2025 Rule of Law Report - targeted stakeholder consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The annual Rule of Law Report lies at the centre of the Annual Rule of Law Cycle, which acts as a preventive tool, deepening multilateral dialogue and joint awareness of rule of law issues. So far, five editions of the Rule of Law Report have been published since 2020.

As every year, the Commission would like to invite the stakeholders to provide contributions to the 2025 Rule of Law Report. On the basis of these contributions and on-going developments, further targeted questions may be shared at a later stage of preparation of the 2025 Rule of Law Report, in particular in the context of country visits, or bilateral contacts.

The Commission invites stakeholders to provide contributions which include:

(1) information on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to the Member State in the 2024 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter and
(2) any other significant developments since January 2024[1] and up to the date of submission falling under the 'type of information' outlined below.

The input should consist of a short summary, if possible in English, covering the areas referred to below. Legislation or other documents may be referenced with a link. Contributions should focus on significant developments since the last Rule of Law Report both as regards the legal framework and its implementation in practice.

If you would like to provide further specific **input related to the single market dimension in the Rule of Law report**, you can also respond to the additional targeted consultation available here.

[1] Unless the information was already submitted in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Type of information to be included:

Under each of the four pillars, the replies should include references to the following types of information:

A) Legislative developments

Newly adopted legislation
legislative drafts currently discussed in Parliament

legislative plans envisaged by the Government

B) Policy developments

Implementation of legislation
evaluations, impact assessment, surveys
white papers/strategies/actions plans/consultation processes
follow-up to reports/recommendations of Council of Europe bodies or other international organisations important administrative measures
generalised practices

C) Developments related to the judiciary / independent authorities

important case law by national courts
important decision/opinions from independent bodies/authorities
state of play on terms, nominations and expired mandates for high-level positions (e.g. Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, Council for the Judiciary, Prosecutor General, heads of independent authorities included in the scope of the request for input[2])

D) Any other relevant developments

National authorities are free to add any further information, which they deem relevant; however, this should be short and to the point.

Please also indicate whether the developments reported are linked to the implementation of reforms and investments under the RRP, where applicable. To simplify your answers to the questionnaire, **if there are no developments, it is sufficient to indicate this** and the information covered in the contributions for the previous Rule of Law Reports does not need not be repeated.

[2] Such as: media regulatory authorities and bodies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies, ombudsman institutions, supreme audit institutions and, where they exist, transparency authorities.

About you

I am giving my contribution as
*

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- xCivil society organisation/NGO
- International organisation
- Judicial association or network
- Media organisation or association
- Public authority or network of public authorities
- Other

If "Other", please specify

Organisation name
*

250 character(s) maximum

Glopolis, Czech Republic, with the inputs from several Civil Society Organisations and their umbrella organisations associated in NeoN - Network of Networks

Main Areas of Work

- Justice System
- Anti-corruption
- Media Pluralism
- xChecks and Balances
- Other

If "Other", please specify

Civic space, participation, transversal cooperation among civil society organisations and with the government administration and business.

Please insert an URL towards your organisation's main online presence or describe your organisation briefly:

500 character(s) maximum

https://glopolis.org/
A Czech civil socitety organisation, since 2004, strengthening collaboration between CSOs with each other and with government and business, promoting enabling conditions for CSOs and civic space. In Stronger Roots, supporting networks to better cooperate with diverse partners at national and EU levels. Coordinating NeoN of 20 networks from different fields associating 1000+ CSOs to engage effectively with the state, fulfilling democratic principles and sustainability. www.neon-cooperation.org

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is in the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making

Country of origin
*

Please indicate the country of origin of your organisation

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- xCzechia

Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary

Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Other - please specify

If "Other", please specify

Please indicate the country of origin of your organisation

First name

Jana

Surname

Miléřová

Email Address of the organisation

Publication of your contribution and privacy settings

*

You can choose whether you wish for your contribution to be published and whether you wish your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous - Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. Organisation name, URL, transparency register number, first name and surname given above will not be published. **To maintain anonymity, please refrain from mentioning the name of your organisation and any details from which your organisation an be identified in the rest of your contribution.**

xPublic - Your personal details (name, organisation name, transparency register number, country of origin will be published with your contribution).

No publication - Your contribution will not be published. Elements of your contribution may be referred to anonymously in documents produced by the Commission based on this consultation.

xI agree with the personal data protection provisions.

Specific_privacy_statement_targeted_stakeholder_consultation_2025_rule_of_law_report.pdf

4

Questions on horizontal developments

In this section, you are invited to provide information on general horizontal developments or trends, both positive and negative, covering all or several Member States. In particular, you could mention issues that are common to several Member States, as well as best practices identified in one Member State that could be replicated. Moreover, you could refer to your activities in the area of the four pillars and sub-topics (an overview of all sub-topics can be found below), and, if you represent a Network of national organisations, to the support you might have provided to one of your national members.

Overview topics for contribution

List_of_topics_-_2025_Rule_of_Law_Report.pdf

Please provide any relevant information on horizontal developments here

5000 character(s) maximum

The Czech Republic, like many other EU Member States, must fulfil the EU's fundamental pillars of democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law. Focusing on the burning aspects of the rule of law is important, but insufficient without taking into account the context and ensuring the fulfilment of fundamental rights and the strengthening of democracy.

In the Czech Republic, a number of positive steps have been taken in the past year on important sub-agendas. The government has also been more responsive to civil society's call to use the Rule of Law Report and its assessment to push forward specific agendas such as conflicts of interest, public procurement or the independence of public service media. Yet, major reforms have been slow, incoherent or have not met the objectives with which they were launched. This is most evident in the National Recovery Plan, where there is a risk that reforms or the adoption of laws that condition disbursements will not be implemented. The Czech public administration faces challenges in implementing evidence-based policies due to limited capacity and expertise and a lack of political leadership.
Overall, in the last year of its mandate, the current government has not sufficiently completed all legislative and non-legislative instruments that have the potential to strengthen the guarantees of democracy and the rule of law. This is evident from a number of findings and references made by Civil Society Organisations.

At the same time, the rule of law and the Report as such has been promoted by the civil society organisations and brought also to the agenda of Government Advisory Bodies - mainly the Government Council for NGOs and its Committee for the EU, as well as joint events.

The CSOs call the European Commission but also the governments to make the EU RoL report preparation process more inclusive, transparent, engaging civil society and other stakeholders and at the same time take preventive measures to ensure that the contributing actors and CSOs would not be ostracized by governments in countries where the evaluation is not very positive or where the populist and anti-democratic tendencies are gaining strengths.
See more the joint policy paper of Batory Foundation, Glopolis, OSF Prague, Center for Democracy and Law Miko Tripalo https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1442/recommendations.pdf

Questions for contribution

Under each pillar, you are invited to provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to the Member State in the 2024 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter of the 2024 Rule of Law Report and any other significant developments since January 2024 and up to the date of submission[3]. Please always include a link to and reference relevant legislation/documents (in the national language and/or where available, in English). **Significant developments** can include challenges, positive developments and best practices, covering both legislative developments or implementation and practices.

Information provided in reply to the first question under each pillar, related to the follow-up to the recommendations, does not need to be repeated in subsequent parts of the questionnaire, but can be cross-referenced in the subsequent questions, where relevant. All other questions are not limited to the recommendations, but as in previous years, cover the entire scope of the Report.

[3] Unless already covered in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Member State/enlargement country covered in contribution [only one choice possible]

If you wish to submit information concerning several Member States/enlargement countries, please fill in the questionnaire separately for each country. There is no limit to the number of contributions submitted by a single participant.

Albania
Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus

xCzechia
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Montenegro
Netherlands
North Macedonia

Poland
Portugal
Romania
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden

I. Justice System

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

In March 2024, an amendment to the Public Prosecution Service Act was approved. The government will no longer be able to dismiss the chief prosecutor at any time without giving reasons.
The measures addressing the remuneration of judges and staff of courts and prosecutors' offices, were not resolved.

A. Independence

Appointment and selection of judges, prosecutors and court presidents (incl. judicial review)

(The reference to 'judges' concerns judges at all level and types of courts as well as judges at constitutional courts) 5000 character(s) maximum

Irremovability of judges, including transfers, (incl. as part of judicial map reform), dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Promotion of judges and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Prosecutors have a highly hierarchical structure, so personal matters are highly important. In early January 2025, Chief Prosecutor Igor Stříž announced his resignation, effective at the end of March. Lenka Bradáčová, the recent Chief Prosecutor in Prague, is expected to succeed him in a carefully negotiated leadership reshuffle orchestrated by Justice Minister Pavel Blažek. Under a recent legal amendment, Mr. Blažek is empowered to appoint the Chief Prosecutor for a single, non-renewable seven-year term, following an agreement with all parties involved.

Obviously questions remain about the selection and dismissal of senior prosecutors, including the government-appointed Supreme Prosecutor. The High Public Prosecutor's Office in Prague plays a pivotal role in addressing the most severe corruption-related, economic, and financial crime but also organized crimes (affects trust in justice and judiciary). Therefore it is truly essential who will be head of it, once Ms Bradacova takes the position of Supreme Prosecutor, seated in Brno.The outgoing Supreme Public Prosecutor Igor Stříž has announced a selection process for the position of Chief Public Prosecutor in Prague.

https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2025/01/striz-vypsal-vyberove-rizeni-na-nastupce-bradacove-zajemci-se-mohou-hlasit-do-22-unora/
Prosecutors Office: https://verejnazaloba.cz/en/

Ms Bradáčová's appointment is seen as a move toward stability and continuity. A highly respected figure, she brings deep expertise in criminal law, extensive prosecutorial experience, and strong leadership within the system. While some consider her controversial, her track record reflects both achievements and challenges, positioning her as a capable leader likely to bring seven years of steadiness to the institution.

However, concerns linger about Ms Bradáčová's perceived closeness to Minister Blažek, who has faced allegations linked to the privatization of Brno City apartments and investigations into suspicious activities at the PDZ credit union. These cases have implicated figures close to Prime Minister Fiala, including the Prime Minister himself, raising questions about potential conflicts of interest.

At the same time, Ms Bradáčová already announced the ambition to enforce the narrowing of the system of public prosecutor's offices from four to three levels.

https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-blazek-navrhl-za-strize-bradacovou-40503625

https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-bradacova-chce-zuzit-statni-zastupitelstvi-na-tri-stupne-40503706

https://plus.rozhlas.cz/bradacova-ma-cisty-stit-zapsat-se-bude-chtit-reformou-statniho-zastupitelstvi-9390095

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/bradacova-nema-pokoru-tvrdi-novinar-jine-jmeno-ve-verejnem-prostoru-nebylo_2501142323_kvr

https://www.info.cz/zpravodajstvi-a-komentare/karieristka-ktera-neumi-uznat-chybu-proc-je-spatne-ze-se-bradacova-stane-nejvyssi-statni-zastupkyni

Allocation of cases in courts

5000 character(s) maximum

Independence (including composition and nomination and dismissal of its members), and powers of the body tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary (e.g. Council for the Judiciary) 5000 character(s) maximum

Accountability of judges and prosecutors, including disciplinary regime and bodies and ethical rules, judicial immunity and criminal/civil (where applicable) liability of judges (incl. judicial review) 5000 character(s) maximum

Independence/autonomy of the prosecution service

5000 character(s) maximum

The Public Prosecutor's Office operates independently in case decisions, with an effective system of internal supervision. The hierarchical structure impacts efficiency and oversight. However there are continuous public debates over defining criminal policy and prosecutors' accountability, especially in politically sensitive cases (ie case of Ms Parkanova). Critics of prosecutors often mention the issue of quality of indictments, many of which fail in courts.It also concerns the uniformity of procedures among public prosecutors in various cases. The Supreme Public Prosecutor has the authority to issue general directives to unify and guide the actions of public prosecutors in the performance of their duties within the prosecution service.
https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2023/08/prohra-zalobcu-v-cele-s-bradacovou-lide-maji-pravo-vedet-udaje-o-proverkach-potvrdil-nss/
https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-kauzy-parkanova-chtela-vyssi-odskodne-ze-ji-9-let-nepravem-stihali-opet-neuspela-263553
https://verejnazaloba.cz/nsz/cinnost-nejvyssiho-statniho-zastupitelstvi/pokyny-obecne-povahy/

Independence of the Bar (chamber/association of lawyers) and of lawyers

5000 character(s) maximum

Significant developments capable of affecting the perception that the general public has of the independence of the judiciary

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Quality of justice

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

5000 character(s) maximum

Resources of the judiciary (human/financial/material), remuneration/bonuses/rewards for judges and prosecutors, including observed changes (significant and targeted increase or decrease over the past year) (Material resources refer e.g. to court buildings and other facilities. Financial resources include salaries of staff in courts and prosecution offices.)

5000 character(s) maximum

In 2024, there has been a turbulent development around the remuneration of judges and judicial staff, which was also one of the recommendations in the previous Rule of Law report. Problems with insufficient salaries are leading into the departure of qualified (non juridical) staff, which has been the case also at the Ministry of Justice itself. The inadequate salaries of judicial staff also fail to attract or motivate individuals to work within the judiciary. This shortage of personnel is becoming a systemic problem for the effective functioning of the justice system. The most critical situation turned into a strike of judicial employees 7 - 9 October 2024. In response to a strike, the government increased their salaries in November 2024, but this still appears to be a temporary fix rather than a long-term solution. The debate over the salaries of judges and prosecutors is complex. Currently, these salaries are tied to those of politicians, and any wage freezes are often challenged by judges. A potential solution is to separate judicial salaries and their adjustments from political wages.

https://www.ceskenoviny.cz/zpravy/zamestnanci-soudu-stavkuji-zavrene-zustaly-podatelny-cast-jednani-byla-zrusena/2579067 https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/oddelme-platy-politiku-a-soudcu-radi-expertka-zakaz-zmrazovani-si-v-ustave-neumi_2410170600_nel https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2024/12/justicni-odbory-miri-uzavrit-s-blazkem-dohodu-o-platech-stavka-zavisi-na-realnem-splneni/

Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees) 5000 character(s) maximum

Digitalisation (e.g. use of digital technology, including electronic communication and AI tools, within the justice system and with court users, procedural rules, access to judgments online) 5000 character(s) maximum

Use of assessment tools and standards (e.g. ICT systems, including AI-based systems, for case management, court statistics and their transparency, monitoring, evaluation, surveys among court users or legal professionals)
5000 character(s) maximum

Geographical distribution and number of courts/jurisdictions ("judicial map") and their specialisation, in particular specific courts or chambers within courts to deal with fraud and corruption cases. 5000 character(s) maximum

C. Efficiency of the justice system

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined under section 2)

Developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (e.g. as regards length of proceedings)

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the justice system - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

II. Anti-Corruption Framework

Where previous specific reports, published in the framework of the review under the UN Convention against Corruption, of GRECO, and of the OECD address the issues below, please make a reference to the points you wish to bring to the Commission's attention in these documents, indicating any relevant updates, changes or measures introduced that have occurred since these documents were published.

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

5000 character(s) maximum

The law on the regulation of lobbying was approved by the government, and is now in the third rearing in the Chamber of Deputies. There are serious concerns about the final form of the law as many of the MP's amendments weaken the merit of the law with lots of exemptions and at the same time the version presented in the first rearing constituted barriers to participation of experts in advisory bodies.

On Anti-corruption framework see also Transparency International Czech Republic (TI) overall annual assessment of Prime Minister Petr Fiala's coalition Government for 2024. It specifically highlights failures to implement effective anti-corruption measures, with much of the blame and lack of political will directed at the Civic Democratic Party (ODS). There is a lack of a strategic anti-corruption plan with clear direction. The government's four-year framework TI assess as superficial, resembling a cut-and-paste effort, and the new strategy and action plan largely recycle ideas from previous years. Anti-corruption legislation seems to be treated by lawmakers as a mere necessary evil. Moreover, certain government actions clearly favor powerful financial groups and behind-the-scenes players. Link: https://www.transparency.cz/vlada-petra-fialy-selhava-v-implementaci-protikorupcnich-opatreni-vinu-nese-hlavne-ods/

A. The institutional framework capacity to fight against corruption (prevention and investigation / prosecution)

List any **changes** as regards relevant authorities (e.g. national agencies, bodies) in charge of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption and the resources allocated to each of these authorities (the human, financial, legal, and technical resources as relevant), including the cooperation among domestic and with foreign authorities. Indicate any relevant measures taken to effectively and timely cooperate with OLAF and EPPO

5000 character(s) maximum

There is a shared concern about the capacities of the institutional anticorruption system. It is reflected in the chronically low funding of anti-corruption measures. The Law on Lobbying is one of the milestones associated with funding through the National Recovery Plan, but no funds have been allocated within NRP or state budget

for its enforcement and implementation. The Ministry of Justice has a narrow manoeuvring space to secure the capacity to actually enforce the obligations under this law, once it is approved. The Conflict of Interest and Anti-Corruption Department responsible to methodically direct and enforce the law in practice faces long-term underfunding and understaffing also for other agendas.
https://planobnovy.gov.cz/hlavni-pilire/instituce-a-regulace-a-podpora-podnikani-v-reakci-na-covid-19/#hlavni-komponenty
https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2024/12/boj-proti-korupci-cili-na-vysoke-politiky-i-sport-na-zakon-o-lobbovani-se-vazi-tri-miliardy/
https://www.echo24.cz/a/HZh8F/zpravy-snemovna-zakon-o-lobbingu-lobbista-poslanci-pirati-starostove-ods-pirati-benda-michalek-cez-ceska-posta

The clear underfunding is also evident in the budget approved by the government for the main areas of the state's subsidy policy towards NGOs to support public benefit activities for the year 2025. The Council of the Government for the Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption recommended to the Government, at a single meeting of the Council in 2024, to increase the existing funds of the state subsidy policy in the field of the fight against corruption and to order the Minister of Finance to ensure sufficient financial coverage. This request has been supported by representatives of anticorruption CSOs, experts, but also state administration. The Government however kept the allocation for 2025 for anti-corruption measures in the amount of only 4.3 million CZK = 0.05% of the total budget of 8,184 mil. CZK for the subsidy programme.
https://korupce.cz/rada-vlady/zaznamy-z-jednani/?a=rada-vlady
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/usneseni-vlady/usneseni-vlady-cr-ze-dne-22--cervna-2022-c--540-197437/

Safeguards for the functional independence of the authorities tasked with the prevention and detection of corruption

5000 character(s) maximum

The reform of the Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS) is at risk, with its support within the government highly uncertain. The proposed reform focuses on addressing long-standing recommendations to reduce the excessive concentration of power in the hands of the ÚOHS chairman and to streamline decision-making processes, thereby limiting opportunities for malpractice in public investments.

Despite declared support from the new Minister for Regional Development, Petr Kulhánek (STAN), who submitted a revised proposal to the government in December, failure to pass the reform would perpetuate inadequate and unfair oversight of public contracts worth hundreds of billions of crowns.

Key elements of the reform include significant changes to the review process of public procurement. The most notable change in the functioning of the supervisory authority (ÚOHS) is the abolition of the two-instance process, while maintaining collective decision-making. The review process will now be conducted by a commission as a collegial body. In July 2024, the long-awaited amendment to Act No. 134/2016 Coll., on Public Procurement (ZZVZ), was submitted for interdepartmental comment. The main goal of the amendment is to "ensure an effective and, above all, rapid review of public procurement, while meeting the public interest of allowing procurement to proceed without undue delays.

https://www.transparency.cz/vlada-petra-fialy-selhava-v-implementaci-protikorupcnich-opatreni-vinu-nese-hlavne-ods/

Information on the implementation of measures foreseen in the strategic anti-corruption framework (if applicable). If available, please provide relevant objectives and indicators

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Prevention

Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector (including as regards incompatibility rules, revolving doors, codes of conduct, ethics)

5000 character(s) maximum

Measures to enhance general transparency of public decision-making (including rules on lobbying, asset and interest disclosure rules, gifts policy, transparency of political party, financing) 5000 character(s) maximum

A key legislative proposal aimed at increasing transparency in the legislative process is the long-awaited Lobbying Regulation Act (https://www.psp.cz/sqw/historie.sqw?o=9&t=649). This bill, currently under review in the Chamber of Deputies, has been in process for nearly 15 years. The bill is one of the milestones to be adopted to unlock access to hundreds of billions of crowns from the National Recovery Plan.
There have been serious changes in the proposal of the act during the legislation process and the version proposed by the Ministry of Justice changed by the Government's approval and through the intergovernmental commenting procedures till the third reading in the Parliament. The wide coalition of CSOs including Glopolis alarmed for the risks of non-systemic exceptions from the law that would weaken or even null the sense of the law. See https://www.rekonstrukcestatu.cz/archiv-novinek/poslanci-prosim-opravte-to-nevladni-organizace-upozornuji-na-problemy-v-navrhu-zakona-o-regulaci-lobbovani

https://www.rekonstrukcestatu.cz/download/NzeWCQ/dopis-nevladnich-organizaci-poslancum-k-navrhu-zakona-o-regulaci-lobbovani.pdf

https://www.transparency.cz/poslanci-v-cele-s-markem-bendou-prosazuji-mnozstvi-vyjimek-ktere-podkopavaji-ucinnou-regulaci-lobbingu/, https://www.rekonstrukcestatu.cz/download/WoZ7XA/stanovisko-rs-k-pozmenovacim-navrhum-k-navrhu-zakona-o-regulaci-lobbovani-podle-hlasovaci-procedury-_-19112024.pdf

We also want to take the attention to the risk of harmful impact of some of the measures of the Act on the participation of stakeholders in the legislation and public decision making. Therefore, we alongside of other CSOs call for the final version of the law that ensures that:
1) definition of the lobbied persons will not include the members of the government's advisory bodies (except for the Legislative Council of the Government),
2) the meetings of working bodies established by government advisory bodies, where lobbyists will be present (for example, senior directors), and minutes of them are taken and publicly available, should not be reported as lobbying meetings,
3) the protection of vulnerable persons from abroad (e.g. human rights defenders or foreign dissidents from non-democratic regimes) will be enforced so that they do not have to be mentioned in lobbying reports, as it could be threatening to their security or lives.
4) the amount of bureaucracy associated with the lobbing registration and reporting process needs to be proportionate and not burdensome.

A major concern of many civil society organizations is that various interest groups will eventually negotiate exemptions, leaving only CSOs engaged in public policy and advocacy to register as "lobbyists", and the law will thus represent a legal and administrative burden primarily for civil society organizations. It will also label many civil society organisations as 'lobbyists' and contribute to a negative image of the civil sector acting as an advocate for public interests. The word 'lobbyist' has a negative connotation in the Czech Republic and can be politically abused. There are concerns that the law could become a pretext for bullying and smear campaigns (as it was in Slovakia).

https://www.psp.cz/sqw/text/orig2.sqw?idd=247540 (the aggregated proposals for changes in the Law), the presentation of the issues at the Government Council for NGOs - https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/zapisy-ze-zasedani/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-30--zari-2024-217664/
Presentation of the issues and statements of CSOs representatives at the meeting of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs in the Chamber of Deputies on September 26, 2024 (https://www.psp.cz/sqw/hp.sqw?k=4000)

Measures to prevent conflicts of interest in the public sector. Please specify the features and scope of their application (e.g. categories of officials concerned, types of checks and corrective measures depending on the category of officials concerned)

5000 character(s) maximum

The recent 2024 amendment to the Conflict of Interests Act introduced stricter regulations, including a clearer ban on media ownership and tighter rules for accepting subsidies and investment incentives. Politicians can no longer transfer media ownership to close associates or trust funds, and fines for breaches will increase. Upon taking office, politicians must either divest from media companies or stop their broadcasting and publishing activities.

However, a significant setback occurred in December 2024, when the Constitutional Court overturned parts of **Lex Babiš II,** an amendment aimed at preventing high-ranking politicians, like Babiš, from owning media. The Court ruled that an amendment proposed by MP Jakub Michálek (Pirates) was unconstitutional due to being an unconstitutional rider, which had been added to an unrelated law without sufficient debate. This resulted in the annulment of the law, proposed by opposition MPs, while the Court did not address the content of the law itself. The Court's decision highlighted flaws in the legislative process, emphasizing that laws must be created through an open and transparent process. As a result, the original **Lex Babiš** framework, which does not apply to beneficial owners, will be reinstated.

Constitutional Court ruling and explanation: https://www.usoud.cz/aktualne/pozmenovaci-navrh-predstavoval-neustavni-prilepek-ustavni-soud-proto-vyhovel-navrhu-na-zruseni-zakona-podaneho-skupinou-poslancu-z-rad-opozice

In recent days, Agrofert Holding confirmed that it has filed a series of lawsuits against the Ministry of Agriculture regarding subsidies that the ministry refuses to pay to Agrofert due to a conflict of interest of its owner and former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš. The first verdicts have been indicating that Agrofert Holding can fail, such as in case of lawsuit brought by the Moravian-Silesian Region against the Ministry of Local Development, which refused to reimburse Agrofert for a subsidy due to Babiš's conflict of interest. As media point out, there is a concern that with the return of Mr. Babis into the seat of Prime Minister, he could change the law that prohibits the Government officials to draw on subsidies.

https://plus.rozhlas.cz/jiri-leschtina-babis-se-dal-soudi-o-statni-dotace-a-vidina-jeho-stretu-zajmu-tu-9399695

--> For the three previous points, **please also provide information and figures on their application /enforcement,** such as number of detected breaches/irregularities of the various rules in place and the follow-up given (investigations, sanctions, etc.)

Measures to ensure whistleblower protection and encourage reporting of corruption, including their application (i.e. number of reports received, and the follow-up given)

5000 character(s) maximum

Specific measures to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in sectors with high risks of corruption, with a view to monitor and prevent corruption and conflict of interests, and where applicable measures to prevent and address corruption committed by organised crime groups.

Such high-risk sectors could include: public procurement, including construction, transport/infrastructure, defence, cohesion, agriculture, environment, healthcare, citizen/residence investor schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.

5000 character(s) maximum

Current leadership of the Supreme Audit Office (SAO / Czech NKU) maintains an impartial stance. NKU President Kala has been vocally critical of the "subsidy economy," stating that the country's economy has shifted from a market-based system to one reliant on subsidies. He criticized the complex and bloated system of hundreds of subsidy programs redistributing billions, emphasizing that the focus is often on acquiring funds without considering their impact. Kala called for a re-evaluation of how the state manages subsidies and stabilizes public finances.

In 2024, the SAO highlighted ongoing corruption risks in public procurement, state aid, tax relief, real estate management, local government supervision, and healthcare operations. Its annual report provided numerous examples of inefficiency, misplaced incentives, and risks in public spending.

Mr. Kala in Insider podcast, August, 2024: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEZfetbJx3w

Český rozhlas:: https://plus.rozhlas.cz/sef-nku-kala-nase-ekonomika-nerizene-a-plizive-presla-z-trzni-do-silne-zavisle-8964726

C. Repression

The legal framework on the criminalisation and sanctions for corruption and related offences, including foreign bribery

5000 character(s) maximum

10

Official data on the number of investigations, prosecutions, final judgments and the application of sanctions for corruption offences (differentiated by offence if possible). Please indicate whether the cases: involve legal persons; are related to the implementation of EU or national funds; involve high level corruption. Please indicate which data is publicly available and how policy-making is informed by the data 5000 character(s) maximum

Potential obstacles identified in law or in practice to the investigation and prosecution of high-level and complex corruption cases (e.g. political immunity regulation, procedural rules, statute of limitations, cross border cooperation, pardoning)

5000 character(s) maximum

Information on effectiveness of criminal and non-criminal measures and of sanctions (e.g. recovery measures and administrative sanctions) on both public and private offenders

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the anti-corruption framework - please specify 5000 character(s) maximum

In 2024, a significant amendment to the Civil Service Act was passed in Parliament in October. Prepared by the Ministry of the Interior, the amendment aims to create a more efficient and adaptable civil service, capable of responding to current trends, hiring skilled employees flexibly, and promoting professional growth within state administration. These changes are expected to make public service more professional, modern, and efficient, with potential anti-corruption impacts.

There is broad consensus on the reform priorities, including streamlining state administration, strengthening its independence, and reducing departmentalism. In this context, the civil service reform, particularly simplifying HR processes, eliminating departmentalism, and introducing safeguards against politicization, is seen as a positive step that addresses many current shortcomings. The comprehensive law aims to improve public administration efficiency through de-bureaucratization, enhancing career growth opportunities, and protecting senior officials from political pressures. However, the amendment does not yet address the transformation of the role of state secretaries.

https://mv.gov.cz/sluzba/clanek/pravni-predpisy.aspx

Ministry of Interior website on Reform: https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/moderni-kvalitni-a-efektivni-statni-sluzba-bez-zbytecne-byrokracie-novela-sluzebniho-zakona-prosla-tretim-ctenim.aspx

https://www.rekonstrukcestatu.cz/archiv-novinek/statni-sprava-se-otevre-odbornikum-a-ochrani-nejvyssi-uredniky-pred-politickymi-tlaky

In June 2024, a Senate conference addressed the rising influence of oligarchs in Czech politics and media. Participants highlighted the growing concentration of wealth and the merging of economic and political power, which they described as state capture by an oligarchy. Rather than fierce competition among billionaires, a tacit agreement often divides spheres of influence, preserving the status quo. This is reflected in behind-the-scenes control over key government offices, regulatory bodies, and security forces, creating a stable yet concerning system of shared power and wealth.DenikReferendum:https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/36373-bohati-ovladaji-stat-senatni-konference-se-vymezila-vuci-rostouci-oligarchii

Senate event on oligarchy: https://www.marekhilser.cz/aktuality/archiv/konference-klientelismus-jako-hrozba-pro-demokracii-a-trzni-prostredi
Hlídací pes: https://hlidacipes.org/jan-urban-jak-ze-je-to-v-cesku-s-korupci-novodobe-ceske-dejiny-urcuje-a-dotvari/

III. Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. Media authorities and bodies

(Cf. Article 30 of Directive 2018/1808)

Measures taken to ensure the independence, enforcement powers and adequacy of resources (financial,

human and technical) of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Amendment to the Act on Czech Television and Czech Radio (Parliamentary Document No. 738, https://www.psp.cz/sqw/historie.sqw?o=9&t=738 should strengthen rules and mechanisms to enhance the independent governance of public service media, which have become entangled in political disputes. However, there is a lack of political consensus on increasing fees for public broadcasters threatens their financial stability and, by extension, the quality of their programming. Many objections and disagreements are expressed by private media. Further safeguards into the draft to prevent political influence on media councils are needed.

Public broadcasters play a vital role in media and reporting; however, disagreements persist regarding their performance and societal role. These divisions hinder the implementation of necessary measures to safeguard their independence, professionalism, and impartiality. Addressing this challenge is both urgent and significant, requiring a shared commitment to finding common ground. At the same time, there are strong rhetoric attacks on public media broadcasting from the politicians and the leading opposition party ANO lead by Andrej Babiš, who wants to abolish the funding of public service media through fees and replace it with funding from the state budget.

https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/zvyseni-poplatku-ma-verejnopravnim-mediim-prinest-stamiliony-do-rozpoctu-349225

The discussion in the Chamber of Deputies has stalled, despite assurances from the coalition. The wide initiative led by a CSO Díky že můžem urged the politicians to support public service media and the Media Law Amendment adoption and to guarantee the independence and financial stability of public service media, as promised in The Government programmatic declaration. The joint statement was signed by over 210 public institutions and CSOs and >12 000 individuals CSOs. There is a fear of a repetition of the situation in Slovakia, where public service media effectively became state-controlled media. "Stable and predictable funding is one of the key conditions for the existence of free media and artistic creation," . The Government members of parliament are promising it will pass in the Chamber of Deputies till the end of January 2025.
https://www.dikyzemuzem.cz/podpor-podpisem/
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7288532245542281216
https://www.facebook.com/Glopolis/posts/pfbid028mfSX3cYFrUTU9XBWV2ojPzj8FBKEVZv7isBqga8oD5WMNYzMuQkuS7kH5zGaPA2l

Conditions and procedures for the appointment and dismissal of the head / members of the collegiate body of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Existence and functions of media councils or other self-regulatory bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Safeguards against government or political interference and transparency and concentration of media ownership

Measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising

5000 character(s) maximum

Safeguards against state / political interference, in particular:

- safeguards to ensure editorial independence of media (private and public)
- specific safeguards for the independence of heads of management and members of the governing boards of public service media (e.g. related to appointment, dismissal), safeguards for their financial and operational independence (e.g. related to reporting obligations and the allocation of resources) and safeguards for plurality of information and opinions
- information on specific legal provisions and procedures applying to media service providers, including as regards granting/renewal/termination of licenses, company operation, capital entry requirements, concentration and corporate governance

5000 character(s) maximum

Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents

Rules and practices guaranteeing journalists' independence and safety, including as regards protection of journalistic sources and communications, referring also, if applicable, to follow-up given to alerts lodged with the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists 5000 character(s) maximum

Law enforcement capacity, including during protests and demonstrations, to ensure journalists' safety and to investigate attacks on journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

Access to information and public documents by public at large and journalists (incl. transparency authorities where they exist, procedures, costs/fees, timeframes, administrative/judicial review of decisions, execution of decisions by public authorities, possible obstacles related to the classification of information) 5000 character(s) maximum

Lawsuits (incl. SLAPPs - strategic lawsuits against public participation) and convictions against journalists (incl. defamation cases) and measures taken to safeguard against manifestly unfounded and abusive lawsuits

5000 character(s) maximum

The transposition of the anti-SLAPP directive in the Czech Republic is slow and well behind the attention of policy makers and public debate. The CSOs call for an expert and public debate on the anti-SLAPP directive and involvement of relevant stakeholders in the regulation's preparation. The transposition has been already included in the Government's Plan on legislation for 2025, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice which should present the proposal to the Government till end August 2025 within the amendment of Code of Civil Procedure. https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/lrv/dokumenty/plan-legislativnich-praci-vlady-na-rok-2025-217763/
However the only public official raising the issue is the Government Plenipotentiary on Human Rights Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková - https://www.linkedin.com/posts/klarasimackovalaurencikova_%C5%A1ikana-%C5%BEalobou-nedej-se-%C4%8Desk%C3%A1-televize-activity-7287533220181467136-CjQb?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop.
The experts but also CSOs are concerned about the right transposition, as it is scheduled at the end of the mandate of the current Government, with no appetite to start new legislative procedures before the 2025 Parliamentary elections, and with no RIA procedure planned.

An example illustrating the urgency of such measures is the case of "Limity jsme my", an environmental movement supporting climate activists convicted in 2024 for participating in a peaceful blockade against coal mining in 2018. The court ruled that 83 activists must collectively pay over one million Czech crowns in damages, a decision perceived by many as an attempt to silence criticism of large corporations like ČEZ. Activists have described this lawsuit as a tool of intimidation, underscoring the need for legal reforms to prevent strategic lawsuits aimed at suppressing public participation. Cases like this highlight how corporate entities may exploit the judicial system to discourage civil society's efforts to address critical issues such as the climate crisis. https://limityjsmemy.cz/2024/11/za-blokadu-uhelneho-dolu-bilina-musi-protestujici-zaplatit-milion-cez-pritom-vydelava-miliardy/

Another relevant moment is the decision of the Constitutional Court from January 2025: Legal entities have the right to protection of their good reputation, and in cases where it is harmed, they can demand reasonable compensation for non-material damage caused. The finding overturns an earlier Supreme Court ruling that basically said only people have this right and not legal entities. The new decision means that associations have the right to compensation when someone attacks their good reputation. This interpretation may bring very positive outcomes but also certain risks. It seems that in effect, we are returning to the state we were all accustomed to, where legal entities also have the right to the protection of their good reputation.
The Constitutional Court also stated that the right to protection of a good reputation cannot be abused, for example, to pursue strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP).
https://www.usoud.cz/fileadmin/user_upload/Tiskova_mluvci/Publikovane_nalezy/2025/Pl.-26-24-n%C3%A1lez_AN.pdf

Any other developments related to media pluralism and freedom - please specify 5000 character(s) maximum

It is crucial to raise awareness among politicians, experts, and citizens about the issue of disappearing independent regional journalism to prevent the rise of "media deserts." The goal is to protect media pluralism and independence. In the Czech Republic, the number of regions without independent regional media is growing, creating so-called media deserts. These gaps are often filled by "dependent media," such as municipal and regional newsletters or private regional television, which are frequently used for promoting local politicians and suppressing criticism. Similarly, private regional TV stations often create content tailored to the needs of municipalities and regions. Meanwhile, public discourse is largely focused on the quality of national and public media, with little attention given to addressing the decline in regional journalism. This shortage negatively impacts the coverage and investigation of corruption at local and regional levels.
https://nezavisla.media/

https://www.okraj.cz/

IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

The amendment to the Public Defender of Rights Act, which establishes the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) and the Children's Ombudsman, has finally passed the Chamber of Deputies on January 22, 2025, and is heading to the Senate. Experts and government officials informally share concerns that the Ministry of Finance has not confirmed the provision of funding and capacity to expand the ombudsman's office and the conditions for implementing the law are not clear.
https://www.ochrance.cz/aktualne/poslanci_schvalili_ve_tretim_cteni_zrizeni_detskeho_ombudsmana/
https://www.psp.cz/sqw/historie.sqw?o=9&t=688

There are positive steps in promoting participatory and evidence-based policy-making, some reflecting the recommendations of OECD Public Governance Review. Yet, these steps are not on a scale that would ensure real institutional change, cross-cutting implementation of participation, standardisation and capacity development for state administration and engagement of the stakeholders, incl. CSOs.

A. The process for preparing and enacting laws

Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders'[1]/public consultations (including rules and practices on the transparent participation of civil society to policy development and decision-making processes), and transparency and quality of the legislative process both in the preparatory and the parliamentary phase

[1] This includes also the consultation of social partners

5000 character(s) maximum

New Government Analysis Unit (GAU) and analytical units were established at several ministries within National Recovery Plan. The concern is about the stability of the new structure after the election and after RRF 2026.
https://ria.vlada.cz/kontakty/

The Government's Legislative Work Plan 2025 indicates only 14 of total 77 tasks have the obligation to carry out RIA. This reveals that RIA is not planned for important regulations such as transposition of Anti-SLAPP.
https://ria.vlada.cz/vlada-schvalila-plan-legislativnich-praci-vlady-na-rok-2025/ .
The current RIA reform seems to respond to some of the issues identified by OECD. It is proclaimed to improve the quality and standardisation of consultations and advance RIA before tabling the regulation proposal. The CSOs have not been engaged in RIA reform, in general it is rare they would be invited to RIA processes. Glopolis addressed this issue and opened the debate on how to engage CSOs in RIA reform (the event “Decision closer to People” and the roundtable on the Rule of Law 07/01/2025).
https://glopolis.org/stronger-roots/workshop-rozhodovani-blize-lidem-zapojovani-obcanske-spolecnosti-do-verejneho-rozhodovani/
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7270081187920900096
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7282801000069951488
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/vlada/clenove-vlady/pri-uradu-vlady/martin_dvorak/tiskove_zpravy/tiskova-zprava-odbornici-u-kulateho-stolu-jednali-o-ochrane-pravniho-statu--217805/

The Department for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Office of the Government is a champion in promoting participation. Thanks to its activity, the OGP Seventh Action Plan 2025-2026 includes measures such as the

possible establishment of a national competence centre for participation, the piloting of participatory and deliberative processes, improvement of awareness and competences of public administration and civil society. CSOs are concerned about the implementation of the commitments due to a lack of political support, unsecured funding and reliance mainly on individual approach of officials. The Department needs to seek resources for participation projects through TSI or Technology Agency, which is not systemic.
https://korupce.cz/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Akcni-plan-Ceske-republiky-Partnerstvi-pro-otevrene-vladnuti-na-obdobi-let-2025-az-2026.pdf
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/zapisy-ze-zasedani/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-19--prosince-2024-217720/

The pilot testing of the Methodology for the Participation of NGOs in Consultative and Working Bodies and in the Drafting of State Administration Documents revealed significant gaps in knowledge, personnel, financial resources, and capacity of both public administration and CSOs. The Government Council for NGOs recommended the Government to approve and implement the Methodology. However, the Methodology is not legally binding, so it is just a voluntary up to the ministries to use it in their practice. Anti-Corruption Action Plan 2025-2026 under the Ministry of Justice also refers to the Methodology.
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/zapisy-ze-zasedani/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-19--prosince-2024-217720/
https://korupce.cz/protikorupcni-dokumenty-vlady/na-leta-2023-az-2026/

The establishment of a coordinator for cooperation with civil society at the Ministry of Environment has been piloted with Green Circle (GC, Association of ecological CSOs). The coordinator facilitates transparent and functional contacts with different MoE departments, reflection meetings with the minister (2 times a year), GC has access to eKlep and RKS for commenting on proposals to the government and EU agenda, MoE provides grant scheme for eco-CSOs coordination - 0.5 million CZK per year.
https://zelenykruh.cz/zeleny-kruh-jednal-s-vedenim-mzp-o-klicovych-environmentalnich-tematech/
https://zelenykruh.cz/ministerstvo-spustilo-druhou-cast-verejne-konzultace-nove-klimaticko-energeticke-strategie-ceska/
Presentation of MoE at Glopolis event -
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7270081187920900096

There are however also negative trends: the environmental CSOs Green Circle and Climate Coalition report that the public administration avoids the processes of environmental assessments of concepts/SEA. Projects that are supposed to go through the EIA process often do not undergo the assessment of relevant alternatives as required by law.

Glopolis pointed out there was an insufficient assessment of the potential impacts of the Lobbying Act on civil society and participation, and encouraged improving the assessments of impacts of future regulations. The umbrella networks play an important role in such intersectional dialogue.
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/zapisy-ze-zasedani/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-30--zari-2024-217664/

13

Rules and use of fast-track ;procedures and emergency procedures (for example, the percentage of decisions adopted through emergency/urgent procedure compared to the total number of adopted

decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and application of states of emergency (or analogous regimes), including judicial review and parliamentary oversight

5000 character(s) maximum

During 2024, the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations has been warning of serious human rights restrictions and discrimination related to the legislation around migrants, foreigners and Ukrainian refugees - the forthcoming Lex Ukraine VII and the Amendment to the law on the residence of foreign prepared by the Ministry of the Interior. The draft of the so-called Aliens Act fundamentally changes the concept of the institution of a family member of a Czech citizen and worsens the status of foreigners residing in the Czech Republic. The Lex Ukraine VII was supposed to provide for the extension of temporary protection for refugees from Ukraine, but instead introduces an obligation for citizens of the Russian Federation to be the only ones to renounce their Russian citizenship in order to obtain Czech citizenship. This puts them in danger, claims collective guilt and is also practically unworkable. Similarly, the amendment introduces the offence of 'acting for a foreign power'. Such proposals and arguments about national security seriously violate fundamental rights and constitutionally given freedoms.

https://migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/poslanci-chteji-udelat-z-zadatelu-o-obcanstvi-z-ruska-bezpecnostni-hrozbu-i-z-tech-co-tu-dlouhodobe-ziji-a-angazuji-se-v-pomoci-ukrajine/
https://migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/migracni-konsorcium-apeluje-na-vladu-aby-neschvalila-navrh-cizineckeho-zakona/
https://migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/pripominky-konsorcia-k-lex-ukrajina-vii/
https://migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/lex-ukrajina-vii-na-socialni-davky-prichozi-z-ukrajiny-nedosahnou-i-kdyz-do-systemu-prispivaji-vic-nez-dostavaji/

Regime for constitutional review of laws

5000 character(s) maximum

The Climate Lawsuit of the Czech Republic was filed in 2021 by over 300 citizens concerned about the government's inaction on climate change. The lawsuit, supported by Frank Bold Advocates, claims that the government is failing to mitigate emissions and adapt to climate change, violating human rights and international agreements. The goal is to push for stronger climate action. In June 2022, the Municipal Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, ordering a 55% emissions reduction by 2030, but dismissed adaptation claims. The Supreme Administrative Court annulled the ruling in February 2023, and in October 2023, the Municipal Court dismissed the case. In November 2024, the lawsuit was definitively rejected. The plaintiffs are now preparing a constitutional complaint, drawing on a European Court of Human Rights precedent. https://www.klimazaloba.cz/

B. Independent authorities

Independence, resources, capacity and powers of national human rights institutions ('NHRIs'), of ombudsman institutions if different from NHRIs, of equality bodies if different from NHRIs and of supreme audit institutions

(Cf. the website of the European Court of Auditors: https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/SupremeAuditInstitutions.aspx#) 5000 character(s) maximum

A bill establishing a NHRI and the position of a children's ombudsman was finally approved in January 2025 by the Chamber of Deputies and passed to the Senate. The creation of the NHRI would significantly expand the mandate of the Public Defender of Rights, who currently handles only a narrow range of issues, not human rights protection and advocacy across all areas. It remains to be seen whether sufficient funding will be allocated to enable the institution to effectively carry out its agenda. https://www.psp.cz/sqw/historie.sqw?o=9&t=688

Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies and supreme audit institutions in the past two years 5000 character(s) maximum

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data)

5000 character(s) maximum

Judicial review of administrative decisions: short description of the general regime (in particular competent court, scope, suspensive effect, interim measures, and any applicable specific rules or derogations from the general regime of judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and practices related to the application by all courts, including constitutional jurisdictions, of the preliminary ruling procedure (Art. 267 TFEU)

5000 character(s) maximum

Implementation of final judgments by the public administration and State institutions and follow-up given to supranational judgments, including decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as available remedies in case of non-implementation

5000 character(s) maximum

D. The enabling framework for civil society

Measures regarding the framework for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. legal framework and its application in practice incl. registration, transparency and dissolution rules) 5000 character(s) maximum

The year 2024 marked 10 years of the new association law - i.e. the 10th anniversary of the Civil Code. Conference organized by the Government Plenipotentiary for Human Rights and the Czech Council for Children and Youth addressed the fundamentals of the Code, but also some of the new challenges related to the registers of the actual owners of associations, or setting the boundaries between economic activities of non-profit

association and business activities, or tax and accounting issues. The Code is conceived as liberal, respecting the internal autonomy of associations, while protecting the rights of members and third parties, and has proven itself in practice.
See all presentations at:
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/aktuality/konference-deset-let-_noveho_-spolkoveho-prava-213589/

Within the framework of the Strategy for Cooperation between Public Administration and NGOs for the period 2021-2030, the implementation of its first action plan is being completed. The Government Office has prepared a Monitoring Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2021-2023. It is clear that most of the measures are being implemented on an ongoing basis to varying degrees. Objective C also includes "Actively monitor and comment on legislation governing the status and activities of NGOs". A working group is drafting measures for a new plan to be submitted to the Government by the end of March 2025. There is scope for the inclusion of up-to-date new measures responding to the needs of the sector, however, as the Strategy is not backed by any resources from the State budget, the Department for Cooperation with Civil Society is obliged to provide all costs associated with implementation under project funding. Monitoring of the legislation highly relies on the activity and knowledge of the CSOs members in the Government Council for NGOs and its committees, so it is not rare that several legal analysis are funded by the CSOs themselves and there is not any robust institutionalized mechanism to monitor any legislation and assessing the impact on civic sector.
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/dokumenty/monitorovaci-zprava-o-plneni-akcniho-planu-strategie-spoluprace-verejne-spravy-s-nno-na-leta-2021-az-2030-za-roky-2021-2023-217747/

The EU Committee of the Government Council for NGOs, which also includes members from Glopolis and several NeoN organisations, has promoted transparent and effective representation of CSOs in the implementation of EU funds, including the transparent nomination processes in the EU funds monitoring committees and working platforms. In 2024, Glopolis and the Office of the Government have been implementing two 2-year complementary projects for strengthening the partnership of the non-profit sector with ministries and other central government bodies in the implementation of EU funds, funded through the operational program OPTP/EU funds. They aim at promoting methodological Support for the Involvement of NGO Partners (implemented by the Office of the Government) and to Support of Coordination and Professional Capacities for the involvement of NGOs in the implementation of EU funds 2021- 2027 (Glopolis).
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/zapisy-ze-zasedani/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-19--prosince-2024-217720/
https://glopolis.org/part/

Certain concerns arise whenever there is new legislation that is framed in terms of the transparency or security that is in principle promoted also by the CSOs, but with several unforeseen impacts or risks to fundamental freedoms and CSOs operations. This is applicable to the Lobbying Act, the Conflicts of Interest Act / Register of Beneficial Owners or potentially any new initiatives coming with the Defending Democracy Package and its Directive setting out harmonised internal market requirements for transparency of interests in representations made on behalf of third countries. Glopolis has engaged in the preparation of the position of Committee for the EU as a contribution to the Czech Republic's framework position on this Directive, and raised the following concerns: vague definitions and broad wording give room for abuse and misinterpretation, possible violation of fundamental rights, restriction of civic participation, stigmatisation, undermining democracy within the EU and damaging Europe's role in protecting civil society and democracy in the world, Bureaucratic burden, Lack of consideration of alternative procedures.
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/vybor-pro-eu/2008/11--brezna-212639/

Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures to protect them from attacks – verbal, physical or on line –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services, as well as available remedies

5000 character(s) maximum

There has not been any relevant progress as for the setting up a robust monitoring framework to protect CSOs and human rights defenders within the state administration. There has not been any more research on public opinion on civil society and human rights defenders neither. However there are partial, but important research studies done by some CSOs to support the evidence of the threats and attacks.

Association VIA in its research study Disinformation And Civil Society Mapping Report Visegrad Region shows that the Czech CSOs are facing increasing disinformation attacks that target themselves, their topics, or their clients. This creates pressure on their capacities, threatens their reputation and activity as such, including the ability to fundraise with the public. Disinformation campaigns mainly focus on topics related to the support of human rights, migrant rights, LGBTQ+ issues, Roma issues, environmental issues and the support of democracy. Such campaigns often depict CSOs as "political instruments" of foreign influence or as entities that prioritize foreign interests over the needs of Czech citizens. In addition, the vulnerability of Czech CSOs is exacerbated by weak digitization and insufficient preparedness for crisis communication. The result is a breakdown of trust in CSOs, which threatens their fundraising and ability to respond effectively to crises. Some organizations are already monitoring the outflow of donors (here too, some of the reasons for the lower amount of money donated by the public to solve the autumn floods may lie). It is therefore necessary to provide CSOs with sufficient and targeted support (technical, educational, etc.), which would enable them to effectively face disinformation campaigns and prevent negative consequences in terms of donations and trust in CSOs, as well as their ability to offer adequate answers to the needs and deficits of Czech society.
https://en.hive-mind.community/blog/910,navigating-disinformation-trends-and-civil-society-challenges-in-central-and-eastern-europe-regional-mapping-reports-2023-2024

The Government Plenipotentiary on Human Rights, the Office of the Government and several ministries have been organising events in cooperation with CSOs and promoting the activities supported through the subsidy programmes - as also reported in the Monitoring report -
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/dokumenty/monitorovaci-zprava-o-plneni-akcniho-planu-strategie-spoluprace-verejne-spravy-s-nno-na-leta-2021-az-2030-za-roky-2021-2023-217747/
However there is not a streamlined and strategic communication of the state on how to communicate around the value and role of civil society as the part of democracy.

An example of a severe crisis faced by CSOs was the case of CSO Hnuti DUHA. The Minister of Agriculture, Výborný, suggested in a press statement that the Hnuti DUHA was responsible for the extent of flooding in Northern Moravia by blocking the construction of the Nové Heřminovy waterworks. This baseless media attack, forcing the organization to refute false claims of blocking flood protection measures for decades, has further divided an already struggling society. A wave of solidarity has arisen in support of Hnuti DUHA, with many individuals and organizations standing against this unfair attack.
https://vyzva.hnutiduha.cz/#no-back
https://svetneziskovek.cz/lide/jsme-zvykli-vest-ve-verejnem-prostoru-konflikt-s-annou-karnikovou-z-hnuti-duha-o-krizove-komunikaci-i-naladach-ve-spolecnosti

Since the 2024 election campaigns, more or less open attacks on "political non-profits" from populist parties have been increasing again, which is expected to graduate as the elections approach. The leaders also outline how they want to install higher requirements or limit the activities of the “political non-profits”. With the recent electoral models, there is a reasonable concern that any safeguards need to be done by the current government, else the potential next Governmental coalition cannot be expected to be a civil society and freedom promoter.

K. Konečná, Stacilo!: “We will not cancel non-profits, we will not ban them as in Russia. None of us have plans for that. But we want a register of their payment. One click on the computer is enough, for example, and you will know who is paying for this or that event or debate. Ideally, there should be a central registry that is publicly available.” https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/volby-do-poslanecke-snemovny-konecna-divam-se-na-rusko-jako-na-ostatni-velmoci-268555

T. Okamura, SPD: “We in the SPD distinguish between political non-profit organizations and non-profit organizations that help, for example, the elderly," while his “NGO” Institute for Freedom and Democracy is receiving state subsidies. https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-dvoji-metr-spd-politicke-neziskovky-odmita-sama-na-jednu-cerpa-miliony-40492186

Babiš, ANO: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=607269318295977

Organisation of financial support for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. framework to ensure access to funding, and for financial viability, taxation/incentive/donation systems, measures to ensure a fair distribution of funding)

5000 character(s) maximum

The Main Areas of State Subsidy Policy towards NGOs in Support of Public Benefit Activities for 2025 show a slight increase of the total budget amounting to 8 184 343 498 CZK to be disbursed by 16 providers within 86 subsidy schemes. We can acknowledge a tiny increase in the budget for Gender equality 5 mil. CZK, still hugely inadequate to the complexity of the issue.

On August 6, 2024, an amendment to Act No. 117/2001 Coll., on public collections, entering into force on January 1, 2025 brings several significant changes that will ease the organization of public collections. https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/aktuality/novela-zakona-o-verejnych-sbirkach-prinasi-dulezite-zmeny-216094/
Also for 2024, the possibility of an increased deduction of donations (up to 30% of the tax base), which was introduced in 2020 in response to the pandemic and extended in 2022 in view of the events in Ukraine, was retained and was only intended to be valid for a short period of time. Parliament has extended the validity of gift tax credits until 2026. https://www.mfcr.cz/cs/dane-a-ucetnictvi/dane/danova-a-celni-legislativa/2024/ministerstvo-financi-potvrzuje-plan-prodlouzit-56078

The Government Council on NGOs' expert group submitted concrete and feasible proposals for a systemic change in funding to the Ministry of Finance. The proposed changes to the Budget Rules Act and several other regulations can break through the long-term lack of multi-year financing of non-investment subsidy projects, the listing of so-called quick subsidies in case of sudden crises and financial transfers of subsidies between partners in partnership projects. The legal analysis confirmed that ministries have the competence to announce multi-year non-investment subsidy programs from the state budget. It depends on the provider how they determine the parameters of a specific subsidy program and how they ensure the financing of supported projects in the medium term. The Ministry of Finance could easily take an important step forward in preparing a new decree on the financial settlement of relations with the state budget, where it would be treated that it is possible to account for the subsidy only at the end of the period for which it was granted. This solution was supported by the majority of subsidy providers, who have also raised that during the interdepartmental commenting procedures.
See the minutes from Council meetings - https://vlada.gov.cz/scripts/detail.php?pgid=1398
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/ex_skup_fin/expertni-skupina-k-systemove-zmene-financovani-verejne-prospesnych-sluzeb-a-cinnosti-ze-statniho-rozpoctu-198755/

E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture

If there have been developments related to initiatives to foster a rule of law culture, please specify, which (e. g. debates in national parliaments on the rule of law, public information campaigns on rule of law issues, contributions from civil society, education initiatives, etc.)

5000 character(s) maximum

Glopolis has been continuously promoting the Rule of Law Report, the engagement of CSOs in the process around it and the national dialogue on rule of law, mainly within the agenda of the Committee for the EU of the Government Council for NGOs, and the Government Council itself. There were several concrete conclusions of these bodies, based on Glopolis contributions in line with other CSOs from NeoN - statement on the Report for the framework position of the Czech Republic to the EU Rule of Law Report, the conclusion of the Government Council recommending to stimulate the inputs from different advisory bodies for the preparation of the Czech Republic's report on rule of law (see the minutes from the meetings:
https://vlada.gov.cz/scripts/detail.php?pgid=1399
Glopolis also prepared a guidance for CSOs engagement in the process for NeoN network and the Committee for EU:
https://neon-cooperation.org/aktuality/zapojte-se-do-pripravy-zpravy-o-pravnim-statu-2025

Glopolis together with Network for Protection of Democracy and Lobbio, we appreciate the support from the Office of the Government with the Representation of the European Commission for the organisation of the participatory event Rule of Law in the Czech Republic: Opportunities for 2025, which took place on 7 January 2025 under the auspices of the Minister for European Affairs and the Government Plenipotentiary for Human Rights. Experts from academics, representatives of the state administration and the non-profit sector jointly debated topics related to the rule of law in a total of three workshops. These successively focused on strengthening rules for preventing conflicts of interest, fair public procurement and consultation in the RIA process. A panel discussion with the participation of the Minister for European Affairs Martin Dvořák, the

Government Plenipotentiary for Human Rights Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková and the former Vice-President of the European Commission Věra Jourová reflected on the outcomes of the individual expert workshops and possible opportunities and obstacles to the proposed solutions.
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7282801000069951488
https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/vlada/clenove-vlady/pri-uradu-vlady/martin_dvorak/tiskove_zpravy/tiskova-zprava-odbornici-u-kulateho-stolu-jednali-o-ochrane-pravniho-statu--217805/

We also promoted the launch of the Report and addressed the Prime Minister with an open letter to respond to the findings from the report and recommendations. The open letter stimulated further exchange with the Prime Minister. https://glopolis.org/neon/otevreny-dopis-premierovi-nevladni-organizace-apeluji-na-dukladnou-diskusi-o-doporucenich-zpravy-o-pravnim-statu-ek/ https://glopolis.org/proseco/odpoved-premierovi-klicove-je-posilit-demokraticke-pojistky-do-voleb/
https://neon-cooperation.org/aktuality/odpoved-premierovi-klicove-je-posilit-demokraticke-pojistky-do-voleb-povedomi-o-jejich-potrebnosti-by-mohla-zlepsit-debata-v-parlamentu-a-aktivni-komunikace-clenu-vlady

Glopolis together with Stefan Batory Foundation, OSF Prague and other partners, we prepared a policy paper with recommendations to the European Commission on improving the process of preparation of the RoL report - https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1442/recommendations.pdf

Glopolis also follows the events on the topic of rule of law organised by other actors. We participated in the Conference: Do we want the rule of law? Why (not)? - Praha, 11. 10. 2024 organised by the Faculty of Law, Charles University, Prague - https://www.prf.cuni.cz/aktuality/do-we-want-rule-law-why-not

We can develop these actions thanks to the CERV-funded project PROSECO - Empowering Civic Space, coordinated by Glopolis with partners Malý Berlín from Slovakia, Network for Protection of Democracy/STEM Institute in the Czechia, Crosol in Croatia, and Peace Institute in Slovenia.
https://glopolis.org/proseco/

Any other developments related to the system of checks and balances - please specify 5000 character(s) maximum

Supporting document upload

If you would like to submit any supporting document(s) to your contribution, please upload your file(s) here