

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

The Czech Republic is a unitary country which has a two-tier subnational government system, made of 14 regions and 6,258 municipalities, with no hierarchical link between them. Prague has a dual status: it is both a region and a municipality, and has only one assembly and one board.¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

SDGs are integrated in the **Czech Republic 2030 Strategic Framework (CR 2030)**. It was prepared in cooperation with the Government Council for Sustainable Development. It has been adopted by the government and came into effect in April 2017.³ It is complemented by the **Implementation of the 2030 Agenda action plan**. While CR 2030 is the main content guide for the achievement of SDGs (although it is primarily based on the internal developmental needs of the country), the action plan is the formal link between national goals and SDGs.⁴

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **Ministry of Environment**, with the support of the **Ministry of Regional Development**, is in charge of the SDG coordination process. They seek advice from the **Government Council for Sustainable Development (GCSD)**, chaired by the Prime Minister, in which LRGs are represented by SMO CR, the Association of Regions of the Czech Republic and Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

As in 2017, the 2021 VNR has been prepared with the support of the **Government Council for Sustainable Development** and its Committees and consulted with the relevant stakeholders. Consultations within the Council took place twice in 2020 and once in March 2021.

1.3 MONITORING

The CR 2030 vision, as well as the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda action plan, are assessed every three years. The first assessment took place in 2020. The reports were approved by the government in January 2021, and the preparation of a new Implementation Plan CR 2030 began on their basis. There are in total an extraordinary volume of data: a total of 192 indicators for CR 2030 and 247 indicators for the 2030 Agenda, and another 140 indicators of the national set for quality of life.⁵ Also, a new online tool and methodology for territorial impact assessment (TIA) has been developed for municipalities and regions to enhance the sustainable planning of their projects and decisions about investment targeting. The tool reveals the potential positive and negative impacts of projects on the specific territory in all three areas of sustainable development.

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

2. See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/15717Czech_Republic.pdf (2017);

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279492021_VNR_Report_Czech_Republic.pdf (2021)

3. For the elaboration of this document, the drafting phase was carried out in close cooperation with ministries, local and regional authorities, parliamentary representatives and a wide range of other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and the labour unions.

4. The first assessment reports on both these strategic documents were approved by the government in January 2021. The content of the VNR is based on these.

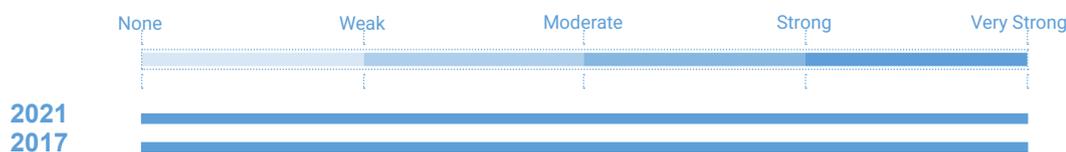
5. However, the 2021 VNR does not include data based on these indicators, even though it is based on the assessment of CR 2030 and the Implementation action plan. On the contrary, it offers a qualitative assessment of the progress made for each SDG target.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

LRGs participated in the drafting of the 2030 Strategic Framework. **SMO CR** (Union of Towns and Municipalities) took part in the Government Council for Sustainable Development, in charge of the 2021 VNR. It was also involved in the preparation of the national reporting process, commenting on the draft report.

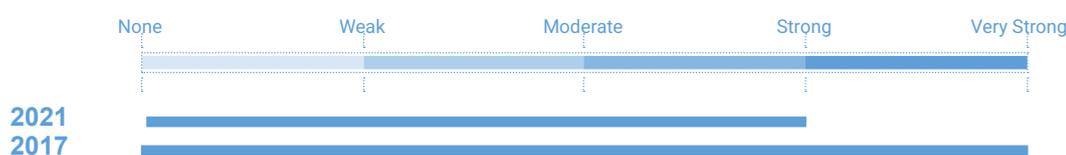
2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: SMO CR (Union of Towns and Municipalities) took part in the Government Council for Sustainable Development, in charge of the 2021 VNR. It was also involved in the preparation of the national reporting process, commenting on the draft report.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: Regular consultation, no decision making.

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments' annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

The 2017 VNR has as a Key Area "Regions and Municipalities" stating that by 2030, the Czech Republic will have completed its reform of regional public administration. It is also looking for strengthened coordination among public institutions as this will lead to more coherent and coordinated policies while respecting the principle of subsidiarity at different levels of governance, including local government. The government will give methodological and coordination support to regions and municipalities to set minimum standards for public services and ensure the exchange of information and good practices. "In order to enable the effective long-term planning and regular assessment of local policies towards sustainable development and public wellbeing, sufficient administrative capacity of regional institutions will be ensured."

The 2021 VNR also has a subsection on "Regions and their strategies", which includes municipalities. The references to regions and municipalities are constant, both in terms of specific SDG-related initiatives and concerning local actions for sustainable development that may not have the SDG-tag.

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

The 2017 VNR acknowledges that many municipalities set their citizens' participation strategies under Local Agenda 21 and, for example, legislation on environmental impact assessment enables citizens to be involved in local urban planning. They include implementation of sustainability principles, including ecological education and raising public awareness, nature conservation and sustainable development as a whole (e.g., Czech Union of Nature Conservation - Branch Veronica in Brno). The 2021 VNR reaffirms this point by stating that LRG awareness of and commitment to the SDGs is growing, and that "some newly created development strategies in individual regions are already based on CR 2030, although in most cases not directly but by means of a connection to the current Regional Development Strategy 21+, or use the Smart Cities concept". However, according to the VNR, "the regions often endeavour to apply sustainable development principles throughout strategic management."

► The **Liberec Region** has executed a Sustainable Development Strategy and a Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change. It has also established an advisory climate commission and applies sustainable development principles in strategic development and during the creation of regional plans. Other regions also proceed in a similar manner (e.g. the **Moravian-Silesian, South Bohemian and Vysočina Regions**).

► The 2021 VNR acknowledges the role played in all pillars of sustainable development (plus culture) by the town of **Jihlava**, who has recently joined the URBACT IV – Global Goals for Cities programme network.⁶

6. Answer of SMO CR to the GTF Survey in 2021.

► According to **SMO CR**, LGAs and “Local Action Groups” also address sustainable development. In 2021, the Association launched a systemic change in its functioning in the context of sustainable development: the area of sustainable development is now among the Union’s priorities (Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic) for 2021-2023, a new working group for sustainable development will be established and the Association will continue to educate and support municipalities in implementing SDGs in more intensive and systematic way. The VNR acknowledges the effort of SMO CR, who in 2020 conducted a questionnaire survey to find out what the situation is in the implementation of SDGs at the local level. Based on this survey, which involved 400 municipalities, an analysis was performed which identified the current situation in implementation SDGs on the local level, priority areas, obstacles and what support from the national institutions or from SMO CR the municipalities need. The VNR acknowledges that “89% of Czech municipalities that took part in the questionnaire survey consider sustainable development an important aspect in decisions about development of their municipalities”.⁷

► Beyond the SDG-related experiences at local level, the VNR also includes several LRG-led actions contributing to sustainable development, such as that of the **Moravian-Silesian region**, rich in coal, to define new energy, environmental and economic goals.⁸

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

Not applicable.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Czech Republic has created a pilot overview of state budget expenditure for the SDGs in 2020 (**SDG tagging**) that has not yet been tested (although the Executive Summary states that the first overview was carried out in 2020). An existing expenditure budget structure enables classification and identification of expenditure in the state budget depending on the content and purpose, up to the level of SDGs targets. However, the formation of the state budget and its structure is not currently prepared for decisions based on SDGs, or for actual sustainable budgeting (**SDG budgeting**). According to the 2021 VNR, around 75% of expenditure from the state budget is in accordance with SDGs, and it relies broadly from EU funds.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: In Czech Republic, in 2015, some municipal responsibilities were reallocated from small municipalities to larger municipalities (to overcome municipal fragmentation), and to the central government in the social reform framework.⁹ The 2021 VNR points out the importance of some towns/cities for the region in which they are located, often assuming more competent than foreseen. actions. “Towns that do so intentionally and thereby exceed the importance of their regions are for instance **Chrudim**, **Jihlava** and **Litoměřice**”.

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The number of women in executive positions in the Czech Republic has not exceeded 30% over the long term. The number of women in local government is increasing regularly (28% in 2019), while the percentage of women in the Chamber of Deputies has never exceeded 22%.

3.2 COVID 19

The 2021 VNR underlines that “the Czech Republic, as an [EU] member state, has the opportunity to prepare an ambitious National Recovery Plan focusing on digitalisation, environmentally friendly solutions, healthcare, modern education and the improved function of the public administration system in the 21st century.” However, no information related to LRGs is given.

7. Answer of SMO CR to the GTF Survey in 2021.

8. Answer of SMO CR to the GTF Survey in 2021.

9. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

4. SDG INDICATORS¹⁰

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		28 (2020)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		-
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		99.2 (2015, Prague)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		15.4 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		100

¹⁰ The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>. More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/cze>