

2026 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, six 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 2026 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 2026 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) developments and measures taken in relation to the recommendations in the 2025 report,**
- (2) developments related to topics covered in the 2025 country chapters, as well as any other new developments related to the rule of law.**

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.

This questionnaire also integrates the separate questionnaire on the single market from last year. In addition to these specific questions, respondents to the questionnaire are invited to consider the Single Market dimension, including any relevant cross-border issues, in all their answers.

Where questions of particular relevance under the single market dimension, this is indicated before the relevant question.

[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 and enforcement 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.

Where relevant, please also indicate whether the developments reported are linked to the implementation of reforms and investments under the national Recovery Resilience Plan. 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.

* I am giving my contribution as

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

* Organisation name

250 character(s) maximum

Glopolis, o.p.s.

also with expert inputs from organisations: Liga lidskych prav, Green Circle / Zeleny kruh, Transparency International ČR, Institut českého znakového jazyka - Pevnost

Main Areas of Work

- ☐ Justice System
- ☐ Anti-corruption
- ☐ Media Pluralism and Freedom
- ☒ Checks 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 society 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 network 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
- ☒ Czechia
- ☐ 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

First name

Jana

Surname

Milerova

Email Address of the organisation

jmilerova@glopolis.org

* 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 can be identified in the rest of your contribution as we will not be able to guarantee anonymisation of these elements.**
- ☒ Public - 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.

☒ I agree with the personal data protection provisions.

[Specific privacy statement targeted stakeholder consultation 2026 rule of law report.pdf](#)

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 for contribution.docx](#)

Please provide any relevant information on horizontal developments here

5000 character(s) maximum

The growing discrepancy between the inviolability of fundamental constitutional principles and democratic values on the one hand, and on the other hand, representatives who are supposed to respect, protect, and enforce them in the exercise of the powers of all public authorities: Post-election data points to a polarized electorate divided along generational and socioeconomic lines. Although youth voter turnout reached a historic high, older generations are still more numerous and more likely to vote. In 2025, the ANO party won more than half of the votes of voters aged 65+. The election results allowed Andrej Babiš to form a government with the support of smaller parties, including radical or "anti-system" actors such as the SPD and Motoristé sobě (Motorists for Themselves), despite the fact that the SPD achieved its worst results to date. However, a political agreement also brought actors who did not win a strong electoral mandate and whose leaders are themselves associated with legal controversies into positions of power. Tomio Okamura and A. Babiš are awaiting the Chamber of Deputies' decision on requests for criminal prosecution. Filip Turek (Motoristé sobě) has been criticized for positions incompatible with the constitutional order, as reflected in the president's reasoning. However, these actors are now expected to oversee key elements of the legal environment or to shape them directly. We are seeing similar cases of increased support and influence for radical political groups elsewhere in Europe. We are rightly concerned about the gradual erosion of the values of the rule of law and the further weakening of the already fragile public confidence in democratic institutions.

Politicization of civic participation. In Czechia, too, the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) and experts in policy dialogue is beginning to be questioned. Participation is increasingly being framed as a "political activity" and CSOs are accused of promoting a political agenda that is the exclusive domain of political parties and subject to registration requirements and a ban on foreign funding. This narrative has been reinforced by unsubstantiated accusations by the EPP in the European Parliament of lobbying carried out by CSOs and being paid for from the LIFE program. The new Czech government coalition politicians use also this case to question the role of civil society actors. At the same time, the civil sector cannot reliably rely on public support, as the public itself tends to be uninformed and distrustful of CSOs, especially in those parts of society where the public has no direct experience with them. STEM research shows that trust in the civic sector in Czech society is sharply divided by generation. While about half of people under 29 view non-profit organizations positively, among those over 60 it is only a quarter. The greatest scepticism targets organisations involved in state affairs and legislative change - precisely where generational gaps are widest. At the same time, personal experience with the civic sector raises trust by up to 20 points on a 100-points scale. Distrust is therefore strongest where people have no direct contact and are more vulnerable to simplified narratives about "political activists."

Insufficient guarantees of the quality of the legislative process: In the Czech Republic, the weakening of the standard legislative process was already evident in the previous election period, but is even more apparent now. Accelerated legislative procedures are being increasingly used without justification, and there has been an increase in the number of parliamentary proposals, bypassing public and stakeholder consultation, inter-ministerial review, RIA or other data-based assessment. This practice is worrying as it is becoming common even for key reforms such as the new civil service law and the amendment to the building law, which were

submitted without full expert assessment or the public debate. The key “legislative rider” in 2025 was the problematic amendment to the Administrative Procedure Code as an addendum to the amendment to the Asylum Act.

<https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/238395-novela-stavebniho-zakona-850-stran-41-zakonu-a-nula-lobbistu>

<https://denikn.cz/1837305/tajna-reforma-blazek-s-bendou-propasovali-zmeny-spravniho-soudnictvi-do-azyloveho-zakona-sporny-paragraf-napsal-advokat-developeru/>

<https://www.hrad.cz/file/edee/2026/01/dopis-prezidenta-republiky-predsedovi-vlady.pdf>

<https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-za-fialy-to-bylo-spatne-za-babise-se-to-smi-koalice-sype-jeden-zakon-za-druhym-zrychlenou-cestou-40556855>

<https://osf.cz/2025/09/25/stem/>

<https://www.stem.cz/spolecna-povolebni-studie-agentur-simar-ozveny-voleb-2025/>

<https://www.stem.cz/hodnoceni-nove-vlady-odlisne-postoje-podle-volebniho-chovani/>

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 2025 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter of the 2025 Rule of Law Report and any other significant developments since January 2025 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

- ☒ Czechia
- ☐ 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 2025 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

No concrete measures were adopted to strengthen the integrity framework for Members of Parliament, nor was the revision of the conflict of interest legislation reinitiated. In the area of revolving doors, no specific legal

framework was introduced in 2025 to regulate post-mandate transitions of Members of Parliament into the private sector beyond the general lobbying regulation.

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

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

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)

[single market relevance] Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

5000 character(s) maximum

We would like to address the issue of legal and institutional framework for the protection of civic space, in particular of civil society organisations and publicly engaged citizens and human rights defenders that are exposed to disinformation, intimidation and bullying. State protection is formally available, but in practice it is insufficient and does not adequately reflect the specific nature of attacks targeting the civil society sector, particularly in the online environment. Ensuring a safe operating space requires protection against intimidation and harassment, which is intended to be legally anchored through the transposition of the EU anti-SLAPP Directive aimed at preventing abusive litigation against public participation. At the same time, pre-litigation challenges initiated by politicians are emerging, which may have a deterrent and intimidating effect, especially on smaller entities lacking adequate legal resources. The availability of pro bono legal services for civil society organisations is concurrently very limited, in some cases amounting to practical unavailability.

https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

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

[single market relevance] 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

The digitalisation of the Czech judiciary does not work in practice. Courts still rely on paper files, fragmented and outdated IT systems, and incomplete tools such as the long-delayed electronic case file. This leads to slower proceedings, higher costs, limited remote access, and unequal treatment of parties. The risk is not only inefficiency, but a growing gap between citizens and justice, weakening trust in the rule of law. What is needed is clear and centralised reform: a fully functional electronic case file, unified and user-friendly e-filing, remote identity verification, interoperable court systems, and a single, high-quality database of court decisions. Digitalisation must be treated as a core justice reform, not a technical add-on.

<https://llp.cz/blog/opozdena-digitalizace-justice-dopady-vyzvy-a-doporuceni/>

Particularly problematic is the publication of judicial decisions. Although courts are legally obliged to anonymise and publish judgments, in practice publication is incomplete, irregular and inconsistent. Many decisions remain inaccessible to the public, which limits transparency, public oversight of the judiciary and the predictability of the law. Compared with several other European countries, the Czech Republic lags behind in the openness of judicial data and in the possibility to analyse case law in a systematic way.

In recent years, the Ministry of Justice has attempted to improve the situation through various initiatives, including modernising information systems, piloting electronic case files and developing online portals for communication with courts. These efforts, however, have often been hampered by insufficient coordination, underestimation of technical complexity, limited staffing capacities and shifting political priorities. As a result, progress has taken the form of isolated steps rather than a coherent reform.

<https://msp.gov.cz/web/msp/digitalizace-justice-npo>

<https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-zivot-v-cesku-na-digitalizaci-50-miliard-nestacilo-pouze-18-procent-sluzeb-statu-je-online-296277>

<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/justici-cesko-digitalizuje-uz-osmnact-let-muze-prijit-o-desitky-milionu-368886>

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

The issue of the “judicial map”, meaning the geographical distribution of courts, their number and structure, has been debated in the Czech Republic for almost twenty years. There has been repeated criticism that the constitutionally entrenched four-tier court system (district, regional, high and Supreme courts) is inefficient and no longer meets current needs. During the first government of Andrej Babiš, the Minister of Justice Marie Benešová (2019-2021) proposed introducing a three-tier system, which would have meant abolishing the high court and high public prosecutor’s offices. A similar intention has now been announced by the current Minister of Justice, Jaromír Tejc (a former deputy of Minister Benešová). The main motivation is cost-saving. According to him, the current network of courts does not reflect demographic developments or the real workload of part of the judiciary, and the state cannot afford to maintain it in its present form in the long term. However, the concrete shape of the reform is not yet known. It is therefore essential to monitor the process closely to ensure that any changes are based on expert analyses, well thought out with engagement of all stakeholders, and genuinely increase the efficiency of the judiciary, and are not misused to the detriment of its independence.

<https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2026/01/tejc-chce-zrusit-nektere-soudy/>
<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/benesova-by-rada-zavedla-tristupnove-soudnictvi-znamenalo-by-to-konec-vrchnich-soudu-i-zastupitelstv-64339>

[single market relevance] Specialisation (of judges/specific courts/chambers within courts) and training for the judiciary to deal with commercial cases, as well as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation as regards commercial 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 in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (e.g. as regards length of proceedings, to address backlogs)

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the justice system - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

In 2025, the Czech Republic introduced several key legislative changes aimed at modernising criminal law, strengthening the protection of victims, and improving judicial practice. One of the most significant steps was a

comprehensive amendment to the Criminal Code and related legislation, forming part of a broader reform that will continue with further changes entering into force in 2026.

These changes were not the result of political action alone. They followed years of sustained advocacy and expert work by practitioners, academic experts, victim support services, professional associations incl. civil society organisations, which consistently pointed to gaps in protection and to the mismatch between Czech law and contemporary human rights standards. The reform process was marked by consultations, public debate and the active involvement of stakeholders who brought the perspectives of victims and practitioners into the legislative process.

The reform shifts the system away from excessive reliance on custodial punishment and towards a more differentiated and effective approach to sanctions. It expands the use of alternative penalties, such as fines and conditional sentences, and gives courts greater room to individualise punishment. For less serious offences, the automatic use of imprisonment is reduced. These measures are intended to ease pressure on an overcrowded prison system and to promote more proportionate and socially effective responses to crime.

A major and widely welcomed element of the reform is the redefinition of the offence of rape. The new legal definition abandons the traditional focus on the use of force or threat and is instead based on the absence of consent (“no means no”). Any sexual act carried out without the other person’s freely given consent now constitutes rape, even where no physical violence or threat was used. This change significantly strengthens the protection of victims and better reflects their lived experience, while aligning Czech law with contemporary human rights standards and European trends. The reform also introduces a new offence of sexual assault and refines sentencing to reflect the seriousness of the conduct and the vulnerability of victims.

In parallel, the Ministry of Justice and the Prison Service prepared the system for implementation, including methodological guidance for courts and prison authorities. The reform is expected to reduce the prison population and to place greater emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration.

<https://msp.gov.cz/web/msp/tiskove-zpravy/-/clanek/poslaneck%C3%A1-sn%C4%9Bmovna-schv%C3%A1lila-rozs%C3%A1hlou-novelu-trestn%C3%ADho-z%C3%A1kon%C3%ADku>

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/snizeni-poctu-veznu-i-uvolneni-pravidla-tykajici-se-konopi-snemovna-schvalila_2505301428_adn

<https://msp.gov.cz/web/msp/tiskove-zpravy/-/clanek/poslanci-jednomyslně-schválili-redefinici-znasilneni-kopirovat->

<https://www.profem.cz/cs/novinky/a/redefinice-znasilneni-co-se-meni-a-od-kdy-zmeny-plati>

<https://amnesty.cz/spravedliva-definice-znasilneni-jde-do-finale-po-schvaleni-senatem-uz-chybi-jen-podpis-prezidenta/>

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 2025 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

5000 character(s) maximum

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/specialised 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

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

5000 character(s) maximum

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 in particular as regards high-level officials (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

The Act on the Regulation of Lobbying, effective from July 1, 2025 was adopted with the aim of increasing transparency in legislative and regulatory processes, in particular by identifying actors seeking to influence public decision-making, the interests they represent, and the stages at which such influence is exercised. The law introduces a public register of lobbyists and establishes reporting obligations. Certain categories of entities involved in legislative processes, such as parliamentary assistants, are not covered by this regulation. If an obligated entity submits comments during the interdepartmental comment procedure, it is not required to report subsequent lobbying activities. This affects the completeness of the legislative footprint and may limit the ability of the public to gain a comprehensive overview of how and where influence is exercised during the policy-making process.

The methodological guidelines and trainings in 2025 and January 2026 provided by the Ministry of Justice are very welcome and support the implementation of the law. These tools are however not binding and cannot fully replace the legal clarity of the law itself. Initial feedback from civil society points to specific problems related to the application of the law to civic engagement and participation. The law introduces new administrative obligations without fully taking into account the specific nature of civic engagement and participation. Civil society organizations often engage in collective, open, and issue-based forms of advocacy, such as joint letters, public statements, or collective dialogue with the decision-makers. These activities differ from professional lobbying carried out by economic entities and may require more complex internal coordination and reporting, especially for organizations with limited administrative capacities.

Thirteen professional chambers had already requested changes to the law regulating lobbying by the end of 2025. At this stage, comprehensive evaluation data, including feedback at EU level regarding alignment with European transparency standards, are not yet available. Early legislative changes could therefore complicate the assessment of whether the law effectively meets its original transparency objectives.

The law must be protected from politicization and its emptying of meaning, or rather from its misuse for other purposes that are contrary to EU law. By this we mean, in particular, the misuse of the lobbyist register against legitimate civic engagement or the labeling of foreign funding of CSOs.

The implementation of the Act on the Regulation of Lobbying also needs to be seen in the context of the forthcoming transposition of the EU framework on transparency of interest representation carried out on behalf of third countries. While the EU framework and accompanying recommendations explicitly state that civil society organisations acting in the public interest should not be targeted, stakeholders in the Czech Republic point to the need for these safeguards to be clearly and explicitly reflected in national legislation. Experience with the current lobbying law shows that broad definitions, numerous exemptions and limited legislative traceability may lead to regulatory gaps on the one hand, and increased administrative uncertainty for CSOs on the other. Without clear statutory exclusions anchored directly in domestic law, there is a risk that the combined application of the lobbying regulation and the future third-country interest representation framework could result in regulatory overlap or unintended burdens for CSOs, particularly those receiving foreign funding for legitimate public interest activities.

Stakeholders therefore emphasise the importance of avoiding legislative gold-plating and ensuring that EU-level guarantees — including the non-application of these rules to civil society organisations — are transposed into binding national provisions, rather than relying solely on methodological guidance or interpretative assurances.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKS6J1L_mv0

<https://glopolis.org/publikace/nove-povinnosti-pro-lobbisty-prakticke-tipy-pro-nevladky-i-obcanske-iniciativy/>

<https://www.transparency.cz/kdo-lobbuje-ferove-a-kdo-radeji-potaji-registr-napovi/>

<https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/237447-ceske-vzlety-apady-schvalovani-regulace-lobbovani>

<https://zpravy.ckait.cz/vydani/2025-06/profesni-komory-nejsou-lobbiste-je-nutne-zvysit-odbornost-legislativni-procesu/>

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

During the previous government led by Prime Minister Petr Fiala, conflicts of interest in the public sector were not addressed in any systematic or comprehensive way. An amendment to the so-called Lex Babiš, which tightened rules on politicians' ownership of media and on access to public subsidies for members of government and their companies, was adopted. However, the Constitutional Court later annulled the part of the amendment concerning media ownership due to a procedural defect in the legislative process. The governing coalition did not subsequently re-enact this provision through a proper procedure. As a result, regulation of conflicts of interest in this area remained largely unchanged and unresolved under the previous government. The appointment of Andrej Babiš as Prime Minister was closely linked to the question of how he would resolve his conflict of interest. President Petr Pavel made this issue a condition of his appointment and insisted that it be addressed in advance. In response, Andrej Babiš declared that he would resolve the conflict by transferring his Agrofert shares into a trust structure managed by an "entirely independent administrator" under the supervision of an independent protector. He has claimed that this is an "irreversible solution" and that the shares "will never return" to him.

However, this arrangement addresses only Agrofert. Andrej Babiš continues to own a range of other companies, including in sensitive sectors such as reproductive clinics etc., for which no comparable conflict-of-interest solution exists (because he is just the owner). The current framework therefore applies unevenly: while certain forms of ownership are regulated for members of government, other business interests of high-level officials remain outside effective control. This illustrates the limited scope and fragmented nature of Czech conflict-of-interest measures, which lack comprehensive coverage across categories of officials and do not provide uniform preventive or corrective mechanisms.

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/stret-zajmu-andrej-babis-agrofert-smlouvy-uzavrene-v-rozporu-se-zakonom_2601161215_tec

<https://www.reflex.cz/clanek/komentare/132985/prezident-pavel-hasi-na-co-se-fialova-vlada-vykaslala-babisuv-stret-zajmu-se-vubec-nemusel-resit.html>

<https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-babisovi-vyprselo-lhuta-jenze-na-vlastnictvi-agrofertu-se-nevztahuje-40556622>

<https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-ustavni-soud-zrusil-podstatne-casti-lex-babis-ii-vyhovel-navrhu-hnuti-ano-266118>

--> For the three previous points, **please also provide information and figures on their application/enforcement if available to you**, 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

A whistleblower protection law has been in force since 2024, but protection is weak in practice because there is a general distrust of systemic protection and all protection costs are borne by the whistleblower. This puts the whistleblower at a disadvantage if the subject of the report has significantly greater resources for legal services, media coverage, etc. Another problem is the political culture, in which even public officials repeatedly make offensive or aggressive statements against investigative journalists who report on politicians' scandals. These

statements do not come from state institutions and do not represent systemic restrictions, but they can undermine confidence in the impartiality of the state administration.

<https://www.oziveni.cz/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/ochrana-oznamovatel-u-whistlebloweru-analyza-oziveni.pdf>
https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

[single market relevance] 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, investor residence schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.*
- *In particular, measures to mitigate high risks of corruption in the area of public procurement, such as enhancing transparency and oversight (for example through digital technologies) and promoting fair competition and accountability in public procurement (e.g. targeted actions to address the high share of single bids) and measures to guarantee the effective and independent functioning of the public procurement review bodies.*

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Measures for the prevention of corruption in relation to the issuing of official permits (e.g. related to environment, energy, service provision and various types of construction)

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Repression

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

5000 character(s) maximum

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

III. Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

Following the publication of the 2025 Report, discussions were initiated at the level of Parliament and expert committees on the revision of laws governing Czech Television and Czech Radio, aimed at strengthening the independence of their supervisory bodies and ensuring more transparent procedures for the appointment of council members. However, no law had been passed by the end of 2025. The civil society and professional institutions launched initiatives calling for the introduction of standards for transparent selection procedures for

members of public media councils. However, these proposals have not yet been institutionalized. Although the EMFA entered into force on August 8, 2025, the Czech Republic still does not have an implementing law that would guarantee specific measures to strengthen institutional checks and balances (e.g., rules for the selection of members, transparency of decision-making processes, guarantees of editorial independence). Only a very limited draft adaptation of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) was proposed, which has not yet reached even the first reading in the Chamber of Deputies. The Czechia is thus exposing itself to the risk of sanctions from the EU and at the same time missing an opportunity to strengthen the protection of media independence. The EMFA brings fundamental changes in areas where Czech legislation has long-standing gaps – in particular in the transparency of media ownership, the regulation of media mergers, and the rules for awarding state advertising contracts. The new political representation will have to put this comprehensive regulation into practice and open a broader professional and political debate on how to balance media regulation with media independence.

<https://www.pravniprostor.cz/clanky/ostatni-pravo/evropsky-zasah-do-medii-co-ceka-cesko>

<https://www.mediaguru.cz/cesko-ma-zaclenit-zakon-o-svobode-medii-emfa-co-prinese>

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

In the Czech Republic, the independence of media regulatory bodies is formally guaranteed by law. The key body is the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (RRTV), which is designed as an independent administrative authority. The Czech Television Council and the Czech Radio Council perform a similar role in relation to public service media. Their members are appointed for a limited term, and the law stipulates that these bodies and their members may not interfere with editorial work or broadcast content.

The RRTV has statutory powers to supervise, grant licenses, and impose sanctions, which enables it to enforce compliance with media legislation. Public media councils have a supervisory and conceptual role – they approve budgets, oversee the fulfillment of public service obligations, and appoint or dismiss directors-general. However, their powers are limited so that they cannot directly influence content.

These bodies are financed from the state budget, which means that their budgets are subject to annual political approval. In practice, financial, human, and technical capacities have been stretched for a long time, especially in relation to the scope of the agenda and the rapidly changing digital environment. This is reflected in limited analytical capacities and dependence on a small number of experts.

The Czech system thus provides basic institutional guarantees of independence and enforcement powers, but there is a lack of systematic measures to further strengthen this independence, such as multi-year and stable funding, transparent and professionally oriented nomination processes, and targeted strengthening of professional and technical support. The implementation of the European Media Freedom Act presents an opportunity to address these weaknesses and create the conditions for truly functional, resilient, and adequately resourced regulatory bodies.

<https://rrtv.gov.cz/cz/>

<https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/vse-o-ct/rada-ct/>

<https://rada.rozhlas.cz/>

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

In the Czech Republic, the conditions for appointing and dismissing members of collective bodies in the field of media regulation are laid down by law, primarily for the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (RRTV) and the public service media councils – the Czech Television Council and the Czech Radio Council.

The members of these bodies are elected by the Chamber of Deputies. Candidates are nominated by various social, professional, and civic organizations, or by members of parliament. The law sets out basic eligibility requirements (e.g., integrity, legal capacity, incompatibility with certain functions) and the length of the term of office, which is intended to ensure continuity and a certain degree of independence from the current political cycle. The term of office is limited in time and the replacement of members takes place gradually, not en masse. The chair or vice-chair is elected by the council from among its members. A member may only be dismissed for reasons specified by law, such as breach of duty, loss of eligibility to perform the function, or long-term inactivity. In the case of public media councils, the Chamber of Deputies may dismiss a member if they repeatedly or seriously violate the law or fail to fulfill their duties.

Formally, the system is designed to combine democratic legitimacy (election by parliament) with a certain degree of stability and protection against arbitrary dismissal. In practice, however, the strong role of the Chamber of Deputies means that the composition of these bodies is significantly influenced by the current political majority. The selection process is not based on open competitions or independent expert assessment of candidates, which increases the risk of politicization and weakens the perception of the actual independence of media councils.

<https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2001-231>

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

5000 character(s) maximum

In the Czech Republic, there are both statutory media councils and self-regulatory bodies that contribute to the protection of media standards and the public interest.

In the area of public service media, the Czech Television Council and the Czech Radio Council are responsible for overseeing the fulfillment of public service obligations, approving budgets, monitoring financial management, and appointing or dismissing the director general. The law expressly prohibits them from interfering with broadcast content and editorial work. Their purpose is to create an institutional bridge between the public and public service media and to ensure that these media act in accordance with the law and their mission.

In the private media sector, there is no single, legally established self-regulatory body with universal jurisdiction. Professional and ethical initiatives are particularly active in this area, such as the Czech Syndicate of Journalists and its Ethics Committee, or the editorial codes of ethics of individual media outlets. These mechanisms have recommendatory and moral authority, but are not legally binding. Their task is to cultivate professional standards, promote responsible journalism, and resolve ethical disputes within the profession. The Czech system is thus a combination of formal regulation (through statutory councils and regulatory bodies) and limited self-regulation based on professional standards. However, there is no strong, widely respected self-regulatory body such as a press council that would have authority across the media sector and serve as an effective alternative to litigation in ethical matters.

<https://rrtv.gov.cz/en/static/about/councils-mission/index.htm>

<https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/vse-o-ct/rada-ct/>

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

[single market relevance] 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
- **[single market relevance]** 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

The year 2025 brought a significant shift for the better in the area of public service media, particularly in terms of their legislative basis and the provision of predictable, sufficient, and politically independent funding. Czech public service media have long enjoyed a very good reputation and have been successful in creating high-quality content. A key prerequisite for this is the system of broadcasting fees, which ensures their stability and protects them from dependence on annual decisions on the state budget.

In 2025, fees were increased by law – in the case of Czech Radio for the first time in almost twenty years and in the case of Czech Television for the first time in more than fifteen years. This step strengthened the economic security of both institutions. However, the new government that emerged from the October 2025 elections is proposing changes that could jeopardize the future independence of public service media. The proposed changes to the funding system could lead to greater dependence on the state. Transferring funding to the state budget would open the door to political pressure: the media could be forced to tailor their content to the ruling parties in order not to jeopardize their budget.

Equally problematic are considerations to merge Czech Television and Czech Radio. This could disrupt their functioning and create conditions for politically motivated personnel interventions—a scenario we have recently seen in Slovakia, for example.

https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/koalice-se-dohodla-na-zruseni-poplatku-ct-a-rozhlasu-cesko-neproda-letouny-l-159-ukrajine.A260119_111341_domaci_kop

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/navrhovane-zmeny-verejnopравnich-medii-odsoudil-senat-vladu-vyzval-aby-zachovala_2601211813_dci

[single market relevance] Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

5000 character(s) maximum

As pointed out by Media Pluralism Monitor, media plurality in Czechia is one of the most risky areas, mainly due to high concentration of ownership and low transparency. According to the latest report, the media plurality risk assessment reaches up to 78%, which means a very high risk for an open and independent media scene.

A large part of the media market is controlled by just a few powerful owners. According to new analyses, one third of the Czech media space is owned by businessman Daniel Křetínský, with other significant shares held by other oligarchs through groups such as PPF (owner of TV Nova), Penta (regional daily newspapers), and other private owners.

Estimates by Deník Alarm suggest that the majority of the media in Czechia is now in the hands of so-called "fossil oligarchs," with truly independent and public media making up only a small part of the market.

The public sector includes Czech Television and Czech Radio, which have a stable legislative and institutional position and significant reach within the Czech media space. In contrast, smaller independent and local media face a challenging financial and operational environment—many have ceased to exist, and those that remain often operate mainly thanks to grants or community support.

The current form of the Czech adaptation framework to the EMFA appears very minimalist, and it is therefore unclear whether it will in itself lead to the correction of these weaknesses. In particular, there is a lack of implementing legislation, even though the regulation will take effect in August 2025. The absence of specific rules may limit the consistent enforcement of pluralistic considerations in the assessment of media mergers and the strengthening of ownership transparency, which are key areas for a healthy media ecosystem.

<https://denikalarm.cz/2025/12/oligarchizaci-ceskych-medii-je-potreba-pojmenovat-a-postavit-se-ji-celem/>

<https://www.mediaguru.cz/ceska-media-ohrozuje-vysoka-koncentrace-vlastnictvi>

Report on the State of Democracy in 2025 – (Network for the Protection of Democracy, will be published in February 2026 on the website <https://www.ochranademokracie.cz/>)

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

Czechia has a basic legal framework governing media freedom, the protection of journalists, and access to information, but it is not a comprehensive system as required by European standards. Freedom of expression and the right to information are enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, and there is also a law on free access to information that allows the public—including journalists—to obtain data from state institutions. The protection of journalistic sources is mentioned in some Czech media laws, but its scope is not always clear and does not provide comprehensive guarantees against state interference, for example in the

area of communication surveillance or pressure to reveal sources.

In addition to laws, there are codes of ethics and professional standards, but these are only self-regulatory in nature and are not legally enforceable. There is therefore a lack of a comprehensive and explicit framework that would systematically ensure the independence and safety of journalists, clearly protect their sources and communications, and respond to new threats such as digital surveillance tools.

This gap is to be partially filled by the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), which came into force in August 2025 and sets new standards for the protection of journalists and editorial independence. However, the Czech Republic has not yet adopted implementing legislation to transpose these rules into national law. In practice, there is still no comprehensive framework that meets European requirements for the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists.

<https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-utoku-na-novinare-pribyva-setkalo-se-s-nimi-80-procent-z-nich-40518562>

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

5000 character(s) maximum

The protection of journalists is not systematically treated as a specific priority in the Czech Republic. Neither the police nor other authorities have special methodologies or specialized procedures focused directly on the safety of journalists, for example when covering protests, demonstrations, or other potentially risky events.

Most incidents against journalists are dealt with within the general legal framework as misdemeanors or crimes against individuals, regardless of their role in performing activities in the public interest. This can lead to an underestimation of the seriousness of attacks motivated by efforts to intimidate the media or restrict their work. There is also a lack of systematic collection and evaluation of data on attacks against journalists, which would allow for a better understanding of the extent of the problem and a targeted response.

During demonstrations and public gatherings, the safety of journalists depends to a large extent on the individual approach of specific police officers and the experience of the editorial offices themselves. There are no uniform rules that clearly define the status of journalists in the field, nor are there mechanisms in place to ensure a rapid and effective response in the event of an attack.

The European Media Freedom Act emphasizes the active role of the state in protecting journalists and their work. Its implementation could create space for the introduction of clear procedures, training for security forces, and better coordination in the prevention and investigation of attacks on journalists. At present, however, there is no comprehensive system in Czechia that would guarantee this protection not only formally but also in everyday practice.

<https://www.ecpmf.eu/ten-demands-for-maintaining-media-freedom-in-czechia/>

<https://policie.gov.cz/clanek/zverejnene-informace-2024-utoky-na-novinare.aspx>

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

Like other EU member states, the Czech Republic is required to transpose the European Directive 2024/1069 on protection against SLAPP by May 7, 2026. The state made some preparatory steps, however there are no clear milestones and the transposition has not been tabled in the Government legislative work plan for 2026. In its resolution of March 18, 2025, the Government Council for Human Rights called for an effective transposition that ensures broad protection of civil society actors acting in the public interest, extends safeguards beyond cross-border to domestic cases, provides a wide range of remedies (including costs, damages and sanctions), addresses the risk of abusive use of criminal law, and ensures regular collection of data on lawsuits against public participation. Similarly, the Government Council for NGOs adopted a resolution in the same spirit at its meeting on June 19, 2025. A draft amendment to the Civil Procedure Code also addressing partly anti-SLAPPs was prepared by the Ministry of Justice, exists as a document prepared by the government, and was published as a draft for public comment. However, it has not been submitted in parliament and the entire process has been suspended.

<https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rlp/cinnost-rady/zasedani-rady/Usneseni---sikanozni-zaloby.pdf>

<https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/aktuality/zasedani-rady-vlady-pro-nestatni-neziskove-organizace-dne-19--cervna-2025-220329/>

<https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/monitor/8160783.htm>

Any other developments related to media pluralism and freedom - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

The Chamber of Deputies has not yet filled all the vacant positions on the Czech Television Council, which means that this key supervisory body for public service media has been operating with incomplete staffing for a long time. The absence of missing councilors limits not only the plurality of opinions on the Czech Television Council, but also its ability to effectively oversee compliance with the law, strategy, and independence of broadcasting.

In practice, this means that decisions that should be made collectively with full representation of members appointed by different political factions are taken by a smaller group. This situation increases the risk of political influence and reduces public confidence in the impartiality of a body whose role is precisely to protect editorial independence and represent different views in society.

The absence of a full complement of members on the Czech Television Council thus weakens the institutional balance that the Czech Television Act is intended to ensure and contributes to tensions between the Council, Czech Television management, and the wider public.

<https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-obmena-rady-ceske-televize-zacina-okamura-vyzval-k-podavani-navrhu-na-nove-radni-40555977>

Statements made by some Czech Television board members, particularly Pavel Matocha, have attracted considerable attention in recent months. Matocha openly boasted on social media that he was succeeding in "changing the course" of Czech Television through personnel changes and pressure on specific personalities and programs. As evidence, he cites the departure of management, the end of some well-known journalists, the "sidelining" of presenters, and the ongoing resolution of one of the most visible faces of news and journalism – Václav Moravec.

His words drew strong criticism because the law expressly prohibits council members from interfering in

editorial work and broadcast content. Experts and the journalists concerned therefore perceive this as an overstepping of the powers of the Czech Television Council and as further confirmation of the long-term pressure on the independence of public service media.

<https://denikn.cz/1732222/o-matochovych-vazbach-na-tykace-vi-cela-praha-poslanci-chteji-resit-vlivneho-clena-rady-ct/>

IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. The process for preparing, enacting and implementing laws

[single market relevance] Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders'*/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 in the preparatory, the parliamentary and implementation phase (including guidance on how to implement legislation)

** This includes also the consultation of social partners*

5000 character(s) maximum

In the past four years, the bypassing of the legislative process by amendments and additions to laws has intensified, completely eliminating consultation. In practice, participation is unfortunately often formal or selective and has no real impact on decision-making. The quality of participation has not been consistent and depended fundamentally on the political will, capacities, and competencies of those who set up and manage the processes, as well as those who are supposed to be involved and are affected by the issues. There is also a difference between participation in the legislative process and central government and participation at the local level (e.g., in spatial or strategic planning). Formally, there are various instruments for participation of public and non-state actors in the development and implementation of public policies (i.e., advisory bodies, consultation processes, panels, focus groups). Resolutions of advisory bodies in which some are represented (e.g., the Government Council for Persons with Disabilities) are only recommendations and are not binding on ministries. The degree of inclusiveness of participatory processes however varies considerably. Although the criteria for participation are often formally defined (e.g., in methodological guidelines), their application and communication are not uniform, and public authorities are not always able to explain why and how specific actors were invited to participate. As a result, participation in practice often relies on established organizations with existing networks and capacities, while smaller actors and those representing underrepresented groups may face practical barriers related to resources, time, and access. The Methodology for Participation approved by the government in September 2025 represents a positive step

forward, as it sets out principles and recommended practices for involving CSOs in advisory bodies and policy-drafting. Yet, it remains only a recommended framework without binding standards, so its application depends on the willingness and capacities of each ministry and authority. As such, it does not ensure that differences in practice will be reduced.

The Office of the Government has been promoting participation in the past four years, yet the political support has not been sufficient. There is still a lack of methodological support at the central level of state administration, and systematic steps to include participation competences in the training of civil servants have not begun. The state also lacks the tools and resources to adequately support the capacities needed to engage CSOs in policy-making processes. CSOs then provide their expertise free of charge or even finance the preparation of background materials from their own resources (an example is a legal analysis to enable multi-annual financing which was commissioned by CSOs at a legal firm).

https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rnno/aktuality/usneseni_2025_708.pdf

CSOs have not had access to all documents in the legislative process and were not so called “reminding point” for inter-ministerial commenting procedures. The state internal eKlep (electronic library of the legislative process) system was to be replaced by the e-Legislative system, but it has been postponed. Compared to the past, the public should have a broader and more continuous overview of legislative proposals and their development throughout the entire process, rather than only when the materials are submitted to the government. However, this does not mean that all governmental documents will be automatically published – transparency is increasing mainly in legislative proposals and their amendments, not in all working or non-legislative materials of the state. This limits the access to information also to CSOs.

The Czech state has been interested in the relevant expertise of CSOs in a number of areas. There were ministries (e.g., the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) that had established functional cooperation with civil society under previous governments. This has begun to change with the new government of Andrej Babiš and mainly due to decisive steps taken by the coalition partner, Motorists for Themselves, in these very ministries at the end of year 2025.

https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

[single market relevance] 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

Members of the new governing coalition have submitted a draft amendment to the Building Act, which spans 850 pages and amends 41 related laws. The draft was not prepared by ministry officials. It is therefore unclear who actually drafted such an extensive document and who financed this professional work, which took hundreds of hours to complete. The parliamentary proposal is bypassing the standard inter-ministerial comment procedure, which typically involves ministries, local governments, professional organizations, and other stakeholders. The proposal has not been reviewed by the Legislative Council of the Government, which usually oversees legal integrity, conceptual consistency with other laws, and formal correctness. No Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) has been conducted, particularly regarding the financial impact. The press makes no mention of the involvement of lobbyists. The primary argument for the chosen approach is the need to expedite building permits in order to accelerate construction and reduce housing prices. However, the state lacks its own data on the length of the permitting process and instead refers to the World Bank ranking, which was discontinued following a corruption scandal related to its preparation.

<https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/238395-novela-stavebniho-zakona-850-stran-41-zakonu-a-nula-lobbistu>

Similarly, on 29 December 2025, members of parliament submitted a draft Law on State Employees to the

Chamber of Deputies. The proposal aims to “strengthen the effectiveness and performance of administrative authorities and state employees, maintain transparency, professionalism, and stability of the public administration, and preserve its independence and political neutrality.” The draft would repeal the existing Civil Service Act and fundamentally change the nature of the civil service from a public-law to a private-law regime. While a debate on the legal nature of the civil service and the stated objectives of the proposal is legitimate, civil society and expert actors have raised serious concerns that the draft law would undermine—rather than strengthen—transparency, professionalism, stability, independence, and depoliticisation of the public administration. Concerns have also been expressed regarding the increased politicisation of the role of the state secretary, which contradicts the stated objective of strengthening a professional and independent civil service. The proposal was submitted through a parliamentary initiative and did not undergo standard legislative procedures, including interministerial consultations, a regulatory impact assessment (RIA), or review by the Government Legislative Council, despite its far-reaching systemic implications.

<https://denikn.cz/1942680/ve-statni-sprave-je-malo-penez-novy-zakon-situaci-nezlepsil-rika-odborarka-homfray/>

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure legal certainty, the stability of the legal framework and non-discrimination.

5000 character(s) maximum

Vulnerable groups still find it difficult to participate at all levels—from information sharing and consultation to co-decision-making. The weaknesses of the processes can be illustrated by the conditions for the involvement of particularly vulnerable groups, such as people with hearing impairments, single parents, or foreigners living in Czechia, who, as a result of their disadvantages and in combination with problematic systemic settings, are de facto excluded from the very beginning of the process. Involvement in further stages is then impossible or extremely difficult. They often do not even learn about consultations, there is a lack of interpretation or easy access, timely information and sufficient time and capacity for involvement, and professional and responsible handling of the suggestions raised. In many cases, the needs of (small) vulnerable groups “fall victim” to stronger or higher goals. The costs of participation are borne by those involved, not by the institution conducting the consultation.

Particularly vulnerable groups are not systematically and purposefully involved, and the needs of these groups, or the impact of policies on them, are not systematically addressed, and there are no procedures for their involvement. Where procedures do exist (e.g., in explanatory memoranda or government councils), they are not implemented.

<https://glopolis.org/publikace/posilovani-obcanskeho-prostoru-v-cesku-2025/>

The Office of the Public Defender of Rights also focused on the conditions of access to justice in its 2025 report, which assessed that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is only 38% fulfilled in the Czech Republic. Of the four areas monitored, the worst results were in the area of equality before the law (28%), which also includes the restriction of legal capacity. https://www.ochrance.cz/aktualne/co_chybi_aby_mohli_zit_stejne_jako_ostatni_zastupce_ombudsmana_zjistoval_jak_cesko_naplnuje_prava_lidi_s_postizenim/

In 2025, preparations for the E-legislation system (Ministry of the Interior) were also finalized, which unfortunately resulted in the following: 1) It does not offer, by default, the obligation for regulators to comment on whether and, if so, how the proposed regulation complies with, for example, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and 2) it does not provide default tools for searching for regulations under preparation that may potentially interfere with the rights of vulnerable groups, thus fundamentally limiting the participation of disadvantaged groups in the entire legislative process.

Specific problematic manifestations, primarily limited participation and its consequences for persons with hearing impairments who prefer communication in Czech sign language in 2025.

The participation (at all levels) of persons with hearing impairments was not sufficiently taken into account in the

preparation of the amendment to the Education Act. As a result, the law was passed in a form that, among other things, transfers the obligation to pay for interpreting services in schools to their founders (alongside cooks, cleaners, janitors), which is a major problem in the Czech context, as there are approximately 2,600 school founders in the Czech Republic and none of them have experience in providing this type of service. Twenty-six sign language interpreters and hundreds of deaf children and students who use sign language, as well as their families, are thus faced with uncertainty as to whether and how the new "payers" will be able to fulfill their obligations properly and whether the rights of persons with hearing impairments will be fulfilled.

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

5000 character(s) maximum

Regime for constitutional review of laws

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Independent authorities

Independence, resources, capacity and powers (including effective access to relevant data) 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 significant positive change was the adoption of an amendment to the Public Defender of Rights Act, together with the institution of a children's ombudsman and the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI).

Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies and supreme audit institutions in the past year

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure the effective independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities with a direct impact on economic operators such as national economic oversight, enforcement and competition authorities

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

[single market relevance] Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data) and respect of the good administration principle (including the obligation of the administration to give reasons for decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

Since mid-December 2025, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been undergoing extensive organizational and personnel changes under a so-called systemisation process. These steps were initiated by the newly appointed minister Petr Macinka shortly after taking office and following his address to ministry staff. The process departs significantly from established practice. It was announced only days after the minister's appointment and without thorough preparation or consultation with relevant expert partners and stakeholders, including trade unions. This approach has raised serious concerns regarding its potential impact on the functioning of the ministry. The proposed changes risk substantially limiting the ministry's capacity to carry out diplomatic service and to contribute effectively to the formulation and implementation of the Czech Republic's foreign and security policy. A closer examination indicates that the restructuring threatens units responsible for strategically important agendas, including defence and security, sanctions policy against Russia and other actors, strategic communication, security cooperation within the EU and NATO, crisis preparedness and response to international incidents, as well as countering hybrid and cyber threats. These areas are explicitly identified as priorities in the government's own policy programme. Particularly serious concerns relate to the disruption of the senior civil service structure. The dismissal of most section directors, who ensure the day-to-day functioning of the administrative apparatus and continuity in foreign policy execution, could lead to a paralysis of internal decision-making processes from January 2026 onwards. Replacing these positions through standard competitive recruitment procedures may take several months. Similar patterns have been observed within the Ministry of the Environment, where ideological and political priorities of the Motorists for Themselves party have led to the dismantling of certain key agendas and entire organisational units.

<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/reorganizace-na-ministerstvu-zahranici-vyvolala-kritiku-z-opozice-368502>

<https://www.ceskenoviny.cz/zpravy/reorganizace-mzv-bude-podle-macinky-komplexni-zatim-nikoho-nepropustil/2762706>

[single market relevance] 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

[single market relevance] Safeguards (other than judicial review) regarding decisions or inaction of administrative authorities, including remedies (e.g. administrative review)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] 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

[single market relevance] 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

Oversight, including by courts, of the use of intrusive surveillance software by national authorities

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 civic space in the Czech Republic has recently been significantly shaped by political shifts and new government priorities. In January 2026, the newly appointed government of Andrej Babiš included proposals aimed at non-governmental organizations in its Programme Statement. Across several points, the document outlines a fundamental shift in the state's stance toward civil society; rather than being viewed as partners in public service delivery and democratic oversight, non-governmental non-profit organizations are portrayed as potentially risky entities that should be subject to selective and extraordinary obligations. These proposed measures—specifically the introduction of the term "political non-profit organizations," the requirement for

mandatory disclosure of foreign funding, and the threat of broad restrictions on public support—establish an environment characterized by uncertainty, stigmatization, and unequal treatment.

The Programme Statement explicitly declares that a public register will be created for all subsidies granted to non-governmental organizations from public budgets (including state, municipal, and regional levels), and that recipients of public funds will be required to publish their specific expenditures transparently. It further specifies that organizations involved in political activities and financed from abroad must disclose this fact transparently, and that the use of public funds for political activities will be prevented, asserting that while organizations may promote political views, they should not do so using taxpayers' money. Additionally, the statement demands that education be kept free from "ideological influences" and the involvement of political NGOs, stating that schools should focus on knowledge and critical thinking rather than activist attitudes. Finally, it announces that funding will be cut for organizations that "hinder development and investment" and that public funding for environmental initiatives will undergo a fundamental review.

The introduction of the term "political non-profit organizations" in the Programme Statement calls into question the legitimate professional and public activities of civil society and creates unnecessary uncertainty regarding its role in a democratic system. The activities of associations, foundations, and public benefit corporations represent a direct exercise of the constitutionally guaranteed right of association, and their participation in public affairs is a hallmark of a healthy democracy.

While the demand for transparency in public financing is legitimate, it must not be used as a tool for labeling the civil sector. Non-governmental organizations are already subject to rigorous controls, including mandatory registration, publication of financial statements, and supervision of public collections. Furthermore, the flow of public funds is traceable through the Register of Contracts and the State Treasury Monitor. Instead of imposing further selective burdens on the non-profit sector, the state should address its own "digital debt." The actual problem lies in the fragmentation of state data, duplicate reporting, and the lack of interconnection between registers. The path to efficiency lies in simplifying administration on the part of the state, not in creating unequal conditions and new barriers for active citizens.

The mandatory disclosure of foreign funding is stigmatizing and contrary to EU law. While reducing the influence of undemocratic regimes is a legitimate objective, mandatory labeling of foreign sources for non-profits does not achieve this. On the contrary, it stigmatizes standard and legal income, including European funds, which organizations use to co-finance services for Czech citizens. Similar measures introduced in Russia, Belarus, and Georgia led to the restriction of freedoms and the criminalization of civic engagement. In the Czech context, such a move would be in direct conflict with European law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms.

<https://glopolis.org/pro-civic/vladni-prohlaseni-ohrozuje-fungovani-verejne-prospesnych-sluzeb-upozornuje-pres-140-nevladnich-organizaci/>

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

Since 2025, there has been an escalation of negative rhetoric and stigmatization targeting specific segments of civil society, particularly those focusing on climate protection, migrant integration, and inclusive education. A fundamental turning point in this development is the Government's Programme Statement from January 2026,

which introduces the term "political non-profit organizations." This labeling serves as a tool that creates an environment of uncertainty and calls into question the legitimacy of professional and public activities within the civic sector. Instead of being viewed as partners, organizations are increasingly portrayed as "potentially risky entities," directly threatening their public perception and operational safety. This shifting narrative is further compounded by concrete legal threats, most notably in the form of SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation). The country currently lacks effective domestic protection against such abusive lawsuits, leaving organizations and activists to face legal harassment without sufficient defensive mechanisms. To ensure a safe environment and counter this pressure, the following measures are urgently required: the accelerated transposition of the EU anti-SLAPP directive, the extension of protection to domestic disputes beyond cross-border cases, and the implementation of rapid procedural filters for the early dismissal of abusive lawsuits alongside compensation mechanisms for those unjustly prosecuted.

Beyond litigation, the government is also introducing selective obligations regarding foreign funding. The 2026 Programme Statement mandates that organizations involved in "political activities" and financed from abroad disclose this fact transparently. Such a measure is highly stigmatizing and draws parallels to restrictive laws seen in Russia or Georgia, jeopardizing the safety of organizations receiving legal international grants, including EU funds. Furthermore, the announced cessation of funding for organizations that "hinder development and investment" acts as a form of intimidation, particularly against environmental and advocacy groups.

https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

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 legal framework in Czechia allows civil society organisations (CSOs) to seek, receive, and use various funding sources, including foreign funds. The state primarily commissions CSOs to deliver services supporting public policy implementation. CSOs can apply for public funds through grant schemes and public tenders at national and local levels. Typically by June, the government approves the Main Areas of State Subsidy Policy for non-governmental non-profit organisations for the following year. For 2026, 89 subsidy programmes were planned, administered by 16 authorities, including 13 ministries, the Office of the Government, and two agencies (National Sports Agency and Czech Development Agency) across 22 thematic areas. This plan was halted after the state budget was rejected by the new government of Andrej Babiš, with a provisional budget in place until the new draft budget is approved (expected end of January 2026, possibly until March 2026). The largest funding envelope usually supports sports associations, while areas like environmental protection, human rights, anti-corruption, and inequality reduction receive smaller allocations. The latest statements and actions by members of the government—especially Minister Macinka—send alarming signals that there will be a radical change in public funding for areas of public benefit activities in cooperation with CSOs in 2026.

<https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-politika-macinka-chce-na-diplomacii-skrtat-finance-kratkozraketvrdi-neziskovsky-297056>

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/nekteri-si-budou-muset-najit-jinou-obzivu-ministr-macinka-chce-setrit-na_2601200500_ntu

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/o-financni-usporu-nejde-nova-vlada-si-chce-posvitit-na-neziskovsky-kvuli-jejich_2511180500_jgr

Public funding system remains unstable, administratively burdensome, and mostly based on short-term annual grants. Multiannual financing is rarely available, though not legally prohibited; a Ministry of Finance proposal to clarify multi-year funding conditions under Decree No. 433/2024 Coll. was not implemented. Delays in disbursement create operational uncertainty, especially for social service providers. CSOs thus rely heavily on short-term, earmarked funding. Annual compliance checks and complex reporting further challenge smaller or

volunteer organisations. Investment support is mostly absent except in some European programmes, limiting long-term planning. Activities in politically sensitive areas such as migration, refugee integration, climate protection, and human rights are underfunded from domestic sources. Interruptions in foreign funding in 2025, including from U.S. decisions, immediately reduced activities that domestic sources could not replace. Private philanthropy is increasing, exceeding CZK 20 billion (~0.3% of GDP). Individuals donated nearly CZK 15 billion, companies about CZK 6 billion. Since 2020, donors can deduct up to 30% of donations from income tax, extended to 2026. Amendments to the Public Collections Act (effective January 1, 2025) removed administrative barriers, especially for cashless fundraising, simplifying public fundraising campaigns.

<https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rnno/dokumenty/hlavni-oblasti-statni-dotacni-politiky-vuci-nestatnim-neziskovym-organizacim-pro-rok-2026-220232/>

https://glopolis.org/site/assets/files/1506/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

The Czech Republic so far has not had any FARA-type law aimed at monitoring foreign funding), although such attempts were made as early as 2019 with a proposal by SPD MPs. The then government of Andrej Babiš rejected them, arguing that they were discriminatory, violated European law, interfered with fundamental rights protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, and were superfluous. In 2026, Andrej Babiš's new government appears to be going against its previous position, as its Programme Statement directly allows for the implementation of proposals put forward by the SPD, its current coalition partner: "We will introduce a requirement for organizations that engage in political activities and are financed from abroad to disclose this fact transparently." This and other proposals in the Government Programme Statement mobilized broad civil society to issue a joint press release appealing to public and members of parliament to reveal these trends of unjustified and selective increase in administrative burden, risks of stigmatisation and discrimination of CSOs.

<https://glopolis.org/pro-civic/vladni-prohlaseni-ohrozuje-fungovani-verejne-prospesnych-sluzeb-upozornuje-pres-140-nevladnich-organizaci/>

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

Any other developments related to the system of checks and balances - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

Cross-pillar elements: cross-border rule of law issues related to the Single Market

If there are any significant challenges concerning the Single Market you have been facing in a cross-border context relating to any of the four pillars of the report, including for example issues with market access and the conditions for economic activities, that you would like to highlight, please do so here.

Given the cross-cutting nature of this question, it is included as a separate section in the questionnaire. Information collected under this question will however be integrated under the relevant existing pillar(s) of the Report.

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

a1bad4e7-012e-4ce8-afd4-18d97f089bd1/posilovani_obcanskeho_prostoru_glopolis.pdf

Contact

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