

MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

National Coordination Authority

MAIN FINDINGS FROM EVALUATIONS

Summary of selected evaluations carried out
in the 2014-2020 programming period

MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

National Coordination Authority

MoRD-NCA Evaluation Unit

Staroměstské náměstí 6

110 15 Prague 1

Authors: Jana Drlíková, M.A., Mgr. Tomáš Novotný, RNDr. Jana Bystřická

www.dotaceEU.cz/knihovna-evaluaci

E-mail: evaluate@mmr.cz

INTRODUCTION

The publication you have opened **aims to** acquaint the reader with the **main outcomes of the evaluation activities** in the field of the European structural and investment funds (ESIF, ESI funds, European funds) in the Czech Republic (CZ).

Evaluation or **assessment** is a source of evidence. It is one of the ways to support the decision-making process with concrete knowledge. The aim is to obtain reliable background information for strategic and implementation management based on the formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

The publication summarizes the results, conclusions and recommendations of two types of evaluations. The first type of assessment are **impact/result** evaluations, which are based on assessing whether the planned impacts/results supported by the intervention have actually been achieved. The second type are **process** evaluations, evaluations of an operational nature, which are carried out in order to streamline the implementation settings and thus reduce the administrative burden.

The publication is divided into two parts. **The first part** of the publication deals with evaluations carried out by **the MoRD-NCA Evaluation Unit**. This part is divided into the following chapters:

- *Chapter 1 Evidence for the future* presents information and interesting features relevant to the setting of the 2021+ programming period.
- *Chapter 2 What we know about impacts* covers the result or impact evaluations.
- *Chapter 3 What we know about processes* summarizes information for a more efficient setup of implementation processes and reduction of administrative burden.
- *Chapter 4 What else we have done* gives a summary of other analytical or evaluation activities of the MoRD-NCA Evaluation Unit, which were not mentioned in the previous chapters.
- *Chapter 5 What we are preparing* is an overview of currently pending evaluations.

Each chapter presents the main conclusions and findings for each evaluation separately.

The second part of the publication deals with evaluations carried out by the **evaluation units of managing authorities**. Each chapter only covers one managing authority. The chapters summarise evaluations first in terms of results and/or impacts, and then in terms of processes for a more effective implementation setup.

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PART I

MAIN FINDINGS FROM EVALUATIONS OF THE EVALUATION UNIT OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION AUTHORITY

The following part of the publication deals with the **outcomes of evaluations carried out by the Evaluation Unit of the National Coordination Authority**. The Evaluation Unit of the National Coordination Authority acts as a national evaluation coordinator. It carries out evaluations that cut across programmes or focus on key themes that are related to the national level of the EU funds use.

In recent years, the Evaluation Unit of the National Coordination Authority has focused on three main areas which are analogically reflected in the following chapters. The first area covered evaluations serving as **background material for the preparation of the new programming period after 2020**. Secondly, the Unit investigated the **impacts/results of interventions** that were and are being implemented using the European funds. Thirdly, it focused on process evaluation which provided valuable advice to improve the set-up of European fund administration procedures.

In this part of the publication, the reader will also find information on other analytical and evaluation activities of the Evaluation Unit of the National Coordination Authority as well as on ongoing evaluations that have not yet been completed.

1. EVIDENCE FOR THE FUTURE



The chapter “Evidence for the future” contains evaluation outputs that have served and are intended as background documents for the preparation of the 2021–2027 programming period setup. The conclusions and recommendations from the evaluations are thus primarily intended for those who set up the future cohesion policy, especially the Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic in the role of the National Coordination Authority. However, they can serve as inspiration for all European fund players in the preparation of the 2021+ programming period.

EVALUATION RESULTS IN THIS CHAPTER:

ARCHITECTURE OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AFTER 2021

- ❖ Successful implementation of European funds needs stability, predictability and continuity.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION WITH APPLICANTS/BENEFICIARIES

- ❖ The beneficiaries are satisfied with communication with the managing authorities during the preparation of the grant application as well as during the project implementation; the appraisal of the applications is objective but long and complex.

METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT EVALUATION

- ❖ Evolution, not revolution: in the period after 2021, it is necessary to focus more on beneficiaries as the main user of the system, to simplify and clarify methodologies and to focus on the transfer of good practice.

EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

- ❖ After 2021, it is important to create an enabling and supportive environment for a greater role of financial instruments, to simplify and consolidate them, and focus on better promotion.

ARCHITECTURE OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AFTER 2021

Successful implementation of European funds needs stability, predictability and continuity.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ We collected experience from abroad about various types of implementation structures.
- ❖ So-called cards have been created for each EU Member State informing about the functioning of the European funds in that country.
- ❖ 14 case studies have been developed on the following topics: architecture of European funds in general (Estonia, Slovenia, Portugal, Germany, Hungary), financial instruments (Slovenia, Lithuania), territorial dimension and integrated instruments (Portugal, Poland, Germany, Sweden) and legislation (Germany, Poland, Lithuania).
- ❖ Variants of the future setting of the ESIF in the Czech Republic have been proposed.

ESIF ARCHITECTURE

Successful implementation of ESIF = stability, predictability and continuity.

- ❖ It is important to maintain the know-how transferred by key employees.
- ❖ Informal communication and sharing of views among entities is a key prerequisite for smooth implementation.
- ❖ Good practice - some countries use a specific intermediate body centrally providing cross-cutting activities in project administration.
- ❖ Good practice - communication and sharing of views between the audit and the managing authorities are among key prerequisites for smooth implementation.

ESIF LEGISLATION

The ESIF legislation helps the enforcement of the rules and contributes to better mutual cooperation between actors.

- ❖ The preparation of the legislation took considerable time (even several years) and required consultation with all relevant partners.
- ❖ A law on ESIF existed in the evaluated countries already in the previous period.
- ❖ Legislative anchoring of irregularities or the process of their handling were not identified as a major problem.

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (FI)

The use of FI has proved its worth in promoting entrepreneurship, energy efficiency and public infrastructure.

- ❖ They are managed by a fund of funds - there can be one (Slovenia) or more (Lithuania).
- ❖ They are successful if they are set so as to fill a market niche and not compete with existing instruments.
- ❖ Coordination by national development banks is also important.
- ❖ FI help to change the subsidy mentality".
- ❖ The fund of funds manager was selected by way of exception from the public procurement act.

INTEGRATED INSTRUMENTS

Integrated instruments help to encourage the bottom-up approach but are administratively demanding.

- ❖ CLLD - helps to build local partnerships, but for successful implementation it is necessary to build administrative capacities of the LAGs. Good practice identified in Sweden where one multi-fund OP covers the whole the territory.
- ❖ ITI - the importance of this instrument varies across the examined countries (significant vs marginal). Good practice in Germany and Sweden where ITIs were involved informally, which reduced the administrative burden

RESULTS





GENERAL SETTING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

❖ **Stability and continuity**

- Avoiding rapid changes.
- Making changes on the basis of analyses evaluating the functioning to date.
- Consistently exerting maximum efforts to retain existing workers and to choose an appropriate motivation system for that purpose.

❖ **Long-term view**

- Changes should take into account a longer time horizon than one period.
- Suitable changes in the implementation structure should be devised already now in case the allocation decreases more radically in the future.

❖ **Informal communication**

- Strengthening informal communication among the implementation structure entities.
- Good relations between key representatives of the various bodies can contribute to solving problems without the use of complicated paragraphs.
- Concentration of the implementation structure institutions can enhance that effect.

❖ **Relationship between the audit authority and the other implementation structure entities**

- Strengthening communication and exchange of experience between AA and MA/IB in order to minimize differences in opinions and assessment of identical situations.
- Consider whether the MA should always have the option to comment on draft audit reports even in cases where the audited entity is only the beneficiary.

THE SETTING OF SPECIFIC ASPECTS

Financial Instruments (FI)

- ❖ Evaluating the success of the implementation so far.
- ❖ Defining expectations and setting the goals.
- ❖ Carrying out an ex-ante analysis to identify market niches.
- ❖ **Deciding on the form of FI as soon as possible.**
- ❖ Involving all stakeholders in the preparation.
- ❖ Avoiding duplication.
- ❖ **Enabling the involvement of private entities** and motivating them.
- ❖ Unifying FI support provided from different sources.

Integrated instruments

- ❖ Maintaining **the multi-fund nature** of local development strategies.
- ❖ **Not restricting the themes** too much in CLLD and ITI.
- ❖ Adequate support for LAGs and ITIs from the implementation structure, e.g. by establishing a single point of contact for all funds/programmes.
- ❖ **Strengthening the expertise** of LAG and ITI staff.
- ❖ **Simplifying the administrative procedures.**
- ❖ Evaluating the success of the implementation so far.

Legislative anchoring

- ❖ If it is decided to draw up a specific regulation, start its preparation as soon as possible and involve all relevant partners.
- ❖ **Opening a discussion** on the current legal set-up of irregularities.
- ❖ **Strengthening the role of the MA in handling irregularities** and the partner relationship between the MA and the AA.
- ❖ Simplifying the process of dealing with irregularities by setting a **minimum threshold for the value of irregularities** in order to reduce their number.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION WITH APPLICANTS/BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries are satisfied with communication with the managing authorities during the preparation of the grant application as well as during the project implementation; the appraisal of the applications is objective but long and complex.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ A survey was carried out on the opinions of applicants/ beneficiaries concerning the administration of projects in the European funds environment.
- ❖ The results of the survey will be used as a background material for preparing the rules of the European funds in the 2021–2027 programming period.
- ❖ The consultation took place from June to August 2018. More than 24,000 applicants and beneficiaries were approached and responses were received from more than 3,200 entities.

- ❖ The survey shows that satisfied applicants/beneficiaries prevail over the dissatisfied ones in their evaluation of the different phases of administration of projects financed from European funds. At the same time, with the exception of the process of announcing and implementing public contracts, each administration phase was evaluated as satisfactory by more than a half of the entities.

WHAT WORKS

The beneficiaries are satisfied with the information from and communication with the MA/IB.

- ❖ 76% of applicants/ beneficiaries are satisfied with the MA/IB communication related to the preparation of the grant application.
- ❖ 78% of applicants/ beneficiaries believe that the calls contained sufficient information for preparing the grant application.
- ❖ 67% of beneficiaries are satisfied with the MA/IB communication related to the submission of implementation reports.
- ❖ 79% of beneficiaries believe that the check was carried out professionally.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Beneficiaries consider the Project Appraisal to be long and point out the complexity and ambiguity of the tendering rules. The information presented in the cost-benefit analysis is duplicate and the analysis is rather complex.

- ❖ 71% of beneficiaries consider the appraisal of the application to be longer than expected or excessively long.
- ❖ 64% of beneficiaries see the rules of public procurement as complicated.
- ❖ 74% of applicants consider the cost-benefit analysis to be challenging and duplicate; for 14% of applicants, the CBA was useful in setting the project parameters.

RESULTS



METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT EVALUATION

Evolution, not revolution: in the period after 2021, there is a need to focus more on beneficiaries, simplify and streamline methodologies, and the transfer of good practice.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The methodological environment of the European funds in the Czech Republic in the programming period 2014–2020 was evaluated.
- ❖ Good practice and bottlenecks were identified in the methodological environment from the perspective of the implementation structure actors.
- ❖ Information has been gathered on what elements have proven to be appropriate and should be maintained, and what adjustments and changes can be made to simplify the system, reduce administrative barriers and make the project management system more transparent.

THE SETTING OF THE METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The idea of a single methodological environment (SME) has been accepted, but the SME is extensive, confusing and unnecessarily detailed.

- ❖ The clarity of the methodological environment is impaired by:
 - the scope - hundreds to thousands of pages and frequent changes and updates.
- ❖ The scope of the methodological environment swells particularly with the findings of the Audit Authority. Requirements are often taken over without explaining their application in practice.
- ❖ The methodologies are often unclear and users have to enquire about their interpretation.
- ❖ The guidelines should be generally reduced at SME and programme level.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE ENTITIES

Communication was often mentioned as a problem. It is not about the lack of tools and channels, but about their functionality.

- ❖ A problem is the transfer of information from MA to IB or within organizations, which may lead to misinterpretation of information towards applicants/beneficiaries.
- ❖ The key to proper information transfer is the setting up of at least a basic mechanism, for example in the form of a regular newsletter or regular meetings.
- ❖ Informal communication can make information sharing more effective.

MONITORING SYSTEM MS2014+

The intent, as with SME, is correct, but there is no satisfaction with the way it is put in practice.

- ❖ MS2014+ is significantly influenced by the setting of the methodological environment.
- ❖ Reservations mainly relate to:
 - the system robustness, slow responses and (partial) non-functioning of some elements.
- ❖ MAs/IBs gained distrust in the system due to initial technical problems.
- ❖ The change process is also problematic:
 - it is difficult to track the changes and comprehensive records of changes are missing,
 - some changes have become out of date (because of the long deadlines).
- ❖ The low user-friendliness increases administrative and time demands for the implementation structure as well as for applicants/beneficiaries.

RESULTS





THE SETTING OF THE METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The methodological environment should be more based on recommendations and the provision of guidance and examples of good and bad practice.

- ❖ It is recommended that the number and volume of methodological instructions be reduced:
 - at the SME level and in the methodological environment of programmes.
- ❖ Targeting the methodological assistance to a narrower range of topics and thereby supporting greater discussion and transfer of good practice, organizing training workshops.
- ❖ Greater expert support from the MoRD in cross-cutting and problematic topics.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE ENTITIES

Supporting informal communication among entities, interactive discussion, sharing of good practice.

- ❖ Recommendations for more effective communication:
 - more informal meetings,
 - meetings that are more oriented on informal agenda,
 - exchange of experience in the form of traineeships.
- ❖ Working groups:
 - rationalizing the number of working groups,
 - revising their thematic focus,
 - selecting the appropriate format of working groups (interactive discussions),
 - sharing documents and information (Sharepoint, etc.)
 - setting up a mechanism for transmitting information within the MA and IB.
- ❖ Greater exchange of experience between AA and other entities of the implementation structure:
 - seeking consensus in the interpretation of the set rules.

MONITORING SYSTEM MS2014+

Greater stability, More intuitive arrangement, Faster response.

- ❖ Improving communication on changes in the system and modification requirements.
- ❖ Ensuring functionality in the basic system interface for all programmes:
 - availability and reliability of data,
 - interconnection with other systems,
 - basic check of inserted content.
- ❖ The system should be more open to its users so that they can mine data better and more efficiently.
- ❖ Preparing the technical solution of the monitoring system (in accordance with the rules) for the period 2021+ as soon as possible.

EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

It is important to create a supportive and supportive environment for a larger role for financial instruments after 2021, simplification and consolidation are needed, and better promotion is needed.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The aim of the study is to gain an overview of the areas (sectors), beneficiaries and activities where it is appropriate to implement financial instruments (FI).
- ❖ The study show under what conditions the beneficiaries are willing to apply for support in the form of financial instruments. The overview will be used to set the future period.

- ❖ The current state of FI implementation in the Czech Republic and the EU is considerably fragmented. There are 40 types.
- ❖ The FI are insufficiently promoted in the Czech Republic.
- ❖ In the Czech Republic, the beneficiaries are strongly dependent on subsidies and reluctant to use alternative forms of financing, especially in a situation where the administrative burden of using the FI is almost identical to the subsidy financing.
- ❖ In the next period, the usability of FI must be simplified in terms of processes, improving promotion and increasing the pressure on consolidation of the instruments and on using the functioning ones.
- ❖ No additional FIs or funds supporting the same area or activity should be created. See, for example, the area of energy savings currently spread out over 4 operational programmes, all of which will have or already have a separate FI.
- ❖ It is necessary to set the FIs so that they do not crowd out commercial financing but help to activate other sources usable for project/investment financing.

RESULTS



RECOMMENDATIONS



THE SETTING OF FI

- ❖ Financial instruments should be more user-friendly compared to subsidy calls and almost indistinguishable from commercial products for the beneficiaries.
- ❖ Potential final beneficiaries must be aware of the fact that the state wants to use this form to support selected activities and areas.
- ❖ The conditions for the use of repayable assistance must not change.

FI PROMOTION

- ❖ Increasing promotion at all levels.
- ❖ The range of communication channels on the FI options must be broader:
- ❖ It is recommended that the promotion be targeted at the individual groups of potential beneficiaries who should be directed towards the main information source.

FI ARCHITECTURE

- ❖ Unifying and clarifying the structure of FI providers/ managers. It is not necessary to have a separate instrument with a manager for each area.
- ❖ It is possible to introduce an implementation architecture with a fund of funds - or to unify the provision of FIs so that they are not primarily single-type, but enable a combination or selection according to the specific needs of the final beneficiary.
- ❖ Equity FIs are also an important area. This type of FI is key for achieving progress in the use of FIs.

2. WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT IMPACTS



This chapter informs on what has been accomplished with the use of the European funds. It explains the benefits of European funds for the Czech Republic and presents the effects of supported interventions together with examples of concrete results achieved.

EVALUATION RESULTS IN THIS CHAPTER:

ANALYSIS OF THE ESIF IMPACT ON THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND REGIONS

- ❖ Thanks to the European funds, the GDP of the Czech Republic and of regions is growing.

MACRO-MODELLING OF THE ESIF CONTRIBUTION

- ❖ The greatest short-term impacts are achieved by investment in transport infrastructure, the largest long-term impacts by investments in human resources.

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND EU FUNDS IN 2007-2015

- ❖ The European funds play a large role in investment in the Czech Republic, the most in the field of industry.

MAPPING AND SYNTHESIS OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE RESULTS AND BENEFITS OF EU FUNDS IN THE 2007-2013 PERIOD

- ❖ The European funds have increased the quality of life in the Czech Republic in many areas.

EX-POST EVALUATION IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Thanks to the European funds, research organizations can better participate in international projects.

EX-POST EVALUATION IN THE FIELD OF BUSINESS RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- ❖ The European funds have helped to increase technological development in the Czech Republic and cooperation between companies and higher education institutions.

EX-POST EVALUATION IN THE FIELD OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

- ❖ Landfill has been reduced thanks to the European funds.

EX-POST EVALUATION IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY SAVINGS

- ❖ Thanks to the European funds, the Czech economy has reduced its energy intensity and negative environmental impacts.

ANALYSIS OF THE ESIF IMPACT ON THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND REGIONS

Thanks to the European funds, the GDP of the Czech Republic and of regions is growing.

OBJECTIVE



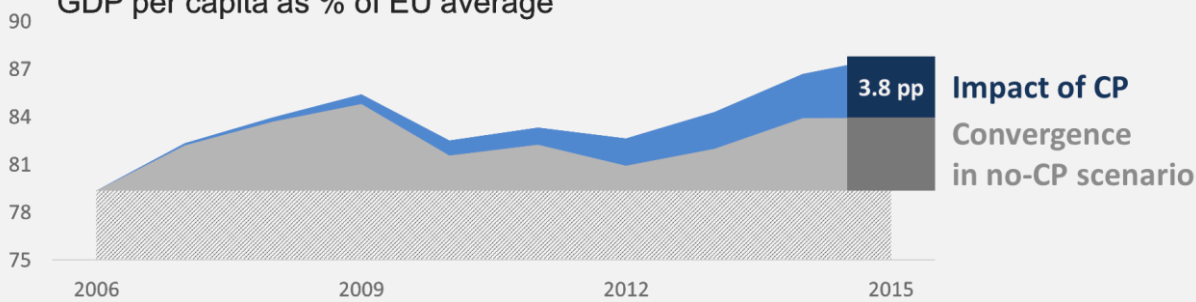
- ❖ Evaluation of the ESIF impact on GDP of the Czech Republic and regions.
- ❖ The analysis shows how European funds foster the development in the Czech Republic from a macroeconomic point of view, and outlines the development from the perspective of regions.

ESI funds have a positive impact on the Czech economy.

- ❖ In 2015, GDP in the Czech Republic was 3.8% higher thanks to ESIF (compared to 2006, i.e. without cohesion policy). Without the policy, real wages in the Czech Republic would be 3% lower and the employment rate would be 2% lower.

Contribution of Cohesion policy to CZ convergence, 2007–15

GDP per capita as % of EU average

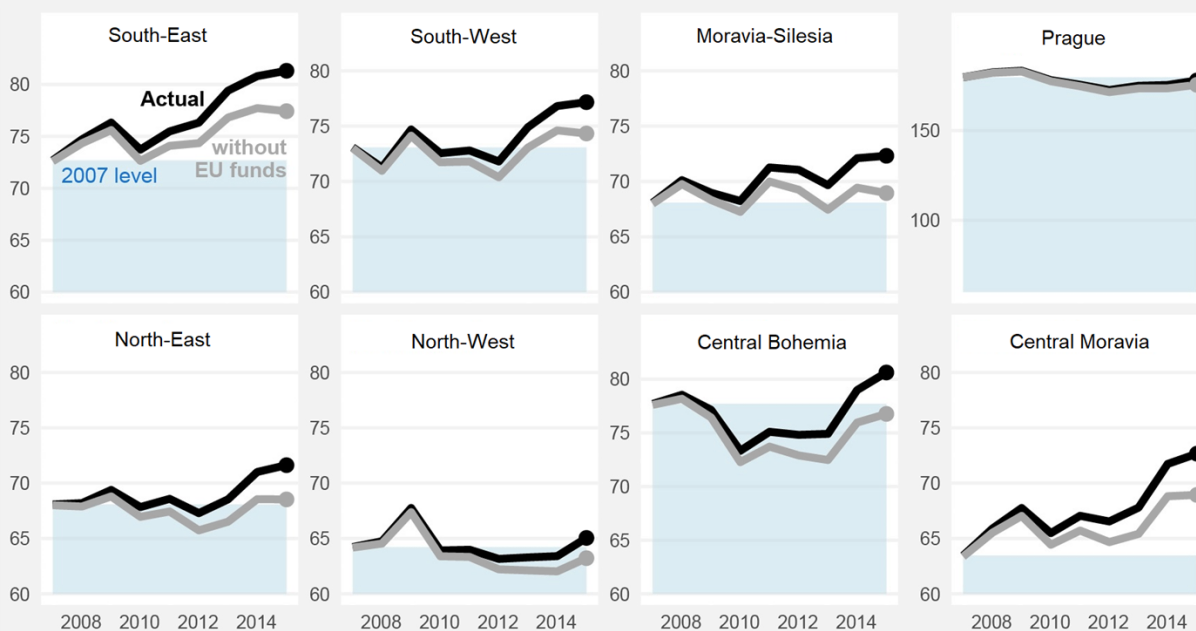


RESULTS



Convergence of Czech regions thanks to ESIF.

- ❖ Thanks to the European funds, the economies of all regions grew.
- ❖ Two Czech regions - Central Bohemia and Southwest - would not approximate the average level of EU GDP without cohesion policy.



MACRO-MODELLING OF THE ESIF CONTRIBUTION

The greatest short-term impacts are achieved by investment in transport infrastructure, the largest long-term impacts by investments in human resources.

OBJECTIVE



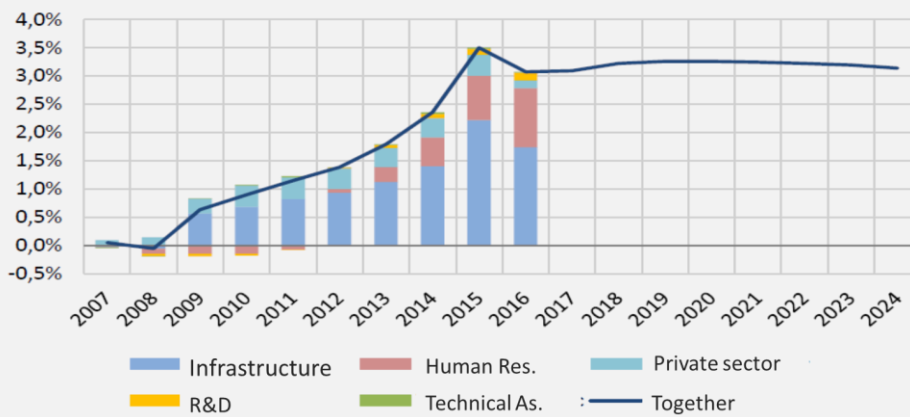
- ❖ The study provides an assessment of the impact of European funds in the main thematic areas and regions on the GDP development in the Czech Republic in 2007–2016, using macroeconomic models.
- ❖ The models simulate the development of the Czech economy without the influence of the European funds.

- ❖ In the period 2004–2015, projects worth roughly CZK 939 billion were reimbursed in the Czech Republic, of which approximately 20% were national public sources.
- ❖ European funds have a positive effect on the Czech GDP, especially in the long term. The impact on GDP was the greatest in 2015, when it grew by 3.5% compared to 2007.

RESULTS



Impact of ESIF on GDP (difference against baseline in 2007)



Zdroj: Model QUEST III R&D.

Dynamics of the impact of the intervention fields/ themes on GDP

Infrastructure

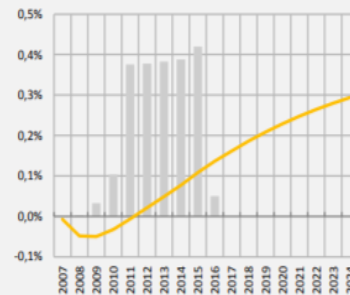
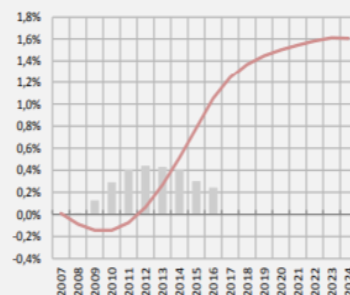
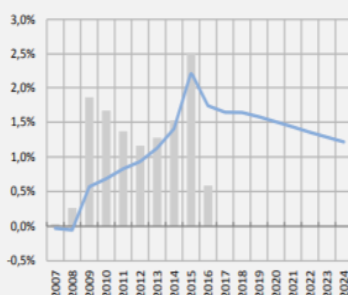
- ❖ **The greatest short-term impact on GDP.**
- ❖ Initially, the GDP grew significantly but then it has been gradually decreasing.

Human resources

- ❖ **They have the greatest impact on GDP in the long term.**
- ❖ The impact was even negative at the beginning, but then the multiplier effect manifested it-

Research and development

- ❖ The biggest delay in the positive impact on GDP.
- ❖ However, this development is not surprising given the long-term nature of the activities and projects.



Zdroj: ČNB, Ministerstvo pro místní rozvoj, model QUEST III R&D, vlastní propočty.

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND EU FUNDS IN 2007-2015

The EU funds play a large role in investment in the Czech Republic, the most in industry.

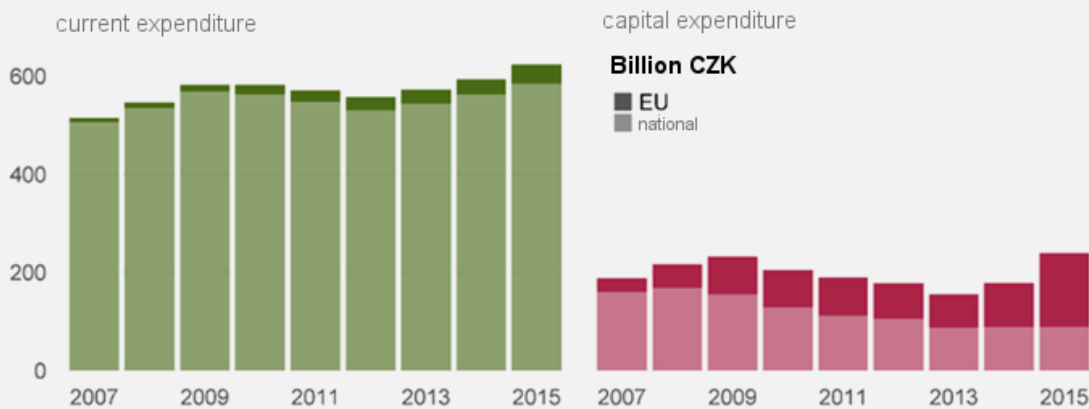
OBJECTIVE



- ❖ We have mapped out how the funds provided from the EU budget enter public spending in the Czech Republic.
- ❖ We have identified the sectors that are heavily dependent on EU funds.

Total national and EU expenditure (2007-2015)

- ❖ **An important role of EU funds in investments** - between 2007 and 2015, the share of EU funds in investments (capital expenditure) increased from 15% to 63% (from CZK 28 billion to CZK 150 billion).

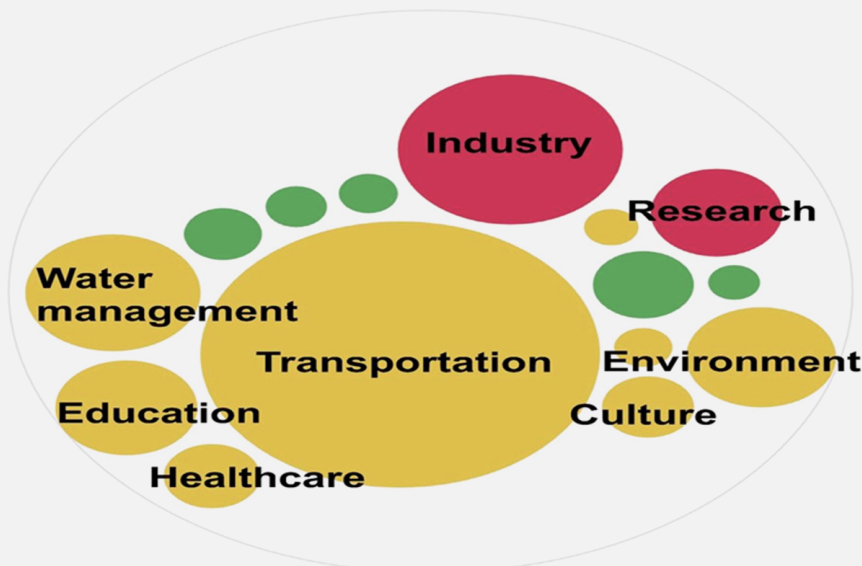


RESULTS



Investment is dependent on ESI fund resources

- ❖ **“Industry, construction, trade and services” are 93% financed by EU funds.**
 - Another great dependency is in the following areas: "Promoting entrepreneurship and innovation", "Measures to increase the competitiveness of industrial sectors" and "Research and development in industry (except fuels and energy)".
- ❖ **Without EU funds**, either there would be **no investment in these areas** or it would be necessary to saturate these areas from other sources.
- ❖ Chart explanation: ESI Funds share of expenditure in the area: green - up to 25%; orange - 25–50%; red - more than 50%.



KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE RESULTS AND BENEFITS OF EU FUNDS 2007-2013

The European funds have increased the quality of life in the Czech Republic in many areas.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ Summary of main findings from impact evaluations made in 2007-2013.
- ❖ In the period 2007-2013, more than 500 evaluations were carried out, of which 141 reports related to impacts/ results and indicator evaluations. Those reports then entered the summary report as a source of information.

EMPLOYMENT

- ❖ Employment **increased among medium-sized and large companies and women with children (the income of supported mothers increased, the average income before joining the project was CZK 10,927, the average income during implementation was CZK 15,318).**
- ❖ Employment of **persons at risk in the labour market increased** (63.5% of the supported persons found employment within one year after the end of the project) and the **qualification of employees** and the competitiveness of companies **increased** overall.

ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ Improved water quality
 - There was a decrease in **phosphorus** (by 8% in 2007–2014 in the Vltava River basin) and **phosphates** (by 11.5% in 2007–2014 in the Vltava River basin) in the monitored areas thanks to the construction of waste water treatment plants.
- ❖ Environmental education
 - A positive impact on its stabilization, improved quality of services.

TOURISM

- ❖ **Increased attractiveness of tourist destinations** in the regions, increased quality and capacity of services, new jobs in tourism and newly reconstructed monuments.

EDUCATION

- ❖ Initial education
 - The **development of key competences of pupils improved** (confirmed by 86% of respondents), i.e. communication skills, languages and natural sciences, greater inclusion, multicultural education, new teaching materials and strengthened teacher training.
- ❖ Tertiary education, R&D
 - A higher diversification of the HEI system, **increased quality of teaching** (confirmed by 51% of the surveyed project implementers) and the **employability of graduates** (confirmed by 63% of the surveyed project implementers). Interventions also helped to retain expert teams and their motivation in scientific institutions and to popularize R&D.
- ❖ Further education
 - The availability of this type of education has been improved, the offer for target groups has been expanded and the motivation to use the service have been strengthened.
- ❖ System framework
 - **New forms and methods of teaching** were **introduced** in initial education, better interconnection of secondary schools and higher education institutions (HEIs), supported training and development of teachers, systems of internal control and quality evaluation introduced in HEIs and higher quality of their teaching.

RESULTS





TRANSPORT

- ❖ Rail transport
 - **Increased interest in traveling by train** (Benešov - Strančice line, the travel time of the express train from Benešov to Prague reduced to 40 min - year 2015).
 - **The number of passengers increased** (Lysá - Milovice line, an increase from 13,000 passengers in 2006 to almost 27,000 passengers in 2014).
 - **Traffic safety has improved** (Břeclav junction, increase in line speed around the station from the original 40 km/h to 120 km/h, which has shortened travel times of each train by up to 2 minutes).
 - **The travel times were shortened** (Planá - Stříbro line, a speed increase from 90 km/h to 100 km/h and measurable shortening by 3 minutes).
- ❖ Road transport
 - **Traffic in municipalities decreased due to bypasses** (Moravské Budějovice - transfer of 66.3% of total traffic to bypass, of which 66.5% are heavy vehicles, Česká Bělá - transfer of 84.9% of total traffic to bypass, of which 76.1% are heavy vehicles).

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- ❖ Improved skills of employees, a systemic approach to human resources development introduced, **quality management improved or its system introduced, and increased transparency and openness of public administration.**

BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

- ❖ There has been an increase in **production diversity** (total production of supported enterprises increased by 24% - the first measurement took place in the year before the project implementation, the second in 2013), **in production capacity** (increase by 25%), **production quality** (61% of addressed enterprises), **production efficiency** (average time savings of 22% in supported projects), **competitiveness** (61% of enterprises said they managed to gain a competitive advantage, 48% of enterprises said they improved competitiveness by reducing their prices of products and services, 77% of enterprises stated they increased competitiveness by improving the quality of products offered) **and a reduction in staff turnover** (43% of companies in the Innovation programme, 89% of companies in the Potential programme).
- ❖ The impact was positive on the **introduction of new technologies** (770 new technologies were introduced - about 25% of all technologies in supported enterprises) and on the increase in **market share and production volume** (even during the crisis, production volume was higher by 24% in 2010 compared to the year before the projects were implemented).

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ **Higher interest of students in natural science and technical fields** and increased attendance of science centres and their educational programmes.

EX-POST EVALUATION IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Thanks to the EU funds, research organizations can participate in international projects.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The aim of the evaluation was to identify and verify the likely effects of the European funds in the area of research and development, namely the support for the establishment and development of centres of excellence and regional research centres, and to evaluate the benefits for the Czech Republic's research and development potential.
- ❖ The establishment of 48 centres (8 centres of excellence and 40 regional centres) was supported in the Czech Republic (outside Prague).

Modernized and expanded capacities of research institutions. The new infrastructure leads to their involvement in international projects. A more progressive approach in pursuing the visions of science and research centres.

RESULTS



OVERALL EVALUATION

- ❖ The capacities of research institutions have been modernized and expanded (thus attracting foreign scientists and workers; in total, this represents 10% of all researchers in the Czech Republic, of which up to 50% are foreign workers).
- ❖ The infrastructure enables participation in international projects (20 international projects out of 44 projects have been or are being implemented directly in one of the OP RDI centres).
- ❖ The supported centres display a more progressive approach in pursuing their visions.
- ❖ Achieving the vision is influenced by the degree of autonomy of the centre.
- ❖ R&D support from ESIF cannot be separated from the overall system of R&D financing.
- ❖ The idea that "the centres should earn their keep" is not valid.

WHAT WORKS

- ❖ Provision of modern equipment and active promotion of the centre.
- ❖ Regular evaluation of research teams leads to higher performance of the centre.
- ❖ Administrative support for researchers.

IDENTIFIED OBSTACLES

- ❖ Uncertainty about future financing of the centres.
- ❖ Low back-office capacity (administrative support).
- ❖ Employment of foreign scientists (Bureaucratic, financial and cultural barriers).
- ❖ The R&D funding system does not motivate scientists to cooperate with industry.
- ❖ Regional centres under HEIs are not adequately valued.
- ❖ State aid rules limit the scope of contract research.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Closer coherence of interventions with regard to the setting of the R&D system.
- ❖ Concentration of capacities and consolidation of research teams.
- ❖ Continued support for collaboration with industry and international cooperation.
- ❖ Continuation of the multi-objective financing set up in the period 2014–2020.
- ❖ Supporting new and upgrading existing research capacities.
- ❖ Approach of the MA/ support provider oriented on the purpose of interventions.

EX-POST EVALUATION OF BUSINESS R&D AND INNOVATION

The European funds have helped to increase technological development in the Czech Republic and cooperation between companies and higher education institutions.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The aim of the evaluation was to identify and verify the likely effects of European funds, namely the Potential and Prosperity programmes (under Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation) in the area of business research, development and innovation.
- ❖ The evaluation examined the effects on the growth of a number of variables in the supported companies and the impact of those programmes.

There was an increased interest in incubation / establishment in incubators and science and technology parks. Achievements: 1. intensified technological development, i.e. the development of additional products/services and 2. enhanced cooperation between companies and HEIs or research entities.

RESULTS



PROGRAMME "POTENTIAL"

- ❖ The result was an increase in value added (by approximately 33%) in supported enterprises and an increase in labour productivity (by approximately 18%) in supported enterprises.
- ❖ There was an increase in the technological level of company equipment (69% of the surveyed companies).
- ❖ R&D capacities of companies were expanded and created (49% of surveyed companies).
- ❖ The portfolio of products offered was expanded and new products were developed or new services introduced (72% of companies reported that they had developed at least one new product thanks to the aid).
- ❖ The level of cooperation with external researchers increased (30% of companies collaborated with more external researchers than usual in the implementation of the project).
- ❖ Industrial research and development should continue to be supported.

PROGRAMME "PROSPERITY"

- ❖ No impact of the aid, or of incubation of companies, on financial indicators has been proven.
- ❖ In business incubators (BI) and the science and technology parks (STP), the cooperation of universities and research institutions with the business sector improved (7 out of 9 BI / STP).
- ❖ Innovation infrastructure for R&D has been developed (5 out of 9 BI / STP).
- ❖ BI / STP are mostly funded by a combination of own resources and subsidies.
- ❖ Obstacle: there are insufficient data available to effectively evaluate this type of intervention.
- ❖ It will be necessary to establish a way of measuring progress and the reporting of underlying data for their evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Supporting research, development and innovation activities in the next period.
- ❖ Taking steps to ensure availability of relevant data.
- ❖ Ensuring continuous collection of data on the implemented interventions.
- ❖ Interlinking the monitoring indicators with intervention objectives.
- ❖ Reducing the transaction costs related to applications for applicants and increasing their awareness.

EX-POST EVALUATION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

Landfill has been reduced thanks to the European funds.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The aim of the evaluation was to identify and verify the likely effects of the European funds on waste management.
- ❖ The evaluation examined the contribution of the interventions to a change in the production of waste. It assessed the developments in municipal waste management, and whether the volume of landfilled biodegradable municipal waste has been reduced.

The capacity of waste management facilities and waste separation and collection systems has increased. Separate collection of waste increased, material recovery from waste increased and landfilling was reduced.

RESULTS



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Over 4,000 projects were supported and the capacity of waste facilities increased to 10,471,043 t/year.
- ❖ The capacity of the waste separation and collection system increased to 1,617,518 t/year.
- ❖ The supported projects contributed mainly to an increase in the separate collection of waste, to increased material recovery and reduced landfilling.
- ❖ A testing of the impact of the subsidy on waste production showed that participation in the subsidy programme is statistically significant for all monitored types of waste and a part of the change in the production of individual types of waste can be attributed to the impact of the subsidy programme.
- ❖ The greatest degree of dependence between participation in the programme and a change in the production was recorded in the production of biodegradable municipal waste, i.e. in a desirable increase in the production of such waste - a usable commodity.

EXAMPLES OF OUTPUTS, RESULTS AND IMPACTS

- ❖ Civic amenities – the amount of mixed municipal waste has been reduced and the capacity of civic amenity sites has been increased.
- ❖ Waste containers were purchased, thus increasing the capacity of the civic amenities.
- ❖ Composting plants – the amount of the separated waste component has increased.
- ❖ Waste treatment technologies were acquired to treat the waste instead of passing it on.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Continuing the support of waste management while setting such targets of interventions that clearly match the identified needs and demand, based on an assessment of expected consequences of the legislative environment development and while adequately respecting the goals of the Waste Management Plan (not to use it as a declarative list of goals).
- ❖ When setting the interventions, the theory of change method should be consistently applied, and causalities should be correctly defined in the theory of change model.
- ❖ Analysing the absorption capacity (needs) when designing the interventions.
- ❖ Considering the effectiveness of interventions in smaller communities.
- ❖ Stabilising the legislative and methodological environment, unifying the system of reporting data on waste production for the MoE and CSO, consistently verifying the data in the records of waste and continuing in the ongoing training of staff responsible for the waste management agenda.

EX-POST EVALUATION OF ENERGY SAVINGS

Thanks to the European funds, the Czech economy has reduced its energy intensity and negative environmental impacts.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The aim of the evaluation was to identify and verify the likely effects of the European funds on energy savings under the Operational Programme Environment and the Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation.
- ❖ The evaluation examined the contribution of the interventions to reducing energy intensity.

There was a decrease in the energy consumed to heat public sector buildings and a reduction in the relative energy intensity of the Czech economy (achieved by reducing losses in production processes and in heating buildings).

- ❖ Interventions generated about 4.1 PJ of energy savings per year, the value represents an important contribution to the strategic goals of reducing energy consumption - the total amount of savings should be 51.10 PJ by 2020.

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ 5.5 thousand projects were supported and reported annual energy savings at 3.4 PJ/year.
- ❖ The result highly exceeded the anticipated effect of the intervention at 2 PJ/year.
- ❖ The achieved reduction of energy loss leads to more economical management of energy resources in the public sector and allows the deployment of more environment-friendly methods of heating buildings.
- ❖ Without the subsidy intervention, the projects aimed at energy savings would not have been implemented in most cases, or would be implemented at a significantly lesser extent.

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

- ❖ A total of 953 projects were supported under the ECO-ENERGY programme.
- ❖ The projects contributed to the annual energy saving with 13.7 PJ/year.
- ❖ This has exceeded the target set by the programme by more than 24%.
- ❖ The subsidies allowed the supported businesses to concentrate the planned activities in a single project without having to spread them over a longer time period.
- ❖ Thanks to the subsidies, the activities planned by the businesses were significantly accelerated, and the energy savings could therefore be notably higher in that period than they would be without the subsidies.
- ❖ Other identified results
- ❖ User comfort in the buildings has been improved.
- ❖ Visual presentation of the companies has improved.

RESULTS



RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Continuing in a similar orientation of the programmes, i.e. in promoting energy savings in the public and private sectors.
- ❖ Maintaining the variability of supported activities with a direct link to energy savings.
- ❖ Using an effective set of supplement indicators for evaluating the project to ensure valid evaluation of projects.
- ❖ Continuing the use of full computerization of the grant applications.

3. WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT PROCESSES



This chapter deals with the most important findings from process evaluations, which aimed to evaluate the methodological environment both at the level of the single methodological environment (SME) and at the level of the methodological environments of the individual managing authorities. The reader can learn what processes have proven effective, but also where there is still room for streamlining implementation and reducing administrative burdens.

EVALUATION RESULTS IN THIS CHAPTER:

EVALUATION OF PLATFORMS FOR PREPARATION OF CALLS

- ❖ Thanks to the platforms, partnership cooperation has improved.

EVALUATION OF SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES

- ❖ The methodological approach to synergies and complementarities was not accepted by the managing authorities. However, the managing authorities want the MoRD-NCA to coordinate such complex issues.

EVALUATIONS FOCUSED ON CORRUPTION

- ❖ European funds rank better in terms of corruption than the other areas of public administration.

SATISFACTION INDICATORS FOR 2018

- ❖ Satisfaction with the monitoring system is growing.

EVALUATION OF PROCESSES AND DEADLINES IN PROGRAMMES AND IN THE METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ The fastest reimbursement of payment requests is provided by OP Transport, on the contrary the slowest is in OP Research, Development, Education and OP Prague.

EVALUATION OF PLATFORMS FOR PREPARATION OF CALLS

Thanks to the platforms, partnership cooperation has improved.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ We evaluated the functioning of platforms (working groups and similar meetings) for the preparation of ESI Fund calls in the Czech Republic in 2014-2020.
- ❖ We have identified weaknesses and strengths in fulfilling the partnership principle.
- ❖ We have information about the purpose and approaches to the call preparation platforms.

Partnering has improved, also thanks to platforms for call preparation. The most important is the opportunity of discussion and openness to discussion. However, the capturing of platforms in the methodological environment is criticized by the managing authorities. MoRD-NCA is perceived rather as an inspector.

RESULTS



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- ❖ The MAs approach the platforms for the preparation of calls differently, but they always communicate with the partners in some way, be it platforms defined within the single methodological environment, working teams or bilateral meetings.
- ❖ Before submitting the calls to the platform, MAs usually communicate about them in smaller closed groups.
- ❖ Partners perceive negatively that over a half of the members of the platforms are representatives of State administration. At the same time, the partners respect that the MA should have a decisive say as it is responsible for the call. However, they would welcome the platforms to reflect their views.
- ❖ The partners see the main purpose of the platforms in the possibility to translate practical experience and meaningful settings into the call. Another benefit is networking.
- ❖ Greater application of the partnership principle is hampered by general systemic barriers: e.g. high turnover of the MA staff, complexity of rules, complicated division of responsibilities and competencies within the ESIF system.
- ❖ Some SME requirements are contradictory (e.g. the required synergies and chronological continuity of calls vs the fastest possible absorption).
- ❖ Mutual distrust between MAs and the NCA has been identified throughout the system, which puts a burden on the implementation process.
- ❖ The purpose of the methodologies is not sufficiently explained to the MAs, so they often perceive the imposed obligations as an administrative burden.
- ❖ The rules set for platforms were often inconsistent across the SME and changed over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Maintaining the platforms laid down by SME and established beyond SME. Continuing to gather information from experts and from the field.
- ❖ Building on what already works in the next period, not creating complex platform systems, new mechanisms or partnership tools.
- ❖ Considering a change in the representation of the actors in the platforms.
- ❖ Holding the platform meetings and consultations of call proposals in time to allow enough space for discussion.
- ❖ Communicating properly the comments on calls and their settlement.

EVALUATION OF SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES

The methodological approach to synergies and complementarities was not accepted by the managing authorities. However, the managing authorities want the MoRD-NCA to coordinate such complex issues.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ We reviewed the state of implementation of synergies and complementarities, the functioning of the coordination mechanisms defined in the Partnership Agreement and in the operational programmes (OPs) and we evaluated the process settings.
- ❖ We focused on processes of managing and monitoring the synergies and complementarities (S/C).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- ❖ **Defining duplicities (overlaps) at the beginning of the period was very useful** for both the MAs and NCA.
- ❖ **But defining the S/C differences in the Single Methodological Environment** and introducing “**purely synergistic calls**” proved to be **problematic**. That step deteriorated the cooperation between NCA and MAs.
- ❖ **The S/C agenda has not yet been fully accepted by the MAs** and implementation of any measures is very difficult.
- ❖ A **key coordination mechanism** appears to be **informal communication** and **platforms for the preparation of calls**. The officially defined mechanisms are used primarily for purposes other than the coordination of S/C.
- ❖ **There is a need for a mechanism that would coordinate large/controversial themes** which cut across several ministries and multiple opinions exist on how to address them. Here, the MAs called for coordination by the NCA.

RESULTS



RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Considering the S/C targets for the next period (the targets defined for this period have been largely met).
- ❖ Coordinating in time the definition of duplicities (overlaps) and mutual boundaries.
- ❖ Applying varying degrees of coordination and reporting based on the nature of the S/C. Prioritizing coordination and reporting where it is needed or where the topic cuts across multiple ministries.
- ❖ Encouraging the acceptance and understanding of the topic by the main actors.
- ❖ The NCA should play the role of mediator in problematic cases and coordinator between ESIF and Community/national instruments.
- ❖ In the next period, involving more the strategy supervisors and the substantive departments of ministries as coordinators of ESIF with other programmes.
- ❖ Ensure reporting primarily through informal communication.

EVALUATIONS FOCUSED ON CORRUPTION

EU funds rank better in terms of corruption than the other areas of public administration.

OBJECTIVE



- ❖ The topic of increasing transparency and preventing fraud was addressed by three evaluations/analyses: ❖
- ❖ “Satisfaction indicators: expanded with the corruption theme” (2016) - a questionnaire survey on the perception of corruption by implementation structure employees, applicants, members of working groups and persons involved in management.
- ❖ “Evaluation of the Strategy for Combating Fraud and Corruption under the CSF Funds 2014-2020” (2018) - evaluation of the Strategy in the framework of EU co-financed programmes and projects.
- ❖ “Evaluation of the perceived functioning and effectiveness of selected SME instruments in terms of increasing transparency in ESIF” (2018) - a feedback on selected SME tools.

SATISFACTION INDICATORS: EXPANDED WITH THE CORRUPTION THEME

- ❖ Entities that are part of the **ESI Fund** structure **are rated much better** in terms of the possibility of corruption **than the other areas of public administration**.
- ❖ According to respondents, corruption may occur **the most frequently** among **external evaluators**, and the **least among auditors and inspectors**. Most respondents believe that the probability of **detecting corruption** is **low**.
- ❖ In the area of public procurement, the best rating was given to the transparency of the contract award process, the worst to the consistency of checks on the implementation of the contracts.

EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR COMBATING FRAUD AND CORRUPTION UNDER THE CSF FUNDS 2014-2020

- ❖ The measures outlined in the Strategy essentially cover all the main risks identified for ESIF funded projects. The risks concern project selection and implementation.
- ❖ Increasing the transparency and sharing experience with the treatment of corruption were recommended.

EVALUATION OF THE PERCEIVED FUNCTIONING AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SELECTED SME INSTRUMENTS IN TERMS OF INCREASING TRANSPARENCY IN ESIF

- ❖ Most respondents agree with the idea of establishing tools such as a database of evaluators, the institute of codes of ethics, disclosure of ownership structures, procedures used in case of suspected unfair conduct, etc. However, the scope of implementation of the instruments across MAs varies, resulting in different levels of their effects and also their **impact on the administrative burden**.
- ❖ Despite the **problematic application of the instruments in practice**, most of the tools analysed have an impact on transparency in the ESIF implementation processes.
- ❖ For at least half of the instruments, **respondents do not understand that their primary purpose is reducing the risk of fraud and corruption**.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ **Explaining the purpose of each instrument.**
- ❖ **Sharing (good) practice** among AMs/IBs or other relevant actors.
- ❖ Ensuring that reporting and information sharing is carried out mainly through informal communication.

RESULTS



EVALUATION OF PROCESSES AND DEADLINES IN PROGRAMMES AND IN THE METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The fastest reimbursement of payment requests is provided by OP Transport, on the contrary the slowest is in OP Research, Development, Education and OP Prague.

OBJECTIVE



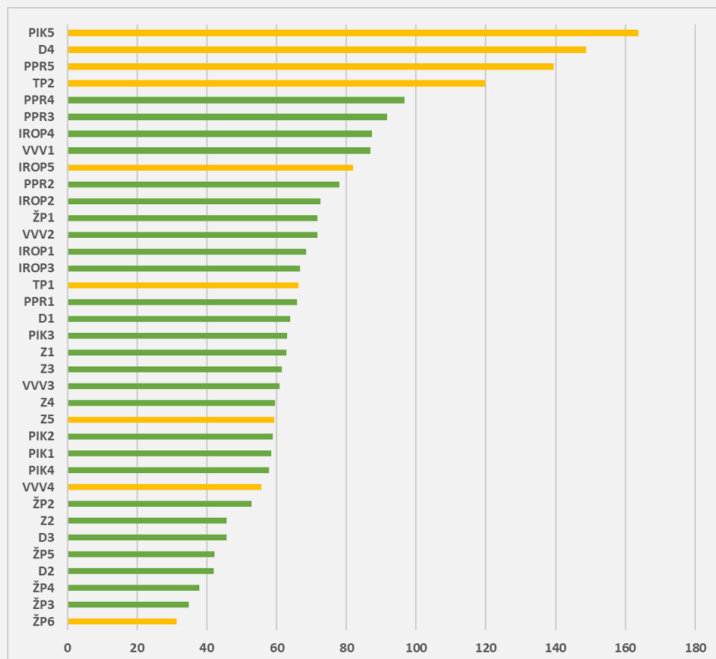
- ❖ The aim is to gradually, meaningfully and purposefully teach the implementation structure to evaluate its performance. The evaluation was carried out using the so-called “Vanguard method”, which is suitable for strengthening the client-oriented approach of organizations and for identifying unnecessary administrative burdens.
- ❖ The analyses carried out:
 - The duration of appraising grant applications (2016) - an analysis of grant application approval.
 - The duration of reimbursing payment requests (2018) - an analysis of reimbursing payment requests.

- ❖ Most of the analysed programmes, their specific objectives, or the individual calls on average **accelerate their reimbursement.**
- ❖ In 2018, the **longest periods were reached by PA1 of OP RDE and PA3 of OP PGP.** The biggest fall in the speed of reimbursement for 2018 was recorded in PA4 of OP EIC.
- ❖ In 2018, the **fastest reimbursement to beneficiaries of Requests for Payments were made by OP Env, OP Emp, and OP T.**

RESULTS



The duration of payment request reimbursement across programmes in days:



RECOMMENDATIONS



- ❖ Using pre-defined reports in MS2014+, which help to identify implementation system points with an increased administrative burden.
- ❖ The recommended procedure is based on three steps:
 - identifying the points with increased burden using reports in MS2014+,
 - analysing such points more deeply,
 - interpreting the findings and proposing possible adjustments to the procedural settings and to MA services.

4. WHAT ELSE WE HAVE DONE

EX-POST EVALUATION AND ESTIMATION OF BENEFITS FOR EU15 AS A RESULT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COHESION POLICY IN THE V4 COUNTRIES

- ❖ The study estimates and in some cases quantifies the economic benefits of the implementation of cohesion policy in the V4 countries for the EU15 countries which finance a significant part of cohesion policy expenditure through the European budget.
- ❖ Main results:
 - cohesion policy contributed significantly to the economic growth of the V4 countries in 2007-15. The GDP of those countries was about 6% higher than it would have been without the cohesion policy.
 - the implementation of cohesion policy in the V4 countries has had significant benefits for the EU15. In particular, it has brought around EUR 96 billion to the EU15 countries, equivalent to around 80% of the EU15 contribution to cohesion policy through the European budget.
 - most of these benefits were due to an increased demand of V4 countries for imports from EU15. But the direct benefits due to companies, established or owned in the EU15, participating in projects financed from European funds are also significant.
 - the results of cohesion policy also bring other benefits for EU15 citizens and businesses, such as improved environment or infrastructure.

CAPABILITY APPROACH AS AN APPROACH TO ASSESS THE RELEVANCE OF ESIF FUND INTERVENTIONS

- ❖ Pilot assessment of the relevance of selected ESIF interventions in terms of well-being of relevant target groups using the Capability Approach.
- ❖ The output was a methodology for the preparation and evaluation of public policies based on 8 case studies.

EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF NCA

- ❖ Evaluation of NCA communication activities for 2011–2013
- ❖ Awareness of EU funds for 2016
- ❖ Awareness of EU funds for 2017
 - The main objective was to identify public awareness of the EU funds in connection with the national campaign “EU funds for better education and employment”. The evaluation showed that awareness of EU funds is still high, but that awareness of advertising campaigns is falling. The respondents evaluate the European funds as beneficial especially for the life of Czech inhabitants and their region, less for themselves.

EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING SYSTEM

- ❖ The aim of the evaluation was to assess both the existing training system and to obtain background information for deciding on a new training system. The evaluation showed that the training system helps to increase the knowledge and skills of the implementation structure staff, creates the prerequisites for their professional growth and equips them with skills needed for the performance of their job.

PART II

MAIN FINDINGS FROM EVALUATIONS OF MA EVALUATION UNITS

The second part of the publication deals with the **outcomes of evaluations carried out by evaluation units of managing authorities**. The evaluation units of managing authorities perform evaluations at the programme level. They carry out process evaluations aimed at evaluating procedures at the managing authority level, as well as result evaluations that deal with specific interventions.

In each section, the reader will get an **overview of the evaluations** used as a basis for the summary, as well as their most interesting conclusions, from two perspectives. The first perspective focuses on **what the evaluations found out about the impacts of the** relevant operational programme, the second then summarizes **what the evaluations found out about the processes** in the relevant operational programme.

5. OP RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

VERIFICATION STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTIONS UNDER PRIORITY AXES 1, 2 AND 3 OF OP RDE AND VERIFICATION OF THE RELEVANCE OF THEIR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OP RDE

EVALUATION OF THE CALL SMART ACCELERATOR

EVALUATION OF THE CALL TEAMING

EVALUATION OF THE CALL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

EVALUATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEMPLATES I - NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

EVALUATION OF THE CALL DEVELOPMENT OF CAPACITIES FOR R&D

EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY, TOOLS AND PUBLICITY OP RDE

EVALUATION OF THE SYSTEMIC PROJECT "NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES - CZECHELIB" SUPPORTED FROM PA 1 OF OP RDE - 1ST INTERIM REPORT

EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL SYSTEMIC PROJECTS SUPPORTING EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY PRE-SCHOOL, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION (PA 3)

EVALUATION OF NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL PROJECTS WITH SIMPLIFIED COST OPTIONS

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE OP RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

In education, there is a shift from frontal teaching towards experiential, exploration and project methods. R&D is moving towards the excellence and quality of research teams.

IMPACTS



SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND HEIS

- ❖ In the area of research and development (R&D), there is a shift towards excellence both in the research itself and in the research teams.
 - There has been an increase in the number of professional publications in recent years, the rate of growth is significantly higher compared to the original assumptions.
 - There is an apparent increase in the success rate of participants from the Czech Republic in international research programmes (in 2015, in less developed regions 13.80%, in more developed regions 11.90%). For 2018, it is 14.10% in the less developed regions and 14.60% in the more developed regions).
- ❖ The effect of selecting high-quality projects is significant.
- ❖ The quality projects result in establishing and developing strategic partnerships both in the research itself and for the preparation and subsequent submission of applications in international grant competitions (in particular Horizon 2020).
- ❖ The project implementation teams **involve top R&D workers** from related or associated fields, with a **significant share of foreign R&D workers**.
- ❖ The capacity of research teams is growing in terms of both the number of members and their quality.
- ❖ The research teams expand to include experts that would be difficult to recruit, let alone retain, without support from the European funds.
 - In the European Innovation Scoreboard, there is a significant shift in the area of “Attractive research system”, which mainly concerns international cooperation in research (International Scientific Co-publications Index: 73.8 in 2011 and 132.3 in 2018; Foreign Doctorate Students Index: 50.2 in 2011 and 74.7 in 2018).
- ❖ There is a **clear interest of doctorate students in engaging in research projects** - given the long-term nature of the projects (up to 2022), this is an ideal opportunity for drawing up their dissertations.
 - The share of doctoral students using the infrastructure has slightly increased, however, an increase is expected mainly in the following years.
- ❖ The strengthened **cooperation of research organizations** with each other and with the industry is very important.
 - In the European Innovation Scoreboard, there is a significant shift in the area of cooperation between research organizations and enterprises (Innovative SMEs Collaborating with Others-Index reached 101.1 in 2011 and 114.4 in 2018; the Public-Private Co-publications-Index was 71.4 in 2011 and 85.6 in 2018, and the Private Co-funding of Public R&D Expenditure-index in 2011 reached 49.8 and 68.3 in 2018.
 - The implementation of projects involves the establishment of cooperation which will be reported in the following years under the indicator “Number of supported collaborations”. The current value in commitments is 118 collaborations.
- ❖ The implementation of these projects enabled HEIs, including the Prague ones, to acquire modern to state-of-the-art equipment.



- ❖ Currently, large numbers of **new and innovated study programs are being accredited and re-accredited**, including the promotion of newly accredited and innovated doctoral programmes.
- ❖ The aim is to ensure that teaching uses modern teaching trends and that cooperation with practice is strengthened.
- ❖ The infrastructure for education in bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes is being substantially modernized.
 - A great number of new/ upgraded/ extended infrastructures for research-oriented study programmes have been supported, and they are the subject of a large number of quality projects successful in the follow-up calls. The number of these infrastructures significantly exceeded the original assumptions; the number of supported research infrastructures for research-oriented study programmes is currently 226.
 - In connection with the support of a large number of infrastructures, the number of students using them in research-oriented study programmes (i.e. doctoral programmes) has also increased. 5844 students use the newly built, extended or modernized research infrastructure for research-oriented study programmes.
 - The number of students who take advantage of the newly built, expanded or modernized infrastructure, excluding infrastructure for teaching related to research, is assumed to be at least 120 thousand (bachelor's and master's degrees).

NURSERY SCHOOLS

- ❖ As a result of activities to support the personal and professional development of nursery school teachers, e.g. through further training, experiential forms and methods are being introduced in education. The development of these forms and methods was significantly enhanced by the possibility of purchasing teaching aids.
- ❖ That leads to a better development of the abilities and potential of children, an improvement of their mutual cooperation and cooperation with the teacher.
- ❖ Children's communication and self-reliance have improved.
- ❖ Further training of nursery school teachers has reflected in the education of children.
- ❖ Nursery school teachers are now **applying new methods and didactic aids in teaching**, so they can **identify speech disorders** in children more easily and can begin to address them in a timely manner.
- ❖ The use of the positions "school assistant" and "nanny" in nursery schools has saved teachers time, which is utilised for more **individual work with children**.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- ❖ Teachers in participating schools are moving away from frontal teaching towards experiential, exploration and project methods and forms of teaching.
- ❖ As a result of the supported activities, new technologies and aids (e.g. tablets and e-readers) are acquired for schools and are employed in teaching.
- ❖ In the area of personnel support, the positions of the school special educator and school psychologist were evaluated very positively. In connection with them, the respondents most appreciated:
 - inspiration by new methods and aids,
 - **better cooperation with professional workplaces** (e.g. pedagogical and psychological counselling, clinical speech therapy, clinical psychology, special pedagogical centres or the authority for social and legal protection of children),
 - professional **assistance in teaching, in dealing with conflicts and bullying, which has resulted in better communication and improved school climate**.



- ❖ The aim is to ensure that teaching uses modern teaching trends and that cooperation with practice is strengthened.
- ❖ Educators appreciate:
 - school assistants, as they make their work easier and enable more individual approach to pupils,
 - training courses that brought them new ideas, learning methods and new aids, which they then applied in teaching.
- ❖ Tutoring and clubs (reading, board games and logic clubs) contributed **to an improved learning achievement of pupils.**
- ❖ For example, reading clubs are run by 1389 schools, the fun logic and board games clubs by 1391 schools, the foreign language communication clubs by 716 schools or the exploration clubs by 667 schools.
- ❖ Thanks to activities supporting thematic and awareness-raising gatherings and cooperation with parents, schools have become more open, and cooperation with parents and other entities has improved.

SMART ACCELERATORS

(support for the coordination of entrepreneurs involved in research, arranging cooperation with research centres, research orientation, etc., sponsored by Regions)

- ❖ There was a significant increase in expenditure on innovation support in all Regions where Smart Accelerator was implemented (consensus of political representatives of the Regions). CZK 335 billion was invested in support for the development of innovations through this call; the funds act as an impulse for other actors and motivate them to participate in innovation activities; the first estimates indicate the amount of CZK 221 million (innovation vouchers, financial participation of the Regions, contributions of firms).
- ❖ What has been achieved:
 - Significant strengthening of personnel capacities which are dedicated to supporting the development of innovation in the Regions (concentrated in Smart Accelerator teams). The teams also concentrate know-how in the area of support for innovation capacities. The anchoring of organizational structures and processes for managing the support of the innovation environment and the moving towards the smart specialization of the region are also important.
 - **Concentration of know-how in supporting innovation capacities** within the Smart Accelerator implementation teams.
 - Anchoring of organizational structures and processes for managing the support of the innovation environment and moving towards smart specialization of the region.
 - As part of the implementation of the call, **the regional innovation actors**, their potential and needs **were successfully identified** (mapping).
 - Connections among the regional innovation actors have been established.
 - The Smart Accelerator call has contributed to stimulating and strengthening the interest of political representatives and other stakeholders in activities supporting the innovation environment in the Regions.
- ❖ The **credibility** has been **increased of the Region/ agency as a partner for discussing** the common direction of the region and as a provider of support/ services that are useful to local actors.
- ❖ In the environment described above, it is possible to create and facilitate conditions for cooperation, design and implementation of strategic projects - often joint projects (bringing together more actors). An essential finding is that without the support, the activities described above would be significantly subdued.

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE OP RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROCESSES

The calls should be more targeted; Local Action Plans (LAPs) and Regional Action Plans (RAPs) seem to be a suitable tool for improving the quality of regional education. The multi-fund approach contributes to more effective project preparation and implementation.

MULTI-FUND APPROACH

- ❖ The multi-fund approach contributes to more effective project preparation and implementation.
- ❖ It leads to more effective coordination of the supported activities within the programme.
- ❖ The fact that projects financed by the ESF and the ERDF must be submitted and implemented separately is negatively assessed.

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

- ❖ The **Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI)** mechanism is not a suitable tool for supporting excellent research from the OP RDE.
 - It may result in lower achievement of the relevant specific objectives.
 - There was no nationwide competition in the ITI calls, as a result of local allocation, there is less competition and lower-quality projects are supported than if there was a nationwide competition.
 - In view of the above, it is necessary to streamline the instrument in the new period.
- ❖ Based on feedback from implementers, **Local Action Plans (LAPs) and Regional Action Plans (RAPs)** can be considered a suitable tool for the needs and specificities of regional education.
 - Not only schools in the regions, but also employers are actively involved in the projects.
 - LAGs could provide greater support to applicants and beneficiaries of simplified projects (templates for schools).
- ❖ **The Agency for Social Inclusion (ASI)** has proved to be an important actor, coordinator and organizer of working groups (facilitator and moderator of discussions) in socially excluded localities. Respondents in municipalities also appreciate ASI's methodical assistance in project preparation.
- ❖ The possibility of funding R&D and education in all regions of the Czech Republic is evaluated very positively.
 - Eliminated disparities related to under-financing of Prague mainly in R&D due to previous programmes.

EVALUATION OF PUBLICITY

- ❖ At the time of the evaluation, the OP RDE was the best known OP - 44% of the Czech population knows it.
- ❖ The media campaign to raise awareness of the programme was successful in relation to the target group, while it did not fulfil the communication purpose in relation to the general public.

PROCESSES



6. OP EMPLOYMENT



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF OP EMP I - RELEVANCE

EVALUATION OF THE SURVEY AMONG LOCAL ACTION GROUPS

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT - QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF BENEFITS FOR THE TARGET GROUP

PROCESS EVALUATION OF CASEL IMPLEMENTATION UNDER OP EMP

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE CAPACITY OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

EVALUATION OF OP EMP PUBLICITY

EVALUATION OF PILOT VERIFICATION OF MICRO-CRECHES

EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT (EYI)

EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S GROUPS AND CHILDREN'S CLUBS

STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF OP EMP II

ONGOING EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR COMPETITIVE PROJECTS FOR THE FINAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT)

EVALUATION OF A SURVEY AMONG APPLICANTS FOR SUPPORT UNDER THE INTEGRATED INSTRUMENTS ITI / ITDP

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE IMPACT OF OP EMP

Children's groups had a positive impact on parents' salaries. The life of disadvantaged groups is gradually improving.

IMPACTS



EMPLOYMENT OF DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

- ❖ **65% of** competitive projects focused on direct work with clients (job seekers, people disadvantaged in the labour market, people excluded or at risk of social exclusion) **helped to get work for a part of the unemployed** (one project mediated jobs for 26 people on average).
- ❖ In 85% of the projects, the attitudes and motivations of the target group were changed (increased motivation to participate in the labour market, increased self-confidence, better orientation on the labour market, motivation for further education, restored work habits).

SOCIALLY WORTHWHILE JOBS

- ❖ **Half of the supported persons currently have a job (employee or self-employed).** The highest share of supported persons came from the Moravian-Silesian Region.
- ❖ The most important benefit is getting work, work experience and restoring work habits. According to employees of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic, the project has proved its worth in all age groups, especially in the 50+ group.
- ❖ **The impact of community service on the target group is not clear** (almost half of the target group is jobless). The gaining of work- and life experience, earnings, and the associated ability to better repay debts were seen as positive.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT (YEI)

- ❖ **Regional projects supported higher-risk groups**, while projects of labour offices supported the lower-risk groups (school-leavers, etc.).
 - The projects were entered also by persons who might be able to find a job themselves but in many cases the job would probably not meet the needs of the participants. **47% of respondents think that participation in the project certainly helped them to find a job. A total of 64% of respondents received a job offer after their participation in the project, of which 87% were full-time jobs.**

GENDER EQUALITY

- ❖ The return of parents from maternity or parental leave to work has been facilitated. **370 831 participants (parents of children) and 1,296 childcare facilities** were supported, of which: 13 969 persons newly used pre-school childcare facilities.

MICRO-CRECHES

- ❖ **The share of employed women has increased significantly with the enrolment of their children in micro-creches**, but it is necessary to verify what role such facilities should play in the overall system of care for pre-school children.
- ❖ The proportion of working women increased to 89%, which represents an increase by 28% compared to the situation before the child entered the micro-creches.
- ❖ More than half of the women increased their working time (55%), and for a significant proportion of women there was no change (37%). For more than half of the women, their monthly income increased (59%), while for a third of them it remained unchanged (34%).
- ❖ The users of the facility are predominantly complete families, university educated persons with long-term work experience. The service has been used very **little so far, for example, by single parents** who could solve their financial situation by using it.



CHILDREN'S GROUPS AND CHILDREN'S CLUBS

- ❖ **The intervention had a significant positive impact on the economic activity of parents;** it has been confirmed that, for supported mothers, the intervention is very important as it gives them the opportunity to get employed.
- ❖ Thanks to the support, there was a **significant increase in women working in employment** (an increase from 37% to 74%) and there was a certain **increase in the net income of the mothers.**

ADAPTABILITY OF LABOR FORCE (employees of enterprises, self-employed, social partners)

- ❖ According to the project implementers, 76% of projects achieved closer links between employers and employees and improved relations at the workplace.
- ❖ 46% of projects improved the personnel situation of employees thanks to the training of new employees tailored to the needs of the implementer, and to a lesser extent, the projects improved production efficiency, reduced turnover and increased sales.
- ❖ There was no change in 10% of projects.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- ❖ **Thanks to the support, the quality of life of disadvantaged employees was improved.**
 - The conditions were adapted to the needs of these employees, they were involved in the operation of the company by providing their own ideas or improvements, thanks to which the employed have a sense of belonging and also can influence the direction of the company.
 - That has **increased their self-esteem and the possibility of becoming independent.**
 - **It has a demonstrated positive impact on their family relationships, social contact, and a sense of being beneficial to society.**

SOCIAL INNOVATION

(support for the development and implementation of innovation in social inclusion and in public administration, and the building of a social innovation ecosystem)

- ❖ The completed projects have tested and validated their innovations, created implementation models as well as procedures and networks to deploy innovation in other locations and regions or its introduction at system level (through integration into existing policies as one of the standard solutions).
 - The situation of dozens of socially excluded persons has been improved as part of the pilot projects.
- ❖ Among the several completed projects, the Rapid Re-housing (RRH) project stands out as it brings a new approach to social housing in the Czech Republic, for a group of socially excluded families with homeless children.
 - Based on the implementation of the RRH programme in Brno with 50 families and according to the results of the project (documented by a rigorous evaluation), a call with an allocation of CZK 150 million was announced under OP Emp, which allows the introduction of RRH in several dozen municipalities.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- ❖ According to the responses, the competitive projects contributed to:
 - increasing the knowledge or skills of public administration employees,
 - transparency and efficiency of public administration,
 - Improving communication with citizens.

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT OP EMP PROCESSES

High administrative burden during project implementation. Coordinated approach to socially excluded localities (CASEL) - few quality projects.

CALLS AND GRANT APPLICATIONS

- ❖ CASEL - grant applications focused on social entrepreneurship were assessed as of **low quality across all localities**. Small municipalities submitted fewer, better quality project.
 - An analysis has proven no relation between the size of the municipality, the quality of the strategic plan of social inclusion, the quality of cooperation with the Agency for Social Inclusion (ASI) and the MA and the rate of absorption of the allocated funding.
 - The reserved allocation evaluated positively by many of the entities involved in CASEL, but may contribute to lower quality of supported projects.
 - The recommendation is to coordinate the calls of operational programmes in terms of timing and subject matter.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT

- ❖ 66% of the competitive projects consider some parts of project preparation and implementation to be problematic (management, monitoring, administration and reporting).
- ❖ In various evaluations, a number of respondents repeatedly **evaluated negatively the administrative burden** (e.g. for social enterprises, it is connected with obtaining contributions for the employment of disadvantaged persons, an ambiguity of the instructions and guidelines concerning the establishment and operation of a social enterprise; for CASEL, it is the processes connected with its implementation).
 - **The complexity of the co-ordination of operational programmes** (OP Emp, OP RDE, IROP) leads to a **low mutual interlocking of calls**, while the absence of such continuity of calls is one of the barriers to programme implementation (CASEL).
 - A problematic issue is the **sustainability of the outputs of the implemented activities** after the end of the project period in the event that an adequate follow-up intervention (CASEL) is not ensured from other sources.

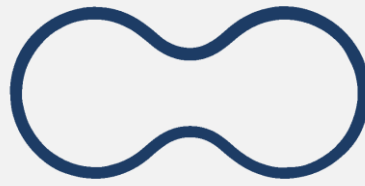
TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

- ❖ CLLD (Community-led local development) – more than three-quarters of the LAG representatives surveyed (89%) perceive **OP Emp as a beneficial tool for addressing problems, developing the potential of the LAG territories** in the area of social inclusion, community development, promoting employment and social entrepreneurship, and reconciling work and private life.
 - LAG representatives perceive room for supporting new activities or target groups (e.g. the elderly, children and generally economically inactive inhabitants).
 - CLLD support from the OP Emp successfully contributes to the building of resources and capacities in rural areas and small municipalities that are not otherwise sufficiently equipped to address the problems of social exclusion.
- ❖ ITI (Integrated Territorial Investments) - The added value of ITI calls is a **more intensive communication of project ideas** between the applicant and the holder as well as between applicants (better coordination and targeting), which results in greater activation of local actors in the projects and better project sustainability.
 - The complexity of administrative tasks related to the project implementation and concerns about two-stage administration and inconsistency of attitudes are perceived.
- ❖ The ITI calls **better prevent duplications of focus** in projects compared to common calls.

PROCESSES



7. INTEGRATED REGIONAL OP



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

ANALYSES OF ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITIES IN 2016 AND 2017

ANALYSES OF ABSORPTION CAPACITY IN 2016, 2017 AND 2018

VERIFICATION OF CHANGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF IROP I. (2017)

EVALUATION OF THE FULFILMENT OF PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF IROP I. (AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016)

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE IMPLEMENTED COMMUNICATION TOOLS OF THE IROP MA I.

EVALUATION OF THE DESIGN OF THE IROP SYSTEM OF INDICATORS, VERIFICATION OF THE INTERVENTION LOGIC AND EVALUATION OF INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE DATA BASE

EVALUATION OF THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF IROP II (AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2018)

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS HAVE FOUND ABOUT THE IMPACT OF IROP

Irreplaceable role of the programme in the field of restoration of cultural heritage. Public transport is improving. The computerisation of public administration has expanded to cover the collection of laws and regulations.

IMPACTS



- ❖ In general, due to the focus of the programme on **building infrastructure**, the speed of project implementation varies significantly across the areas of support. Projects the content of which is purchase (whether of equipment or buildings) are completed quickly.
- ❖ In the other areas focusing on construction projects, including the preparation and submission of the grant applications, the programme is now in the peak implementation phase of the programming period.

CLASS II AND III ROADS

- ❖ More than **388 km of class II and III roads** are being upgraded thanks to support from IROP.
- ❖ The largest project completed so far is the project of the Road Administration of the Olomouc Region, which includes **three bridge structures; it improves transport accessibility and connection to motorways D46 and D35.**
- ❖ An important effect is the increased road safety and reduced negative impacts of transport on the population and the environment.

CYCLE PATHS

- ❖ The interest in building and upgrading cycle paths and cycle routes is lower than expected.
- ❖ **77 km** were newly built, but over **1,672 parking spaces for bicycles** were created.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- ❖ Municipalities have purchased **500 barrier-free public transport vehicles, including those adapted for the disabled.**
- ❖ **18 transfer terminals** were built or renovated.
- ❖ Almost **1,310 parking spaces** were also created.
- ❖ Integrated Rescue System
- ❖ **50 buildings** serving the Integrated Rescue System (IRS) units were newly acquired or modernized. The beneficiaries **preferred to obtain more expensive vehicles** (e.g. fire trucks).

CULTURAL HERITAGE

- ❖ **In the area of restoration and development of cultural heritage**, extensive and complex projects are being implemented (construction and restoration work with a budget of around CZK 100 million).
- ❖ By the end of 2018, 8 projects were completed with expected rapid growth in 2019. **Applicants' interest far exceeds the programme's resources.**



- ❖ **490 facilities for education and lifelong learning were supported**, the projects address, for example, the insufficient capacities of nursery schools.

TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ The only area where a lack of demand has been identified and that has an impact on the programme objectives is the small area of spatial development documents (initial estimates: approximately 1109 documents, now 450).
- ❖ The MA identified the insufficient absorption capacity as early as 2016 and subsequently transferred the funds to areas with a higher interest from applicants.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- ❖ Applicants are primarily interested in activities related to the development and strengthening of social services.
 - The number of social housing units increased by approximately **400 housing units**, with the expectation that, according to the analysis, **a total of 5,000 housing units will be implemented**.
 - The capacity of social housing has also increased by almost **1,000 beds**.
- ❖ 243 facilities for services and social work were created.
- ❖ The number of the types of the services provided also increased significantly.
- ❖ The interest of applicants in support of deinstitutionalization of psychiatric care was low.

THE ENERGY SECTOR

- ❖ Despite the slower start of the implementation, the achieved number of households with better-classified energy consumption was in line with expectations.
- ❖ **Significant contribution has been made to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.**
- ❖ The number of households with better classified consumption reached 19,402 (the commitment is 34,737).
- ❖ The estimated annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is currently 71 188.6 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent/year.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- ❖ The largest completed project to contribute to increasing the efficiency and transparency of public administration through the development of the use and quality of ICT systems was the project of electronic collection of laws and international treaties (e-Collection) and electronic drafting of regulations (e-Legislation).
- ❖ 110 information systems were built for public administration.

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT IROP PROCESSES

There is a need to better set the indicators for assessing the impact of interventions.

PROCESSES



ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

- ❖ The administrative capacity is affected by problems caused by the implementation of the Civil Service Act, especially the prolongation of the process of hiring new employees into the service, which is subsequently reflected in the low number of job applicants.

MONITORING SYSTEM

- ❖ **The start of absorption was slowed down due to the applicants' initial unfamiliarity with the ISKP14+ system, which was augmented by its initial problems.**
- ❖ Frequent errors, unexpected changes after repair installations, user unfriendliness.

ABSORPTION CAPACITY

- ❖ **A large excess of beneficiaries' demand over the capacity of suppliers**, for example in the field of construction, specialized medical technology or restoration, which leads to the re-announcement of tenders. In most cases, this means extending the schedule of the projects and slowing down the absorption in general.

PUBLICITY

- ❖ The best rating is given to individual communication tools (phone, mail, individual counselling at seminars), it is recommended to set up an exchange of experience (forum) directly on the IROP website and actively involve applicants and beneficiaries in the forum (not only the IROP communication staff), to put greater emphasis on the IROP website as the main communication channel.

INDICATOR SYSTEM

- ❖ The indicator system **focuses more on monitoring the outputs** and progress of the implementation rather than on the results and impacts of the intervention. It is therefore more suitable for programme management needs than for later evaluation of results.
- ❖ Due to the breadth of the programme and its focus on infrastructure, the link to the final target person is very loose.
- ❖ **In particular, there is a lack of assessment of the quality** (e.g. of services) **and of impact on the life situation of the supported persons** (e.g. in the case of social housing).
- ❖ For some statistical indicators, the target values of the indicators appear unreachable; in some indicators, the IROP has only a marginal effect.
- ❖ The existing system of secondary data sources (Eurostat, ministerial statistics, etc.) has proven insufficient in terms of availability, completeness, validity and reliability for some result indicators."

INTERVENTION LOGIC

- ❖ The situational analysis is rather general and is not supported by statistical data, studies and analyses.
- ❖ The key problems, the root causes of the problems; the conditions and assumptions of the OP are not clearly identified.

8. OP ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION FOR COMPETITIVENESS



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION FOR COMPETITIVENESS

RELEVANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT IN 2014-2016

RESULT EVALUATION OF OP EIC SUPPORT TO INCREASE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF START-UP AND DEVELOPING SMES AND TO INCREASE THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMES (SOS 2.1 AND 2.2)

RESULT EVALUATION OF OP EIC SUPPORT TO INCREASE THE INNOVATION PERFORMANCE OF ENTERPRISES (SO 1.1)

RESULT EVALUATION OF OP EIC SUPPORT TO INCREASE THE INTENSITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATION IN RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION (SO 1.2)

RESULT EVALUATION OF OP EIC SUPPORT TO INCREASE THE USABILITY OF BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE AND INCREASE THE CAPACITY FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (SOS 2.3 AND 2.4)

RESULT EVALUATION OF OP EIC SUPPORT TO INCREASE THE SHARE OF ENERGY PRODUCTION FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES, INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF THE BUSINESS SECTOR AND TO APPLYING LOW-CARBON TECHNOLOGIES IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT AND IN THE USE OF SECONDARY RAW MATERIALS (SOS 3.1, 3.2 AND 3.4)

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF THE OP EIC

The innovation performance of enterprises is increasing, collaboration with research is improving.

IMPACTS



EX-POST EVALUATION 2007-2013

- ❖ Overall, the aid did not have a statistically significant impact on competitiveness of the supported enterprises (but that may be due to the short time since the implementation).
- ❖ **The most significant impact is the purchase of new equipment, machines, technologies and innovation activities in the supported enterprises.** 2 812 items were purchased to help the supported enterprises to grow and develop, while increasing their competitiveness.
- ❖ The aid also had a significant impact **on employment**, be it the increase in the number of employees due to the growth of the company or the increase in the financial remuneration of employees.
 - In total for all activities, the number of employees increased by 3,759.
- ❖ A positive impact **on product quality and added value** in the supported enterprises.
 - At the beginning of 2019, value added amounted to CZK 803,050.
- ❖ Financial instruments are economically more efficient than subsidies because the funds allocated to loans and guarantees are potentially returnable.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION (SO 1.1; SO 1.2)

- ❖ The interventions have a positive impact on the **innovation performance of enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises** (they improve products, streamline production, save costs, etc.).
- ❖ **New innovated products were introduced on the domestic and foreign markets and innovation was accelerated by up to two years.** The number of enterprises that received support for the marketing of new products amounts to 136 and there are 729 innovations introduced.
 - Examples of innovations include: research and development of a number of diesel aircraft engines, intensive single-crystal light source, starting a series production of products with the application of innovative lightweight materials, development of nanostructured hi-tech materials for space applications, etc.
- ❖ However, the projects are relatively conservative and rather of an average innovation order.
- ❖ The **cooperation of supported enterprises with research institutions and HEIs has improved**, mainly thanks to support from the Innovation Vouchers programme.
 - The cooperation improved in 818 supported enterprises.
 - Almost 90% of supported enterprises confirmed the improvement under the Cooperation support scheme, two thirds of supported enterprises registered improvement under the Innovation Vouchers support scheme, and 30% of supported entities under the Infrastructure Services support scheme.
- ❖ Some supported enterprises started new cooperation with other supported entities. These partnerships are positively evaluated and in most cases **have the potential to continue after the end of the project**. The long-term nature of the co-operation represents a basis for further research activities beyond the grant support.



- ❖ The ability to participate in European research projects has increased.
 - Given the high competition among projects in programmes such as HORIZON 2020, it cannot be assumed that the aid would have a significant impact on success in European subsidy schemes (currently 4 projects).
 - However, from the point of view of the beneficiaries, the support from the programme brings the potential to increase the number of project applications to be submitted to HORIZON 2020-type programmes, mainly due to the establishment of collaborations that may turn into project partnerships for such programmes in the future.
- ❖ **The expertise of workers** and the possibility to conduct research using own capacities are **increasing**.
- ❖ This is a synergistic effect in the form of gaining the experience needed to implement future activities without subsidies.
- ❖ Research barriers consisting in the lack of expertise and technical capacity of enterprises have been removed by sharing these capacities between enterprises and research organizations.
 - Some barriers result from the presence of the market. Businesses pursue profits, universities not. The cooperation improved in 818 supported enterprises.

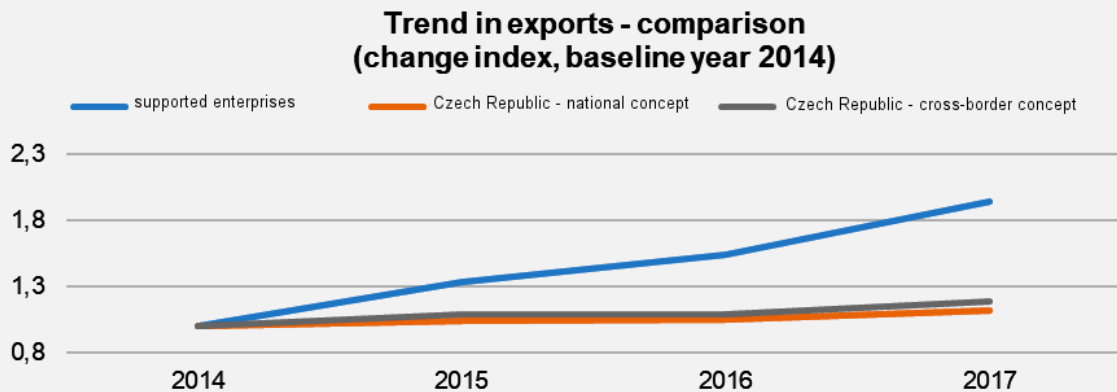
DEVELOPMENT OF SMES (SOS 2.1 AND 2.2; SOS 2.3 AND 2.4)

- ❖ Beneficiaries observe **increased competitiveness due to the introduced innovations** which increase the quality and efficiency of production, enable the production of new products with higher added value.
- ❖ Added value increased in supported projects by 20% compared to non-supported projects, equity grew by CZK 10-17 mil. and economic outturn by CZK 2.7-3.7 million) and/or increasing the quality parameters of existing production, expanding production capacity and, as a result, attracting new customers and increasing the production volume.
- ❖ The questionnaire survey shows that:
 - Over the past 5 years, 86% of respondents have expanded their offer to include new products or services they did not provide before.
 - 66% of respondents improved strategic planning and business process management.
 - 88% of respondents improved their ability to identify opportunities in foreign markets.
 - 84% of respondents increased their ability to expand internationally and expanded their export activities as well as manufacturing, sales and distribution activities on foreign markets.
 - 88% of respondents made new contacts with investors/ partners.
- ❖ About half of the applicants also declare product innovation thanks to the introduction of new technologies.
 - However, these are lower-order innovations (increasing the accuracy of manufactured products, introducing products of larger sizes, extending the (shelf) life of products, improving surface quality, etc.).
 - Examples include: modernization and automation of the furniture production process, streamlining the production of plastic parts, etc.
- ❖ In a third of the projects, innovation consisted in replacing old technology with more modern technology, with **some projects just above the threshold of simple renewal**.



- ❖ A positive finding is the relatively high proportion of direct automation, robotics elements and IT production control systems to achieve the Industry 4.0 objectives. So far, 316 projects focused on Industry 4.0 have been implemented.
 - The direct automation, robotics elements, or implementation of IT production control systems leading to the implementation of Industry 4.0 targets are represented in 44% of the monitored projects, which is partly passive due to a general technological progress, but partly also active in companies that directly declared strategic interest in raising the technological level in this direction, which can be evaluated positively.

- ❖ The **supported enterprises** show a strong **increase in exports**, the pace of which is significantly faster than the growth of exports at the national level or at the level of the relevant sectors.



- ❖ The installation of new technologies improved the comfort of employees and had positive environmental impacts (reduced environmental impacts of production, more effective use of waste, etc.).
- ❖ **New premises were created and the number of premises as well as the total area of brownfields regenerated for business purposes increased.** The investment made it possible to expand production, production facilities, to upgrade existing production, improve the environment and extend the product portfolio.
 - The area of 267 358.26 m² was regenerated with the largest share in the Zlín Region (20%), the South Moravian Region (16%) and the Ústí nad Labem Region (10%). At the national level, the value represents an increase in the regenerated buildings and the total area by 0.1% (compared to 2014).
 - The added value, tangible fixed assets, equity and the economic outturn of the supported companies grew.
- ❖ **The success rate of grant applications submitted by small and micro companies was very low.**
 - Greater methodological support needs to be provided to them, e.g. through free consultations.

SHIFT TOWARDS A LOW CARBON ECONOMY (SOS 3.1, 3.2 AND 3.4; SOS 3.5 AND 3.6):

- ❖ The physical progress in the given SOs was assessed as **unsatisfactory** at the end of 2018, and in some cases even risky in terms of meeting the quantified targets for 2023.
 - The reason is not an incorrect setting of the intervention logic of these SOs and/or the subject of support, but rather **the organizational and administrative aspects** (delays in implementation, high administrative demands of the whole process of obtaining support).



- ❖ In the case of renewable energy sources (RES), the **low absorption capacity** is mainly due to **regulatory restrictions / prohibition of combining investment and operational support for RES, distrust in the system of support for energy from RES** in the Czech Republic (changes in conditions, lack of transparency, etc.).
- ❖ In terms of energy intensity of industrial production, the Czech Republic is approaching the other EU countries.
 - The share of the interventions in this development is minimal so far, due to the low number of completed projects. This is one of the reasons why the contribution to reducing CO₂ emissions is still negligible.
 - However, the supported enterprises have significantly reduced their energy intensity compared to those that did not receive aid.
 - Subsidy beneficiaries achieved a relatively significant reduction in energy consumption (36% of beneficiaries reduced their energy consumption by more than 20% and 27% of beneficiaries reduced it by 10-19.9%)
 - The unsupported applicants reported most frequently stagnation of energy consumption, i.e. a change in consumption in the interval of +/- 5% compared to the situation in 2015. Nearly 32% of respondents chose that answer.
 - A reduction in energy consumption by more than 20% was confirmed only by 6% of unsupported enterprises and a reduction by 10-19.9% by almost 15% of respondents.
- ❖ The most common activity in conventional energy savings is the reduction in energy consumption of buildings, in the field of innovative low-carbon technologies it is electromobility.
 - The most frequently implemented supported activity was measures to improve the energy performance of buildings (i.e. thermal insulation of buildings or replacement of windows and doors). This activity was included in almost 62% of the supported projects and its share in all supported activities is 28%.
 - Other frequently implemented activities are measures to modernise lighting systems (36.4% of implemented projects, or 16.6% of all activities) and measures to reduce energy intensity, or to increase energy efficiency of production and technological processes (32.8% and 14.9%, respectively).
 - On the contrary, the least used activities are measures to utilise waste energy in production processes (9% and 4.1% respectively) and the installation of cogeneration units with the maximum utilization of electricity and heat energy for the company's own consumption (1.4% and 0.6% respectively).

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT OP EIC PROCESSES

In the preparation of the project, it is necessary to strengthen the role of the project manager and personal consultations.

CALLS AND GRANT APPLICATIONS

- ❖ Compared to the 2007-2013 period, the **administrative burden on** applicants has **increased**; the **process of appraising the grant applications is slow**.
- ❖ The recommendation is **simplifying the aid application forms**, including samples of completed forms, and limiting the number of documents signed (one signature per legal act).
- ❖ **Greater transparency is needed in the appraisal** (in particular the economy criterion) – for better chance of unsuccessful projects to develop the application into an acceptable form.
- ❖ The calls should not set the maximum amount (limit for **total eligible expenditure**).

ADMINISTRATION OF PROJECTS

- ❖ The problem is **low flexibility in project changes**.
- ❖ We recommend **reducing the risk of enterprises in the financing of projects** (advance or interim financing, or motivate research organizations by maximizing public support).
- ❖ Simplifying / changing the system of providing evidence of de minimis and SME status.
- ❖ Strengthening the client-oriented approach – reformulating the role of project manager (now a contact person), optimizing the communication channels, providing personal consultations.

VERIFICATION OF PROJECTS

- ❖ **Verification of project outputs** (at the expense of checking the expenditure reporting).

METHODOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ Implementation is negatively influenced by **the unstable methodological environment**.
- ❖ The **opinions communicated by the MA should be binding**.
- ❖ In public procurement, using the **design-and-build** methodology, i.e. transferring the responsibility for drafting the design documentation and for quality of the work to the supplier.

MONITORING SYSTEM

- ❖ **Reducing duplicate data inputs**, submitting and uploading the same or unnecessary **documents**; **automating the processes** where possible (data checks, reports).
- ❖ Interconnecting with the other public administration information systems.

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

- ❖ The territorial targeting of the programme corresponds to the identified needs. The specific approach to the economically problematic regions of the Czech Republic is demonstrated in the form of bonus points for projects with their place of implementation in such regions.
- ❖ **Continuing the bonuses**, allocations for the regional level, and considering the introduction of ITI support.

EVALUATION

- ❖ The conditions for submitting an application should also be the **consent to the provision of selected data for evaluation purposes** (within 10 years from the end of the support).
- ❖ **Cooperation with the Czech Statistical Office and the Czech Social Security Administration** is needed to obtain the data needed for evaluations.

PROCESSES



9. OP TRANSPORT



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

EVALUATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME TRANSPORT 2014 - 2020 INCLUDING VERIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND OF THE SETTING OF SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE COMMUNICATION PLAN OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME TRANSPORT IN 2014-2016

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE COMMUNICATION PLAN OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME TRANSPORT IN 2017-2018

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT OP T PROCESSES

Faster preparation of construction is hindered by legislative barriers. In the future, the Managing Authority will monitor more closely the preparedness of the main beneficiaries construction projects.

ADMINISTRATION OF PROJECTS

- ❖ Socio-economic changes have not led to the need to change the intervention logic of the programme.
- ❖ However, given the high growth in freight transport, the MA should prioritize those prepared projects that will address the consequences of high growth in freight transport.
- ❖ Complicated legislation and the resulting slow preparation of construction.
- ❖ That deepens the investment debt, and the **strategic decision-making** on investment priorities **gives way** to a practical approach of **starting the construction projects based on their readiness**.
- ❖ **Projects involving State aid are complicated** due to the approval processes at the European level (notification) and national level (programme documentation, preparation of calls).
- ❖ The preparation of constructions is significantly influenced by the necessity to **repeat the EIA process** for some constructions and the complexity of ownership settlement.
- ❖ Concerning the main beneficiaries:
 - focusing on detailed **preliminary monitoring of construction preparedness** in order to eliminate risky projects in time and to predict real values of absorption,
 - promoting a priority preparation of projects on backbone railway lines and, in particular, the so-called major projects, after many of the priority project proposals in railway infrastructure have been submitted for support to CEF.

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

- ❖ The readiness of city railway transport projects for immediate implementation is complicated by the ITI and ITDP approval mechanisms.

SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES

- ❖ The setting and method of coordinating the synergies and complementarities (S/C) does not mostly allow their added value to be applied.
 - This happens only under the ITI and ITDP instruments or in local strategy documents and sustainable urban mobility plans, but not at the level of the programmes as such.

PUBLICITY

- ❖ The annual communication plans have been prepared so that their activities cover the defined communication objectives.
- ❖ Room for improvement in meeting the objectives is in the area of awareness of the positive impacts of the implemented projects.
- ❖ In the future, there should be more focus on the use of the already implemented projects:
 - organising events also outside Prague,
 - festivals and other events for the public are also a suitable tool.

PROCESSES



10. OP ENVIRONMENT



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE OPE 2014-2020 (AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016)

EVALUATION OF SETTING THE CONDITIONS OF THE BOILER SUBSIDY SCHEME IN THE OPE 2014–2020

EVALUATION OF OPE 2014-2020 COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

EVALUATION OF THE OP ENVIRONMENT 2014 - 2020 ADMINISTRATION PROCESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF APPLICANTS AND BENEFICIARIES

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT OPE PROCESSES

The computerisation of application submission has facilitated the administration process, but the user-friendliness of the system needs to be improved.

ADMINISTRATION OF PROJECTS

- ❖ **The possibility of electronic submissions made the applying for support much easier.**
- ❖ **The methodology of direct or indirect costs in the area of personnel and overhead expenses is complicated** and sometimes ambiguous or incomplete. Problems relating to differentiation of eligible and ineligible expenditure and the demanding accounting were mentioned several times.
- ❖ According to respondents, the greatest weakness of the Guidelines for Public Procurement in the OPE 2014–2020 is their **increased strictness compared to Act No 134/2016 Coll., on public procurement.**
- ❖ **Completing the CBA module is a significant burden for the applicants**, while the CBA often has a minimum added value.
- ❖ **One of the weakest elements of the OPE is the low user-friendliness of IS KP2014+** - the time required to fill in applications, the need for duplicate inputs of data, a non-intuitive system of messages.
- ❖ The approval of projekt or payment requests in MS2014+ suffers from long downtimes.

INTEGRATED INSTRUMENTS

- ❖ **Improving the awareness of what integrated instruments are** and what their benefits are. Applicants are not actively interested in integrated instruments.

ABSORPTION CAPACITY

- ❖ **Extending the project implementation periods to prevent excess demand for equipment and services and the increase in their prices.**
- ❖ Building a reserve of projects from the unsupported applications.
- ❖ **Use ex-ante payments for economically weaker applicants.**

BOILER SUBSIDIES

- ❖ **A motivation effect for boiler replacement / heat pump acquisition.**
- ❖ **Reducing the support to coal-fired boilers**, encouraging the replacement of old boilers with emission class 1 and 2.

PUBLICITY

- ❖ **The most important source of information with substantial impact on the main target group is the website.**
- ❖ Seminars, consultations and information services, the telephone Green Line, and the **use of a media campaign combining a greater number of communication activities** and promotional measures (e.g. television, press, radio, Internet) have proved effective and created higher awareness and **coverage of the widest possible range of the target group.**
- ❖ The target group often registered the information but did not associate it with the OPE.
- ❖ The most problematic areas of awareness of the target group were related to the information needed to submit an application (IS KP2014+, interpretation of terms in tender documentation, specification of eligible costs, etc.).

PROCESSES



11. OP PRAGUE - GROWTH POLE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



EVALUATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER:

THE FIRST INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE OP PGP

AD HOC EVALUATION OF THE OP PGP ABSORPTION CAPACITY

THE SECOND INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE OP PGP

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE OP PGP

The capacity in nursery schools has increased. Children's groups are strongly supported.

IMPACTS



RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Activities in the area of research and development support comply with the relevant areas of RIS3.
- ❖ The projects focus mainly on knowledge for the digital economy, cultural and creative industries, as well as social science knowledge for non-technical innovation and advanced manufacturing technologies.

COMMUNITY CENTRES

- ❖ **Community centres were reconstructed mainly in locations where the need to implement projects for the target groups is not so great.**
- ❖ The share of the programme's funds in the total funds spent on social housing in the City of Prague is 1.2%.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- ❖ The contribution of the programme to social entrepreneurship has been very marginal so far (8.8% of total investment) as well as to the **elimination of social problems in the area of activities for integration, community services and prevention** (only 2 projects were completed).
- ❖ Currently, 141 projects are being implemented, of which 90 are focused on community centres, 49 on social entrepreneurship and 2 projects on a combination of the above activities.

NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- ❖ The contribution of the programme to the elimination of social problems in the area of insufficient capacity of schools and educational establishments can be assessed as relatively significant especially in facilities caring for children under 3 years of age and in primary schools, and moderate in secondary schools.
- ❖ The programme contributed to the increase in the capacities of facilities caring for children under 3 years of age with 29.7% and to the **increase in the capacities of primary schools in Prague with 30%.**
- ❖ **Trained teachers** include group work, **elements of critical thinking or project teaching** in their **lessons** more often. They try to adapt methodological, didactic materials and aids to different groups of pupils more and they use IT technologies in teaching to a greater extent.
- ❖ However, a direct link of these effects to the programme cannot be unequivocally proven because a number of teacher training activities from other sources ran parallel in the same period.
- ❖ 13.7% of **children's groups** established in Prague was supported. 16.5% of the total capacity of places for children in children's groups in Prague was created.
- ❖ **9 providers of 22 children's groups with a capacity of 372 children** were supported (there are 161 children's groups with a capacity of 2,259 places in total in Prague).

WHAT THE EVALUATIONS FOUND OUT ABOUT OP PGP PROCESSES

It is important to formulate the texts of the calls comprehensibly, to continuously specify the requirements in the calls.

ABSORPTION CAPACITY

- ❖ The project preparation is more difficult for projects on technologically advanced measures and for projects on social entrepreneurship infrastructure.
- ❖ The absorption capacity is significantly helped by:
 - appropriate timing of the calls,
 - direct mail provision of information about upcoming and published calls,
 - methodological support for applicants,
 - elimination of administrative barriers, adherence to schedules and deadlines, assuring maximum functionality of MS2014+,
 - streamlining the organizational structure to support the preparation of projects at the Prague City Hall,
 - stabilising the OP PGP implementation system; systematic setting of relationships, competencies,
 - setting clear rules of responsibility among the OP PGP Managing Authority, the Department of Education and Youth, the Department of Health, Welfare and Prevention, the Unit of Project Design and ITI and other units of the Prague City Hall,
 - simplification, streamlining and clarification of the rules for preparing project applications and project implementation: simplification of the system of the required project documentation for ERDF projects, comprehensible formulation of call texts, continuous specification of call requirements and simplification of the methodology for feasibility studies and CBA.

PROCESSES



