



# Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic



*This brochure contains basic information about the Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic, which is available for download in Czech or English version from the websites of the Ministry for Regional Development [www.mmr.cz](http://www.mmr.cz).*

The Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic is a conceptual strategic document of national impact approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic no. 22 on 14 January 2015. Its main objective is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of the environment created by construction and to increase interest in the creation of a harmonic urban environment. This policy sets out the vision and the objectives, and seventy specific measures. It is a tool of initiation and incentive rather than of restrictions and regulations.

## Authors

The Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic has been prepared by the Ministry of Regional Development in close cooperation with the Institute for Spatial Development. Key contribution to this policy was provided by the Czech Chamber of Architects, the Czech Chamber of Certified Engineers and Technicians Active in Construction, and the Association for Urban and Regional Planning of the Czech Republic. Universities, non-governmental and non-profit organizations, and the general public participated in the preparations as well.

## Vision

The purpose of the Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic is to improve the quality of peoples' lives by improving the quality of the environment in which they live. The proposed measures will lead to

- >>> increased quality of architecture,
- >>> economical structures fitting the surrounding environment,
- >>> friendly public spaces,
- >>> harmonic urban and country areas, including the adjacent landscape,
- >>> respect for local particularities of each region of the Czech Republic
- >>> perception of architecture as an existing and future component of our cultural heritage,
- >>> education of experts and the general public to thus stimulate public interest in the quality of the environment.

## Approach

This policy emphasizes the need for a complex approach to assess the buildings, their relation to existing architectonic and urban values, and their impact on the landscape. The basic principle is a complex perception of the environment, which must be reflected in the overall concept, in the design of the individual project components, as well as in the urban, architectural and artistic details. An integrated approach must be applied to solve problems, and this approach shall balance and interconnect requirements as defined by individual fields of human activity.



## Themes and Measures

The Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic addresses three general thematic groups that include 8 themes in total. Objectives have been determined for each theme as well as the measures leading to their implementation. The document specifies the relevant institutions and time frames for each of those measures. The Ministry for Regional Development is monitoring, assessing, and publishing the results of implementation in regular two-year intervals.

### Themes:

## LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENTS

### 1. Landscape and Settlements Arrangements

The first theme's objective is to improve the cooperation in the settlement structure and to improve the landscape solutions in the planning context. Its aim is to determine, protect and develop a long-term urban settlement concept, including urban composition. Minimization of an excessive and unwanted spread of settlements into the landscape should be achieved, along with the elimination of farmland appropriation. These measures are also intended to improve the land's resilience against natural disasters and its adaptation to climate change.

### 2. Public Spaces

This policy calls for the sufficient availability of public spaces within settlements, easy access to such spaces and their mutual interconnection. It seeks the use of planning studies to verify existing systems and the use of the regulatory plans to stabilize the proposed parcelling. The solutions for major public spaces shall be determined via public competitions. Construction of complexes which negate the permeability of the territory should be eliminated. Improvement of public spaces should be planned with the participation of the public.

### 3. Integration of Buildings in their Environs

The policy aims to ensure coherence of new buildings and the character and pattern of valuable existing urban structures. One of the main objectives is to support the elements that create local, city-wide or regional identity and to support the character and uniqueness of the given area. The policy also requires the examination of the status and powers of the chief architects.

## BUILDINGS

### 4. Tenders

According to the policy, the price of the planning documentation and building projects shall not be the sole criterion for selection. Architectural competitions are preferred when it comes to important construction projects. In order to increase the quality of buildings, it is necessary to bear in mind not only the building costs, but also the operational costs of the construction's life span.

### 5. Design, Construction, Life Cycle and Sustainability of Buildings

The policy strives for the maximum quality of project documentation. That is why it is pushing for application of performance standards and fee systems for preparations of planning documentation and project documentations. Increased construction quality shall be supported by long-term monitoring of data on the economics of implementation, operation and maintenance of buildings funded from the public budget.

## EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND RESEARCH

### 6. Education

Designers and other persons involved in the construction works need deeper education and the public officials need to be provided with better ongoing training. The most important thing however, is to support and develop education and awareness-raising in architecture, urbanism, planning, landscape architecture, building culture, and high-quality environment, at all school levels.

### 7. Awareness and Media

The policy stresses out the need of more frequent presentation of topics relating to the quality of the environment and aesthetic construction qualities in the public media. It is important to promote sharing of examples of good practices and high-quality completed projects.

### 8. Research and Development

Research activities focussing on architecture, urbanism, planning, landscape architecture, and building culture should be further developed. Especially important is to emphasize publishing and practical usage of the research results. Grants offered by various institutions shall be uniformly monitored and registered.