

ACHIEVEMENT OF PARTIAL GOALS

Partial outputs (in the form of peer-reviewed and published reports) have been specified for each year of the project running and over five-year horizon. The final output will be published in the form of a comprehensive report on competitiveness of the Czech economy. Collective outputs in the form of a context analysis of Czech economy competitiveness and its methodology and the company survey methodology were to be produced in the first year. Other goals include various forms of implementing the results of activities in the four workplaces collaborating on the project and are fulfilled continuously in the period of project duration.

Collective outputs for the year 2005 were produced in cooperation of CES and NOZV in the form of comprehensive refereed studies, which were published in the form of analytical-methodological publication called Year Book of Czech Republic's Competitiveness 2005 following a broader discussion and an external evaluation 2005. Both workplaces prepared materials for publication of the second stage of the context analysis in the first half of 2006. The materials were externally refereed comprehensive working papers describing individual components.

ESF focused its publication activity on analyses of individual key areas in the particular components and their mutual synthesis. The outputs were oriented not only on methodological expertise but especially on analytical expertise using qualified systemization of available secondary data and assessment of the primary data acquired from its own surveys. These activities are aimed at publishing a comprehensive report on the Czech economy competitiveness. All outputs were evaluated.

In comparison with the project planning, there was a shift in the methodology of company surveys in collective outputs. The methodology was developed as an internal material of CES and NOZV in the form of a workbook. However, after extensive internal and external discussions following the existing research results, it was recommended to change the approach: a structured expert survey was to be made instead of an extensive questionnaire survey in companies. This change is initiated particularly by the fact that extensive questionnaire surveys in analyzed areas have already been covered by existing surveys. Therefore, the earmarked finances would not be efficiently used. On the other hand, however, there are hardly any qualitatively-based surveys, which require a different (and significantly more time-consuming) methodological approach. That is why the methodology of company surveys was shifted towards the methodology of expert surveys that should be finalized during the first half of 2006 based on the updated results and needs of the research. A proposal concerning this shift will be presented and submitted for approval to the CVKS Council. It includes the application of alternative methodological approaches such as case studies, surveys of expert (qualitative) opinions acquired from the members of enlarged focus groups, targeted questionnaire surveys of a smaller sample of respondents with a narrower and simultaneously deeper scope (probes). This change will not interfere with the planned schedule of the project in further stages. Originally budgeted funds allocated for the surveys will be also respected.

Members of research teams at ESF and CES were involved in relatively extensive publishing activities in standard forms of working papers, publications in refereed and non-refereed expert periodicals and in attending national and international

conferences. These outputs are reviewed in a separate chapter of the report. Forms of applying research results at individual workplaces include workshops, construction of databases, setting up and development of focus groups, making web pages of the Centre, a file with related information sources, external publishing and presenting activities of team members, current information from the research team, development of new programmes of study and specializations using the project results, etc.

ESF realized mainly the following forms of applying the research results: Procedures and existing results have been opened to general public via specifically designed web page within the framework of MU web pages. Besides the printed version, the publications are available in electronic form (ESF published 14 working papers in 2005). The working papers are debated in the workshops. Their objective is a qualified discussion of each topic or work output (altogether 12 workshops organized at ESF). Discussion groups were set up (3 groups according to allocated components) by selecting both local and external experts. Numbers of debaters will be systematically increased after completing individual stages. A specific form of application is development and restructuring of study programmes. ESF incorporated the first outputs in the structure of study programmes to prepare new study specializations, mainly in master and doctoral studies in the branch of Economic Policy. New courses on innovations were introduced to study plans in bachelor and master studies at ESF which are also taught at the Faculty of Law and Faculty of Science. A cooperation agreement was made between Masaryk University in Brno and the Association of Innovative Business in the CR (AIP) promoting development of innovative business in the Czech Republic. Project team members are nominated to sit on the Association's managing bodies and editorial board. Another agreement has been made between Masaryk University and South-Moravian Region on carrying out a project called „Strategy of Human Resources Development in South-Moravian Region“. To promote awareness of managers about innovation processes, the Centre enhanced cooperation with the Commercial and Economic Chamber in Brno by contributions to the programmes of the Regional Educational Centre for entrepreneurs. Implementation of the research activities involved not only ESF employees, but also students (as workers of the Centre), from the study field accredited at ESF for doctoral studies ((Economic Policy, Economics, Economics and management), and also the students in Master study programmes. The following databases were made accessible under the auspices of ESF: (a) subscribed ALBERTINA Creditinfo and Corporate Monitor (databases of companies in the CR, their economic data and credibility data), (b) a comprehensive collection of electronic sources called SourceOECD, containing three principal information areas, all of them with a considerable time retrospective, namely electronic books, electronic journals and international statistical indicators. Moreover, ESF outlined topic-related research projects to promote Centre's research activities, which are incorporated into specific research at the departments of the faculty participating in the project.

CES implemented especially the following forms of research applications: a printed version and an electronic version of the yearbook together with a database of partial assessment indicators. The database of CES users in printed form currently includes more than 700 subjects from a wide and representative spectrum of institutional sectors in the CR on national and regional levels. CES designed web pages of the project with references to web pages of all workplaces. It also organized 12 workshops to discuss the progress of solution and research results. Three focus groups were set up having on average 15 external members: (1) macroeconomic

performance and stability, (2) institutional quality and conditions for doing business, (3) research, innovations and information society. The group members are made up of representatives of ministries (e.g. MPO, MF, MI), commercial banks, the Czech National Bank and ČSÚ, important academic institutions (CERGE-EI, IES FSV UK) and other organizations (Transparency International, Czechinvest, Industry and transport union, Research and Development Council) and from the corporate sector. Among the focus group members are also workers from foreign partner institutions (e.g. OECD, ECFIN, WIIW, USSE SAV, ZSI etc.). The periodical Bulletin CES serves to inform the general public. It contains brief news on publication and other activities, information about conferences, seminars and latest development of the researched subjects. A specific form of application was provided by developing a master programme called Economic analysis and competitive strategy, which is closely related to research activity at CES within the framework of CVKS. The structure and content of the master programme are based on the key pillars of the projects emphasizing alternative analytical level of qualitative sources and competitiveness results. The programme can be implemented by actively integrating its students into the research in the form of seminar works set by CES workers. Three six hour CES seminars have been designed for expert focus groups and general public, which will be held under the auspices of the Czech Economic Society and arrangements have been made for holding a conference in cooperation with the Institute of Slovak and World Economics of SAV under the auspices of prime minister of the SR.

NOZV made its results from examining human resources quality to general public on a specially designed web page. Besides the internet presentation, a printed form of the Competitiveness Yearbook was sent to about 300 potential users of their results. The users database was made just for this purpose and includes mainly top management officials from public administration bodies, educational and research institutions, professional unions and Czech officials in international institutions (ILO, Cedefop). Research results are discussed and also disseminated by a focus group with 8 core members, who are prominent experts in HR, ranking both from research and also from managerial and corporate spheres. This group is complemented by other experts according to researched issues. The results are also partly used in review of educations in the CR, which are prepared by NOZV as the national coordinator of Refernet for the European Centre for Development of Vocational Training. The analyses of HR quality are used by other sections of NVF in their cooperation with regions and in evaluation and drafting of operational programmes co-funded by the EU, which are designed for HR development and employability.

The above activities of the Centre were performed not only by employees of the above entities, but also students (as workers of the Centre), from the branches accredited at ESF for doctoral studies ((Economic Policy, Economics, Economics and management), and also the students in master study programmes.