

# The Government Council Discusses the Final Draft of Science and Research Budget

On Friday 28 April 2023, the regular meeting of the Research, Development and Innovation Council (the Council), chaired by Minister Helena Langšádlová, took place at the Straka Academy. The main points of the meeting included again the preparation of the draft state budget for R&D&I for the period 2024+, as well as the schedule of OP TAC (Operational Program Technologies and Application for Competitiveness) calls and the Concept of Defence Applied Research, Development and Innovation 2023–2029.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Council members approved the assignment of the strategic document Analysis of the State of Research, Development and Innovation in the Czech Republic and their Comparison with Foreign Countries in 2022. The Council prepares the analysis annually in accordance with Act 130/2002 Coll. and uses unique data from the R&D&I Information System to the maximum extent possible.



389th meeting of the RDI Council. Photo: Office of the Government of the Czech Republic

The Council then discussed the final Draft State Budget for Research, Experimental Development and Innovation for 2024 with projections, which will now be submitted to the Government. In view of the continuing adverse trend in inflation, which was as high as 15% in 2022 and is predicted to be almost 11% in 2023, and in order to reflect current science policy priorities, **the Council proposes that the Government approve** the expenditure of:

**CZK 47.8 billion for 2024,**

CZK 50.7 billion for 2025,

CZK 50.1 billion for 2026.

For 2024, **an increase of CZK 7.6 billion** is proposed compared to the 2023 expenditure.

*"The 2024 budget will be extremely challenging to put together, not least given the disruption to public finances left by previous governments. Nevertheless, I believe that we will manage to maintain the budget for science and research at a level that will allow us to develop this area while maintaining the priorities of supporting excellence, people in science and transfer,"* said Minister Helena Langšádlová, commenting on the ongoing negotiations on the budget and the Council's proposal. Public funds invested in science, research and innovation have a long-term positive impact on social development, the growth of the Czech economy and an increase in future tax revenues.

The members of the Council discussed the documents of the **Operational Programme Technologies and Applications for Competitiveness (OP TAC)** under the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Specifically, they were informed about the schedule of calls for 2023, of which the call Cooperation of schools and companies for SMEs with an allocation of CZK 300 million will be newly opened from mid-May.

The Council approved an opinion on the Concept of Defence Applied Research, Development and Innovation for the period 2023–2029. This material, which is under the competence of the Ministry of Defence, reflects current national strategic documents and NATO and EU conceptual documents in the field of research, development and innovation. The future direction of defence research will emphasise the development of capabilities in emerging and ground-breaking technologies, in line with the available financial resources and capabilities of the domestic defence and security industry.

What was also approved was the **call for nominations for the national government award for 2023** for outstanding results in research, development and innovation, which will be announced in cooperation with the company Česká hlava PROJECT traditionally in early May this year – and published on the website [www.vyzkum.cz](http://www.vyzkum.cz) and [www.vlada.cz](http://www.vlada.cz).

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