is expected its implementation in all primary schools. All actors as well as individuals, including pupils and young people, can contribute in various stages of the process proactively in the consultations or as "subjects" by the testing.

#### Innovations at tertiary education level

There are no content outlines given by the state for the tertiary level, which is why the principal document in this area is the [Strategic Plan of the Ministry for Higher Education for the period from 2021](#). The innovations in all fields are supported and various mechanisms are set to be promoted by the state, as well as self-governing higher education institutions, which have thus wide possibilities for implementing and supporting excellence and innovations.

## Pedagogical tools and support of teachers

Currently we do not see any systematic support in the area of development of innovation and competencies connected to it on the national level, the only exception being the methodological materials aimed at teachers of [lower secondary education](#) and [upper secondary general education](#), which help teachers tackle the concept of individual key competencies within teaching and competencies for innovation are part of those 'key competencies'.

In general, the MEYS only provides links to [some of its own publications](#) and to a set of other websites of [some of its contributory organisations](#).

One general support tool for teachers is the **methodological web-portal for teachers** [RVP.cz](#), where actual information from educators are provided, shared and discussed among teachers, model lessons are provided, reports from conferences are shared, education initiatives or systemic projects developed and outcomes or progress communicated. Individuals can thus find much inspiration. The National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic will also prepare and provide wider support during and after the process of the Educational Curricula Reform.

Another general system to support teachers is the **system of further education of pedagogical workers** (so-called DVPP - *Další vzdělávání pedagogických pracovníků*). It is a systemic and nationally coordinated process of further education of teachers following their pre-graduate preparation. During their careers, teachers have the right and obligation to participate in the DVPP.

Based on the legislation in education, teachers have the right to 12 days a year as a time for self-study within the DVPP. They are entitled to the compensation of lost salary which they would have gained during those 12 days if they would stay had been at work.

In regard to innovation in education, it is up to the teacher which type and subject of further education they will choose.

MEYS provides only the register of accredited [persons](#) and [institutions](#) to provide the DVPP to pedagogical workers.

As the public system of providing information to individual teachers is quite systemic and complicated, non-profit organisation EDUin acting as an umbrella over many initiatives and active teachers in education provides its own portal with the concrete information from accredited institutions and their courses on [DVPP.info](#).

## Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work

In the Czech Republic, there is currently no systematic state support of innovation and competences for innovation within non-formal learning and youth work. However, this does not mean that nothing happens in this field, just that it is without state coordination. Many of the youth organisations, universities, civil society organisations and regional or local authorities with the support of the state, Erasmus+, ESF or private sources organise initiatives or projects in the field of innovation. Many of the youth work initiatives are innovative per se.

In the terms of supporting talented/gifted young people, the national PERUN project and the section "[Talentovani.cz](#)" of the National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic was created to support and facilitate individual support as well as the national subjects competitions.

Below we introduce a list of state initiatives geared towards the youth in general and to talented youth, which are connected in some way to the development of competencies of innovation.

Earlier, the Concept supported talented and gifted pupils was assuming setting and providing necessary coordination in the area of activities directly linked with the care for

the talented pupils, as well as in the areas of information, methodology and strategy. It creates the basis for the gradual construction of the national Talent Support Network, which will be the basis of a functioning system of support and care. The main task of the current Concept is the construction and coordination of a hierarchically structured system, which specifies subjects and their tasks on individual stages from the national segment (departmental and interdepartmental workgroups) through the regional level (regional workgroup of care for the talented) down to the level of schools (Coordinator for Talent Support).

The pedagogue who will be dealing with this issue in the school (Coordinator for Talent Support) plays an important part in the whole system. The umbrella and initiating part of the whole system are the workgroups (departmental and interdepartmental) responsible for a wider approach to the methodological management of the individual lower segments. The system determines the tasks in the wider area of identification, development and employment of the talent for the individual segments of the proposed system.

The deciding main segment of the prepared nationwide Talent Support Network will be the regional talent support networks, which are closely tied to the existing workplaces of the National Pedagogy Institute in the regions and to selected universities. The regional working group for care for the talented will provide a wide offer of activities for cognitively talented pupils using all regional capacities and resources. At the same time, it stems from the specific regional conditions, which are different in each region. There should thus be created [Regional Networks to support talent](#).

MEYS annually supports talented youth and pedagogues teaching talented pupils in several subsidy programmes, e.g. the [Programme of State Support of Work with Children and Youth](#), [Support of Competitions and Shows within leisure-based Education](#), [Programme Excellence of Basic and Secondary Schools](#), and [Support of Talented Pupils of Basic and Secondary Schools](#). Hundreds of projects from organisations and schools, which are working with talented youth are supported by a total amount of 73 million CZK yearly (ca 2 800 000 EUR).

### **State support of Competitions and Shows within leisure-based Education**

Competitions and shows are, according to leading experts in the area of pedagogy, considered as the main tools in the educational system through which a talented child (pupil) can be identified, in various disciplines, age groups, professions, etc. It is a form undemanding of time, resources, and it is most frequently used and respected by the society. The educational system is in its essence based on motivation and comparison, how successful are the pupils in handling the prescribed material or adoption of knowledge, which the pupil acquired outside of the schooling. A system of competitions has already existed for this purpose for more than sixty years.

### **Programme of State Support for Work with Children and Youth**

This takes place annually, and its beneficiaries are institutions working with youth. Innovation is not mentioned explicitly, but it is taken into consideration during the competition for the financial subsidy. For details see [Chapter 1.7](#).

### **SIPON – Talent Support Network**

The Talent Support Network aims to create an environment for systematic care for talented pupils and students through sharing information and best practices, by innovation and systemic proposals, and furthermore to advocate for the interests of participating parties and target groups in the field of policies and to plan the allocation of resources concerning identification, education, support, care and employment of talented children and youth in the Czech Republic.

In connection to the gradual creation of regional talent support networks as key parts of the Talent Support System in the years 2014-2016 the network has progressively left the concept of an information network for target groups (children, pupils and their parents) and now focuses on creation of innovation, sharing information and best practices.

## Talented Children

At the Masaryk University in Brno, in accordance with the state Concept, there is the [Centre for development of gifted children](#). They provide research, support, and consultations for the general public in order to support talented children in the country before the potential of youth can get lost.

## 6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

### National strategy

There overarching national strategy for digital education skills is the [Education Strategy 2030+](#). In the earlier period there was also a governmental strategy called [the Digital Czech Republic v. 2.0](#), which offered overall backing to other partial conceptions, and one of which is also the [Strategy of Digital Education](#)

Digital Learning is one of the objectives (no. 1.4) with emphasis on:

- Digital environment
- Computational thinking
- Multidisciplinarity
- Ensuring the promotion of digital literacy for all pupils
- Supporting the digital competences of all teachers
- Reducing inequalities and preventing the digital divide

### Media literacy and online safety through formal education

The FEP states the 'Informatics and information and communication technologies' (hereinafter 'Informatics') as one of the compulsory areas in regional education.

Informatics is a wide area, which in the Czech FEP covers the area of work with ICT, as well as the area of information literacy and online security, as it is for example in the [FEP for general secondary schools](#):

*'The realisation, respect and alleviation of negative influences of modern information and communication technologies on society and human health to know the means of prevention and protection from misuse and restriction of personal freedom of the human; gaining data from a higher number of alternative sources and differentiating credible and quality information sources from unreliable and poor-quality ones; realisation of basic legal aspects and ethical principles connected to work with information and computer technology with respect to intellectual property, copyright, personal data and principles of correct citation of authors' works' (page 63).*

Another educational area which covers media literacy in the scope of formal education is the cross-sectional topic 'Media education', which, according to the FEP for general secondary schools, should help the pupil in the following areas:

*'To develop a critical distance from stimuli coming from media products (so to develop the ability to receive and process media products with the sense of how they are constructed and with which communication intention they are being offered at the market);*

*To realise the importance of unmediated interpersonal relations (family, partner) and their inner emotional and cognitive dynamics (in many cases contrasting with the stereotypical offer of their portrayal in the media products);*

*To adopt procedures of rational and controlled treatment of symbolic contents; to support free decision making based on critical evaluation of provided information of unequal character, especially decision-making at the level of the civic dimension of living in society and its separation from the consumer's dimension;*

*To learn to evaluate the quality and relevance of information sources;*

*To get the idea about the role of media in the individual types of society and different historical contexts' (page. 79)*

Methodological support is provided by the National Pedagogy Institute, as well as within continuous methodological support of teachers during the implementation of the FEP (within DVPP see [Chapter 6.7](#) 'Support tools for teachers' for details).

For the primary school level, there is since January 2021 revised FEP in the field of ICT. A new key competence - digital - and a new educational field of informatics are being incorporated. Informatics focuses primarily on the development of computational thinking and understanding the basic principles of digital technologies. The digital competence of pupils in individual educational fields of the FEP ZV will develop according to how the development of digital technologies affects their content.

## **Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning**

Following the earlier Digital Strategy, the [DigiCoalition](#) was created. DigiKoalice (Czech National Coalition for Digital Jobs) is an open fellowship of representatives of state institutions, IT companies, ICT sector, educational institutions, academic assemblies, non-profit organizations, statutory authorities of schools, educational institutions and other entities, that wish to contribute to better digital literacy of citizens of the Czech Republic, to increase their chances of succeeding in the labour market with help of their digital skills and a result, improving the competitiveness of the Czech economy.

With the exception of occasional projects financed by various sources and very often the ESF or the Erasmus+ Programme, there is no systematic education of youth workers in media literacy in the Czech Republic.

However, in the field of leisure-based education (according to the Education Act) the youth educators can use the support system of the DVPP for pedagogical workers.

In the field of youth organisations, the Czech Council of Children and Youth, a non-state and independent national youth council, started a project in 2017 supported by the ESF and offering possibilities for further education of employees of youth organizations (no voluntary youth workers allowed according to the national grant scheme). It is up to the youth organisations to decide if media and media safety topics as relevant for their education, and many related courses are in place since the launch of this initiative.

## **Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media**

The area of cyberbullying and other specific online dangers is very explicitly visible within the scope of [primary prevention of risky behaviour](#), which is covered by the [Strategy of primary prevention 2019-2027](#).

This strategy sees children and youth as a target group and introduces among other things evaluation standards for awarding certification to an entity, which wishes to be active in this area. Entities, which were up to now certified by the MEYS, focus among other things on the area of [cyberbullying](#).

Cyberbullying is also explicitly mentioned within the scope of [methodological documents published by the MEYS](#) on primary prevention; the area of online security as such is still missing.

Within the scope of primary prevention, the MEYS also has a [subsidy programme](#).

MEYS has its own [Department of Prevention](#), which deals with methodological support of regional consulting centres, as well as with certification and subsidy programmes. Furthermore, this structure is supplemented by [regional school coordinators of prevention](#) and [methodology specialists of prevention](#) within the scope of pedagogical-psychological advice bureaus.

In 2018, one-year non-investment projects were supported under the Children and Digital Media priority, which aimed to monitor the issue of non-substance online addiction of children, media education or cyberbullying of children and adolescents. The volume of funds for 2018 was set at almost 400 thousand. CZK.

Since 2006 there has also been a non-state organisation called the '**National Centre for Safer Internet**' (Národní centrum bezpečného internetu), also known as '[SaferInternet](#)', undertaking many activities to prevent cyberbullying, help (specifically youth and seniors) victims of cyberbullying and other negative risks posed by the internet and new media. The organisation is cooperating with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other public authorities and runs several projects in the fields of raising awareness-raising and helping. The organisation is also a designated national coordinator of the No Hate Speech Movement in the Council of Europe Youth sector by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The organisation is supported by several public projects from national, regional as well as EU resources. The main initiatives are Day of Safer Internet, Prague Safe online, and European Month of Cybersecurity, and they provide eSafety Label certification for schools.

## 6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

### Information providers / counselling structures

The Czech Republic used to have a National Youth Information Center and the regional network of Youth Information centres, coordinated by the state level. However, since 2020 this was abolished. The main providers and counselling structured about the non-formal education are thus the local or regional centres for the free time and Leisure-based education and also very importantly the youth organizations and NGOs working with children and Youth.

Since 2022 there is a new department for Youth and interlinking of formal and non-formal education within the National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic which is focusing on promoting non-formal education.

The Czech Republic uses the [Eurodesk](#) network, which focuses on information concerning mobilities, and, of course, also non-formal educational activities for young people.

The [Centre for International Cooperation in Education](#), which is the administrator of the Erasmus+ Programme in the Czech Republic also offers information about non-formal educational activities on its [website](#); however, to a considerable degree it is information rather for organisers of such activities than for young people as such. There are several informal networks, especially on social media which promote non-formal education directly toward young people.

The centre publish also a magazine called [Mozaica](#) which is focused on the promotion of international mobility and particularly non-formal learning opportunities.

The main provider of information from the youth sector, youth organisations, youth work, and youth policy is the **web portal** [Adam.cz](#) and a **magazine called Archa**, both managed by the Czech Council of Children and Youth.

### Awareness raising initiatives

In 2017 the [National Conference on Youth](#) took place, which was on one hand part of a mid-term evaluation of the Youth Strategy 2014-2020 and on the other a platform for youth workers, '*who are interested in professional growth as individuals, as well as at the same time in development of the activities of the organisations, in which they work. Its goal is the deepening of competences in the field of youth work, sharing of experience, and networking.*'

Since 1st of September 2018, started a new project of the National Institute for Further Education called "**Interconnecting formal and Non-Formal, including Leisure-based education**". Main goal of the project is to support the cooperation between teachers and youth workers who should **perceive together as partners by the common goal of developing the competencies of Children and Young people**. The project period is 2018 - 2021 and the costs are covered by the EU ESF Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic.

Among the outcomes helping to the promotion of Non-formal learning are e.g. [piloted educational programmes](#) or their wider commented [Methodics](#).

In 2021 several conferences and activities related to promotion and raising awareness about non-formal education were organized by the National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic and NGOs. Closed Round tables to the topic were also organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

## 6.10 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy development

In 2017, the [process of revision and updating of national curricular documents](#) (Framework Educational Programmes) for primary and secondary education was started. Since January 2021 a so-called "small Revision" was agreed to add the digital competence into the Framework Educational Programmes with the voluntary mode of its implementation into the schools in the coming school years. In 2021 the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports together with the National Pedagogy institute established expert groups for the work on the FEP revisions and a clear timeline was agreed by the Ministry. Up to 2023 New FEP should be created and piloted and up to 2026, they should be implemented into primary schools.

There are several points for the wide expert as well as public consultations and the Ministry and the institute have an open and transparent policy on the process.

Following the [OECD Educational Highlights of 2016](#), the big issue in the Czech Republic in 2017 were low salaries of teachers, which are among the lowest within OECD countries. Since the Government undertook several steps to raise the salaries of teachers. However, the negotiations in 2019 were marked with several strikes from many teachers and schools in order to make clear how the increase should be administrated and delivered to teachers.

Since 2020 there is a [new Education Strategy 2030+](#) based on wide expert and public evaluation and consultations process which started in 2019. Its implementation is now the main policy focus. See [details in Eurydice article](#).

### Ongoing debates

The debate about the revision of the Framework Educational Programmes is one of the most important in the educational field. But also other topic as the "middle tier" of governing or supporting the schools are in play. The Ministry of Education started a pilot of the "Middle tier of support" in two counties and the outcomes are under evaluation for the wider national upscaling.

The [Partnership for Education 2030+](#) was created by the main networks of various non-governmental education providers and enablers. They work based on the collective impact principle and discuss models of the implementation of the Education Strategy 2030+, as there is common agreement on the goals. Two main working groups prepare their visions on the implementation of the wellbeing of pupils and students in Czech Education and about the middle tier of governance and pedagogical leadership in the Czech education system. The Ministry and state institutions took the auspices above these initiatives and became active partners and participatory experts in the process.



Many of the actual debates were linked to the impact and coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, closing schools, social distancing and as a new "emerging theme" the issue of the wellbeing of pupils arose from the expert, youth, international as well as national policy perspective.

## 7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Health and particularly also well-being are a **central focus of the public policies** in the Czech Republic, especially public health policies.

There is a [Strategic framework for the development of health care in the Czech Republic until 2030](#), the [National Mental Health Action Plan 2020-2030](#) and the [National Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2020 - 2030](#).

According to the documents little attention is still paid to mental health issues among children and adolescents, both in terms of prevention and treatment, and suicides are still the second most common reason for death by young people aged 15 - 24 years of age.

The state of Czech Young people is not the best in European comparison, **especially in terms of risky behaviour and consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs**; it is rather on the opposite side. (See [Chapter 7.1](#))

However, there are **many systemic attempts at the state level to improve the situation, including the new Act on the protection of health from the harmful effects of addictive substances, which came into force in May 2017 and which strengthens the protection of children and juveniles**.

**New policy and tools were also introduced in 2016 in the field of Sport** and improving physical activity of young Czechs. (See [Chapter 7.3](#))

The public health policy is quite strong in the Czech Republic, and children and Young people are traditionally a dedicated focus group.

Also, the **educational reforms are reflecting the needs, and there are many large-scale initiatives to bring a healthy lifestyle to schools including the issue of wellbeing**. (See [Chapter 7.4](#))

In the field of non-formal and informal education, there are initiatives on health issues as well, however without complex strategic plans on a national level.

### 7.1 General context

#### Main trends in the health conditions of young people

Long-term data about health conditions of children and young people in the Czech Republic are available from the [Institute of Health and Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic](#), and also from international comparative studies such as [HBSC](#) and [ESPAD](#). In 2019 the Palacky University also published the [National report on sport activity of Children and Youth](#).

According to those studies:

The majority of Czech children see their own health and well-being positively. In international comparison, however, Czech Kids are in the lowest numbers in those categories.

In general, **four out of 10 children among all age categories and genders have had an injury**, which needed to be treated by a doctor.

Czech Children **start drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes and marijuana significantly earlier than the international average**. Even if the **trend of**

**consumption is slowing down in recent years**, Czech Children and Young people are still among the highest consumers of these substances among European Youth.

[European Drugs Report on Trends and Development 2018](#) showed that in the Czech Republic there is the highest lifelong prevalence of Cannabis use in Europe (37 %) by students. Up to 8 % of Czech Students reported Cannabis use in the last 30 days. As problematic in the Czech Republic was mentioned also use of Metamfetamine which is the second highest in Europe after Latvia. On the other hand, the use of Heroin is on sinking in the Czech Republic as well as in Denmark. Positive can be seen the lowest rate of the Hepatitis C type by the injected drug users among youth up to 25 years of age but also by the adult population even if there have been new cases in 2016 observed. The supportive programmes for drug users are labelled between low and medium counts in European comparison.

By 15 years old, 20 % of boys and 14 % of girls regularly drink alcohol. Around 30 % of 15-year-olds report repeated alcohol intoxication, which is significantly higher than the international average.

The Czechs' experience with bullying and cyberbullying is significantly lower, but in contrast, Czech Children are on top in fighting in international comparison. However, bullying is also one of the most reported issues for young people through the structured dialogue with youth.

**An overwhelming majority (80 %) of Czech Children are lacking enough physical activity**; however, in international comparison, Czech Children are above average.

According to a 2018 study by [HBSC](#), boys more often than girls play team sports – 58 % vs. 35 %. Children from richer families also play more often than children from poorer ones. 38 % of 11-15-year-olds play sports with their parents at least once a week.

**Overweight is nearly twice as high for boys as for girls.** 15-year-old boys are overweight by 23%. This is similar in international comparison. However, Czech young people 15 years old are significantly more likely to have special diets or do activities for lowering their weight (19 % of boys and 37 % of girls).

Around 50 % of 15-year-olds skip breakfast, which is below the international average. At the same time, **approximately 70 % do not eat dinner with their families, which brought Czech children and young people to the lowest international rating.**

Consumption of fruits is average in international comparison; however, consumption of vegetables is slightly lower than the average (24 % of 15-year-olds).

The vast majority of Czech youngsters clean their teeth at least once a day, which brought them above average in international comparison.

The 15-year-old youngsters are a bit below international average in sexual activity but above average in using sexual preventive means.

More than 40 % of young people (15 and 16 years of age) spend more than 4 hours on the computer during weekdays and more than 53 % during the weekends.

**Around 9 % of 16-year-olds have been gambling in the last 12 months**, nearly 3 % have problems with gambling.

Adolescents aged 13-15 can be divided into three categories in terms of **health literacy**. Almost a fifth of them (18.2%) are at a low level, the largest group of schoolchildren (63.2%) is aware of health issues at a medium level. Another roughly one-fifth of children (18.6%) are very good at gaining information about health, their understanding and use.

For young people aged 15-24 is suicide is the second leading cause of death. In terms of counties with the highest suicide rates, the are Tachov, Sokolov, Česká Lípa and Trutnov, for both sexes. For comparison: the suicide rate in Europe in 2016 was 15.4 suicides per 100,000 inhabitants, above the global 10.6 suicides per 100,000 inhabitants ([WHO, 2018](#)).

For the same period, the Czech Republic's suicide rate was 13.1 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, slightly below the European rate and above the global average ([WHO, 2018](#)).

Children with autism spectrum disorders and other neurodevelopmental disorders are on the rise, behavioural and anxiety disorders are more common among children, and a new and alarming trend is the increasing frequency of self-harm and suicide attempts among adolescents.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures fighting against it hit seriously children and youth population in school as well as out of school environment. Those were documented by several projects such as [Life during Pandemic](#) and by the National Institute of Mental Health. Also the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports initiated several [methodical supports](#) and subsidy schemes to support the mental health of pupils and young people related to education and social re-socialization.

In autumn 2021 results of a survey among school directors on the topic [well being in primary education](#) was published by the Partnership for Education 2030+. Among the trending results were mentioned:

The **term well-being is not a familiar concept among public school principals and superintendents**. A quarter of respondents (27%) have an idea of what it means. Conversely, half (49%) had not heard the term at all.

Nevertheless, after explaining the term, a clear majority of respondents state that its content is understandable and even that they create appropriate conditions for the well-being of pupils and teachers at school. But it should be added that this is mostly a more hesitant "rather yes" answer, which suggests that principals are not so convinced about the fulfilment of wellbeing as a whole in their school.

The basic assessment of wellbeing in education among the representatives of the primary schools involved in the research is positive: they see it as necessary for good educational outcomes for pupils and for the working atmosphere in the school (which are, of course, linked areas) and do not see it as a short-term fashion trend.

## Main concepts

Health and well-being policies are very much **in line with the EU and WHO standards**. The Czech Republic is one of the countries on the top in the care of babies and children, and many international and European standards were inspired by the Czech experience, e.g. European standards on the quality of toys for children up to 3 years of age. Quality care for children is seen in long-term as the best prevention base for young people and adults.

In the Czech Republic, there is a specific healthcare **system of professionals for children and adolescents** so-called 'Praktický lékař pro děti a dorost' (practical doctor for children and adolescents, also a paediatric practitioner). These professionals provide a specialised health care service from the first days after birth up to 18 years of age (inclusive). These professionals have a [particular medical approbation for the child and youth care](#), which is [unique in the European as well as global context](#). However, in 2016, this particular approbation was merged, and in autumn 2017 the Parliament discussed its renewal. According to the [information from the association of these specialists](#), even young students of medicine showed increased interest in the field.

The Ministry of Health wanted to reach the goal of one basic specialisation for children and youth (paediatrics), as there is another one 'children's medicine' (paediatrics, [dětské lékařství](#)). Paediatrics offers the graduates the possibility of being employed only at children's hospitals, but not of having their own practice. It serves as a basis for further children's medical specialisations (e.g. paediatric gastroenterology etc.). The practitioners for children and adolescents are also obligated to perform ordered actions in the sense of maintaining the public health policy – **vaccination, regular examination of children and youth and reporting about the state of health of children and adolescents' population and the education is thus wider in this sense**.

National public health statistics usually publish information specifically for age groups 0-14 years and 15-64 or 15+ years or they use the 5 years intervals. Reporting in various medical fields by doctors is also done in the age group 0-19 years of age.

Public health issues and policies come from **traditional concepts of hygiene**, which refer to conditions and practices that help maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases (as national legislation and the WHO state).

There is a **specific field of Hygiene for children and juveniles** ([hygiena dětí a mladistvých](#)) focused on the public health policies of children and juveniles according to the [Act on Protection of Public Health no. 258/2000 Sb.](#) The field is focused especially on health conditions of children and young people in schools, school facilities, and free time and leisure activities. There is also the [Concept of Safety and Health at work](#), ensuring safe space and conditions for children, pupils as well as workers in schools and school facilities.

An important element of the Czech health policy valid for the whole population, not only youth, is that the *Charter of Fundamental Rights and Basic Freedoms (Art. 31)* within the constitutional order declares the **Right for free medical care** and tools covered by the public health insurance system.

From the educational perspective, the **Education towards Health** is part of National curricula documents, even if the educational field has only limited time devoted within education.

There is **no national definition of well-being** in public policies related to young people. The Educational Strategy 2030+ mentioned these issues in the context of lack of a good relationship towards school, risky behaviour, poor relationships between classmates, infractions of school rules, bullying and cyberbullying, a lack of focus on psycho-hygiene, school relating depression, anxiety, distress and suicidal tendencies.

[Extended definition of wellbeing in education](#) was created by the Partnership for Education 2030+ which in complex reflect cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual sphere of the phenomenon.

## 7.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

#### State actors in health policy

**Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic** ([Ministerstvo zdravotnictví České republiky](#))

The Ministry is the central state authority on health and public health policies.

As of beginning 2022, it consists of [five sections](#): Economics and Health Insurance Section, Legislation and Law Section, Health care section, Public Health Protection and Promotion Section, Communication and Information Technology Section.

There is no special department or unit for youth issues in general. There is only the *Unit on nutrition hygiene, subjects of common use, children and adolescents*, under the Department for the protection of public health.

There are [70 organizations under the direct management or competence of the Ministry of Health](#).

Among those, we can find three state administration bodies, the Inspectorate of Spa and springs, the inspectorate of narcotics and psychotropic substances, and the Chief hygienist.

There are a further 14 regional Hygiene stations responsible for public health issues in regions including the field of hygiene for children and adolescents, University Hospitals,

Hospitals, Children Hospitals, public undertaking at Spas, various institutes, coordination centres, the State Health Institute and the national medical educational institute.

### **Main state Agencies**

#### **The National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) ([Státní zdravotní ústav](#), SZÚ)**

This is a healthcare establishment for basic preventive disciplines - hygiene, epidemiology, microbiology and occupational medicine. Its main tasks are health promotion and protection, disease prevention and follow-up of environmental impact on the health status of the population. [The Institute was established by the Act no. 258/2000, Article 86.](#)

The main activities of NIPH comprise:

- Science and research
- Reference and methodological advice
- Providing expert opinions on the health safety of various products (e.g. cosmetics, food supplements, items of daily use etc.)
- Systematic monitoring of the environmental impact on the population's health in the Czech Republic
- Preparation of legislation in the field of health protection, including harmonisation of Czech legislation with the norms of the European Union
- In the field of health promotion and disease prevention, NIPH concentrates on the most important health problems – epidemiological surveillance of severe infections (AIDS, hepatitis, newly emerging and re-emerging infections)
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle (prevention of cardiovascular diseases and tumours, healthy nutrition, drug abuse prevention)
- The Institute plays an active role in under- and postgraduate training of physicians and other healthcare workers and provides consultations to professionals working in the field

#### **Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic ([Ústav zdravotnických informací a statistiky ČR](#))**

This was established in 1960 and it is an organisational component of the State, its founder was the Ministry of Health.

The National Health Information System (further on 'NHIS') is defined in [Act no. 372/2011 Sb., on health services and conditions of their provision \(Act on health services\)](#)

Administration of the NHIS is delegated by the Ministry of Health to the Institute in accordance with the basic purpose and objective of its activity that follows from the Statute of the Institute.

The Institute is a component of the State Statistical Service (according to the competence act) and performs this activity according to [Act no. 89/1995 Sb., on state statistical service](#).

It cooperates with organs of the State Statistical Service, mainly with the Czech Statistical Office, it secures the connection between NHIS and individual health care providers, and it cooperates with the operators of information systems of other organisations in and out of the health sector.

The Institute will continue to follow the principles of the European Statistics [Code of Practice](#) with the aim of securing the high quality and credibility of European data.

The Institute cooperates with associations of hospitals, associations of physicians, professional medical societies, health insurance companies and other organisations, particularly on precise specifications of the NHIS contents and on the utilisation of the collected data.

On the international level of health statistics, the Institute cooperates particularly with the WHO, OECD, the UN, EUROSTAT and other organisations. The Institute is the official presenter of NHIS data for the Czech Republic.

### **National Sports Agency** ([Národní sportovní agentura](#))

It was established on the 1st of August 2019. It is a central state agency with its own budget chapter for the field of sport.

Since 2021 it is responsible for state financing of sports activities until that is the competence still by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The main aim is to support relevant conditions for sports development and increase the sports activity of Czech citizens with a focus on Children and Youth.

### **The National Council for Sport**

It is a permanent advisory body to the President of the National Sports Agency, within the meaning of the Act on the Promotion of Sport.

It has a total of 21 members, including representatives of athletes, heads of sports organisations and other experts on sport in the Czech Republic.

The mission of the National Council for Sport is, among other things, to assess and submit suggestions for solving long-term current problems in the field of sports environment. The Chairman of the Council is the President of the Agency.

### **Self-governed actors in the health policy**

In the scope of self-governed actors in the health policy, regions and municipalities are out of the state administration's scope and have delegated competencies and responsibilities for the health of their inhabitants.

Further **professional Chambers** are important and specific self-governed actors.

The [Act no. 220/1991 Sb.](#) establishes these Chambers. All autonomous working experts and even employees in fields of medicine, pharmacy, and dental medicine have to be members of these professional chambers according to the Act. All Czech professional chambers in the health system have a dual function - representing the interests of the members as well as having control over them, which is a competence under delegated powers of the state to the chambers.

### **The Czech Medical Chamber** ([Česká lékařská komora](#))

### **The Czech Pharmacy Chamber** ([Česká lékárnická komora](#))

It is interesting is that in 2011 an independent Civic Association 'Young Pharmacists' was created with the goal of changing the setting of the Chamber.

### **Czech Dental Chamber** ([Česká stomatologická komora](#))

Main tasks of the professional chambers:

- Expertise and ensuring professional standards and quality
- Representation of members and advocacy of their rights
- Setting up conditions for creating one's own practice in the field
- Disciplinary proceedings against members
- They are entitled to negotiate the tariffs for public health insurance
- Commenting entities on legal matters in their fields
- Education of members
- Public information activities
- Possibility of protests

## Cross-sectorial cooperation

State administration in the health policy is partially decentralised in Regions, Municipalities with delegated powers of the state, and municipalities (towns, cities).

Regions are responsible for regional health policy (establishing special health facilities, their registration, operation, regional distribution of health services, purchases of specialised medical equipment, etc.)

Municipalities and towns support the development of local medical care, are responsible for the accessibility of the medical care, organise first aid services and other relevant emergency services within the municipality.

There is a strong tradition of the Children's medicine taking care also about young people up to 18 years of age. Children's medicine has a rich system of professional and representatives bodies represented also in state coordination bodies.

Cross-sectorial health-related bodies on the national level are:

- [Government Council for Drug Policy Coordination](#)
- [Government Committee for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Government Council for Safety and Health at Work](#)
- [Government Council for Road Safety](#)
- [Government Commissioner for Health Science and Research](#)

## 7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

### National strategy(ies)

The state strategies in the field of sport are:

'**Strategy to support sport in 2016 – 2025 – SPORT 2025**' by Governmental Decree no. 591/2016

'[Plan of support of sports development 2015 – 2017](#)' and [for period 2018 - 2019](#) by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

'[Health 2020 – National Strategy for Health Protection and Promotion and Disease Prevention](#)' from the year 2014.

There is also the [Act no. 115/2001 Sb. on supporting sports](#).

Since the end of 2005, there is also [Methodology to ensure the safety and health of children, pupils and students](#). It brings standards how the safety of sport and physical activities, especially in school facilities, should be tackled. In 2007 also [Methodical information - playgrounds and gyms](#) were issued to better harmonise the issues around gyms and playgrounds for children and Young people.

Actual issues in sports policy development are discussed in the advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [National Council for Sport](#).

### The Strategy SPORT 2025

The responsible state authority for the implementation is the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. However, practically all other ministries have ascribed co-responsibilities.

The Strategy is overarching to all target groups of the Sports Policy. Children and Young people are one of the main target groups as well as professionals a state representation.

The priorities of the Strategy in relation to children and Youth:

- Stop the decline in the physical fitness of children and youth
- Stop the growth of overweight and obesity in children and youth

- To increase the level of motion literacy
- Reduce the economic participation of families in the sport

The aims are:

- Promote the development of sports clubs, sports, and physical education units
- Encourage mass promotional and motivational sports events (family action)
- Continue to support talented youth programmes in cooperation with sports federations
- Intensify the education system link with the preparation of talents and representation
- Raise awareness of sports for children
- Develop the performance of youth sport regardless of the perspective representation
- Upgrade the system of training of experts in sports and strengthen the mentoring of children
- Develop school and university sport
- Restore and build sports infrastructure
- Develop sports for disabled young people

There are no revisions or updates, as the strategy is rather new and in the first years of implementation since 2016. Action Plans serve to implement the Sports Strategy. Action plans are evaluated for the given period, usually 3 or 2 years.

### **Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people**

The promotion of sport and physical activity among young people is a cross-sectoral issue on a horizontal and even vertical level, where regional authorities are also involved.

Following the implementation of the Sports strategy, several measures are in place. Young people are mostly targeted via the school system. The state also supports theirs out of school activities. On Young people and their support structures are target following subsidy programmes:

#### **Call MY CLUB** ([Výzva MUJ KLUB](#))

This programme is devoted to supporting sports and physical **activities of Children and Young people up to 23 years** of age (with possible exceptions in age limit). It also includes maintenance and operation of sports facilities used by children and youth. The allocation for 2020 was 1 500 000 000 CZK (ca 60 000 000 EUR).

#### **Call TALENT** ([Výzva TALENT](#))

The programme supports young sportsmen and sportswomen especially in **sports listed in Olympic games programmes**. This focus usually on the age **group of 15 - 23 years** of age. Further, it supports basic and performance activities of talented Children aged usually 6 - 15 years of age. It supports the top sports youth centres (vrcholová sportovní centra mládeže), sports youth centres (sportovní centra mládeže), sports centres (sportovní střediska) and sports academies (sportovní akademie). For 2020 the allocation was 900 000 000 CZK (ca 36 000 000 EUR).

#### **Call REPRE** ([Výzva REPRE](#))

This programme supports the state representation in international sports events including the Youth Olympic games. It is **devoted to all aged usually above 15 years of age**. The allocation for 2020 was 720 000 000 CZK (ca 28 800 000 EUR). Young people compete with the whole sports representation population as the nature of the programmes implicate.



## Physical education in schools

Physical education is an obligatory part of the state curricular documents.

There is also a promotional activity '**An hour of additional sport**' ([Hodina pohybu navíc](#)) in the extracurricular educational activities for the elementary schools. In January 2017, 350 elementary schools across the whole country were involved in this initiative. After the Pilot testing of this project finished new ways if the implementation and support were searched in 2018.

[Methodological materials](#) for teachers, schools, and sports trainers were created during the pilot testing.

According to the Strategy SPORT 2025 and the legislation on supporting sports activities, there is also the [Subsidy programme IX. For supporting the organisation of school and tertiary education sports](#) which can support up to 100 per cent of the project costs.

There is also a top-level initiative of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports to support the involvement of the 'swimming preparation' into school activities. Swimming at elementary schools is quite a traditional activity since the 1960s. Currently, it is up to the school director to decide whether it will be done at that particular elementary school and included in the school curricular document for the obligatory school attendance or not.

The ministry has launched a [Subsidy call for 2020](#) to motivate elementary schools to include swimming in their scope of activities. Also there is already an announcement of the [results](#) of the development program for 2020.

## Collaboration and partnerships

Collaboration and the formation of partnerships between schools, youth workers, health professionals and sports organisations to promote youth fitness and physical activity among young people are to some extent promoted under the pilot testing of an initiative 'An hour of additional sport' ([Hodina pohybu navíc](#)). In the scope of the programme, the sports trainers and youth workers with physical activities are attending schools in the extra-curricular activities to promote various sports activities among the pupils and also to motivate them to participate in sport in their free time.

In 2015, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports launched a [call for the financial support](#) of the implementation of the initiative. The overall allocation for the initiative was 23 mil CZK (ca 855 500 EUR). From this allocation, 3 million CZK were devoted to the development of the methodological materials and testing and 20 million CZK for the involved schools – up to 10 million CZK for the year 2015 and up to 13 million CZK for the year 2016.

## 7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

### National strategy(ies)

There are several strategies tackling the issues of healthy lifestyle, healthy nutrition, sexual health and prevention of risky behaviour. Some of them are focused on the whole population, mentioning children or young people as one of their target or vulnerable groups, or there are some specific strategies and action plans targeting only children or young people.

[Strategic framework for the development of health care in the Czech Republic until 2030](#)

[National Mental Health Action Plan 2020-2030](#)

[National Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2020 - 2030](#)

[National Strategy on Primary Prevention of Risk Behaviour of Children and Youth for the period 2019-2027](#) (For details see [Chapter 4.3](#))

## [Education Strategy 2030+](#)

### Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

There are several activities supporting healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition among young people.

1. [Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports no. 282/2016 Sb.](#) on food requirements for which advertising is admissible and which can be offered for sale in schools and school facilities. Advertising and selling of unhealthy foods are forbidden in schools and school facilities. The [novelisation of this Decree from 2018](#) mitigated strong limits on food requirements.

2. **Schools for Health** - The National Institute of Public Health is a national coordinator of the World Health Organisation '**School for Health**' project, which is a complex initiative not only to teach about health but to transform the school life into a healthy one. Adopted by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 1992. In 2014, 300 Czech schools were members of the national network.

3. **Healthy cities (and regions)** – based on a WHO initiative. Interested cities and regions are implementing the [Agenda 21](#) with a focus on the primary prevention activities in the public space at all scopes from social and psychological to environmental and healthy, and transparent public management focused on including young people (directly targeting). There is the [National Network of Healthy cities](#) as a supportive and coordination actor.

4. **The Centre for Public Health Promotion** is a centre at the National Institute of Public Health and it is running several activities directly targeting young people – at schools, in public or via other channels such as doctors, or media such as mobile apps. Within the Centre, there is the Department of Hygiene of Children and Juveniles.

- **Programmes for disadvantaged groups and Socially Excluded Localities 'Jablíčko' (Apple) - lo'í phabajori** (in Roma language) supporting the healthy eating habits of young Roma.
  - More than 1 500 children were interviewed from 2015 to 2017 across the country.
  - The programme continues.
- **'The game against AIDS'** – interactive programme for children and young people.
  - Target Group: students 14+
  - Aim of programme: prevention of HIV and STDs, social and legal aspects of HIV+ persons, epidemiological situation in the country and in the world
- **'Healthy balls'** – oncology prevention with physical activity
  - Target group: students 16+
  - The aim of the programme: motivation to regular self-examination of testicles and breasts
  - Learning of self-examination on models
  - Mobile application 'Hands on breasts' ([Ruce na prsa](#))
  - Mobile application 'Guardian of balls' ([Hlídač koulí](#))
- **'Loono'** - self prevention of disease
  - Prevention of oncological diseases - teaching people how to self-examine breasts and testicles the right way and regularly to detect any issues at an early stage.

- Prevention of cardiovascular diseases - teaching people how to detect cardiovascular diseases at an early stage, but also what to do when they witness someone having a stroke or a heart attack.
  - The truth about... - educational lectures and panel discussions, where they focus on disproving various myths about health, prevention, and the human body.
  - **'How (Not) to Become An Addict'**
    - Prevention of smoking, alcohol, media, advertising, bullying, assertive techniques...
  - **European Immunisation Week 2016**
  - **Healthy School Canteen Project ([zdravá školní jídelna](#))**
    - Provides advice, recipes, and guides for healthy nutrition. Inspire with presentation of the best eateries, consult with nutrition experts and receive the prestigious certificate healthy school canteen from experts in nutrition and hygienists, at this moment 49 schools and 192 school canteens are involved.
  - **Brief interventions** – motivation techniques for nurses and teachers to intervene with relevant patients
  - **World No Tobacco day 2017**
    - Literary and art competition for schools (included DVD spots)
    - Virtual Gallery 2015
  - **Life is sweet without added sugar**
  - **Have a nice journey for health**
  - **Health-promotion materials and posters for young people**
5. **Fruits and vegetables in schools**, the EU project is implemented in the Czech Republic since the school year 2009/2010.
- The main aim is to fight against child obesity with the target group of ISCED 1 educational level pupils.
  - There were 2883 schools participating in 2009/2010 (71% of total) and in 2016/2017, 3863 elementary schools already participated.
  - The [Agricultural Intervention Fund \(SZIF\)](#) coordinates the project.
  - The project is in the competence of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

6. **Milk in schools** is also an EU initiative, with the same structure as Fruits and vegetables in schools. However, the difference is in the target group, which is elementary, and secondary schools. The aim is to contribute to healthy nutrition and to create healthy eating habits of children and youth by increasing consumption of milk and dairy products. Moreover, another aim is to raise the consumption of dairy products.

Since 2017, following the Decision of the European Parliament, the EU projects Fruits and vegetables and Milk in schools are more integrated as one initiative.

## Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

Health education and educational goals related to health and healthy lifestyles are part of the [state curricular documents at ISCED 1, ISCED 2 as well as ISCED 3 level](#) (Framework Educational Programmes - for details see [Chapter 6](#)).

Some updates of the curricular documents linked also to healthy lifestyles education were made in 2013.

[At ISCED 1 and 2 level](#), among many cross-curricular subtopics, there is a main educational field no. 5.8 'Human and Health'.

At ISCED 3 level ([G](#)), there are many cross-curricular subtopics linked to health as well as the main educational field no. 5.7 'Human and Health' with two educational fields of study: 'Education for Health' and 'Physical Education' (Sport). In [Vocational education](#), the educational field is usually called 'Education for health'.

Education for health in curricular documents:

It has a practical and application character in education, in the context of science and social science education and with the use of specific health information. It is primarily about a deeper understanding of risky and non-risky behaviours (in partner relationships, parental roles, contact with addictive substances and other harmful substances, threats to safety, etc.) for all-around active support of personal as well as community and global health (in everyday life and in extraordinary events).

The teachers' methodological portal [RVP.cz provides methodologies](#) and activities for health education and promotion within the scope of the curricular documents. There are also examples of the practice of various schools, of how they tackle the needs related to Education for health from the Framework Educational Programmes.

### **Experimental verification 'Motion and Nutrition'**

In the period 2013-2015, according to the educational legislation, there was an official experimental verification process (pilot testing as well) of a [programme aiming at changes in the movement and nutrition regime of elementary school pupils](#).

Inclusion of all the results and the [overall revision of the state curricula](#) is planned with its implementation until 2025.

### **Hygiene station activities**

The regional Hygiene station of Pardubice region is running the '**Education for Health**' ([Výchova ke zdraví](#)) campaign, bringing the topics to schools in its region. Other regional Hygiene stations are running their own activities in this field and in regards to schools in their regional area.

There are also some **private activities for healthy lifestyle within schools** and among pupils e.g. 'Surely healthy school' ([Skutečně zdravá škola](#)), 'Healthy 5' ([Zdravá 5](#)).

### **Sex education and personal relationships education**

Sexual education and personal relationships are integrated into [curricular documents for ISCED levels 1, 2 and 3](#). At level 1 and 2 it is part of the ethical education and at level 3 it is part of the Education for health.

ISCED 1 level:

**Goal:** the pupil applies graceful behaviour to the other sex, and focuses on safe ways of sexual behaviour among boys and girls at a given age

**Content:** partnerships, marriage, parenthood, the basics of sexual education - family, family relationships, partnerships, personal relationships, ethical aspects of relationships, ethical aspects of sexuality, sexual and other abuse.

ISCED 2 level:

**Goal:** the pupil respects the importance of sexuality in relation to health, ethics, morality and positive life goals; understands the importance of restraint in adolescence and responsible sexual behaviour.

**Content:** sexual adolescence and reproductive health - reproductive health, sexuality as part of personality formation, restraint, premature sexual experience, promiscuity; problems of pregnancy and juvenile parenthood; sexual identity disorders, protection from sexually transmitted diseases, sexual crimes, forms of sexual abuse of children.

ISCED 3 level:

**Goals:**

- The pupil is oriented in personality, emotions, and needs, and applies responsible and ethical approaches to sexuality.
- Pupil considers the possible consequences - focuses on the issue of reproductive health in terms of responsibility for future parenthood and knows the rights of each individual in sexuality and reproduction.
- The pupil can outline the consequences of the violation of criminal law sections related to sexually motivated crime, hidden forms of individual violence, and derive personal responsibility from them.

**Content:**

- changes in adolescence - physical, mental and social; searching for personal identity
- focusing on the future, searching for a partner
- experiencing emotional states and deeper emotional relationships, ways of self-reflection and emotional control
- reproductive health care - factors affecting fertility
- preventive inspection; education associated with the abuse of nicotine, alcohol, drugs and sexually transmitted diseases
- methods of assisted reproduction, its biological, ethical, psychosocial and legal aspects
- models of mutual behaviour related to ethical and psychosocial aspects of partner and sexual life - responsibility, self-esteem, respect, decision-making
- sexual and reproductive health risks - promiscuity, premature termination of pregnancy
- sexually motivated crime - pornography, paedophilia, child prostitution, trafficking in women
- hidden forms and degrees of individual violence and abuse - bullying, brutality, neglected and abused children (CAN)

Inclusion of all the results and the [overall revision of the state curricula](#) is planned with its implementation until 2025.

**Peer-to-peer education approaches**

Peer to peer approaches in education for a healthy lifestyle are used as one of the methodologies by many providers of health education, youth groups or youth organisation. However, there is no state initiative or programme directly promoting this methodology as the providers are often using it. They are also promoted by the [Education Strategy 2030+](#).

The programmes of the National Institute of Public Health are also using peer-to-peer approaches in specific projects and campaigns, e.g. within the programme 'Healthy Balls', students of medicine and other volunteers are helping with the implementation and realisation of the programme.

Many activities are also organized by the voluntary association of [Young Doctors](#).

**Collaboration and partnerships**

There is no top-level initiative directly supporting collaboration and partnership among various actors in the field of health education, however, the political strategies are supporting these principles and the project organisers can decide whether to involve partners or not. National strategies for the third decade foreseen creating of such collaboration when the infrastructure and coordinated base will be prepared.

## Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people

Apart from the **school initiatives, projects and educational content, and the above-mentioned activities and campaigns of the National Institute for Public Health**, there are no specific state activities in this regard.

**Doctors** for children and adolescents or their practitioners provide the individual counselling and support to children and young people.

However, there is a **strong segment of the private market and NGO sector** providing support and counselling targeting children and young people or the overall population.

In the regions and on a **local level, Regional and local Authorities** or Regional hygiene stations may launch special campaigns and programmes.

## 7.5 Mental health

### National strategy(ies)

[Strategic framework for the development of health care in the Czech Republic until 2030.](#)

The strategic framework has three Implementation plans as followed:

- Protecting and improving public health
- Optimising the health system
- Promoting science and research

The strategies, Implementations plans and objectives related to mental health are steered by the [Government Council for Mental Health](#) and the Ministry for Health. Its task is to prepare and implement the [Mental Health Action Plan 2030](#).

The Governmental Council as well as the Ministry for Health implement the strategies and the [psychiatric care reform](#).

### Improving the mental health of young people

Young people were involved in the discussion about mental health in [discussion within the Structured Dialogue with youth](#).

On the 20th of December 2019, the Ministry for Health announced a [new Programme to support the development of new services in the field of care provided by the multidisciplinary teams of mental health for children and adolescents](#) as a part of the Psychiatric care reform.

The aim is to provide multidisciplinary support in health, social and pedagogy services in ambulances and in terrain. The initiative and fund call is supported by the European Social Fund

The Ministry of Health operates also [Mental Health Support Program](#) which is devoted to the whole population including young people.

There are [3 psychiatric children's hospitals](#) in the Czech Republic, which were founded by the Ministry of Health and are in its competence. According to the [2015 annual report of the Institute of Health Information and Statistics](#), the capacity is 250 beds for young people up to 18 years of age. There are also 18 psychiatric hospitals for adults with special sections of 188 beds for child patients. For comparison, in 1997 there were 5 psychiatric children hospitals with 405 beds.

The National Institute for Mental Health published a short **brochure** with basic information named '[Trauma in Childhood and Adolescence](#)'. Since 2017 also operates within the institute [working group on research on mental health of Children and Adolescents](#). It runs

several research projects as well as prepare educational programmes for schools. Its representatives are active also within the National Curricular reform (see chapter 5).

### **Supporting mental health by pupils in schools (web portal)**

- in 2021 National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic launched a new web portal [dusevnizdravi.edu.cz](http://dusevnizdravi.edu.cz) to support schools, school directors, teachers and parents in mental health issues.
- There are 4 main sections related to:
  - How to support mental health in schools (quick interventions and tips what to do directly in school)
  - Contacts for the help services - Tips for school psychologists, educational counselors and prevention methodologists.
  - Videos and Podcasts about various topics related to mental health in schools.
  - Section specifically for parents about the relevant topics and tips

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in relation to Mental Health Issues of young people and resisting the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic issued also the [Recommendations on distance learning and mental health](#).

### **Campaign and project 'Můj Mindset' (My Mindset)**

- Started in 2016 and focuses on medical and health secondary schools
- Focused on de-stigmatisation of mental health among secondary school pupils within the health sector.
- NGO project with support among others of the Ministry of Health and National Institute of Mental Health.

### **Campaign 'Nevypust' duši' (Do not let go of the soul)**

- Started in summer 2015 as an initiative of two students and became a NGO later.
- Promotes topics of mental health in the society, special focus on young people and their mental health struggle linked to studies.
- Initiative inspired by the UK.
- Supported by the National Institute for Mental Health.

### **Subsidy Schemes of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to support for resisting the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

- [Summer Camps](#)

- [Together after COVID](#)

- [subsidies for activities in the field of primary prevention of risky behaviour and promotion of mental health in schools and educational institutions for 2022](#)

- Mental Health became also one of the priorities in the annual [subsidy scheme for NGOs in the field of work with children and youth](#).

## 7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

### Policy framework

#### Medical risks

In order to early detect any medical health issue and risk, the Public Health Insurance system is in place following the [Act no. 48/1997 on Public Health Insurance](#).

The scope of what should be examined by obligatory preventive examinations within the system, is given by [Decree of the Ministry of Health no. 70/2012 Sb. on preventive examinations](#).

There are **obligatory preventive examinations by doctors** for children and adolescents (up to 19 years of age) and adults (19 years and above), by dentists and by gynaecologists (only for women).

These preventive examinations are **free of charge** for the persons (provided by the Public Health Insurance). The obligation to attend is given in the [Act no. 48/1997 on Public Health Insurance](#) art. 12.

The defined **health examination framework** is as follows:

- in the first year of life 9x a year (of which at least 6x in the first 6 months and of which at least 3x in the first three months of the life)
- at 18 months of life
- at 3 years of age and since then every 2 years (minimum interval between the preventive examination is 18 months)
- the '19 years old' examination needs to be done before the person is 19 years of age and it is an exit examination from the care of the Practitioner for Children and Adolescents. Then the Young person needs to register at the Practitioner for adults and the preventive examination are still at 2yearly intervals.
- in the case of dentists the preventive examination is up to 18 years of age 2x a year, after reaching 18 years, it is 1x a year, and for pregnant women, it is 2x during the pregnancy period
- in the case of gynaecologists, it is at the end of the obligatory school attendance and from 15 years of age 1x a year

If someone is diagnosed with a disease, beyond this preventive framework, he or she is ordered within the dispersive care covered by the public health insurance as well. The dispersive care system provides continuous professional medical care including regular monitoring, check-ups and healing visits by specialised doctors, in case of children by specialised children's professionals (in hospitals as well as out of hospitals).

#### Health risk factors in the environment

In order to **early detect risk factors in the environment for children and young people**, the field and system of the '**hygiene of children and adolescents**' within the scope of the protection of public health is regulated in the [Act no. 258/2000 Sb. on Public Health](#) including the control mechanisms and the inspection system for detection (the system of Health Institutes and Hygiene Stations).

The field of study Hygiene of children and youth works from the premise that different age groups are characterised by specific peculiarities of physical and mental development, and it studies the influence of environment, living and working conditions on healthy development and health status of children and youth and identifies risk factors of disease. Apart from the public system, it is also a special field of study in academia in medical sciences.



## Social risks affecting health

In order to **detect social issues and unsatisfactory conditions**, social-legal protection of Children is anchored in the [Act no. 359/1999 Sb. on the social-legal protection of Children](#)

The protection is in the fields of:

- the child's right to a favourable development and proper education,
- protection of the legitimate interests of the child, including the protection of his or her assets,
- restoration of disrupted family functions.

In order to detect potential risks early, any person is entitled to contact the parents of children and young people to inform them. Doctors for Children and Adolescents as well as teachers are obligated, if they detect anything, to inform respective public authorities (municipality department, police, etc.)

## Stakeholders

If any **doctor or teacher** has any suspicion or hints of other health risks and issues from other areas, he or she needs to take action and to inform the proper Authority.

The **National Health Institute, Regional Hygiene Stations, and Hygiene Stations in cities with delegated powers** responsible for the respective local area monitor public health issues affecting (young) people.

The [social departments of municipalities](#), so-called OSPOD (Odbor sociálně právní ochrany dětí) monitor social health issues linked to social-legal issues of Children.

In case that children (up to 18 years), or anybody else, are smoking, drinking alcohol or using any other illegal drug in sports grounds for children or mostly devoted or accessible to children, the **groundsmen** should tackle the issue and if necessary contact the respective Authority.

**Any person can give an impetus to the relevant public authority** if there is a justified reason, and they should inform the parents about the relevant issue.

## Guidance to stakeholders

Guidance to **teachers** is given by the system of preventive measures.

The publicly available web portal for this system is [www.prevence-info.cz](http://www.prevence-info.cz) where teachers and the public can find relevant and current information.

Some aspects are covered by the [Decree on the provision of counselling services in schools and school counselling facilities](#) no. 72/2005 Sb.

Regarding Drugs and Substance abuse, the web portal [www.drogy-info.cz](http://www.drogy-info.cz) is available for all stakeholders.

For professionals in social-legal protection matters, the web portal [www.ospod.cz](http://www.ospod.cz) is available.

For professionals, their profession channels are also in use – counselling, further education structures, etc.

## Target groups

The main target group is Children, i.e. persons up to 18 years of age. There are no other special sub-groups in relation to age. Practically, the student status is also depending on the age (26 or 28 years in case of PhD. studies).

## Funding

**The state budget** fully covers services specifically targeting children and adolescents up to 18 years of age. Some streams are delegated for this purpose to regional and local actors as well.

**The Public Health Insurance System - the Public Health Insurance Companies,** cover the Medical examination and care. **Individual public insurance payers** finance such provisions, according to the legislation. For **Children, Students** (and other respective groups not linked to age), the Public Health Insurance is **paid by the state budget**.

For specific projects within the system, other resources can be used, especially EU Structural Funds, regional, local or even private sources.

## 7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

There are **no special top-level initiatives to make health facilities more youth-friendly**.

However, we can consider a special system of children and adolescents practitioners and children's hospitals as well as children's departments in hospitals as a youth friendly environment.

The only Initiative, which is focused only on babies, is the [Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative by the WHO](#), strongly promoted in the Czech Republic.

Since 2020 in regard to COVID-19 Pandemic Impact and coping with, the issues of rights of the Child in the hospitals became publically active.

## 7.8 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy development

#### National Strategy for Health Protection and Promotion and Disease Prevention

The new [Governmental Council for Mental Health](#) met for the first time on 18 December 2019. Its task is to **prepare and implement the new [Mental Health Action Plan 2030](#)** which should be implemented in coming years as well as the [Strategic framework for the development of health care in the Czech Republic until 2030](#).

On the 20th of December 2019, the Ministry for Health announced a **[new Programme to support the development of new services in the field of care provided by the multidisciplinary teams of mental health for children and adolescents](#)**. The aim is to provide multidisciplinary support in health, social and pedagogy services in ambulances and in terrain. The initiative and fund call is supported by the European Social Fund. Three of the multidisciplinary centres were already open for operation.

In 2020 the new [National Sports Agency](#) began to be fully operational in order to further work on improving the social, legal and funding issues related to sport field including the sports at schools and universities as well as outside of the formal education framework.

An amendment to the Act on Medicinal Products and the Amendment to the Act on Public Health Insurance came into force in 2020.

The Ministry of Finance, as the Intermediary of the Health Program financed from EEA funds 2014-2021 in cooperation with the Ministry of Health - Program Partner, announced on 15 May 2020 a call for [grant applications](#) for individual projects in the field of mental health promotion for children and adolescents. The allocated amount for the call is CZK 134,302,597. The aim of the call is to support risk reduction, escalation and chronification of mental problems in children and adolescents, through the implementation of activities aimed at prevention, early detection and diagnosis, effective intervention in

subclinical and clinical forms of mental problems in children and adolescents, measures to strengthen and the systematisation of cooperation between mental health care professionals and mental health awareness activities for minors.

## Ongoing debates

The wellbeing of young people makes a part of the new [Educational Strategy 2030+](#). It is highlighted by the [Partnership for Education 2030+](#) project partners, as it is discussed in one of its two working groups.

The comprehensive definition of wellbeing in education was created and its further promotion and discussion about possible implementations are held.

The reform of mental health and psychiatric care will continue steered by the Governmental Council on Mental Health. The main focus is seen by deinstitutionalization, more multidisciplinary and preventing children and youth mental health issues within education and practice of health and social services.

## 8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

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Culture is an important part of young peoples' lives in the Czech Republic. According to the data (see [Chapter 8.1](#)), **young people are more creative and active in cultural issues, compared to the older generation.**

Young people have **very good conditions for access and guidance on quality cultural activities and gaining artistic and cultural competences**, and thus foster their creativity as well. There is a **strong and qualitatively high system of free-time Elementary Art Schools**, where young people can learn to play musical instruments, act, dance or paint. In the Czech Republic, this education is on high level - because of the scope and density from big to many smaller municipalities and because of the quality of expert artists, professionals and teachers involved in the system.

There is also a very **robust system of various national competitions, shows and exhibitions for young people** performing any artistic activity interlinked from local, through regional to national and international level.

**Despite high decentralisation and freedom in cultural policies and expressions, there is traditionally whole-state cooperation and coordination and support in the field of cultural activities for young people**, in the Czech Republic, usually called aesthetic or artistic.

Formal education emphasizes development of cultural and creative competence and more recently also to entrepreneurial skills.

Non-Formal education providers are very strong in the cultural field. **Nearly every public cultural or memorial institution has special programmes for young people** or provides discounted or free entries.

### 8.1 General context

#### Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

However, young people are an important target group of cultural policies of the Czech Republic, there are **no national longitudinal data monitoring youth participation in cultural activities**. However, there are several studies or surveys on ad hoc bases or in wider academic research.

Czech Statistical Office cooperates on the data collection on culture with NIPOS (National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture), the National Library and Ministry of Culture

as in State Statistical Service. However, young people are not a special focus in this service. [Experts from the Statistical Office](#) declare that the statistics in culture is one of the most complicated and problematic. [Official cultural statistics focus only on professional activities](#) and non-professional activities, thus mainly including youth cultural activities are not monitored officially

The Czech Statistical Office provides relevant data on cultural participation only within a special module added to the EU-SILC national implementation ([Výběrové šetření Životní podmínky](#)). This basic module was realised in 2006 and 2015.

Based on the [data provided from 2015](#) we can assume for the age cohort 16-30 years that:

**Around 5 to 6 % of young people could not afford to participate** in basic cultural activities such as visiting the cinema, theatre or cultural heritage sites in last 12 months. For sports events, it was a bit more, around 8 %.

Around 9% of young people go to the cinema, theatre, cultural heritage sites or sports events at least 1 to 3 times a year.

**Approximately 17 % of young people visit the cinema more than 3 times a year, compared to the theatre at 9 %, cultural heritage sites at 7-8 % and sports events at 11%.**

**No interest in such activities was shown by only about 2 % for the cinema, 6 % for theatre and cultural heritage sites and around 5 % for sports events.**

In terms of sports events, we see that with higher ages, the interest lowers. In the age group 16-20 years only around 3 % were not interested, in the age group 26-30 it was up to 6 %.

The [survey also showed](#) that with higher age groups, the interest in active cultural participation lowers. In the **age group 15-24 years, 39 % performed some cultural activity at least once a year. For persons over the age of 45, it was below 30 %.**

Active learning of cultural activities such as playing a musical instrument, painting, acting or dancing [within the scope of Elementary Art Schools](#) (see details below in [main concepts](#)) is rising – **in school years 2010/11 there were around 235 000 pupils of these schools. In 2015/16 it was already around 247 000, in 2018/19 around 253 500 and in 2019/20 254314.** Considering that the total number of children and young people was rather on the decline, we see that a higher proportion of children and young people is interested in art education. There is also easier access of young people to creative learning and culture.

According to the [State Cultural Statistics](#), we can presume that **fewer young people (students) are visiting museums and galleries**, as there is a rise of persons paying full entry fees contrary to those with discounted tickets (however, the discounts are monitored in total for all entitled groups including students, seniors, handicapped etc. and young people not studying will also be also paying the full entry fee if they do not have a special youth discounts card).

Trends in the cultural theatre infrastructure for children and youth based on the [State Cultural Statistics](#) between years 2012-2018:

	2012	2016	2018
Repertoire of plays in theatre for Children and Youth	870	1 044	875
Number of performances on a home stage and touring in the Czech Republic	9 744	11 267	10 891

Number of Premiers for Children and Youth

196

173

151

## Main concepts

Cultural policies and their concepts in the Czech Republic are harmonised with the international framework, especially of UNESCO, Council of Europe and the European Union. There are several main concepts, which are country-specific. Among these are Public Cultural Service, Cultural and Creative Industry, the system of Elementary Art Schools and the idea of aesthetic activities of children and youth.

### Veřejná kulturní služba (Public Cultural Service)

This is a term used since the 1960s but with a vague definition given in the [Act no. 203/2006 Sb. on some kinds of support for culture](#) as follows:

Public cultural services are services consisting of making artistic creation and cultural heritage available to the public and in the acquisition, processing, protection, preservation and disclosure of information that is used to satisfy the cultural, cultural-formative or cultural-educational needs of the public.

### KKO – Kulturní a kreativní průmysly (Cultural and Creative Industry)

KKO is a new concept in the Czech Cultural Policy since 2014, which focuses on the economic and social value of creativity and cultural innovations.

The official [definition of KKO by the Ministry of Culture](#):

'KKO includes activities which are based on human creativity, skills and talent. They have the potential to create wealth and jobs, in particular by using intellectual property. They include activities or products of public, non-profit and market subjects, regardless of the type and the method of the financing entity, who performs them. KKO contributes with its added value to other sectors of economic activity and can be a source of technological and non-technological innovation. KKO has many other positive impacts on society and the particular individual.'

### Estetické aktivity dětí a mládeže (Aesthetic activities of children and youth)

The cultural sphere (materialised with state organisation NIPOS – for details see [Chapter 8.2](#)) operates with the concept or rather the idea of aesthetic activities of children and youth within aesthetic education. It is rather a traditional term used and supported by the state before 1989. However, in the cultural sector, it is a strong concept, even if there is no official definition.

## 8.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

The central state authority in the field of Culture is the [Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic](#). Creativity linked to innovations and applied industry is also within the competence of the [Ministry of Industry and Trade](#). Education for creativity and culture is also in the competence of the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#). The institutions don't focus on youth and culture specifically in this combination, but youth issues in culture are part of their policies and topics they are dealing with.

### Main actors

Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic

The [Ministry](#) is divided into 4 sections, among which is a section for live arts and for cultural heritage.

There is no separate section of any department focusing on youth issues in culture; however, youth is one of the relevant target groups in most of the related policies.

Specifically to educational activities in culture, there is a Department for educational activities in culture.

The [Ministry of Culture has established a Commission of the Minister's Deputy for education in culture](#) in 2017, which has, among other things, debated the recognition of the profession 'Educator in Culture'. Since 2016, a related profession 'Museum Educator' was a recognised qualification in the National Register of Qualifications.

Ministry of Industry and Trade

The [Ministry](#) is divided into 9 sections, among which the sections for Business, Digital Economy and Consumers are in relation to creativity and innovations.

The Ministry is responsible for 12 public Agencies, relevant among which are [Business and Investment Development Agency - CzechInvest](#) and [Czech Agency for Business and Innovations](#).

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

The [Ministry](#) is a Central state authority in the field of Education, for details see [Chapter 1.4](#) and for educational policies see [Chapter 6](#).

Main public Agencies relevant in the field of Culture and Creativity

National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture ([NIPOS](#))

NIPOS was created in 1991, by the transformation of earlier structures dating back to 1905 to the 'Svaz osvětový' (Cultural Enlightenment Union). That Union associated the most significant Czech unions, associations, clubs and other subjects, that that undertook enlightenment, cultural and educational activities in a variety of ways and in different areas. The main task of the Union was to coordinate activities of the organisations associated with the Union, to provide organisational help, and later to provide educational and methodological activities.

The basic mission of NIPOS is the support of cultural development. In particular in the field of culture-social and creative citizen activities both local and regional, in view of non-professional culture activities and copyright matters, information service and expert consultations for both authorities and employees of local government, state administration, civic associations, legal and physical entities and other subjects operating in the field of local and regional culture. It is namely on the basis of systematic use of theoretical and practical findings of analytic and research activities in culture, of their own research and with the use of professional knowledge in various branches of cultural activities. The professional activity of NIPOS focuses on gathering and analysing knowledge about the general role and position of the public culture services in the field of the socio-economic development of regions.

There are several departments with a particular focus on young people:

ARTAMA is a department for non-professional artistic activities with a strong focus on children and youth cultural activities.

CIK Department (The Centre of Information and Statistics on Culture) provides the statistical service for the entire area of the culture under the rule of the Act no. 89/1995 Sb. about the government statistical service

KAM Department (Strategy and Planning in Culture) was established in July 2012. The department analyses, researches, and makes expertise and strategic documents in the field of culture.

The Editorial Office is the editor of the journal '[Místní kultura](#)' (The Local Culture).

The Arts and Theatre Institute ([Institut umění – divadelní ústav](#))

The Arts and Theatre Institute (ATI) is a state-funded organisation founded by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. It was founded in 1959 as the Theatre Institute.

In 2007, the institute changed its name to the Arts and Theatre Institute (ATI).

The ATI collects objects and work relating to theatre, processes and provides access to them, pursues research, initiates and participates in international projects, and publishes scholarly work. The ATI is also the headquarters of the Czech Office of the EU Culture Programme ([Czech Cultural Contact Point](#))

National Heritage Institute ([NPU](#))

The National Heritage Institute (NPÚ) is the biggest state-funded organisation under the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. Under current laws, it is entrusted with a number of expert tasks related to state heritage conservation.

NPU aims to develop an enthusiasm for historic buildings and other types of cultural heritage in both children and adults. In order to help people them find a path to them and grow to love them, NPU creates learning programmes for both schools and individuals, one-day workshops and year-long courses during which we acquaint people with heritage and its care.

The state heritage institutions usually also provide discounts and special programmes for children and youth.

National Institute of Folklore Culture ([NULK](#))

NULK is the main state organisation focused on traditional folklore culture, its research, promotion at home and abroad, conservation and development. It plays an important role in formulating state policies in this field and cooperates with international organisations like UNESCO or CIOFF.

The important part is also public education and education of children and youth.

Political bodies relevant for culture and creativity

Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Physical Training

This is a [committee](#) within the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. The committee deals with government control, especially in the fields of education, science, culture and sports.

Committee on Education, Science, Culture, Human Rights and Petitions

This is a [committee](#) within the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. *'A fundamental task is to contribute to the development of scholarship and science because to a great extent, conditions for such development are created by legislation. Senators cooperate with educational and scientific institutions of all levels and the bills are debated together with citizens at the constituencies. A new dimension for such work has been created by the new territorial reform so communication with regional administrations will be very important for further activities of the Committee.'*

General distribution of responsibilities between top-level and regional/local authorities

Regional and especially local self-governing authorities have their own competencies in cultural issues. There are also some delegated competences of the state that need to be followed and implemented by the regions and municipalities; however, during the transformation in 1990 the role of the state in culture was diminished and individuals were placed at the centre.

In the field of culture, regional and local authorities should follow the state cultural policy, however, they can also develop their own cultural policies, if it is not against the state cultural policy. Most of the regions have developed their own regional cultural strategies. In the case of municipalities, those affected by cultural issues usually do as well.

## **Cross-sectorial cooperation**

There is a long historical tradition of cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports - extracurricular children's and youth aesthetic

activities, education of relationship to art and cultural heritage, art and vocational education. Cross-sectorial cooperation is thus in some ways ensured on several levels from the top level within the Government, down to cooperation on projects and relevant activities.

In 2021 Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Culture signed a common [memorandum about cooperation in the field of cultural education](#).

The memorandum aims to more practically implement earlier initiatives for coordination of the educational and cultural policies of the Czech Republic.

The [State cultural policy 2021 - 2025](#) aims among others also for strengthening the creative education and use of digital and creative assets of the Czech cultural sector within education. It also wants to support the issue of youth unemployment due to the wider use of opportunities of Creative Culture Industry.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the National Pedagogical Museum and the J. A. Komenský Library, the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has launched an experimental evaluation project 'Educational Programmes of Memorial Institutions in Schools'](#). The experiential pedagogy project was ongoing in cooperation with 72 schools in the academic year 2017/2018. The project allows schools to cooperate with memorial institutions, libraries, galleries, castles and chateaus managed by the National Heritage Institute. A [conference reflecting](#) its results was organised on 15. 10. 2018 and a second round of the experimental evaluation was also launched for the academic year 2018/2019.

## 8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

### Existence of a national strategy

There is **no specific National strategy on creativity and culture for or of young people**. However, this topic was **one of the strategic goals of the Youth Strategy til 2020** (for details on Youth Strategy see [Chapter 1.3](#)) and young people and their potential for culture and Creative Cultural Industry is recognized as well in the [State culture policy 2021 - 2025](#).

As main strategic documents in the fields of culture and creativity, there are:

[State culture policy 2021 - 2025](#)

The state culture policy mentions young people several times as the relevant target group of these policies, especially in relation to artistic and aesthetic education. Opposing to the earlier Strategy 2015 - 2020, the position of young people in the state cultural policy is more targeted and young people are not only seen as a resource for culture, but also as an important driver and target for cultural and creative activities, and cultural educational activities.

### Scope and contents

[State culture policy 2021 - 2025](#)

There are six strategic goals:

Goal 1: **Increasing accessibility and accessibility of culture** corresponds to the combination of strengths in the form of comprehensive state support for the cultural creative sector and as an opportunity, especially given the high public interest in cultural participation and the new technologies and practices that enable it.

Goal 2: **Effective care of cultural heritage** builds on the strengths of systematic protection and maintenance of cultural heritage responding to the current threats of inadequate funding, climate change, technological obsolescence and the merely local dimension of some areas of cultural heritage.



Goal 3: **Live arts development** uses the opportunities in the form of the active cultural creative sector, demand for cultural participation, dense cultural infrastructure and the possibility of synergies in public support for cultural creative sector, to progressively address weaknesses in the form of the poor legal environment, ineffective set-up of support instruments for cultural creative sector and insufficient support for skills and networking, including internationalisation.

Goal 4: **The development of the cultural and creative industries (CCI)**. The form of CCI development is based on the same principle, where the large pool of talent, the innovative potential of CCIs and successful examples of internationalisation lead to a reduction of weaknesses, e.g. in the form of little consideration of the economic benefits of CCIs to date.

Goal 5: **The broader role of culture in the Czech Republic** focuses on exploiting opportunities for cooperation within public administration. Culture cuts across many areas of society and cannot be confined to a single ministry. The aim is to achieve synergies in the development of the cultural creative sector and other sectors, including Education, employment, environment and others.

Goal 6: **Transformation of the Ministry of Culture** is the last and key objective for the implementation of the first four objectives of the state policy. It is about transforming the Ministry to avoid the negative impacts of weaknesses and external threats. A crucial pre treasure is to increase the capacity of the MoC to be able to promote the wider role of culture and effectively support the whole CCS.

## Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the Implementation of the State Cultural Policy. The connections in education are in the co-responsibility with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, based on the common memorandum of cooperation from 2021.

## Revisions/updates

The new State Cultural Policy 2021 - 2025 was built based on the analytical and consultation activities evaluating the impact and SWOT of the previous state cultural policy 2015 - 2020. The analytical part worked heavily also with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the culture in the state. These lead not for prolonging the previous state policy concept but creating a new framework. Otherwise, it has been expected that based on the evaluation the framework from 2015 could be working well for the whole decade till 2025.

## 8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

### Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

There are no specific national initiatives facilitating young people's access to cultural environments by removing linguistic, financial, time and geographical constraints in the sense that the youth work does. The national policy focuses on equal access to culture for all individuals. Various disadvantages are targeted directly from the perspective of the disadvantage and not the perspective of a social group of youth. General supportive measures are on national as well as mostly on the regional and local level and are the responsibility of individual organisers of cultural activities.

As statistics show, see ([Chapter 8.1](#)), young people are participating more in cultural activities in comparison to adult and senior sections of the population.

Reducing obstacles, that is **creating possibilities for participation in cultural life for young people can be seen in educational activities, programmes, competitions and contests for Children and Young people specially organised by professionals as well as non-professionals**. Within the concept of [non-professional art and its support](#) there are also the **aesthetic activities of Children and Youth**.

From the amount of the state support within the programme of Non-professional art, we can see a small decline in the support of aesthetic activities of Children and Youth:

	Subsidy programme for Non-professional artistic activities in CZK (ca. EUR)	Sum of support to Children´s and Youth aesthetic activities in CZK (ca. EUR)
2014	36 241 926 (1 343 000 EUR)	2 385 000 (88 300 EUR)
2015	36 558 257 (1 354 000 EUR)	2 352 000 (87 100 EUR)
2016	38 380 293 (1 421 500 EUR)	2 127 000 (78 800 EUR)

Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for the purposes of mid-term evaluation of the Implementation of the Youth Strategy 2014-2020. EUR calculations made by authors of Youthwiki using the exchange rate in respective years.

There is a [coherent and interlinked decentralised system of shows and exhibitions from local to national level](#). It is a robust system with quality activities of non-professional artists. Many of those activities are limited only to young people but not all; they can attend higher levels and thus new opportunities are opened for the non-professional artists. At the same time, it helps facilitate contact between the active people and stimulate the quality of peer-to-peer as well as professional education and sharing good practices and artistic values of living arts. In the field of theatre and film the foundations of this system were laid in the 1930s.

### Elementary Art Schools

The easiest guided access to artistic education and activities is via the [system of Elementary Art Schools \(Základní umělecké školy, ZUŠ](#) – for basic details on the concept see [Chapter 8.1](#)) as a special formal and professional educational system in the leisure time, based on the voluntary application of the child or their parents, or a young person. Within these schools, professionals (artists, artists with pedagogy approbation) teach and work with individual youngsters. **Young people also have opportunities for collective artistic cooperation in various artistic groups, music bands, dance groups, theatre ensembles, chamber plays, individual performances, youth orchestras etc.** For each of the study fields (musical instruments, painting, theatre, dance, youth orchestra, etc.), **national competitions under the auspice of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports are organised, also with regional, local and often even school competition rounds.**

In the [school year, 2016/2017](#) 248 524 children and young people participated in this system of artistic education, roughly 10% of the youth population. There is a higher interest and more pupils have joined in each of the last several years. **In the school year 2018 /2019, the number of young participants raised to 253 545.**

In total, there are **496 such schools in 2019**, founded mostly by municipalities (240), regions (196), private sector (55), churches (4) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (1). The total number is slowly increasing as well in the last years.

The education is partially paid by the young people (or their families) themselves, but most of the expenses are covered by the founder of the school and state and public transferred resources. **For young people from an economically disadvantaged background, there can be also remissions on the school fees.** From this perspective, it is a very accessible option for young people. On the other hand, there is a logical barrier of accepting only pupils based on basic talent exams or artistic predispositions, which however are on a reasonable level and make sense in the whole concept and context of individual work with professional artists and art teachers.

There have been [studies](#) that children and young people participating in ZUŠ are usually also further consumers of (higher) cultural events.

Heritage sites often provide student or often youth discounts, which reduce obstacles for young people to participate in public tours at state and public heritage sites.

## Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

Information on cultural events and opportunities is a decentralised field in the Czech Republic.

Regarding state channels, Young people can gain information via the system of schools (see [Chapter 8.5](#))

Information on aesthetic activities of children and youth is provided by [NIPOS-ARTAMA state Agency](#)(about shows, exhibitions etc.).

Otherwise, there are many private sources, regional and local authorities' channels, media coverage on culture for the whole population which are used by young people as well (magazines, web sites etc.)

Relevant initiatives

Week of artistic education and non-professional activities

A [promotion week](#) organised by NIPOS since 2013 and supported by the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Partners are the National Institute of Education and Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

Every year there are more than 200 registered activities within the week.

Every year, printed matter is created for promotion. Promotional materials are distributed through NIPOS contacts to libraries, museums, galleries, theaters and other means. They are also sent to registered participants who show interest in them. The project coordinator also seeks media promotion. Promotion and communication with the public are key activities we have been working on continuously since the 1st year with the intention of targeting national media.

ZUŠ OPEN

[ZUŠ OPEN](#) is a private awareness-raising project at the whole state level. The Magdalena Kožená Endowment Fund and the Association of Elementary Art Schools organise it. It is a whole state event for Elementary Art Schools in the public space. The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports supports the project financially, as do other private donors.

Information about organization of ZUŠ OPEN were in 2020 distributed by Český rozhlas (public service broadcaster), also reports are every year published by several news sources.

## Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

There is a [System of artistic and aesthetic education](#) providing knowledge of cultural heritage among young people. Formal and non-formal education mediate to some extent knowledge of cultural heritage. Pupils learn of that in subjects like history, art etc.

[The National Heritage Institute \(Národní památkový Ústav, NPÚ\)](#) runs [methodological centres](#) and [provides educational activities](#) (for the whole public and young people and school collectives as well). The centres provide space for concentrated research into a particular theme, and at the same time allow research findings to be presented and transferred to other specialists and the public, most frequently in the form of exhibitions, lectures and workshops.

The Institute also operates national heritage institutions and buildings such as castles, chateaus etc. There are special discounted entry fees for students and very often for young people as well. Children usually do not need to pay entry fees, or special family prices are in place. Visiting heritage sites is a very popular and traditional free time activity of Czech society which is also seen by the very high density of state and public sites which are open

to the public and which organise regular tours as well as many additional activities, festivals, thematic days, night tours, costume tours, children's days etc.

## 8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

### Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

There are several educational spheres related to acquiring cultural and creative competences: There is Framework Educational Programmes 'Rámcový vzdělávací plán' ([RVP](#)) that forms a generally binding framework for the creation of school educational programs for schools in all fields of education in pre-school, primary, elementary art, language and secondary education.

- Formal school system and National Curricular documents – Framework Educational Programmes
- Elementary Art School system (for details see this chapter and [Chapter 8.4](#)), have their own Framework Educational Programmes
- Leisure-based and Interests Education, have their own Framework Educational Programmes
- Non-formal Education, without state Framework Educational Programmes

Cultural competences are developing systematically through [arts education](#) and aesthetic education and also many other related and similar approaches, such as entrepreneurship and creativity education (see [Chapter 8.6](#)) and others.

Formal school system

**Creative activities** ([tvůrčí činnosti](#)) are the basis of general education in obligatory and optional content. They help gain and develop a sum of creative and cultural competences.

#### Basis of educational content

Art and music education is obligatory in schools as separate subjects.

##### Art Education

Elementary schools

- Development of sensory sensitivity
- The application of subjectivity
- Authentication of communication effects

Gymnázium (specific ISCED 2 form)

- Image signal systems
- Visual art systems

##### Music Education

Elementary schools

- Vocal activities
- Instrumental activities
- Music and movement activities
- Listening activities

Gymnázium (specific ISCED 2 form)

- Production
- Reception and reflection

##### Performing arts and communication

- The artistic process and its development
- The role of the subject in the artistic process
- The role of communication in the artistic process

### Optional content includes dramatic education, film/audio-visual education dance and movement activity education

**Pre-school education** – Art, music, movement and drama activities are implemented under the five Educational areas (Child and his/her body, the child and her/his psyche, the child and others, the child and the society, the child and the world).

**Elementary schools** – The area of art and culture is one of the nine educational areas. It includes educational fields of music education and art education. Educational content areas of art and culture are in the form of school subjects included in education as a required component in the years 1-9 of elementary school (1-4 year of eight-year and in 1st and 2nd-year of six-year grammar school). Drama, Film/Audio-visual education and Dance Education are included in the Additional educational disciplines. Their educational

content can be implemented at the level of school education programmes as an additional optional teaching subject, course or module or integrated into other subjects.

**Gymnázia** – The area of art and culture is one of the nine educational areas. Educational disciplines in the Arts and culture are Music and Visual Arts. These fields are included as a mandatory part of the training in the 1st and 2nd years of the four-year cycle (6th and 7th-grade of the eight-year cycle, and the 4th and 5th year of the six-year cycle). The student chooses one of the mandatory fields. Part of the educational content of Arts and culture is a topic that integrates the arts and communication, the content of which is mandatory for all students. Subjects coming from the area of art and culture can be included in the upper grades of the Gymnázium, and it is possible for the students of these subjects to undertake the final leaving exams (maturita). Drama and Film/Audio-visual are included in the scope of supplementary educational disciplines. Their educational content may be implemented at the level of school education programmes as an additional, optional teaching subject, course or module or integrated into other subjects.

**Conservatory** – provides the level of education in vocational artistic education in music, drama and dance field. Prepares students for professional careers in the arts as performers, teachers in Elementary Art Schools, etc., or to study at universities with an artistic focus or art faculties.

**Secondary vocational schools, lyceum and vocational school** – Depending on the type of expertise of the education, cultural competences are incorporated either in training directly in the art (art and applied art), or pedagogical education (secondary school and Lyceum), or as so-called Aesthetic education as a general basis for exploring art and culture and for the strengthening and deepening of knowledge of this area acquired in primary school (mainly from literature and in general cultural review).

**Higher Education Institutions with artistic focus or faculties of education** – Professional artistic and cultural education. Graduates are to succeed in artistic professions (performing artists, artists, designers, composers, conductors, actors, etc.) or as teachers of artistic disciplines in different types of schools.

### Leisure-based and Interests Education

Leisure time centres, school play-centres and school clubs help further develop cultural and creative competences. Youngsters interested in cultural activities can attend special courses or undertake their own projects and activities with the support and guidance of an educator. These centres are not part of formal education.

### Non-formal Education

Most, if not all, public cultural institutions are providing educational activities as one of their regular or project activities. Museums, galleries, theatres, libraries and other memorial institutions usually also have special cultural programmes for children and young people. Chateaus, castles and other cultural and cultural heritage institutions usually provide special educational programmes or organise special events or festivals with educational elements for children and young people and for school and out-of-school youth collectives.

**Základní umělecká škola (ZUŠ, earlier also known as 'Liduška' – 'Lidová škola umění', 'Elementary Arts School')**

ZUŠ is a special kind of school according to the [School Act no. 561/2004 Sb.](#) within the [system of art education in the Czech Republic](#). Artistic Education is overarching literacy applied at all levels of education.

The system of ZUŠ is considered by [experts of Research Institute of Education in Prague](#) and by [many artistic professionals](#) as unique in the world in relation to the scope and density of the network in the country, structure and its interconnection to the system of art education.

ZUŠ provides the basics of artistic education in music, art, dance and literary-dramatic fields. They do not provide a level of education; however, the pupils are certified as in traditional schools (grades and word evaluation, certificate every semester - 'vysvědčení'). Students are accepted to the study of the relevant discipline based on proven prerequisites (preparatory study) or talent exams (study at I., and II. degree levels and adult studies). Studying a given degree in the artistic field is completed by a final exam, which may take the form of a graduate performance or exhibition of artwork.

ZUŠs provide education on 4 levels:

- preparatory school lessons
- basic studies of the 1st (7 years) and 2nd levels (4 years)
- studies with an extended number of school lessons (for talented pupils)
- adult education

Elementary Art Schools can also prepare pupils for education at secondary art schools and at conservatories or for studies at universities focusing on artistic pedagogical activities.

As other schools, also ZUŠs also educate according to the [Framework Educational Programme \(FEP\) for Elementary Art Schools](#). Each school needs to prepare its own School Educational Programme based on the FEP as an individual curricular document.

For more info about Elementary Art Schools see [Chapter 8.4](#).

Also, youth organisations and youth work are paying attention to cultural development and creativity with many of their activities, depending on the art, activities and focus of those organisations. We can find cultural summer camps, special music, art, dance, theatre projects and activities, and creative activities are usually the base of all the work with Children and Youth in the Czech Republic. Each of those organization has its own approach, statutes.

## **Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields**

### Teachers' informal education

There are general systems of supporting teachers in all fields, and culture and creativity are not the exception. Among the most important are the methodological and sharing national-wide portal [RVP.cz](#) and the system of further education of teachers (DVPP). For details, see [Chapter 6.7](#).

As the teachers and educators in Elementary Art Schools and Leisure-time centres are considered as teachers according to the Educational Act, they can also participate in the DVPP.

### Educators and youth workers

As the teachers and educators in Elementary Art Schools Leisure-based and interest education are considered as teachers according to the Educational Act, they can also participate in the system of further education of teachers and the [RVP](#) portal also has sections for their activities.

For other forms of Youth Work, there is no state centralised system of further education for youth workers and it is up to each (youth) organisation to develop their own strategies, which is quite common.

Between years 2019 – 2023, the Czech Council of Children and Youth carry out an EU-funded project 'Šablony' to support the improvement of the quality of non-formal education. One of the ten thematic areas is dedicated to cultural awareness and expression - creative expression, fine art and music, dance, dramatic art, literature and audiovisual art.

There is also an annual nationwide Mutual Exchange of Experiences for youth workers and volunteers and culturally and creatively-oriented courses are also included.

Professionals in the cultural sector (e.g. artists, managers of cultural institutions, curators...)

Further education of adults depends on their own activity and interest in the education or the activity and support of their employers. There are opportunities to attend courses organised by educational institutions, universities, private actors and experts.

The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS) also organises educational seminars and other opportunities such as conferences etc.

Also the NIPOS provides 3x a year a [bulletin called 'Kormidlo'](#) ('Rudder') about high-quality events, shows and workshops in all fields of aesthetic activities of children and youth throughout the country.

It focused on fields of:

- children's and youth theatre
- recital and drama
- stage dance
- dance folklore art
- children's and high school choir singing

**For young artists up to 35 years of age, it is possible to apply for a [scholarship](#) at any professional arts institution at home or abroad with the aim of realising some artistic creation.** These scholarships from the Ministry of Culture are for professionals but there is also an opportunity for non-professionals.

**Scholarship are available in the field of:**

- Professional art
- Non-professional art and traditional folk culture
- Creative scholarships in the field of literature

## **Providing quality access to creative environments**

There are several top-level initiatives to support quality access of young people to creative environments:

### Elementary Art Schools

The education is partially paid by the young people (or their families) themselves, but most of the expenses are covered by the founder of the school and state and public transferred resources. **For young people from an economically disadvantaged background, there can be also remissions on the school fees.** From this perspective, it is a very accessible option for young people. On the other hand, there is a logical barrier of accepting only pupils based on basic talent exams or artistic predispositions, which however are on a reasonable level and make sense in the whole concept and context of individual work with professional artists and art teachers.

### Aesthetic activities of children and youth

The cultural sphere (materialised with state organisation NIPOS – for details see [Chapter 8.2](#)) operates with the concept or rather the idea of aesthetic activities of children and youth within aesthetic education. It is rather a traditional term used and supported by the state before 1989. However, in the cultural sector, it is a strong concept, even if there is no official definition.

## National system of competitive shows and exhibitions

There is a [coherent and interlinked decentralised system of shows and exhibitions from local to national level](#). It is a robust system with quality activities of non-professional artists. Many of those activities are limited only to young people but not all; they can attend higher levels and thus new opportunities are opened for the non-professional artists. At the same time, it helps facilitate contact between the active people and stimulate the quality of peer-to-peer as well as professional education and sharing good practices and artistic values of living arts. In the field of theatre and film the foundations of this system were laid in the 1930s.

NIPOS and its **Department ARTAMA**, currently oversees 23 national competitive shows and exhibitions, of which fifteen are preceded with preliminary competition rounds on the lower administrative level. For the other shows and exhibitions, the selection process is by others, by expert commissions.

Most of them take place every year. Four are biennial and one is triennial.

National system of competitions (see [Chapter 6.7](#))

## 8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

### Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

Formal education

For [International Standard Classification of Education \(ISCED\) 1 and 2 level](#), national curricular documents (Framework Educational Programme) **do not involve creativity as a separate key competence**. The category of creativity is involved in the field of competences for problem solving and the field of competences linked to work. Through the work competences, pupils should be able to adapt to various work conditions. Entrepreneurship is involved in work competences in relation to developing the entrepreneurial thinking of pupils.

For **ISCED 3 level**, Gymnázium type (general education) is **creativity directly involved** in the field of personal and social key competences. **Competences for entrepreneurship are a separate key competence field** connected, among others, to critical evaluation of risks and the skill of bearing the risks and responsibilities.

For Vocational Education and Training, creativity and entrepreneurship are nearly invisible, there is not paid much attention to these. However, the similar contents are partially tackled by other fields such as problem solving and competences for employability and entrepreneurship activities.

**At all levels of education (ISCED 1 – 4)**, there is also a **cross-cutting topic of the 'Human and the World of Work'** where creativity and entrepreneurship can be tackled.

**Creative entrepreneurship** is seen as a specific concept and as a non-transferable skill, contrary to creativity and entrepreneurship. It could be tackled within the crosscutting topic or by relevant educational programmes linked to Creative and Cultural Industries (Concept KKP – for details see [Chapter 8.1](#)).

**Career Counselling** at schools also [works](#) with creativity and entrepreneurship competences and pupils can thus gain individual support.

**Teacher support** is within their system of Further Education of Pedagogical Workers. The National Institute for Education offers [methodological](#) support brings basic knowledge about the possibilities of supporting entrepreneurship, creativity and initiatives that can be used. That includes [inspiring examples from professional experience](#) and [educational support](#) (further education courses for pedagogical staff focused on entrepreneurship) and [guidelines on entrepreneurship education](#).



Non-formal, informal learning and youth work

There is **no central top-level policy to support creativity, entrepreneurship and creative entrepreneurship in Non-formal learning or youth work.**

### **Supporting young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors**

There are no central top-level initiatives focused directly on young people in order to support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors. Young people can use general schemes and initiatives for the general public e.g. by the [Technical Agency of the Czech Republic](#), [Czechinvest](#) and its project [Support of Start-ups](#) (that support startups and innovative entrepreneurs who bring new thoughts, ideas and technologies) or [Arts and Theatre Institute](#) with its initiative [Creative Czechia](#) (Kreativní Česko) with the possibilities of [favourable loans from the EU Funds](#). The aim is to support the growth of the cultural and creative industries through soft loans with EU support.

## **8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies**

### **New technologies in support of creativity and innovation**

There are not yet any specific initiatives focused directly on young people in this field.

There is methodological support in the scope of implementing the Strategy of Digital Education that includes among other things the pillar 'Support for integration of technologies to schools', which contains the following areas of methodological support in the area of digital technologies:

- 6.3 Support of ICT methodology specialists and their work;
- 6.4 Methodological support of integration of digital technologies into teaching and school life;
- 6.5 Expert and methodological support of development of infrastructure of the digital environment of schools for the founders and management of schools;
- 6.6 Creation of a network of ICT methodology specialists on a regional, or alternatively municipal, level.

For media literacy and use of media by young people see [Chapter 6.8](#).

### **Facilitating access to culture through new technologies**

There are not yet any specific initiatives focused directly on young people in this field.

For media literacy and use of media by young people see [Chapter 6.8](#). or [New technologies in support of creativity and innovation](#).

For the general population, there is a vision of supporting the development of an eCulture within the Strategical Documents on Culture – enable the use of cultural content for new scientific knowledge by converting it into electronic form, introduction of a mandatory copy of electronic publications and preservation of national cultural heritage created in electronic form.

## **8.8 Synergies and partnerships**

### **Synergies between public policies and programmes**

In general, policy programmes need to comply with the main policy strategies, priorities and tasks of the public policies, action plans and similar strategical policy documents. Usually, there are two ways of synergy. Firstly, there is a programme or activity already ongoing and its continuation or further support is enhanced by adding it to strategical

documents. Secondly, there is a political priority of a proven or lobbied need in the field and it is proven within the robust process of strategy creation. Since there is a political priority in a strategic document and a responsible administrative unit, it needs to work on the implementation, which may finish in creating a new programme or initiative and if possible by involving relevant other actors in partnership.

The creation process of certain policy strategy is usually facilitated by meetings of experts and representatives at preparatory roundtables, conferences, expert groups etc., which enhance the synergies. Before the Strategy goes for discussion and approval to the government, it needs to fulfil the inter-sectorial commenting procedures and settlement of the comments in order not to have discrepancies among sectors, actors and state policies.

Usually, there is no publicly available information about the exact processes, unless they are stated in respective documents or its explanatory report or accompanying analysis documents.

In the field of promotion of creativity and cultural entrepreneurship, there is no available public information.

### **Partnerships between the cultural and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers**

There are no central top-level policy, initiative or guidelines directly promoting young people's creativity and capacity for innovation through partnerships. This does not mean that there are no such partnerships. Many companies, schools and school facilities, public authorities at all levels, youth work providers, NGOs and other actors are joining common or partnership initiatives on an official, non-formal or on project level. Usually, it is a matter of local-level or vertical or horizontal coordination of respective issue or problem.

There is general support of partnerships especially within the [Programme LEADR](#), [Local Agenda 21](#). European Funds (ESIF) are probably the most significant promoters of partnerships. Programme LEADR focuses mainly on new forms of improving the quality of life in rural areas, new forms of strengthening the local economic environment and job creation. It also deals with the evaluation of natural and cultural heritage. There is also strategic vision of Local Agenda 21 development in the Czech Republic until 2020. The goal of the agenda is transparent and efficient public administration.

### **Example of partnership project with youth cultural element**

An example with the involvement of a cultural field, aesthetic education for young people, is the [project called 'Úsvit'](#) (dawn). It is a project of partnership on improving the situation in the housing estate 'Chanov', which is one of the most notorious and symbolic socially excluded areas with a very high proportion of Roma population. The project was in a way a pilot for similar activities in the future. Its aims should have improved security and safety in the housing estate, prevent criminality, create conditions for new methods of education of Roma children, social work in the Roma community, sustainability of the public property, and to improve the image of the Roma community in the area and among other citizens of the city.

The specific objectives of the project were:

- Strengthen the responsibility of individual Roma and their surroundings for their lives, for the environment in which they live and raise their children, and for the reputation of the Roma community among other residents of Most
- Engage the Roma themselves to improve the quality of life and security situation in Chanov
- To improve relations between the inhabitants of the Chanov housing estate and the other inhabitants of Most.
- Create a know-how for similar projects

- Quantify financial costs that can be used for orientation to implementers of similar projects

Financial costs were directed to social prevention, educational activities and situational prevention. Other implemented follow-up projects focused on drug prevention, criminal prevention and leisure-time activities, including homework preparation and tutoring, which were implemented in cooperation with non-profit and charitable organizations.

## 8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

### Fostering equality and youth involvement through cultural activities

Cultural activities as a tool for social inclusion is not yet a widely-recognised concept at the public policy level. [The State Inclusion strategy 2014-2020](#) mentions mainstreaming social inclusion in many areas, including culture, however, it does not bring any concrete actions in this field. Similar is the situation within the youth sector. The strategy seeks to integrate the socially disadvantaged into many areas of life, including cultural life. The aim is for them to have the same opportunities to participate in (among other things) cultural life, for that new tools need to be found.

The Czech Office of the EU Culture Programme already published a booklet '[Artists for society. Examples of cultural projects in the field of social inclusion](#)' in 2010. Some of these were focused on children and young people – in hospitals, in difficult life situations, Roma youth, etc. There is no newer similar initiative since then.

In 2019 a conference Culture connects was realized. The main topic of the conference was the need for long-term and systematic connection of culture to the social, educational or health spheres. By them culture is perceived as an opportunity to overcome obstacles in the mutual understanding of individuals and groups of the population.

There are no central, top-level policy initiatives in this. From the state cultural institutions, there are many local initiatives from museums, libraries, and theatres where we can foster equality in their educational or youth activities, programmes, exhibitions etc.

There is a [Museum of Roma Culture](#), created initially by Roma Activists and it became a budgetary organization of the Ministry of Culture since 2005. It runs several activities for young people and young Roma. There was a project **Social and educational activities of the Museum of Roma Culture 2005–2019** – program aimed at supporting the education and personal development of children and youth, especially from the Roma community. They work with clients from families who cannot sufficiently support their children on their way to education. Since 2020 tutoring of socially disadvantaged children is run by [DROM, romské středisko](#).

From bigger public initiatives, there is a project [Inclusion with the National Technical Museum](#), implementation time 2018 – 2021. The goals of the project are four new educational programs designed for pupils preparing to enter the labor market. The programs are inclusive and focusing mainly on students with physical, hearing and visual impairments. In addition to a special program at the museum, students are also taking part in excursions and internships with employers.

### Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

There are some individual initiatives used at all levels, usually local or community levels, and by various subjects, and also varying in quality and impact.

From the activities of the state, the [Museum of Roma Culture](#) is very significant. This museum has strong educational and social work programmes, including for children and young people from their surroundings, which is one of the socially excluded areas. The museum help the majority understand the history and culture of the Roma minority. At the same time it provides support to the Roma community and young individuals with

education, preparation for schools etc. They organize workshops for the general public and school groups under the guidance of exhibiting artists. Also they organize leisure time activities for children like drawing, dancing, landart, beatbox or collage, screen printing technique and paper engraving technique.

There is a Low-threshold facilities for Children and Youth as one of the social services and youth work activities for Children and Youth.

Another famous project with involvement of many public partners including the Ministry of the Interior and the Police is the [project called 'Úsvit'](#) (dawn). It focuses on improving the situation in the housing estate 'Chanov' which is one of the most notorious, and a symbolic socially excluded area in the Czech Republic with a very high proportion of Roma population. The project was in a way a pilot for similar activities. For the activities with children and young people, aesthetic education was used as well, and young people participating in cultural activities were also supported in their inclusion in society and planning their own life path.

## 8.10 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy development

In 2017 the [process of national curricular documents revision and updates](#) was started. Between 2022 - 2023 new national curricula framework should be created, after that piloted, accompanied by "model documents and activities" for schools and in the period 2024 - 2026 it should be implemented in all schools.

Within the revision process, lots of emphasis are put on the use of ICT and modern technologies and that is the only field that was reformed and put in pilot testing and comprehensively put in force by the so-called "small revision" in January 2021. The fields of culture and cultural competencies, however, were diminished within the "small" revisited curricula 2021 and how it will be worked out is not known yet. Wider support of cultural creative education and use of new technologies for cultural expressions are expected.

The realization of the common memorandum on cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is expected to be further exploited and discussed in order to bring practical common initiatives.

### Ongoing debates

The most recent topics in the culture field are linked to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Culture in the Czech Republic, professional and non-professional was hit very much since March 2020, as due to the need for social distancing and diminishing people-to-people contacts most of the opportunities for living culture were closed by the Governmental decisions. Cultural institutions are adapting to the new situations as many offer part of their programme online and try to bring new models, how to bring culture to the public and young people.

Recent information about the situation in [Culture and Covid-19](#) are on the website of the Ministry of Culture.

The implementation of the new State Cultural Policy 2021 - 2025 is in a play of which one of the priority goals is also to transform and reform current support and execution of culture, cultural and creative industries and also new ways of educating about and for culture within the formal education.

## 9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD

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Youth international and global cooperation is **mostly a domain of civil society, individual approach, activity and attitude** to the role and life of a person in the society and in the world. The state is providing support within various public policies and their execution, however, **there is no special comprehensive "Youth and the World" policy.**

Global youth cooperation is based on the general legal and human rights framework, access and individual activity.

The approach could be marked with the motto 'think globally and act locally' with all the connotations and various interpretations of that motto – to think in a global perspective and to act according to that at home or to help those who are not so fortunate abroad. These ideas are also seen in many activities, especially of civil society organisations and initiatives related to young people. **The solidarity aspects** are strengthened due to the pro-active implementation of the European Solidarity Corps programme.

There are two main concepts in the Czech Republic linked to global issues education in the widest meaning of the concept of education. Those are **'EVVO' – 'Environmental education, upbringing and enlightenment'** also known as environmental education and **'GRV' – 'The global development education'**. See details in [Chapter 9.1](#). More about the awareness of global issues you can find in [chapter 9.4](#) and about green volunteering in [chapter 9.5](#).

Regarding transcontinental youth work (details in [chapter 9.6](#)), there is no special concept or support from the state level as it is the domain of (youth) NGOs. More specific measures are taken in regard to international cooperation, youth exchanges and cross-border volunteering where the **EU role and its programmes play an important part.** The Czech Republic was not a colonial country, and thus international thematic, educational and humanitarian supports are more in common.

There are **several interstate agreements and contracts on cooperation** with states from other continents in particular fields of international cooperation.

Annual Global development education support schemes are in play mainly for NGOs and since 2016, there is the [UN Youth Delegate Programme](#), offering the opportunity for two selected youth representatives, based on the open public annual call, to exchange their views within the General Assembly of the United Nations and respective UN youth forums, such as the Youth ECOSOC Forum and similar UN Forums for Youth.

### 9.1 General context

#### Main concepts

The concept of 'Youth and the World' is rather artificial in the policy sphere of the Czech Republic. The actions in this field are mostly a domain of civil society, individual approach, activity and attitude to the role and life of a person in the society and in the world. It could be marked with the motto **'think globally and act locally'** with all the connotations and various interpretations of that motto – to think in a global perspective and to act according to that at home or to help those who are not so fortunate abroad. These ideas are also seen in many activities, especially of civil society organisations and initiatives related to young people.

There are two main concepts in the Czech Republic linked to global issues education in the widest meaning of the concept of education. Those are 'EVVO' – 'Environmental education, upbringing and enlightenment' and 'GRV' – 'The global development education'.

## The 'EVVO' Concept

In the Czech Republic, there is quite a long and specific tradition of 'ecology education' or 'environmental education' linked to global, local and environmental issues in the widest sense of the environment. Since the end of the 1990s on the policy level they have spoken about '[EVVO – Enviromentální vzdělávání, výchova a osvěta](#)' ('Environmental education, upbringing and enlightenment').

EVVO is also anchored in legislation, concretely in the [Act no. 123/1998 Sb. on the right to information about the environment](#). According to Article 13, the public authorities from the state to the local level are obligated to support environmental education. Further, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is also obligated to ensure that EVVO in the sense of the sustainable development education, is in the basic national curricular documents and that the state supports the pedagogues in their education in the field of protection of the environment and sustainable development.

[The goal of environmental education in the Czech Republic](#) is the development of competences (within this concept in the sense of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) required for environmentally responsible behaviour. It is behaviour that is within a given situation the best option for the current and future status of the environment. Environmentally responsible behaviour is perceived as responsible personal, civic and professional action regarding the treatment of nature and natural resources, and consumers behaving and actively influencing their own surroundings with the use of the democratic process and other legal ways. EVVO prepares and motivates such action, however, the acting as such is a matter of a free decision of the individual.

EVVO was developing quite well and under this concept has established a rich nationwide governance network of various, mostly non-state and non-public actors, on this kind of educational activity in the widest meaning of the term 'education' including environmental volunteering, reduction of consumption impact, sustainability in all its practical aspects, nature protection etc. Currently, the concept is steered and supported by the Ministry of the Environment and its [state programme on EVVO and Environmental counselling for the years 2016-2025](#).

**The basic history of the development of the EVVO concept** can help for a wider insight:

During the former Czechoslovakia and under the communist regime, ecological activities were popular in the society and especially among young people, parents and more significantly by mothers worried about their children's environment. However, as since the 1970s these activities became not only related to the protection of nature but to wider connotations linked to life and humanity, the totalitarian communist regime was somewhat suspicious, as they might endanger the [concept of the 'new socialist man'](#). A 'new socialist man' denotes under the communist ideology a person without freedoms in the sense in which the 'western' free liberal world, and the current Czech Republic, recognise and perceive them.

In the year 1985 in a research paper, RNDr. Danuše Kvasničková, CSc. justified the introduction of 'ecological education': '... it is more obvious that it is an education that reinforces the versatile knowledge and respect for the principles of the relations of man and the environment at the global level and the biosphere'. (According to [Nástin vývoje EVVO v letech 1918 až 1989](#) – 'Outline of the EVVO development in years 1918 until 1989'). This was something against the official communist ideology of the time.

On the impulse of the basic organisation of the then Socialist Youth Union, the year 1974 was declared as a 'year of development and environmental protection'. The aim of the action was the coordination and unification of relatively inconsistently designed activities for children's and youth organisations in the area of care for the environment (in the meaning of global issues as well). These actions came to the public consciousness as the **action 'Brontosaurus'** and grew into a lasting movement, which has turned into the Brontosaurus movement and later the Association Brontosaurus. [Brontosaurus](#) is still a

non-governmental non-profit youth organisation aiming at the issue of the environment, sustainability and also in the wider sense of global issues.

Such activities attract free-minded people and this could have been seen as a danger for the communist totality until 1989. In many aspects, these activities have been developing within the underground or as parallel to the official establishment, even if the establishment needed to recognise them to some extent in order to be able to steer them. We can assess that they have been on the edge of the social and political development.

From this very brief and insufficient outline, we can illustrate the roots of quite a wide caution of people of older generations active in this sphere to official cooperation on a policy level and thus also a strong accent on the decentralisation and non-state development of the cooperation of young people on global and environmental issues. Of course, after the regime changed, the situation changed dramatically, however, the focus on the issue and outcomes to some extent persists instead of a focus on 'policy' and state institutionalisation. The state needed to prove that it is honestly supportive. Since that young people were drivers in global environmental issues which was accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic time since 2020 to that aspect, that sustainability and "Green Europe" became also top priorities for the coming Czech EU Presidency 2022.

### The 'GRV' Concept

A parallel concept to EVVO, which is also more globally and internationally oriented, is the concept of '[GRV – Globální rozvojové vzdělávání](#)' (Global Development Education). Global development education is a lifelong learning process, which contributes to the understanding of the differences and similarities between the lives of people in developing and developed countries and facilitates the understanding of the economic, social, political, environmental and cultural processes that affect them. It develops skills and supports the creation of values and attitudes so that people are able and willing to actively participate in solving local and global problems. Global development education aims at taking responsibility for creating a world where all people have the opportunity to live a decent life.

GRV is promoted more as being linked with the international cooperation, humanitarian aid, and international development cooperation, however slowly became more promoted also toward inner issues and school education.

GRV is also in a way a domain of civil society and also some youth organisations. However, both of the concepts are also very much linked to the formal school system and both are anchored in the national curricular documents in formal elementary and secondary education.

In the [2018 - 2030 national Strategy on Global Development Education](#), the goal is defined as:

*"The goal of Global Development Education (GRV), based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is to support people's ability to competently and objectively understand global, regional and local political, economic, social, environmental and cultural processes, including their interrelationships and their interconnectedness."*

Main Topics of GRV according to the Strategy 2030 are:

- World interconnectedness and interdependence
- Diversity of the world
- Environment
- Poverty and inequality
- Human rights
- Peace and conflict resolution

## Formal youth participation programmes on global issues decision-making

Basically, when possible the Czech Republic uses opportunities to delegate young people or youth representatives to international events for young people. However, there is no generally known system for the youth delegation and the activities are rather ad hoc and based on capacities and the worldview of actors and financial resources.

Most developed is the Cooperation with the [Czech Council of Children and Youth](#), as the only recognised National Youth Council and an umbrella organisation for Children and Youth organisations in the Czech Republic. Alternatively, there is the [National Parliament of Children and Youth](#) as the umbrella initiative for children and youth parliaments.

The Czech Council of Children and Youth is a member of the [European Youth Forum](#) and since 2016 has its own first elected representative to the Youth Forum's board. In the 2016-2017 mandate, the representative of the Council was also first elected to the [Advisory Council on Youth by the Council of Europe](#).

[The Programme of the UN Youth Delegates in the Czech Republic](#) was initiated by the Czech Council of Children and Youth in the cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports since 2016 and it is run [within the scope of the Structured Dialogue with Youth](#).

## Youth interest in global issues

The participation and interest of Czech youth in global issues is not systematically studied or monitored by either the Czech state or academia. There are only partial studies by private actors and NGOs or tertiary education students within the scope of their bachelor, master and occasionally doctoral theses.

Thus, only systematic activity in this regard is the [UN Youth Delegates Programme](#) running within the Structured Dialogue with Youth and operated by the Czech Council of Children and Youth, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education. Czech UN Youth Delegates are familiar with the national outcomes of the Structured Dialogue and also by themselves they help to widen the Structured dialogue about the global level and global issues. During their visits of youth groups and schools, they collect and analyze the opinions and interests of young people in global matters together with the other outcomes of the Structured Dialogue with Youth.

Czech Council of Children and Youth also operates the Foreign Affairs Commission composed of representatives of its member organisations and interested individuals from young people. Together they discuss the international and global issues and prepare opinions and decisions for the Board of the Nation Youth Council.

The **importance of environmental protection, nature conservation and the issues connected to climate change are important to young people in above-average values** e.g. according to the [representative survey of the youth initiative Youth Speak Up!](#) which monitored important topics of young people in regard to parliamentary election 2021.

## 9.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

This section describes the main actors involved in policy-making on youth and global issues on the level of governmental authority, public actors and non-public actors.

#### Governmental authority

On the level of the Government, the youth issues are within the competence of the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#).



The main responsible entity within the ministry is the [Youth Unit](#) within section II. governing Education and Youth. International cooperation, in general, is in the competence of Section IV. on legislation and international relations. Within this section, there is also the two Departments for international relations and EU affairs.

The competence of foreign affairs policy and international relations is the domain of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. Within the section on security and multilateral cooperation there is also the Department of the United Nations which is responsible among other things also for the [UN Youth Delegates Programme](#). There is also a Section of Non-European Countries, Economic and Development with the [Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Department](#).

In the scope of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also the [Council for International Development Cooperation](#).

In specific topical issues, other respective Ministries can be involved in their international cooperation and activities and competencies in youth, especially the **Ministry of Culture** and **Ministry of Environment**.

### Public actors

The main public Agency responsible for the international cooperation in youth issues is the **[Centre for International Cooperation in Education \(DZS\)](#)**.

It is a semi-budgetary organisation, established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, performing tasks involved with ensuring educational, training and other relations with foreign countries under the instructions of the ministry. DZS is responsible for a number of international programmes, including the Erasmus+ Programme and European Solidarity Corps, and carries out activities relating to the promotion of education. DZS services are aimed at both individuals, students, teachers, directors of all types of schools and other professionals, and organisations and companies involved in education and local authorities and, last but not least, also the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

In the field of global development, there is the **[Czech Development Agency](#)**.

Bilateral projects of development cooperation between the Czech Republic and other countries are the main activity of the Czech Development Agency. Based on the [Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2010-2017](#) and [2018-2030](#), the Agency focuses in each country on projects in specific sectors. The sectors were selected in consideration of Czech experience and build upon Czech comparative advantages. They also reflect priorities of the international community in general and activities of other donors.

At the same time, the Czech Development Agency [supports projects under its specific programmes](#). They include the Programme Engaging the Private Sector in Development Cooperation with its Programme Feasibility Study and Programme Development Partnership for the Private Sector, the Programme Temporary Expert Assignment and the Programme Placement of Czech Teachers to Developing Countries.

The Agency also supports trilateral projects. Such projects are co-financed by other donors, for instance by the European Commission.

Last but not least the Agency supports local projects. Such projects are focused on raising awareness about development cooperation and capacity building of Czech entities. The Agency also provides support to the projects during their implementation.

In the competence of the Agency there is also the [Global development education and awareness](#).

## Non-public actors

In the sphere of non-public actors, we can list many youth organizations, NGOs and private actors. Among those most significant for the youth field we can name:

- [The Czech Council of Children and Youth](#), national youth council
- [The People in Need](#), the Largest NGO with many relevant activities for young people, especially within their programmers [One World at Schools](#) and [Varianty](#).
- [Movement Brontosaurus](#), youth NGO
- [INEX-SDA](#), youth NGO
- [AFS Mezikulturní programy](#), youth NGO
- [Junák – Český skaut](#), Czech Scouting Movement
- [YMCA](#), youth NGO
- [Pionýr](#), youth NGO
- [Duha](#), youth NGO
- [ADRA](#), humanitarian organisation
- [Tamjdem](#), NGO
- [AIESEC](#), student organization
- [DOFE - The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award](#), youth organisation
- and many others...

## Cross-sectorial cooperation

Existing mechanisms of cross-sectorial cooperation between Ministries, Departments, Agencies involved in defining policies and measures regarding youth's contribution to global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up, including youth cooperation at the global level are on an **ad hoc basis** or linked to **concrete needs of various activities, programmes** and projects. There is **no central cross-sectorial body on the international cooperation in defining the youth's contribution to global processes**.

## 9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

### Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

In 2020 [The minister responsible for environmental issues and climate signed](#) based on the action of several Czech Youth Organizations and initiatives and the Czech UN Youth Delegate the commitment that the ministry should take on board young people by the implementation of the climate policy, the so-called **Kwon-Gesh Pledge**.

The space for such exchanges is rather ad hoc, organized by the civil society, academia and the interested policy-makers themselves.

As one of the most widely known and oldest youth initiatives is the '[Prague Student Summit](#)' organised by the [Association for International Affairs](#) and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports.

There are also several other model projects on the UN, NATO, EU or the American Congress.

## Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

Basically, when possible the Czech Republic uses the opportunities to delegate young people or youth representatives to international events for young people with the aim to exchange their view on global or any other social and political issues. Such activities are supported by all International Organisations where the Czech Republic is a member and where it is possible to ensure proper representation and the funding for such a mission.

Within the scope of the [Structured Dialogue with Youth](#), youth representatives are regularly sent to the **EU Youth conferences and other international events of the EU Structured Dialogue with Youth**.

Since 2016, there is the [UN Youth Delegate Programme](#), offering the opportunity for two selected youth representatives, based on the open public annual call, to exchange their views within the General Assembly of the United Nations and respective UN youth forums, such as the Youth ECOSOC Forum and similar UN Forums for Youth.

Since 2010, the [Visegrad cooperation in the Youth Field](#) was renewed and youth representatives are invited to the V4 meetings in the youth field and youth policy.

Young people from the Czech Republic also regularly participate in various [youth events](#), Forums, competitions and activities of the European Union, [youth events of the Central European Initiative](#), [UNESCO Youth Forums](#) and [youth activities of the Council of Europe](#), including the representation in the Advisory Council on Youth and the Youth delegate programme of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

Within bilateral relations, there is the international **Czech-German Council for youth exchanges and cooperation**, where members also include the youth representatives from the Czech Council of Children and Youth as well as from the Czech-German Youth Forum.

The [Czech-German Youth forum](#) annually involves interested young people in the political and social cooperation including activities with the exchange on international issues with policy-makers.

Apart from these publicly institutionalised opportunities, Youth from the Czech Republic is active within many other non-governmental international activities and projects such as the [European Youth Parliament](#), and various models of international institutions such as Model UN etc.

Also, via their opportunities the Czech political representatives in international bodies such as the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of Regions and others are often allowed to bring young people to relevant meetings where they can exchange views on global and political issues.

## 9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

### Formal, non-formal and informal learning

In the Czech Republic, there are two basic strong and quite developed concepts on education in global issues as described in [Chapter 9.1 – The Global Development Education](#) and the [Environmental Education \(EVVO\)](#) which are also included in the state curricular documents in formal education and are also promoted by youth and other NGOs in non-formal education. Within formal education there are also enhanced educational areas like 'Human and Society', 'Human and World' where pupils can be taught about the global issues as well, however, the form and exact content depends on the school's curricular documents and programmes.

There are also several public initiatives on how to motivate an interested school to provide attractive education on global issues such as '[Světová škola](#)' (A World School), [UNESCO](#)

[Schools](#), or private NGO programmes like '[Jeden svět na školách](#)' (One World at Schools) or '[Škola pro udržitelný rozvoj](#)' (School for sustainable development), '[Zelená škola](#)' (Green school), '[Ekoškola](#)' (The Eco-School), etc.

'The [1Planet4All](#) project is an international project in 11 European countries, including the Czech Republic, which focuses on raising young people's awareness of climate change, its causes and effects not only on us, but also on people in developing countries, solutions and, above all, personal responsibility for a sustainable future. The project is supported by the European Union and its DEAR (Development Education and Awareness Rising) program, which seeks to motivate young people to engage with global issues and challenges facing the world today.'

[Adra](#) offers methodological materials for educators on teaching global education within the True World project. They offer materials for kindergartens, primary schools and high schools. [Aprok](#) is also involved in global development education. They offer a wide range of educational programs for students. For schools, they organize seminars that take place in interactive form. [Nazemi](#) offers educational programs for students and methodological courses for teachers. Participants will gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills in global education topics. [Varianty](#) by 'People in need' help teachers with global education issues and implement this approach in life of the whole school. They create programs and educational material.

Special importance in raising awareness in global issues from the point of view of non-formal and informal learning also goes to the [European programme Erasmus+](#) and its possibilities for youth projects concerning international and global issues.

As there is an ongoing process of revision of the Educational Framework Programmes (main national curricular documents, for detail, see [chapter 6](#) and specifically [6.10](#)) The National Institute for Education published in 2018 an [overall analysis how the global issues and thinking in global and European context have been developing in the Czech Education system](#), in curricula, what are the ongoing trends and how to further enhance the issues in the content of education within the preparing new Educational Framework Programmes.

## Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

There have been no special state youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues per se since 2010.

In 2020 the [Labyrinth 2030](#) competition for university students and young professionals up to the age of 30 was announced. It focuses on projects focused on foreign development cooperation. The competition is organized by Caritas CR and is co-financed by the Czech Development Agency. It is focused on foreign development cooperation, solving development challenges in the area.

## Information providers

The biggest promoters in this field are respective NGOs, usually those operating the above-mentioned educational programmes. The topic of Global Development Education at the state level is in the competence of the Czech Development Agency as described above.

Visible efforts to raise awareness about global issues among young people are seen more and more within the [UN Youth Delegates programme](#) in the Czech Republic. Young UN Delegates from the Czech Republic are organizing events with young people and are visiting schools and youth groups to promote the UN, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the role of Young people in their fulfilment.

The [Information Centre of the United Nations in the Czech Republic](#) also provides information and organizes several activities to promote UN and global issues among young people.

In the Czech Republic there is an initiative '[Univerzity za klima](#)' (University for climate) – an initiative of students, teachers and university staff who are not indifferent to the future

of our planet. They support Fridays for Future strikes. The national branch of [Fridays for future](#) also operates in the Czech Republic.

## Key initiatives

There are several main initiatives on the state level to promote Global topics among wider society with particular attention to young people.

1. [State Strategy to for Education on Sustainable development for the period 2008-2015](#).
2. [The European Week of the Sustainable development](#) has been an annual initiative of the Office of the Government and its Department on Sustainable development since 2015.
3. [Hate Free Culture](#), a wide public campaign of the Office of the Government and its department – The Agency for Social Inclusion.
4. [The state Agenda 2030](#) as a national vision for the year 2030, also implementing the SDGs to the national context.
5. [Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030](#)
6. [Education Strategy 2030+](#)
7. [Czech UN Youth Delegate Programme](#)

## 9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

### Green volunteering

The main state initiative in the field of green volunteering is providing support to non-governmental organisations active in the field.

[The Ministry of the Environment is providing two types of activity support annually.](#)

[Programme A](#): for NGOs active in the field of protection of nature and sustainable development. There are 11 specific topics eligible for funding, focusing on nature and biodiversity protection, the impact of the environment on human health, adaptation to climate change and innovation in environmental education. The highest possible subsidy is up to 250 000 CZK (ca 9 260 EUR) and the Ministry is contributing up to 70% of the project costs.

[Programme B](#): for NGO subjects capable of redistributing the resources for supporting significant local NGOs and voluntary activities in the field of protection of nature. There are two main fields – Coordination of Projects supporting Biodiversity where it is possible to receive up to 3 000 000 CZK (ca 111 000 EUR) and Coordination of Land Groups where it is possible to receive a subsidy of 2 000 000 CZK (ca 74 000 EUR).

In the [Overview of the NGOs' work in the field of protection of nature](#), the Ministry also monitored what the NGOs were doing in the period 1992-2010.

In 2011, the Ministry completed a [study on the voluntary activities of the Non-governmental environmental organizations](#) in cooperation with the Foundation 'Partnerství'. According to that study, **13% of the voluntary activities in the field are focused on the education of children and young people**. The study did not differentiate between the youth environmental NGOs and general environmental NGOs. However, the environmental youth organisations such as [Movement Brontosaurus](#) or the [Czech Union of Young Nature protectors](#), [Young Nature protectors](#), [the Czech Union of young breeders](#) etc. are some of the important organised Czech youth movements.

### Green production and consumption

There are no special state initiatives targeting young people in regard to green production and consumption, although they are the target group of general campaigns.

However, we can find state initiatives targeting the whole population partially also with the topic of green consumption. Such as the campaign '[The farm in the hand](#)', or '[Learn about your farmer](#)'. On the other hand, one of the main aims of these initiatives is to support local farmers and domestic production. In this scope, there are also other initiatives, but the green aspect is rather implicit and secondary.

## 9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

### Intercontinental youth work cooperation

Intercontinental youth work cooperation is not really strong in the public policy of the Czech Republic. It is usually the domain of Charities, youth organisations and NGOs.

The only specific sources of public support for young people and their intercontinental youth work cooperation is thus the European programme Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.

[Ad-hoc support for international voluntary youth work activities](#), or more precisely cross-border volunteering, was provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in relation to the European Year of Volunteering in 2011.

Youth organisations can, however, apply for support of such activities within the standard state subsidy scheme for youth work, if they are interested. For details on the subsidy scheme see [Chapter 1.7](#).

### Development cooperation activities

Development cooperation activities of young people are not really strong in the public policy of the Czech Republic. It is usually the domain of Charities, youth organisations and NGOs or the wider public and general state development cooperation policies (with no direct mentioning of youth work and youth policy).

The only specific source of public support for young people and their development cooperation activities is the regular subsidy scheme of the [Czech Development Agency for the development activities of NGOs](#).

## 9.7 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

The COVID-19 Pandemic hit the fields of Youth and the World in a significant manner. Many programmes needed to transform into online space. Regarding the Youth Field, a significant initiative of Germany on how to foster the international youth-work cooperation, is the development of the DINA International, an online platform for youth online work, in which the Czech Republic has participated through the Czech-German coordination centre Tandem.

The implementation of the EU Just Transition Fund also opened a space for more youth inclusion in this initiative and The Ministry of the Environment is preparing in cooperation with the Youth Field a possible new setup for Youth Inclusion.

A [Pilot Programme of Work and Vacation for Youth between the Czech Republic and Australia](#) was launched on 1. 3. 2018.

V4 and Eastern Partnership countries signed a [Memorandum of cooperation in the field of youth](#) in 2015. During the Czech presidency of the V4 group, a [Framework Action Plan for the Implementation of the Memorandum 2015-2017](#) was drafted during a Summit in Prague. An Action Plan for the Implementation of the Memorandum was one of the goals

of the Hungarian Presidency of the V4 Group (1. 7. 2017 – 30. 6. 2018). However, a draft has not yet been released.

## Ongoing debates

The Czech Republic [signed a bilateral treaty of cooperation](#) in the areas of education, youth, sports and culture with South Korea in 2014, effective until 2016. One of the aspects of cooperation was also the field of Youth and Youth work. A similar Treaty was previously in effect until 2012 and there has been a common exchange of youth workers from the Czech Republic and South Korea organised by the Czech Council of Children and Youth with the Support of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Similar [bilateral treaties concerning working holidays](#) for youth between the Czech Republic and Canada, and between the Czech Republic and New Zealand are in place.

The Czech Republic has also signed many [bilateral treaties of cooperation in the areas of education, sports and culture](#), where youth is specifically referred to in relevant articles. These allow for exchanging documents concerning youth, facilitating information about conferences and other youth-related events, and support for youth NGOs by establishing direct relations between them.

Cooperation in the field of Youth was also the subject of a [Memorandum](#) between V4 and Eastern Partnership countries signed in 2015.

The Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports are also negotiating bilateral cooperation with Cyprus Ministry responsible for Youth affairs within the Council of Europe cooperation. There have been bilateral peer visits within the COE Youth framework in 2017 from the Czech Republic to Cyprus and in 2018 from Cyprus to the Czech Republic.

In 2020 the Minister of the Environment confirmed the Czech Republic's [commitment to meaningfully involve young people in the implementation of the national climate policy](#). The signing of the so-called Climate Pledge for Youth (Kwon-Gesh Pledge) took place with the support of representatives of organizations that have long been fighting for more consistent action on climate change and education.

The international Youth cooperation is actually mostly focused on the upcoming Czech EU Presidency 2022. Within the CZ PRES initiatives in the Youth field are important priorities sustainability and "Green Europe" which are discussed further.

## 10. YOUTH WORK

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The history of Youth Work activities in the Czech Republic goes back in the mid 19th Century, and its main development started at the beginning of the 20th Century with Benjamín Svojsík. It flourished during the so-called first Czechoslovak Republic in the period between the two World Wars. The Nazi occupation and the Socialist-Communists regimes made lots of centralised state actions against the free development of the sector. They focused on providing some new concepts, approaches, or material conditions that remained. See more details in [Chapter 10.1](#).

Nowadays setting of Youth Work in the Czech Republic compose thus of two main directions:

- 1) **youth work based on non-formal education, informal learning and personality development**
- 2) **youth work based on so-called leisure-time-based education (under the pedagogy and School Acts)**

There are also services based on the social care approach, primarily focused on children and young people at risk, poverty, disadvantaged, or institutional care.

The traditional governmental structures for Youth Work and Youth Policy in the form of the Youth Department, which operated since 1987, change since 2020. Firstly to the Department for Youth, Non-Formal and Further Education and later on were Youth issues delegated to the new Youth Support Unit under the Department for Elementary education and Youth. See more details in [Chapter 10.2](#).

Leisure-based education covers Education Legislation legally. The Civil Code and related legislation regulate other forms of Youth Work based on non-formal education and informal learning. The social care services are regulated with the Social Policy Regulations. See more details in [Chapter 10.3](#).

The state supports Youth Organizations financially based on the State Subsidy Programmes for Supporting Work with Children and Youth in Non-Governmental Organisations and their Idea concept for Years 2022 - 2023. See details in [Chapter 10.3](#).

The quality of Youth Work in Leisure-based education is ensured through the education legislation and in the Non-formal based Youth Work through the title "NGO recognised by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for providing quality youth work." There are also other particular tools. See details in [Chapter 10.4](#).

Speaking about Youth Workers, there is no central or legal definition. Unless the Educational legislation defines them in the case of Leisure-based Education, see details in [Chapter 10.5](#).

There have been broader state initiatives to recognise the learning outcomes from the Youth Work in the last years, and some achievements have been met. However, complex recognition is more or less a decentralised field. See details in [Chapter 10.6](#).

Decentralisation is as well to see in the field of raising awareness about Youth Work. This area became state-decentralised and uncoordinated unless a few specific initiatives. See details in [Chapter 10.7](#).

Since 2021 no particular nor comprehensive National Youth Strategy is dealing with Youth Work, and it found its political support within the Education Strategy 2030+. About the ongoing debates and policy development, learn more in [Chapter 10.8](#).

## 10.1 General context

### Historical developments

The history of youth organisations and youth work in the territorial area of nowadays Czech Republic goes **back to the mid 19th century** when Czech people were allowed to create their own civic associations in the Austrian Monarchy.

**In summer 1912, professor A.B. Svojsík organised the first boys' scout summer camp** near the castle Lipnice. In 1913 the first summer camp using special kind of Czech tents ("podsadový stan") took place, and in 1915 first girls scout summer camp was organised near of Živohošť.

The first Czechoslovak Republic since 1918 was a friendly environment of youth work. Czech Scouts even helped in the first days of the independent state with the necessary services as post and others. The state elite strongly supported the big Youth organisations as Scout or YMCA and others.

After Nazi Germany occupied Czechoslovakia **and WWII** started, the independent youth organisations were forbidden, and the Nazi Policy towards youth was a separate chapter. However, many people from youth organisations were active in the **underground resistance** and helped to sustain the Czech traditions and statehood. The end of WWII opened a few years of flourishing time again, and youth organisations were also helping with the post-war reconstructions.



**The communist putsch in 1948 had a very negative impact on youth work in Czechoslovakia.** Youth and children organisations that were not set up under the patronage of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (for instance Junák, Sokol, Orel and others, e.g. church organisations), were gradually broken up, and members who resisted the ban or wished to continue their activities illegally were often sentenced to prison.

Czechoslovak Communist Party promoted the chief organization the **Czechoslovak Youth Union** (Československý svaz mládeže - ČSM). The main aim was to exert ideological influence on young people and promote the policies of the Communist Party.

**In 1949 a single children's Pioneer organisation was set up on the model of the Soviet Union** within the ČSM. The banned groups, which had previously united thousands of children and young people, looked for a way to function under the aegis of organisations that were still allowed – for example, within Svazarm (Union for Cooperation with the Army). Organised free-time activities in this period were more or less standardised and were linked to schools or factories, which guaranteed their ideological collaboration with the Communist Party. The Communist regime, well aware of the potential inherent in influencing the youngest generation, supported these organisations both financially and materially.

**From 1953 Houses of Pioneers and Young People (Domy pionýrů a mládeže) began to spring up in Czechoslovakia.** According to a resolution of the Communist authorities of the late 1960s, they had to be set up in all municipalities with a population of over 5 000. The task of these institutions was to organise free time for children and young people, but obviously everything had to be done in accordance with the **prevailing Communist ideology**.

Under the influence of social changes and as a result of attempts to democratise the regime of the time, **in 1968 the traditional associations of children and young people (e.g. Junák, Sokol, Orel) were restored**, or there was a fundamental transformation of them (in the Pioneers, for example), or new types of such associations came into existence. There were, for example, young technicians' centres, young naturalists' centres and young ramblers' centres.

The new model for children and young people was meant to be closer and more attractive to them with an aim to meet their needs in a more flexible way. **This trend was forcibly interrupted by the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops led by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1968.**

With the onset of normalisation, the Czechoslovak Youth Union was replaced by the **Union of Socialist Youth (Socialistický svaz mládeže - SSM), which the Communist Party set up**. Its target group were young people aged between 15 and 35. Within it, young people could do things their way, e.g., art groups, etc., but checks were made to ensure that the activity was **in line with the Communist ideology**. Although a number of such groupings managed to carry on their own activities for a certain time regardless of whether official Communist ideals were sustained, for most of them, these activities were banned under threat of sanctions, which extended from police harassment to the risk of being removed from studies or work and going as far as the threat of imprisonment.

**The change of regime in November 1989 – ushered in by the "Velvet Revolution" – signified a complete change in the field of non-formal education and informal learning and the functioning of social organisations, including those working with children and young people.**

With the **transition to democracy**, organisations that had been banned during the normalisation period were reconstituted. This especially concerned organisations run on a scouting or woodcraft basis or organisations originating from a Christian environment. The Union of Socialist Youth split into many independent entities, and its fission was accompanied by conflicts as the organisation's property was privatised. With the logic of democratic development, **following 1989, hundreds of new non-governmental non-profit-making organisations (NGOs) and private entities appeared**, whose

alternative programmes began to fill the space in the field of leisure time of children and young people.

With the decentralisation of political power, there was also a gradual transformation of the houses of pioneers and youth. A regulation issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports **in 1992** established a common name for these, as "**leisure time centres for children and young people**", which are currently an integral part of the official school system in the Czech Republic. Alongside, in the Czech Republic, there are **about 1500** non-governmental not-for-profit organisations (NGO) that are actively committed to providing free-time activities and learning opportunities for children and young people in which children and young people take part on a voluntary basis. These include sports, art activities, nature studies, rambling, technical activities, handicrafts and other areas.

**Youth workers active in NGOs are both professional employees and, mainly, volunteers** who work with children and young people in their free time. Their qualifications are not explicitly governed by specific laws or regulations, besides the general ones, but at a number of organisations, primarily those that function across the country. Their training is thus subject to the organisation's internal rules, which means that they often have to participate in various courses for leaders or instructors.

Their funding from the state budget is provided mainly through grant programmes from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, but also from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Culture or, depending on the objective of the activity, other ministries too. Organisations may also apply for grants from regional, municipal and local authorities and, since 2004, also from the EU. Czech Republic participated in the predecessors of the EU Youth Programmes even before 2004.

In an attempt to compare the parameters of the Czech system with that one of Western Europe, we may state that there is a certain difference in the system of funding, and in the amount of resources invested, as well as in the system of recruitment and training of employees working with children and young people in their free time. In the Czech Republic, such work is actively sought by people who want to work with young people (the overwhelming majority because they themselves had this experience as children and adolescents), either as professionals or as volunteers.

In the 1990s, there was a need to deal with the socialist history. **There were challenges of the youth work property privatisation and the cooperation of people with opposite ideological backgrounds and experiences.** The conciliatory process was successful **in 1998 when the [Czech Council of Children and Youth](#) as an independent and democratic youth organisation umbrella was created.** From the end of the 1990s until 2020, the state also has been creating youth policy concepts/strategies ([for details, see chapter 1](#)).

## National definition or understanding of Youth Work

**There is NO legal nor common definition of Youth Work.** Moreover, in Czech, it is not usually referred to Youth Work as such but to "**Work with Children and Youth**" (**práce s dětmi a mládeží**) which is used in more perspectives depending on the context of given public policy (social, educational, cultural, environmental etc.).

At the same time, there are, **in a way, two prevalent concepts of youth work.**

1) **youth work based on so-called leisure-time-based education** is provided by the network of Leisure Time Centres (Střediska volného času, SVČ), school clubs (školní kluby, ŠK) and after-school childcare facilities (školní družina, ŠD). These facilities providing leisure-time-based education are not obligatory, but they are incorporated to the formal educational system. The state, regions or municipalities set them up, and to a lesser extent do private entities. They are funded from public sources depending on the number of children in regular free-time activities. Individual participants in the learning activities (children and young people) also cover part of the financial cost of overheads.

With the current development of Educational reform and the [preparation of the State Education Strategy 2030+](#), we can expect closer cooperation of these kinds of youthwork with formal education and their integration. One of the strategy's goals is to create a concept of the "whole-day educational facility" providing compulsory and voluntary leisure and interest-based education and youth work.

**Official definitions of Leisure-based education** according to the Education Act No. 561/2004 Sb. and the State Youth Strategy 2014 - 2020 is:

Provides participants with leisure time activities focusing on different areas. The term "education" refers to both education and training. Interest education takes place in school facilities for interest education, particularly in leisure centres, after-school centres and school clubs. Leisure centres are also involved in additional care of gifted children, pupils and students, provide for the organisation of competitions and exhibitions in collaboration with schools and other institutions. The objectives, content and outcomes are usually closely linked to all types of school education and are guaranteed by the state as part of the school system.

2) **youth work based on non-formal education, informal learning and personality development** is provided by non-profit non-governmental organisations (NGOs) whose umbrella organisation is called Czech Council for Children and Youth (Česká rada dětí a mládeže, ČRDM). CRDM has 98 member organisations and nine regional Youth Councils. The youth work activities and approaches differ according to the individual subjects and organisation.

## 10.2 Administration and governance of youth work

### Governance

**The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is the central state authority in the field of Youth and Youth Work.**

There was a [systemization process](#) of Governmental Structures in the Czech Republic. It also impacts the Governance Structures related to Youth Work at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports level. Till the end of 2019, there was a section of Sports and Youth with Youth department dealing with Youth Work and Youth Policy issues. There were special units for each of these domains.

The structural development led in 2021 to create a new **Section for Education and Youth with the Youth Development Support Unite.**

More about the governmental actors see in [Chapter 1.4](#).

At the level of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, there are:

- **Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic** (Výbor pro vědu, vzdělávání, kulturu, mládež a tělovýchovu)
- Within the Chamber of Deputies until 2013 there was also the specific Subcommittee on Youth and Sport (Podvýbor pro mládež a sport). After the elections 2017 and with the new House of Deputies independent **Subcommittee on Youth and Leisure-time activities** was set up.
- Within the Chamber of Deputies, there are also youth-issues related bodies as Subcommittee on foster care and Subcommittee for crisis situations in Family. Many of the Youth sector issues are also discussed in other committees as Constitutional, Budgetary, Foreign affairs etc.
- **Committee for Education, Science, Culture, Human Rights and Petitions of the Senate of the Czech Republic** (Výbor pro vzdělávání, vědu, kulturu, lidská práva a petice Senátu ČR)

## Cross-sectoral cooperation

As there is an ongoing transformation process, the new cross-sectorial cooperations are not clear yet.

On the level of Youth Policy see details in [Chapter 1.4](#).

## 10.3 Support to youth work

### Policy legal framework

There is **no one or overall specific national legislation related to Youth Work**, nor any particular youth work state policy strategy. However...

As described in [subchapter 10.1](#) there are basically two common understandings of Youth Work activities.

**Leisure-based education** is covered with the **Educational legislation** as described, and you can find more details also in [chapter 6](#). The most significant legal acts are:

#### **[Act no. 563/2004 Sb.](#) of 24th September 2004 on pedagogical workers**

The Act gives standards for qualification, the scope of professional work and in-service training of different pedagogical workers, including so-called "leisure-time-based educators".

#### **[The Government Regulation no. 74/2005 Sb.](#) of 9th February 2005 on leisure-time-based education** (Vyhláška č. 74/2005 Sb., o zájmovém vzdělávání)

The Regulation gives professional standards and qualification criteria for so-called "leisure-time-based educators" who provide so-called leisure-time-based education, a specific part of non-formal education in the Czech Republic.

Leisure-time-based education is provided by leisure-time centres for children and youth (Střediska volného času, SVČ), after-school clubs (školní kluby, ŠK) and after-school childcare facilities (školní družiny, ŠD). They are fully or partially financed from the public budget and with a small contribution of the participants. Establishers of the providers can be municipalities, unions of municipalities, regional governments, churches, other legal entities, and physical persons. Leisure time centres and after-school clubs cover with their activities all 14 regions in the Czech Republic. In 2021 there were 334 leisure time centres in the Czech Republic whose activities were attended by 310 043 participants; and 603 school clubs by 46 544 pupils.

The Regulation allows specialised school facilities to provide school remedial activities and tutoring activities to children to prevent early school leaving. These facilities also serve as a platform for children and youth to enable them to enter a variety of local, national or international projects.

**The youth work based on non-formal education, informal learning and personality development** is provided by non-profit, non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The general Regulation is based on the legal framework of the Civil Code and legislation (for details, see [chapter 1.2](#)).

**Act on Public Health Protection (No. 258/2000 Sb.) and the Regulation of the Ministry of Health on hygiene for recovery activities for children (No. 106/2001 Sb.)** provide regulation and control mechanisms regarding the so-called "recovery stay for children".

The recovery stay is an organised stay of 30 or more children up to 15 years of age for more than five days. The purpose is to strengthen children's health, increase their physical fitness, or acquire specific knowledge or skills, including many summer camps with younger persons up to 15 years of age.

The Youth Work activities should be available to all interested Children and Young people based on equal opportunities principles.

The state has a policy guiding [framework for NGOs recognised by the Ministry for their children and youth work](#). This recognition has its implication on the level of essential quality and standard control and transparent access to state support for their Youth Work activities.

## Funding

The general, legal and policy setting of Funding Youth Policy and Youth Organizations is covered in chapters [1.7](#) and [5.6](#)).

**State Funding Framework 2017 - 2020 for Children and Youth work laid down a system, which was slightly modified and updated for 2022 - 2023, based on the internal Ministerial concept for the support.** However, there is an ongoing debate about legal compliance with supporting associations with subunits and the redistribution of the support to those subunits, which have their own legal entity, although they are an integral part of the association.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports provides the Funding Framework.

The support focuses on regular and long-term action determined by the broadest range of children and young people and on promoting actions and activities which contribute to the improvement, expansion and development activities of various youth organisations and organisations working with children and youth.

Goals of the programmes:

- Creation of free time and other selected activities within the membership base of individual NGOs;
- Creation of free time and selected NGOs targeted activities intended for non-organised children and youth;
- Significant international and national events aimed at children and young people;
- Training and education of children and youth;
- Creating conditions for the development of non-formal education;
- Development of volunteerism and volunteer work with children and youth;
- Education of children and youth in other fields (e.g. participation, mutual tolerance, healthy lifestyle);
- International cooperation for children and youth;
- Multicultural education.

Structure of the programmes:

1. For the NGOs recognised by the state for their children and youth work
2. For umbrella organisations (national and regional level)
3. For other NGOs with branch associations (large youth associations)

Non-supported activities (covered by other programmes and policies)

- For NGOs having the area of physical education and sport as their main activity;
- For NGOs promoting and integrating the Roma community and national minorities;
- For NGOs aiming at preventing drug use, crime and other negative phenomena;
- To support NGOs dealing with impact only, single-sided or activities (e.g. only organising children's camps with no relation to the year-round activity, operation or renting of hiking and camp bases or another real estate, equipment, etc.);

- For projects aimed at providing social services under Act no. 108/2006 Sb., on social services;

### **Investment Programme no.133710 (Investiční program 133710)**

State funding for developing the material and technical base of extracurricular activities for children and youth in 2016 allocated ca 25 000 000 CZK (ca 926 000 EUR). For 2020 is the allocation 14 000 000 CZK (ca 560 000 EUR). For 2021 the Ministry launched two calls to allocate 8 700 000 CZK (ca. 345 000 EUR).

### **Systemic development of Czech-german cooperation in the field of education and youth (for 2021).**

The Ministry also launch [annual subsidy calls to support the Systemic development of Czech-German cooperation in the field of education and youth](#) (for 2021).

The allocation is 7 000 000 CZK (ca 280 000 EUR).

### **EU Funding in supporting Youth Work**

The Czech Republic is fully participating in the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union and the European Solidarity Corps. The National Agency of the Programme in the Czech Republic is a part of [The Centre for International Cooperation in Education \(DZS\)](#) as a semi-budgetary organisation, established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

### **EU Structural and Investment Funds**

To support the **quality of non-formal education within Youth Work**, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports runs the call on Improving the quality of non-formal education ([Výzva č. 02 18 071 Zvyšování kvality neformálního vzdělávání](#)) supported by the European Social Fund.

The call is continual in the period from 28th February 2019 to 15th April 2020. Overall allocation was 300 000 000 CZK (ca 12 000 000 EUR).

Supported activities are:

- Education of workers in non-formal education
- Sharing the experience of non-formal education workers through mutual visits
- Tandem non-formal education
- Introducing new methods in non-formal education
- Project day in the clubhouse
- Project day outside the clubhouse
- Club in non-formal education

Target groups:

- Children and pupils participating in non-formal education (children over three years of age, primary and secondary school pupils)
- Workers and volunteers of organisations active in the field of education and non-formal education
- Pedagogical staff

Other supports from the European Funds related to Youth Work, using or including some parts of Youth Work:

- Competencies for democratic culture (financial allocation: 162 000 000 CZK). This activity supports creating and piloting programmes which promote the development of competencies for democratic culture, namely an active involvement of children and young people into decision-making processes.

- Implementation of Regional Action Plans (financial allocation: 1 750 000 000 CZK) Supported activities cover the concrete activities which had been set up in the Regional Action Plans in respective regions, especially in the field of linking formal education to non-formal education. The priority is given to innovation of technologies, entrepreneurship and initiatives of pupils and students in the form of networking and sharing examples of good practices.
- Local Development Action Plans (financial allocation: 3 000 000 000 CZK)
- Support is provided for the implementation of activities covered by the Local Action Plans which aim sometimes at linking formal education to non-formal education, linking youth work and social work, facilitating structured dialogue with children and young people and supporting school parliaments.

## Cooperation

National Individual project Linking Formal and Non-formal Education, including Leisure-based Education (registration number: CZ.02.3.68 / 0.0 / 0.0 / 16\_032 / 000816; development of capacity building in schools II).

The project is co-financed by the EU of CZK 8,974,544.88.

Project implementation period: 1st September 2018 - 30th August, 2021

The project provides a system of methodological support based on the functioning of the network of collegiate support centres at regional offices of the National Institute for Further Education, whose professional activities support the exchange of experience in the area of the interconnection of formal and non-formal education. The centres methodically support the cooperation of educators and non-formal education workers (including Leisure-based education), who form educational programs for children and pupils focused on developing their key competencies.

An information campaign on the recognition of non-formal learning outcomes accompanies the methodological work.

Other forms of cooperations are rather on a local and regional level due to the nature of the youth work governance structures and the competencies divisions of the state, regions and municipalities.

## 10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work

### Quality assurance

**The title "NGO recognised by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for providing quality youth work."**

The title is awarded within the sub-programme of Grant Schemes by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for supporting youth work in NGOs. It is awarded by the minister responsible for youth upon the decision of the Selection Committee. It is linked to the amendment to the "Governmental Rules for providing grants from the state budget to non-profit, non-governmental organisations by the central public bodies" (since 2014 this amendment enables the Ministry to make an agreement on long-term cooperation with selected youth NGOs). Currently, 13 NGOs are holders of this title for the period 2016 – 2020, 4 more for the period 2017 – 2020, 1 for period 2018 - 2020, plus the Czech Council for Children and Youth as the main strategic partner for the Ministry is granted with the title on a long-term basis.

Youth NGOs awarded with the title have to meet **15 criteria** (for instance: the NGO has to exist at least 5 years; has to have organisational units at least in 3 regions; has youth work covered in the Status; has clearly defined its organisational structure and clearly described processes in the organisation; makes public their Yearly Reports including financial statistics; has elaborated Strategic Development Plan including description of

learning perspective – objectives, methods and forms of youth work; no problems in the field of financial clearance; has no crime files; performs systematic PR towards the public; activities are provided not only to its own members but also to other target groups – it is open to everyone; supports volunteering; is actively inclusive and open to vulnerable young people, disadvantaged young people and young people with fewer opportunities; provides regular training courses to youth leaders and youth workers which are accredited by educational institutions; has professional and sufficient staff for providing activities – at least 60% of educational staff has certificate of attending accredited training courses).

Holders of the title are obliged to submit the complete annual Year Report to the Youth Unit of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Youth Unit submits audit controls at a random basis.

### **Youth work quality self-assessment tools for youth NGOs and youth centres, OLINA**

**Form of youth work where the tool applies:** youth centres/youth organisations (self-assessment tool)

#### **Short description of the tool:**

OLINA tool is one of the final products of the ESF national project "Keys for life - Developing Key Competences in Leisure-Time and Non-Formal Education". It is an online system for the management of youth work quality systems for youth non-formal education settings (leisure-time centres, youth clubs, youth NGOs) and serves as a tool for introducing the principles of PDCA (plan-do-check-apply) to leisure-time centres, youth clubs and youth NGOs.

OLINA tool is based on three modules:

1. self-evaluation,
2. competence-building and
3. training.

OLINA tool is usable for the self-evaluation of competencies of youth leaders and afterwards for the development of their competencies in e-learning programmes. At the same time, the on-going evaluating processes in non-formal settings can be assessed. The ESF national project "Keys for life" has created and piloted training programmes aimed at raising the quality of youth work. These training programmes reinforce the skills and competencies of youth leaders and workers for setting objectives and their continuous evaluation.

**Tool initiated by:** National Institute for Children and Youth (today the agenda merged to the National Pedagogy Institute of the Czech Republic).

**Tool handled by:** National Institute of Further Education (<https://kvalita.nidv.cz/>), since 2020 National Pedagogy Institute.

**Object/Theme:** Youth work quality self-assessment tools for youth NGOs and youth centres.

#### **Short description of main objectives/aim:**

- To facilitate the establishment and maintenance of youth work quality systems.
- To improve the youth work quality on the level of the management system of youth NGOs and youth centres as well as the competencies of youth workers and youth leaders.
- To increase the efficiency and quality of provided activities.



- To get feedback about the level of youth work quality and be able to continuously improve it in reaction to new challenges and the rapidly changing needs of young people.

#### **Method:**

A set of youth work quality self-assessment tools for youth NGOs and youth clubs integrated in an interactive online platform which offers three modules:

1. **Assessing Module:** facilitates youth work quality self-assessment of youth NGOs and youth centres, provides a set of self-assessment tools usable for different types of youth work settings which enables the users in an interactive form to carry out the self-assessment and compare the results of the self-assessment periodically. System provides to its users an opportunity to undergo a process analysis with defining main, supportive and controlling processes. As the next step it is offering CAF or modified Internal Audit as tools for finishing the phase of assessment of different processes and on-going activities. In addition, the users can benefit from consultations and methodological support provided by experts from the National Institute of Further Education).

2. **Competence Module:** facilitates self-assessment of 30 key competencies crucial for youth work at the level of youth workers and youth leaders (two tests providing feedback to the individual user about the level of his/her key competencies related to the youth work quality. In addition, a multi-source external assessment tool enables the user to be assessed by his/her supervisors, colleagues, external partners, young people etc. and improve his/her personal and professional development. The methodology for developing 15 soft competencies is provided).

3. **E-learning Module:** provides eight innovative e-learning training programmes aimed at developing and improving eight selected key competencies for youth leaders (effective communication and presentation; planning; project management; problem-solving; human resources management; strategic management; leadership; fundraising). The performance resulted from the training courses is recorded in the users' personal profiles and enables the users to improve further their performance if desired.

#### **What resources does it take to run the tool:**

ESF budget for the Individual National Project "Keys for Life - Developing Key Competencies in Leisure-Time and Non-Formal Education": 185million CZK; follow-up: annually 4million CZK from the budget of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

**How it is documented:** On-line automatically in all three modules.

#### **Handling/use of gathered knowledge/results:**

It is possible to work with the results further at any time (for instance, to compare the results achieved in different periods throughout the year when using the tools repeatedly; to measure the progress made in the field of youth work quality system in youth NGOs and youth centres as well as key competences of youth leaders). Online application tool enables leaders and managers of the target groups to document the development of their quality youth work competencies and create their own "**Personal Competency Portfolio**" based on self-evaluation. In addition, the tool enables the users on the level of youth NGOs and youth clubs to elaborate their own Remedial Action Plan and document progress made in closing the weaknesses and observations.

#### **Strength of the tool:**

Enables equal access of all youth workers and youth leaders to the tool. The usage is free of charge and is adaptable to different needs of the users. User-friendly approaches.

#### **Weaknesses of the tool:**

A strong motivation of youth leaders and youth workers to devote their free time to use the tool continuously is required (a large number of youth workers and youth leaders are

volunteers and devote a huge amount of their free time to youth work). Thus the tool does not have many real users currently.

## Research and evidence supporting Youth Work

There is no significant research neither a system of continuous documentation, neither study of youth work initiated, requested or managed by public bodies recently (since the end of 2012). The same applies to national research structures researching youth work.

However, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is operating the [National Register of research on children and youth](#) to collect the related outcomes of research about Children and Young people of third actors as Universities, NGOs and others.

Since the end of 2016, The Czech Council of Children and Youth (National Youth Council, Non-governmental structure) started to operate an Analytical Center as a small unit dealing with the information, data and knowledge about youth work, youth policy and youth in cooperations with universities, researchers, private as well as public institutions and organisations.

## Participative youth work

Information on the participation of young people in general policymaking is described in [chapter 5.4](#). There are no specifics for youth work comparing to youth policy. The quality Youth Work should be based in principle on the young people's participation.

## "Smart" youth work: youth work in the digital world

There are no specific national-wide initiatives to support digital youth work.

There was [State Strategy on Digital Education till 2020](#); however, this did not deal with Youth Work specifically. The following development of the concept was landed within the [Education Strategy 2030+](#).

Youth organisations usually use digital technologies for communication and promotions, which was especially accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, when youth organizations very often sustained their activities in online space and developed also many digital projects and activities.

As an example, we can pick, e.g. [project Face2Art](#).

Face2Art Project implemented by an NGO HUDEBNÍ MLÁDEŽ (Jeunesses Musicales) Czech Republic and gives to young people from 13 to 23 years of their age an opportunity to present themselves as artists with their own pieces of art as well as to gain new artistic experience. They can enhance their artistic skills at:

- producing/making art
- perceiving/analysing art
- reflecting upon arts/culture (production as well as perception) in seven art disciplines

The platform for presentation is a virtual gallery where the pieces of art are exhibited and 'fans' can vote for them in the contest. Each discipline has a patron (a well-known artist) who comments on the best entries in the contest and becomes a personal mentor to the best participants. The online part is balanced with an offline part – young people participating in the project are invited to take part in several workshops and meetings and thus meet the online community face-to-face.

**Strength of the project:** There is a tendency that young people of a certain age are eager to express their personality in an original, innovative way. They often use art as a means of expressing themselves and seeking feedback and exchange of views with their peer community. They like to show pieces of art in social networks to get acknowledgement and reflection on their artistic performance. This kind of project supports the participants in making better use of their expression in social media. In the project, the participants can enjoy a safe online environment with pre-set rules and get addressed feedback and

professional mentoring from which they can learn a lot. Another strength of this approach to online youth work is a two-level interconnection between working with young people online and offline.

In 2018, The national network of certified youth information centres got an assignment from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to prioritise building up digital competencies of youth workers / leaders as well as leisure-time-based educators in their submitted projects within the Grant Scheme for Youth Information Centres in 2018. However, for later years, the support was stopped.

Supported activities in 2018:

- creating video-programmes which promote digital youth work
- providing youth information centres with game consoles of virtual reality and sharing them within the national network of youth information centres with an aim to get young people familiar with new and so far not widely accessible digital technologies
- creating training opportunities on digital and media literacy for youth workers in youth information centres including educational materials usable also for schools
- developing project "Digital citizenship" which would cover issues such as digital identity cards, digitalisation of public services, digital elections etc.
- organising roundtable discussions on digital competencies in youth work in regions
- issuing Inspiromat "Competencies for the 21st century" devoted to the digitalisation of youth work (the National Youth Information Centre is the issuing body)

## 10.5 Youth workers

### Status in national legislation

**The Czech legislation does not cover the concept of youth workers as such.**

Only within the Leisure-based education concept, pedagogical staff do the respective kind of youth work activities and also need respective educational qualifications. The Youth Workers in Leisure-based Education are thus covered with the **Act no. 563/2004 Sb. of 24 September 2004 on pedagogical workers and The Government Regulation no. 74/2005 Sb. of 9 February 2005 on leisure-time-based education** (Vyhláška č. 74/2005 Sb., o zájmovém vzdělávání) as amended. [The last amendment was in 2018.](#)

As pedagogical staff providing direct educational activity in Leisure-based Education are considered:

- a) teachers
- b) pedagogical staff in institutions providing further education of pedagogical workers
- c) tutors,
- d) special pedagogues,
- e) psychologists,
- f) pedagogues of Leisure time,
- g) assistants of pedagogues,
- h) trainers,
- i) leading pedagogical workers.

There is no central regulation on Youth Work or Youth Workers within the NGO Youth Work. The qualification is required only in specific situations within the state funding schemes based on the [vocational qualifications](#) within the National Register of Qualifications.

## Education, training and skills recognition

The pedagogical workers in Leisure-based education get the qualification through the:

- a) tertiary education in fields of Leisure-based Education (Free time pedagogy) or social pedagogy.
- b) tertiary education in educational fields (with the exception of practical vocational training)
- c) higher vocational school in a programme accredited for free time pedagogy or Social Pedagogy or pedagogy.
- d) higher vocational school training in further education in programmes of Free time pedagogy, Social Pedagogy, Tutoring or pedagogy studies.
- e) High schools education with leaving exam (maturita) in fields of Free time pedagogy or Social pedagogy.
- f) High school education programme with leaving exam (maturita) provided by tertiary educational institutions in a programme of life-long learning in fields of Free time pedagogy, Social pedagogy, Tutoring or Pedagogy.

## Mobility of youth workers

The mobility of Youth Workers is possible on individual attempts through the state programmes for funding Youth Work, Erasmus+ programme, European Solidarity Corps or other private sources. The only systematic exception is within the supported Czech-German Youth Cooperation.

## 10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work

### Existing arrangements

[The National Register of Qualifications](#) - Recognition and Validation of Learning Outcomes (Národní soustava kvalifikací, NSK)

It is a publicly accessible register of recognised professional qualifications as well as their assessment standards.

The NSK provides a collection of standards, allowing verification and recognition of abilities, skills and competencies.

**Professional qualifications** are awarded by authorised bodies that must be an agency of the Czech Government, either a ministry or the Czech National Bank according to the act 179/2006 Sb. Certified authorities are listed in the NSK in accordance with the relevant evaluation standards. Conditions for the granting of authorisation are governed by act 179/2006 Sb. on Further Education. A list of authorised bodies, including contact information, is included in the NSK web page ([www.narodnikvalifikace.cz](http://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz)) as well as each vocational qualification in the NSK, where authorisation has been granted.

During examinations, applicants must demonstrate all the competencies listed in the qualification standard according to the criteria in the assessment standard.

Successful applicants receive **the Vocational Qualification Certificate**, a nationwide valid certificate containing personal data of the applicant, authorised body data, the exam report, and a list of verified and validated competencies. The certificate and the exam report are stored as required by the law on archiving.

### Recognised professional qualifications in the youth field:

Approved in 2014

- **Coordinator of Volunteers** (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-752>)

Approved in 2015

- **Youth leader of activities aiming at improving state of health of children and youth** (hlavní vedoucí zotavovací akce dětí a mládeže) (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-749>)
- **Self-reliant youth leader for leisure-time-based activities** (samostatný vedoucí volnočasových aktivit dětí a mládeže) (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-750>)
- **Youth leader for leisure-time-based activities for children and youth** (vedoucí volnočasových aktivit dětí a mládeže) (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-751>)

Approved in 2017

- **Expert in the area of international cooperation with children and youth** (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-1291>)
- **Guarantor of the safety of children and youth in non-formal and leisure-time-based education** (Garant bezpečnosti pro oblast práce s dětmi a mládeží v zájmovém a neformálním vzdělávání) (<https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/qualification-1289>)

Quality Label for outstanding projects granted from Erasmus+ Program: Youth

This Quality Label is awarded in the Annual Valorisation Conference by the Deputy Minister acting as the National Authority for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme in the Czech Republic. The winning project based on outstanding youth work is selected by the Committee and presented by the beneficiaries in the plenary of the Conference.

Memorandum on supporting the recognition of the results of non-formal education

It is one of the final products of the ESF national project „[Keys for life – Developing Key Competencies in Leisure-Time-Based and Non-Formal Education](#)“ 2009 - 2013. „Keys for life – Developing Key Competences in Leisure-Time and Non-Formal Education“ provided also a set of minimum competence profiles for selected positions in youth NGOs as a baseline for recognition of particular qualifications, as well as educational programs aimed at youth workers so that they could build these identified minimum competence profiles for their continuous work with children and youth. The identified minimum competence profiles facilitate the process of the transparency and validation of skills and the recognition of youth workers' qualifications. The recognition of the value of non-formal education within the ESF project covered three different levels:

- Recognition of social benefits of the work with children and youth,
- Recognition of competencies gained in non-formal education by employers,
- Formal validation of competencies gained in non-formal education by public authorities and educational institutions,
- Self-evaluation of competencies gained in life-long learning.

The project provided methodological support for creating training programmes in the field of developing human resources in youth NGOs, youth clubs and leisure-time centres. Within the project, five expert meetings with employers, professional educators and other professional public were organised, which focussed on the recognition of the results of non-formal education. Moreover, a national conference (2011) for the same target group was organised during which” **Memorandum on supporting the recognition of the**

**results of non-formal education”** was signed by the representatives of the employers. In the meantime, the Memorandum (see above) was signed up by more signatories.

Another national ESF [Project K2](#) (2012 – 2015) as a follow up contains a key activity based on recognising the results of non-formal education within which the “Personal Competency Portfolio” was further elaborated, and its scope was enlarged by planning the personal development of youth workers. Four roundtables were organised for employers, public authorities, professional educators and youth workers.

ESF budget for Keys for Life: 185 mil. CZK; follow-up: annually 4 mil. CZK from the budget of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. ESF budget for K2: 57 mil. CZK.

### Youthpass certificates

Youthpass certificates are widely promoted by the National Agency of the Erasmus+ Programme, especially in the activities of youth field such as Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service, Mobility of Youth Workers, Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) and Structured Dialogue meetings. Participants of approved projects are informed about having the right to receive recognition for their participation and learning in the projects in a form of the Youthpass certificate. The National Agency promotes Youthpass in their information campaigns also for potential beneficiaries.

### Skills

As competencies are seen as a flexible concept of acquiring information, skills, attitudes and values, young people in various youth work activities can acquire them depending on the given youth work activity. However, apart from the qualifications in youth work, there is no central register or recognition framework - it depends on the level and the actors involved. Following the discussion, it seems that it needs to wait until the competencies are reformed within the formal education system to be possible to make relevant connections.

## 10.7 Raising awareness about youth work

### Information providers

The Czech Republic uses the [Eurodesk](#) network, which focuses on information concerning mobilities, non-formal educational activities for young people and international youth work.

There used to be a system of National Youth Information Centers, see details in [chapter 6.9](#) 'Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning'). However, through the educational policy transformation, the state system was cancelled since the 1st of January 2020.

From the state perspective are among the providers formal schooling facilities, leisure-based education facilities, partially expert semi-budgetary organizations as National Pedagogy Institute and the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research, and mainly NGOs dealing with Youth Work.

### Key initiatives

Since 1st of September 2018, started a project of the National Institute for Further Education (since 1st of January 2020 The National Pedagogy Institute) called [Interconnecting formal and Non-Formal, including Leisure-based education](#).

The main goal of the project is to support the cooperation between teachers and youth workers who should **perceive together as partners by the common goal of developing the competencies of Children and Young People**.

The project period is 2018 - 2021 and the costs are covered by the EU ESF Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic.

Among the outcomes linked to youth work awareness-raising, a publication and promo videos are in preparation.

No further specific initiatives focused on raising awareness about non-formal education and its forms are being organised by the state in the Czech Republic.

## 10.8 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

The new state Strategy on Education 2030+ was created and no new post-2020 National Youth Strategy 2021 is planning.

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports deals mainly with direct support towards youth NGOs through the subsidy programmes and focus on the topics how to strengthen the connection between formal and non-formal education, provides as well by the youth organizations.

On the level of state agencies, the [National Institute for Further Education and the National Institute for Education have merged](#) into the National Pedagogy Institute since the 1st of January 2020. Within the Institute new Unit for Non-formal and Leisure-based education is being created. The main focus by the public agency supporting youth work is connected with the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme and the European Solidarity Corps.

The main focus in the field is put by the Education Strategy 2030+ on the connections and added value of non-formal education and formal education with aims to better equip young people with competencies relevant for professional, personal and civic life and for lowering inequalities in education.

The sector is also preparing for the Czech EU Presidency in the second half of 2022.

### Ongoing debates

The ongoing debates reflect the changes and processes in policy and public structures development. The discussions about the Youth Work development are rather on expert than public bases, and their further continuation waits until the administration transformation process have finished in working structural environment with a stable personal situation.

As [The new Education 2030+ Strategy](#) foresees more linking of Leisure-based Education within the school segment, further discussion is needed to clear the future situation up.

An action plan for the field of Youth and Connections between formal and non-formal education for the period 2022 - 2023 is in preparation by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Additional support was provided to cope with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and further development is not clear yet. The pandemic hit with the need of social distancing also the youth sector, and since the pandemic started, crises, preventive and operational issues are discussed according to the pandemic development.

In October 2021, a national election could significantly impact the public debate; however, youth work is not a main priority of the election debate.

## GLOSSARY

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**Career counselling:** represents an institutionalised system of advisory services, designed to help individuals decide on their professional and educational path at any stage of their life. This package provides services both for individuals who have not yet entered the

labour market, and also job seekers who are looking for work, as well as for those who are currently employed.

**Critical thinking:** is a careful and considered decision on whether we accept or reject a claim, or whether we forego any judgement of it. Critical thinking also involves a degree of certainty with which we accept or reject a particular claim.

**Cultural continuity:** Cultural continuity is understood to be the creative preservation and transmission of cultural heritage, which is considered to be a set of tangible and intangible values, works and cultural relations, which originated in the past but whose origin and meaning contribute to the creation of contemporary cultural and social values.

**Education for sustainable development:** Is a prerequisite for the acquisition of the type of ways of thinking, decision-making and behaviour by the individual, which lead to sustainable behaviour in his/her personal, professional and civic life.

**Emancipated use of the media:** This means a type of approach to the media that will enable their instruction and, therefore, also their safe and effective use.

**Employment:** is defined as the number of people involved in productive activities in the economy. This concept includes both employees and self-employed persons.

**Employability:** is understood to be a form of specific active job adaptability, which enables workers to identify their career opportunities and to exploit them

**Environmental education, training and awareness:** Training, awareness and education are provided in such a way as to promote thinking and activities that are consistent with the principle of permanently sustainable development, and which encourage awareness of responsibility for maintaining the quality of the environment and its individual components, and of respect for life in all its forms.

**Environmental literacy:** This covers the knowledge, skills, disposition and behaviour of an individual to enable him/her to make competent decisions and to act in situations relating to the environment at a local, regional and global level. An environmentally literate person makes informed decisions regarding the environment, is willing to act upon these decisions to improve the quality of life of other people and participated in civic life.

**ERYICA (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency):** The European Youth Information and Counselling Agency is an independent European organisation, composed of national youth information co-ordination bodies and networks. It aims to intensify European co-operation in the field of youth information work and services.

**Formal education:** is education which is provided in educational institutions, whose function, aim, content, means and methods of assessment are defined and specified in the legislation. A typical educational institution is the school. Formal education includes consecutive levels and types of learning, which are either intended for the population as a whole (e.g. mandatory basic education), or for specific groups (e.g. secondary and tertiary education). Completion of this education is generally confirmed by a certificate. The outcome is a certain level of education.

**Healthy lifestyle:** is a healthy way of life, which leads to minimising the risk of disease.

**Information youth network in the CR:** consists of youth information centres, which are independent workplaces providing children and young people, as well as other interested members of the public, with information and services that are primarily related to the life of the younger generation.

**Informal learning:** can be understood to be a process of spontaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies from everyday experience of work, the family and leisure activities. It also includes self-learning, where the learner is unable to verify the results of learning. Unlike formal and non-formal education, informal learning is unorganised, generally unsystematic and not coordinated through institutions.



**Intercultural dialogue:** is seen as an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups from different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and historical conditions, based on mutual understanding and respect.

**Intergenerational dialogue:** serves to ensure that demographical changes were not only perceived to be a conflict and competition for resources between the younger and older generation. The aim is to improve contacts between different generations and to ensure that all groups benefit from these contacts. This helps to reduce barriers and prejudices between different groups and promoted intergenerational respect and solidarity.

**Inter-religious dialogue:** In the context of religious pluralism, dialogue means any type of positive and constructive inter-religious relations with individuals or communities that belong to another religion, a dialogue that seeks mutual understanding and mutual enrichment, with full respect for truth and the freedom of both parties.

**Key competencies:** represent a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values that are important for the personal development and success of every member of society. Their selection and conception are based on values that are generally accepted by society and on generally shared ideas about which competencies contribute to an individual's education, to a happy and successful life, and to strengthening the function of civil society.

**Leisure time:** is a period when a person carries out the activities he/she wants, at a pace that allows him/her to relax, without any intention of being productive for the benefit of society. Leisure time is also a period outside work, liberated from overtime work and commuting to the workplace.

**Leisure-based education in the youth field:** Provides participants with leisure time activities focusing on different areas. The term "education" refers to both education and training. Interest education takes place in school facilities for interest education, particularly in leisure centres, after-school centres and school clubs. Leisure centres are also involved in additional care of gifted children, pupils and students, provide for the organisation of competitions and exhibitions in collaboration with schools and other institutions. The objectives, content and outcomes are usually closely linked to all types of school education and are guaranteed by the State as part of the school system.

**Memory institutions:** This term refers to archives, museums, libraries, research institutes and universities, whose goal is to protect and display documents from our cultural heritage. These facilities tend to the national memory and also create new sources of information on cultural events at a local and a national level.

**National Coordinator of the information system for youth in the CR:** In the CR, the national coordinator is the National Information Centre for Youth, the specialised department of the National Institute for Further Education, which provides methodological assistance for issues concerning the construction and operation of the IYN.

**National network of environmental education centres:** Is a joint programme run by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and administered by the Association of environmental education centres, Pavučina, in close cooperation with the Czech Union for Nature Conservation. The programme was launched in 1999 to stabilise the development of existing, and to initiate the establishment of new environmental education centres in the Czech Republic

**New media technologies:** This is a type of public communication based on the internet, which enables a far greater degree of interactivity: the recipient is able to actively participate in the form of a media product or in menu selection and at the same time the (media) product is better able to respond to user requests.

**Non-formal education:** Usually takes place outside the formal education system and without additional recognition by the competent body or institution does not generally lead to the acquisition of a level of education. Non-formal education focuses on the acquisition of life skills and training for active citizenship and includes both individual and group

learning using a collective approach. It is self-contained and focuses on the learning process and on experiences and activities based on the needs of the participants. A necessary condition for non-formal education is the participation of a professional facilitator, trainer or manager.

**Non-organised youth:** young people who have not committed to regular participation in organised activities and are not associated with the organisers of these activities as members of the same organisation.

**Organised youth:** registered individual members of non-governmental non-profit organisations or registered visitors of youth centres and other facilities working with children and youth, who are involved in regular activities or traditional one-off activities at these facilities.

**Political literacy:** Helps people to become politically conscious and active. It focuses on developing those skills that help individuals to observe and explain social phenomena in political terms. Political literacy is more pedagogically focused on the development of political thinking, than on fostering knowledge of political institutions.

**Public space:** is broadly defined as a part of the life of each person which is distinguished from both the private and the public sector.

**Risky behaviour:** is the type of behaviour which results in a demonstrable increase in health, social, educational and other risks to the individual or to society.

**Self-awareness:** is a cognitive component of the self-concept of the individual's "I", as an image of oneself, one's personality and its components. It is the cognitive aspect of man's relationship to himself.

**Self-concept:** is a summary of opinions of oneself, of one's place in the world. It is a summary of feelings through which we experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction with ourselves, greater or less self-confidence, self-esteem and influence on others. Self-concept is also an awareness of our personal characteristics, albeit distorted or stylised, but always with the intention of making a certain impression on others.

**Self-organisation:** expresses the continuous process of organising complexity and creating order. Organised complexity with internal order thus becomes both the creator and the creative processes. The system therefore performs the processes – it organises itself – which in turn enable the existence of the system.

**Self-regulation:** is a person's ability to manage their voluntary actions; conscious efforts to achieve the established goals; also the adoption of social norms, which then become part of the self-regulatory system of the individual.

**Social activation service:** are field or outpatient services provided to families with a child whose development is at risk due to the impacts of a long-term critical social situation, which the parents are unable to overcome without help and which presents further risks which threaten his development. The service covers the following basic activities: educational and motivational activities; mediating contacts with the social environment; social therapeutical activities; assistance in the enforcement of rights, legitimate interests and in dealing with personal matters.

### **Structured dialogue with young people (SD)**

*SD at EU level:*

Structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations serves as a permanent forum for joint reflection on the priorities for European cooperation in the youth field, its implementation and evaluation.

*SD at the national level (equivalent to SD at the EU level):*

Structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations serves as a permanent forum for joint reflection on priorities for cooperation in the youth field at a national level, its implementation and evaluation.

**Sustainable development:** Permanent sustainable development is development enabling current and future generations to retain the possibility of satisfying their basic needs while at the same time preserving biodiversity and the natural function of ecosystems.

**Young people with fewer opportunities:** are young people who are disadvantaged in comparison with their peers, because they face one or more situations and obstacles such as social barriers, economic barriers, disability, educational difficulties, cultural differences, health problems, geographical barriers, etc. In certain contexts, these situations or barriers prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, trans-national mobility and participation, active citizenship, empowerment and social inclusion.

**Young people's initiative (or youth initiative):** is a project where young people participate actively and directly in activities of their own devising and which allow them to develop their initiative and creativity. The project is initiated, created and implemented by young people themselves. Young people's initiative projects help to develop the personalities of young people and brings changes that benefit the general public (and in particular the areas where these young people live).

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Information from previous years can be accessed and freely downloaded through the PDF files below.

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[Czech Republic 2020.pdf](#)

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