



Mission:

*“Ready to serve the cause of democracy, human rights and civil society whenever and wherever the need arises.”*

## Annual Report 2018

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

2018 was the year when DEMAS marked ten years since its establishment. When several organizations working in the field of human rights and freedoms endorsing democracy decided to join their efforts, they had already had a track record of implementing projects together. Establishing an official platform was a logical thing to do. During the previous period, prior to the establishment of the association, activities aimed at spreading ideas and principles of transition to democracy as a policy which has been an official element of [Czech foreign policy](#) for the past twenty-five years as a way in which the Czech Republic contributes to global safety, stability and sustainable development.

Since its establishment, DEMAS has become a stable partner of many activities of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (MFA CR) as its main civil society partner supplying selected expert inputs. By doing this, the association contributed greatly to the reputation of the Czech Republic, which has unfortunately suffered due to turbulences in domestic politics in the recent years and their reflection in some of the actions of the Czech Republic on the international stage. By providing transparent support to human rights and democracy both in the Czech Republic and abroad, DEMAS shows that an active and resilient civil society which believes in freedom and democracy still exists in the Czech Republic. We also realize more and more that effective and meaningful support of democracy in the world cannot exist without protecting democracy and its values at home; this is the reason why DEMAS is going to continue to raise public awareness of democracy and human rights, both domestically and abroad.

Pavel Pšeja, Chair of the Board of Directors  
Sabina Malcová, Executive Director

### Platform in its tenth year of existence

As of 31 Dec 2018, DEMAS had thirteen regular members and two members with permanent observer status. Two meetings of the whole platform and four meetings of the Board of Directors took place during 2018, when the

platform celebrated its tenth anniversary; the agenda of the meetings included both internal affairs and program discussions on joint activities of the platform. The Secretariat is, by definition, the driving force behind joint efforts of the platform. The new Board of Directors was elected at the general meeting in September to oversee the direction of the platform's activities. The new members of the Board of Directors are: Vladimír Bartovic, Vít Dostál, Sylva Horáková, Jakub Klepal (Vice-Chair) and Pavel Pšeja (Chair). Similarly to the previous years, the platform's activities were split into several working groups covering both geographical areas, primarily, the post-Soviet region, and topics, primarily advocacy.

Similarly to previous years, also in 2018, there was a vivid debate across the platform and other entities implementing MFA CR projects on priority countries of Czech Foreign Policy. This debate resulted in a joint opinion for MFA CR and supporting documentation of foreign affairs of the Czech Republic. MFA CR was also the recipient of relevant information on practical support of political human rights which was used for preparing materials for the address delivered by the Minister at a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. Throughout the whole year, various meetings with government officials – mainly representatives of MFA departments, political parties, both chambers of Czech Parliament, experts and citizens took place with the goal of raising awareness about transformation policy and democratization. DEMAS also participated in the work of an expert group for non-governmental non-for-profit organizations for Senator Miluše Horská, Vice-President of the Senate of the Czech Republic.

Traditionally, DEMAS was actively involved in the work of the [Human Rights and Democracy Network](#) (HRDN); the platform participated in its meetings in Brussels and contributed to sharing materials and minutes among its members, including participation in joint declarations and HRDN research (see below), including, for instance, participation in the [EU – NGO Human Rights Forum](#) in Brussels. [Měj se k světu](#) initiative was another informal professional group joined by DEMAS in 2018. In 2018, DEMAS also cooperated with the Polish foreign policy platform [Grupa Zagranica](#) and Hungari-

an and Slovenian NGOs in a project financed by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The project featured an advocacy workshop and a networking meeting in Warsaw, where DEMAS representatives delivered several talks on advocacy strategies with an emphasis on advocacy towards EU institutions. Cooperation with NGOs from Visegrád countries continued into the second half of the year.

The Secretariat is also in charge of a steady flow of new information for its members. In our regular weekly newsletter, we provided information on the developments in different regions, on grant calls, on invitations to important events and on new publications.

Similarly to the previous years, DEMAS Secretariat continued to support capacity building of its members by providing travelling grants. Their purpose was, for example, participation in conferences and making contributions, research or advocacy-related trips which were focused solely on institutions in Brussels.

### Conferences, seminars and lectures

On 11 April, DEMAS participated in NGO Market, a fair of non-for-profit non-governmental organizations taking place in Prague since 2000. The Secretariat presented joint work of the platform and activities of its individual members together with some of the member organizations. The Secretariat presented the work of those organizations which were not present at the fair. We believe that contact campaigns, such as a presentation at NGO Market, are very effective. An invitation to this year's



Photo: NGO Market



Photo: One World in the Regions

NGO Market was published in the first issue of the Newsletter, and the Secretariat also mentioned it on its website. It also reported on NGO Market in the [second issue of the Newsletter](#).

One of the main topics of Czech foreign policy, transformation cooperation and democratization, remain largely unknown to the public. This is the reason why DEMAS, together with experts from its member organizations, organized a series of debates on Czech foreign policy. Public debates took place during [Jeden svět v regionech](#) (One World in the Regions) festival, e.g. in Karlovy Vary, České Budějovice and Tábor. A debate with the title [Ukrajina pět let po Revoluci](#) (Ukraine Five Years Post-Revolution) with the participation of the Ambassador of Ukraine, Yevgen Perebyinis, took place in the Municipal Library in Hradec Králové. Lectures for Czech and foreign students of Bachelor programs at Palacký University in Olomouc received positive feedback.

DEMAS organized a traditional debate at Forum 2000, this time with the title *V4: Is Civil Society Under Pressure? Democracy in Visegrád countries is currently experiencing turbulent times and civil society is also exposed to problems. What is the current role of civil society, how is it possible to define civil society, and what problems and pressure is civil society of Visegrád countries facing today?* This and other issues were the topic of the debate organized as a part of Democracy Festival which was part of Forum 2000 international conference. This debate, which took place in the European House on 9 October, featured Robert Basch, Robert Břešťan, Roman Joch and Lucia Najšlová. The debate was hosted by Vladimír Bartovic.

During the monitored period, DEMAS Secretariat organized two half-day trainings aimed at improving public communications of NGOs. The topic of the first one was *Crisis communication and internal marketing analytics in social media*; the topic of the second one was *Comprehensive approach to PR, skillsharing and practical examples of practical PR*.

## Declarations and Opinions

In 2018, the platform joined two HRDN opinions regarding [EU financial instruments](#), and issued three joint opinions itself, two concerning the status of civil society in Hungary and one concerning decrease of funds allocated to ZRS and TRANS programs: On 19 February, DEMAS signed the letter by Amnesty International to [support Hungarian civil society organizations](#). On 19 March, DEMAS published a letter in response to new legislative initiatives aimed at restricting [civil society in Hungary](#). This opinion was covered in the April issue of [Bulletin pro lidská práva a demokratizaci](#) (Human Rights and Democratization Bulletin). On 27 November, DEMAS, FoRS and Platform of Entrepreneurs for Development Cooperation sent a letter to a group of Members of the Chamber of Deputies and Senators regarding a draft amendment to restrict funding of ZRS and TRANS programs introduced by Jiří Kobza (MP for SPD) in the national budget for 2018. The draft bill proposed not only to restrict ZRS funding to a large degree, but also, primarily, to terminate TRANS altogether. The letter was also endorsed by the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, who supported are arguments.

The Association continued to publish its [Newsletter](#); four issues were published in 2018. This Newsletter is one of the tools DEMAS uses for communicating with the outside world. All issues are available at our regularly updated website [www.demas.cz](http://www.demas.cz) in the News section. In the final quarter, the website was revised and updated.



Photo: Training

## Projects

Similarly to 2017, [Transition Promotion Program by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic](#) supported *Support of DEMAS platform*, a one-year project of DEMAS capacity building, networking, exchange of information and raising awareness among experts with regard to Czech transformational policy. The project was also aimed at supporting advocacy efforts and cooperation with the MFA of the Czech Republic.

The project entitled *Support of Advocacy Activities towards the EU and Central European Cooperation for the period from October 2017 until September 2018* was supported by the [National Endowment for Democracy](#). Its main goal is to support DEMAS members' advocacy activities with the EU institutions and NGO cooperation in Visegrád countries.



Photo: Debate at Forum 2000



## Financing

As we already mentioned under Projects, DEMAS implemented two subsidized projects in 2018.  
MFA CR: 800 thous.  
NED: 468 thous.

All expenses were non-investment by nature, split into individual subsidized categories in accordance with the corresponding budgets; mostly, they were classified as personnel costs, services and overhead costs.

**Total consumed purchases: 313 thous.**

Material consumption: 15 thous.

Travel expenses: 86 thous.

Costs of representation: 3 thous.

Other services: 209 thous.

**Total personnel costs: 824 thous.**

Wages: 626 thous.

Social security tax: 196 thous.

Costs related to statutory social security: 2 thous.

**Other costs total: 1 thous.**

Misc. other costs: 1 thous.

**Total contributions provided: 144 thous.**

Membership fees paid: 144 thous.

**Total costs: 1282 thous.**

**Total operational subsidies: 1268 thous.**

Operational subsidies: 1268 thous.

**Total contributions received: 114 thous.**

Total contributions received (donations): 2 thous.

Membership fees collected: 112 thous.

**Total revenue from own operations and from the sale of goods: 33 thous.**

**Total income: 1425 thous.**

**Profit before and after tax: 143 thous.**

## Tiráž

The activities of DEMAS are determined independently and exclusively by the member organizations. DEMAS is politically non-partisan, and its actions reflect neither any political or ideological positions nor the interests of any other institution.

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Assistance and Human Rights, 2019



**TRANSITION**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

### Board of Directors:

Vladimír Bartovic  
Vít Dostál  
Sylva Horáková  
Jakub Klepal (Vice-Chair)  
Pavel Pšejja (Chair)

### Secretariat:

Sabina Malcová (Executive Director)  
Veronika Soporská (Project Manager)

### Member Organizations:

Agora Central Europe  
Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky  
CASLA Institute  
CEELI Institute  
Centrum pro komunitní práci  
Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury  
CEVRO  
Člověk v tísni  
EUROPEUM  
Nadace Forum 2000  
Občanské Bělorusko  
Transitions  
Transparency International Česká republika

### Observers:

Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague  
Amnesty International