

# Evaluation practices assessing the impacts of initiatives targeting 25+ NEETs

COUNTRY REPORT – CZECH REPUBLIC

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IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT 'LOST  
MILLENNIALS – TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH  
NETWORK FOR THE EVALUATION OF INITIATIVES  
TARGETING 25+ NEETS'

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Project summary:

*The project 'Lost Millennials' focuses on a regularly neglected group of the generation of Millennials: young people aged 25-29 neither in employment or education and training (25+ NEETs). This generation started their working life shortly after the economic crisis of 2008, perceiving uncertainty and lack of security for work and well-being, they are more likely to be inactive or in precarious jobs. The main objective of the project is to contribute to the successful integration of 25+ NEETs to the labour market through increasing knowledge on the effects of employment initiatives on 25+ NEETs, building capacity of stakeholders to perform impact studies and thus improving the quality of labour market interventions. This objective will be achieved through the creation of the transnational research network which will share know-how and good practices, the evaluations of governmental and community-based initiatives targeting 25+ NEETs, as well as the engagement of stakeholders to increase the policy-relevance of project results.*

For more information, please visit our [website](#), contact us on [lm.leadpartner@hetfa.hu](mailto:lm.leadpartner@hetfa.hu) and follow our social media ([Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#)).

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Implemented by:



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## 1. Introduction

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Initiatives aimed at 25+ NEETs in the Czech Republic are overwhelmingly co-funded by the ESF (EU funding has a larger share than national funding). Funding activities with EU money entail many obligations for the beneficiaries. One of them is evaluation in many areas. One of these areas that directly evaluates the situation of our target group of 25+ NEETs is the evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) policy, which focuses on young people and their employment and within which many initiatives in the Czech Republic have been identified. As confirmed to the IREAS research team during a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, these evaluations are mandatory and timely. Evaluations of some mapped initiatives are also still being planned (e.g., ex-post quantitative analysis of the YEI).

In general, it can be said that Czech institutions working in the socio-economic field and targeting 25+ NEETs are doing a good job in evaluating their activities using many evaluation tools. Thus, several evaluations have been identified. The form of evaluations differs. Some are quantitative, others are more qualitative, and the timing of activities also varies. Many activities are evaluated more than once, e.g., ex-ante and ongoing.

Evaluations were searched on the official websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and on information websites related to EU policies in the Czech Republic, EU support programmes, operational programmes of the Czech Republic and individual projects (e.g., esfcr.cz). A specific feature here is that many evaluations evaluate several initiatives simultaneously, which makes quite a lot of sense, given the similar focus of many initiatives. It would not therefore be easy to assess their individual effects.

## 2. General information of evaluation practices

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The number of initiatives identified far exceeds the number of evaluations. However, this is mainly caused by the fact that many evaluations are focused on sets of initiatives that aim the same target group and use similar tools to do so. This is the case, for example, of the large-scale evaluation of the Housing First Support Challenge or the evaluation of the YEI policy (Youth Employment policy).

In the Czech Republic, most of the identified initiatives are co-financed by EU funds, which means that their evaluation is, in many cases, mandatory. The governing bodies of the Czech Republic (e.g., the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) are thus following the imposed obligation and carrying out evaluations. However, at the meeting with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs representatives, it was obvious that the representatives themselves welcomed these evaluations very much and realised

their great importance because this is the efficient way to find out whether the funds for social policy are allocated effectively.

Evaluations were searched on the official websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and on information websites related to EU policies in the Czech Republic, EU support programmes, operational programmes of the Czech Republic and individual projects (e.g., esfcr.cz). These pages are well structured, and much information about calls and projects is published. Therefore, it is not challenging to find them, as these institutions usually publish the information online as publicly available.

### 3. Characteristics of evaluation practices

The following table summarises the basic information provided in this chapter for the evaluations identified by the research team in the Czech Republic. These are mainly evaluations and assessments of initiatives funded by the European Union's funds. Therefore, the managing authorities were obliged to carry out their evaluations (e.g., YEI).

The type of evaluations varies, as their purpose is often also different. If the managing authority wants to investigate the programme's effects as a whole, it tends to opt for quantitative analysis. Whereas if the managing authority wants to look deeper into the design of the initiatives, it opts for a more qualitative analysis, explaining much deeper the mechanisms and processes. This is good, for example, for future construction of initiatives or for controlling the executive bodies themselves.

Most of the identified initiatives were evaluated during the implementation (midterm) or after the end of implementation (ex-post). Usually, qualitative or mixed methods were used for constructing the reports about the realised projects' effectiveness, efficiency and economics.

| Name of evaluation   | Type of evaluation (ex ante/mid-term/ex post) | Type of the programmes which the identified evaluation practices assess        | Type of evaluation (Quantification/qualification) | Period of evaluation |
|--|---|--|---|----------------------|
| <b>OVĚŘENÍ PŘÍNOSŮ PROJEKTŮ HOUSING FIRST PRO ZABYDLENÉ OSOBY – KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ</b><br>(VERIFICATION OF THE BENEFITS OF HOUSING FIRST PROJECTS FOR HOUSED PEOPLE - A QUALITATIVE STUDY) | Mid-term                                      | Call no. 108 Support for Housing First (whole call, many initiatives included) | Qualitative                                       | 11/ - 12/2021        |
| <b>Vyhodnocení výzvy č. 108 OPZ – Podpora programu Housing First</b> (Evaluation of Call   | Mid-term                                      | Call. No. 108 OPZ – Support for the Housing First                              | Mixed   | 08/2019 – 1/2022     |

|   |  |  |              |          |
|---|--|--|--------------|----------|
| No. 108 OPZ - Support for the Housing First Programme)  |  |  |              |          |
| <b>Procesní evaluace implementace Koordinovaného přístupu k sociálně vyloučeným lokalitám v rámci Operačního programu Zaměstnanost</b><br>(Process evaluation of the implementation of the Coordinated Approach to socially excluded localities under the Operational Programme Employment) | Ex post  | Coordinated Approach to socially excluded localities   | Mixed        | 8/2018   |
| <b>EVALUACE VÝZVY MEZINÁRODNÍ MOBILITA PRO ZNEVÝHODŇENOU MLÁDEŽ</b> (EVALUATION OF THE CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH)   | Ex post  | International mobility for disadvantaged youth (Call No. 32)   | Mixed        | 8/2019   |
| <b>Kvalitativní šetření přínosů projektů mezinárodní mobility a sociálního začleňování znevýhodněné mládeže</b><br>(Qualitative research on the benefits of international mobility projects and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth)  | Mid-term   | International mobility and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth (Call No. 59)                             | Qualitative  | 4-5/2022 |
| <b>ANALÝZA PROJEKTŮ NOPP-SÚPM A NOPP-VPP NA ZÁKLADĚ DAT Z IS ESF 2014+</b><br>(ANALYSIS OF NOPP-SÚPM AND NOPP-VPP PROJECTS BASED ON DATA FROM IS ESF 2014+)   | Ex post  | 2 projects:<br>New job opportunities - socially useful reserved jobs<br>New job opportunities - public works | Quantitative | 08/2021  |
| <b>Evaluace projektu "Vzdělávejte se pro růst! Pracovní příležitosti"</b> (Evaluation of the project "Educate for Growth! Job Opportunities")   | Ex post  | Educate yourself for growth! - job opportunities   | Mixed        | 06/2015  |
| <b>EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚSTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR</b><br>(EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC)   | Mid-term   | The Youth Guarantee (many indicated initiatives included)  | Mixed        | 12/2018  |
| <b>EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚSTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR</b><br>(EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE)   | Ex ante  | The Youth Guarantee (many indicated initiatives included)  | Qualitative  | 2015     |
| <b>KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ PROJEKTŮ YEI</b><br>(QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF YEI PROJECTS)   | Mid-term (entry report) and ex post (final report) | YEI projects (many indicated initiatives included)   | Mixed        | 08/2018  |

### 3.1 Methodology of evaluation practices

The identified evaluations are often quite different in their methods. Some are quantitative, whereas the fundamental statistical analysis was conducted based mainly on statistical data. Specifically, the data from public sources (in the case of the Czech Republic, e.g., the Czech Statistical Office or Eurostat) were used, complementing the primary data obtained in the project implementation framework.

Qualitative evaluation reports use relatively wider field of methods. The most common was the interview or a questionnaire survey. Other reports used case studies or focus groups to verify the proper settings of the initiative (or programme). Vast of the identified evaluation reports used a mix of methods mentioned above. Some evaluation reports have even consisted of qualitative and quantitative analysis as well.

The number of respondents and participants in the evaluations corresponds to the design. Some methods (e.g., interviews) are more demanding (financially, timewise); therefore, the number of respondents is limited. Whilst other methods (e.g., statistical analysis) do not take so much effort, there is a need of a lot of data from many respondents to be statistically usable (here, data are often collected in some systematic way). The sample size in percentages differs (12 - 100%). However, the sample size has never been smaller than 12% in all of the quantitative evaluations identified.

Any methodological challenges were not identified in selected evaluations. However, the evaluation design and quality differ from report to report. Some of them are more quality and detailed than others. This fact could be caused by the different sizes of the sample, whereas for smaller sample sizes it is better to use a different approach (e. g., interviews) than for numerous samples.

| Name of evaluation  | Methods used  | Number of respondents in the research per used evaluation methods  | Sample size in %   |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>OVĚŘENÍ PŘÍNOSŮ PROJEKTŮ HOUSING FIRST PRO ZABYDLENÉ OSOBY – KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ</b><br>(VERIFICATION OF THE BENEFITS OF HOUSING FIRST PROJECTS FOR HOUSED PEOPLE - A QUALITATIVE STUDY)  | The qualitative research was based on 30 more than one-hour guided <b>interviews</b> with project participants.   | 30 persons   | 12 % (30 respondents from 255 housing supported by the program)  |
| <b>Vyhodnocení výzvy č. 108 OPZ – Podpora programu Housing First</b><br>(Evaluation of Call No. 108 OPZ - Support for the Housing First Programme)  | The <b>questionnaire</b> collection was set up in three main phases - before moving in and after 12 months and 24 months after the household had moved in.  | 255  | 100%   |
| <b>Procesní evaluace implementace Koordinovaného přístupu k sociálně vyloučeným lokalitám v rámci Operačního programu Zaměstnanost</b><br>(Process evaluation of the implementation of the Coordinated Approach to socially excluded localities under the Operational Programme Employment) | The evaluation used both <b>secondary data</b> sources provided by the client and <b>publicly available data</b> , as well as <b>primary data</b> collection through personal or telephone <b>interviews</b> with relevant actors who were included in the nine case studies, and a <b>questionnaire</b> survey for representatives of local consultants of the Agency for Social Inclusion, managers of the Strategic Plan for Social Inclusion and applicants for support.<br><b>Case study, Statistical analysis</b> | 214  | 31 %   |
| <b>EVALUACE VÝZVY MEZINÁRODNÍ MOBILITA PRO ZNEVÝHODNĚNOU MLÁDEŽ</b><br>(EVALUATION OF THE CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH)  | The evaluation was based mainly on two <b>questionnaire</b> surveys among the supported persons, a questionnaire survey among the implementers, data from the ESF IS and project self-evaluations. The findings from the <b>focus groups</b> are used only additionally for interpretation  | 373 entrance questionnaires, but only 241 reference questionnaires. 216 questionnaires could be linked using the identification code | 90 %   |
| <b>Kvalitativní šetření přínosů projektů mezinárodní mobility a sociálního začleňování znevýhodněné mládeže</b><br>(Qualitative research on the benefits of international mobility projects and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth)  | The basic data collection technique of the qualitative research was personal <b>interviews</b> , i.e. individual guided semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews (IDI) and <b>focus group</b> discussions (FGD).   | 18 supported persons, 3 realisers  | -  |
| <b>ANALÝZA PROJEKTŮ NOPP-SÚPM A NOPP-VPP NA ZÁKLADĚ DAT Z IS ESF 2014+</b><br>(ANALYSIS OF NOPP-SÚPM AND NOPP-VPP PROJECTS BASED ON DATA FROM IS ESF 2014+)   | Statistical analysis  | 22 455   | 70 %<br>(Due to the higher possible error rate of older data, only people who entered the projects since 1 January 2017 are included in the analysis.) |
| <b>Evaluace projektu "Vzdělávejte se pro růst! Pracovní příležitosti"</b><br>(Evaluation of the project "Educate for Growth! Job Opportunities")  | Case study, questionnaire, interviews, statistical analysis   | 252 individual interviews (qualitative)  | Quantitative part: 100 % sample size   |
| <b>EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚSTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR</b><br>(EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH  | Questionnaire, interviews, statistical analysis   | Evaluation of The Youth Guarantee (ENG) was part of the evaluation of the whole initiative.  | -  |



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|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC)  |                                     |  |  |
| EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚSTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR (EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE) | Statistical analysis, desk research | Desk research – information about around 5 500 persons | -  |
| KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ PROJEKTŮ YEI (QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF YEI PROJECTS)                             | Interviews, statistical analysis    | 30 participants and 15 implementers                    | This is a truly negligible number of respondents. However, this is an assessment of the qualitative aspect of the initiatives. |

### 3.2 Types of evaluations and their results

For this chapter, the tabulation method was chosen. In it, comments on the individual evaluations can be found.

It is impossible to generalise whether the managing authorities of these initiatives carry out the evaluations themselves or outsource them. Some reports were completed by the internal evaluator (some based on the data collected externally) and others by external evaluators. However, in both cases, most of the evaluated initiatives have been considered successful. The quality of some of the evaluations identified is limited. The method used is a descriptive analysis of the situation rather than an evaluation in the proper sense (see table below, e.g., HOUSING FIRST).

| Name of evaluation   | Form of evaluation | Generally evaluated as | Important recommendations  | Comments  |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| <b>OVĚŘENÍ PŘÍNOSŮ PROJEKTŮ HOUSING FIRST PRO ZABYDLENÉ OSOBY – KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ</b><br>(VERIFICATION OF THE BENEFITS OF HOUSING FIRST PROJECTS FOR HOUSED PEOPLE - A QUALITATIVE STUDY) | external           | successful             | No recommendations were formulated   | Rather, it is feedback to implementers from participants in the initiatives. Most of the participants were satisfied with the services provided.  |
| <b>Vyhodnocení výzvy č. 108 OPZ – Podpora programu Housing First</b> (Evaluation of Call No. 108 OPZ - Support for the Housing First Programme)  | internal           | successful             | Again, this is more about feedback to implementers and managing authorities. Part of the title of this evaluation is: HOUSING FIRST: CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSED HOUSES, which describes the form of the evaluation quite well. No recommendations are made here; the characteristics of occupied households are stated. | The report focuses on the results of the pre-move-in questionnaire, which maps the situation of supported persons in various areas of life - experience with housing need, quality of previous housing, use of social support, health status, financial situation, employment, community integration, etc. Future reports will be focused on the outcomes/changes in the situation of occupied persons one and two years after moving in. |

|   |   |                   |  |  |
|---|---|-------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>Procesní evaluace implementace Koordinovaného přístupu k sociálně vyloučeným lokalitám v rámci Operačního programu Zaměstnanost</b><br/>(Process evaluation of the implementation of the Coordinated Approach to socially excluded localities under the Operational Programme Employment)</p> | external  | Rather successful | <p>1) To ensure the functioning of a comprehensive system of providing support to applicants for support in the field of social entrepreneurship under the Comprehensive Programme for Socially Excluded Localities, applying for support in open calls under the Operational Programme Employment.</p> <p>2) Extending the role of active employment policy in the evaluation of applications for support under the Coordinated Approach calls to socially excluded localities under the OP Employment.</p> <p>3) Lead a discussion with other Managing Authorities on the coordination of calls.</p> | The group of 25+NEETs will indeed be only a small part of the target group of the Coordinated Approach to Socially Excluded Localities programme in the context of the Czech Republic.   |
| <p><b>EVALUACE VÝZVY MEZINÁRODNÍ MOBILITA PRO ZNEVÝHODNĚNOU MLÁDEŽ</b><br/>(EVALUATION OF THE CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH)</p>  | combination                                       | successful        | <p>1) Simplify the administration associated with cooperation with a foreign partner</p> <p>2) Increase the financial advance</p> <p>3) Tighten the conditions for entry of people with higher education qualifications into projects</p> <p>4) Extend language training</p>   | The evaluation design does not allow us to formulate claims about the causal link between participation in the project and labour market participation, as we did not work with a control group in the evaluation  |
| <p><b>Kvalitativní šetření přínosů projektů mezinárodní mobility a sociálního začleňování znevýhodněné mládeže</b><br/>(Qualitative research on the benefits of international mobility projects and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth)</p>  | external  | Rather successful | <p>Recommendations will be made in the final report (which has not yet been found).</p> <p>All 3 types of evaluations were planned - ex-ante, interim and ex-post.</p>   | The evaluation design does not allow us to formulate claims about the causal link between participation in the project and labour market participation, as we did not work with a control group in the evaluation  |
| <p><b>ANALÝZA PROJEKTŮ NOPP-SÚPM A NOPP-VPP NA ZÁKLADĚ DAT Z IS ESF 2014+</b><br/>(ANALYSIS OF NOPP-SÚPM AND NOPP-VPP PROJECTS BASED ON DATA FROM IS ESF 2014+)</p>   | internal  | Cannot be said    | No recommendations were formulated.  | <p>This is a descriptive analysis of two projects. It does not draw any conclusions, as it is not intended to do so. The socio-demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries, the extent of the support they received under the projects and their position in the labour market have been mapped. The analysis was carried out on a set of supported persons who entered the following projects in the years 2017 a 2018.</p> <p>Translated with <a href="http://www.DeepL.com/Translator">www.DeepL.com/Translator</a> (free version)</p> |
| <p><b>Evaluace projektu "Vzdělávejte se pro růst! Pracovní příležitosti"</b> (Evaluation of the project "Educate for Growth! Job Opportunities")</p>  | Internal (Only surveys collection was outsourced) | successful        | <p>1) Simplification of administration (e.g., the process of approving grant applications).</p> <p>2) Increase awareness of the possibilities and detailed conditions for support</p>  | This is a very high-quality evaluation, which was developed internally by the MLSA in  |

|   |             |                   |   |   |
|---|-------------|-------------------|---|---|
|   |             |                   | <p>3) Analyse the instruments separately,<br/>4) Ensure valid data on which to base the above analyses<br/>5) To take into account the outputs of the analyses and evaluations carried out in further support to the VPP and SUMP.<br/>6) Ensure systematic research and evaluation of the effectiveness of PES tools.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚŠTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR (EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC)</b></p> | combination | successful        | <p>1) Strengthen candidate information at the initial information meeting<br/>2) More individualized support and focus on a more complex target group<br/>3) Improve coordination between the Labour Office and the regions<br/>4) Maintain and possibly develop Vocational Training and Retraining</p>   | -   |
| <p><b>EVALUACE INICIATIVY NA PODPORU ZAMĚŠTNANOSTI MLADÝCH V ČR (EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE)</b></p>                             | internal    | Rather successful | <p>This is an ex ante evaluation, so far it does not make any recommendations.</p>  | <p>The context analysis showed that the Czech Republic is just above the eligibility threshold for YEI funding in only one region.<br/>All the projects under preparation under 1.5 have the same objectives as the YEI. To all projects share the same individual approach to participants, taking into account regional characteristics and establishing cooperation across institutions.</p>   |
| <p><b>KVALITATIVNÍ ŠETŘENÍ PROJEKTŮ YEI (QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF YEI PROJECTS)</b></p>   | external    | Rather successful | <p>Improve coordination between the ÚP CR and the regions.<br/>Maintain and, where appropriate, increase support for the work of streetworkers in recruiting people to work with them.<br/>Maintain and strengthen the role of personal advisors.<br/>Maintain and possibly develop Vocational Training and Retraining activities.<br/>Strengthen candidate information at the initial information session.</p> | <p>This sub-evaluation is part of a wider internal evaluation of youth employment support, which aims to assess the impact of projects targeting young jobseekers included in the programme Youth Guarantee, in particular to assess the contribution to increased employment, employability and motivation of the target groups of young jobseekers up to the age of 30. The subject of this broader internal evaluation are the regional projects implemented under the calls covered by the Youth Guarantee and under their sub-component the Youth Employment Initiative.</p> |

## 4. Conclusions

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To sum up, in the Czech Republic, evaluation of the initiatives (or programmes) is a common practice, since evaluation is an obligatory part of many initiatives. However, managing authorities usually evaluate many initiatives in one massive evaluation report. This caused the extent of many evaluations not sufficient to make a high-quality assessment. Another finding from the mapping of evaluations was the absence of evaluations at the (lowest) project level. It does not mean that the evaluations are not realized but they mostly serve for the internal purposes of the implementer and are not usually published.

Most of the evaluations identified were ex-post or ongoing and consisted of a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Qualitative data (e.g., interviews) were usually outsourced by external subjects, which collected the data needed. The managing authorities have easy access to the primary quantitative data, so they often use them in the analysis. Implementation of initiatives or programmes was most often considered successful or relatively successful, based on the study conducted.

The increasing pressure from EU bodies on the obligation to evaluate projects/initiatives and programmes can be seen clearly. This is evidenced by the fact that initiatives co-financed by EU funds are much more frequently evaluated than initiatives financed from the state budget (not many of these have been identified in the Czech Republic). However, the following programme period should be pressured to strengthen evaluations, leading to the narrower targeted initiatives implemented by identifying the actual needs.

There was also the absence of a more significant comparison of different types of evaluations identified. This issue could be the object of further research, where a comparison of different types of NGO projects with the traditional approaches of the state and the Labour Office was examined. This comparison will aim to identify core activities and approaches to the 25+ NEETs group that are needed and perhaps often overlooked in initiatives.