

The Government Council has discussed support for start-ups and appointed an informatics professor from Singapore into its International Advisory Panel

The Research, Development and Innovation Council (the Council) led by the Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš held its regular meeting in the Straka Academy building on Friday 26 April 2019. Main points on the agenda of the Council meeting included approval of its position on the Proposal of the RD&I program “The Country for the Future”, with the total allocation of 9 billion Czech crowns, and on the Proposal of expenses in the state budget of the Czech Republic for RD&I in 2020–2022. Prof. Kian Lee Tan, a renowned scientist from Singapore, was appointed a new member of the International Advisory Panel.



The press conference after the meeting of the RD&I Council. Photo: Government Office of the CR

“Today we have appointed a new member of the International Council, Kian Lee Tan of the School of Computing at the National University of Singapore. He is an outstanding expert and his involvement is a result of our visit to Singapore. We are expecting more nominations from India and other countries”, commented the Prime Minister on expansion of the expert team of the International Advisory Panel.

At the meeting the Council approved its position on a general document called the **Proposal of the Research, Development and Innovation program “The Country for the Future”** presented by the Ministry of Industry and Trade as one of the first tools for implementation of the **Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019–2030**. The program focuses on formation of innovative firms, innovation infrastructure and development of small and medium enterprises and on monitoring of the latest world’s trends in development of the digital society.

The duration of the program is planned for 8 years until 2027. The program is divided into three **sub-programs (Start-ups, Digital leaders and Innovation for practice)** and the total costs of its implementation have been proposed at **9.1 billion CZK**, from which 6.1 billion will be drawn from public funds. *“We have started to fulfill in concrete terms the new governmental priorities following from the Innovation strategy. For example, innovative startups had never before had a higher support,”* stressed the Vice Chairman of the Council and the incoming Minister of Industry, Karel Havlíček. At the same time, these funds will not increase the overall budget and they will be transferred from savings of unused funds dedicated for science and research.

The Council has also approved the **Proposal of expenses from the state budget of the Czech Republic for RD&I for 2020–2022 with a forecast until 2026**, including handling of the interdepartmental amendment procedure without any reservations. The proposal will be submitted to the government in May and the proposed total expenses are the following amounts:

for 2020 in total 36.97 billion CZK

for 2021 in total 37.47 billion CZK

for 2022 in total 38.00 billion CZK.

In 2020 the year-on-year increase of the funding will be 1 billion CZK in comparison with the budget approved for 2019. In the period of five years there has been a record increase in the budget by 10 billion CZK from 27 billion for 2015 to 37 billion for 2020. The volume of funds for 2021 will remain in the amount of a valid medium-term forecast. For 2022 the Council has proposed to increase expenses in comparison with the approved medium-term forecast for 2021 by 531.88 million CZK.

In the course of negotiations with the providers additional requirements were addressed with involvement of claims from unused expenses (NNV).

During the meeting members of the Council were also informed about the progress of the Implementation of Methodology 2017+ as usual. The Council also authorized its executive board to start **presentation of the Methodology 2017+ in relevant foreign expert communities** with the objective to obtain its certification.

Members of the Council discussed ideas about the future of European structural and investment funds in 2021+ in the area of science and research and they approved a document evaluating results of Research, Development and Innovation programs completed in 2017.

Source: Press release of the RD&I Council and the Government Office of the CR | 26 April 2019