



NATIONAL CONVENTION

OPEN DEBATE ON EUROPE

The National Convention on the European Union, launched by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic in November 2014, is a permanent venue for debate on European issues in the Czech Republic.

The project brings together representatives of the Government, state administration, both chambers of the Czech Parliament as well as European institutions, social partners, business, academia, NGOs, and other relevant stakeholders.

THE IDEA BEHIND THE NATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE EU?

Affirming the Government's Policy Statement, the intention of the Cabinet is to intensify dialogue on European issues with stakeholders, experts and the public. Regularly convened thematically specified roundtables and conferences represent the principal occasions for such a discussion. In addition, the network of Eurocentres organises public events aimed at involving the public in the debate on current European topics.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION?

- ★ To initiate a constructive debate on the priorities of the Czech Republic within the EU,
- ★ To create an inclusive platform for bringing together representatives of the Government, state administration, Parliament, social partners, experts and other stakeholders,
- ★ To build a broad consensus on the Czech priorities within the EU,
- ★ To formulate concrete recommendations to the Government in respect of Czech EU policy.

HOW DOES THE CONVENTION WORK?

The Convention is strategically managed by the Coordination Council composed of representatives of the Office of the Government, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both Chambers of the Czech Parliament, social partners and some think-tanks concerned with EU affairs. Other interested actors may participate in regularly organised thematically specified roundtables. A high level of expertise is ensured by an independent expert coordinator chosen on the basis of an open tender. These experts are responsible for the preparation of

discussion papers as well as for the outcomes of the roundtables. The positions of selected stakeholders - ministries, NGOs and experts - are also presented at the sessions. Nevertheless, the main part is devoted to an open discussion with all interested participants. The outcomes - recommendations to the Czech Government summarizing the views presented – are regularly submitted to the Committee for the European Union.

While the roundtables are venues for expert-oriented debate, the public has many opportunities to participate in public events (seminars, discussions, lectures) relating to the Convention's topics, as organised by the network of Eurocentres.

And last but not least, public conferences are also a significant part of the National Convention. Attended by high-profile national and foreign guests, the conferences discuss specific Czech priorities in the EU.

ONE YEAR OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION: REVIEW

The National Convention on the European Union was launched in November 2014 by the Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka. The Czech Republic is thus following several European countries with its Convention-like national dialogue on EU affairs. From November 2014 to June 2015, nine roundtables were arranged, addressing the following topics: energy efficiency, migration, European Structural and Investment Funds, institutional aspects of differentiated integration, energy security, employment, the Digital Single Market, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the role of national parliaments in the EU.

In total, 2,129 participants from 206 different institutions have participated in these roundtables and 52 recommendations to the Government have been issued. In cooperation with the Eurocentres, 26 public events in Prague and the Czech regions have been organised, while welcoming 1,253 citizens.

www.narodnikonvent.eu

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More information on National Convention can be found on the www.narodnikonvent.eu website with detailed information on the project and news including summaries of round tables discussions.

National Convention on the EU also has its own Twitter account [@KonventEU](https://twitter.com/KonventEU), where also YOU can get involved in a discussion.