

mišljenja i komentari

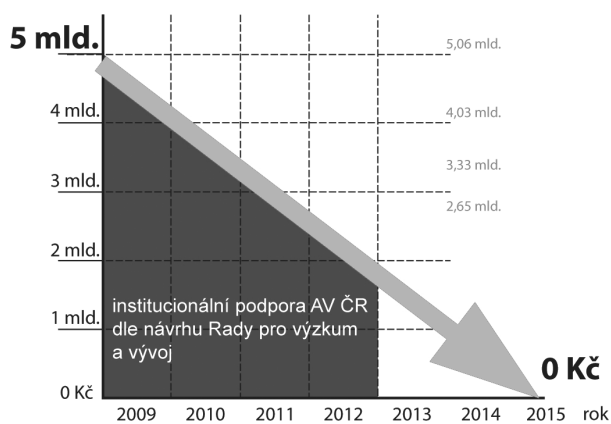
Struggle for Governmental Financial Support of Science in the Czech Republic

I. Wichterle

Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Institute of Chemical Process Fundamentals, Razvojova 2, CZ-16502 Prague 6, Czech Republic

The world financial crisis has influenced state budgets all over and impacted every field of society. However, the necessary cost restrictions cannot be proportionally distributed among individual chapters of budget as politicians are ready to do. It happened in the Czech Republic that unluckily governmental Council for Research, Development and Innovation (RVVI) recommended to reduce finances for the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR). Like the CNRS in France or the Max-Planck Gesellschaft in Germany, the ASCR is the government institution consisting of 54 institutes and employing almost 7000 people of which more than half are university-educated scientists. Actually, the ASCR produces almost 40 % of all scientific results in the country.

The proposed reductions for the following years should continue in order to reach only 50 % of the present budget in 2012, which naturally could be extrapolated to 0 % in 2015 as shown in the diagram.



Institutional support of ASCR according to the proposal of RVVI (1 Kč = 0.28 Kn)

Due to the expectation of future unfavorable conditions, serious negotiations at the highest level have started, while the internet petition had 14000 verified signatures by the end of August 2009 (<http://www.cas.cz/en/>). Some street events were organized by young scientists also (<http://www.vedazije.cz>). For example, the demonstration of “murdering Czech science” was performed in front of the Institute of Art History.

Finally, the long and uneasy negotiations between Premier Jan Fischer and President of ASCR Professor Jiří Drahoš have resulted in a mutually acceptable solution (<http://hn.ihned.cz/c1-37943380-vlada-prida-akademii-pul-miliardy>): The Academy will receive an additional 20 million €, i. e. half of the amount suggested as 2010 reduction.

Moreover, common consent was found in organizing a round table discussion before end of August 2009 on how to measure and



Demonstration of execution the Czech science – VRAŽDA ČESKÉ VĚDY (=MURDER OF CZECH SCIENCE)



Premier Jan Fischer and President of the ASCR Professor Jiří Drahoš (right)

evaluate fruitfulness of research. Such common problems have to progress quickly because future budgets for the Academy will depend on evaluation procedures, as the Finance Minister said. However, the Academy has been applying its internal evaluation procedures for more than five years by means of international evaluation committees.

Conclusion: if there is a good will from both sides, a certain compromise can be reached even though the problems are not insignificant and negotiations rather complicated and difficult.