



RDS21+
Regional Development Strategy

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC 2021+

**#prolepšíregiony
(for better regions)**



MINISTRY
OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
CZECH REPUBLIC



Introduction by Minister Klára Dostálová

Dear ladies, gentlemen and partners,

You have just opened a publication in which you can find everything concerning the new Regional Development Strategy of the Czech Republic 2021+, prepared for you by the Ministry of Regional Development with the participation of all major actors - individual ministries, territorial partners, representatives of the private and non-profit sector and the academia. The Strategy defines different types of territory based on their potential and specific needs. It thus seeks to offer tailored solutions for support towards the development of the varying regions of the Czech Republic. I am convinced that the Strategy will be successfully implemented on the basis of this broad consensus, thus strengthening the competitiveness of metropolises, strengthening further development of agglomerations, consolidating the stabilizing function of regional centres, improving the quality of life for economically and socially vulnerable areas, and kick-starting the economic growth of structurally affected regions.

The Strategy defines the shape of regional policy after 2020. It is one of the cornerstones for the use of European funds; it includes a thematic focus of national subsidy schemes, but also a discussion on other long-term instruments that will help to end regional disparities while strengthening the competitiveness of our country. It is therefore a document in which the State openly declares its plans of support for regions, which will be subsequently specified and implemented through action plans. The partners in the territory can then work with them and translate them into their own development plans. I truly believe that all this will really take place.



Regional Development Strategy of the Czech Republic 2021+

The Ministry of Regional Development, in cooperation with a number of partners, has developed a post-2020 regional development strategy as a national strategic document in the field of regional development.

The ambition of the Regional Development Strategy of the Czech Republic 2021+ (hereinafter referred to as “RDS 21+”) is to set the main objectives of regional development in the horizon of 7 years, or to define, in accordance with Act No. 248/2000 Coll., on Regional Development Support, as amended, the main objectives of the State’s regional policy in the period 2021–2027 in terms of supporting dynamic, balanced and sustainable development of the territory.

The main purpose of RDS 21+ is to identify thematic areas in which a territory-specific approach to development is needed or desirable, and at the same time to identify what



different interventions should be implemented in different territories to strengthen territorial

competitiveness, reduce regional disparities and help to find solutions promoting sustainable territorial development.

RDS 21+ focuses on issues that need to be addressed by national interventions, have certain territorial specificities or territorial implications, and a solution to them can be found.

The document also serves as a guide for regional self-governments in developing their strategies for the development of their territories. The Strategy does not aim at solving all problems of the Czech Republic, but focuses only on areas where it is appropriate to apply specific tools to address the needs of the territory. Its focus stems from the umbrella national development document Strategic Framework of the Czech Republic 2030. The Strategy does not take precedence over other national strategic documents, but appears in them in terms of defining their territorial dimension.



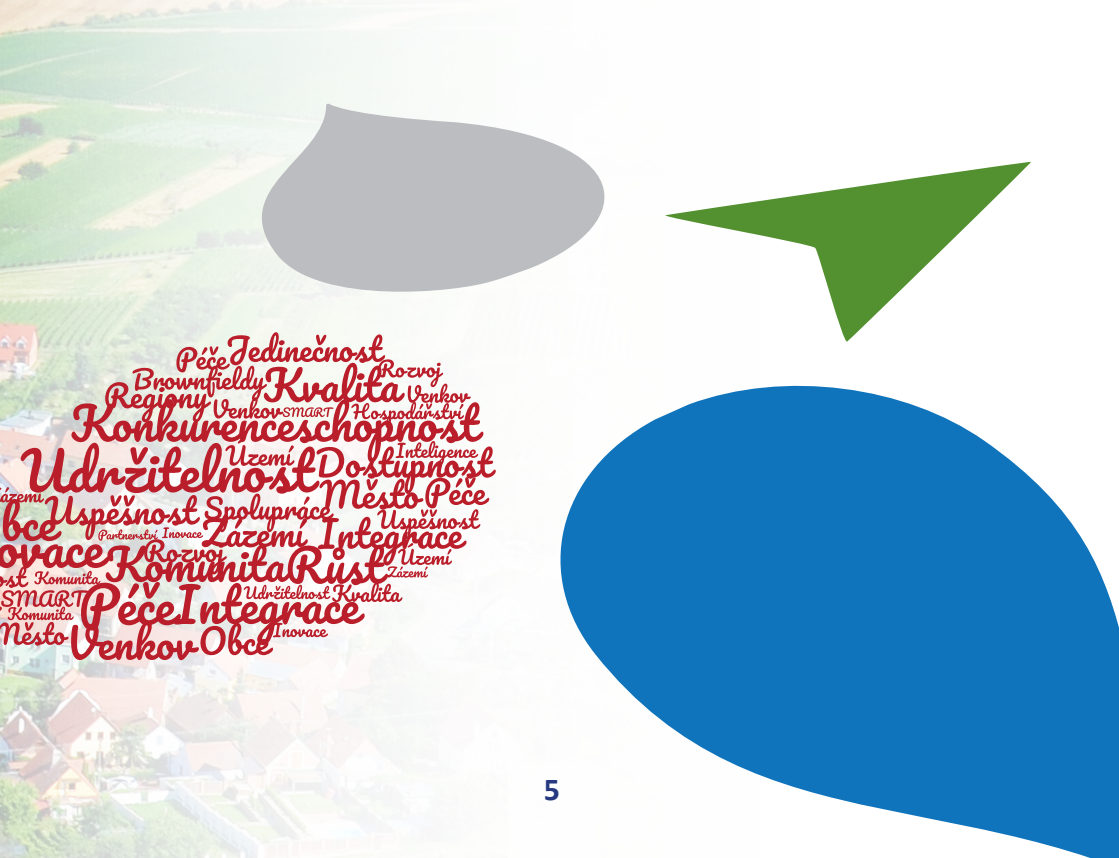
The purpose of RDS 21+

1. To ensure tailor-made support for regions
2. To reflect the territorial dimension in sectoral policies
3. To develop strategic planning and management based on functional regions
4. To strengthen cooperation among actors in the territory
5. To improve coordination of strategic and spatial planning
6. To develop smart solutions
7. To improve work with regional development data

Vision of the Czech Republic's direction in line with RDS 21+

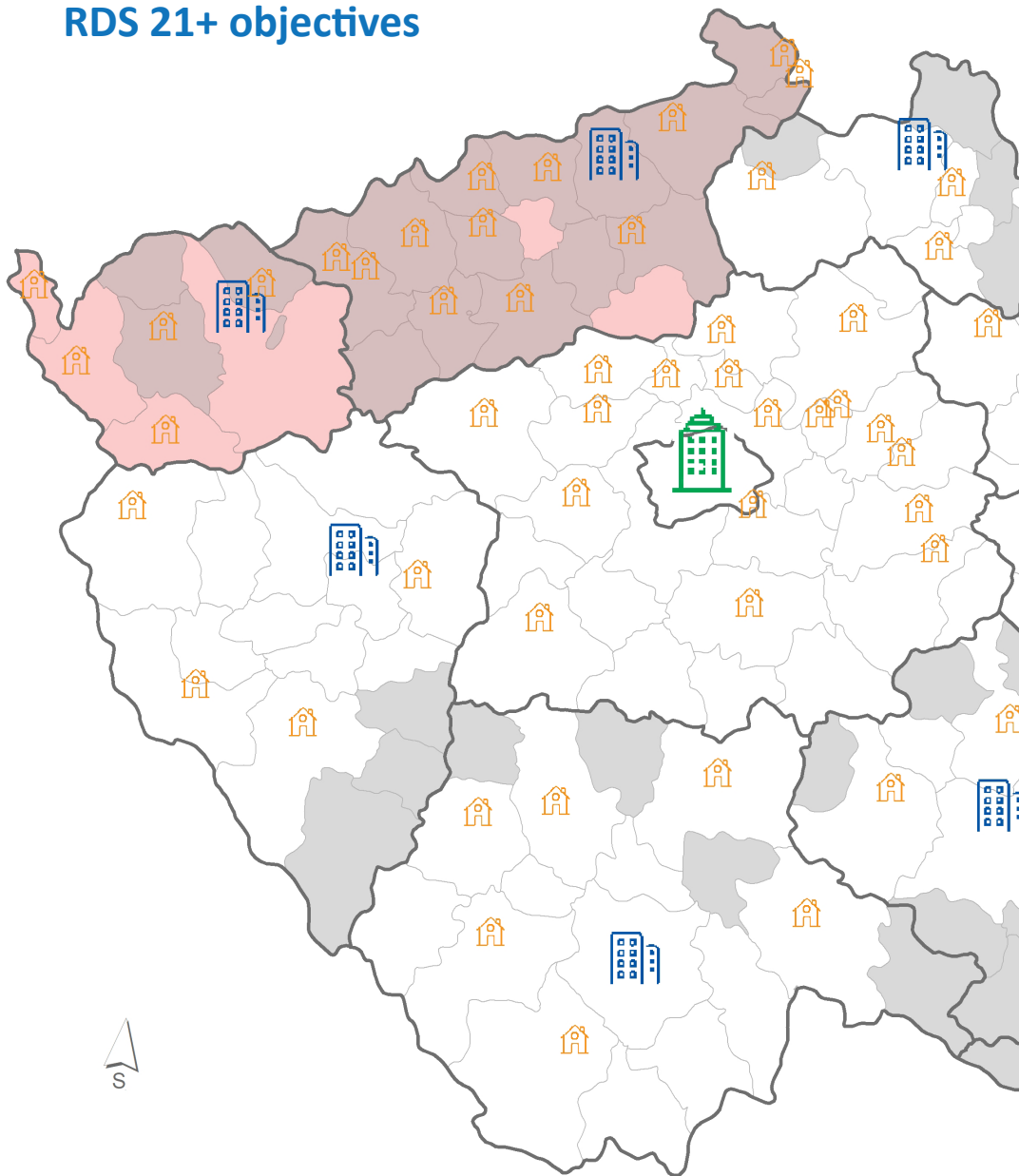
Regions are effectively capitalizing on their development potential, their social stability is increasing, competitiveness shows a sustained and steadily growing trend and the conditions for improving the quality of life of all citizens and the prosperity of companies can be clearly seen.

The principles of sustainable development and environmental limits are respected. All regions are above or approaching the EU average in terms of economy and quality of life, and are at the forefront of Central Europe with regard to attractiveness and competitiveness.



Péče Jedinečnost Rozvoj
Brownfields Kvalita Venkov
Regiony Venkov smart Hospodářství
Konkurenceschopnost
Udržitelnost Město Péče
Uspěšnost Spolupráce Uspěšnost
obce Komunita Růst
smart Péče Integrace
Něsto Venkov Obce

Geographical delimitation of the RDS 21+ objectives





Metropolis



Agglomeration



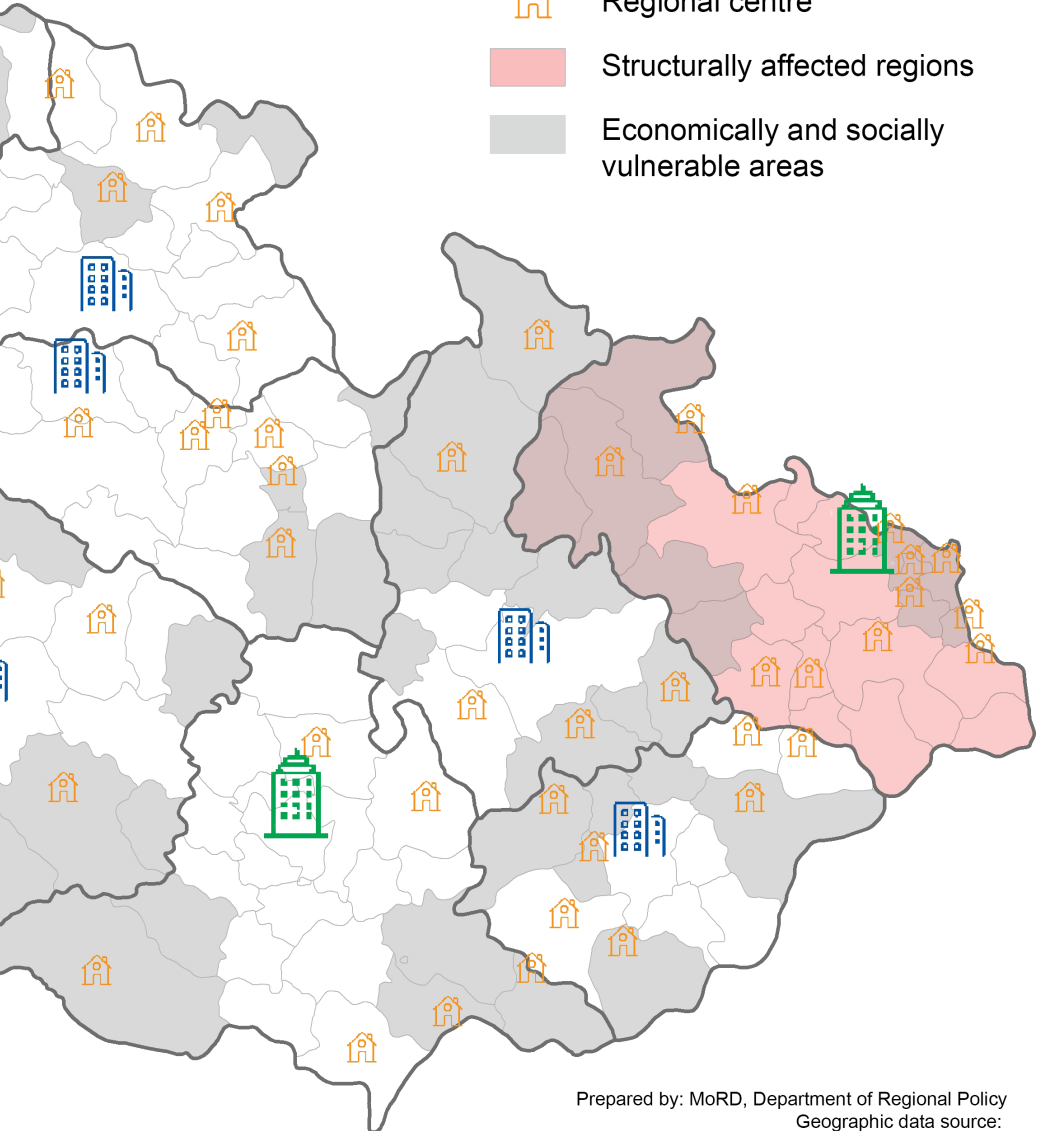
Regional centre



Structurally affected regions



Economically and socially vulnerable areas



Prepared by: MoRD, Department of Regional Policy
Geographic data source:
State Administration of Land Surveying and Cadastre (ČÚZK)
MoRD, July 2019

Geographical delimitation of the RDS 21+ objectives



The metropolitan areas are Prague, Brno, Ostrava and their hinterlands including those of a rural nature.



The agglomerations consist of the other regional capitals and their hinterlands including those of a rural nature.



Regional centres and their rural hinterlands can be divided into two categories:

higher-order regional centres identified from the national level (usually municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants and catchment areas with at least 30,000 inhabitants)

and *lower-order regional centres* identified from the regional level (usually municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants and catchment areas with around 10,000 inhabitants).

These three so-called strategic objectives cover the whole territory of the Czech Republic. At the same time, one objective may partially overlap with the other two objectives and some objectives may entirely overlap in one territory. This means that some areas are included under several strategic objectives and that each municipality is part of at least one strategic objective.





The structurally affected regions are the Ústí nad Labem, Moravian-Silesian and Karlovy Vary Regions, whose development is also supported by the Strategic Framework for Economic Restructuring (RE:START).



Economically and socially vulnerable areas are territories delimited at the level of administrative districts of municipalities with extended powers (hereinafter referred to as “MEPs”) based on selected indicators (housing construction intensity, gross total increase, age index, unemployment rate, intensity of business activity).

The administrative districts which show the worst results in these indicators and in which 25% of the Czech population live were identified. In addition to the MEP administrative districts thus defined, the category of economically and socially vulnerable areas also includes the administrative territories of municipalities overlapping with former military areas.





Metropolitan areas

Metropolitan areas in the Czech Republic face challenges related to their rapid development and growth, which they will need to adapt to. The increasing population creates pressure on housing availability and public services capacity; cities are growing at the expense of green areas and land resources. Compared to similar metropolitan areas in Europe, Czech metropolitan areas are not yet sufficiently exploiting their potential for economic and social development or cooperation between research organizations and firms. The potential of metropolises is seen in their economic strength and growth; their dominant position in research and development and high labour productivity are also important factors.

What they should be:



Globally competitive and attractive



With good transport links to European metropolises and Czech regions



Effectively using space for their development

What does RDS 21+ plan for metropolises?

1. To develop science and research capacities and support the arrival and retention of talent and of top researchers
2. To develop regional innovation systems
3. To improve the position and importance of companies in global networks
4. To better integrate the public transport system and to develop urban mobility
5. To improve their connection to European metropolises
6. To improve the availability of social and health services, education and childcare services
7. To create conditions for affordable housing and to improve housing estates
8. To improve the integration of foreigners at a local level
9. To help develop and utilise the cultural and creative potential
10. To ensure coordinated spatial development
11. To improve microclimatic conditions



Agglomerations

Most agglomerations show slower growth compared to the European average. These areas have weaker links to strong and rapidly growing metropolitan areas, not only in terms of transport connections but also in terms of cooperation in science and research. Agglomerations must address problems associated with population growth in their hinterlands. Some agglomerations experience growing social segregation. Their potential lies in the development of quality specialized research and tourism, such as congress tourism.

What they should be:



Thriving regional centres



Well connected by transport to nearby and remote settlements



Adapted to climate change

What does RDS 21+ plan for agglomerations?

1. To use the economic potential of agglomerations more effectively and to develop the science and research bases
2. To ensure high-quality transport connections and services in the territory for passenger and freight transport
3. To manage traffic more effectively and help reduce its negative effects
4. To ensure a sufficient range of social and health services
5. To improve accessibility to education, to ensure quality infrastructure for education and childcare services
6. To ensure a sufficient capacity of affordable and social housing for vulnerable groups or persons who have lost housing - outside segregated and excluded localities
7. To support the development and utilisation of the potential of agglomerations in the field of culture and tourism
8. To promote sustainable spatial development
9. To improve microclimatic conditions



Regional centres and their rural hinterlands

Regional centres play a stabilizing role in the territory and should also play the role of centres of the given micro-region. However, they often have less potential for development because of their location (outside the main development axes), labour shortages, inappropriate skills of employees, inadequate infrastructure and lack of services.

In small municipalities in the hinterland of regional centres, the accessibility and quality of public and commercial services and transport infrastructure are particularly problematic. Some regional centres often have considerable tourism potential which can play an important role in the economic development of this category of settlements, or of whole micro-regions. Due to the high proportion of green areas in their territories, regional centres have the potential to provide a high quality of life.

What they should be:



Creating conditions for economic development



Accessible for transport and well equipped



Caring for the environment in municipalities and ensuring the sustainable development of the landscape

What does RDS 21+ plan for regional centres?

1. To diversify economic activities
2. To improve cooperation between employers, the public sector and secondary schools
3. To develop consulting centres for new, small and medium-sized enterprises
4. To revitalize brownfields
5. To improve the accessibility of high-speed internet
6. To develop sustainable tourism
7. To better coordinate transport in the regions
8. To improve the condition of roads and railways
9. To renew and modernize the infrastructure and equipment of schools and educational establishments in regional centres and their hinterlands and to ensure childcare services
10. To address problems related to socially excluded localities in the rural environment
11. To ensure the adequate availability of outreach social services and improve the availability of public facilities in rural areas, and to create conditions for community life development

12. To help develop and utilise the cultural potential of regional centres and their rural hinterlands
13. To develop sustainable management of the landscape and water resources, to revitalize and support spontaneous water retention in the landscape where possible, and support the construction of small reservoirs
14. To strengthen the coordinating role of municipalities in directing landscape development
15. To improve the air quality in rural hinterlands of regional centres
16. To strengthen landowners' responsibility for environmental quality
17. To use modern systems of landscape management and reduce the negative impacts of intensive farming in the territory
18. To develop new energy sources based on renewable energy and energy storage
19. To modify the transmission and distribution system and so enable the connection of new renewable energy sources



Structurally affected regions

In the past, the three structurally affected regions focused on mining, manufacturing and chemical industries. Currently, they show low economic growth rates and are significantly lagging behind the most advanced regions of the Czech Republic. A direct part of their economic problems is the lack of attractiveness of the regions for living, a reduced offer of job opportunities with good prospects not only for young and qualified professionals, and worse conditions and low attractiveness for business. These regions have the potential to develop activities with higher added value.

What they should be:



Offering a good quality of life and a healthy environment



Economically revived and with an adequate offer of quality jobs



Free of disused industrial sites and former mining areas

Specific measures to address the precise problems of these regions are described in the comprehensive action plans of the Economic Restructuring Strategy (RE:START programme, www.restartregionu.cz).



Economically and socially vulnerable areas

The problems of vulnerable areas are generally manifested in worse living conditions and fewer development opportunities along with limited options to participate in the development and growth of the Czech Republic. There is also an overall weak economic performance in evidence.

In certain areas, the social structure (age, education) is deteriorating, particularly in the former Sudetenland. Another problem is social exclusion, availability of quality public services and public facilities.

In many areas, the unavailability of high-speed internet can negatively affect the development of local businesses and reduce the quality of life. In some areas, the potential lies in the stronger sense of attachment of the population to the territory and high potential for tourism development. Here, farming and forestry often have a major impact on the condition of the landscape, its components and ecosystem functions.

What they should be:



Creating conditions for the development of innovative businesses



Accessible for transport and equipped with basic services



With a rich community life and residents attached to the territory

What does RDS 21+ plan for economically and socially vulnerable areas?

1. To develop micro businesses and SMEs
2. To support local employment as part of public investment
3. To encourage external investment
4. To ensure a good transport service
5. To address problems related to socially excluded localities and prevent their emergence
6. To develop community life in municipalities
7. To provide public facilities
8. To reduce the dropout rate in primary and secondary schools and to give support to early school leavers



Quality planning of regional development

The trend of recent years has been an increased effort to apply integrated planning and solutions in both urban and rural areas. At the same time, emphasis has been placed on strengthening cooperation between municipalities, especially because of the large number of small municipalities. The development potential of metropolitan areas is untapped. It has been hampered by the insufficient coordination of development at the metropolitan level, which is manifested, for example, in an unwillingness to communicate and jointly plan and coordinate activities that extend beyond the city borders.

Towns as centres of wider hinterlands often do not have sufficient administrative capacity to provide public services in their hinterlands. The offices of MEPs often do not have sufficient personnel capacities to provide services for the whole wider hinterlands. This applies in particular to smaller centres of the MEP administrative districts.

The administrative burdens are an obstacle to the existence/development of sole traders or micro-enterprises in particular and have potentially the greatest impact in rural areas, more so in economically and socially vulnerable localities. In such territories, the role of small enterprises is crucial, both in terms of employment and the provision of basic commercial services.

What it should be:



Coordinating strategic and spatial planning



Mainstreaming the territorial dimension in sectoral policies



Developing smart solutions in public administration

What does RDS 21+ plan for public administration?

1. To create a methodology for the coordination of strategic and spatial planning
2. To provide positive motivation for joint strategic planning
3. To develop cooperation among municipalities in the performance of public administration
4. To identify the specific needs of public administration in metropolitan areas and agglomerations
5. To establish and develop a regional system of support for sustainable development
6. To clarify the system of national subsidy schemes
7. To use the territorial impact assessment tool at both policy and project level
8. To use smart solutions in both urban and rural areas
9. To create a central catalogue and search engine for public administration services
10. To improve territorial development planning based on population forecasts
11. To monitor the concentration of social exclusion in the Czech Republic as a precondition for targeted interventions

The implementation of RDS 21+

is based on ten key principles:



Binding force of RDS 21+



Strong implementation and organizational framework



Partnership approach



Integrated approaches and solutions



Territorial dimension



Synergy



Measurability



Financial principles



Risk management



Awareness-raising and information

The territorial dimension is a key and cross-cutting principle of the RDS 21+ implementation, which is expected to be applied across ministries.

Interventions must be carried out through public policies, so that they meet the needs of each type of territory.

The RDS 21+ implementing documents are the **RDS 21+ Action Plans** which are the responsibility of the Ministry of Regional Development. They will be prepared working on the principle of partnership among members of working groups. They will be drawn up every two years.

The RDS 21+ Action Plans will be divided into measures and activities under strategic and specific objectives. **The measures** will be based on the type of measures specified in RDS 21+. They may also be supplemented by additional measures if such are agreed in the working groups that discuss the draft action plans.

The measures will contribute to the achievement of objectives through concrete activities.

The individual measures will be followed up by activities with a specific description and justification, indicator, links, holders, implementers and the form of financing.

The RDS 21+ Action Plans are also implementing documents of the Rural Development Concept which defines the activities that need to be implemented to ensure the development of the Czech countryside.

The RDS 21+ Action Plans provide guidance for the cohesive instruments - Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) and Community-led Local Development (CLLD) and for Regional Action Plans.

The RDS 21+ objectives and the RDS 21+ Action Plan measures and activities will be monitored through set indicators. For each indicator, the individual parameters are defined on a card.

It is expected that a monitoring report will be submitted annually and feedback from actors at all levels of implementation will be ensured.



*The most important financial source for the RDS 21+ implementation will be **EU funds**, using the following instruments:*



Integrating the territorial dimension into operational programmes



Separate calls of the managing authorities for specific types of territory



Bonuses for projects in a certain type of territory



Earmarking an allocation for implementing ITI and CLLD



Proportions set in the regional action plans for the types of territory

National funding sources are expected to use the following instruments:



Separate calls for a specific type of territory



Bonuses for projects



Higher co-financing rates for specific types of territory



Co-financing of projects by the State in regional calls



Joint calls of a Region and the State

Co-financing from all the financial sources outlined above can involve own resources of applicants or beneficiaries.

The implementation structures are expected to be financed from the state budget in the case of the Executive Team of the Ministry for Regional Development and from European sources in the case of the Secretariats of Regional Standing Conferences, including the newly established positions of Regional RDS 21+ Manager and Coordinator for Economically and Socially Vulnerable Areas.

Global objectives will be monitored through the following indicators:

1. Persons working in research and development
2. Quality of motorway and rail connections of metropolises to other agglomerations and European metropolises
3. Total expenditure on research and development
4. Quality of motorway and rail connections of agglomerations to other agglomerations and European metropolises
5. Availability of primary medical care
6. Availability of social services
7. Gross rate of total population increase
8. Disposable income of households
9. Number of entrepreneurs with employees
10. Long-term unemployment rate (greater than 12 months)

Comments of territorial partners



RDS 21+ gives municipalities and cities an exceptional opportunity to apply their requirements in a strategic document, which should also serve as a guide for the allocation of European finance. Funding is undoubtedly a duly motivating element. In the long run, however, the development of territories, public administration and the provision of public services for our citizens, whether in urban or rural environments, are much more important. That is why UTM CR paid maximum attention to the preparation of RDS 21+.

František Lukl, Chairman of the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic

The Association of Local Authorities of the Czech Republic very much appreciates the highly partnership style and at the same time professional approach of the MoRD in drafting the Regional Development Strategy of the Czech Republic 2021+. Based on our frequent communication with mayors and other partners across Europe, we are pleased to say that such an approach to discussing a regional development strategy is also unique on a European scale.

We firmly believe that this Strategy will not just end up in a filing cabinet and that the huge energy and time invested by all actors in its discussion will translate into the crucial importance that the RDS 21+ will have in the preparation of the EU 2021+ programming period as well as in the formulation of regional policies implemented by the State or Regions. Only in this way can we achieve the desired mutual convergence of the individual regions and their approximation to the Western European average and finally halt the persistent widening of the gap.

Radim Sršeň, Vice-Chairman of the Association of Local Authorities of the Czech Republic

For the National Network of Local Action Groups of the Czech Republic, the engagement in the preparation of the new regional development strategy was an opportunity to work together with other partners on a new agreement where we will determine how to develop our country in the coming years. We are a holder of the integrated instrument LEADER and therefore we believe that RDS 21+ will gradually contribute to better interconnection of activities in various areas of regional development. We also believe that thanks to RDS 21+, the disparities in the quality of life between urban centres on the one hand and peripheral areas, especially in the Sudetenland, on the other, will cease to widen.

Jiří Krist, Chairman of the National Network of Local Action Groups of the Czech Republic

The opportunity to be present at and participate in the formation of the new Regional Development Strategy of the Czech Republic 2021+ as one of the main pillars of future development is invaluable for us. It means for us not only the possibility of influencing its design, but also closely cooperating and communicating with all involved partners. I strongly believe that together we all will succeed in fulfilling this well-prepared strategy and in improving the conditions for a better life for all inhabitants in the Czech Republic.

Pavel Hečko, member of the Council for Regional Development, Agriculture and Rural Affairs under the Association of Regions of the Czech Republic



WHAT WILL THE NEW RDS 21+ BRING?

To state administration

a roadmap for the implementation of tailor-made solutions for various types of territory within the policies of individual ministries

To regions

a definition of the main directions of regional policy in a mid-term perspective, which may serve as starting points for the regions

To municipalities

information on where and how the regional policy of the State will help the municipalities

To citizens

information on the steps planned by the State to improve the quality of life

Legal framework:

Act on Regional Development Support
(Act No. 248/2000 Coll.)

For more information see:

www.mmr.cz

www.uzemnidimenze.cz

www.risy.cz

www.obcepro.cz

www.mapy.mmr.cz