



Mission:

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

## Annual Report 2020

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*this is the annual report of DEMAS for the year 2020. The year of an unprecedented pandemic was not easy for anyone. Although normal life and work slowed down at first, we were back in the office after a relatively short time and thought of new ways of implementing our plans.*

*The pandemic has changed our lives – often, beyond recognition. And it was not much different in some other parts of the world; in fact, it was much worse. In undemocratic regimes where human rights are violated daily, the pandemic has become a pretext for silencing opposition, imprisoning activists or suppressing rallies. Work of our member organizations in these places has become even more important – and complicated. We would like to thank all our colleagues for their dedication and enthusiasm, and we also like to thank all of you for your help and support.*

*Jakub Klepal, Chair of the Board of Directors  
Sabina Malcová, Executive Director*

### Platform in its twelfth year of existence

Center for the Study of Democracy and Culture from Brno (CDK), one of the organizations that founded DEMAS, terminated its membership as of 31 July 2020. The reason was it ceased its transformation policy activities and re-emerged as a publisher of professional literature. At the same time, an academic organization [Center for Human Rights and Democracy](#), which deals with human rights from the point of view of Czech and international law, expressed interest in becoming a member of our platform. During August, the Center was approved *per rollam* by all DEMAS members, and in September, it participated in the General Meeting as a member with the status of an observer. As of 31 December 2020, the platform had 11 full members, two members with a permanent observer status and one with “probation” observer status for a period of one year, after which full membership can be expected.

Two meetings of the whole platform and five meetings of the Board of Directors took

place during 2019; 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 direction of the platform is set by the new Board of Directors: L. Argüellová (People in Need), M. Svoboda (CEELI Inst.), V. Dostál (AMO), J. Klepal (Forum 2000) and Š. Zajíček (CEVRO), who were elected by the General Meeting on 15 September. J. Klepal was elected chairman and M. Svoboda vice-chairman. As in previous years, the work of the platform was carried out by several working groups covering both geographical and thematic areas, primarily corresponding to Czech foreign policy priorities. The working groups met mainly to discuss geographical priorities.

Throughout 2020, the Association closely cooperated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic on topics related to prioritized countries and topics of Czech foreign policy; it organized several thematic meetings, and platform representatives participated in regular consultations with the Ministry’s leadership and representatives of relevant departments. DEMAS also regularly submits information pertaining to practical support of political human rights to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which then uses it for preparing the address delivered by the Minister at the [United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva and the Universal Periodic Review](#).

In March, DEMAS was nominated by Helena Válková, Commissioner for Human Rights, to the working group on creation of the [Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations Strategy for 2021–2030](#) under the auspices of the Government Council for NGOs. Throughout the year, there were meetings with Czech MPs, MEPs and other political representatives, experts and citizens, with the purpose of information exchange pertaining primarily to Czech foreign policy. DEMAS also participated in the work of an expert group for non-governmental non-for-profit organizations which provides support for Senator Miluše Horská, Vice-President of the Senate of the Czech Republic.

As in previous years, DEMAS was actively involved in the activities of the [Human Rights and Democracy Network \(HRDN\)](#) and partly

contributed to [Neon](#), a Czech NGO initiative. The main benefit of involvement in both interdisciplinary platforms is to have access to general information about current events and direct contact with Czech and international organizations operating mainly in the field of transformation and development policy.

The Secretariat is also responsible for ensuring a steady flow of new information to 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. As in previous years, DEMAS Secretariat continued to support capacity building of its members by providing education or travelling grants. They were provided, among other, to enable participation in conferences and making of professional contributions or research trips.

During its January meeting, the Platform selected topics for trainings organized by the Secretariat for the Platform’s member organizations. This year’s theme was the digitization of work, which had been more than useful in the wake of the Covid pandemic and the transition to teleworking. The training conducted by K. Švidrnichová took place on 23 November and 1 December and was focused on broader issues and challenges for work teams related to online communication and on specific tools, techniques and strategies to facilitate communication within the team and outside the organization.

### Conferences, seminars and lectures

[This mini-project in cooperation with the Hungarian branch of the global pro-bono network PILnet](#) was focused on two round tables on the topic [Supporting civil society through private sector pro bono services and civic engagement of young people and students](#). The discussions were attended by 30 representatives of NGOs, business, academia, public administration and independent experts – this number was already influenced by the spread of the pandemic.

In the fall, two lectures were given as part of a “postponed” film festival [One world in the regions](#) DEMAS member organizations; analysts



Photo: Round table discussion

from DEMAS member organizations took part in a debate on 8 October; the debate was about the movie entitled [The Earth Is Blue Like An Orange](#) with guest M. Lebdůška (AMO); a debate about the movie entitled [Colectiv](#) which took place on 10 October and featured P. Leyer (Transparency International) as a guest. Other originally planned lectures had to be canceled due to the pandemic.

Unfortunately, due to quarantine measures, the traditional NGO Market fair, at which DEMAS traditionally presented its work and transformation policy as such, could not take place. Instead, the event took place in early November in the form of an online format entitled [Weeks for the non-profit sector](#) and featuring several debates and workshops.

Lectures on transformation policy at the [Department of International Relations](#) and European Studies of the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University in Brno, and the [Department of Development Studies](#) of the Faculty of Science, Palacký University in Olomouc, took place during the fall (winter) semester. Almost thirty foreign students involved in the [Global Development Policy](#) program at the Department of Development Studies at Palacký University in Olomouc (GLODEP) from all over the world participated in a one-day workshop in Prague.

An invitation-only panel discussion entitled *Czech foreign policy: Supporting Transformation Policy Across the Political Spectrum* took

place in the European House on 13 October as part of the annual Forum 2000 conference, which was traditionally attended by members of parliamentary political parties, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, companies and NGOs. The fact that all respondents agreed on the importance of transformation policy as a direct and effective tool of Czech foreign policy, which earns a good reputation for the Czech Republic, especially abroad, we consider as a positive thing. The question remains how to ensure that it has the same credit on the domestic scene. The issue of linking support for good governance, the rule of law, fundamental human rights and business is perceived as the key theme.

## Declarations and Opinions

In 2020, DEMAS joined [a number of opinions, calls and campaigns](#) initiated by international and domestic organizations or platforms: an opinion on the forthcoming [EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy](#), an initiative of the Brussels HRDN network addressed to European Council representatives dedicated to [the issue of financing the EU's external action in the next multiannual financial framework](#), an open letter entitled *European Civic Forum* and addressed to European and national leaders concerning [funding support for civil society organizations](#), an initiative calling for the level of support to be maintained in the multiannual financial framework, in particular, a letter to selected representatives of the European Parliament, [Increasing Resources for Human Rights and Democracy in the next MFF](#), and the call of HRDN and other international networks entitled [Global Crises Demand Strengthening Cooperation Solidarity](#) and seeking to increase of funds, especially in the thematic pillar of NDICI MFF, as well as the recommendation of HRDN for revision of [directives on dialogues and human rights with third countries, consul-](#)

[tation of the European Commission on the thematic program in support of civil society](#) and an open letter to Prime Minister A. Babiš and Vice President of the European Commission M. Ševčovič on the issue of tampered nomination of representatives of the third sector for the Czech Republic to the European Economic and Social Committee.

The Association continued to publish its [Newsletter](#); four issues were published in 2020. This Newsletter is one of the tools DEMAS uses for communicating with the outside world. All issues are available on our regularly updated website [www.demas.cz](#) in the News section.

## Projects

Similarly to the previous years, [Transition Promotion Program by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic](#) supported *Support of DEMAS platform*, a three-year project for 2019–2021 aimed at DEMAS capacity building, networking, exchange of information and raising awareness among experts with regard to Czech transformation policy. The project was also aimed at supporting advocacy efforts and cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and other bodies of public administration.

The project entitled *Strengthening NGO Resilience and Democracy Advocacy* for the period from October 2019 until September 2020 was supported by the National Endowment for Democracy. Its main goal is to support DEMAS advocacy activities and NGO cooperation in the Visegrád countries. The NED project was compatible with the project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and served as its co-financing.

This mini project in cooperation with the Hungarian branch of the global pro-bono network [PILnet](#) was focused on two round tables on the topic *Supporting civil society through private sector pro bono services and civic engagement of young people and students*. The entire project was implemented in February and March 2020.

A consortium of OSF Foundation, Open Society Foundation, NIOK Foundation and Glopolis think-tank supported the project entitled *Strengthening value-oriented Czech foreign policy*. Project implementation will be taking place from September 2020 to December 2021 as a part of [Stronger Roots](#), a program which aims to support the resilience and stability of civil society organizations in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia and help them to better position themselves in society.



Photo: One World in Pilsen, M. Lebdůška (AMO/DEMAS)

## Financing

As we already mentioned under Projects, DEMAS implemented four subsidized projects in 2020.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: 900 thous.

NED: 185 thous.

PILnet: 34 thous.

OSF: 25 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 and costs of services.

### **Total consumed purchases: 262 thous.**

Material consumption: 22 thous.

Travel expenses: 14 thous.

Costs of representation: 2 thous.

Other services: 224 thous.

### **Total staff costs: 894 thous.**

Wages: 672 thous.

Social security tax: 219 thous.

Cost related to statutory social security: 3 thous.

### **Other costs total: 1 thous.**

Misc. other costs: 1 thous.

### **Total contributions provided: 28 thous.**

Membership fees paid: 28 thous.

### **Total costs: 1185 thous.**

### **Total operational subsidies: 934 thous.**

Operational subsidies: 934 thous.

### **Total contributions received: 322 thous.**

Total contributions received (donations): 210 thous.

Membership fees collected: 112 thous.

### **Total revenue from own operations and from the sale of goods: 20 thous.**

### **Total income: 1276 thous.**

### **Profit before and after tax: 91 thous.**

## Imprint

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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### *Board of Directors:*

Lucia Argüellová  
Vít Dostál  
Jakub Klepal (Chairman)  
Marek Svoboda (Vice-Chairman)  
Šimon Zajíček

### *Secretariat:*

Sabina Malcová (Executive Director)  
Hana Votradvocová (Project Manager)

### *Member Organizations:*

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

### *Observers:*

Arcidiecézní charita Praha  
Amnesty International  
Centrum pro lidská práva a demokracii



**National Endowment  
for Democracy**  
*Supporting freedom around the world*

| Nadace OSF

**TRANSITION**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

**PILnet** The Global Network  
for Public Interest Law