



Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28:

The Czech Republic

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April – 2018



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Editors: Nick Thijs and Gerhard Hammerschmid

Manuscript completed in August 2017

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018

ISBN: 978-92-79-90890-3
doi:10.2767/057310

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1 SIZE OF GOVERNMENT

The Czech Republic is a country with a relatively low level of public expenditure. According to the OECD's general government spending indicator, the Czech Republic is among the ten countries with the lowest indicator value. In a similar way to Slovakia, the Czech Republic has relatively low general government expenditure calculated as a percentage of GDP as well as general government expenditure per capita (and also general government debt per capita). Looking at the structure of general government expenditures by function, the top five priority areas are represented by social protection, health (public health-care services), economic affairs (with the highest share of transport), education (particularly secondary education) and general public services (OECD, 2015; Ministry of Finance, 2016). The situation did not change significantly in the period 2007 – 2013 (see OECD, 2015), although total general government revenues were growing to a very limited degree in the period from 2006 – 2015 according to Eurostat's data.

The OECD's statistics also indicate that the most government expenditure was undertaken by central government. (The Czech Republic is among the ten countries with the highest proportion of expenditure undertaken by central governments). Thanks to a significant increase in tax revenues in 2015 (due to economic growth), including social and health-care insurance, the general government deficit was 0.4% of GDP in 2015.

Table 1: General government budget data

CZECH REPUBLIC	2010	EU 28 Rank	2015	EU 28 Rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Total expenditures (in % GDP)	42.97	21	41.97	20	-1.00	+1
Central government share (%)	69.39	12	72.70	10	+3.31	+2
State government share (%)						
Local government share (%)	26.28		27.11			
Public investment (in % GDP)	4.73	8	5.10	10	+0.37	-2
Debt in % GDP	38.16	6	40.32	7	+2.16	-1
Deficit in % GDP	-4.4	8	-0.6	5	+3.8	+3

Table 2: Public sector employment

CZECH REPUBLIC	2005	OECD EU18 rank	2011	OECD EU12 rank	Δ Value
Total public sector employment in % of total labour force	32.80	1			
	2005	OECD EU21 rank	2011	OECD EU19 rank	Δ Value
General government employment in % of total labour force	12.90	14			
			2011	OECD EU17 rank	
Central government share of general government employment			45.90	8	

Sources: OECD - *Government at a glance*

**According to the OECD, public sector employment includes public corporations, while general government employment excludes public corporations.*

At present, there are no national data on government employment in the Czech Republic; only some data on employment in central government are available, but they are rather fragmented in various reports published by the Ministry of the Interior. For instance, 'Analysis of the current state of public administration' (Ministry of the Interior, 2011) referred to 159 854 employees working in state administration in 2010. This number included 16 977 employees of central authorities; the rest was represented by employees of the so-called 'deconcentrates' – specialised authorities existing within hierarchies of individual ministries and other central authorities (e.g. financial authorities, labour offices, various inspections). Data produced by the Ministry of the Interior refers to 230 authorities of which the employees are regulated by Act 234/2014 on the State civil service. In their study dating from June 2014, Bouchal and Janský stated that almost 935 000 people were employed in the Czech public sector. Salaries are allocated to 420 000 of them from the state budget. The Ministry of the Interior used the data produced by the Ministry of Finance in the State annual statement which, according to Bouchal and Janský, did not provide clear information on public sector employment. Using the data stated in state budgets (including the state budget proposal for 2017,) the partial summary of employment in Czech public administration can be found in the following table.

Table 3: Employment in public administration

CZECH REPUBLIC	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
(1) Employment in public administration			503 158		
- share of central authorities	413 595	416 645	422 445 (84 %)	437 291	444 928
- share of municipalities			72 515 (14 %)		
- share of regions			8 198 (2 %)		
(2) Public employment in social security roles			n/a		
(3) Public employment in the army			n/a		
(4) Public employment in the police			n/a		
(5) Public employment in employment services			n/a		
(6) Public employment in schools			n/a		
(7) Public employment in universities			n/a		
(8) Public employment in hospitals (in millions)			n/a		
(9) Public employment in core public administration Calculation (1) minus (2)-(8)			n/a		
(10) Core public administration employment in % of general government employment (9)/(1)			n/a		

Sources: National statistics

**According to the OECD, general government employment excludes public corporations.*

There are no data on employment in 'self-governments' (local and regional governments with their own powers and mandates) published by the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of the Interior on a regular basis. The analysis from 2011 only works with numbers from individual authorities at sub-national levels and argues against overrepresentation in administrative segmentation of the country and funding of self-government and state administration exercised by self-governments (tax shares and other transfers from the national budget). The Annual report on public administration in the Czech Republic in 2015 (Ministry of the Interior, 2016) is based on data from the salary information systems which is administered by the Ministry of Finance and refers to 72 515 employees of municipalities and 8 198 employees of regions. The numbers above do not include employees in the army or in the police, schools, universities, and hospitals. There is no complex data available on employment in the Czech public sector. The table above therefore only works with data on employment in public administration and the shares of central authorities also include employees of employment services, tax administration organisations, etc.

2 SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT

2.1 State system and multi-level governance

The Czech Republic was established as an independent sovereign state on 1 January 1993 as the result of the split of the former Czechoslovakia. The Czech Republic's public administration reform started after the fall of the communist regime in November 1989, and the first decade of reforms more or less followed the pattern of administrative reforms in other post-communist countries from the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. Administrative reform after November 1989 took the form of a reaction to the characteristics of public administration from the period of communism – subordination of state administration under centralised party rule and the abolition of the separation of powers were emblematic (Kuhlmann and Wollmann, 2014). The reform attempted to follow on from the democratising development of the pre-communist period and take into account experiences in developed countries and pressure from the EU on candidate countries. Initially, the main aim of the public administration reform was the renaissance of democracy and democratic values in the legislation. This democratisation of the legal and policy-making rhetoric went hand in hand with development and redevelopment, empowerment and stabilisation of the territorial self-governments, i.e. the decentralisation of responsibilities and the search for an adequate form of fiscal federalism.

The Czech administrative system has the following structure:

Table 4: Czech administrative system - structure

Territorial level (according to the territorial fragmentation)	Types of authorities	Self-government / State administration
National	Ministries and other central state administration authorities	State administration
	Agencies	State administration (specific status based on horizontal decentralisation)
	Some chambers	Self-government by interest groups
Regional	Regions	Self-government and state administration

	Deconcentrates (financial authorities, labour authorities, various inspectorates)	State administration
District	Deconcentrates (financial authorities, labour authorities, various inspectorates)	State administration
Local	Municipalities, towns, cities and their parts/districts (in the case of territorially sub-divided cities)	Self-government and state administration
	Voluntary associations of municipalities	Self-government
	Local workplaces in some deconcentrates	State administration

Source: Authors.

Kohlmann and Wollmann (2014) include the Czech Republic in the group of countries with unitary-decentralised administrative structures with strong local government. Although local governments originated from intensive decentralisation, they are still to a large extent dependant on funding from the state. As a result of the de-concentration of central government responsibilities, they also exercise state power and as such they exist in a hierarchical system of state administration organisations. According to some, larger municipalities can now perform more activities defined as state administration responsibilities than self-government activities.

Municipalities represent the lowest self-governmental units. According to the constitution, they are independent legal entities exercising their 'own responsibilities'. In practice, they not only perform tasks previously performed by self-government, but are also required to perform state administration ('delegated responsibilities'). This is called 'the joined model' and it is visible particularly in the structure and tasks of the main executive bodies of municipalities – their municipal offices. According to the amount of state administration they perform, there are various categories of municipalities in the Czech Republic. Three main groups of such municipalities are usually differentiated – Type I municipalities, 388 Type II municipalities ('obce s pověřeným obecním úřadem'), 205 Type III municipalities (municipalities with extended responsibilities, 'obce s rozšířenou působností', 'ORPs'); this division can also be found in the terminology of the Act on Municipalities (Act 128/2000). All municipalities of type III also perform the responsibilities of the lower grade municipalities in addition to the responsibilities allocated to type III municipalities.

Type II municipalities were created after the change of regime in 1990 in order to provide some state administration services not only to their own citizens, but also to citizens of other smaller municipalities. Among their specific responsibilities in terms of state administration, particular attention is devoted to environmental protection, the protection of agricultural land resources, the authorisation of disposal of water and the protection of waterways. Type III municipalities were established at the beginning of 2003 and took over the state administration responsibilities of abolished district offices (which is why they are sometimes called 'micro-districts'). For instance, the following responsibilities of former district offices were transferred to type III municipalities – the issuing of passports and ID cards, the issuing of trade permits, the social and legal protection of children, care for elderly and disabled people, transport and road economics, state administration in the area of forestry, hunting and fisheries and originally also the paying out of social allowances. Sometimes two additional categories are differentiated – 1230 municipalities with a registry office and 618 municipalities with

a construction office. The real situation is even more chaotic (at least for citizens), as illustrated by the table below.

In cooperation with other ministries (e.g. the Ministry for Regional Development), the Ministry of the Interior attempted to 'clean up' this situation, in particular suggesting the transfer of responsibilities to Type III municipalities (ORPs) which were created after the abolishment of 77 district offices at the end of 2002. This recentralisation is politically rather sensitive (as the mayors of municipalities and associations of self-governments are not in favour of the policy because the municipalities would lose some funding) and the ministry has not succeeded yet.

Table 5: Structures of municipalities according to the amount of state administration they perform

Types of municipalities	Number
Type I municipality	409
Type I municipality + verification and authentication of copies against original documents	123
Type I municipality + construction office	1
Type I municipality + construction office + verification and authentication of copies against original documents	1
Type I municipality + Czech POINT	1930
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + verification and authentication	2542
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + registry office + verification and authentication	623
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + construction office	1
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + construction office + verification and authentication	8
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + registry office + construction office + verification and authentication	219
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + construction office + verification and authentication + Type II municipality	1
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + registry office + construction office + verification and authentication + Type II municipality	182
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + registry office + construction office + verification and authentication + Type II municipality + Type III municipality	201
Type I municipality + Czech POINT + construction office + verification and authentication + Type II municipality + Type III municipality	4
Prague	1

Source: *Ministry of the Interior (2011).*

Regions are higher self-governmental units and have the same legal status as municipalities. They were anticipated in the Constitution drawn up in 1993, but were actually established in 1997 by the Act that created their territorial bases (Act 347/1997) and their responsibilities were defined in legislation created in 2000. Fourteen regions were established (including the capital city, Prague). In a similar way to municipalities, regions also exercise state administration responsibilities, some of which were transferred to them after the abolishment of district offices at the beginning of 2003.

The distribution of power between different levels of government is summarised in the following table:

Table 6: Distribution of power between different levels of government in the Czech Republic

Government level:	Legislation	Regulation	Funding	Provision
Central government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defence • external affairs • internal affairs • justice • finance/tax • economic affairs • environmental protection • public utilities • social welfare • health • education • science and research 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defence • external affairs • internal affairs • justice • finance/tax • economic affairs • environmental protection • public utilities • social welfare • health • education • science and research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defence • external affairs • internal affairs • justice • finance/tax • economic affairs • environmental protection (some) • public utilities (some) • social welfare (allowances) • health • education • science and research
Regional government (regions)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social welfare (coordination of social services) • environmental protection • public utilities (some: road infrastructure, coordination of transport) • health (hospitals) • education (secondary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social welfare (social services) • public utilities (some: infrastructure) • health (hospitals) • education (secondary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmental protection • health (some)
Local government (municipalities)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social welfare (social protection of children) • environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social welfare (social services) • environmental protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social welfare (social services) • environmental protection

		al protection • public utilities (some: road infrastructure , transport) • health (primary care) • education (primary)	• public utilities (some: road infrastructure , transport) • health (primary care) • education (primary)	• public utilities (some: road infrastructure , transport) • health (primary care) • education (primary)
--	--	---	--	--

As outlined above, we have to differentiate between automatic responsibilities (self-government responsibilities) and delegated state administration tasks of regions and municipalities. In the case of self-government responsibilities, regions are responsible for the following in particular:

- secondary education, special primary schools, coaching and training teachers
- strategies for the care of historical monuments
- regional institutes and establishments for social care
- protection against alcoholism and other substance additions
- establishing health-care institutions
- planning waste disposal (in economic terms)
- strategies for environment protection
- preparation for crises and crisis management.

In the case of delegated state administration, regions serve as institutions of control (as they control the economies of municipalities and the performance of state administration in municipalities), guidance/advice (as they should help municipalities with the interpretation of legislation etc.), regulation (in the case of certain services) and allocation (transfers from central authorities to local self-governments in the cases of primary education, primary health care etc.).

There is a general clause in the legislation stating that responsibilities that are not deemed to be national or regional are automatically municipal. Generally, municipalities are responsible for local development and in this regard they should take into account needs of their citizens and follow principles of economy, effectiveness and efficiency.

The Czech administrative system is rather fragmented because of the large number of small municipalities (the majority of municipalities have fewer than 1000 inhabitants). This fragmentation challenges the possibilities for the national level to coordinate and evaluate the state of play in public administration. After the abolishment of the 77 former district offices, coordination responsibilities were transferred to central authorities and in particular to 14 regional offices. This made it more difficult to access methodical help that was formerly among the duties of district offices according to some representatives of municipalities (14 regions are now responsible for methodical help to municipalities instead of the 77 former district offices). Associations of municipalities (Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic – SMOČR, and Association of local self-governments – SMS ČR) often criticise national government for being overly top-down and not inclusive. They complain that they simply have to follow national legislation which has increased the administrative burden imposed on them by the State.

Revenues of municipalities are dramatically affected by the share of taxes conferred to them by the so-called budgetary allocation of taxes. Because the majority of taxes that form the most significant part of municipal revenues are influenced by economic development, it is also hard to estimate future revenues. The funding of municipalities is still being debated, although their shares of taxes were revised a few years ago by amendments to Act 243/2000. Another debate relates to the financing of state administration tasks performed by municipalities. The Act on Municipalities states that municipalities will receive a 'contribution' to carry out the tasks in delegated competence. Although municipalities have a legal right to contributions from the state budget for the performance of tasks in delegated competence, the law does not specify how much, in what form and under what terms this contribution will be provided, or what percentage of the costs associated with the performance of public administration of municipalities they will cover. The rates are stipulated by the Ministry of Finance in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior. The size of the contribution is dependent upon the scope of delegated state administration responsibilities, the size of the administrative district and the proportion of the size of the administrative centre and the size of the administrative district. An analysis of the financing of the performance of state administration and territorial self-government pointed out significant differences in the level of coverage of expenses of municipalities with regard to state administration. The level of coverage of expenditure for municipalities with a Registry office stood at 40% on average, while for municipalities with a Construction office this was 50%. The average level of coverage of expenditure was close to 70%. However, for municipalities with extended responsibilities (ORPs), the average level of coverage exceeded 100% (Toth and Hužera, 2009). That is also why the Ministry of the Interior has attempted to link the funding of municipal state administration with process modelling for several years. To date, however, no real effects have been visible.

State structure (federal - unitary) (coordinated - fragmented)	Executive government (consensus - intermediate - majoritarian)	Minister-mandarin relations (separate - shared) (politicised - depoliticised)	Implementation (centralised - decentralised)
Unitary, but rather fragmented.	According to the government's rules of procedure: majoritarian.	The law prescribes some separation, but in practice it is often shared. Some level of politicisation is apparent.	In the case of state administration: centralised. In the case of self-governments: decentralised and - at least to some extent - coordinated.

2.2 Structure of executive government (central government level)

2.2.1 Machinery of government

In March 2017, the following ministries were in place:

1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2. Ministry of Defence
3. Ministry of the Interior
4. Ministry of Justice
5. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
6. Ministry of Transport
7. Ministry of Agriculture

8. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
9. Ministry for Regional Development
10. Ministry of the Environment
11. Ministry of Culture
12. Ministry of Health
13. Ministry of Finance
14. Ministry of Industry and Trade

In addition, two specific positions of ministers seated under the Office of the Government were established:

15. Deputy Prime Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, Chairman of the Research, Development and Innovation Council
16. Minister of the Czech Republic's Government for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation, Chairman of the Government Legislative Council

Various advisory committees and councils were also established within the remit of the Office of the Government (16 were enumerated on the website of the Office of the Government) and working bodies not under the Office of the Government (11 were listed in March 2013¹).

Ministries generally have the following internal structure:

- Units directly under the responsibility of a minister (cabinet, office, internal and inspection unit, press and PR department). The position of secretaries is recognised by law and may be established at ministries and the Office of the Government. These state secretaries are equal to deputies appointed as heads of specialised sections. Their role is to serve as State Service managers within their sections as well as for organisations under the responsibility of ministries. Secretaries manage activities related to the organisational aspects of the civil service, the management of service relations, the remuneration of civil servants and the head of the service authority under the responsibility of the ministry. Act 234/2014 on the State civil service also prescribes that in case of issues relating to changes in the service relations and the termination of civil service employment contracts, secretaries take action following consultation with a relevant Minister or the Head of the Office of the Government. This may have an impact on the level of politicisation of central authorities.
- Specialised sections headed by Deputy Ministers, subdivided into departments or offices (usually a section responsible for financial affairs, EU funding and the security department and a section of the state secretary exist alongside other sections within the structure of ministries; the structure is not harmonised across individual ministries).

There are various steering mechanisms in place, organised predominantly around the Office of the Government and its committees and advisory bodies. Other advisory bodies exist (see below). There is also a special body coordinating public administration reform and e-government (the new position of e-government architect was established within

¹ The list is available here: <https://www.vlada.cz/en/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/>.

the structure of the Ministry of the Interior only recently). The RIA (Regulatory Impact Assessment) mechanisms are also outlined below.

No study on agencification has been carried out in the Czech Republic. Although it is not easy to summarise the agencification due to missing terminology in the language (Randma-Liiv, Nakrošis and Hajnal, 2011), and agencification has not been a systematic government policy, the level of agencification in the Czech Republic is similar to that in Slovakia. Various types of agencies (as described, for example, by Van Thiel, 2011) have been established - semi-autonomous organisations without legal independence, legally independent organisations with some managerial autonomy and various private or private-law-based organisations established by or on behalf of the central government (particularly state-owned companies and enterprises). The first agencification initiatives can be linked to the early transformation period and particularly to the privatisation and establishment of a new health insurance system within which health insurance companies operate. Later on, individual agencies were established as a result of the restructuring of ministerial responsibilities (e.g. Czech Grant Agency, Labour office of the Czech Republic, General directorate of finances, General directorate of taxes), special requirements for more autonomous advisory institutions or institutions responsible for specialised areas (CENIA, TAČR). There is variation between individual agencies in terms of their legal status, funding and management autonomy.

The Czech administrative theory differentiates the following three basic types of organisations in particular that, to some extent, can be identified with the term 'agency':

- administrative offices with nationwide competence directly controlled by the government
- administrative offices with nationwide competence directly controlled by the ministries
- independent administrative offices

Administrative offices with nationwide competence directly controlled by the government are listed in the Competence Act (Act 2/1969) alongside ministries. They are not led by a minister but by the Head of an office appointed by the government or the president. They also differ in the substantive focus of their activities. An administrative office carries out a specific activity that is associated with the purpose of establishing such an office. The specifics of the activity are directly expressed in the title of the administrative office (e.g. Czech Mining Office, Intellectual Property Office, and Czech Statistical Office). Administrative offices with nationwide competence have their own section of the budget, as the individual ministries also have. They can also legislate.

Another type of administrative office with nationwide competence is those that fall within the field of responsibility of a ministry. Bringing these within the responsibility of the ministries has an impact in terms of the absence of certain powers that other administrative offices with nationwide competence controlled by the government have. In particular, these include the lack of competence to legislate. This power is held by the Ministry that controls the given administrative office. For example, the Czech Trade Inspection is managed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and the Czech Environmental Inspectorate falls within the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment. The inclusion within the remit of the ministries is also reflected in the fact that administrative offices with nationwide competence managed by the ministries do

not have their own budget chapter. Their funding is part of the budget chapter of the relevant ministry.

State administration is also performed by state offices that exist outside the organisational system controlled by the government. They are independent administrative offices. They have two basic characteristic features. They are bodies of state administration and they are also independent. The independence of these offices from the government is reflected in the fact that they are not under the control of the government, and are not controlled by any ministry either. This means that neither the government nor any ministry or other administrative body can give tasks to these independent offices. They therefore have functional independence. Independence from the government and other ministries is also reflected in the fact that these offices have a separate budget chapter within the state budget through which their activities are financed. An example of this kind of independent administrative office is the Council of the Czech Republic for Radio and Television Broadcasting. Members of managing boards and committees or directors of some of these independent administrative offices are exempt from Act 234/2014 on the State civil service (as specified in Article 2 of the Act). For instance, this is the case for members of the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting, members and the chairman of the Czech Telecommunication Office, the chairman and vice-chairman of the Energy Regulatory Office and the Czech Statistical Office.

The literature differentiates the following characteristics of an agency:

- • it is structurally differentiated from other organisations
- • it has some capacity for autonomous decision-making
- • it has some expectation of continuity over time
- • it performs some public functions
- • it has some personnel and some financial resources
- • it was created by government, and is funded to a great degree by government or is under the administrative scrutiny of the government

Taking into account these characteristics, we can differentiate the following main categories of agencies that exist in the Czech Republic (and some may also argue that public universities can have similar characteristics):

2.2.2 Main agencies in the Czech Republic

Administrative offices with nationwide competence directly controlled by the government and listed in the Competence Act (Act 2/1969) (excluding the Office of the Government)

1. Czech Statistical Office
2. State Administration of Land Surveying and Cadastre
3. State Mining Administration
4. Industrial Property Office
5. Office for the Protection of Competition
6. Administration of state material reserves – Czech Republic
7. State Office for Nuclear Safety
8. National Security Office
9. Energy Regulatory Office
10. Czech Telecommunication Office
11. Office for Personal Data Protection
12. Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting
13. Office for Supervision of Economy of Political Parties and Movements (established recently)
14. Office for Access to Transport Infrastructure (established recently)
Organisations that to some extent still fall within the responsibility of individual ministries (and usually subjected to Act 234/2014 on the State civil service)
15. Czech Trade Inspection
16. Czech Environmental Inspectorate
17. Financial Analytical Authority
18. General Financial Directorate
Financial Administration Bodies:
19. Appellate Financial Directorate
20. Specialised Tax Office
21. Czech Social Security Administration
22. Office for Defence Standardisation, Cataloguing and Governmental Quality Verification (<i>Úřad pro obrannou standardizaci, katalogizaci a státní ověřování jakosti</i>)
23. State Labour Inspection Office
24. Office for International Legal Protection of Children
25. Centre for Regional Development of the Czech Republic
26. Czech Proof House for Arms and Ammunition
27. State Energy Inspection
28. Assay Office
29. Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing
30. Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (API)
31. Czech School Inspectorate
32. National Archives
33. National Registers Authority
34. National Institute of Public Health
35. State Institute for Drug Control
36. Czech Breeding Inspectorate
37. State Veterinary Administration
38. Czech Agriculture and Food Inspection Authority (SZPI)
39. Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture
40. State Land Office
41. State Agricultural Intervention Fund
42. Institute for State Control of Veterinary Biologicals and Medicines
43. Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
44. State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic
45. Security Services Archive
Other organisations structurally differentiated from central authorities
It is hard to enumerate them – a ministry can have 10 to 60 such organisations (They take various legal forms, including partially budget-funded organisations)
Organisations established by municipalities and regions (primary and secondary education, health-care organisation etc. usually meet many of the criteria)

2.2.3 Centre of government coordination

The Office of the Government provides administrative support for the government and, formally, it is the main government coordination body. The office also performs the tasks

related to the professional, organisational and technical assurance of the activities of the government of the Czech Republic and its bodies. The Office of the Government had relatively broad competence during the implementation of the reform and modernisation of central state administration from 2004 to 2006, when these responsibilities were transferred back to the Ministry of the Interior. Currently, the Office of the Government is failing to fulfil the coordinating function to an extent comparable with the definition provided by the OECD (2004, p. 5-6): 'The Office of the Government is primarily a coordinating body whose main activity is to ensure that the various activities of individual ministries and other government offices are performed effectively and coherently.' The Prime Minister is relatively strong and the situation in the Czech Republic is similar to the situation described by the Latvian Report on Centres of Government in the EU Member States (Safeg, 2015), according to which in these circumstances the Centre of Government exerts a relatively administrative influence on decisions of the Government. It is also neither a performance monitoring unit nor a unit responsible for strategic planning (including the HR strategy for the public administration for which the Deputy of the Minister of the Interior for State Civil Service is responsible). Individual ministries are responsible for their strategic plans which should follow the manifestos of the Government. They are also the key vehicles for driving priority policy initiatives. To some extent, the Office of the Government also provides policy advice services (particularly through existing councils and committees trying to adapt to new priorities as described in the OECD's 2014 study).

The Office of the Government is also responsible for the circulation of government documents and supplementary documents between central government bodies, the parliament and the president. For these purposes, the Electronic Library of the Legislative Process ('eKLEP') and the Electronic Library of Government Materials ('eVláda') were established within the ODok project (www.odok.cz).

In the case of legislative proposals, Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is in place and its monitoring and development has been brought under the Office of the Government (including after transfers from the Ministry of the Interior). It has been in development since 2005 and became a compulsory part of the legislative process in November 2007. The framework requirements for the RIA analysis were changed in the General guidelines for Regulatory Impact Assessment in December 2011. The following were key steps in the process of regulatory impact assessment (RIA):

1. Drawing up an overview of the impact of the draft legislation
2. Drafting and approval of the draft Government legislative work plan
3. Processing of RIA on the proposed legal regulation
4. Interdepartmental comment process for draft legislation, including the processed RIA
5. Draft opinion of the RIA Working Committee on the submitted regulatory impact assessment.

The amended RIA rules of procedure require that RIAs be processed on the basis of an 'overview of the impact.' According to the revised version and the current General rules for RIA dating from February 2016, RIAs have to include a definition of the problem, the goals to be achieved, the identification of the stakeholders and the impact of the proposed legislation. The updated RIA general guidelines stipulate that overviews of the impact would be designed according to the templates that are listed in the Annexes to

the new guidelines and methodology developed in the documents (as set out by the website <http://ria.vlada.cz>). The current General rules for RIA apply the principle of proportionality, which is defined as follows: 'RIA is designed following the principle of proportionate analysis, which is related to the varying depth and scope of the analysis in the evaluation and quantification of potential impacts of the proposed solutions, but also with the whole process of impact assessment - the extent of collecting data necessary to evaluate the impacts, the extent of consultation of the stakeholders and the number of options assessed.' In principle, the submitter is responsible for determining the level (depth) of the analysis. However, in the case of significant anticipated impact in specified areas, in-depth RIA is to be elaborated. In addition, submitters have to prove that they have consulted the stakeholders on the draft legislation. The DataKO (Database of Consulting Organisations²) should play a supporting role (a list of consulting organisations is also available on the website ria.vlada.cz), although current rules do not explicitly mention them. RIA should also evaluate the consultation process. Consultations are an obligatory part of RIA, but their form and length are not specified. Submitters are required to determine the level of consultation based on the proportionality principle.

In addition, the roles of Government, the Legislative Council and its Working Committees and Chairman (existing within the infrastructure of the Office of the Government) have been specified as follows:

- The government of the Czech Republic decides on the implementation of RIA on the basis of a recommendation from the Working Committee of the Legislative Council of the Government for regulatory impact assessment (hereinafter 'Working Committee') or the chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government.
- The government decides on the implementation of RIA in the context of the Government Legislative Work Plan for the respective calendar year. Part of the draft Government Legislative Work Plan is information for each legislative task on whether the performance of RIA will be imposed or not.
- The Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government decides on the implementation of RIA for draft regulations on the basis of documents sent before the deadline set by the Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government. The content of the documents is a summary of the draft regulations scheduled for release in the following calendar year.
- The submitter of the draft legislation proposes the implementation of RIA in the context of a summary of impacts processed for each item of draft legislation. This draft will be examined by the Working Committee. In the event that the opinion of the submitter and the Working Committee differ and the resulting conflict cannot be resolved at the level of the member of government or head of another central body of state administration, a proposal for a decision by the government will be submitted and in the case of draft regulations also submitted to the Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government for a decision.
- In the event that a draft law or government regulation is submitted outside the Government Legislative Work Plan, RIA will always be performed (exemptions are specified). In the event of a failure to perform RIA, the Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government decides at the request of the submitter and on the

² The database is available here: <https://kormoran.odok.cz/ODOK/datako-dir.nsf>.

recommendation of the Working Committee.

- In the case of draft regulations sent after the deadline for the submission of documents, RIA is always performed. In the event of a failure to perform RIA, the Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government decides at the request of the submitter alone.
- The Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Government's decision not to carry out RIA is always on the basis of a written request from the submitter and a processed overview of impacts, without delay. Their opinion is sent electronically to the submitter of the draft legislation.

In December 2015, model RIAs were made available on the website of the Office of the Government³.

In the period from 2004 to 2006, when the Office of the Government was responsible for coordination of public administration reform, the Office criticised the implementation, and the coordination of the reform was hindered by some strong ministries behaving as silo-based organisations. Despite the efforts, the Office could not overcome the departmentalism and the tendency of some central authorities (and their units) to act independently. The success of the coordination was further limited by some authorities preparing reform documents outside the institutional framework of the reform. The Office was frequently not perceived as the coordinator and partner of the reform (Úřad vlády, 2005a and 2005b). In autumn 2006, the coordination of the reform of central administration was transferred back to the Ministry of the Interior. Considering multiple areas of its responsibilities (including police and fire prevention, registry offices and civil and travel documents, archiving, e-government), the Ministry has become a super-ministry (large multi-objective bureaucracy).

2.2.4 Key management, budgeting and monitoring mechanisms

The management of central government bodies is relatively decentralised and even the new Act 234/2014 on the State civil service did not change much, since it does not establish a career-based civil service in State authorities. Central government bodies are responsible for the management of their own processes, people and technologies.

Key monitoring and control mechanisms have been established particularly in the area of budgeting and they also follow the requirements of the Act on Financial Control. The Ministry of Finance is the central government body responsible for matters including the State Budget, the State Final Account, the Treasury of the Czech Republic (and its information system), financial supervision, accounting and auditing. The Act on Budgetary Rules was approved in 2000 and since then it has been amended more than 40 times. It specifies, for example, the preparation of the mid-term state budget perspective, the financial control mechanisms as well as the framework for management of the State Treasury and State debt. It states that the State budget will be approved for one year at a time.

The Deputy of the Minister of the Interior for the State Service approved various regulations on recruitment and employee evaluation procedures which should be

³ Model RIAs are available here: <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/lrv/ria/aktualne/vzorove-zpravy-ria-zpracovane-dle-pozadavku-obecných-zasad-ria-138671/>.

followed by central government bodies and a majority of the organisations falling within their remit (deconcentrates).

Based on the Government resolution of November 2015, new mechanisms of ex-ante control of e-government projects funding were established. Following the new Strategy for the development of ICT public services, new measures for increasing efficiency were approved and the Chief e-Government Architect Office was established within the Ministry of the Interior, the central government body responsible also for e-government coordination. The Chief e-Government Architect should provide the government with annual reports on the evaluation of projects. Since the beginning of 2016, central government bodies have been required to present their e-government projects to the Chief e-Government Architect if their anticipated price exceeds 6 million CZK per year, or 30 million CZK over five years. They cannot invest without obtaining a positive statement on the project from the Chief e-Government Architect Office. The Chief e-Government Architect should reach a decision within 30 days (in 60 days in more difficult cases). For this purpose, among others, a Guide for estimating the total costs of ownership of ICT public services was approved in January 2016.

Special inter-ministerial working groups also exist in the area of e-procurement, for instance. A working group on the functionality of the Czech Public e-Procurement Information System has also been created in order to collate complaints and proposals for its improvement prior to the planned extension of its use in the public service.

2.2.5 Key mechanisms of auditing and enforcing accountability, quality and practice of independent overseeing

There are the following bodies for independent overseeing in the Czech Republic:

- The Supreme Audit Office (SAO, NKÚ, www.nku.cz) – The SAO's activities are concentrated on ex-post control. Its responsibilities are specified in Act 166/1993. The SAO audits the financial management of state property and financial resources (including state tendering) received from abroad. It expresses its opinion on the State's final account and oversees the State's budget implementation. It is not authorised to audit the finances of municipalities, towns, and regions or to audit companies co-financed by the State or by a self-government, although initiatives aiming to incorporate such duties have emerged on several occasions. It cannot impose sanctions and only publishes reports. Some of the reports criticised the expensive use of financial resources on realisation of the former Smart Administration strategy, the National economic instrument (NEN) etc. The Supreme Audit Office criticised the fact that goals were defined rather vaguely, were not supplemented by relevant indicators and were not and could not be evaluated.
- The Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS, www.uohs.cz) – The Office for the Protection of Competition is the central authority of the state administration responsible for creating conditions that favour and protect competition, supervision over public procurement and consultation and monitoring in relation to the provision of state aid. Its activities are focused on ex-post control. Its responsibilities are specified in general terms by the Act 273/1996. It can impose sanctions.
- The Office for Personal Data Protection (ÚOOÚ, www.uoou.cz) – This Office was established by Act 101/2000 in order to control the observance of the legal obligations laid down for processing personal data, maintaining the register of

notified data processing operations, dealing with initiatives and complaints from citizens concerning breaches of law, and providing consultancy on personal data protection. It can impose sanctions and also focuses primarily on ex-post control.

- Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) – The responsibilities of the Public Defender of Rights (hereinafter the 'Defender') are specified in Act 349/1999. According to the Act, the Defender shall work to defend persons against the conduct of authorities and other institutions set out in this Act where such conduct is at variance with the law or does not comply with the principles of a democratic State governed by the rule of law and good administration, as well as against their inaction. The Defender is not authorised to impose sanctions. If the Defender ascertains a violation of legal regulations or any other maladministration in the course of his or her inquiry, he or she shall ask the authority to provide a statement on the Defender's findings within 30 days. If remedial measures are not implemented, the Defender shall inform the complainant and the authority in writing of the Defender's final statement that should include a suggested remedy. The authority shall inform the Defender within 30 days of receipt of the final statement of the remedies that have been implemented and if the authority fails to comply with the duty, or if the remedial measures are insufficient in the Defender's opinion, the Defender shall inform the superior authority (or if there is no such authority, the Government), and he/she may also inform the public of his or her findings, including disclosure of the names and surnames of persons authorised to act on behalf of the authority.

In addition, various inspection services exist. For instance, the State Labour Inspection Office (SUIP, www.suip.cz) controls compliance with duties specified in labour law. Its activities are specified in Act 251/2005.

2.2.6 Organisation/coordination of administrative reform

The Ministry of the Interior is a central government body responsible for the coordination of administrative reform in the Czech Republic, including the e-government. Currently, the Strategic Framework for the Development of Public Administration in Czech Republic for 2014-2020 (Ministry of the Interior, 2014) is the main reform strategy, supplemented by implementation plans (<http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/implementacni-plany.aspx>). The Strategic Framework states that its implementation structure will consist of the Government Council for the Information Society and the Government Council for Public Administration (and its Managing Committees: for public administration modernisation, for optimisation of PA in territories and for human resources in public administration). During its meeting of December 2016, the following topics were discussed, amongst others: Methodology of quality management implementation in state authorities and Methodological recommendations for the education of state civil servants in the area of quality management. The Strategic Framework also specifies minimum quality management standards. These standards would be sent for processing in the inter-ministerial comment procedure and submitted to the Government before the end of March 2017.

3 KEY FEATURES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

3.1 Status and categories of public employees

There are four main categories of employees in the Czech public sector:

1. Civil servants. They are regulated particularly by Act 234/2014 on the State civil

service and the Act on Civil Servants of Self-Governments (Act No. 312/2002) . Their legal status tends to be position-based rather than career-based. Various differences compared with private sector employment are specified by Act 234/2014 on the State civil service.

2. Public servants. For this category, special legislation regulates the preconditions of their employment, their training and career, managerial positions, or salaries (e.g. the case of teachers in primary and secondary education, heads of various central offices).
3. Employees regulated by specific more complex legislation (the police force and the armed forces). In particular, components of a career-based system can be found here.
4. Other employees (regulated only by the Labour Code).

It is not possible to specify the share of civil servants and public servants more precisely as outlined in point 1 of this report.

HR system (Career vs. position based)	Employment status (civil servant as standard; dual; employee as standard)	Differences between civil servants and public employees (high, medium, low)	Turnover (high, medium, low)
The HR system converges to a position-based model.	There are some specifics defined by the Civil Service Act and the Act on the State civil service (312/2002 and 234/2014) that differentiate civil servants from employees of private sector organisations.	Medium.	No data available. Cannot be estimated.

3.2 Civil service regulation at central government level

The legal status of civil servants represents an important through not completely consolidated field in Czech public administration reform. Until 2003, the Czech Republic had been particularly criticised for the absence of specific legislation on the rights and duties of civil servants, which went hand in hand with the absence of a training system for civil servants. The training of civil servants was organised on an ad hoc basis by various institutions. There had been no central institution which would coordinate it and reform programmes had been repeatedly pointing out the low level of professionalism and managerial competencies of civil servants in central as well as territorial public administration.

In 1999, the government approved the strategy for the training of civil servants. It aimed to prepare a training system that would follow public administration reform and the accession to the EU, but left the training of politicians (particularly members of municipal and regional councils) unresolved. In 2001, the European Commission stated that 'in particular, the Czech Republic still does not have a specific legal framework for its civil servants'. The 1999 Accession Partnership established as a short-term priority the adoption and implementation of the a civil service act Furthermore, the Government's 1998 Manifesto identified having a civil service act as one of the most important objectives to be reached by the mid-term point of the government (i.e. mid-2000). A civil service act as proposed by the government and a first reading was held by

Parliament in May 2001. However, discussions revealed a lack of sufficient consensus on the reform in Parliament. Only the code of ethics of civil servants was approved by the government that year. However, this code was binding only in the state administration, not in self-government (even for employees who exercised state administrative activities in municipal bodies).

In 2001, the Czech Republic was criticised by the European Commission who found it 'regrettable' that in the Czech Republic the aforementioned legislation defining the status of civil servants (and related issues) was still lacking. The rights and obligations of public administration employees were governed by the general labour legislation, especially the Labour Code. Remuneration was then based on the provisions of Act 143/1992 on payment and remuneration.

In 2002, the legal status of civil servants was specified in two acts:

a) The Act on Civil Servants of Self-Governments (Act 312/2002) which has already come into force and specifies in particular the process of recruitment of civil servants, their tenure, rights and duties. It defines the system of education, and the coordination and accreditation duties of the Ministry of the Interior. In other areas, the Act refers to the General Labour Code. It is binding for all executive employees of municipal and regional offices (regardless of whether they perform self-governmental or state administration tasks) and in some cases also for mayors of municipalities (particularly when the position of the secretary of the municipal office is not established).

b) The Civil Service Act (Act 218/2002) which specified in much more depth (compared to the first act) the legal status of the majority of executive employees of central administrative authorities and their deconcentrates, but this has not come into force yet. The legal force of this act has been postponed almost every two years since 2003, when it was due to come into force in its first version. Its implementation was incorporated into the central administration reform projects (see above). Let us remind ourselves of some of the words of the European Commission's 2002 report on Czech progress towards accession: 'Welcome progress has been achieved in the establishment of an independent, professional, stable and accountable public administration at central level. An important step forward was taken with the adoption of the Civil Service Act in May 2002 after difficult discussions and a close vote in Parliament. The Act creates a specific and comprehensive legal framework for the central public administration and reforms the existing arrangements in a number of key areas', and also highlight the statement of the following report that 'the act sets forth a gradual implementation of its provisions during a transition period, which extends up to two years from entry into force. Moreover, further delay will occur as a result of the adoption by Parliament in July 2003 of a Government proposal to postpone its entry into force to 1 January 2005 due to the financial burden caused by the floods of 2002. This development is unfortunate, as the Czech Republic will enter the EU with a central administration at the very early stage of its reform process'. Among the particular reasons given for the postponement were the costs of new remunerations system and related savings measurements.

The enforcement of the State civil service act was postponed regularly until 2014. In the meantime, in summer 2007, the government approved the project of a uniform and complex legal specification of the civil service. The Ministry of the Interior had to prepare an Act that would unify as much as possible the fragmented legal specification of employees of territorial and central authorities utilising the stabilised positive practices stipulated in the Act on Civil Servants of Self-Governments (Act No. 312/2002). The

project has not showed much progress. The Bill was being discussed publicly in the period between autumn 2007 and autumn 2008. In July 2009, the government passed the legislation which required the Ministry of the Interior to submit the modified proposal for the act on civil servants in public administration and their training until the end of 2009. Current public information does not reveal more.

Finally, the new act 234/2014 on the State civil service was passed late in September 2014 anticipating its full enforcement with effect from July 2015. This Act replaced the former Civil Service Act (Act No. 218/2002. In a similar way to the former Act, the new Act specifies many aspects of civil service in state authorities. The former Act stated that the General Directorate of State Service would be established. Its responsibilities were defined as being similar to the current responsibilities of the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of the Interior for the State Service. The Act also described the positions of deputies of state secretaries. In comparison to the former Act, the new Act states that civil servants have to pass an examination (the Civil Service Examination).

The Act is still being implemented under the coordination of the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of the Interior for the State Civil Service and its regulations. His department is also responsible for systemisation and coordination of State Service (but not of civil servants of self-governments and other categories of employees of the Czech public sector).

3.3 Key characteristics of the central government HR System

There are no studies published by the OECD on the current civil service system in the Czech Republic, i.e. those that would evaluate the impacts of Act 234/2014 on the State civil service.

The central government HR System is regulated by Act 234/2014 on the State civil service, but individual HR processes are relatively decentralised. In particular, the function of recruitment and selection is more centralised (recruitment must be approved by the office which is highest in the hierarchy of State Civil Service offices). Other core HR functions like promotion, development and training are decentralised but must follow the framework set out in the Act and in regulations of the Deputy Minister for the State Civil Service. Appraisal and salaries are also decentralised, but the remuneration of civil servants of the State Civil Service must reflect minimum requirements as specified in Act 234/2014 on the State civil service and supplementary legislation, including the General Labour Code. The Act together with special Government ordinance (Act 134/2015) and regulation of the Deputy Minister for the State Civil Service specifies criteria for civil servants' appraisals and their weightings and the link to remuneration. During the appraisal, individual goals should be taken into account.

There is no specific section dedicated to the Senior Civil Service in both the civil service acts. Special provisions only set out specific requirements on their recruitment (particularly the length of previous experience in public administration), training and dismissal. According to Act 234/2014 on the State civil service they can be dismissed by those who appointed them. Deputy Minister for the State Civil Service is appointed by the Government at the proposal of the Prime Minister, for a period of six years and on the basis of a selection process. State secretaries are appointed by the Government, at the proposal of the respective Minister or the Head of the Office of the Government. They are appointed on the basis of a selection process for a period of five years, but can

be dismissed only by the Deputy Minister for the State Civil Service, which reduces potential politicisation. Reasons for recalling a civil servant from the service post of a senior civil servant are specified quite strictly in Article 60 of the Act (the Act sets out the following reasons: the service post of a senior civil servant is abolished; the performance appraisal concludes that the senior civil servant delivered unsatisfactory results; the senior civil servant no longer complies with the condition of good health; the senior civil servant no longer complies with the condition of security clearance; or the senior civil servant is dismissed from the service for reasons of criminal proceedings). The Deputy Minister for the State Civil Service and the Director for Human Resources of the Civil Service will also be recalled from the service post if they gravely breach the service discipline guidelines or if their conduct compromises the dignity of their post or casts doubt on their impartial, professional, and just performance and decision making. The risk of politicisation is reduced, because – in a normal situation – the recall has to be based on previous performance appraisal. Nevertheless, some politicisation is possible, but because of the new status of the Act the level of politicisation of recalling is hard to assess.

There are no comparisons of remuneration in civil service and private sector. The proposal of the State budget for 2017 works with the total 161 603 620 613 CZK on salaries and other payments for work for 444 281 positions in authorities and offices with individual sections in the State Budget. The second systemisation of positions in state civil service, which covered the period from January to December 2016, works with the total 25 445 998 006 CZK for 59 264 positions in the civil service and 9 911 positions in management posts (i.e. the category of employees called '*představený*'); this category includes the following types of positions: deputies for sectional management, directors of department and heads of their sub-units). Using these numbers, the average salary in the State Civil Service is 30 654 CZK and 30 312 CZK in the public sector. This indicates that the average salaries in the public sector are higher than the average salary in the country and average salary in the profit sector (according to data of the Czech Statistical Office, the average salary was 29 320 CZK, the average salary in the private sphere was 28 833 CZK and private salary in the not-for-profit sphere was 31 548 CZK in the fourth quarter of 2016). There are annual pay negotiations.

In the case of civil servants of self-governments, core HR functions are decentralised even more. The Act on Civil servants of Self-governments (Act No. 312/2002) only specified their training system and requires that for each employee a training plan should be prepared for the next three years, during which the employee should have at least 18 days of training. The remuneration of civil servants of self-governments is regulated in the Labour Code and Government Ordinance no. 564/2006 which, similarly to Act 234/2014 on the State civil service, outlines qualification preconditions and a table with salary classes (16 according to the most demanding type of work, '*platová třída*') and salary grades ('*platový stupeň*'; here length of experiences is relevant) which are relevant for assigning a salary rate ('*platový tarif*') and fixed part of remuneration. The Annual Report on the Czech Public Administration in 2015 (Ministry of the Interior, 2016) states that in 2015 the total expenditure on the salaries of civil servants of municipalities was 20 211 942 229 CZK and in the case of regional governments it was 3 384 705 017 CZK. Using the data on the numbers of civil servants of municipalities and regions, the average salary was about 23 300 CZK in the case of civil servants of municipalities and 34 500 CZK in the case of civil servants of regional governments.

Coherence between different government levels (high, medium, low)	Remuneration level vs private sector (much higher, higher, same, lower, much lower)	Formal politicisation through appointments (high, medium, low)	Functional politicisation (high, medium, low)
Low (there is a special act on civil servants of the central executive bodies and a special act on civil servants of municipalities and regions)	Almost the same on average; slightly lower in the case of civil servants of municipalities (on average)	Medium	Medium in the case of civil servants of municipalities and regions; lower in the case of civil servants of the State

4 POLITICAL ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

4.1 Policy-making, coordination and implementation

The Czech Republic is a unitary state with a relatively high degree of decentralisation. Although the President is now directly elected, his/her functions are mostly representative as in a classical parliamentary system. The Government has a leading role in state administration and its rules of procedure are in line with majoritarian decision-making. They are usually formed by coalitions which may be rather fragile. In its 2011 study, Transparency International criticised the frequent changes of governments and their lack of independence.

Various aspects of vertical as well as horizontal coordination were echoed in governmental documents during the administrative reform. The coordination problems were previously highlighted by a document considered to be the first strategy of PA reform – The concept of public administration reform of 1999 (*Koncepce reformy veřejné správy*): ‘The main aim of central government, that is its strategic, methodical and coordinating functions, is not the main focus of central authorities. One of the major weaknesses of central government is a low level of horizontal coordination of individual subjects ... The so-called functional management is a totally dominating aspect, which causes the problem of departmentalism (the silo mentality).’ The document of 1999 claims this was caused by a ‘high level of centralisation at central government level, which restricted the activities of these authorities to no more than an operational character. The structure of ministries and their staffing were adjusted accordingly.’ This statement was literally adopted or slightly rephrased in other reform strategies as well as in the published Analysis of the current state of public administration (Ministry of the Interior, 2011).

Although general rules on legislative procedure and RIA (see above) state that Bills are consulted, there are no specific e-consultation instruments in place. In addition, associations of municipalities often criticise the fact that the national government is overly top-down and directive. One of the authors of this report (David Špaček) carried out a survey on e-participation in March and April 2014, which also examined tools available on the webpages of ministries. Participation is perceived as an important part of the preparation of legislation and national strategies, but exists in an ‘advisory mode’ in the Czech Republic (consultations are required for national legislation and strategies in particular, but their real effect has not been evaluated). This has not changed, despite the Government approving the ‘Methodology on Inclusion of the Public in the Preparation of Government’s Documents’ (by its resolution no. 879) in August 2007. The web survey indicated that ministries usually let users of their webpages read and download

information, rather than participate in discussions organised on their webpages or leave comments on individual outputs. Ministry webpages are still very heterogeneous and one can navigate them using the 'Site map' instrument. Possibilities to initiate offline discussions and submit comments were enhanced on webpages of the national government where the Library of Draft Legislation also contained an e-mail contact for submitting comments as well as deadlines for their submission.

Transparency International also criticised the level of political influence over civil servants, particularly with regard to the national level and changes after general elections. The study was prepared before the current Act 234/2014 on the State civil service was put in place and the critique may not be relevant because the new Act reduces the potential for politicisation. The reduction of politicisation was among the goals of the Act, but this cannot be fully evaluated because the Act is still so new. We will be better able to evaluate the real effect after the general elections which will be held in October 2017.

Most of the strategies are not evidence-based and their parts on strategic analysis are rather weak, mostly working with qualitative data, sometimes without taking into account the results of international benchmarking studies, or even data published by the Czech Statistical Office. In 2011, Transparency International was very critical about the quality of policy implementation in the Czech Republic: 'While "conceptual" documents exist for almost all areas, their implementation is generally not conceptual and quite often the individual steps being taken go against the original strategy, or result in the original strategy being amended. This tendency goes hand in hand with frequent changes on ministerial posts, which are even more frequent than changes of governments.' (p. 45).

Distribution of powers	Coordination quality (high, medium, low)	Fragmentation (high, medium, low)
Centralistic, connected to the Prime Minister	Medium to low.	Relatively high.

Political economy (liberal – coordinated)	Interest intermediation (corporatist - pluralistic)	Citizen participation (strong – weak)	Policy style
More coordinated than liberal. Often mixed, depending on results of election.	Hard to say. Depends on area. Mixed in my opinion.	Weak.	Rather top-down in some areas.

Sources of policy advice (mandarins, cabinets, external experts)	Administrative autonomy (high – medium – low)	Patronage & politicisation (formal, functional) (merit – patronage) (high – medium – low)	Public service bargaining (Agency – Trustee)	Stability (high – low – no turnover after elections)
Cabinets, external experts.	Medium.	Some patronage can be seen especially in the case of the civil service in municipalities and regions where the potential level of politicisation is higher.		Hard to evaluate for State civil service now. In addition, no data are available on turnover in civil service in municipalities and regions.

4.2 Administrative tradition and culture

The administrative tradition tends more towards the classic continental European culture, particularly due to Roman-German legal traditions. There is a public and a private legal sphere and administrative action is perceived as the implementation of law by means of legal specification. The principle of legality is a dominant value in administrative action, rather than performance-orientation. There is a relatively high degree of juridicisation of administrative action and the formalised direction of administrative activities as described by Kuhlmann and Wollmann (2014) with regards to continental European culture. The scope and content of state activity depends on political leadership at national level and we cannot clearly state whether the conservative or the social democratic type is prevailing.

Czech legislation has absorbed the public administration principles of the European Administrative Space as described, for instance, by the OECD (1999). Gradually, new instruments have been established that enable the external control of public administration and support openness and transparency in particular.

Although the Freedom of Information Act has been in place since 1999, Transparency International criticised the access to information and transparency in its National Integrity System Assessment (2001). According to the NGO, the decisive factor in public access to information was not so much the division between public and non-public on official criteria but rather differentiation between 'cheap' and 'expensive' information, according to their sensitivity. 'Within the public sector, detailed information concerning financial management of institutions and remuneration of individuals, information on exercise of control and use of sanctions, or data/materials on which the important decisions are based are expensive and therefore unavailable... Information concerning ownership structures and other key relationships within the private entities is similarly inaccessible.' (p. 9). The study also criticised the fact that although acting with a conflict of interest was prohibited in formal terms, in practice it was difficult to assess the integrity of individuals and prove or disprove their conflict of interest or private gain.

Although efficiency was emphasised among top-priority public administration principles in various legal documents (Act on Financial Control, Act on Public Procurement, acts on regions and municipalities), many questions have been raised in relation to the Czech practice of public procurement in the field of e-government. As eGov.cz pointed out, only one bidder participated in more than 70% of e-government public tenders (accounting for more than CZK 5000 million) in 2011. The winning bidders usually retained copyright and the exclusive rights to maintain and develop the information systems. Another example is the development and operation of the National Electronic Tool (NEN) as a future national platform for e-procurement. Almost every large e-government national project was or still is under the close supervision of the controlling institutions (Supreme Audit Office or Office for the Protection of Competition). In some cases, fines that are imposed on public authorities due to their violations of public procurement law are not sufficient to motivate them to change their practices.

Administrative simplification has been seen particularly in the burden imposed on businesses. This can also be seen in the sophistication of e-services available for them. Only recently did administrative simplification initiatives start focusing on citizens and public administration, as small municipalities in particular often criticised the burden

imposed on them by the State. In November 2016, the Ministry of the Interior published a report on the state of play of the reduction of the regulatory burden imposed on citizens and public administration. A call for tenders was announced during the summer and it is debatable whether Deloitte as the author of the study gathered sufficient data. In particular, the study demonstrates the practice of RIA and some e-government projects (like data boxes) that may simplify administrative procedures, but does not calculate the administrative or regulatory burden imposed on citizens and public authorities. Although the reduction of the administrative burden has been among the priorities of administrative reform since 2003 at least and various method documents on related calculations were prepared by the Office of the Government as early as in 2005 (with some updates from 2015⁴), there are no indicators that would be measured annually or regularly.

The Czech scores in Hofstede's national culture dimensions are as follows:

Hofstede national culture dimensions		
Dimension	Value	Average EU28
Power Distance	57	52
Individualism/Collectivism	58	57
Masculinity/Feminity	57	44
Uncertainty Avoidance	74	70
Long-term Orientation	70	57
Indulgence/Self-restraint	29	44

Sources: Geert Hofstede's national culture dimensions, <https://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html>.⁵

Hofstede defines culture as 'the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others' (Hofstede, 2017). According to Hofstede's national culture dimensions, the Czech Republic can be characterised as follows:

- The value of the Power Distance Index is higher than the EU-28 average, i.e. less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally and people do not strive to equalise the distribution of power and do not demand justification for inequalities of power. Society is perceived as hierarchical, and hierarchy in an organisation is seen as reflecting inherent inequalities. This supports centralisation and can be reflected in lower voter turnout, which may indicate that people have resigned themselves to the situation, do not trust governments and do not think that there is real competition between parties. In the case of general elections, voter turnout was almost 97% in the early 1990s and has been decreasing since then, reaching less than 60% in the 2013 general elections. (The situation was

⁴ See e.g. <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/lrv/ria/aktualne/dilci-metodiky-pro-hodnoceni-dopadu-regulace-jako-metodicky-podpurny-nastroj-k-obecnym-zasadam-ria-133977/>.

⁵ Interpretation: Power Distance (high value = higher acceptance of hierarchy and unequal distribution of power); Individualism (high value = stronger individualist culture); Masculinity (high value = higher masculinity of society); Long-term Orientation (high value = stronger long-term orientation); Indulgence (high value = indulgence)

comparable for the first election of the president in 2013). In the case of elections to municipal councils, the average voter turnout was even lower in 2014 (44%) and much lower again in the case of regional councils (about 35%). This may also result in reduced activity among citizens and a reduction in their participation in public decision-making or policy-making.

- The rate of Individualism is also rather high, but comparable with the EU-28 average. According to Hofstede, there is a strong preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. In individualistic societies, the employer/employee relationship is a contract based on mutual advantage. Hiring and promotion decisions are supposed to be based on merit only, and management is the management of individuals. The rate indicates that people place emphasis on personal achievements and individual rights. This seems to be in compliance with legislation on civil servants, which tends to be more position based rather than career-based, and although Act 234/2014 on the State civil service is rather complex, it prescribes decentralisation in some areas (including training and career development).
- In comparison to the EU-28 average, the level of masculinity is rather high. The score indicates that people 'live in order to work', managers are expected to be decisive and assertive, the emphasis is on equity, competition and performance and conflicts are resolved by fighting them out. It is hard to assess whether this is visible in public administration, since data and studies are lacking.
- The score of the Uncertainty Avoidance Index is relatively high, which indicates that rigid codes of belief are maintained, which is further supported by the value of the Power Distance Index. This may also be reflected by the perceived role of law - sometimes it was and still is believed in reforming public administration that a legislative change will form a solution.
- The score for Long term Orientation indicates that a more pragmatic approach can be visible and that thrift and efforts in modern education are encouraged as ways of preparing for the future. On the one hand, this is in line with the score of individualism, but it can be contradictory to the Uncertainty Avoidance score.
- The value of Indulgence indicates that Czech people are generally not indulgent and tend to be cynical and pessimistic.

Administrative culture <i>Rechtsstaat</i> (state based on justice and integrity), public interest	Welfare state (liberal, conservative, social-democratic)	Public sector openness (open, medium, closed)
More <i>Rechtsstaat</i> than public interest.	Mixed, now tending towards social-democratic, but the main philosophy changes after elections.	From medium to closed, but also differs in individual areas and also layers of public administration and across the same group of organisations.

Key PA Values	Managerial vs Procedural (Managerial. Mixed,	Red tape (regulatory density) (very high to very low)	Discretion/ autonomy (high, low, medium)
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	Procedural)		
In formal terms, the standard principles of the European Administrative Space with a strong emphasis on efficiency, openness and transparency in legal changes. In practice, this differs across public administration. No comprehensive research findings available.	Mixed to procedural. Again this may differ across public administration, but a strong emphasis on compliance with legally-prescribed procedures is apparent.	Rather high in some areas, with some simplification initiatives that have has a particular impact on deregulation for businesses.	From low to medium.

5 GOVERNMENT CAPACITY AND PERFORMANCE

5.1 Transparency and accountability

Indicator	Value 2014	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Access to government information (1-10)	8.00	8	8.00	10	0.00	-2
	Value 2013	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Transparency of government (0-100)	29.43	24	36.86	23	+7.43	+1
	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Voice and accountability (-2.5,+2.5)	1.00	19	1.02	17	+0.02	+2
Control of corruption (-2.5,+2.5)	0.26	20	0.39	21	+0.13	-1
TI perception of corruption (0-100)	43.60	21	56.00	19	+12.40	+2
	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2014	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Gallup perception of corruption (%)	81.00	22	83.00	21	+2.00	+1

Sources: Bertelsmann Stiftung, European Commission, World Bank Group, Transparency International, Gallup World Poll.

Note: The ranking of the Gallup perception of corruption is based on 27 countries, and on the 2009 values for Estonia and Latvia.

The table indicates a relatively better than average performance in the case of access to government information. The Freedom of Information Act was approved as early as 1999 and its amendments introduced possibilities for publishing information electronically. In addition, requirements that are stipulated in the acts on municipalities and regions require them to publish a range of information online, the Contract Register was recently introduced and the Ministry of the Interior became more active in this field and regarding requirements on open data which enhances access to government information.

On the other hand, the practice may differ as indicated in the score of transparency of government and the value of the Corruption Perceptions Index (corruption impact assessment is required in the anticorruption strategy, but no methodology on how to estimate and link it in RIA is available). Above we mentioned the critique of Transparency International about the high level of secrecy and the price of public information. Even the creators of the Freedom of Information Act criticised the fact that public authorities often do not follow the philosophy of the legislation and extensively utilise exemptions from making information available on request (extensive use of reasons like trade secrets, personal data protection) or even ignore the legislation (the critique has been partly adopted by the initiative Open Society – 'Otevřete.cz' and

evaluated by Infoliga – www.infoliga.cz). Metadata on public information are not sufficient and public administration is not active in monitoring and promoting the law on public information (no central authority is responsible for monitoring and disseminating information on laws on access to information). In addition, duties to assist applicants for information are limited and if an application for information is submitted to a public authority that is not responsible for the area and does not have the required information at its disposal, the authority can reject it without further helping the assistant (forwarding his request to a relevant authority, helping the applicant identify the relevant authority etc.). There is no formal control on whether deadlines are met when handling applications for information and one must rely on the active attitude of applicants. In addition, although the plan was that sanctions for freedom of information violations could be imposed on public authorities, this was not implemented. Protection of freedom of access to public information has not been enhanced (as there is no special information commissioner or ombudsman, no criteria for applying principles of access to information have been introduced, there is no special commission incorporating freedom of information into RIA procedures etc.); on the other hand, freedom of information is perceived as a soft instrument. Accountability is undermined also because national strategies do not work with SMART goals.

5.2 Civil service system and HRM

Indicator	Value 2012	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Impartiality (1-7)	3.92	22	3.57	20	-0.35	+2
	Value 2012	EU26 rank	Value 2015	EU26 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Professionalism (1-7)	3.74	21	3.80	21	+0.06	0
Closedness (1-7)	4.21	22	3.33	26	-0.88	-4

Source: *Quality of Government Institute (Gothenburg).*

The table indicates a relatively bad situation in terms of all of the indicators. It indicates a relatively low degree of impartiality in comparison to other EU countries. Government officials may take into consideration something about the citizen or case that is not stipulated in the policy or law when implementing laws and policies. Public sector employees may favour some applicants with whom they have stronger personal contacts etc. This goes hand in hand with violations of public procurement law. Above we set out a critique of supervising institutions with regards to tenders for e-government projects.

Professionalism did not score highly in comparison to other countries. One of the measures to increase the level of professionalism (and reduce politicisation) is represented by the enactment of Act 234/2014 on the State civil service . The Act prescribes an examination of State civil servants and requires regular appraisal and its linkage to remuneration. The Act has only been in place for a short time and its effects have not been evaluated systematically. Although the Act on Civil Servants of Self-Governments (Act No. 312/2002) has been in force since 2003, it is not clear what impact it has had on the professionalism of civil servants. For instance, the act states that a training plan will be drawn up for each civil servant specifying the types of education and training and allocating at least 18 days within the next three years for their training. This duty is to some extent 'virtual', because the plans are not evaluated at a national level. In addition, no analysis of educational needs in public administration was prepared by the national coordinator of education in public administration – the Ministry of the Interior. The available analyses only work with quantified education

(number of courses taken, number of civil servants participating), and not with satisfaction levels or the real impact of the training.

5.3 Service delivery and digitisation

Indicator	Value 2013	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
E-government users (%)	6.91	27	9.94	26	+3.03	+1
Pre-filled forms (%)	40.67	19	29.14	19	-11.53	0
Online service completion (%)	55.86	23	70.29	22	+14.43	+1
	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Online services (0-1)	0.45	16	0.48	26	+0.03	-10
	Value 2013	EU27 rank				
Barriers to public sector innovation (%)	22.83	19				
			Value 2015	EU28 rank		
Services to businesses (%)			52.50	11		
	Value 2011	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Ease of Doing business (0-100)	68.59	18	76.71	13	+8.12	+5

Sources: European Commission Digital Economy and Society Index UN e-government Index, EU Scoreboard Public innovation, Eurobarometer no. 417, World Bank ease of doing business index.

The Czech Republic usually obtains higher scores for e-government services for businesses. In particular, high-impact services for businesses show a higher degree of online sophistication. In the case of services for citizens, the level of service impact (the frequency of their use) is not reflected so much in the availability of e-government services. In the case of the EU e-government benchmarking, the line summarising the Czech score for online availability is more yellow, orange and red, rather than green, and services are not automated. In general, only public information is available, often not through a national portal. Relatively large numbers of public services are provided offline too. Such a situation is due to the absence of a real national public administration portal – portal.gov.cz is generally only informative and does not provide more transactional electronic services.

The national public administration portal (portal.gov.cz) was launched in September 2003 as a pilot organised by the former Ministry of Informatics. Officially, the portal was launched a year later when it offered a directory of public authorities, access to Czech legislation and text descriptions of some life event solutions (for instance how to apply for ID cards and passports, how to submit tax declarations, how to pass on a change of permanent address, how to register a new car etc. - the number of options has been growing). Only one transactional service was available – the electronic submission of monthly returns for the Czech social security administration (ČSSZ). More transactional services were made accessible later following new legal duties imposed on businesses (e.g. the electronic submission of sheets for pension insurance). Businesses use qualified e-signatures or special signatures prepared by the ČSSZ free of charge. Furthermore, submissions for tax administration (VAT, income taxes, road taxes and property taxes) and customs administration (submissions of statistical data on movement of goods within the EU) were made accessible through the national portal. In addition, the Ministry of Transport organised electronic tests for driving licenses. However, since autumn 2011 the transactional part of the portal has been reduced and it now mainly only offers information. Individual central authorities that offered their e-services via the

national portal before are now offering them through their own solution. This leads to rather fragmented and silo-based (department-centred) practices of e-government service delivery. There is no central platform informing citizens and businesses about the list of more transactional national e-government services they can use. The role of the information system of data boxes has been favoured and those who have set up their data box may use their log-in details to provide authorisation when accessing to services like electronic tax declarations.

This is also intensified by the relatively low transparency of public organisations on the national public administration portal (see point 3.4 of the 2015 report, p. 26-31). Through the portal, citizens can now only access descriptions of some life event solutions (the quality of guidelines is debatable), data boxes directories, links to other authorities (particularly those at central level) and basic information on the EU and the country. They can fill in applications for some extracts from public registries, but only if their data box has been set up. Similar services (mainly information services) are available in the section dedicated to 'Information for entrepreneurs and sole traders'. The portal motto 'Visit an authority via the Internet' is therefore rather misleading.

The practice of e-participation is limited and is available only sporadically and at the local and regional level (e.g. Vysočina region was and is among the most active self-governments in the Czech Republic).

5.4 Organisation and management of government

Indicator	Value 2014	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Strategic planning capacity (1-10)	4.00	20	5.00	16	+1.00	+4
Interministerial coordination (1-10)	5.67	19	5.67	18	0.00	+1
SGI Implementation capacity (1-10)	5.71	19	5.71	19	0.00	0
	Value 2012	EU26 rank	Value 2015	EU27 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
QOG Implementation capacity (1-7)	4.74	17	5.11	16	+0.37	+1

Sources: Bertelsmann Stiftung, Quality of Government Institute (Gothenburg)

We have commented on strategic planning capacity and inter-ministerial coordination issues above. The current value of the Czech Republic's composite indicators on implementation capacity of the Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) is determined by higher scores on constitutional discretion, national standards and task funding, rather than by higher scores in the area of government efficiency and monitoring agencies or ministries (government efficiency obtained the lowest score from all the components of the index). Inter-ministerial coordination scored relatively highly thanks to informal coordination mechanisms (according to the SGI 2016 'Informal coordination mechanisms have featured prominently in the Czech political culture. Under the Sobotka government, the principles of coordination and problem-solving within government are described in the coalition agreement. The most important body is the coalition council.') Still, administrative reform strategies as well as e-government strategies, for instance, often do not specify goals in a SMART way. They did not work sufficiently with outcome indicators and were rather output-oriented. The national evaluation has been very superficial and only recently did the Ministry of the Interior start to publish evaluation information. It was motivated by funding possibilities from the EU but, as indicated above, the time between the call for tenders and the anticipated finalisation of the studies is too short to be really evidence-based. Implementation capacity is also determined by the programming capacity and in the case of administrative reform the

programmes and strategies do not specify goals that would be measurable. Civil servants prepare the strategies that are decided on by politicians, hence implementation performance are dependent on administrative as well as political factors. Other implementation issues described by Smerglio et al. (2015) are also apparent. For instance, there has also been criticism of the fact that the national level – which is responsible for the national framework for funding from the EU Structural Funds – has a negative impact on the smoothness of the implementation of programmes and reduces the absorption speed of funds (also because of the delays in preparing operational programmes, publishing project calls, postponing evaluations of project proposals, launching the new information system MS2014+ for the monitoring of the implementation of programmes and projects co-funded by the EU - <https://www.mssf.cz/> - e.g. Good Governance, 2016).

5.5 Policy-making, coordination and regulation

Indicator	Value 2014	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Societal consultation (1-10)	5.00	15	6.00	13	+1.00	+2
Use of evidence based instruments (1-10)	7.67	6	7.67	7	0.00	-1
	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Regulatory quality (-2.5,+2.5)	1.30	14	1.08	16	-0.22	-2
Rule of law (-2.5,+2.5)	0.93	18	1.12	15	+0.19	+3

Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung, World Bank Group.

The current value of the Czech Republic's composite indicators of SGI (the Sustainable Governance Indicators) indicates a poor overall level of executive capacity. Evidence-based instruments scored relatively highly (7.7) particularly thanks to the advancement of RIA rather than thanks to sustainability checking. Societal consultation received a score of 6. As pointed out above, the culture of inclusion and gathering of input from the public for policy-making is relatively weak and is not further supported by ICT services.

Regulatory quality scored relatively well. Using this indicator, the World Bank tries to capture perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development. According to the description of the concept measured, representative sources are based primarily on a business perspective. As pointed out above, the regulatory burden imposed by legislation on citizens as well as on public administration bodies (e.g. municipalities) has been addressed only recently by the Ministry of the Interior and only a pilot analysis is available. The rule of law indicator score indicates a relatively good situation. Czech Republic also received a relatively good score on the World Justice Project's Rule of Law index 2016 (the global rank was 17). Still, in the case of some procedures the decision making of courts may be considered rather slow. For example, the project 'Map of delays' ('Mapa průtahů', www.mapaprutahu.cz) found that for the same procedure a decision can be made within 122 days on average by one court, and 876 days on average by a different court.

5.6 Overall government performance

Indicator	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2016	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Trust in government (%)	32.00	13	27.00	17	-5.00	-4
	Value 2011	EU27 rank				
Improvement of PA over last 5 years (%)	8.00	14				
	Value 2010	EU28 rank	Value 2015	EU28 rank	Δ Value	Δ Rank
Public sector performance (1-7)	3.80	20	3.67	21	-0.13	-1
Government effectiveness (-2.5,+2.5)	0.91	18	1.05	17	+0.14	+1

Sources: Eurobarometer 85, Eurobarometer 370, World Bank Group, World Economic Forum

The overall government performance and effectiveness goes hand in hand with the issues outlined above. If measured by the voter turnout, overall trust in government is fairly low. This can also be determined by corruption affairs as presented by the media. There are no studies on public trust in government prepared and published by the central government bodies. For instance, STEM (2017) surveys trust in government rather summarily and found that the public has particular trust in the army, the police and the president, and rather distrusts the Chamber of Deputies (the lower chamber of the Czech Parliament), the Senate and members of the Government. We may hypothesise that in the case of some municipalities trust in their political and executive bodies could be higher. The level of trust in governments of regions would be determined by a low awareness of the public about the functions of regions in the administrative system. To date no data are available on this.

Improvement of public administration over the last five years is debatable. This can be linked to the increase in the use of services established earlier. For instance, basic registers which were established after two decades of discussions about their design started to be implemented thanks to the approval of the legislation in 2009 (the Act on Basic Registers, Act No. 111/2009). The project also aimed to reduce duplicities in fundamental data on citizens and businesses, and it reduced the administrative burden related to repetitive requirements on data which are now stored in basic registers. Other e-government projects were implemented earlier, but as noted above high-impact services for citizens still lack sufficient online sophistication. Improvements can also be linked to the new State civil service legislation, but its real effects are hard to estimate because most provisions of Act 234/2014 on the State civil service came into effect in July 2015. According to the available data, it brought a rather high administrative burden related to the recruitment and appraisal of civil servants. In addition, many aims that were set out in the former Smart Administration strategy are repeated in the current Strategic Framework for 2014-2020. On the other hand, a change can be seen in the amount of evaluation information that has been published by the Ministry of the Interior in the last two years.

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