

Government Council celebrates 30 years of service with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation

On 9 November 2022, a ceremonial meeting of the members of the Research, Development and Innovation Council (the Council) and guests was held at the seat of the Government to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of its establishment. The meeting was attended by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Petr Fiala, Minister of Science, Research and Innovation Helena Langšádlová and current members of the Council, as well as former chairs of the Council, representatives of academia, ministries and other stakeholders in the field of RDI.

The Council was established on 1 July 1992 (originally as the Czech Government Council for Scientific Activities and Technology Development) with the aim of creating an advisory body to the Government in the field of RDI. For 30 years it has been an expert and advisory body to the Government in the field of research, development and innovation.



Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Petr Fiala. Photo: Office of the Government of the CR

“As a former university rector, I have always perceived the Government Council for Science, Research and Innovation as an important body dedicated to supporting this area in the Czech Republic. I also consider it extremely important from my position of the Prime Minister, because the area of R&D is an essential factor that helps move the Czech Republic towards a

developed economy with higher added value,” said Prime Minister Petr Fiala at the opening of the ceremonial meeting.

During its time, the Council has focused on the priorities of the national research and development policy, departmental programmes of support for science and research, principles of evaluation of programmes and groups of RDI grant projects. Its important milestones include, for example, the introduction of the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research Organisations and Programmes of Special Purpose Support for RDI. Given that science, research and innovation are now issues of interdisciplinary and international nature, the positions of science diplomats were created, who are now based in Washington, Tel Aviv and Taipei.



Minister of Science, Research and Innovation Helena Langšádlová. Photo: Office of the Government of the CR

“Cooperation between scientific institutions, companies and the State is a prerequisite for the valorisation and exploitation of the results of science, research and innovation. I also consider issues related to the protection of the State’s security interests in the field of science and research to be essential. Furthermore, it is crucial to develop and support research and development in fields that are important for addressing key issues of our future, such as energy, climate change, population ageing, etc.,” said Minister Langšádlová.

The Council’s 30th anniversary celebration was also attended by a number of its chairs emeritus, university rectors, deputy ministers and many other prominent figures from the field of science, research and innovation. The attendees acknowledged that, as a proportion of GDP, spending on RDI reached 2% in 2021. This is the highest value in the history of the independent Czech Republic. This figure attests to the ever-increasing importance of science, research and innovation for the development of the Czech Republic and its economic and scientific potential.

The Council in data and figures

- The Council currently has 17 members and it is chaired by the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation Helena Langšádlová.
- The Council has been led by 17 chairs, 3 of whom were Members of the Government for Science and Research (Petr Mareš, Pavel Bělobrádek and the current Chair Helena Langšádlová).
- A total of 124 members have been part of the Council at some point (including chairs).
- The 383rd meeting of the Council took place in October. If added up, all meetings would last a total of approximately 240 working days.
- The Council discussed more than 4 000 documents.
- 1992–2022: How did the name evolve over time?
 - 1992–1995: Council of the Government of the Czech Republic for Scientific Activities and Technology Development
 - 1995–2002: Council of the Government of the Czech Republic for Research and Development (1995–2002)
 - 2002–2009: Research and Development Council
 - 2009 – now: Research, Development and Innovation Council
- The first meeting of the RVVI was held on 15 October 1992.
- The Council proposed 17 laureates of the Government’s National Czech Mind (Česká hlava) Award. The 2022 award went to botanist Prof. RNDr. Petr Pyšek, CSc.
- The Council coordinates the activities of 3 Czech scientific diplomats who are based in Tel Aviv, Taipei and Washington.
- The Council cooperates with 13 foreign advisory bodies in EU Member States and other countries.
- Research and development expenditure in the Czech Republic increased by 7.5% year-on-year to CZK 121.9 billion in 2021. As a proportion of GDP, it amounted to 2%. This is the highest value in the history of the independent Czech Republic.
- In 2021, a total of CZK 47.8 billion was spent on research and development in the Czech Republic from the State budget and EU sources, up 4% year-on-year.
- As of 2015, more than 100 000 people work in research and development in the Czech Republic. By the end of 2021, this number had already reached 122 000. Less than 1/3 of them were women.
- Last year, a quarter of researchers at the institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences were foreigners; at higher education institutions, it was 12%. Most of the foreign researchers come from Slovakia. There were less than three hundred researchers from Ukraine in the public sector.
- In 2021, a record CZK 76.6 billion was spent by 2 800 companies operating in the Czech Republic on their own research and development. This is triple the amount spent on university research.
- In companies, the highest investments were made into research in the automotive and ICT sectors.

Annex: **30 years of the Government Council**

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