



## Partnership fund in the Czech Republic

# STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY THROUGH SWISS EXPERTISE



The partnership funds set up under the auspices of Switzerland's enlargement contribution facilitate the sharing of experience between institutions in the new EU member states and Swiss partners – in areas such as non-motorised mobility, teacher training and environmental protection. The Swiss contribution to the partnership funds for financing small projects in partner countries is approximately CHF 25 million. In the Czech Republic for example, these funds supported projects to promote non-motorised mobility and vocational education.

Switzerland possesses a great deal of expertise in areas such as research and environmental protection, and in other fields too. For mainly historical reasons the partner countries lack expertise in a wide range of areas. Swiss organisations can consequently make a significant contribution to active knowledge transfer. Funds totalling CHF 5.05 million have been invested in such partnerships in the Czech Republic.

Switzerland supported 98 small projects in the Czech Republic which helped to solve concrete problems. Partners included foundations, associations, municipalities and cities. Switzerland generally financed 90% of the project budget. The Czech partner organisations assumed the rest of the costs. Sharing its

experience allowed Switzerland to play an active role in breaking down economic and social disparities within the Czech Republic and between the Czech Republic and the older EU member states. Switzerland was part of the selection committee in the Czech Republic and was actively involved in decisions relating to the funding of the projects.

The two following project descriptions give an idea of the wide variety of partnership projects carried out in the Czech Republic with help from Switzerland.

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### PARTNERSHIP FOR NON-MOTORISED MOBILITY

Switzerland has a great deal of experience in the field of non-motorised mobility. The SwitzerlandMobility foundation encourages people to get around without a motor by suggesting selected routes for walkers, cyclists, in-line skaters and canoeists. The Czech counterpart to SwitzerlandMobility is the Greenways Programme of the Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation. The objective of the project was cooperation between these two partners. A week-long programme about SwitzerlandMobility's services took place in Switzerland to provide the Czech delegation an insight into Swiss non-motorised mobility. In return, representatives of SwitzerlandMobility travelled for four days around the Czech Republic introducing their foundation to interested parties. The exchange programme enabled the participants to come up with ideas on how to develop the SwitzerlandMobility model in the Czech Republic. The project of-

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### SHARING OF EXPERIENCE IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE ENLARGED EU

In addition to the Czech Republic, the partnership funds also support institutional partnerships between Switzerland and Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary. These partnerships focus on sharing experience in the various areas of expertise. As a result, institutions and government agencies in the different countries of the enlarged EU can benefit from extensive Swiss expertise, and the Swiss partner gains more experience through international cooperation.



officially ended with a two-day conference in Prague attended by Lukas Stadtherr from SwitzerlandMobility. The Czech foundation reported on the progress made thanks to the shared experience. In addition, the foundation created a brochure in Czech on the cooperation and partnership project with SwitzerlandMobility and presented drafts of their own cycle tours website.

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#### KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Swiss dual vocational and professional education and training system has a very good reputation, as it stands apprentices in good stead for their future careers. This type of education and training is very popular among young people in Switzerland: around two thirds of school leavers choose the vocational route. In contrast, apprenticeships in the Czech Republic are rapidly losing their appeal since the education they offer is purely theory-based or takes place in school workshops with worn and outdated equipment. This means that at the end of their apprenticeship, apprentices have not acquired the skills employers are looking for and therefore have difficulty entering the labour market. The «Střední škola technická» (SŠt) in Prague was able to benefit from Swiss experience and quality through the partnership fund in the Czech Republic. This upper-secondary vocational school has a partnership with Lausanne technical vocational college (École technique – École des Métiers de Lausanne (ETML)). Exchange visits have allowed the Czech schools to find out more about vocational education and training in Switzerland and get a clearer idea of the specific measures needed to improve the situation of vocational education and training in the Czech Republic. Another of the partnership projects contributions was the transfer of used tools and machinery in perfect working order from the ETML to the SŠt at a symbolic price.

#### THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

##### THEME

Supporting civil society

##### COUNTRY

Czech Republic

##### PARTNERS

Non-motorised mobility project:

SwitzerlandMobility

Vocational education and training project:

École technique – École des Métiers de Lausanne ETML

##### STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For historical reasons, institutions, organisations and public bodies in the new EU member states lack expert knowledge in many specialist fields. Swiss expertise can help to fill these gaps in knowledge and experience.

##### PURPOSE

- Developing and promoting non-motorised mobility for leisure and tourism
- Promoting and improving Czech vocational education and training

##### ACTIVITIES

- Transfer of Swiss expertise
- Establishing and expanding institutional partnerships
- Study visits to project partner
- Joint evaluation and drafting of reports
- Creating long-term international relationships in the project area

##### TARGET GROUPS

General public, young students and apprentices, civil society

##### COSTS

Partnership fund in the Czech Republic:

CHF 5.05 million

Non-motorised mobility project:

CHF 51'000

Vocational education and training project:

CHF 67'500

##### RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Non-motorised mobility project:

Nadace Partnerství (Environmental Foundation Partnership)

Vocational education and training project:

Střední škola technická SŠt (upper-secondary vocational school)

##### DURATION

Partnership fund in the Czech Republic:

2009 – 2016

Non-motorised mobility project:

March 2010 to December 2010

Vocational education and training project:

September 2011 to August 2012