



Executive Summary

This evaluation report assesses the *Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)* in the Czech Republic. The evaluation is based on the grounds of the European Commission (EC) requirement to present the member states' *YEI* evaluation reports by the end of 2015. However, the *YEI* projects in the Czech Republic are not yet in their implementation phase, thus this report presents *ex-ante* assessment of the *YEI*. It summarizes main findings regarding the *YEI* context and relevance, and describes four projects that are being prepared in the initiative's framework.

The report states that only one of the Czech NUTS 2 regions, Northwest, is qualified for the *YEI* support, and it surpasses the eligibility criteria of youth unemployment rate by a small margin. In the comparison with other supported European regions, the youth unemployment rate of Northwest region ranks among the lowest ones. However, it still presents the highest unemployment figures within the Czech Republic, and evinces related problems such as low education levels and labour supply and demand mismatch. Compared to other supported regions, the evaluation report considers the *YEI*'s necessity in the Czech Republic as rather low. However, the regional focus within the country is assessed as accurate. The *YEI* support in the Czech Republic is administered within the Investment Priority 1.5 of the Operational Programme Employment.

Northwest comprises of two NUTS 3 regions; Karlovarský kraj and Ústecký kraj. Their Employment Office Authorities submit their projects within the *YEI* as *Iniciativa Karlovarského kraje* and *Iniciativa Ústeckého kraje*. These projects focus on providing education, trainings and work experience opportunities such as internships.

Karlovarský kraj and Ústecký kraj regional authorities also present their projects, named *Nestůj a pojd' II* and *Dáváme práci* respectively. Karlovarský kraj's project (*Nestůj a pojd' II*) sets up very similar activities composition as the above-described Employment Office's projects. Ústecký kraj's initiative (*Dáváme práci*) adopts a different approach, proposing to support socially excluded youth and young entrepreneurs. Its activities complement the local Employment Office project.

All of the projects approach the targeted youth on individual basis, take into account regional specifics and attempt to cooperate within wide institutional network.