

Statement of the Czech Rectors Conference on the Planned Budget Cuts in Higher Education

Brno, 5 June 2023

Rectors of Czech Republic Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), members of the Czech Rectors Conference (CRC), express their fundamental disagreement with the current working draft of the state budget by the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic in the field of financing education, science and research for the years 2024–2026.

CRC points long-term to the unsatisfactory state of funding of higher education in the Czech Republic and repeatedly emphasizes the need to increase the share of higher education funding back to the level of 0.65% of GDP, as the current share in the Czech Republic is lower than in other OECD countries. CRC considers further reduction of financial resources in the field of higher education to be completely unacceptable and profoundly short-sighted also due to the growing demographic curve; this has now caused secondary schools to be overwhelmed by applicants, and it can therefore be expected that a similar situation will be repeated in the field of higher education in a few years.


CRC understands the current difficult situation in the field of public finances, however, for the above-mentioned reasons, it strongly warns against widespread cuts in the field of education and science. Rectors of HEIs in the Czech Republic agree with the Program Statement of the Government of the Czech Republic regarding the necessity of reforms to support excellence and are willing to cooperate on changes leading to an increase in the efficiency and quality of both educational and creative activities. However, if there were to be widespread cuts, there is a real risk of deepening personnel instability and reducing the competitiveness of HEIs of the Czech Republic.

CRC states that the institutional funds for science in the Czech Republic are already insufficient and further reductions in funding would, in addition to the immediate limitation of scientific performance, also lead to the limitation of the ability of top scientists of the Czech Republic to obtain funds in various project challenges, as the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic for the area of HEIs is counting on a combination and complementarity between both sources. For this reason, CRC also emphasizes that one of the state's goals should be to reduce dependence on targeted funding, and warns against replacing funds for HEIs from the national level with funds from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

CRC therefore appeals to the Government of the Czech Republic and the relevant ministers to act responsibly and prudently and prevent the negative trends mentioned above.

Brno, 5 June 2023

On behalf of the Czech Rectors Conference



Prof. Martin Bareš
President