

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (EU Operational Programmes section) response to the Commission Working Document – Consultation – On the Future “EU 2020” Strategy

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic welcomes the EU 2020 strategy initiative, especially its designation to be the successor of the current Lisbon Strategy. However, even if the Lisbon Strategy has contributed to the growth of EU member states, all the goals have not been achieved so far. For this particular reason we would like to strongly support the fact that efforts have to be done at all levels – European, national and regional.

We support the division into three key priorities which should lead to the suggested goals. Nevertheless, we believe that we should make use of existing policies and tools even if those would need to be more result oriented, simpler and also more coordinated with national and regional authorities.

We would especially like to bring the following comments/suggestions:

- To encourage people to be self-employed, we should start working on changing the cliché that a failure is a shame (because it is not). Students should be learnt at all school levels the basic rules of commerce and business, should be given them the spirit of entrepreneurship and commercialization of research results. Only by changing minds/habits/cultural perceptions we will be able to convince people not to be afraid of being self employed.
- More emphasis should be put on teaching sciences in order to attract more students to enhance scientific studies and later on research carriers.
- University and secondary school education should undergo changes to deliver more market oriented graduates.
- Universities and industry should be more linked, develop common projects and work more closely together. Students and researchers should be taught to think in the frame of project management to see different ways of exploiting results and recognize potential value of patenting, or technology transfer, or publishing, or further development, or joint venture, etc. More stress should be put on intellectual property rights management.
- All EU programmes should focus more on bigger well-targeted projects having real impact then thousands of smaller ones.
- Encourage and support mobility among labour force, students at universities and secondary school level.
- Support to development of R&D sector, European research infrastructures and R&D centres (in the frame of the cohesion policy).
- Reduction of trade and entrepreneurship barriers.
- “Flexicurity” as a way of support to lifelong learning and possibility for all citizens to reorient themselves. Foreseeing needs of the future is crucial in this respect.
- Cooperation and creating of synergies is needed but overlapping should be avoided on all levels of policy making.
- Member states should encourage development through both budgetary and non-budgetary means.

- To create greener economy we should try to find new methods to reduce CO₂, use energy more effectively and face carbon constraints and lack of resources. Ideological prejudice should go aside. Moreover education of citizens should go hand in hand with all policy making.

We strongly believe that our comments will contribute to creation of more targeted and ambitious EU 2020 Strategy.