

# Members of the RDI Council observed a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the Russian invasion of Ukraine

On Friday, 24 February 2023, the Research, Development and Innovation Council (the Council), chaired by Minister Helena Langšádlová, held a regular meeting in the Straka Academy. The meeting agenda included information on preparations of the proposal for state budget contribution to science and research for the 2024+ period or information on integrating ELI Beamlines into ELI ERIC. The Council also discussed accession to the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA) and, as part of the regular renewal, it elected new members of the Expert Panels assessing research results based on Methodology 2017+.

The meeting was opened with a minute's silence in homage to the victims of the already one-year-long Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Council members also joined the public collection **Light and Warmth for Ukraine**, organised nationally by Junak - Czech Scouting. The goal of the collection is to produce trench candles as an expression of help in a situation where many areas of Ukraine are without electricity, and as a symbol of our common hope for the future.

*"By solidarity with the war-stricken Ukraine we strengthen our security and freedom. Without the fellowship and help from citizens, anyone who can give a hand, we would not make it. So we did not hesitate in the Council to join the collection. I am really grateful for the joint position,"* said Helena Langšádlová, Minister of Science, Research and Innovation and Chair of the Council on supporting the collection.



The Council members observed a minute's silence to commemorate the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, 24 February 2023. Photo: Office of the Government of the Czech Republic

In the first part of the meeting, the Council members heard information from the Council Chair on negotiations with aid providers, held as part of preparations of the **Proposal for a state budget contribution to research, experimental development and innovation for the period 2024+**. Minister Langšádlová will promote **increasing the budget for science and research** at the Government meeting, mainly on the grounds of the persisting **high inflation**.

In the next part of the meeting, representatives of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) informed about the current situation in **integrating the laser research centre ELI Beamlines into the ELI ERIC consortium**. The Council requested information from MEYS on predictions of future expenditure of this international infrastructure including investments and requirements of the consortium for Czech state budget funds until 2030, and asked the Academy of Sciences to submit regularly the results of ELI Beamlines research.

In the traditional item of the agenda on Methodology 2017+, members of the Expert Panels were elected. The Council proposed to its Chair to appoint **11 new members of Expert Panels**, and to appoint **Jakub Sirovátka, Dr.phil.**, as chairman of the Humanities and the Arts Expert Panel.

Then, the Council approved accession to the **Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment** (ARRA), prepared by the European University Association (EUA), the European Commission and the Science Europe organisation in July 2022. By acceding to the Agreement, the Council also enters the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment, a significant source of information for further improving the assessment according to the current methodology.

Director General for the International Relations, EU and EC Section of MEYS, Dr. Václav Velčovský, informed the Council members about the current status of the **Operational Programme Johannes Amos Comenius** and also advised them on the preparation of a call for proposals in social sciences and humanities. Minister Langšádlová will promote an increase in the allocation of CZK 1.5 bil. for supporting social sciences and humanities.

The President of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, Prof. Petr Konvalinka, presented to the Council the next steps in the programme **National Centres of Competence**.

The Council members discussed the document **Analysis of the administrative burden in research, development and innovation**, drawn up by the company Ernst & Young for the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic. The analysis contains recommendations intended to simplify the processes in providing purpose-tied aid. The Councillors proposed to discuss the document with the providers of purpose-tied aid and to use the suggestions from the Analysis in the preparation of the new Act on research, development, innovation and knowledge transfer.

At the end of the meeting, the Council took note of the **Manual for Using the Definition of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises**, which serves as a general guidance for applicants and beneficiaries of the Operational Programme Technologies and Applications for Competitiveness (OP TAC).

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