EVALUATION OF RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SEGMENT 2025+

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATORS

Content

Part I – Overview and General Information on the Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide members of international evaluation panels (hereinafter also referred to as "IEP") with valuable information and context regarding the evaluation of higher education institutions (hereinafter also referred to as "HEIs"). This guide supplements the information related to the evaluation process for HEIs, as defined by the **Methodology for the Evaluation of Research Organizations in the Higher Education Segment 2025+** (hereinafter referred to as "Methodology HEI2025+"). The introductory part of the guidelines briefly introduces the main principles of evaluation. The second part provides more detailed information about the research, development, and innovations system (hereinafter referred to as "R&D&I system") in the Czech Republic and further elaborates on the principles of evaluation and the procedures for evaluators.[1] The aim is to facilitate understanding of the evaluation process and simplify drafting of the Evaluation Report (hereinafter also referred to as "ER"). The guide is a complementary material to the Methodology HEI2025+.

General Information

The evaluation of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Czech Republic is conducted to improve the quality and efficiency of the R&D&I management at all levels and to increase its international competitiveness. HEIs are key players in the R&D&I system in the Czech Republic, and their comprehensive evaluation takes place every five years. The evaluation primarily focuses on the research activities of HEIs. The evaluation is conducted by the Council for Research, Development, and Innovation at the Government of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as “R&D&I Council“) and the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (hereinafter referred to as “MEYS”), in cooperation with other stakeholders.[2]

The evaluation of HEIs is conducted in five modules (see below). In modules 1 and 2, HEIs are being evaluated as research organizations according to the applicable **Methodology for the assessment of research organisations and the evaluation of research programmes** (hereinafter referred to as "Methodology 17+"). This evaluation is conducted by R&D&I Council at the national level on an annual basis. The results of the evaluation are transferred to the provider, which ensures the evaluation of HEIs in modules 3, 4, and 5 every five years. The results from all five modules together constitute the overall evaluation of the HEI. The document for the evaluation in modules 3, 4, and 5 is the Methodology HEI2025+. HEIs will be evaluated according to this document in 2025 by international evaluation panels (hereinafter referred to as "IEP"). The result of the evaluation will be an Evaluation Report, which the HEIs will receive at the beginning of 2026.

[1] In these guidelines, a gender-sensitive terminology is used where appropriate. In some sections, the generic masculine form is used for the sake of better readability of the text.

[2] HEIs in the Czech Republic are evaluated by the R&D&I Council as the central body responsible for the management of R&D&I system at the national level. Additionally, they are evaluated by the relevant "provider" at the ministry level, which provides financial support to the HEIs. Public HEIs and private HEIs in the Czech Republic are evaluated by MEYS. Two state HEIs (State Military University and Police Academy) are evaluated by other providers (the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior). Unless otherwise stated, the term "provider" in this guide refers to MEYS.

The Process of the Evaluation

The evaluation of HEIs involves the assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report (hereinafter also "SER") and an on-site visit by the IEP. The IEP is composed of both domestic and international experts and is structured according to the scientific fields represented at the evaluated HEI, as defined by the FORD[3] (OECD Frascati Manual) classification. The evaluation is conducted in accordance with the Methodology HEI2025+ in five modules, designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the research activities at the HEI. Each HEI submits a SER, in which it evaluates the outcomes of its research activities using selected indicators.

The self-assessment of the HEI takes place in the following modules: *M3 – Societal Relevance, M4 – Viability,* and *M5 – Strategy and Policies*. Research outcomes in the remaining two modules, i.e., *M1 – Quality of Selected Results* and *M2 – Research Performance*, are not included in the SER, as HEIs are evaluated annually by the R&D&I Council through peer-review of selected results and bibliometric analysis for these two modules. The results for Modules 1 and 2 are provided to the IEP by the provider, allowing the IEP to have an overview of the research performance parameters of the evaluated HEI. This enables the IEP to connect the results with the evaluation in Modules 3, 4, and 5 and create the Evaluation Report (ER) for the HEI including all five modules.

The evaluation also includes an on-site visit, which is a present visit by the IEP at the evaluated HEI. The date for the on-site visit is agreed upon by the HEI, the provider, and the evaluating IEP. The duration of the on-site visit depends on the size of the HEI and the number of its units.[4] During the on-site visit, the HEI introduces itself to IEP. Afterwards the IEP visits individual units of the HEI and engages in discussions with selected researchers and students. The findings from the on-site visit are incorporated into the ER and considered in the overall evaluation of the HEI.

Timeline

The table below outlines the key activities of the evaluation process[5], which can be divided into two phases from a time perspective:

The **preparatory phase** involves the preparation of materials by the HEIs for evaluation (primarily the SER) and their submission to the provider. Based on the HEI's proposal, the provider appoints individual IEPs. Online training sessions are conducted for the evaluators, who are familiarized with the procedural aspects of the evaluation, the Methodology HEI2025+, and related documentation. Additionally, meetings between the evaluators and the Expert Advisory Committee of the provider (hereinafter referred to as "EAC") are held, during which evaluation criteria for each FORD are calibrated and parameters of quality and relevance of results are discussed.

The **implementation phase** refers to the period during which HEIs are evaluated. The IEP evaluates the SER through repeated meetings, and on-site visits are conducted at the individual HEIs. By the end of October 2025, each IEP will prepare the evaluation of the HEI in the form of the ER.

[3] Fields of Research and Development.
[4] The minimum length of the on-site visit is one calendar day, the maximum is five days.
[5] For the detailed timetable of the evaluation process see part III of this guide.

Milestones

Establishment of IEPs	January 31, 2025
Training for IEP evaluators	February 2025
Harmonization meetings between IEP and EAC	March–April 2025
Start of evaluation by IEP	May 1, 2025
Evaluation by IEP and on-site visits	May–August 2025
Finalization of evaluation reports	September–October 2025
Publication of evaluation results	February–March 2026

Workload for Evaluators

The time commitment for individual evaluators varies depending on the size of the HEI being assessed by the IEP. HEIs have different organizational structures and a varying number of components, which affects the volume of materials the IEP needs to evaluate. The size of the institution also impacts the duration of the on-site visit conducted by the IEP. The following table provides an estimate of the average workload for an IEP evaluator at a medium-sized HEI:

Initial Training on Methodology HEI2025 (online)	2 x 2 hours
Harmonization meetings between IEP and EAC (online)	2 x 2–3 hours
Review of SER in Module 3	4 hours
Preparation of ER for Module 3	2 hours
Discussion of results within IEP	2 hours
Review of SER in Modules 4–5	8 hours
Preparation of ER in Modules 4–5	8 hours
Discussion of the results within IEP	4 hours
On-site visit	24 hours (1–5 days up to the size of the HEI)
Total	52 hours

Expected Outputs of the Evaluation

The primary output of the IEP evaluation is the **Evaluation Report (ER)**, which assesses the research activities of the HEI in the structure defined by the **Methodology HEI2025+**. The ER also includes insights gathered from the on-site visit conducted at the evaluated HEI. The evaluation holds formative value, especially for the evaluated HEIs. The ER provides information on how the HEI was evaluated, the results of the evaluation, and the reasoning behind them, as well as recommendations for improvements in specific areas (if relevant). The ER is further used by the provider and other stakeholders as a basis for the overall evaluation of the HEI. The overall evaluation is subsequently used by the provider as one of the materials for institutional funding of the HEI in the upcoming period. The evaluation has a summative value as well.

The following is expected from IEP evaluators during the 2025 HEI evaluation:

- Participation in the provider's online training sessions and harmonization meetings
- Review of relevant materials and evaluation documentation
- Evaluation of SER in Module 3 and discussion of results within IEP

- Evaluation of SER in Modules 4 and 5 and discussion of results within IEP
- In-person attendance during the on-site visit at the HEI
- Creation of the ER and discussion of its contents within IEP
- Communication with the provider and the HEI throughout the evaluation process

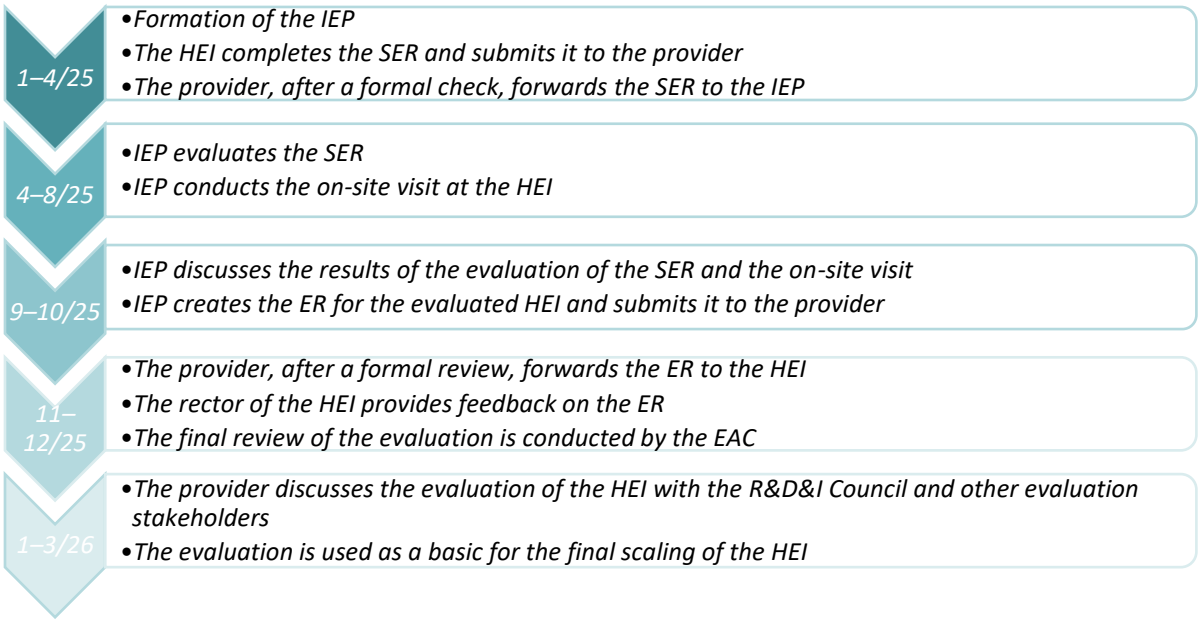
International Evaluation Panels

The evaluation of HEIs in 2025 will be conducted through International Evaluation Panels (IEPs). Each HEI nominates its IEP, which is then approved and appointed by the provider. The IEP consists of both domestic and international experts representing various FORD fields (based on the structure of the evaluated HEI). The IEP evaluates the HEI through an assessment of the SER and an on-site visit at the HEI. The SER of the HEI is distributed to the IEP members electronically before the evaluation begins. The on-site visit is a physical visit of the evaluators at the HEI, organized by the HEI itself.

The result of the evaluation is the ER created by the IEP. The ER assesses the HEI across all five modules according to the Methodology HEI2025+. Each module is evaluated on a four-point qualitative scale (A–D). The evaluation of Modules 1 and 2 is conducted by the R&D&I Council, not the IEP. This evaluation is provided to the IEP by the provider. IEP evaluates Modules 3, 4, and 5. The final ER includes the evaluation of the HEI across all five modules and is supplemented with findings from the on-site visit. After the IEP concludes its evaluation, the ER is given to the rector of the HEI by the provider, who may provide feedback on it. The overall evaluation of the HEI is expressed by placing the HEI on a qualitative scale (A–D). This grading is calculated with different weights assigned to each module (as outlined below).

Conclusion of the Evaluation and Next Steps

Once the HEI is placed on the qualitative scale, a final review of the evaluation is conducted by the **Expert Advisory Committee (EAC)**. The overall evaluation is then discussed in a joint meeting of the provider, the R&D&I Council, the Czech Rectors' Conference (CRC), and other invited guests. The overall evaluation will be used by the HEI to formulate and implement measures for managing its R&D&I system and processes. Additionally, the overall evaluation serves as one of the key criteria for the provider's decision on funding support for the HEI for the next five-year period.



Part II – Research, Development and Innovation System in the Czech Republic and Czech Higher Education

Research, Development and Innovation System in the Czech Republic

Actors and Levels of R&D&I

The R&D&I management system in the Czech Republic can be divided into three levels:

I. National Level
II. Provider Level
III. Research Organization Level

National Level

The highest level of R&D&I is represented by the actors who determine the basic priorities, goals, and strategic direction of the Czech R&D&I system: Government of the Czech Republic / Research, Development, and Innovation Council, Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports and Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Research, Development, and Innovation Council (R&D&I Council) plays a key role in Czech R&D&I. It is an advisory body to the Czech Government and is responsible for the strategic direction of R&D&I in the Czech Republic. Through the *National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic* (*NP of R&D&I*) it formulates the goals and priorities of Czech research and oversees their implementation. The R&D&I Council drafts the R&D&I budget proposal, which is submitted to the government and coordinates the subsequent allocation of funds between providers. In collaboration with providers, it conducts evaluations of R&D&I and prepares methodological documents for the evaluation process. For the Czech Government, it prepares annual analyses of R&D&I in the Czech Republic and compares them with international developments. The R&D&I Council also manages the R&D&I Information system (R&D&I IS). The Council consists of leading experts in science, basic and applied research, and innovation, nominated by bodies representing the research interests across the R&D&I system, such as the Czech Rectors Conference (CRC), the Council of Higher Education Institutions, the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) etc. The R&D&I Council is represented by the Minister for Science, Research, and Innovation.

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) is the central authority responsible for the R&D&I agenda outside the scope of the R&D&I Council. It is a significant provider of funding for research in the public sector, especially supporting research organizations in the Czech Republic, particularly universities, research infrastructures, international R&D&I cooperation, and managing operational programs for R&D&I co-financed by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). MEYS also collaborates with the R&D&I Council in formulating the NP of R&D&I and in evaluating research organizations.

Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) is the central authority responsible for industrial research. It is responsible for the *National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of the Czech Republic 2021-2027 (RIS3).* It ensures institutional support for research organizations in the Czech Republic and support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). MPO manages applied research, experimental development, and innovation programs, as well as operational programs for R&D&I co-financed by ESIF.

Level of Provider

In the Czech R&D&I system, by "provider" we mean an actor who decides on financial support for R&D&I. These actors are responsible for funding R&D&I. Besides the previously mentioned MEYS and MIT, the largest providers of R&D&I funds are state-established institutions and various ministries: Ministry of Transport, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Agriculture. These ministries provide institutional support for Long-term conceptual development of research organizations (hereinafter referred to as "LCDRO")[6] and they also provide targeted project-based support (see below). They may also create their own grant schemes in the form of projects. Other major actors include the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), the Czech Science Foundation (GACR) and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TA CR). In addition to these actors with nationwide scope, individual regions in the Czech Republic also act as providers.

The Czech Science Foundation (GACR) is a government organization that provides grant support from public funds for basic research in all scientific fields. The most frequent applicants are public universities or institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences. GACR projects operate on a bottom-up principle, with the project topic determined by the proposer. In addition to standard scientific projects, GACR also supports young researchers, international scientific cooperation, and researcher mobility.

The Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TA CR) is a government organization that provides grant support from public funds for applied research, experimental development, and innovation. The focus of the projects is based on a top-down principle, tied to the currently announced program calls. These can be divided into three groups: programs directly prepared by TA CR; sectoral programs prepared in collaboration with selected ministries and international programs and calls.

The Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) is a government organization funded from the state budget. It consists of 54 independent research institutes that conduct basic research in a wide range of fields. Given its public funding, CAS' research focus extends beyond the immediate needs of society and addresses topics that can be applied over the long term. CAS also conducts applied research, focusing on socially relevant research issues and conducting excellent and frontier research.

Level of Research Organizations

The level of research organizations consists of entities that conduct research: universities, institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), sectoral research organizations, private entities, and other research organizations. This wide range of actors can be broadly divided into two groups, i.e., public research organizations and private research organizations.

Public Research Organizations

Research organizations operating in the public sector can be typologically divided into two groups. One group consists of HEIs, i.e., universities, while the second group comprises public research institutions, which primarily includes institutes of CAS and sectoral research organizations. As for HEIs, there are currently 26 public universities in the Czech Republic, two state universities, and nearly 30 private universities, some of which also receive public funds for research. The main mission of universities is educational activities, but since the inflow of funds from the ESIF in 2007, their research activities have expanded significantly. In addition to universities, 22 sectoral research organizations, established by various ministries, also participate in research funded by public resources. Many research organizations are established by other central government bodies and regions. This also includes the previously mentioned institutes of CAS. Public funds for research are also utilized by large research

[6] To research organizations according to their respective areas of responsibility.

infrastructures, which are high-tech and knowledge-intensive facilities. Currently, 43 such facilities operate in the Czech Republic.

Private Research Organizations

Research in the private sector in the Czech Republic is conducted by nearly 3,000 companies and enterprises, which also fund most of it. A portion of funding for corporate research comes from public resources, and another part from foreign funds. Private research in the corporate sector thematically reflects current societal demand, primarily in the form of innovations. It focuses mainly on the IT services sector, the automotive industry, electronics, and mechanical engineering. Additionally, there are around 60 private research organizations in the Czech Republic whose mission is to provide research services to other actors. These research organizations are partially supported by public funds from the MIT. They are thematically focused, for example, on nuclear research or materials research. Research organizations that primarily commercialize the results of R&D&I are grouped in the Association of Research Organizations.

R&D&I Topics and Areas

In terms of thematic focus, many research results in the Czech Republic are aimed at the general advancement of knowledge across scientific disciplines. This mainly involves basic research without clearly defined goals or priorities, which is predominantly carried out at public universities or public research institutions. Within this general knowledge advancement, the field of natural sciences dominates, followed by engineering, and then the humanities and social sciences. The second major area of R&D&I in the Czech Republic is industrial production and technology. This is primarily applied research or experimental development, conducted mainly by private companies. To a lesser extent, private national or foreign enterprises, HEIs, and public research organizations also contribute to this area.

From a geographic perspective, the regions with the largest number of universities are the biggest recipients of public support for R&D&I, as these universities are among the most significant R&D&I actors in the Czech Republic. The same applies to public research organizations, particularly the institutes of CAS. The unofficial R&D&I hub in the Czech Republic is the capital city, Prague, which receives more than half of the total public support for R&D&I. The second-largest city, Brno, home to several universities, ranks second. The third region with a high concentration of research institutions is the Central Bohemian Region, which, although it has no universities, hosts a significant number of public research organizations and research and development centres. The regional distribution of higher education is a characteristic feature of the Czech Republic. There are fourteen regions in the Czech Republic, and eleven of them have at least one public university, while the remaining three regions host at least one private university.

In addition to universities, innovation centres are also significant R&D&I actors in the regions. There is at least one innovation centre in each region of the CR. These centres are supported by regional budgets or the ESIF. They implement regional innovation strategies and work closely with local private actors (companies, businesses, startups, commercial enterprises) as well as public institutions, thereby contributing to the development of the regional innovation ecosystem.

Legislation and Policies for R&D&I

Legislative Framework

The legislative framework for R&D&I in the Czech Republic is composed of several legal regulations and supplemented by both national and European directives. The primary law governing R&D&I is *Act No. 130/2002 Coll., on the support of research, experimental development, and innovation from public funds, and on the amendment of certain related laws (the Act on the Support of Research, Experimental*

Development, and Innovation). This law defines the rights and obligations of entities engaged in R&D&I, conditions for support, methods for providing information about R&D&I, and regulates relationships between the provider and the recipient of support. Other significant legal regulations in the R&D&I field include *Act No. 341/2005 Coll., on public research institutions*, and *Act No. 283/1992 Coll., on the Czech Academy of Sciences*. The status of universities is governed by a separate law, *Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions*. The alignment of the Czech Republic public funding support for R&D&I with EU legislation is stipulated by *Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014, issued on June 17, 2014*, and the Framework for State Aid for R&D&I.

Policy Framework

The main strategic document for the R&D&I field is the *National Policy for Research, Development, and Innovation of the Czech Republic 2021+*. It defines five strategic objectives and 28 measures to develop all components of R&D&I in the Czech Republic. The main mission of the strategy is to contribute to the prosperity of the Czech Republic and to foster progress in the following areas: governance and funding of the R&D&I system; motivating people to pursue research careers and developing human resources; quality and international excellence in research and development; collaboration between research and application sectors; and the innovation potential of the Czech Republic, as well as addressing the global risks and threats of the 21st century. The National Policy for R&D&I is valid for at least the period from 2021 to 2027, corresponding with the EU funds' programming period.

The strategic direction in the field of development and innovation is set by *The Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019–2030*. The framework plan, with the primary goal of positioning the Czech Republic among the most innovative countries in Europe, consists of nine interconnected pillars, made up of more specific goals and tools for their implementation. The strategy covers the following areas: financing and evaluation of research and development; innovation and research centres; national start-up and spin-off environment; polytechnic education; digitalization; mobility and the built environment; intellectual property protection; smart investments and smart marketing.

The Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization (RIS3) is another concept aimed at creating a long-term competitive advantage for the Czech Republic based on knowledge and innovation. The strategy works with the concept of "smart specialization", which leads to the identification of the region's or country's strengths and the use of its specific capacities and resources in combination with existing opportunities in the economic background and research and innovation capacity. It also connects the use of European, national, and regional budgets to support applied research and innovations.

Other policies and strategies in research and innovation include the *National Reform Program of the Czech Republic*, an annual plan for reforms and investments that the Czech government plans to implement. The program focuses on current economic and social challenges and is coordinated with the economic policies of the EU, approved by the European Commission. A specific role in reforms and investments is played by the National Recovery Plan (NRP), funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility. The NRP contains a separate pillar focused on research and innovation, particularly in excellent healthcare research, support for business innovations, and strengthening the international competitiveness of research and innovation. The individual pillars of the NRP consist of components where the Czech Republic has defined dozens of reforms and investments aimed at improving the functioning of the country for its citizens and strengthening its future.

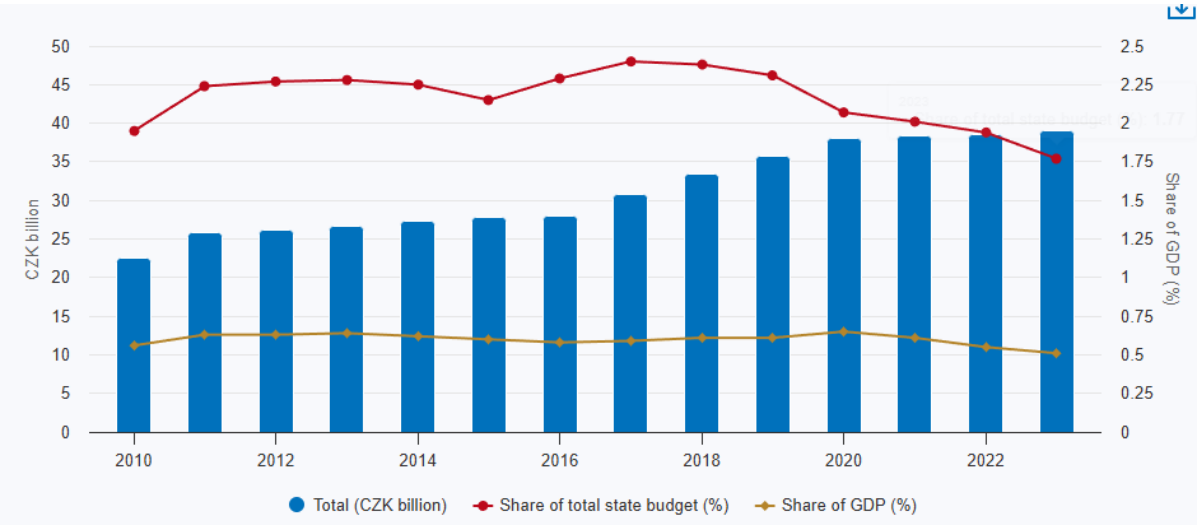
National policies for research and innovation areas are typically complemented by long-term intentions of individual providers. Together, they create the strategic framework for managing and implementing research and innovation in the Czech Republic.

Funding of R&D&I

Public and Private Financing

R&D&I funding in the Czech Republic comes from both private and public sources. While private investments are mainly focused on research and innovations in the private and business sectors, public funds are directed towards supporting both basic and applied research at universities and public research institutions. There is a certain degree of interconnection between private and public sector funding, allowing private entities to access state support under certain conditions, and likewise, public research institutions can obtain funding from private resources.

Since 2010, state budget expenditures for R&D&I in the Czech Republic have consistently increased. In 2023, the state budget allocated CZK 40.2 billion for RDI, with actual support amounting to CZK 38.9 billion. The total actual support for RDI, including income from foreign programs (EU, EEC, Norwegian funds), amounted to CZK 49 billion in 2023.



Source: CZSO, Statistics of Government budget allocations on research and development (GBARD)

Direct and Indirect Support

For public sector research organizations, particularly universities, public funding is crucial. Public support in the Czech Republic is provided in both direct and indirect forms. Direct support refers to financial resources provided by state authorities or specialized agencies, which can come from national funds (from the state budget of the Czech Republic and public budgets) or from foreign sources, mainly drawn from the ESIF and international organizations outside the EU (e.g., CERN, NATO, OECD, UN, Norwegian funds, etc.). Indirect support takes the form of tax relief and incentives (tax credits), tax deductions, exemptions from customs duties, guarantees, loans, and various forms of preferential treatment. For R&D&I funding in the public sector, direct public support is fundamental.

Institutional and Targeted Support

Law No. 130/2002 Coll. (see above) distinguishes between institutional and targeted support.

Institutional support is designated for the long-term conceptual development of research organizations (LCDRO), international cooperation in R&D&I, co-financing of EU operational programs, organizing public tenders in RDI, etc. This type of support is focused on the independent execution of basic research, applied research, dissemination of these activities' results, and knowledge transfer (if profits from the transfer are reinvested into the primary activities of the research organization). The

rules for granting institutional support are determined by each funding provider. According to the current rules for providing institutional support for LCDRO, institutional support for universities is provided in two parts: a stabilizing part, which comprises 85% of the institutional support granted to universities in 2020, and a motivational part, calculated as a percentage of the total institutional support based on the university's evaluation and any increases in the overall LCDRO budget.

To evaluate R&D&I in the Czech Republic, a robust evaluation system known as Methodology 2017+ is currently used. This system relies not only on quantitative, metrics-based evaluation of R&D&I outputs but also on qualitative dimensions, such as the societal impact of research results. Institutional support is provided by individual providers, with the MEYS as the main provider for universities, and other ministries also involved for research organizations. The CAS is a separate provider for its own institutions.

Targeted Support

Targeted support is typically provided through grants, projects, or R&D&I programs within the framework of public tenders, through public procurement, or as support for specific university research within master's and doctoral study programs. In the Czech Republic, targeted support is primarily provided by the Czech Science Foundation (GACR) for basic research and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TA CR) for applied research. However, it can also be provided by ministries; for instance, large research infrastructures are funded by targeted support from MEYS. The MIT provides support for corporate R&D&I in this way.

In the Czech Republic, both institutional and targeted support are distributed through a system of funding providers for R&D&I, comprising 15 public administration bodies, primarily various ministries, GACR, TA CR, and the CAS. Each provider manages its own budget chapter, from which it provides financial support to research organizations under its authority. MEYS, along with GACR and TA CR, provides cross-sectoral support to research organizations across public administration. Additionally, the Government of the Czech Republic manages state budget expenditures for R&D&I and ensures the operation of the R&D& Council, a governmental advisory body for R&D&I. Another provider is the CAS (see above).

European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

Since 2007, the development of R&D&I in the Czech Republic has been significantly strengthened by EU programs in both the public and private sectors. R&D&I actors have been able to draw on European funds through operational programs, which were managed by MEYS and MIT (as seen in the table below).

Programming Period	**MEYS**	**Total Allocation (billion EUR)**	**MIT**	**Total Allocation (billion EUR)**
2021–2027	*Jan Amos Komenský*	2.5	*Technology and Applications for Competitiveness*	3.1
2014–2020	*Research, Development, and Education*	2.77	*Enterprise and Innovation for Competitiveness*	4.09
2007–2013	*Research and Development for Innovations*	2.07	*Entrepreneurship and Innovation*	3.12

Funds from the ESIF have primarily contributed to the development of research capacities and the modernization of infrastructure for R&D&I in the Czech Republic. Thanks to these funds, many universities have established new research centres, including facilities for frontier research, which have enhanced the internationalization of Czech research and attracted foreign researchers to the country. ESIF also facilitated the creation of regional research centres that conduct contract research with industrial companies and firms, and they supported the development of knowledge transfer systems at universities. Finally, ESIF resources represent a significant means for the sustainable and stable development of human resources in R&D&I, which is crucial for excellent science.

HEIs in the Czech Republic

HEIs in the Czech Republic represent the highest level of education, scientific, research, development, and other creative activities, playing a significant role in the economic, social, and cultural development of various regions in the country. Their structure, governing bodies, and funding methods are legislatively regulated by Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions. There are three types of universities in the Czech Republic: public, private, and state. Currently, there are 26 public universities and two state universities operating in the country.

While public universities fall under the jurisdiction of the MEYS, state universities are managed by other ministries: the University of Defence falls under the Ministry of Defence, and the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague is overseen by the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to public, private, and state universities, there are also several foreign universities or their branches operating in the Czech Republic.

HEIs in the Czech Republic can be of two types: university-type and non-university type. University-type institutions are authorized to offer doctoral study programs (as well as habilitation and professorship procedures) and can divide their internal structure into faculties. Non-university type institutions offer only bachelor's and master's degree programs. A complete list of universities in the Czech Republic is available on the MEYS website.

Public universities hold a dominant position in the Czech higher education system, a result of both historical tradition and the development of the country's higher education. The oldest university in the Czech Republic is Charles University, founded in 1348. Other significant universities were established in the Czech lands continuously from the 16th century onward. Public universities offer free education in programs accredited in the Czech language, as they are primarily funded through public budgets. Tuition fees usually apply to programs taught in English. In contrast, study at private universities is subject to fees, with the amount of tuition varying depending on the institution.

Czech universities actively promote international cooperation by participating in the Erasmus+ program and offering double degree and joint degree programs.

The academic and research focus of public universities is highly diverse and spans all fields covered by the Frascati classification of research disciplines (FORD). The structure of studies at Czech universities follows a three-tier system: bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Most universities use the ECTS credit system as part of the Bologna Process. The study programs are accredited by the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education.

In addition to their educational role, nearly all Czech universities are also engaged in research activities. The combination of education and research is a defining feature of Czech higher education. Most academics are involved in research alongside their teaching responsibilities, although there are staff members dedicated exclusively to research activities.

Czech higher education is characterized by a high degree of autonomy of individual university components, such as faculties, departments, and institutes. These units have their own budgets, study

programs, and research focus, which allows them to respond flexibly to new trends and developments in their fields. Faculty autonomy is ensured by the existence of faculty senates, which oversee the self-governance of faculties and, together with deans and vice-deans, decide on their direction. Part of these bodies always includes student representatives.

The second significant characteristic of Czech HEIs is their strong focus on research. Particularly public HEIs, due to the mentioned system of public funding, serve as centres of R&D&I. The quality of their results is further enhanced by extensive international cooperation in these areas.

The funding of HEIs in the Czech Republic is regulated by Act No. 111/1998 Coll. on Higher Education Institutions. The budget of public HEIs consists of various income sources. However, a crucial role is played by the state budget contribution for educational and creative activities (see above). The eligibility for this contribution depends on the type and financial demands of accredited study programs and lifelong learning programs, as well as the achieved results in educational and creative activities and their complexity. The strategic plan developed by the MEYS and how a university fulfils it through its own strategic plans is also important in determining the contribution amount. The MEYS decides on the allocation of the contribution.

Additionally, universities receive funds to support research, experimental development, and innovation through so-called institutional support, which is aimed at the LCDRO. This institutional support is provided by the MEYS based on an evaluation of universities, which is carried out according to the Methodology HEI2025+. The upcoming evaluation of universities is thus one of the key foundations for university funding for the next five-year period.

Another common method of funding involves grants (Targeted support). Grants are designated for student scholarships for meals and accommodation, as well as for the development of the HEI.

Evaluation of R&D&I in the Czech Republic

To ensure effective management of R&D&I at all levels and to increase the efficiency of public funding on R&D&I, the Czech Republic regularly conducts evaluations of the R&D&I system, which also applies to Czech universities. The evaluation is legislatively regulated by Act No. 130/2002 Coll. According to Section 35, Paragraph 2, Letter c) of this regulation, the national evaluation of science and research is ensured by the R&D&I Council, which is responsible for preparing the methodology for evaluating research organizations, developed in collaboration with selected providers. Since 2017, the Methodology 2017+ (see above) has been in force, which was approved by a government resolution on February 8, 2017. According to Methodology 2017+, all research organizations in the Czech Republic that are registered in the Register of Public Research Organizations and request evaluation are subject to evaluation.

The R&D&I evaluation system, according to Methodology 2017+, reflects the different sizes, missions, and field-specific characteristics of research organizations, whose management at various levels requires different levels of detail in the information. Therefore, Methodology 2017+ combines several key evaluation principles, which include categorizing research organizations based on management level and type while maintaining a common framework and tools for evaluation (see Methodology 2017+). HEIs, according to this logic, represent a separate category of research organizations and are evaluated based on a distinct methodological document. This is the Methodology HEI2025+ (see above), which serves as a complementary methodological document to Methodology 2017+ and was approved by the Government of the Czech Republic. The common evaluation framework is based on the assessment of research organizations in five basic evaluation modules:

Module 1 – Quality of Selected Outputs: This module involves evaluating R&D&I outputs in terms of quality, originality, and significance compared to the international level. The research organization being evaluated submits the results from the past five years. A minimum of 10 outputs are evaluated, with the number generally depending on the size of the research organization.
Module 2 – Research Performance: This module includes an assessment of the overall production of outputs by the research organization in various fields and their quality in comparison to national, European, and global output. International databases, particularly SCOPUS and Web of Science, are the primary sources.[7]
Module 3 – Societal Relevance: This module assesses the extent of positive impacts that R&D&I has on society. Societal relevance is mainly related to the results of applied research, though it also partially covers basic research. These are results that hold societal significance in areas such as the economy, government and public administration, quality of life, social issues, and cultural policies.
Module 4 – Viability: This module evaluates the quality of the research organization's internal management processes, particularly in the areas of research, infrastructure, financial security, human resource policies, structure and development of human resources, and international collaboration.
Module 5 – Strategy and Concept: This module assesses the research strategy of the research organisation, how it is being implemented, and its alignment with higher strategic R&D&I goals at both national and international levels.

The relative importance of the individual modules for the evaluated research organizations varies according to their position within the R&D&I system. The national level of evaluation is based on common standards, aimed at gathering information about the overall performance of R&D&I in the Czech Republic. The focus is on the comparability of research organizations in terms of the quality of their outputs. This information is used to assess the fulfilment of the NP of R&D&I, to inform government on changes to NP of R&D&I, and to prepare budget proposals for state spending on R&D&I. National-level evaluation also serves to continuously monitor the quality of R&D&I across individual research organizations. This evaluation is carried out annually by the R&D&I Council. For national-level evaluation, Modules 1 and 2 are used, particularly bibliometric analysis and peer review in the form of remote reviews.

Modules 3, 4, and 5 are used for the so-called comprehensive evaluation of research organizations, conducted once every five years. This evaluation is carried out by the relevant providers. The starting tool for evaluation at the provider level is the assessment of the research organization's Self-Evaluation Report (SER) by an expert panel, complemented by a physical visit to the research organization (referred to as an "on-site visit"). The results from all the modules are used to classify the RO into a four-tier quality scale. This completes the comprehensive evaluation of the research organization, which then serves the purposes outlined in Methodology 2017+ (as mentioned above).

The comprehensive R&D&I evaluation is also conducted on Czech HEIs on a five-year cycle. The evaluation is carried out by the provider of institutional support, based on the report of the International Evaluation Panel (IEP) (Modules 3, 4, and 5) and the outputs from the national-level evaluation provided by R&D&I Council (Modules 1 and 2). This means that the evaluation of performance and quality of research outputs in Modules 1 and 2 is ensured by R&D&I Council according to Methodology 2017+ (as mentioned above), while the evaluation of specifics of the research organizations and its long-term development in Modules 3, 4, and 5 is conducted by the

[7] Using the bibliometric tools Scimago Journal Rank (SCOPUS) and Article Influence Score (WoS).

provider according to sectoral methodology. The comprehensive evaluation is thus the result of evaluations across all modules, at both the national and provider levels.

The provider-level of evaluation allows for better reflection of the specific characteristics of the research organization, while maintaining a common evaluation framework based on Methodology 2017+. For public and some private universities, MEYS is the provider of institutional support. The currently valid common evaluation framework for the higher education sector is set by the Methodology HEI2025+.

Part III – Evaluation of the HEIs

HEI Evaluation 2020

The first cycle of university evaluations based on Methodology 2017+ took place in 2020. A total of 26 public and 4 private universities were evaluated. The principles of the evaluation were similar to those planned for 2025. HEIs were assessed in accordance with the *Methodology for the Evaluation of Research Organizations in the Higher Education Sector* through the IEPs in five modules. The results of the evaluation were discussed by MEYS, the R&D&I Council, and the Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) in April 2021. A protocol was prepared from the meeting, which included information on how each university was evaluated and the resulting outcome, including justifications. The results were published on the provider's website.

HEI Evaluation 2025

The HEIs evaluation in 2025 will follow the Methodology HEI2025+. The evaluations in Module 1 and 2 will be conducted at the national level by R&D&I Council, while Module 3, 4, and 5 will be assessed by the IEPs. The results from all five modules will be aggregated into a final score, as outlined in Methodology HEI2025+, which will place each HEI into a qualitative grading scale. The final ranking of HEIs will be discussed at a joint meeting between the provider, R&D&I Council, CRC, and possibly other invited guests. The results of the evaluation will serve as feedback for the evaluated HEIs (the formative significance of the evaluation) and as a basis for the distribution of institutional support from the provider (the summative significance of the evaluation).

Evaluation Period

For the 2025 evaluation, in accordance with the documentation published by the provider, the results for Module 3 will cover the years 2019–2023, and for Modules 4 and 5, the results will cover the years 2020–2024, along with projections for the following five-year period. This evaluation period ensures continuity with the previous evaluation cycle and considers the availability of the most up-to-date data.

Evaluation Schedule

The evaluation process is divided into two phases: the **preparatory** and **implementation** phases. The evaluation of HEIs in 2025 will follow the schedule below:

Publication of Documentation by the Provider	until 16 October 2024
Submission of proposals for evaluation of the HEI by the Provider and submission of a proposal for the composition of the IEP	until 30 November 2024
Statement by the R&D&I Council on the proposed IEP members	until 15 January 2025

Entrusting HEIs with the organisational arrangements for realization of evaluation	until 31 January 2025
Appointment of the MEP	until 31 January 2025
Appointment of the EAC	until 31 January 2025
Training for IEP and EAC members and joint IEP/EAC meetings to establish quality criteria	February-April 2025
Submission of evaluation Materials to the Provider	until 31 March 2025
Verification of Materials by the Provider	until 30 April 2025
IEP evaluation	May-August 2025
Finalisation of Evaluation Reports	September-October 2025
Rector's Statement on the Evaluation Report	November 2025
Final control of the evaluation by EAC	December 2025
Joint meeting of the Provider, the R&D&I Council and the CRC	January-February 2026
Preparation and publication of protocols on evaluation of HEIs	February-March 2026

Preparation Phase of Evaluation

In the preparation phase of the evaluation, HEIs collaborate with the provider to form IEPs that will subsequently evaluate the HEIs. The HEIs approach individual evaluators, and the proposed composition of the IEP is reviewed by R&D&I Council. The provider then formally appoints the IEP. Simultaneously, the provider establishes an EAC and initiates its activities. After the formal appointment of both bodies, the provider begins training for members of the IEP and the EAC, ensuring that evaluators and members of the EAC are trained by the provider in evaluation methodology. The evaluators are also expected to familiarize themselves with the Methodology HEI2025+ and related evaluation documentation, which will also be available in English. Following this, a series of meetings between the IEP and the EAC takes place to set quality and relevance criteria for results and to harmonize the evaluation process across the IEPs. Meanwhile, universities prepare and submit evaluation materials (SER) to the provider. The provider checks the formal correctness and completeness of the materials and then forwards them to the IEP, which begins the evaluation process.

Implementation Phase of Evaluation

The implementation phase starts with the IEP commencing their evaluation activities. The IEP evaluates the submitted SER and related documentation. The evaluation includes an on-site visit, where the IEP physically visits the evaluated HEI. During this visit, the HEI presents itself and its departments, and selected topics from the IEP are discussed, followed by a discussion with representatives of the HEI and its departments. After completing the on-site visit, the IEP finalizes the ER, which is then submitted to the HEI’s rector, who may provide feedback on it. In justified cases, the IEP may be asked by the provider to revise the ER. The ER is then reviewed by the EAC, which oversees the consistent application of evaluation criteria. Afterward, the ER is discussed at a joint meeting of the provider, R&D&I Council, the CRC, and invited guests. Finally, the HEI receives the final evaluation, and the results are published on the provider's website.

International Evaluation Panel (IEP)

The evaluation of HEIs is carried out by IEPs. Each IEP is composed of at least seven members, the majority of whom must be foreign experts. The composition of experts within the IEP must reflect the academic structure of the evaluated HEI. IEP members are appointed by the provider based on proposals from the evaluated HEIs.

Requirements for IEP Members

- High level of expertise in the relevant academic field
- Established expert with extensive professional experience
- Strong academic or professional background
- Extensive publication/creative history
- Active publication/creative activity (at least two published outputs in the last two years)
- Active participation in project activities (at least one active project as the principal investigator at the time of selection) and completed international projects
- Membership in expert bodies (scientific societies, editorial boards of journals, expert advisory bodies, professional organizations, scientific/international boards of universities, etc.)
- Experience in managing research organizations (academic and managerial positions) for panel chairs
- Experience in evaluating R&D&I (evaluation of R&D&I, project evaluation at national or international levels, peer review, quality assessment of HEIs, etc.)
- Absence of conflict of interest
- Full understanding of English in written and spoken form (B2 level or higher according to the CEFR)
- Absence of funding for research activities from the Russian Federation

General Requirements for Panel Composition

- Gender balance (a proportional number of women and men should be approached)[8]
- Geographical balance of evaluators (The IEP should be composed of evaluators from different countries to ensure the widest possible representation of diverse academic environments. There should not be a situation where several evaluators in the IEP come from the same country.)[9]
- Professional balance of evaluators (Not only academics should be approached, but also experts from public/private sector institutions or business.)

[8] At least 40% representation of women or men, respectively.

[9] The requirement for a simple majority of foreign evaluators in the MEP is the minimum requirement set by the Methodology. Even after this requirement is met, the preferred option is to fill the remaining number of evaluators in the panel with foreign experts.

Contractual Relationship between HEIs and IEP Members

The form of the contractual relationship and payment of remuneration for participating in the IEP between evaluators and the evaluated HEI is not regulated by the provider and thus depends on standard practice and the discretion of the evaluated university. If new members are added to the IEP, they can only participate in the evaluation once they have been officially appointed by the provider. The provider does not set the amount or scaling of remuneration for evaluators. Evaluators must meet the criteria for impartiality towards the evaluated HEI. They confirm their impartiality by signing a declaration of honour. Impartiality is considered compromised if the evaluator:

- Has close family ties (spouse, partner living or not living in the same household) or other close personal ties with a person in a leading position at the evaluated HEI (rector, dean, department head, director of an institute, etc.) or with any legal representative of the evaluated HEI.
- Is currently employed or has been employed at the evaluated HEI within the last five years.
- Is a member of any of the bodies of a public HEI or any of the bodies of other parts of a public HEI (§ 7 and § 22 of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments and Supplements to Other Acts, as amended) or holds a similar position at a private HEI being evaluated.
- Has, in the last five years, participated significantly in scientific collaboration or been a co-author of a substantial number of outputs or results of the evaluated HEI.[10]

IEP Secretary

Each IEP is assigned a secretary by the evaluated HEI. The IEP Secretary is primarily responsible for providing administrative and technical support related to the functioning of the IEP, coordinating activities between the IEP and the HEI, and answering IEP questions regarding the HEI's internal organization and processes. Therefore, the IEP Secretary must be someone familiar with the R&D&I environment, the internal management processes of R&D&I at the evaluated HEI, and fluent in the working language of the IEP, which is English.

Provider's Methodologist

Each IEP (or HEI) is assigned a so-called Provider's Methodologist (hereafter referred to as "Methodologist") by the provider. The Methodologist is responsible for ensuring adherence to the evaluation principles set out in the Methodology HEI2025+ and the Methodology 17+, as well as the defined quality criteria for research and relevance of results. The Methodologist oversees compliance with the evaluation deadlines and processes, resolves methodological questions (or passes them to the EAC for resolution), and participates in organizing the evaluation process throughout the evaluation cycle. The Methodologist is a member of the IEP but does not vote or directly participate in the evaluation itself.

The IEP has the right to request additional information from the evaluated HEI on any part of the SER. However, the IEP is not required to request additional information nor to consider any information provided by the HEI outside of the SER.

Expert Advisory Committee (EAC)

To ensure consistency in the evaluation, the provider establishes the EAC for the evaluation of HEIs. The EAC is responsible for the consistent application of evaluation criteria across IEPs and research fields, according to the FORD classification, and for providing uniform interpretation of professional issues raised by individual IEPs. To ensure continuous oversight of the application of the set criteria, it

[10] Especially for joint project solutions and co-organization of conferences.

is recommended that the preparation of IEP outputs for each module be ongoing. Specifically, it is recommended that the IEP prepare drafts for the evaluation of modules 3, 4, and 5, which can be continuously consulted with the EAC.

Example:
IEP Activity Schedule:

- *Evaluation and preparation of ER drafts for Module 3* *May 2025*
- *Evaluation and preparation of ER drafts for Modules 4 and 5* *June 2025*
- *On-site visit* *July-August 2025*
- *Finalization of ER and submission to the provider* *September-October 2025*

The IEP or the HEI contacts the EAC through the methodologist. The IEP or HEI may also consult the EAC if there are uncertainties about methodological rules or if there is a need to interpret professional issues that cannot be resolved in collaboration with the provider's methodologist.

On-site Visit

An integral part of the evaluation of each HEI is at least one on-site visit by the IEP to the evaluated HEI. The on-site visit is organized by the evaluated HEI. The program for the on-site visit is the result of a mutual agreement between the evaluated HEI and the IEP. The mandatory components of the on-site visit program are set out in the HEI 2025+ Methodology. As part of the program, the IEP visits specific facilities and units of the HEI, and engages in discussions with HEI management, scientific and academic staff, and potentially with students involved in the research activities of the evaluated HEI or its evaluated units.

For the on-site visit, the IEP, in cooperation with the secretary, prepares specific points from the SER or topics of interest that the IEP wishes to discuss with the HEI management or representatives of specific units. The aim is to allow HEI representatives to prepare appropriate responses to the questions raised, ensuring the efficiency of in-person meetings. This does not limit the ability of the IEP to ask additional questions during the on-site visit. The IEP will also decide which specific facilities it would like to prioritize visiting during the on-site visit.

The program will distinguish the IEP's closed meeting and when invited guests can be present. Guests should rotate to avoid any potential distortion of the information being shared. For example, discussions with scientific and academic staff and students should not take place in the presence of HEI management. At the end of each day of the on-site visit (for multi-day visits), it is advisable to allocate time for a closed IEP meeting to summarize the progress of the on-site visit and discuss the evaluation of the HEI.

In the case of adverse circumstances that prevent the on-site visit from being conducted in person, it is possible to carry it out using suitable remote formats, such as videoconferences or multimedia presentations of the facilities.

IEP Evaluation Process

General Information

The IEP ensures objective and impartial evaluation of the SER and other submitted documents of the evaluated HEI. The IEP is led by its chair, who collaborates with the methodologist and secretary to organize the evaluation process. Upon the provider's request, the IEP collectively addresses questions that arise during the evaluation. IEP meetings are held in person, either physically or using appropriate online communication tools. If necessary, the IEP can also meet per rollam (through circulating documents). At least one in-person IEP meeting at the evaluated HEI (on-site visit) will take place

during the evaluation, preceded by preparatory IEP meetings. The frequency and duration of IEP meetings are determined by the IEP members or the IEP chair. However, the IEP should conduct at least one meeting for the evaluation of Module 3, one meeting for Modules 4 and 5, an on-site visit, and a meeting for the finalization of the ER.

IEP meetings are confidential, and members must maintain confidentiality regarding any findings, a rule that also applies to the IEP secretary and the provider's methodologist. Individual evaluators' opinions related to the ER are confidential within the IEP and the EAC, which serves as the supervisory body of the evaluation. Only after the consensus draft of the ER is prepared will it be submitted to the rector of the evaluated HEI for feedback.

Establishing Quality and Relevance Criteria for Results

The indicators in Modules 3, 4, and 5 are selected in the structure of the SER to allow for a comprehensive assessment of the quality of research and other activities of the evaluated unit/HEI. Given the varying standards, publication norms, and other specificities of the FORD scientific fields, not all indicators will carry the same weight. The significance and relevance of certain indicators may vary depending on the scientific field. It is essential to respect the varying weight of indicators for different FORD areas to ensure high-quality and relevant outcomes from the evaluation concerning the evaluated unit/HEI.

To achieve this, "harmonization meetings" between IEP and EAC members will take place before the evaluation begins. These meetings will include discussions on current quality and relevance criteria and how to apply the indicators outlined in the Methodology HEI2025+ during the evaluation. The goal of these meetings is to "calibrate" the weight of individual indicators to respect differences among scientific fields while applying high international standards of quality in the evaluation (for benchmarking purposes).

Setting Quality and Relevance Criteria

The criteria for quality and relevance are established based on the knowledge, experience, and expertise of both domestic and international experts for each of the scientific fields under the FORD classification. The expected outcome of harmonization meetings is a consensus on the definition of a high-quality and relevant results for each FORD area and a proposal on how the indicators defined by the Methodology HEI2025+ will be applied in the specific FORD area. The EAC secretary will prepare minutes of meeting summarizing the conclusions of these harmonization meetings.

Joint harmonization meetings for setting quality and relevance criteria will be conducted through a series of online meetings organized by the provider in the spring of 2025. In total, seven meetings will take place, all of them online. Six of these meetings will be organized by the relevant FORD scientific area, consisting of two EAC representatives (one domestic and one international expert in the specific FORD area), and members of IEP from individual HEIs, also corresponding to the given scientific area. The final meeting will be for the chairs of the individual IEPs, who will determine how the outcomes of the harmonization meetings will be reflected in the evaluation of specific HEIs.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The main document for the IEP's evaluation is the HEI's Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The document has the following structure:

- **Title Page**: Contains information about the HEI, organizational chart, introductory information about the evaluated HEI, and a SWOT analysis.
- **Self-Evaluation Report in Module 3**: Module 3 evaluates individual units within the HEI. The evaluated HEI prepares as many SER forms in Module 3 as there are units registered for evaluation.
- **Self-Evaluation Report in Modules 4 and 5**: Modules 4 and 5 evaluate the entire HEI. The evaluated HEI fills out one SER form for Modules 4 and 5 for the HEI.

Each module includes the name of the evaluated unit/HEI, the FORD scientific field (in the case of Module 3), and the evaluated indicators. Each indicator contains a verbal description of what is being evaluated, followed by a section for the unit/HEI's self-assessment. The HEI conducts its self-assessment by filling out the relevant sections for each indicator. The text descriptions can be supported by specific figures and data, for which predefined tables are provided.

The unit/HEI may also include hyperlinks to reported results or supporting documents and attachments in its self-assessment. These are organized in an attachment table, which is placed at the end of the SER.

Evaluation Report (ER)

The IEP reviews the SER for each module, indicator by indicator, and evaluates the data provided by the HEI or evaluated unit.[11] For each indicator, the IEP assigns both a numerical and a written evaluation, which are included in the structure of the ER. The ER mirrors the structure of the SER, with each indicator containing instructions for the IEP's evaluation, a section for the score, a comment explaining the evaluation, and recommendations for the HEI. Numerical scores are assigned on a scale from 1 to 5, according to the scale defined in the Methodology HEI2025+.

Indicators for which the HEI or evaluated unit cannot provide results because they are not relevant can be marked as N/A (Not Applicable), with appropriate justification. In such cases, the IEP assesses whether the indicator is truly irrelevant to the unit or HEI. If the IEP agrees that the indicator is irrelevant, it marks the indicator with an N/A score. Indicators marked as N/A do not factor into the final evaluation score, and the unit or HEI is not penalized for not achieving results in these indicators (see Section 1.5 of the Methodology HEI2025+ for evaluation scoring).

If an indicator is left unaddressed and not marked as N/A with a valid justification, and the shortcomings are not rectified after the provider's request, or if the IEP finds that the indicator is relevant to the HEI after review, the indicator will automatically receive a grade of "inadequate." The IEP has the option (but is not required) to request additional information if needed.[12]

The written evaluation of the indicators includes a justification of the score, a description of the quality achieved, the strengths and weaknesses of the HEI or unit in the given indicator, and, importantly, recommendations for further development in the area. At the end of the ER, a table summarizing the evaluation of individual indicators is included. The IEP selects the appropriate evaluation from predefined categories, which forms the basis for determining the average score and the overall evaluation for each module.

[11] The specific distribution of work among individual members of the IEP when assessing SER is up to the agreement within the IEP. In Module 3, it is expected that SER will be evaluated by specific evaluators based on their FORD disciplinary expertise, while in Module 4 and Module 5, the method of completing SER will be determined by the chair of the IEP.

[12] It is the responsibility of the HEI to provide the IEP with complete and sufficiently high-quality information.

Module 3

In Module 3, each evaluated unit of the HEI is evaluated separately. The IEP will therefore prepare an ER for each evaluated unit. The ER for Module 3 always includes an average evaluation score and an overall grade. The average score is calculated as a simple average of the ratings assigned for each indicator. The grade is then assigned based on converting the average score to a qualitative scale (A-D) according to the Methodology HEI2025+.

Once the ERs for Module 3 for all evaluated units are finalized, the IEP will determine a summary evaluation for Module 3 for the entire HEI (i.e., the overall evaluation of all evaluated units of the HEI). For this purpose, a separate form is provided by the provider. The summary evaluation is performed based on a weighted average, calculated using a formula provided by the provider during the evaluation process.

Modules 4 and 5

The evaluation process in Modules 4 and 5 follows a similar approach as in Module 3. However, the evaluation in Modules 4 and 5 pertains to the entire HEI, meaning the IEP completes only one ER form for both Modules 4 and 5. The average evaluation score is determined as a simple average of the grades assigned to each indicator in both modules. The IEP then assigns an overall grade for Modules 4 and 5. The overall grade is assigned based on converting the average score to the qualitative scale (A-D) according to the Methodology HEI2025+. The results for each module are entered into the overall evaluation separately.

Overall Evaluation of the HEI

The result of the evaluation is the ER prepared by the IEP, which includes the overall evaluation of the HEI, made up of the summary evaluations across all five modules. The IEP evaluates the HEI in Modules 3, 4, and 5. The results of the evaluation in Modules 1 and 2 are provided by the evaluation provider, as these evaluations are performed at the national level by R&D&I Council.

The results of all five modules are combined into the overall evaluation, which assigns the HEI to a scale (A-D) defined by the Methodology 17+ and the Methodology HEI2025+. This evaluation scale is provided in both Methodology 17+ and Methodology HEI2025+. Each module is weighted differently, and the weight of the modules is also specified in the Methodology HEI2025+.

Based on the evaluation of individual modules, the IEP proposes the overall evaluation of the HEI, using a calculation formula provided by the provider. This formula, reflecting the evaluation of the HEI in each module and the weight of the modules, will be provided to the IEP during the evaluation process. The final evaluation of the HEI is then discussed in a joint meeting involving the provider, R&D&I Council, CRC, and any invited guests. A protocol regarding the evaluation is prepared and published by the provider.

Gender Dimension in Research Results

The Methodology HEI2025+ does not require the gender dimension to be stated or evaluated for every presented result, recognizing that the gender dimension may not be relevant for every type of result. However, integrating the gender dimension should be considered across all areas of research, particularly for results where there may be differing impacts on women and men, or where the research involves people as the object of study, or the results may affect individuals.

Timeframe of Evaluation

During the preparation phase of the evaluation, the evaluators will be introduced to the Methodology HEI2025+ and the R&D&I and HEI system in the Czech Republic through two online training sessions, each lasting two hours. Additionally, a series of so-called harmonization meetings with the EAC will be held to establish quality and relevance criteria of the results and how indicators shall be used while

evaluation process. These online meetings will be organized according to the specific academic fields based on the FORD classification. Each meeting will last between two to four hours (the number or length of meetings may increase depending on the complexity of the process). However, the evaluators will only participate in the harmonization meetings relevant to their area of expertise. The harmonization process will conclude with a final joint meeting between the EAC and the chairpersons of the IEPs, which is expected to last two to four hours.

The time burden during the implementation phase of the evaluation will depend on the size of the specific institution being evaluated. Based on experiences from the 2020 evaluation, we estimate an average of four hours to review the evaluation materials within Module 3 for one academic unit and another four hours for preparing the ER. Given that Modules 4 and 5 are approximately twice as large as Module 3, the estimated time burden for these modules is eight hours for reviewing the materials and eight hours for drafting the relevant sections of the ER.

To ensure smooth harmonization of evaluations within the IEPs, it is advisable to hold regular online meetings to review progress in each module and, if necessary, preparatory meetings before on-site visits, as well as finalization meetings for the evaluation reports. In the period since May to October, the panel is expected to meet as needed, approximately 1–2 times per month (in practice, meetings will last a maximum of four to six hours). If necessary, based on the opinion of the institution's rector or the IEP, shorter IEP meetings may be held in November and December. However, based on experience, these tend to be brief meetings lasting up to two hours.

As part of the evaluation process, IEP members will also participate in an on-site visit to the institution being evaluated. The duration of the on-site visit will depend on the size of the institution, ranging from a minimum of one to a maximum of five calendar days.

Evaluation Results and Their Use

The evaluation of HEIs within the Czech R&D&I system serves two main purposes:

- **Formative:** The evaluation is a key strategic tool for managing the R&D&I system. The ER should primarily help the assessed HEIs optimize their own research strategies and management tools for R&D&I to achieve internationally comparable results and contribute to the high quality and competitiveness of Czech R&D&I.
- **Summative:** The ER serves as a basis for increasing the efficiency of public spending on R&D&I. The evaluation within the HEI segment is one of the sources used by the R&D&I system when preparing proposals for R&D&I expenditures for individual funding providers. The results of the evaluation are also used by providers as a basis for decisions on institutional support for long-term conceptual development of research organizations (LCDRO).

Important Abbreviations and Terms in the Field of Research, Development, and Innovation

CAS	Czech Academy of Sciences
EAC	Expert Advisory Committee
ER	Evaluation Report
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
FORD	Fields of Research and Development
GACR	Czech Science Foundation
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IEP	International Evaluation Panel
LCDRO	Long-term Conceptual Development of Research Organization
MEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
M17+	Methodology 17+, Methodology for the assessment of research organisations and the evaluation of research programmes
NP of R&D&I	National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic
R&D&I	Research, Development and Innovations
R&D&I Council	Research, Development and Innovations Council of the Government of the Czech Republic
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
TA CR	Technology Agency of the Czech Republic

Literature and Sources

Czech Statistical Office (2025). R&D Expenditure (R&D expenditure | Statistics).

Gov.cz (2025). ACT No. 130/2002 Coll. on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds and on the Amendment to Some Related Acts (the Act on the Support of Research and Development (https://vyzkum.gov.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=15607&ad=1&attid=831142).

Gov.cz (2025). Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019–2030 (https://www.vyzkum.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=867922&ad=1&attid=867987).

Gov.cz (2025). National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic 2021+ (https://vyzkum.gov.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=932081&ad=1&attid=932087).

Gov.cz (2025). The Education System of the Czech Republic – Tertiary Education (The Education system of the Czech Republic – Tertiary education - gov.cz).

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2025). Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions (https://msmt.gov.cz/uploads/Areas_of_work/higher_education/Act_No_111_1998.pdf).

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2025). Tertiary Education (Tertiary Education, MŠMT ČR).

Pazour, Michal (2024). *Support to Czechia on the reform of the Technology Transfer Offices sector. Background Report* (Support to Czechia on the reform of the Technology Transfer Offices sector - Publications Office of the EU).