



National Report on the Implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

Czech Republic



VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2017
HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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FOREWORD BY THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear reader,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the UN nearly two years ago and I am pleased to see that many countries have already begun to transfer its goals into real action. The Czech Republic is no exception. We welcomed the adoption of this ambitious and universal agenda in 2015 and we have actively launched its implementation.



Our country remains fully committed to meeting all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and is determined to support other countries in achieving sustainable development. We are thus very eager to present our national vision and the first assessment of our starting position at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017.

The document you hold in your hands is the first official review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Czech Republic. It builds on a process that lasted nearly two years and resulted in the adoption of a new national strategic framework for sustainable development in April 2017.

Besides all the ministries, the work on the framework involved over three hundred institutions and organisations that provided their expertise and feedback at different stages of its preparation. Such unprecedented stakeholder involvement is crucial, not only at the national level. Creating ownership and getting all the relevant actors on board is a vital precondition of the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda everywhere.

The Voluntary National Review is an opportunity to honestly assess our strengths and weaknesses. Our report outlines policy areas in which we do well and can support other countries in their implementation and, even more importantly, takes a critical look at those goals in which more effort is still needed in order to achieve them by 2030.

We share similar challenges with many others in our journey towards achieving sustainable development and improving our citizens' wellbeing. Taking a critical approach and learning from each other's experience is therefore a very important aspect of global, regional, national and local development. In that respect, regularly reviewing our progress is another important step towards our common sustainable future.



Bohuslav Sobotka

Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

Chair of the Government Council for Sustainable Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Czech Republic's Voluntary National Review provides information on the process of implementing the *2030 Agenda* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level. It focuses mainly on outlining the national objectives and vision to be achieved by the year 2030. In addition, it also analyses the starting points for implementation in six key areas.

The structure of the review builds on the strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030*, which was adopted by the Government in April 2017 and will serve as the main implementation platform for the SDGs in the Czech Republic.

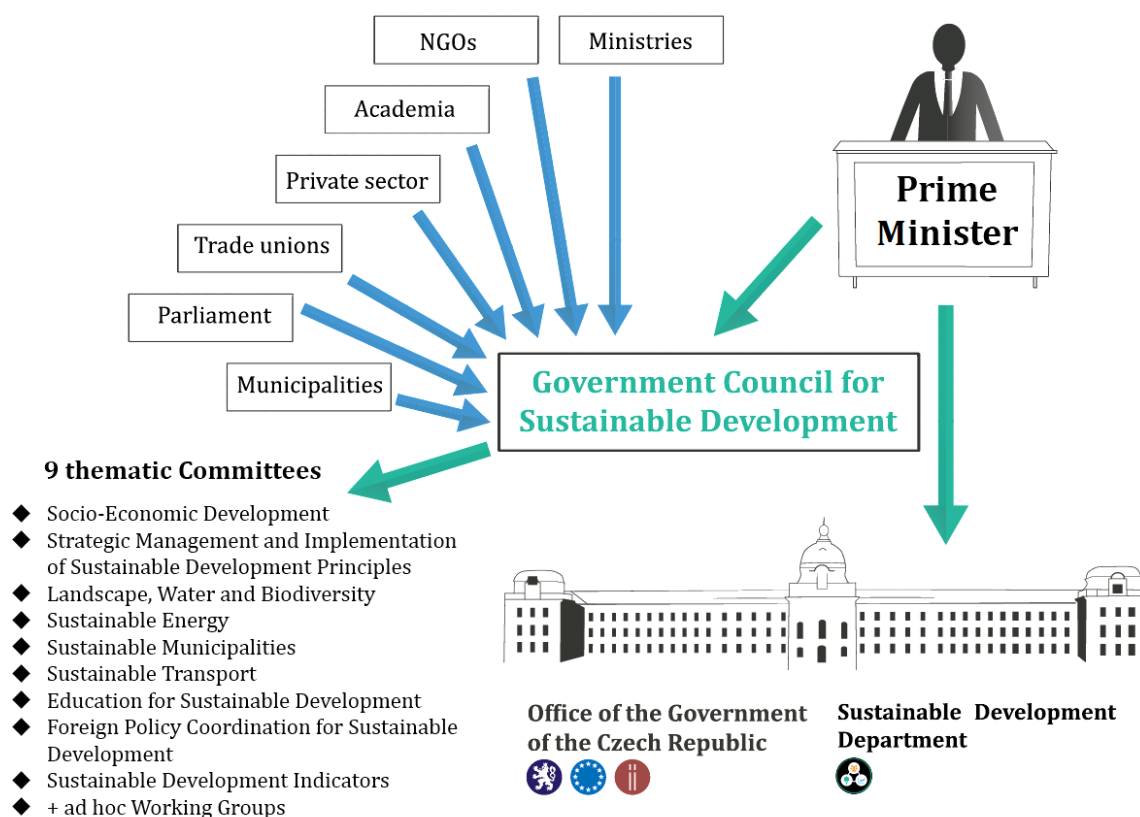
Czech Republic 2030 defines long-term objectives not only in the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development, but also in governance, global development and regions and municipalities. It sets forth 97 specific goals aimed at improving people's wellbeing, while respecting the principles of sustainable development. The document will serve as an overarching framework for sectoral, regional and local strategies. The selection and adoption of specific measures will be carried out by the relevant public administration bodies and supported by the activities of non-state stakeholders.

The division into six key areas (People and Society, Economy, Resilient Ecosystems, Regions and Municipalities, Global Development and Good Governance) is based on an expert analysis, which was carried out in the initial stage of the preparation of the document.

The sustainable development agenda is coordinated at the national level by the Government Council on Sustainable Development (GCSD), chaired by the Prime Minister. The work of the GCSD is supported by its Secretariat in the Sustainable Development Department of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. Work on the strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030* started in 2015 and has been carried out in cooperation with hundreds of experts and stakeholders gathered in the GCSD and its nine thematic Committees.

Analysis of the relevance of the SDGs in the national context shows that all the SDGs and most of the targets of the *2030 Agenda* are applicable at the national level. While none of the SDGs have been fully accomplished, each goal contains areas where the Czech Republic scores well and which can be considered as strengths. Examples of such strengths and weaknesses (i.e. targets where progress has not been satisfactory) are showcased in each key area in order to provide a balanced and a deeper insight into the current state of implementation of selected SDGs.

Institutional structure for sustainable development in the Czech Republic



The Czech approach to the 2030 Agenda implementation builds on two important concepts: sustainable development and wellbeing. In order to consider development beyond the scope of GDP and economic growth, progress in the implementation of the *Czech Republic 2030* strategic framework will be measured using indicators related to its specific goals and indicators focusing on different aspects of quality of life and wellbeing.

The selection of strengths and weaknesses outlined in the report is based on the above- or below-OECD-average score in the respective SDG analysed in the OECD Pilot Study *Measuring Distance to SDGs Targets* (2017). Due to a lack of available data for all the SDG targets, these examples must be considered as merely indicative.

Despite shortcomings in the availability of data, the Voluntary National Review provided an important opportunity to re-assess national sustainable development priorities in relation to the SDGs and critically evaluate the current state of implementation. The report has been prepared with the support of the Government Council for Sustainable Development and its Committees and consulted with the relevant stakeholders.



The key area **People and Society** mostly covers SDGs from the People (SDG 1, 3, 4, 5) and Prosperity (SDG 8 and 10) categories of the *2030 Agenda*. The distance to the target values varies significantly among the available indicators. In particular, reducing poverty and the unemployment rate and combating communicable diseases are already close to the 2030 target levels. However, gender equality, non-medical determinants of health (emissions of hazardous substances, harmful use of alcohol and tobacco) as well as quality of earnings and lifelong learning opportunities are still far from the 2030 aspirations.

The Prosperity (SDGs 7, 8, 9 and 10), Planet (SDGs 6 and 12) and partially also People (SDG 1) categories of the *2030 Agenda* are covered in the key area **Economy**. The Czech economy has performed well in recent years, with GDP surpassing the pre-2008 crisis level and growth rising again. However, the energy management results are mixed: on the one hand, all households have access to modern energy facilities and the use of renewable energy is on the increase; on the other hand, there is significant room for improving energy efficiency in consumption and production.



The key area **Resilient Ecosystems** focuses primarily on the goals and targets in the Planet category of the *2030 Agenda* (SDG 6, 13, 14 and 15). With the exception of climate action, the Czech Republic is ahead of or in line with the OECD average results for every underlying goal. The results as regards protecting biodiversity and the creation of favourable conditions for terrestrial ecosystems are particularly close to the target levels. Besides the Planet goals, SDG 2, 11 and 12 are also addressed in this key area.

The key area **Regions and Municipalities** brings a sub-national perspective to the implementation of the SDGs and provides a framework for mainstreaming sustainable development to regional and local policies. This key area touches upon all of the categories of the *2030 Agenda* and achieving its vision contributes to the implementation of SDGs 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17. The Czech Republic scores above the OECD average particularly in water, sanitation and equality related targets; however, the country also faces challenges arising from regional disparities in income and the quality of the environment.





The 2030 Agenda category of Partnership is covered by the key area **Global Development** (SDG 16 and 17), where performance is so far unbalanced. The Czech Republic aims at applying its domestic and foreign policies to promote the values and principles of global sustainable development. It traditionally supports other countries throughout their transition towards democracy and a market economy, building on its own experience. However, increased efforts will be needed in order to meet the targets set for the international commitments of *Official Development Assistance*.

Sustainable development cannot be successfully implemented without robust institutions which are able to act coherently and draw up the appropriate policies. Achievement of SDG 16 and the systemic issues of SDG 17 is therefore a vital precondition for success in the implementation of all other goals and targets. The key area **Good Governance** mainly addresses the Peace category of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 16), with a special focus on challenges related to the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public institutions. However, emphasis is also placed on equality (SDG 5 and 10) and Partnership (SDG 17) to ensure that no one is left behind.



Adoption of *Czech Republic 2030* is followed by the preparation of its implementation plan. The document will establish adequate mechanisms to ensure compliance between the strategic and specific goals of *Czech Republic 2030* and the objectives of other sectoral strategies, concepts, programmes and measures.

Furthermore, work towards achieving the goals of *Czech Republic 2030* will also be supported by the framework of voluntary commitments, which will allow civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders and individuals to participate in the implementation process and encourage partnerships between various sectors of society. Public institutions will continue to promote the principles of sustainable development and raise awareness about the SDGs.

The compliance of sectoral and regional strategic documents, programmes and measures with *Czech Republic 2030* and progress towards national goals will be monitored by the biannual analytical *Report on Quality of Life and its Sustainability*, prepared by the Sustainable Development Department.

INTRODUCTION

The Czech Republic actively supported the process of negotiation of the ambitious and transformative *2030 Agenda* and welcomed its adoption at the UN summit in September 2015. In the beginning of 2016, the Czech Government adopted Resolution assigning the Office of the Government and Ministry of Environment to elaborate on the SDGs implementation plan.

As a co-chair (since July 2016) and aspiring chair of the UN Economic and Social Council, the Czech Republic eagerly accepted the invitation of the UN Secretary General to participate in the 2017 Voluntary National Reviews on the *2030 Agenda* and share its experience with the national implementation process.

Institutional setting

The process of implementation at the national level is led by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic and supported by the Government Council for Sustainable Development (GCSD). In order to reflect upon the principles, goals and targets of the *2030 Agenda*, the Government decided to review the Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development adopted in 2010. The final document, titled as *Czech Republic 2030*, therefore not only builds on the previous strategy, but also sets national priorities in SDGs and will serve as the main implementation platform of the *2030 Agenda* in the Czech Republic.

The *Czech Republic 2030* has been adopted by the Government and came into effect in April 2017. The strategic framework outlined in the document is designed to serve as an overarching mechanism for sectoral strategies implementing sustainable development goals at the national and regional level.

Public consultation on the initial proposals started in May 2015. Since then, the drafting phase has been carried out in close cooperation with ministries, local and regional authorities, parliamentary representatives and a wide range of other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and the labour unions.

The Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and serves as the main forum providing consultation and building new partnerships among the various stakeholders in the field of sustainable development. One of the main tasks of the Council will be also to follow up and review the national implementation of the new strategic framework and *2030 Agenda* and encourage society's commitment to sustainable development.

The work of the Council is supported by its Secretariat based in the Sustainable Development Department at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. The institutional location of the Secretariat allows the horizontal integration, cross-sectoral coordination and mainstreaming of all three pillars of sustainable development into national policy-making.

Report structure and methodology

The report structure builds on the strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030*, which sets development objectives to be achieved by 2030 in six key areas. For each area, it describes links to the respective SDGs, formulates a vision and defines the current state of implementation with a focus on the Czech Republic's main strengths and weaknesses in achieving the objectives.

The division into six areas is based on analysis by invited experts from government advisory bodies and the network of non-governmental organisations that were consulted in the initial stage of the document preparation.

Analysis of the SDGs' relevance to the national context showed that all SDGs and most of the targets of the *2030 Agenda* are relevant for the Czech Republic. However, the level of progress differs significantly, not only among the 17 Goals but also within them.

While none of the SDGs has been fully accomplished in the Czech Republic, every goal contains targets where the progress accomplished so far can be considered as a strength. The selection of the SDGs focused upon in each key area is therefore only indicative and should serve mainly as example with a more detailed insight into the current state of implementation. The selection of strengths and weaknesses outlined in the boxes is based on the above- or below-OECD-average score in the respective SDG (see Figure 2 in the Annex).

The classification of results builds on the *2030 Agenda* areas of critical importance (categories), defined as People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership, and is based on the OECD Study "*Measuring Distance to SDGs Targets*" (2017).

Using the latest available data from OECD and UN databases, the OECD has built a tool that can assess a country's current position on the individual SDG targets, as a first step towards a more operational framework. For each indicator, these positions are measured in terms of the distance to be travelled in order to achieve the agreed targets by 2030. The results of this assessment, which are still provisional, rely on the best internationally comparative indicators, out of the original set of 230 indicators adopted by the United

Nations for the global monitoring of SDGs. In the case of the Czech Republic, the available data cover 95 out of the 169 targets, 98 of which are included in the OECD Study (see Annex).

The SDGs have to be considered in the global, national and sub-national context in order to be successfully implemented and mainstreamed in all the relevant policies. However, data on the global set of indicators were not fully available for the purposes of this report.

As only over half of the targets can be currently measured and only 131 indicators are available in the OECD Study, the results for certain targets and SDGs are merely indicative and must be complemented by national data and a qualitative analysis of the starting point on each SDG and target. For this reason, the detailed *Development Analysis*, which served as one of the main background research documents for *Czech Republic 2030*, and the *Analysis of the SDGs' Relevance for the Czech Republic* were consulted.

Despite the lack of data, the Voluntary National Review provided an important opportunity to re-assess national sustainable development priorities towards the SDGs and critically evaluate the current state of implementation.

The report has been prepared with the support of the Government Council for Sustainable Development and its Committees and consulted with the relevant stakeholders.



CZECH REPUBLIC 2030

Czech Republic 2030 is a strategic framework representing the country's long-term vision and setting its direction for the next thirteen years. Its objective is to improve the wellbeing of citizens and all the people on the planet and to promote development which is sustainable in social, economic and environmental terms.

The document is intended to serve as an overarching “umbrella” framework for all national, regional and local strategies. Its role is not to replace sectoral documents and select concrete measures but to create links between sectoral strategies and long-term development priorities in order to act consistently across all governance structures. The goals and targets of *Czech Republic 2030* should be reflected not only in public policies but also in citizens' everyday lives.

Czech Republic 2030 builds mainly upon the concepts of sustainability and wellbeing. Besides the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development it also supports and takes into consideration other international commitments made in 2015, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The external context is considered through the concept of global megatrends which have an estimated impact on the ability to achieve national objectives.

Another key precondition for successful implementation is good governance and the ability to make decisions in a highly uncertain environment while considering their long-term impact in all the relevant policy areas.

Distinguishing between three pillars of sustainable development has its advantages and merits; however, an integrated approach taking all the relevant sectors on board is crucial while addressing such a complex agenda as sustainable development.

Finding synergies and trade-offs between policies requires strong cross-sectoral coordination, policy coherence and the involvement of all the relevant stakeholders, including the direct participation of citizens. Governance is therefore just as important a topic as the role of sub-national and non-state actors.

The strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030* addresses these issues by applying a cluster approach and covering the full range of topics in six key areas. Besides the social (People and Society), economic (Economy) and environmental (Resilient Ecosystems) pillars represented under the respective key areas, the framework also covers the role of Regions and Municipalities, Global Development and Good Governance.

Principles of implementation

There are a number of guiding principles which run through all priority areas and define the framework for their practical implementation in specific policies. The planet is only one and it is crucial to act within its limits.

Principles such as international and inter-generational solidarity, responsibility and precaution, as well as others, are therefore vital in order to ensure development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Policy-making in complex systems

Sustainable development is a complex and dynamic agenda which requires a coherent, coordinated and integrated approach. All sectors, particularly but not exclusively the economic, environmental and social pillar, are interlinked and must be approached in a balanced and synergic way through strategic management and planning and with respect to the principle of subsidiarity. Policy-making processes must be transparent and based on evidence, knowledge and participation. Decisions should reflect the views of various social groups and promote steps towards achieving peaceful solutions to conflicts.

Diversity as a mean of resilience

Diversity is a major factor in the stability of complex systems and it diminishes the risk of their collapse. It is important not only in natural ecosystems, but also in the cultural, social, political and economic spheres. Furthermore, sustainable development cannot be achieved without respect for human rights, equality, freedom, solidarity, responsibility and tolerance towards differences amongst both individuals and societies.

Learning and adaptation skills

A good education system accessible to all is vital for the creation of sustainable societies. The ability to use innovative approaches, gain transversal skills and learn from experience is crucial in order to maintain respect for cultural heritage, raise awareness about sustainable production and consumption and increase the general understanding of natural ecosystems. At the systemic level this ability can be strengthened by cooperation between public institutions and academia and the application of scientific results in strategic management and planning.

From GDP growth to wellbeing

The Czech approach to the implementation of the *2030 Agenda* builds on two important concepts: sustainable development and wellbeing. Quality of life cannot be measured solely using economic indicators, such as GDP growth. Its assessment requires the monitoring of other aspects of human life, such as health, education and skills, personal relationships, civic engagement, environment, subjective perception of wellbeing and the work-life balance. While evaluating progress in the implementation of the *Czech Republic 2030* goals and targets, wellbeing indicators will be considered together with sustainable development indicators.

Partnership and stakeholder engagement

Czech Republic 2030 is the result of a participatory process lasting more than a year, coordinated by the Government Council for Sustainable Development (GCSD). It involved hundreds of experts from different sectors, including the work of the nine GCSD Committees and several working groups, a series of round tables formed around the key areas, public regional consultations, CSO platform consultations and discussion in both chambers of Parliament. The Czech Republic is also engaged in dialogue with the private sector through the promotion of CSR and encouraging voluntary commitments of private entities and other actors and individuals towards the achievement of both national and global sustainable development goals.

Policy coherence for sustainable development

The Czech Republic is promoting a broader concept of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD), supporting the paradigm shift from the “do no harm” concept towards complex and integrated solutions built on partnerships and dialogue with developing countries and all the relevant stakeholders at the national level. The PCSD requires not only coordination, but also analytical and monitoring capacities which allow sectoral policies to be addressed in a synergic manner and possible incoherencies to be identified.



People and Society

The key area **People and Society** mostly covers SDGs from the **People** (SDG 1, 3, 4, 5) and **Prosperity** (SDG 8 and 10) categories of the *2030 Agenda*. The distance to the targets varies significantly among the available indicators. In particular, reducing poverty, the unemployment rate and combating communicable diseases are already close to the 2030 target levels. However, gender equality, non-medical determinants of health (emissions of hazardous substances, harmful use of alcohol and tobacco) as well as quality of earnings and lifelong learning opportunities are still far from the 2030 aspirations.

Our vision for 2030

The *2030 Agenda* provides an important common framework for global development for the next thirteen years. Transferring it to the national context, the Czech Republic's vision is in many areas even more ambitious and its goals go beyond the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

By the 2030, the Czech Republic aims to become a cohesive society of educated, responsible and active citizens. Social cohesion will be ensured by functional families, participating communities, decent work opportunities, accessible high quality healthcare and a social welfare system, and equal access to culture.

The government will create an effective education system to assist everyone in achieving his/her highest potential and supporting the development of transversal skills. People living in the Czech Republic will favour a healthy lifestyle and responsible consumption and will live in a healthy environment where the material and nonmaterial needs of individuals are fulfilled while minimising the environmental impact and social exclusion.

In order to achieve this vision, the strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030* sets out six strategic goals and a number of specific targets, focusing on family

Successful fight against extreme poverty

The Czech Republic scores above the OECD average in SDG 1 - *End poverty in all its forms everywhere*. In 2015, the proportion of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion was 14.0%, which was rated as the lowest score of the EU28, where the average was 23.7%. The only countries to achieve a lower score were Iceland and Norway. The SDGs targets 1.1 and 1.b have been already met, meaning that the extreme poverty defined as living on less than 1.25 USD per day has been successfully eradicated and the area is covered by gender sensitive and pro-poor oriented national policies which also translate to the regional and local level. While appropriate national legislation¹ and many sectoral policies are already in place, the Czech Republic is committed to further reducing the number of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion within the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy. Two² of the 97 specific goals (SGs) set by the strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030* aim at achieving those commitments. Measures taken under those goals should help to eradicate all levels of poverty, including those identified in disaggregated data (e.g. age and gender-specific data).

policy, increasing decent work opportunities via technological development, tackling structural inequalities, improving the education and health of all groups and increasing public investment in culture.

Our starting point

The Czech Republic scores slightly below the EU average in terms of subjective wellbeing. Nevertheless, life satisfaction has been increasing since 2013 due to favourable macroeconomic conditions and the gradually decreasing unemployment rate. In the international context, the Czech Republic has low income inequality, a high quality health care, a stable system of public education and a satisfactory level of literacy. The Czech Republic also benefits from the historical tradition of policies favourable to families with children, although the traditional family model has been weakening in recent years.

Despite the universal system of social protection, which plays an important role as a social safety net in the short term, the most vulnerable social groups

¹ Living and existential minimum wage and support for material deprivation are covered by Act No. 111/2006 and Act No. 110/2006; the right to equality and non-discrimination in terms of access to employment, social protection system, housing, education, health care and other services as defined by the Charter of Universal Rights and Freedoms and European legislation is further specified in the so-called antidiscrimination Act No. 198/2009.

² SG 3.1 Decreasing the proportion of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the long-term; SG 3.4 Ensuring equal treatment of people at risk of discrimination based on sex, age, dependency, health status, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or world view with special emphasis on preventing multiple discrimination.

Far from achieving gender equality

SDG 5 - *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls* is the goal for which the Czech Republic has its lowest outcomes comparing to the OECD average. None of the 8 nationally relevant targets have yet been achieved. The gender wage gap, disparities in unpaid work and cases of violence against women are still significant, as is the low proportion of women in management and leadership positions. Women are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions both in the public and private sector. There are only 18% of female representatives in the current government, 19.5% in the lower chamber of the Parliament and 18.5% in the Senate. The proportion of women in municipal councils is 27%. Women account for only 12% of members and board members, and only 9% of the executive management positions of listed companies. These figures put the Czech Republic at one of the lowest positions in the EU28. Several SDG 5 targets (e.g. 5.2, 5.4, 5.5) are covered by the Government strategy for gender equality 2016 – 2020 and other government action plans. Gender equality is also specifically addressed in a specific goal³ of *Czech Republic 2030*.

(particularly mothers with small children, elderly people and the disabled) are still provided with insufficient part-time and flexible work opportunities and face exclusion from the otherwise prosperous labour market.

The high share of the long-term unemployed on the overall unemployment is partially caused by persisting discrimination based on age and ethnicity. Socio-economic conditions are significant determinants of life expectancy and academic performance of students, leaving marginalised groups at greater risk of poverty. Gender inequality is likewise significantly higher in the Czech Republic than in other EU countries.

In order to achieve all SDGs by 2030, the social system should increase its outreach to the most vulnerable groups, following the principle of *leave no one behind*. There is a considerable potential in strengthening cooperation with civil society, local governments and communities while delivering social services. Social policy should focus further on improving the work-life balance, avoiding the casualization and precarisation of labour as well as increasing the availability of public services in suburban and outlying areas in order to prevent their depopulation. Efforts should be also increased towards tackling the high burden caused by the effects of harmful substances on the population (over-limit emissions, smoking, alcohol etc.) and improving healthy life expectancy. Emphasis will be placed on policy efficiency from the point of view of both its recipients and public administration.

³ SG 3.3 Gender inequality is decreasing.



Economy

The Prosperity (SDGs 7, 8, 9 and 10), Planet (SDGs 6 and 12) and partially also People (SDG 1) categories of the 2030 Agenda are covered in the key area Economy. The Czech economy has performed well in recent years, with GDP surpassing the pre-2008 crisis level and growth rising again. However, the results of energy management are mixed: on the one hand, all households have access to modern energy facilities and there is growing use of renewable energy; on the other hand, there is significant room for improving energy efficiency in consumption and production.

Our vision for 2030

The Czech Republic aims to achieve an economic model which enables the scale and quality of goods and services to be increased in the most effective and sustainable way. The demands on natural resources should remain within the non-threatening long-term production capacity of the country and the planet. The indicators of the successful implementation of this vision are not only economic, such as GDP and its growth, but also wellbeing and quality of life.

Structural reforms of economic institutions, management of resources, infrastructure, public finance and the approach to research and innovations will be the main driving force behind economic convergence towards the EU15 in the next thirteen years. The quality of foreign investment should improve over time in order to maintain its positive impact on the domestic economy. Public institutions will support advancement towards higher positions in the international division of labour and value chains through innovative capacities of small and medium enterprises and through investment in critical and strategic infrastructure.

Emphasis will be also placed on the sustainable management of natural resources in order to minimise the external costs of using them. Greenhouse

Sustaining low social inequalities in the long-term

With the Gini coefficient at 0.262 in 2013 (OECD, 2016), the Czech Republic has one of the lowest income inequality in the OECD countries. SDG 10 - *Reduce inequality within and among countries* targets 10.1 and 10.2 have been already met, although revenue growth of the lower 40% slowed down between 2007 and 2012. According to the Social Inclusion Strategy (2014) the proportion of the population at risk of poverty is low due to social transfers, which took about 20% of the population out of poverty defined as at-risk-of-poverty rate, despite the fact that the Czech Republic has relatively low GDP expenditures on social protection.

emissions and the carbon footprint of products will steadily decrease as a result of the increasing proportion of circular economy in total material flows. The share of domestic agricultural production will be higher, helping to improve national food security.

Our starting point

The Czech economy is sensitive to global trends with particular interlinkages to Germany as its biggest and long-term trade partner. Converging to the EU average since 2005, with significant pause from 2010 to 2013, the Czech Republic ranked fifteenth within the EU28 member states in terms of GDP per capita in 2015.

Strong economic growth between 2000 and 2008 was enabled by a significant amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) which provided the domestic markets with capital, know-how and involvement in global value chains. Despite the current decrease in the growth of FDI, half of non-financial corporation's turnover and almost the entire banking sector are part of multinational corporations. Roughly one third of gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) comes from abroad and again roughly one third of GERD is spent by foreign firms.

The Czech Republic scores below the EU28 average in material productivity and, as a result of the high proportion of industry in the economy, shows above-average results in energy demand, leading to higher greenhouse emissions per GDP unit. Electricity is mostly produced from domestic lignite and nuclear power. There is potential to increase energy efficiency mainly in improving heating systems, cutting electricity overproduction and switching from personal to public transport in urban areas.

Low energy efficiency and proportion of renewable energy

Despite the fact that virtually the whole population has access to electricity, the Czech Republic scores overall below the OECD average in the available indicators for SDG 7 - *Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*. These results are caused primarily by higher energy demands and low energy efficiency compared to the EU28 average due to the structure of Czech economy with its high proportion of industry. The Czech Republic also has a low ratio of renewable energy to total final energy consumption (10.9%, UN-STAT 2012) and low ratio of renewable electricity to total electricity generation (10.6%, EAI World Energy Statistics, 2015), falling far short of the 2030 target values.

The accessibility of energy (target 1.1) is assessed through final electricity and gas prices and the proportion of energy expenditure in household income with the aim of keeping the proportion below 10%. The modernisation of energy services aims at achieving higher proportion of nuclear energy and renewable energy in the overall energy mix. The proportion of nuclear power should thus reach 25-33% (currently 18.5%), renewable and secondary sources 20-22% (currently 8.7%), while the proportion of coal should drop to 11- 17% (currently 37.2%). (State Energy Concept, 2014)

The economy benefits from dense road and railway networks. Maintenance of the infrastructure, however, is underfinanced and this is improving very slowly. Particularly certain railway lines and highways are at their limits. In addition, water supply infrastructure is in some locations also currently only able to operate under standard conditions with no significant reserves to provide for a severe deterioration in climatic conditions.

The Czech Republic has been criticised for some gaps in management effectivity of public finance and fiscal system. The fiscal responsibility law that was adopted by Parliament in January 2017 aims to address the main shortcomings of the Czech fiscal framework, since it was evaluated as one of the weakest in the EU. In addition of fiscal responsibility acts, new Act on public procurement was adopted in 2016. Nevertheless, some other challenges, e.g. poor coordination of investment projects across sectors, still remain.



Resilient Ecosystems

The key area Resilient Ecosystems focuses primarily on the goals and targets in the Planet category of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 6, 13, 14 and 15). With the exception of climate action, the Czech Republic is ahead of or in line with the OECD average for every underlying goal. The results for the protection of biodiversity and creation of favourable conditions for terrestrial ecosystems in particular are close to the target levels. Besides the Planet goals, SDG 2, 11 and 12 are also addressed in this key area.

Our vision for 2030

Czech agriculture, forestry and water management must operate within natural boundaries and with global climate change in mind. The restoration of biodiversity, water retention and soil and water quality will be strongly embedded in the national environmental policies. The development of urban areas and infrastructure will comply with the environmental standards and contribute to sustaining and strengthening ecosystem services.

The Czech Republic aims at maintaining genetically diverse populations of native species and restoring natural habitats. To achieve the biodiversity targets, it is essential to enlarge areas with limited or no human intervention; limit the spread of invasive species, and provide incentives to agriculture only on the condition that biodiversity targets are supported instead of undermined.

Specific development policies and analyses focusing on sustainable landscape planning, management, preservation and use will be made in order to broaden the discourse from standard land planning to complex long-term sustainable programming. Landscape connectivity will be strengthened through the restoration of appropriate migration corridors. Furthermore, European and national grant aid will be channelled in order to support ecosystem services and achieve adequate food security.

One of the key challenges will be to implement appropriate measures in order to improve the management of wetlands and other natural bodies of water, and gradually revise certain agricultural and forest practices so as to prevent quick water runoff and soil erosion.

Creating favourable conditions for terrestrial ecosystems

The Czech Republic scores above the OECD average for available indicators on SDG 15 - *Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*, although the individual targets (with the partial exception of target 15.7) have still not been met. Forest area as a proportion of total land area is 34.5% and is increasing by about 2000 ha every year. Since 1950 it has extended by 154,000 ha in total. The proportion of important sites for terrestrial biodiversity that are covered by protected areas is 45%.⁴ Targets 15.1, 15.2 and 15.3 are furthermore addressed under the Strategy 2030 of the Ministry of Agriculture and the protection of mountain ecosystems is also included in national policies.⁵ However, the complex conceptual reflection of target 15.4 has not yet been mainstreamed into current policies. The increasing number of endangered indigenous species and the spread of invasive introduced species are the main challenges of SDG 15 in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, the worsening condition of European protected sites and natural habitats could also pose a threat to achieving this goal.

The measures can be aimed at afforestation, enlarging pastures and grasslands, founding more permanent cultures, such as orchards, agroforestry lands, etc. Moreover, large arable land parcels have to be redesigned and split with new landscape features that have the desired water retention properties - to reduce soil erosion caused by water and wind and to make new habitats for biodiversity.

The Czech Republic also aims to increase the use of brownfields for new construction projects and building sites in order to reduce the loss and degradation of agricultural land.

Our starting point

The Czech landscape underwent significant changes in the second half of the 20th century, when many baulks, alleys and trenches were removed in order to simplify farming. The subsequent growing of fewer types of crops on large parcels led to the need for the use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides on a massive scale.

⁴ Sustainable forest management is guaranteed by the Forest Law (Act No. 289/1995). The protection of the environment and ecosystems is generally ensured by Act n. 114/1992 and the agenda is coordinated by the Ministry of Environment under its State Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection Programme (2009).

⁵ Biodiversity Strategy adopted in 2016 and The Concept of the State Tourism Policy (2014 – 2020)

Need to combine forces towards climate action

The gradual transition to a low-carbon economy, which is the most important objective under SDG 13 - *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*, is a challenging task in the Czech Republic, characterized by high CO₂ emissions per capita and high specific energy consumption. In 2017, the Czech Government adopted an ambitious national Climate Protection Policy aiming at ensuring a gradual transition to a low-emission economy by 2050. The strategy identifies objectives, priorities and concrete measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the obligations arising from international and European agreements (targets 13.1, 13.2, 13a). Adaptation to climate change is tackled by the national strategy approved in 2015. The strategy is in line with the EU Adaptation Strategy and reflects the national context of the Czech Republic. Its creation and implementation aims mainly at achieving the commitments made under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (target 13.2). The Strategy of Adaptation to Climate Change was completed with the National Action Plan approved by the Government in January 2017.

The result is accelerated water runoff, increased erosion and overall soil degradation, significant reduction of biodiversity, and the formation of a poorly permeable landscape. However, the Czech Republic has a relatively high proportion of organic farming, making up almost 12 % of total agricultural land. Organic production contributes to the sustainable system of agricultural management and the high-quality production of food with a positive impact on the environment, landscape, soil and biodiversity. The Czech Republic also has a relatively high proportion of arable land; however, only about 2 % of it is managed in compliance with the principles of organic production. The proportion of forest is also high, although a high percentage of it is in poor condition.

The lack of natural habitats providing suitable conditions for the permanent existence of diverse species, their typical cenoses and the spread of invasive species are significant threats to biodiversity.

Climate change will lead to changes in rainfall distribution - torrential rains and periodic draughts are expected. Slowing water drainage from the soil by improving its ability to withhold rainwater is therefore vital in order to mitigate the impact of climate change. Climate change will result in further soil degradation and the extinction of some native species unless this is offset by better landscape management and more appropriate farming practices.



Regions and Municipalities

The key area **Regions and Municipalities** brings a sub-national perspective to the implementation of the SDGs and provides a framework for mainstreaming sustainable development to regional and local policies. This key area touches upon all of the categories of the *2030 Agenda* and achieving its vision contributes to the implementation of SDGs 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17. The Czech Republic scores above the OECD average particularly in water, sanitation and equality related targets; however, the country also faces challenges arising from regional disparities in income and the quality of the environment.

Our vision for 2030

The Czech Republic seeks to make its territory polycentric and achieve the cohesive development of big cities and regions at all levels. This objective can only be met by reducing regional disparities, ensuring sufficient work and education opportunities and providing adequate public services and infrastructure across the country and regions, both in regional centres and outlying areas.

Furthermore, the adverse effects of accelerated sub-urbanisation, such as increased commuting distances and traffic congestion, must be mitigated through effective urban planning, public investment supporting small and medium enterprises, the digitalisation of industry and services and the development of ICT enabling home offices and online purchasing. Alternatively, re-urbanisation building on existing urban structures and contributing to the revitalisation of brownfields can be supported as a solution to extensively growing cities.

By 2030, the Czech Republic will have completed its reform of regional public administration. Strengthened coordination among public institutions will lead to more coherent and coordinated policies while respecting the principle of subsidiarity at different levels of governance, including local government, with

Accessible clean water and sanitation for all

National progress can be currently measured by at least one indicator for 6 out of the 8 targets of SDG 6 - *Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*, where the Czech Republic scores high above the OECD average. Targets 6.1, 6.2, 6.5 and 6.b are met as universal and equal access to drinking water and sanitation is fully ensured and integrated water resource management is in place at all levels. The participation of local communities in water management is ensured by national legislation. The proportion of inhabitants supplied by water from water pipes reached 94.2% in 2015 and the vast majority of households are supplied via public water supply systems. Occasional accidents or other shortcomings are detected and rectified immediately. Water quality is regularly and comprehensively monitored by the sanitary service. Water use efficiency is steadily improving, which also results in good scores for target 6.4. Major challenges for SDG 6 are targets 6.3, 6.6 and 6.a. Despite a significant reduction in discharged waste water pollution, the run-off of phosphorus and nitrogen fertilizers from fields into rivers and water reservoirs remains a problem, causing the excessive growth of water blooms formed by cyanobacteria and algae, and the deterioration of water for aquatic and recreational use. Additional problems are caused by contamination by POPs and toxic metal in water sediments. Those issues are covered in a specific goal of *Czech Republic 2030*.

an emphasis on the accessibility and efficiency of public administration. Economic, social and environmental links between cities, sub-urban and rural areas will be also intensified.

In this respect, the state will provide methodological and coordination support to regions and municipalities in order to set minimum standards for public services and ensure the exchange of information and good practices. In order to enable the effective long-term planning and regular assessment of local policies towards sustainable development and public wellbeing, sufficient administrative capacity of regional institutions will be ensured.

Growing social exclusion and homelessness have posed significant challenges for meeting a number of SDGs and targets in recent years. Adequate housing and the accessibility of public services needs to be ensured for all social groups, with a strong focus on socially excluded communities. Furthermore, the infrastructure should be prepared to cope with the trend of the ageing population and changes in the population structure associated with migration.

Regional disparities in income and air quality

Initial analyses show that SDG 11 - *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable* is highly relevant in the national context, despite the lack of available indicators to monitor it. SDG 11 is particularly important for the development of the Czech Republic due to the country's residential settlement structure with a relatively high number of administrative units (over 6,200) and the increasing divergence of structurally disadvantaged regions. Only two targets (11.1 and 11.5) have been partially met so far. In spite of the rising number of Local Action Groups and municipalities involved in the Local Agenda 21 (11.b target) there is still a long way to go to achieving the 11.3 target in terms of applying inclusive and participatory approaches at the local level.

While overall air quality has been improving in recent years, nearly half of the population is still affected by excessive limits of carcinogenic benzo(a)pyrene and coarse dust particles. Furthermore, regional disparities in air quality (11.6), income (11.a) and security are deepening and the number of socially excluded communities has doubled in the last 10 years. The adverse effects of sub-urbanisation and climate change are also yet to be addressed. *Czech Republic 2030* sets 5 strategic goals and a number of specific targets to accelerate progress in SDG 11 and tackle these challenges.

One important precondition for achieving the sustainable development of regions and municipalities is their adaptation to climate change, particularly through responsible use of agricultural land, thoughtful placement of important landscape components and the creation of links between natural and urban structures. It is also essential to adopt climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, including crisis management policies, decrease the energy demands of cities and urban heat islands and ensure the effective management of communal waste.

Public administration has great potential to increase its cooperation with non-governmental stakeholders and local communities. The inclusiveness of local policy-making can be enhanced by increasing the number of municipalities adopting Local Agenda 21 and community-led development methods which help to legitimise decisions made by democratically elected representatives.

Moreover, the Czech Republic also aims to increase investment in cycling and pedestrian facilities and adequate infrastructure enabling electro-mobility, which will complement reliable and green public transport.

Our starting point

In the European context, the Czech residential settlement structure can be characterized as monocentric due to the exclusive position of the capital. Nevertheless, regional centres are distributed relatively evenly and consist of a few big cities and numerous small and medium-sized municipalities with a relatively large proportion of the population. The international importance of most regional centres is limited due to the border mountain range and insufficient cross-border infrastructure.

Over 60% of the population live in cities with more than 5,000 inhabitants. Those centres are key components of economic prosperity with concentrated work opportunities and services and relatively higher household incomes. Rural areas make up 79% of the territory and are home to 30% of inhabitants.

National and regional border areas show signs of isolation and can be characterized as peripheries, with a more rapidly ageing population and insufficient work and education opportunities, public services, infrastructure and housing.

The operation of local stores and services is becoming cost-ineffective in isolated areas. Local industrial and agricultural producers are facing foreign competitors and the scale of their production is declining in the long-term. This leads to an increasing number of abandoned sites and brownfields which have an adverse impact on ecosystems.

Sub-urbanisation is an important but selective trend particularly affecting rural areas disconnected from the hinterlands of regional capitals. The hinterlands are, on the other hand, growing at a faster pace than the cities themselves. The adverse effects of increased building density in suburban areas include worsening landscape permeability, the declining stability of ecosystems and increasing costs of public infrastructure. Sub-urbanisation is also causing an increase in automobile transport and commuting distances, resulting in smog situations and over-limit noise levels.

Regional disparities in education and access to services are decreasing in the long-term. However, income levels, air pollution and security in the peripheries and structurally disadvantaged regions are further diverging. Furthermore, the number of socially excluded communities has doubled in the last ten years and their overall number has increased across all regions.

Due to the social changes in the 1990's, the Czech Republic consists of over 6,200 administrative units. In order to successfully reduce their disparities and fulfil the development potential of isolated and structurally disadvantaged regions the capacity of regional institutions to provide services and engage citizens in local decision-making has to be further strengthened.



Global Development

The *2030 Agenda* category of Partnership is covered by the key area Global Development (SDG 16 and 17), where performance is so far unbalanced. The Czech Republic aims at applying its domestic and foreign policies to promote the values and principles of global sustainable development. It traditionally supports other countries throughout their transition towards democracy and a market economy, building on its own experience. However, increased efforts will be needed in order to meet the targets set for the international commitments of *Official Development Assistance*.

Our vision for 2030

The Czech Republic is a responsible member of the international community and aspires to contribute to global efforts to implement the *2030 Agenda* and the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*. It adheres to its obligations and regularly monitors its progress in meeting its international goals and commitments. The Czech Republic underlines the need for a more effective and coherent multilateral system and the importance of cooperation and partnership between all the relevant stakeholders. It seeks to promote a fairer and rules-based multilateral world trading system which respects the principles of sustainable development and enables development opportunities for all.

In order to strengthen its credibility and operational capacity, the Czech Republic will strive to meet the international financial commitments of *Official Development Assistance*. It gradually aims to achieve a GNI of 0.33% by 2030. It also supports further progress in international cooperation in tax matters as increasing the mobilization of domestic resources is crucial for developing countries.

The Czech Republic places special emphasis on SDG 16 - *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels* which is closely linked to the systematic work of the Czech Republic in the area of promoting human rights and democracy. The Czech Republic will

Supporting SDG 16 and SDG 17

SDG 16 - *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels* and SDG 17 - *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development* are particularly relevant at the national level. The Czech Republic traditionally supports other countries throughout their transition to democracy and the market economy, building on its own experience, mainly in co-operation with partner countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. As regards the means of implementation within the SDG 17, *Czech Republic 2030* considers the Policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) to be of key importance. Achieving policy coherence for development is already an important task of the interdepartmental Development Cooperation Council, and the Czech Republic will strive to create additional institutional and analytical capacities to ensure PCSD.

invest in the building of accountable and transparent institutions, which, together with the absence of conflicts, are a crucial prerequisite for a secure and stable international environment.

Through international cooperation, the Czech Republic will join efforts aimed at creating a world where no one is left behind, especially the most vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities and persons at risk of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or religion.

The SDGs will be reflected in the new Development Cooperation Strategy 2018 – 2030 which is to be adopted before the end of this year, as well as in the Transformation Cooperation Program and in all other relevant policies. In addition, the Czech Republic will strive to streamline the *2030 Agenda* in the EU internal and external policies as well as in the work of other international organisations. In this context, the Czech Republic will also seek to ensure stronger and active representation within their structures.

Policy coherence, one of the targets of SDG 17, is essential for achieving the *2030 Agenda*. The Czech Republic aims at strengthening its institutional, analytical and control mechanisms to ensure policy coherence for sustainable development in order to reduce the adverse impact the Czech Republic's policies have beyond its borders. Outsourcing of environmental impact to other countries must be minimized in order to achieve this vision. Furthermore, the Czech Republic will also seek to protect human rights in national entities' supply chains.

Re-committing to *Official Development Assistance*

The Czech Republic joined the OECD Development Assistance Committee in 2013 and in 2015, in the framework of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, re-committed to dedicating 0.33% of its GNI to *Official Development Assistance*. Despite the gradual increase (11.4% increase of ODA in real terms between 2014 and 2015), the target has not yet been met and the current level of ODA/GNI remains at 0.12%.

Our starting point

The Czech Republic is strongly committed to the implementation of the 2015 international agreements related to sustainable development, namely the *2030 Agenda*, *Paris Agreement*, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, *Sendai framework* and the *New Urban Agenda* agreed during the Habitat III global UN conference in 2016. Between 2014 and 2016, the Czech Republic was also one of the financial contributors to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), created at the Cancun conference in 2010, which supports the lowering of greenhouse emissions and adaptation to climate change. The per capita contribution to the GCF is the highest among countries that joined the EU after 2004.

The Czech Republic continues to assist the capacity building efforts of other countries through development cooperation. New programmes of development cooperation between the Czech Republic and partner countries are under preparation and focus on local development, sustainable use of natural resources, sustainable economic and social development and good governance.

Support for human rights and gender equality, as well as emphasis on building partnerships between public administration, civil society and private sector remain important cross-cutting issues.

The official development aid (ODA) target of 0.33% GNI has not yet been met as the ODA figure was 0.12% GNI in 2015. The Czech Republic does, however, aim to gradually increase it in the coming years.

In addition to the promotion of SDG 16, which, since negotiations on *2030 Agenda*, is considered an important thematic priority, the Czech Republic is currently working on developing specific measures for the implementation of SDG 17 and its targets, focusing on eliminating the adverse effects of domestic policies on other countries and strengthening synergies.



Good Governance

Sustainable development cannot be successfully implemented without robust institutions which are able to act coherently and make appropriate policies. Achievement of SDG 16 and the systemic issues of SDG 17 is therefore a vital precondition for success in the implementation of all other goals and targets. The key area Good Governance mainly addresses the Peace category (SDG 16), with a special focus on challenges related to the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public institutions. However, emphasis is also placed on equality (SDG 5 and 10) and Partnership (SDG 17) to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our vision for 2030

The Czech Republic aims at achieving a robust and resilient governance structure that is democratic and efficient in the long-term. An enabling environment will be created in order to encourage citizens' participation in policy-making processes and building partnerships with all the relevant stakeholders. Participatory and deliberative democracy tools will be used in order to achieve these objectives.

To strengthen democracy, constant attention will be paid not only to elections (ensuring equality under electoral law, availability of polling stations, etc.) and the functioning and transparency of political parties but also to promoting greater representation of women in decision-making positions.

Direct citizens' participation in policy-making (e.g. through deliberative mini-publics, deliberative polls and participatory budgeting) will be strongly encouraged. The Czech Republic will also strive to eliminate all legislative and technical obstacles to good representation, participation and deliberation. Fulfilling the partnership principle, however, must respect the responsibility of the public administration for the final decision.

Economic and social inequalities have a considerable impact on the level and form of representation and participation. Reducing structural social inequalities

Knowledge, innovations and partnerships for better policies

Targets 16.3 and 16.9 of SDG 16 - *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels* have been already met or are close to their desired values. In addition to the broad participation and involvement of stakeholders in the preparation of the document itself, *Czech Republic 2030* also sets 5 strategic goals and a number of specific targets aiming to improve access to information for policy-makers in order to produce knowledge- and evidence-based policies; policy coherence for sustainable development in all areas; and supporting innovation and improving the quality of governance from the point of view of the recipients of public policies. Since 2007, the Regulatory Impact Assessment has also been formal part of the legislative process and has been transferred to Government Office in 2011 in order to further strengthen its impact.

in particular is a necessary precondition for achieving an inclusive and resilient form of governance. Furthermore, the Czech Republic will create an environment facilitating participation by extending citizens' access to information and promoting deliberative skills.

Public policies will be coherent in relation to the SDGs and coordinated both vertically and horizontally. Their quality will be improved through evidence-based or evidence-informed decisions, better ex-ante impact assessments and enhanced ex-post evaluations. All phases of the policy-making cycle will be transparent and accountable. The security and resilience of the governance structure will be also strengthened through the development of risk and disaster management policies, including for prediction and response to natural and man-made crises.

Special emphasis will be placed on the systemic ability to learn and adopt innovative approaches, including in terms of democratic governance and long-term effectiveness. Innovations will be enabled and supported through the creation of solid institutional backup based on systemic thinking, foresight and the principles of behavioural insight.

Our starting point

According to global indicators in this key area, the Czech Republic's position is relatively high in global terms and close to the OECD average, although it is still far from the best scores achieved by OECD members. However, measuring the quality of governance is not an easy task and the explanatory power of existing global indicators and indexes has significant limits. Their use

Building efficient, inclusive and accountable institutions

Despite improvements in recent years, the results are still far from the 2030 desirable targets set for the efficiency, accountability and transparency of public institutions (target 16.6) and consequently also for corruption and bribery (target 16.5). The confidence in national institutions index was 51% in 2014, which is relatively low compared to the OECD average and far behind countries such as Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Similar results can be seen for participation, gender balance in leadership positions and access to information to citizens (targets 16.7 and 16.10).

for national purposes is therefore only indicative and needs to be complemented by a closer view and qualitative analysis.

The Czech Republic is a liberal democracy with presidential, parliamentary, European, regional and municipal elections. The transparency of its political parties and elections is supported by legislation, including acts on local and regional referendums. The government is obliged to publish draft legislation in order to inform citizens and deliberative processes can take place at the drafting stage. Many municipalities set their citizens' participation strategies under Local Agenda 21 and, for example, legislation on environmental impact assessment enables citizens to be involved in local urban planning.

Nevertheless, voter turnout in all types of elections has gradually declined since the early 1990s. The number of members of political parties is also gradually decreasing and only 50% of citizens consider them a necessary feature of democracy. Furthermore, a relatively small percentage of citizens believe that elections are an effective way to influence the politics.

The vertical nature of public management is resulting in a strong sectoral focus but a weaker ability to address complex and cross-sectoral issues. Policy coherence (particularly cross-sectoral policy impact assessment) and strategic long-term planning are still relatively weak.

Despite the challenges, there is a strong will for improvement supported by policies adopted in recent years. The State Service Act which was adopted and implemented in 2014, should stabilize the performance of central government and create an environment facilitating long-term activities. Since 2011, the Regulatory Impact Assessment and other sectoral assessments have been a formal part of the legislative process at the government level and the inclusivity, efficiency and accountability of governance has been supported by many other acts and cross-sectoral strategies.

NEXT STEPS TOWARDS THE SDGS

The strategic framework *Czech Republic 2030*, adopted by the Government in April 2017, will serve as an overarching framework for all national, regional and local policies. In addition, the process of its implementation and the further work of the Government Council for Sustainable Development will serve as a transfer mechanism for the Czech international commitments and responsibilities.

The adoption of *Czech Republic 2030* is followed by the preparation of its implementation plan. The document will establish adequate mechanisms ensuring compliance between the strategic and specific goals of *Czech Republic 2030* and the objectives of other sectoral strategies, concepts, programs and measures. The main tool for tracking the compatibility of the goals at different levels will be the regularly updated national Database of Strategies, which is an online platform linking goals and targets of various strategies and which will be also linked with data sources of indicators.

Alignment with the *2030 Agenda* and other international sustainable development commitments (e.g. goals under Europe 2020 and the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy) will be also regularly assessed by the Sustainable Development Department.

The Sustainable Development Department of Government Office will play a methodical role in the implementation of the principles of sustainable development. It will also support other public institutions in using voluntary tools and innovative approaches and set good examples in the field of sustainable development.

The framework will adjust to global development and any changes in key areas that may occur in the future and which will be analysed by applying methods of strategic foresight. It will be therefore regularly reviewed, based on an assessment by the Sustainable Development Department or according to the needs identified by sectoral, regional or other strategic documents or policies. The minimum interval for revision has been defined as every five years.

Promoting SDGs and sustainability

The achievement of the goals under the *Czech Republic 2030* will be also supported by voluntary commitments which will allow a wide range of stakeholders to participate in the implementation process. This approach has the potential to contribute to the following objectives: to involve relevant stakeholders in the process of implementing the national sustainable

development strategy and *2030 Agenda*; to create public ownership of both national and global sustainable development goals; to raise awareness of the SDGs; to encourage NGOs, private enterprises, public institutions and individuals to set their own voluntary commitments and stay accountable to their fulfilment; and to monitor progress made by other stakeholders.

The Office of the Government of the Czech Republic also aspires to be a frontrunner in the implementation of sustainable development goals and applying the principles of corporate social responsibility to its own operation. Besides monitoring the carbon footprint, adopting measures to reduce greenhouse gases emissions, promoting electro-mobility and applying sustainability and CSR criteria in public procurement, public institutions should be involved in continuous dialogue with non-state actors in order to act transparently, accountably and with respect to the principles of sustainable development.

In order to raise awareness about the SDGs and award national projects which contribute to their implementation, a contest entitled *The Czech SDG Awards* was organized in 2017 by a consortium of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Office of the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Czech Development Agency, the Association for Social Responsibility (A-CSR) and the United Nations Information Center. In total 215 projects applied and entered the competition this year.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

National reporting

Compliance of other sectoral and regional strategic documents, programs and measures with the *Czech Republic 2030*, the application of the principles of sustainable development, improvements in wellbeing and quality of life and progress on the national goals will be monitored by the biannual analytical *Report on the Quality of Life and its Sustainability*.

The report will build on 192 indicators of *Czech Republic 2030* designed to operationalize its 97 specific goals, and parallel set of indicators measuring progress in wellbeing.

The *Report* will also include recommendations for policies, strategic documents, concepts, programs and measures based on the compliance assessment results. Data will be collected and indicators prepared by the respective Committee of the GCSD. A draft report will be prepared by the Sustainable Development Department and consequently consulted with the relevant Committees, approved by the GCSD and submitted to Government.

The relevant stakeholders from the non-governmental and private sector which are not represented in the GCSD will be invited to elaborate on the “shadow report” in order to provide an alternative analysis.

Global reporting

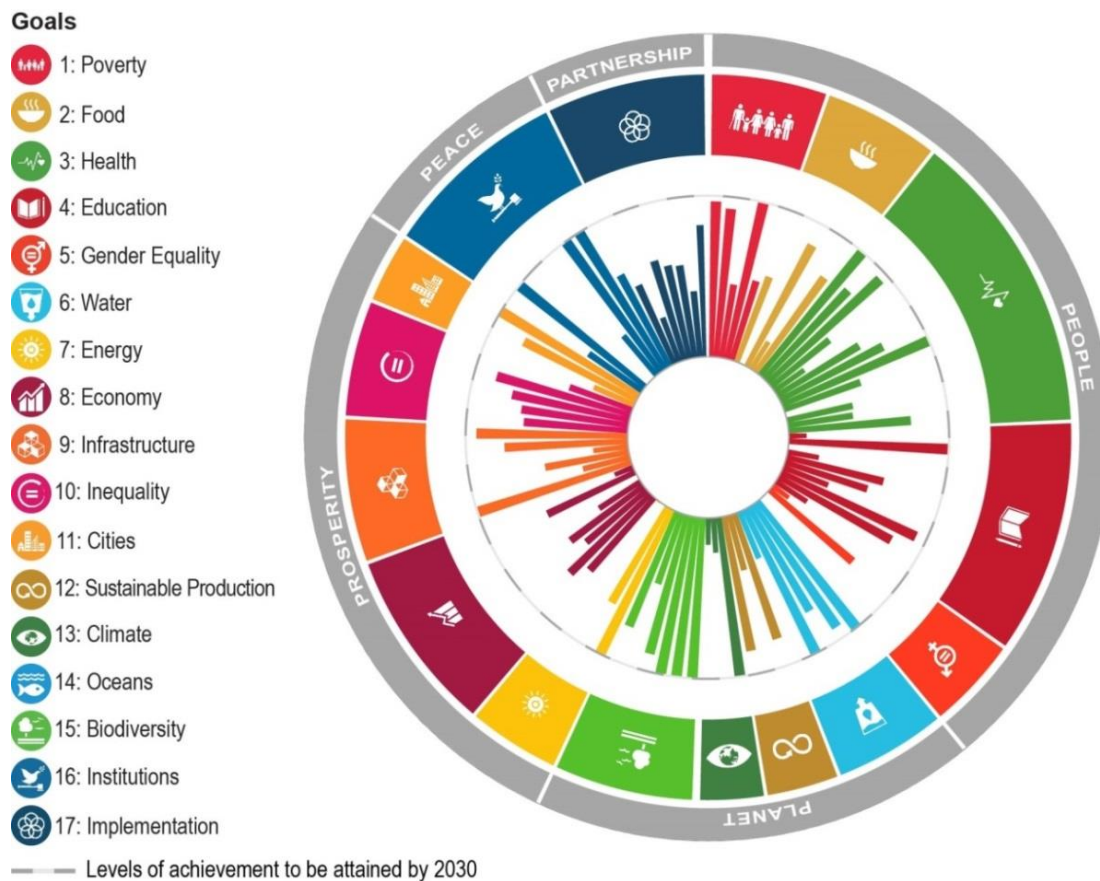
According to the Government Resolution from January 2016 on the outcome of the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development, the responsibility for coordination related to global set of indicators, developed by the Inter-Agency Expert Group and adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2017, lies with the Czech Statistical Office.

The Government Council for Sustainable Development and the Committee on Sustainable Development Indicators is regularly informed about the global monitoring framework and will continue its work towards completing the global set of 244 indicators with the relevant indicators at the national level.

In addition, the importance of the *2030 Agenda* and sustainable development indicators were reflected in the Czech Statistical Office Priority Tasks for 2016 and 2017.

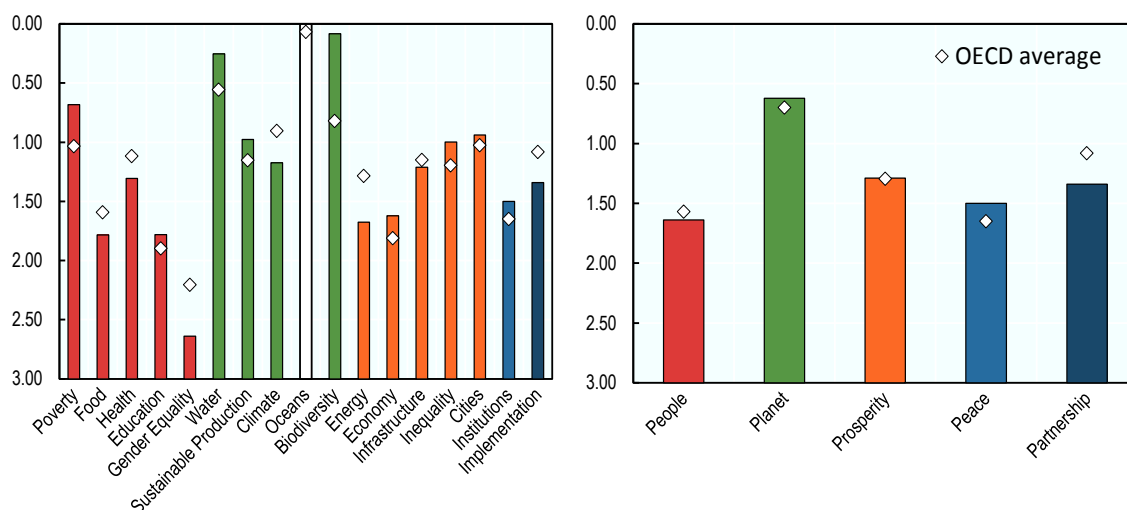
ANNEX

Figure 1. Current progress of the Czech Republic in achieving available SDG targets (Pilot study OECD: "Measuring distance to SDGs targets", 2017)



Note: The chart shows how far the Czech Republic has already progressed towards each available target. The longer the bars, the shorter the distance to be travelled by 2030. Targets are clustered by goal, and goals are clustered by the "5Ps" of the 2030 Agenda (outer circle).

Figure 2. Czech Republic's current position by Goals and the 5Ps of the 2030 Agenda, compared with the OECD average (Pilot study OECD: "Measuring distance to SDG targets", 2017)



The two panels show how far the Czech Republic has already progressed towards each of the 17 Goals and 5Ps of the 2030 Agenda. The bars show the Czech Republic's current position, while the diamonds show the OECD average. The y-axis indicates the distance from the target as the number of standardised units away from the target. 0 indicates that the level for 2030 has already been attained, and the axis starts at 3 as most OECD countries have already attained this level. In the left-hand panel, the distance to each Goal is measured as the average of distances across the targets of the same goal. In the right-hand panel, the distances for the 5Ps are aggregated across goals within the same P. Data on Official Development Aid are excluded in Goals 1 to 16 (left-hand panel) and in the first four Ps (right-hand panel), as they are considered as pertaining to the "implementation" of Goal 17 (left-hand panel) and Partnership (right-hand panel).

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