

Fifteen years in science and research management

From June 2009 to December 2024

From the Extraordinary Assembly of the Academy of Sciences to this year's elections

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Dear colleagues,

I have been involved in science and research management for more than fifteen years, dedicating part of my professional life to the Czech Academy of Sciences as the Vice President of the Academy, the Chairman of the Scientific Council and the First Vice Chairman of the Research, Development and Innovation Council (R&D&I Council). I am intimately familiar with the work of the Czech Science Foundation and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (Control Board and Research Council). I am also close to the university world.

Therefore, as part of my candidacy for the position of President of the Czech Academy of Sciences, I would like to first summarise my work in those agendas that I consider important for the Academy as well as for the Czech science and research environment as a whole.

I will introduce myself with reference to my work in science and research and state the competences with which I am applying for the position of President of the Academy of Sciences. It is clear, of course, that I have not been able to achieve everything I have set out to do over the past fifteen years.

On the basis of this review of my past work, I will address the academic community in September with a programme thesis for my candidacy for the position of Academy of Sciences President.

Before I present my work and its results, I would like to emphasise that I have, of course, never worked on anything completely alone. On the contrary, I have collaborated with colleagues from across the entire system of science and research, which I greatly appreciate. My thanks go to them for all this.

It would be difficult to say exactly who contributed what, when and how much. But I know for certain that in many cases I was the one who determined the outcome of our efforts.

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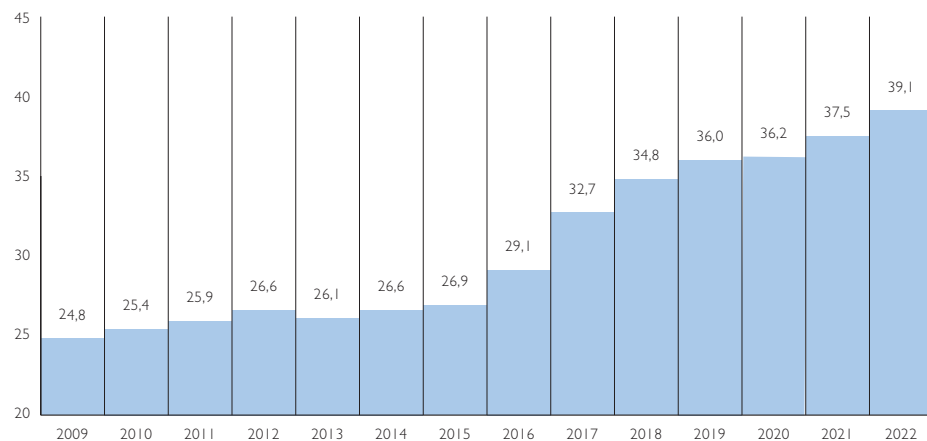
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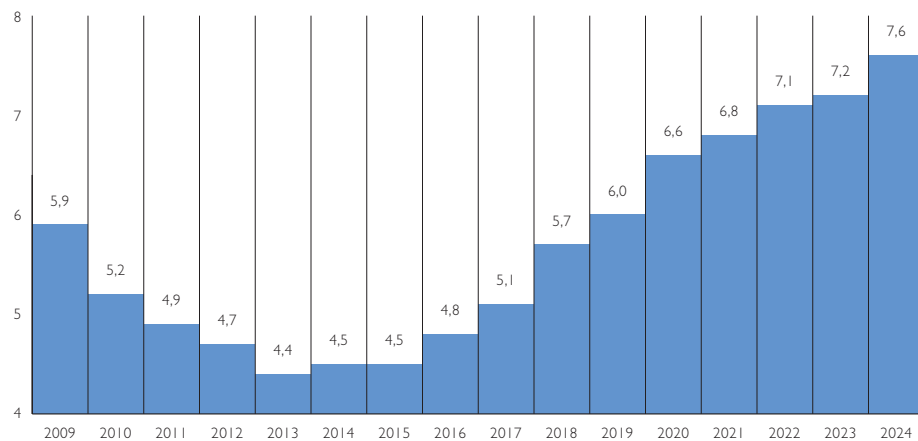
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And other...

Science and research budgets and funding



■ Total state budget expenditures on science and research (CZK bil.)



■ Budget chapter of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CZK bil.)

Starting in 2013, I worked in the science and research system as Vice Chairman of the R&D&I Council (RDI proposes total expenditures from the state budget on science and research) and concurrently as the Vice President of the Academy of Sciences and as a member of the Academy Council. In these positions I had the opportunity to negotiate and propose the amount and focus of financial support.

- **draft Declaration on stabilisation of the R&D&I system in the Czech Republic from 2017** (government commitment: to ensure a systematic increase of institutional support for the Academy of Sciences and public universities of at least 5 percent annually);
- **draft Memorandum on support for research, development and innovation in the Czech Republic, 2019** (government commitment: a systematic increase in state budget spending on institutional support for the long-term conceptual development of research organisations, by at least 4 percent annually);
- **formulation of some objectives of the National Policy of Research, Development and Innovation of the Czech Republic 2021+** (for example: setting an adequate ratio between institutional and targeted funding in order to stabilise and streamline the research environment, while maintaining at least the current level of targeted funding);
- **negotiation of additional financial support for COMPASS-U – Tokamak of the Institute of Plasma Physics of the CAS** (in 2023–2025, as a separate item in the Academy of Sciences budget chapter);
- **negotiation of allocations from the National Recovery Plan for selected research areas** (2021 EXCELES programme – infectious diseases and virology, oncology; neurosciences, metabolic diseases and cardiovascular diseases and the social and economic impact of systemic health risks; and applied industrial research);
- **negotiation of the co-financing rate for projects supported by European Structural Funds – Operational Programmes** (especially in 2023, when the Ministry of Finance proposed an unacceptable co-financing rate for Academy of Sciences institutes and universities);

- negotiating new financial support for ERC-CZ in 2019 under the Academy of Sciences budget chapter (for projects by Academy of Sciences scientists);
- securing additional financial support for implementation of an international evaluation at the Academy of Sciences (budget measure in 2017 in favour of the Academy of Sciences chapter and debited to the Government Office chapter).

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Legislation in the science and research system

As Vice Chairman of the R&D&I Council, Vice President of the Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Scientific Council, I have participated in the development and drafting of legislation regulating science and research:

- **draft law on support for research, development and innovation** (2017, Deputy Prime Minister for R&D&I P. Bělobrádek. Goals: new system of state administration of R&D&I, increasing efficiency of public funding, stabilisation of institutional funding, priorities of sectoral support, motivating private entities to engage in public support of R&D&I, etc.);
- **approval of the minor amendment to Act No. 130/2002 Coll., on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds** (2020, preparation under the leadership of K. Havlíček. Goal: elimination of the coffee-grinder evaluation system based on the evaluation of research organisations as a whole rather than evaluation of individual results);
- **draft of the major amendment to Act No. 130/2002 Coll., on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds** (2020, preparation under the leadership of K. Havlíček. Goals: evaluation of special-purpose support programmes, simplification of administration, portability of grants, incorporation of corporate research, ethics committee for the R&D&I system, etc.);
- **draft amendment to the Higher Education Act** (2022, Minister for Science and Research H. Langšádlová, recommendation to the Minister for co-option. Goals: increasing the transparency of the doctoral education system, developing incentives for flexibility in doctoral students' inter-institutional education, setting a guaranteed minimum doctoral student income including the financial share of Academy of Sciences institutes).

Evaluation of research organisations

During my work in the Commission for the Evaluation of Results at the R&D&I Council and then as Vice Chairman of the R&D&I Council, I advocated for the abolition of the distorted “coffee-grinder” evaluation practice, which awarded points for results. With a similar intention, from 2009, I served on a team involved in the implementation of an International Audit of R&D&I in the Czech Republic, with the aim of promoting a comprehensive evaluation of research organisations. These efforts were brought to fruition with the adoption of the law that finally removed the “coffee-grinder” evaluation practice from the science and research environment. I introduced this law to both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (in cooperation with Vice Chairman K. Havlíček):

- **methodology for the evaluation of research organisations and the evaluation of programmes of special-purpose support for research, development and innovation, i.e. Methodology 2017+** (prepared and proposed to the Government by the R&D&I Council with the aim of promoting quality rather than quantity in the evaluation of science and research);
- **approval of the minor amendment to Act No. 130/2002 Coll., on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds** (in 2020, with the aim of eliminating the “coffee-grinder” evaluation system, see above);
- **embedding the Academy of Sciences evaluation system within the 2017+ Methodology** (as part of the identity of the Academy of Sciences and to strengthen its position at the national level in this matter);
- **example of good practice of a new approach to evaluation: Institute of Ethnology in 2018** (the Cabinet of Music History was subsequently abolished through organisational restructuring, due to a long-standing lack of scientific performance, which I promoted as Vice President of the Academy of Sciences).

Cooperation of the Academy of Sciences and its institutes with universities

As Director of the Institute of Philosophy, Vice President of the Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Scientific Council, I have consistently supported very concrete cooperative ties between the Academy of Sciences and its institutes and universities, especially in the field of doctoral studies:

- **institutional anchoring of cooperation with universities in the education of Ph.D. students** (through joint accreditation);
- **establishment of cooperation between the Academy of Sciences and foreign universities** (e.g., cooperation between the Institute of Philosophy and the University of Leipzig, with the support of the Leibniz-Gemeinschaft);
- **proposal for a request for institutional support in the Academy of Sciences budget chapter specifically dedicated to the joint education of doctoral students** (analysis of current resources expended for doctoral student education/strengthening the position of doctoral students working at the CAS);
- **organisation of an “ERC Day”** (2024, Třešť, aim: to increase motivation and interest in ERC grant projects among junior researchers from academic institutes and universities through an informal networking meeting).

Supporting the position of the Academy of Sciences in the science and research system

Attacks on the Academy of Sciences and its position peaked in 2008–2010. In response, a series of fundamental measures and actions were initiated, in which I participated, first as Director of the Institute of Philosophy, later as Vice President of the Academy of Sciences, etc. The experience from this period was reflected in my leadership of the Academy of Sciences in subsequent years:

- **personal support of colleagues in the Academy of Sciences leadership during the attack on the Academy, participation in the organisation of the Extraordinary Assembly in 2009;**

- **formulation of the initial AV 2I Strategy concept** (a small detail to add: “*Cutting-edge research in the public interest*” – the motto I proposed);

- **support of technology and knowledge transfer under the responsibility of Academy of Sciences institutes, in cooperation with the Centre for Transfer of the CAS as a service organisation for the institutes** (rejection of the concept of a centralised Technology Transfer Organisation at the Academy of Sciences, which would implement transfers itself, 2020).

I have also supported the Academy of Sciences and individuals from the Academy of Sciences environment by:

- **serving in positions across the science and research system** (at the European Commission, at the Research, Development and Innovation Council, in the bodies of the Czech Science Foundation and Technology Agency, at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, etc.);
- **nominating prominent figures from the Academy of Sciences for awards** (Czech Head, (R&D&I Council President’s Award for the Promotion and Popularisation of Research, etc.).

And other...

- **preservation of CEFRES: the French Institute for Research in the Social Sciences in Prague** (in 2014, when this institution’s continued existence was under threat, I brokered an agreement between the French Embassy, CNRS, the Academy of Sciences and Charles University which ensured the continuation of CEFRES and its activities in Prague);

- **NORFACE, HERA: platforms for European cooperation in the social sciences and humanities** (securing the Academy of Sciences’ participation in both platforms, including entry (2016) and continuation (2013));

- **emphasis on the promotion of excellent research and its funding in humanities and social sciences through Academic Awards** (motivation to prepare project proposals, first project submitted and awarded in 2016, followed by others);

- **emphasis on financial support for excellent research in humanities and social sciences through ERC grants** (first successful applications for ERC grants in humanities and social sciences fields in 2010 and other years).

