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The Need for Policy Coherence  
and New Partnerships



**Policy Coherence for Development of the Czech Republic:  
Case Studies on Migration and Trade**

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## Abstract

The Czech Republic is a re-emerging donor, but it is not much less integrated in the global economy and migration networks than experienced donor countries. Even though it is a new EU member state, it is subject to a strong Europeanization of national policies, including those in the development policy area. In two case studies on migration and trade, I analyse the Czech discourses and practices of policy coherence for development (PCD). The constructionist approach to PCD underlines that an awareness of incoherencies and agreement at conceptual and analysis levels are as much necessary for policy implementation as legal and institutional provisions. I explain the positions to PCD of the actors involved in the migration and trade policy area, and I point out the incoherencies, which mostly touch on brain drain, remittances and the impact of agricultural subsidies and of state export guarantees. In the context of a reform of the Czech bilateral development cooperation, the case on migration shows that the promotion of PCD can be used by actors whose roles are endangered by the reduction of priority sectors of development cooperation. The case on trade proves that conceptual disagreements can be so severe that there is no consensus on the signification of development, preventing further implementation of policy coherence.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Since Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union (EU) in 2007, one fifth of all European citizens have lived in a new member state (NMS).<sup>2</sup> However, their contribution to the EU's official development assistance (ODA) approximates only 1%.<sup>3</sup> None of them is a member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and only four Central European countries are OECD members. Moreover, the NMS provide the major part of their ODA through the EU budget and other compulsory contributions to multilateral organizations. According to the 2010 target set by the European Council, the new NMS must "strive to increase" their ODA/GNI ratio to 0.17%, but some of them are already off-track, and the last newcomers have started to set up institutions to provide bilateral aid only recently.

However, these "re-emerging" or just "emerging" donor countries – according to their rich or poor experience of ideologically motivated aid during the Cold War – are not significantly less integrated in the global economy, politics and environment than the experienced donors. They are all trading partners of the developing countries and influence the EU trade and agricultural policies. They face population decline, and

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<sup>1</sup> Draft version, not proofread. This paper is a substantial reworking of the paper *Incoherence of the Czech Policies for International Development: A Conceptual Framework*, presented at the 6th CEEISA Convention "Global and Regional Governance – European Perspectives and Beyond" in Wroclaw, Poland on 25 May 2007. My thanks go to, the discussant of the panel "European development policy: discourses and implementation" Alexander Brand, and to all the interviewees and respondents listed in the Annex.

<sup>2</sup> The new member states of the European Union include five Central European countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Poland), three Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), and two Mediterranean countries (Cyprus and Malta) since 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004, and two East Balkan countries (Bulgaria and Romania) since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Based on rough calculations of reported data and estimates from OECD DAC (2007a) and PASOS (2007).

some of them have already opened their labour markets to qualified migrants from developing and transition countries. Consciously or unconsciously, their external and internal policies have an impact on the developing world, which may be incoherent with the goals of their development policies. Indeed, the relative insignificance of their development programmes should highlight the importance of the other policies towards the developing world and, hence, the problem of policy coherence for development (PCD).

In contrast to this assumption, the concept of PCD is the most institutionalized and implemented among the most experienced donors, especially the Scandinavian countries (ECPDM/ICEI 2006). It seems that in reality, the institution in charge of development cooperation programmes must obtain significant support and institutional recognition before a widely defined development policy gains enough in authority to influence the decisions made by other government bodies. The different levels of attention paid to PCD across the EU contrasts with the roughly similar impact of its members on the developing world and emphasizes that policy coherence is a social construct. In the area of development cooperation, the distinction between discourses and practices was shown to be particularly fruitful.<sup>4</sup> In the case of PCD, the gap between official discourses and policy implementation is probably even wider. Analyzing the (mis)use of the concept by diverse political actors, their (mis)perceptions of it and whether the concept is present or absent in their discourse can help us to understand its rationale and prospects.

The Czech Republic ranks among the NMS whose development policy is the closest to the least active of the fifteen “old” member states (OMS), located especially in South Europe. Its recent accession to the EU and the principles of PCD originating mostly at the European and multilateral levels make it a good case on which to study the effect of Europeanization on national policies. The country has started the transformation of its development cooperation recently, and it is aligning to the centralized institutional model common in most of the OMS, which includes a development agency. The Act on Development Cooperation has not been adopted yet. Even though the principle of policy coherence has already been included in the documents which define the current institutional framework and in the government’s programme since 2006, it is not implemented. This leaves a space for study of the positions in the policy area.

I start by making a distinction between different types and levels of policy coherence in a part dedicated to the genealogy, definition, analysis and critique of the concept, which is used more as an operative tool than as a scientific concept. In the second part of the paper, I introduce PCD in the context of the enlargement of the European Union. In the third part, I present the general institutional framework of the Czech development policy and the positions of the main actors. The last two parts are case studies on migration and trade..While it is extremely difficult to quantify exactly the development impacts of the Czech external and internal policies on the developing world, the interviews and questionnaires with their actors have shown that while in the migration area, there is some motivation for the actors to get involved in the coherence process, which is connected to the development cooperation reform In the trade area, the misunderstandings of the concept of development make PCD

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Ferguson (1997) for a meso level view or Rist (2001) for a macro level view.

inoperative. I conclude with a reflection of the potential of the concept to politicize or depoliticize development issues in donor countries.

## **The concept of policy coherence of development**

The PCD appeared in the early 1990s as one of the triple C's (the principles of aid coordination and complementarity being the other two) in the Maastricht Treaty and in the publications of OECD DAC. The fall of the Berlin Wall partly helped to disideologize development cooperation, which led to its almost complete abandonment in the East and to its significant reduction in the West. On the one hand, the ideological motivations to support ruling governments in developing countries weakened and the focus on poverty reduction strengthened; on the other hand, lower budgets led the development agencies to concentrate more on the problem of aid efficiency.

At the same time, neoliberalism became the global economic model, and the apparent homogeneity of the former Third World disappeared in profit of the multiplication of actors, especially those of the "emerging markets". This constituted a serious challenge to the governments in the North and to the international organizations. Since then, the role of the private sector in financial relations between the North and the South has been steadily increasing, which limits the relative impact of the development cooperation. In spite of regional differences, the volume of foreign direct investments and of remittances grows much faster than aid (OECD 2005), and the donors face the problem of complementarity between aid and other financial flows (Cogneau and Lambert 2006). The concept of policy coherence *for development* can be seen as a response to the weakening public governance of the global economy, whose growth did not lead to a substantive reduction of poverty and inequalities.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of PCD is an invention of development policy-makers rather than scholars, an operative rather than an analytical tool. Aguiar Molina observes that "[d]espite the [EU's] numerous commitments to coherence, the concept, and its use in policy analysis, has rarely been examined" (Aguiar Molina 2003: 235). Mentioned only indirectly in the EU treaties, the concept was made explicit in a communication from the European Commission (European Commission 2005a) and later in the joint declaration European Consensus on Development (European Commission 2005b). Nowadays, coherence and effectiveness are considered as objectives of the development policy of the European Union. Coherence should be respected at all levels: national, regional and global. The developing countries "have the primary responsibility for conducting coherent and effective policies" as well (European Commission 2005b: 9). The announced priority of PCD contrasts with the problem of translation: while the Czech government documents use the word "koherence", the official Czech translation is "soudržnost", a word which is generally used to mean "cohesion", thereby making PCD into a "cohesion of policies in the interest of Development" (Evropská komise 2005). The word would be translated as

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<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of PCD on the global level, based on the Monterrey Consensus on Finance and Development, and from a gender perspective, see Floro and Hoppe (2005).

“consistency” in some other languages, which increases the confusion (Aguilar Molina 2003: 248).

Moving from the translation problems to the **definition**, Foster and Stokke (1999), in perhaps the most complete scholarly book on the subject, define coherence negatively as an absence of incoherencies (i.e. when “other policies deliberately or accidentally impair the effects of development policy or run counter to its intentions”). They understand incoherencies as inherent to any public policy and as a natural state of affairs. With the growing global interdependence, the divergences between interests of private actors are amplified and so are the incoherencies. Politics, reflecting this diversity, tend to compartmentize and create their own institutional cultures: different interests translate into different Departments which would then narrowly deal with separate aspects of a problem. Therefore, on the lowest hierarchical level, misunderstandings are inevitable.

If divergent interests are the cause of incoherence, attaining coherence is possible only in the presence of a common objective. The condition of a common interest, however, is not sufficient. Coherence must trickle down to lower **levels of policy implementation**: from strategies to mechanisms, and finally, to the outcomes (Forster and Stokke 1999). Intentions on the top level are not sufficient, and specific capacities are required on the bottom level of the administration. Aschoff (2005) divides the levels of coherence differently: he divides them into the levels of societal and political norms, political decision making, policy formulation and coordination, and the conceptual level. In both approaches, discursive and practical elements are mixed up, and the ideal state is clearly expressed as having a harmony between all of its levels. OECD (2005) does not provide any more enriching definition, but it does offer a classification of the **tools** needed to put coherence into practice: hard law, soft law, capacity building, surveillance, analysis (by order of hierarchy). The fieldwork in the Czech Republic suggests that *awareness* could be added as the lowest element by order of importance. The purpose of this paper is not to provide a better conceptual framework, but to show that the current conceptualization of PCD is still dispersed.

The whole picture is complicated by the fact that there are multiple **levels of governance**. Foster and Stokke (1999) propose to identify coherence at four levels: coherence of aid policy, coherence of policies towards the South, coherence of donor’s policies (and of aid policy in particular) towards the South, and coherence between donor and recipient policies. While this classification is the most cited, it seems to be a little bit confusing since the third point is but a special case of the second point. A classification by actors seems to be more relevant since it eases the analysis and helps to include the European dimension: internal coherence of the aid policy, intra-governmental coherence, inter-governmental coherence, multilateral-bilateral coherence and donor-recipient coherence (ECPDM/ICEI 2006: 19). In the case studies, I concentrate chiefly on the intra-governmental policy and partly touch on the internal coherence of the aid policy.

Coherence is difficult to attain because one objective must be agreed upon by all concerned actors at all levels of policy implementation and all levels of governance simultaneously. But is such a situation desirable? Achieving policy coherence is feasible neither in theory nor in practice, except in a totalitarian regime. Therefore,

“one-sided demands for coherence by development policy would not be devoid of moral and political arrogance” (Ashoff 2005: 26). Indeed, this is the general state of affairs. Assuming that the interests of the South are seldom identical to the interests of the North, a call for coherence of *policies* for development can be interpreted as call for a shift to *objectives* favourable to the developing world. Incoherence is a result of different interests within a government, which are legitimate in a democratic society by definition. And it cannot be eliminated without limiting the other interests. Therefore, however technical its denomination can seem, the policy coherence *for something* is based on the very idea of the greater legitimacy of the South’s interests and assumes ethical principles of altruism or justice, even if they can be masked.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the call for PCD seems to struggle against the depolitization of development and the North’s concentration on aid transformed into a technical issue instead of struggling with the structure of relations between the North and the South. That is why in practice, coherence is often reduced to the strategy of “naming and shaming” (Winters 2001: 22). The authors who base their approach to coherence on the Rational Choice Theory, such as Winters, are necessarily **critical** of the concept:

Policy-making is about trade-offs, and except in terms of some particular trade-off, coherence is non-operational: it begs the critical question of what point to cohere about, i.e. where is ‘here’ in coherence. In practice, the only role for ‘coherence’ as an abstract term is rhetorical – as a means of signalling concern and persuading partners to pursue some course of action. I think we would be better off without it. (Winters 2001: 1)

Otherwise, coherence would be rational as far as the costs of its implementation would not be greater than the savings. Foster and Stokke (1999) base the coherence framework on the Rational Choice Theory as well without being so critical of the concept.

Another critical approach to PCD may have been inspired by a recent scrutiny of the development-security nexus by Chandler (2007).<sup>7</sup> He starts by observing that the causal links between security and development are far from being clear. During the last few years, the scope of both concepts has been enlarged so much that the nexus is reduced to wishful contradictory political recommendations. The unclear political framework between different agendas makes policy making difficult. The focus on coherence may signify a shift of interest from the incapacity of a single development or security agenda to solving the problems of development or security. As a result, the call for coherence is reduced to the focus on Northern policy making

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<sup>6</sup> Policy makers often stress that a “win-win” situation where greater coherence for development would be achieved without harming the interests of the North is imaginable: “In particularly sensitive areas, such as migration or security, the promotion of European interests and the identification of partner countries’ own concerns must be balanced, with a view to finding *win-win* solutions.” (European Commission 2007: 9, my emphasis). This would be possible only if policy making was simply inefficient and transaction costs to overcome inefficiency were null. In this case, success could be achieved by separate policies. Another strategy of policy-makers is to identify the South’s interest with the one of the North and call for “increased awareness of the fact that development and poverty reduction are eventually in Europe’s own interest.” (European Commission 2007: 10). Here, the coherence problem is reduced to long vs. short term priorities, which, however, remain the object of divergent political interests as well.

<sup>7</sup> “Security and development” was the main topic of the precedent EADI General Conference, which was held in Bonn in 2005.

processes instead of focusing on the partners in the South, the targets of the development policy:

[...] the call for ‘coherence’, central to the security-development nexus, is a bureaucratic substitute for politically coherent policy-making, when the clarity of goals enables instrumental policy making. Rather than justifying a policy in terms of goals, the desire for ‘coherence’ symbolizes the lack of belief that any policy or project can be defended on the basis of policy outcomes. (Chandler 2007)

Again, coherence would serve as a patch to the widening gap between the goal of poverty reduction and the reality of the South. But there is a difference between the coherence for development and the coherence between development and security. While the first type simply asks for a shift of the interests to the South, the latter presents the risk of diluting them and retaining the attention in the North. Moreover, the outcomes of higher coherence, translated in a shift in “structural” policies such as trade and migrations are less visible than aid. Nonetheless, Chandler’s analysis remains valuable in the sense that an exaggerated focus on the coherence implementation in the North may contribute to masking the real goal of the development policies. Contrary to their declared objective, “new partnerships” and “policy coherence” may lead to diluting responsibility between actors.<sup>8</sup>

The approach of the Rational Choice Theory with the notion of transaction costs appears as a handy tool for analysis of PCD. However, the coherence outcomes are extremely difficult to evaluate. It also considers the preferences of the actors as given and overlooks the fact that powerful actors shape the institutional framework to their advantage. An evolutionist approach to PCD may be more suitable, and the Veblenian notion of habit could explain the seemingly irrational actions of governments in the North toward the South. But, as announced, a new theory of PCD is not the aim of this paper.

For my purpose, the examination of the Czech policy coherence, the main asset of the current theories is pointing out that [1] PCD is always based on an implicit shift of interest to the advantage of the South; that [2] coherence can be implemented only if there is a common interest and understanding of the key concepts at the top level; and [3] it can be implemented only if there are capacities of analysis and policy-making at lower levels of administrative hierarchy.

## **Coherence before and after the EU enlargement**

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the post-communist countries almost immediately lost ideological reasons to continue their development cooperation programmes. The Central European and Baltic countries, formerly part of USSR, still had some pragmatic reasons to remain active in the South, especially commercial ones, but in the general turmoil, their political representations focused on the “return to the West”. The NMS had no colonial past, and its engagement in Africa, East Asia or Latin

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<sup>8</sup> It might appear surprising that development policy, which could be considered to be a regional policy, is a matter of serious incoherencies. An empirical assessment of internal US policies shows that regional policies rank among the most coherent ones and are characterized by a concentration of issues and interests (May et al. 2006). Drawing on the theory of public policy could help to clarify the concept in the context of development as well.

America was seen as an imposition of the Soviet Union incompatible with the new line of the democratic foreign policy. The OECD accession from 1995 on was a strong stimulus for Central European countries to restart their development cooperation programmes.<sup>9</sup>

The first concerns with policy coherence for development in the region were shared by the OMS of the EU. In the ambiance of uncertainty preceding each EU enlargement, especially the most massive enlargement ever in 2004, they saw EU accession as a potential obstacle to the development of the South (Doucet 2001; Granell 2005; Michaux 2002). Most of the authors feared the redirecting of European trade, investment and aid flows from the Mediterranean and Africa to the East. Millions of Eastern migrants would take the place of the Africans in the West.<sup>10</sup>

In 2008, their preoccupations appear to be exaggerated. Aguiar Molina (2003) gave a more balanced view of the problem. He forecasted that the Eastern enlargement would be beneficial to the developing world economically for the simple reason that Central and Eastern Europe are not genuine competitors to sub-Saharan and North Africa. In fact, while the latter export mostly raw materials, the NMS are exporters of manufactured products. The EU accession rather facilitated the access of African products to the enlarged common market. However, he admits that enlargement could have been harmful to the countries of the South politically. Since then, development has been moving up on the international political agenda, and it seems difficult to answer the question of to what extent it could be more beneficial to the South if the European Union was not occupied with the institutional and financial arrangement of the Eastern enlargement.

In the period preceding the accession, Aguiar Molina offered two scenarios for the future development policies of the NMS. If nothing changed, they would not be able to increase their international development budgets and their territorial preferences would be limited to their Eastern and South-Eastern neighbours. The alternative forecasted an alignment to the “standard” European development policies: a substantive increase in quantity and quality of aid and a turn in the territorial priorities to Africa, Latin America and Asia from the ex-USSR and Balkans. Four years after the accession, the described processes seem to have started, but the Eastern orientation of the NMS is already deeply rooted in their foreign policies as well as the African policy in the French or British ones. Unlike the latter, the NMS’s development policies are divided between an orientation toward less developed countries and their own comparative advantages and foreign policy priorities.

Whatever the territorial priorities may be, according to the European Council’s (2005) decision, the gap between the OMS and NMS will be maintained at least until 2015. While the OMS must reach an ODA/GNI ratio of 0.51%, the NMS must only “strive to increase” their ODA/GNI ratio to 0.17% in 2010. In 2015, the commitments will still differ: 0.7% compared to 0.33%. Even though the part of the NMS’s ODA on the EU’s total and on their GNI doubled from 0.5% and 0.04% respectively between 2003 and

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<sup>9</sup> For a complete review of the development policies of the NMS from a historical institutionalist approach, see Vencato (2007).

<sup>10</sup> These preoccupations do not make full sense if they are not seen as an expression of French and Spanish foreign policy priorities in Africa and their concern with recentering the European Union to the East.



2006 (European Commission 2005c), the differences remain wide and concern, to a lesser extent, their contributions to the European Development Fund (EDF). For example, while the Czech Republic's share in the total population of the EU is approximately 2%, the Czech contribution to the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF will be only 0.51% (Vláda České republiky 2007b). In any case, from the institutional point of view, the EU decision mechanisms do not seem to suffer under the burden of twelve NMS participating in the definition of the European development policy. Their overall role being limited, there are no major points of discontent to be managed by the European institutions. The development policy is a living example of a “double speed” Europe.

However, in terms of policy coherence, drawing a line between the new and "old" member states along the former Iron Curtain would be too simplistic. A study carried out by ECPDM/ICEI (2006) divides EU member countries into three groups according to the extent to which they incorporated concerns for coherence in their development policies: the first group does not mention coherence in their policy guidelines at all; the second group refers to coherence without putting it into action according to procedures; the third group uses provided institutional mechanisms to put coherence into action. The countries are divided as follows:

**Table: Institutional mechanisms and implementation of policy coherence for development of the EU member states**

Reference	Implementation	NMS	OMS
NO	NO	Bulgaria Cyprus Hungary Latvia Lithuania Malta Romania Slovenia	
YES	NO	Czech Republic Estonia Poland Slovakia	Austria Belgium France Italy Greece Portugal Spain
YES	YES		Denmark Finland Germany Ireland Luxembourg The Netherlands Sweden United Kingdom

(After ECPDM/ICEI 2006: 27-28)

While only NMS belong to the group of countries which lack both reference to coherence in official documents and its implementation, and all EU countries with an ODA/GNI ratio larger than 0.7% make up a part of the most advanced group, there is some overlapping of the two country types in the middle group, where PC

implementation is lacking. This confirms the assumption I have expressed in the introduction, suggesting that the attention paid to policy coherence goes hand in hand with the importance of the development cooperation agenda. The study comments on this situation by stating that “[p]aradoxically, achieving policy coherence for development requires a carefully defined, consolidated and specific aid policy.” (ECPDM/ICEI 2006: 20).

The European countries do not follow exactly the same linear process, and the PCD agenda is relatively in advance in the NMS compared to aid delivery because they have to follow the current trends in development policy, which are promoted at the international and European levels. The external pressure on the NMS remains the main motor for the promotion of their development policy. However, according to the European Council’s (2005) decision, which weakened a more binding proposition of the Commission to the NMS, the European Union does not consider the development policy to be an agenda where the same criteria as those of other EU policies should apply and suggests that in spite of the large gap between the NMS and less developed countries, the EU should still see the newcomers as "developing" countries.<sup>11</sup>

## **The Czech institutional framework and the positions of the main actors**

This part gives a general picture of the institutional framework for promoting PCD at the national level in the Czech Republic. After 1990, the Czech development cooperation was institutionally regulated by two principal documents. According to the 1995 decision of the Czech **government**, the country “recognizes the principle of solidarity between people and accepts its share of the responsibility for resolving global problems”. An “adequate part in providing development aid” is “one expression of this attitude”, and it is “provided in accordance with the interests and needs of the Czech Republic and in conformity with the attitudes of the international community anchored in the resolutions of the United Nations and of the OECD” (Vláda České republiky 1995). A principle of positive conditionality is stated in favour of the countries which undertake democratic reforms and protect human rights. There is no reference to policy coherence in the 1995 document, which understands *aid* (but not *cooperation*) very narrowly.

In the context of EU accession, a new decision was adopted in March 2004 (Vláda České republiky 2004). The “international development cooperation (IDC)” became “an integral part” of the Czech foreign policy. IDC represents a “self-contained development policy”, but poverty reduction is but one of its objectives. Among other goals, its list of objectives includes “economic and industrial development, gradual integration of partner countries into the world economy, development of agriculture, development and reinforcement of democracy, human rights and good governance, rule of law, migration management, sustainable development with emphasis on its environmental component and post-conflict resolution.” They are defined so widely

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<sup>11</sup> During the accession process, the topic of development cooperation, a part of the *soft acquis*, was hardly raised. It is true that development cooperation needs sufficient constituency, political and public support, but still, the ease with which the “double speed” EU development policy has been institutionalized has not been questioned yet.

that any policy evaluation becomes almost impossible. Links between any of these goals are not direct, and they may be incompatible in some cases.

The government decision makes three explicit references to PCD. First, it claims that “[i]n accordance with the international principle of policy coherence for development, the Czech Republic takes in account objectives and standards of IDC when implementing other policies, which can influence partner countries.” Second, the “MFA, in cooperation with other concerned Ministries, takes part in the definition of the EU policies in relation to developing countries while respecting the key principles of coherence, coordination and complementarity and their harmonization in relations to the developing world.” And finally, “sectoral priorities of IDC are defined on the basis of comparative advantages of the Czech republic and in accordance with principles of coherence, complementarity and coordination with other donor countries”. PCD is mentioned explicitly as a concept in the sense of the OECD and the EU. Moreover, the second 2006 coalition agreement and government programme declaration includes a request that the foreign trade liberalization and Common Agriculture Policy not harm developing countries.

These findings contrast with the conclusion of the ECPDM/ICEI research report:

Promoting coherence for development is not clearly spelled out as one of the Czech Republic’s objectives; rather, policy coherence seems to be understood as consistency of development activities with foreign policy objectives and with other trade-related interests. (ECPDM/ICEI 2006: 29).

I argue that this conclusion is too hasty since it does not take in account *by whom* policy coherence is understood. The government decisions are acknowledged by the proposal of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (MFA), whose objective has always been to align the Czech Republic to development policies of the experienced donors in a situation where the implementation of the development cooperation programmes would be dispersed between other Ministries with different visions of reality.<sup>12</sup>

The MFA could promote PCD within the **Inter-ministerial Commission**, but even if it belonged to its priorities, its negotiating power would be too limited. The **Department for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid** was finally founded in August 2003, and the Commission almost never met at the Deputy Ministerial level because of the low priority of the development agenda. In the end, only practical matters related to aid were put on the Commission’s agenda. So far, the mechanisms of commenting on proposals within the inter-ministerial proceedings have not been used to promote PCD either. To conclude, while there is a soft law and sufficient institutional arrangements for the MFA to promote PCD, they are not used.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Historically, the development cooperation programmes were born out of resumed activities from the 1980s, or they were transformations of humanitarian interventions in the former Yugoslavia. The 1995 decision acknowledged the dispersion of development cooperation between nine line ministries with the multiplicity of the objectives.

<sup>13</sup> To compare the situation of an experienced donor outside the EU, Switzerland institutionalized coherency already in 1994 in the separate message *Guiding lines North-South* (Conseil fédéral de la Confédération Suisse 1994). There has been neither a follow up nor a reference to the document since then.

The Department sees PCD at the inter-ministerial level as a natural issue which should be, however, put on the agenda once the transformation of the bilateral aid system is achieved. This view is shared by its Director, who “would not start” with the question on coherence but would put it “at the end for a complete picture”. Her colleague is the only interviewee to raise the issue spontaneously. PCD is considered as “too little perceived and discussed” and as a “very difficult” topic even among the experienced donors. Promoting PCD would be easier in the future because the Czech development policy is subject to a slow positive process of emancipation from the foreign policy. This liberation is not seen as an easy task among the advanced donors either.

Other European donor countries remain points of reference, but that does not mean that everything “comes from Brussels”. Actually, the Czech Republic resisted the preferences of the EU by putting a strong accent on Eastern and South Eastern Europe and by its scepticism as to the general budget support.<sup>14</sup> The Department underlines two dimensions of the PCD concept: it is trying to “educate” other Ministries as well as a wider public, and it acknowledges the idea of an implicit shift towards the interests of the South. Actually, there is a “level where the interest of one’s own country must retreat before the interest of the developing world”, which is “very very difficult”. It does not seem to agree with the “name and shame” method because it wants to “attract, not discourage” the other actors.

In 2008, along with the transformation of the system and the creation of the Czech Development Agency, a new **Council on the International Development Cooperation** was created to replace the Inter-ministerial Commission, seven years after the provision of the Council in the 2001 development strategy (Vláda České republiky 2002). The Department expects the new inter-ministerial advisory body to make the issue “crystallize”. In fact, with the awaited reduction of priority sectors, some of the Ministries involved risk losing budgets on development projects within a few years. Promoting PCD, which they are aware of from the European or multilateral level within their own field of expertise, may become the only way to mark their position in the development arena. Of course, the risk that they may lose their attention very soon is quite likely as well, but the better institutionalization of the Council and the progressive transfer of the bilateral cooperation agenda to the development agency makes it a better potential forum for discussion of conceptual problems, including policy coherence, when compared to the former Commission.

The Department for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid making up part of the MFA, it is interesting to compare its perception of PCD to that of the **Development Centre**, which transformed into the Czech Development Agency in the beginning of 2008. The Development Centre, the result of a UNDP project, was an external expert body to the MFA, whose priority of poverty reduction was not limited by other Departments of the MFA and by other institutional constraints that a Ministry must face. Its Director considers policy coherence as a topic which “comes from the Committees in Brussels”, but he did not notice any substantial activity in the field. He considers that “power relations are somewhere else”, and the idea of the MFA

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<sup>14</sup> The negative stance to the general budget support is based on a general mistrust of the state as a driver of development, higher risks of corruption and, last but not least, its exclusion of the Czech subjects from development projects, which are seen as essential to reinforcing contacts with the developing world.

influencing the decisions of another Ministry is “disconnected from reality” according to him, making the problem of coherence between the foreign and development policy unimportant. Compared to the MFA, which is an agent of change, its perception of PCD is more sceptical.

The role of the Czech *civil society* is substantial but insufficient, as in the case of general public awareness of development issues. The MFA lacks capacities to carry out analysis and organize conferences and seminars. Therefore, many events are literally outsourced to the non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs) because universities and research institutes are too weak to offer their consultancy services. The involved civil society, though, lacks political legitimacy and weakens its criticism of the government. The *Parliament*, or at least the Chamber of Deputies, a common agent of change in policy coherence issues in experienced donor countries, never tackled the issue. Institutionally, the mainstreaming development agenda in the Parliament through the envisaged creation of a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs may present an opportunity to raise policy coherence issues.<sup>15</sup>

In October 2006, the topic of PCD was tackled by the globalization and development think tank Glopolis in a conference organized at and in cooperation with the Senate. Except for the opening speeches, in the end, no MPs participated in the conference. A policy brief was issued on the occasion: It focuses on the “aid and trade” issue and testifies to the diverging approaches of the MFA and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT). Policy coherence is understood in both its negative and positive meanings, using “not undermining” and “synergy” expressions (Glopolis 2006: 2). It complains that there are no capacities for promoting coherence and that intergovernmental mechanisms are unused. Special attention is paid to the forthcoming Act on IDC law and to the need for analysis at the government and academic level. It makes a proposal of including non-trade NGOs in the Sector Group for International Trade at the MIT, which defines the position to be defended at the European Commission. There seem to be no visible outcomes of the conference, and two years later, Glopolis organized a seminar on the topic of coherence between development and agricultural policy in December 2007. The President of the NGDO platform FoRS – the Czech Forum for Development Cooperation - believes that the NGDOs as a whole have to “grow up” to consider the issue but that his own NGDO People in Need, the most important development, humanitarian and human rights organization in the Czech Republic lacks capacities whilst it is already “losing breath” when advocating for reforms of a narrowly defined development policy.

Indirectly, coherence problems make up a part of the claims made by “Czechia against Poverty”, the Czech campaign of the Global Call against Poverty (Česko proti chudobě 2007)<sup>16</sup>. In ten points, this campaign aims at increasing the volume of aid, its poverty reduction impact and gender-sensitiveness; equalization of the donor-recipient relations, a fair liberalization of trade and services, cutting agricultural subsidies and debt relief, increasing the corporate social responsibility and stopping global warming. Even though other coherence issues such as human rights,

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<sup>15</sup> Three working groups were established in February 2008 by the Council, but none on PCD.

<sup>16</sup> The campaign is another example of MFA using the NGDOs to promote the development issues. Subsidized by the state as a “development education and public awareness” project, it was highly critical of the Czech trade and agricultural policies and of the Ministry of Finance, which in particular controls the cooperation budget.

immigration and arms exports are not tackled, the campaign aims at all three types of incoherencies in the Czech external policies as classified by Forster and Stokke (1999). Unfortunately, its impact on public awareness seems to be very limited.

In fact, the Czech **public opinion** seems to be unaware of the incoherencies in play. Only 15% of the respondents were able to identify the right name of the campaign “Czechia against Poverty” in the second public opinion survey on the subject of the Czech development cooperation in November 2006. Given that two other answers (“Help for needy people” and “Any of us can help”) were chosen by 12% and 11% of the respondents respectively, the number of people who really knew the campaign and *a fortiori* its claims was most probably negligible (SC&C 2006: 27). In Switzerland, an experienced donor country, the problem is much more discussed despite severe incoherencies, and their survey is not blind to coherence (GFS Bern 2004). While 87% of voters completely agree or rather agree with the interdiction of arms exports to developing countries, 76% support fair trade and 72% support importations from the South as such (GFS Bern 2004: 7). Equally, in a survey led in Sweden, 63% of respondents agreed that trade conditions would reduce world poverty, followed by 62% who agreed that this could be done through increased peace and security and 50% who thought that it could be done through debt reduction (OECD 2005: 68). No comparable data were collected for the Czech Republic.

While globalization is seen as an important factor in advanced donor countries, this aspect is almost absent from the Czech survey. 49% of the Czech respondents think that aid can reduce the risk of terrorist attacks, and 67% think that it can reduce immigration, but trade issues were not included (SC&C 2006: 20-21). Perhaps this can be connected with an overall awareness of development issues: only 36% of the Swiss claim not to be appropriately informed about the problems of developing countries. This figure is hardly comparable with the Czech survey results, where 79% of the respondents do not have enough information about the Czech assistance to poor countries (SC&C 2006: 21). The most positive message of the Czech public opinion consists in the fact that 82% of the respondents think that aid should go where needed and not to the countries which have good relations with the Czech Republic (SC&C 2006: 17). The respondents do not think immediate profits to the country are necessary either. An altruistic perception of development cooperation suggests that if the public was aware of the policy incoherencies, it might be supportive of their suppression.

In **academia** no specific research has been carried out on the Czech policy coherence level. Several articles have mentioned EU coherence, and a conference paper by Němečková (2006) deals with the issue as a whole from the European perspective. I study other relevant actors and their positions or non-positions in the case studies on migration and trade in relation to development.

## **Migration and development: towards policy coherence through pragmatism?**

With the narrowing of differences in economic output and living standards between NMS and OMS, differences between their labour markets disappear as well. The

demographic structure of the post-communist countries has never been much different either. Their population is ageing, and local people do not engage in unqualified jobs anymore. Some qualified workers, especially Polish ones, emigrate to the OMS, but the trend for the NMS to become immigration countries is evident. In the case of the Czech Republic, the 4% share of foreigners is still lower than in an average OMS; however, there is a clear trend of harmonization of immigration patterns in numbers, types and policies between the Czech Republic and the OMS. The difference consists mainly in the geographical distribution of the countries of origin. While the immigrants to the OMS mostly come from the former European colonies in the South, the immigrants to the NMS mostly come from the East.<sup>17</sup> In the Czech Republic, the majority of some 400 thousand immigrants are Ukrainian, Slovak, Vietnamese, Polish and Russian. When illegal migrants are included, the total estimated number varies from an additional 30 thousand to an additional 200 to 300 thousand (Drbohlav et al. 2005). Therefore, the impact of the Czech policies related to migration may have a serious impact on the development of the countries of origin.

In spite of the growing research on the links between migration and development, an overall assessment has not been established yet (OECD Development Centre 2007). On the one hand, developing countries invest in the expensive and rare education of the migrants, who leave the country and cannot contribute to the improvement of the livelihoods of the local population, especially in the field of health and education. On the other hand, the workers from developing countries send a part of their earnings back home in the form of remittances, which contributes to the development of their region of origin. They may also return home or circulate between both countries periodically and use the newly acquired capital and skills from the destination countries back in the developing world. The final effect is composite, but there seems to be a consensus that while the immigration of non-skilled workers is beneficial to both developing countries and destination countries, the immigration of skilled workers is detrimental to them (see Portes 2006).

The estimation of remittances and, hence, of the final effect of migration is almost impossible because reliable data are unavailable. According to the estimates of the World Bank, the amount of official outward remittances from the Czech Republic in 2006 is quite important: 2.8 billion USD. Out of this amount, 186 million USD are in the form of worker's remittances, and 3 million are in the form of migrants' transfer (Ratha et al. 2007). The bilateral estimates record a total of 460 million USD and, among developing countries, only Vietnam with 2.6% and Serbia with 1.6% exceed the one percent line (Ratha and Shaw 2007, own calculations). Ukraine's remittances would present 0.8% and 3.7 million USD in a year, which seems largely underestimated when compared to minimal earnings and to the number of Ukrainian circular workers in the Czech Republic.

As to the "brain drain" effect, the structure of the migrants by achieved education may serve as an approximate criterion of the benefits for the developing world. Out of 127 thousand foreigners registered in 2006 as employed in the Czech Republic, only 9% held a university or a PhD diploma, and only 15% of them had a better education than what was required for the specific job (Horáková 2007: 44-45). Of course, if

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<sup>17</sup> According to the Czech migration expert Dušan Drbohlav, the pattern of migration between Ukraine and Czech Republic is very similar to that of migration between Mexico and the United States.

illegal and self-employed migrants were included, the education gap would be wider, but it seems that the Czech Republic is not a primary destination for highly qualified migrants yet.<sup>18</sup> And this is actually what the government seeks to change. Facing the demographic predictions of the Czech population, there is a political consensus on the necessity to attract migrants to fill in the population gap and to keep the ratio between the contributors to and the benefactors of social security as high as possible. Without migrants, the Czech population would fall from 10 to 8 million in 2065. These migrants should easily integrate into the Czech society and therefore, they should try to attract young, highly educated people from culturally near regions.

In 2003 the **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** ran the *Pilot Project of Active Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers*, a project of “directed migration” which allows qualified foreign workers and their families to obtain a permission for permanent stay in 2.5 instead of 5 years. By the end of March 2007, only 153 foreigners had already obtained this “green card” (Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí České republiky 2007), but by the end of April 2007, 602 applicants were involved in the programme (Stejskalová 2007) and 888 as to the end of the year, 1882 including their family members (Schroth 2007). All three priority countries of the Czech development cooperation located in Europe have been included in the project: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Serbia, and Montenegro. However, the most successful countries of origin are Ukraine, Bulgaria, Belarus and Russia. India and Canada meet only very limited success. The professional structure of the migrant workers is various, but more than two thirds of them have university educations. In addition to that, the **private sector** is lobbying for a simplification of the rules.<sup>19</sup>

The Ministry does not seem to take coherence problems in account. At least brain drain is not mentioned except for the interdiction for the foreign graduates of Czech universities who got scholarships in the Czech Republic within the development cooperation programmes and who often inquire about this possibility. As the programme is institutionalized by a government decision, comments by other Ministries “from the security and foreign policy point of view” (and hence not from a development point of view) should have already been included in the final document. A way for the Ministry to avoid the confrontation with brain drain seems to be a strong accent on the positive side of migration. It reports only “generally” positive feedback from the countries of origin and insists on the success of the campaigns which prevent potentially illegal migrants from becoming victims of criminal networks.

An information prospectus co-edited with the International Organization for Migration presents migration principally as beneficial to development, and brain drain is considered to be a minor problem of small countries or outweighed by the brain circulation (Stojanov and Novosák 2007). Given that the whole existence of the programme is legitimized by the need of new citizens to settle in the Czech Republic and fill in the population gap, the focus on brain circulation, not uncommon in the

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<sup>18</sup> For the sake of comparison, according to an Interfax news report from 5 July 2007, the large majority of Polish migrants to the United Kingdom and Ireland are overqualified, and as much as 22% of Polish manual workers hold a university degree.

<sup>19</sup> The recent simplification of the “green card” system, approved by the government, which now includes less qualified migrants, was criticized by non-governmental organizations because it denies civic rights to the migrants. Human rights and development enter into conflict with each other. The civic rights of the migrants have been limited exactly because the government wanted to preserve the circular migration.



discourse of the European Commission since it began issuing the “blue cards” during the last few years, is not convincing. For example, the majority of the second generation Vietnamese are not willing to return to Vietnam and are more inclined to migrate to the West.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs encounters the serious problem of intra-ministerial coherence. In an earlier questionnaire, the Department of International Relations, which is responsible for the development cooperation programmes in the social sector, defined PCD in exact terms and acknowledged that the Czech Republic was not coherent with the developing world “for evident reasons”. While specific sectors, cross-cutting issues and initiatives of the European Commission are cited, potential incoherence within the Home Ministry is not quoted.

Other incoherencies are situated in the area of education. In 2007, the **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports** has been in charge of a development project at the University of Kishinev, Moldova. The purpose of the project was to improve the teaching conditions and align the study programmes to EU standards. At the same time, the Ministry was responsible for scholarships awarded to students from developing countries, including Moldova. While the scholarships are an important part of the aid package, costing 140m CZK (5.6m €) a year, which represents 18% of all bilateral projects in 2008, the development outcomes are very modest.

According to an internal document from the MFA, only 29% of 426 students from developing countries have finished their studies in the period from 2003 to 2006. (Bartošová 2007) While almost one half of the students from sub-Saharan Africa or Northern Africa and the Middle East graduated, Latin American and Asian students were less successful, and only 5% of the students from Eastern and South Eastern Europe finish their studies. None of the 9 Moldavian or 13 Ukrainian students, for whom the Czech language should not pose many problems, succeeded unless they continued their studies at their own expense after the expiry of their scholarship. According to the Headquarters of Foreigners and Border Police at the Ministry of the Interior, 15% of those who were supposed to graduate in 2005 ended up paying their tuition on their own (Bartošová 2006). Only half of them had already left before 2005, but most probably, a part of the group left the Czech Republic for another developed country.

In a study on the scholarships for foreign students commissioned by the MFA, Jelínek, Deseiová and Náprstek (2004: 22), the former students estimate the return rate from 50 to 80%. This percentage is even lower in the case of African students. Given the fact that not all students find employment in their country of origin, that some of the students cannot use their new knowledge and skills and that some did not choose a branch of studies relevant for a developing country, the development impact of the scholarships is very low.<sup>21</sup> The OECD DAC (2007b) special review

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<sup>20</sup> The second generation Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic are often referred to as “bananas”, in the sense that they are seen as “yellow” outside and “white” inside.

<sup>21</sup> The students could choose their study programme without limitations. A Senegalese student studied nuclear physics, and a Belarusian student studied Russian. However, in the long term, the foreign graduates of the Czechoslovak universities during the communist era formed a part of the elites, especially in Vietnam and Mongolia, where Czech speakers occupy important political and administrative functions and facilitate development cooperation.

recommended for the Czech Embassies abroad to improve the follow up, agrees that the scholarships are not linked to development objectives and explicitly mentions "questionable" development objectives and "potential negative effects of brain drain". The figures above match those of the pre-reform period. Since 2008, the number of scholarships has been reduced from 250 to 130, countries where the return rate was higher remained on the list, the possibility to study in English was introduced and shorter stays were allowed as well (Vláda České republiky 2007a). Still, the reform did not advance far enough to eliminate further brain drain.

The principal government body in charge of migration, the **Ministry of Interior**, has been involved in the Czech development cooperation since the mid 1990s. During the war in ex-Yugoslavia, it acquired expertise in assistance to refugees – as did many humanitarian or *ad hoc* NGOs which changed their focus on development when urgent needs of the touched population were satisfied. Consequently, the reference to the prevention of migration as a goal of the Czech development cooperation, introduced in a 1995 government decision, could have been considered as progressive even in an experienced donor country.

The Ministry's Department of Asylum and Migration Policy is responsible for assistance to refugees, considered as a part of ODA, and development cooperation projects. The Department has had its own initiative to put the international Migration and Development agenda into practice, produced a paper and organized a round table on migration and development, where involved Ministries and NGOs met in early 2007. The interviewee from the Department considered the fact that "people know about coherence" to already be a success in its own right. The rationale of this action, however, has not been purely idealistic, but a way for the Ministry to affirm its position in the development constituency and remain an important actor after the planned reduction of the number of priority sectors. It became quite disappointed when the MFA was reluctant to follow the Migration and Development agenda because of its energy spent on the centralization of the system of bilateral aid and on the draft of the Act on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid.

As to the perceptions of their projects of migration prevention, the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy does not estimate the projects, run especially by People in Need and the International Organization for Migration, to be truly able to stop or limit migration. Migration would be a natural phenomenon and would be extremely difficult to regulate. The geographical priorities of the Ministry are clearly situated in the East, which is considered as the biggest security threat. Pointing to Spanish projects in Africa, its official is sceptical about the effects on poverty. She says, "Let us be realistic. Nobody is altruistic in this matter." She goes on to argue that "Migration does not resolve development, and development does not resolve migration either". The Ministry considers the *Pilot Project of Active Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers* to be a form of brain drain, and it would protest at the Inter-ministerial Commission.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the MFA disliked the accent put on illegal migration, and therefore, security aspects are placed before the poverty reduction impacts.

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<sup>22</sup> This information was not confirmed by the other parties.

The motivation of the Ministry is openly pragmatic: the projects should limit illegal migration because extraditions are costly and illegal migrants are vulnerable to criminality. The Department also uses its development cooperation projects as a tool to collect information on migration pressures in the countries of origin. Even though its approach to the Czech development cooperation is pragmatic in the sense that it understands international development as a tool for preserving the security of the country, it is pushing for policy coherence since implementing the agenda from European and multinational fora can help it to defend its threatened position within the Czech development cooperation.

The **Ministry of Finance** occupies a special position within the development cooperation system. Systematically, it reduces the ODA budget proposal made by the MFA to reach the 0.17% ODA/GNI objective in 2010 with the argument that the Czech public finance is going through reform. There is neither the political will at the government level nor sufficient pressure in the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies to change it. Along with some technical assistance, the Ministry of Finance should be responsible for easing and monitoring remittances of foreign workers who are employed or self-employed in the Czech Republic. These workers mostly come from European and Central Asian developing countries, where remittances grow at the fastest rate. For example, remittances represent one third of Moldova's GDP and are essential for the development of the poorest European country (Ratha et al. 2007).<sup>23</sup>

Until now, the Ministry has not undertaken any action in the field, but it did make a project proposal to the World Bank on the remittances issue. As it implemented a World Bank project on the evaluations of the Czech development cooperation last year, its attention moved from the narrow topic of development aid to a wider development policy. However, the change still seems to be fresh and induced by external actors because in a questionnaire sent to the same servant two months earlier, including a question on the Ministry's perception of policy coherence, environment, trade, agriculture and security were spontaneously mentioned, but as in the preceding case, neither the Ministry's own agenda nor migration issues appeared.

In the migration area, few NGOs are active. As with the dominant People in Need in the area of human rights, for example, the role of the **International Organization for Migration** (IOM) is quite ambiguous. It implements development projects on illegal migration prevention for the Ministry of Interior and at the same time it collaborates with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on the Pilot Project of Active Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers. The Czech NGOs are generally more dependent on public finance and consequently less critical than their Western neighbour, which in this specific case weakens IOM's position to promote PCD.

To conclude on the case of migration and development, the Czech policies are not coherent since they support brain drain through the programme of selective migration and scholarships for students from developing countries. In the last case, this financial support is accounted for by ODA. The awareness of the coherence problems is not too high since other criteria than development make the assessment

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<sup>23</sup> Moldova is one of eight (plus Iraq and Afghanistan) priority countries of the Czech development cooperation.

of the respective programmes positive. However, with the planned centralisation of the Czech cooperation and the risk of losing its influence, the Ministry of Interior is pushing the agenda on the table, as it did recently during the first meeting of the newly established Council on Development Cooperation. The pressure of external actors is important, but the case of migration and development shows that PCD can be promoted for pragmatic interests by the Ministry, which is not primarily led by development objectives.

## Trade and development: mixing apples and oranges?

While there seems to be a consensus at least on what development means in the migration issue area, this is not the case for trade. The **Ministry of Industry and Trade** (MIT) is responsible for the formulation of the trade policy to be promoted at the European level and controls the most important part of the bilateral development cooperation, about 150m CZK (6m €) (Rozvojové středisko 2007). In this case study, I concentrate less on the impact of the Czech/EU trade policies on the developing world than on the perceptions of the concerned actors and on trade-related policies, whose development impact is not generally overlooked.

An interview with a Czech representative to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, who is appointed by MIT and not by MFA, has shown a serious conceptual incompatibility with the approach of international development organizations and agencies. The semi-structured interview cannot pretend to be representative, but it offers a strong internal consistency. Furthermore, the incompatibility of opinions has been underlined by other statements of the MIT representatives and by the Director of the Department of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid at the MFA: the latter claimed that the difficulty of promoting PCS also comes from the fact that all parties involved “do not imagine the same thing under the term 'coherence'”.<sup>24</sup> Although I advance that the trouble is rooted deeper in the term “development”, she notes that this incoherence should not be interpreted as a problem of “communication” but of “understanding”, which prevents PCD from being implemented.

The MIT representative to the WTO understands coherence on two levels, within the development policy and between different government policies, which is perfectly compatible with PCD as promoted by OECD or EU. He considers the Czech policies as implicitly coherent because they are a result of a government’s decision, which takes in account comments made by other Ministries. He recognizes, however, that an explicit PCD implementation is inexistent. Opinions start to diverge when development cooperation is defined. He seems to consider all “soft” projects as making up a part of humanitarian aid and as being ineffective, especially in Africa.<sup>25</sup> As to the motivations of the actors, these are necessarily pragmatic according to him, so the Czech Republic should not be naïve and use aid to deepen bilateral relations:

I think that the point of bilateral aid should be to open the way to trade or perhaps to help exporters to take hold [in developing countries] or to convince them of our good services

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<sup>24</sup> On the policy level, she refused to evaluate whether the policies of the Ministry of Agriculture and the MIT were coherent with development, pretending that it was not her role.

<sup>25</sup> He does not seem to have enough information about the Czech development cooperation.

It is then natural that he considers the Czech aid to be “disconnected” from trade policy. The word “poverty” never appears in his discourse, and development is simply identified with trade. When asked specifically about the subject, he states that considering the incoherence between the EU agricultural subventions and the Czech projects in the African agricultural sector would be “mixing apples and oranges” because when seen from the WTO, the subventions are perfectly legal and legitimate within the WTO system.<sup>26</sup> The problem is with Africa, which lacks “basic business instincts” when compared to China, for example. The problem of African cotton would consist in its low quality, not in subventions to US farmers. When finally asked for a definition of development, his immediate reaction is “Development of what?” Then he defines it as the ability of a national economy to export and to be independent of imports. Concordantly, aid for trade is a “serious attempt at coherence between policies, which will contribute to the development of the countries in the trade area”. If development is identified with trade, then PCD becomes “policy coherence for trade”.<sup>27</sup>

A softened perception of a pro-trade coherence appeared in an interview with a representative of the **Confederation of Industry and Trade**, who contributed to the foundation of the Platform of the Business Sector for the International Development Cooperation, active since January 2008. She understood PCD in its developmental meaning: the Czech Republic is “not so far” in the agenda, and it was “too soon” to implement it. However, the conversation moves quickly to the coherence of trade and foreign policy, taking up the example of Cuba under embargo and “our economic interests”. While the political frame has to be respected, the confederation is situated on the “more pragmatic side”. Finally, the interview slips to China and particularly to the incoherence between the Czech human rights policy and economic diplomacy.

In spite of the primary orientation on profits, the business sector seems to have understood that development cooperation can be beneficial to the companies without delegitimizing development objectives when it is considered as a partner for the MFA and not as an enemy. The approach of the **Platform of the Business Sector for International Development Cooperation**, established in late 2007, is still pragmatic because it asked for a guaranty of public funding, but it is not as incoherent as the MIT, which also appoints officials to WTO.

The different organizational culture of the MIT has a long tradition. The former head of the MIT told the private sector that “development aid is one of the tools for the Czech companies to penetrate developing markets” and put an accent on the overall budget for the reconstruction of Iraq (Svaz průmyslu a dopravy ČR 2006). The term “aid” is not used officially by any other Ministries anymore: it confirms the Ministry’s vision of development cooperation as another kind of export subsidy. It is not

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<sup>26</sup> In the NMS, I identified other metaphors connected to policy coherence, namely hypocrisy and indifference. In Poland, a UNDP representative stated that “on the one hand, we give money and that’s why we feel morally better, but on the other hand, we pose conditions which de facto prevent these countries from developing in the long term.” (Szczyński et al. 2005). In the Czech Republic, the former Head of the Development Centre made the criticism that one hand does not know what the other is doing or even that one hand destroys what the other has done (approximative quotation). This metaphor implies the existence of a coherent government body, and more generally, all the metaphors aim at the connection or disconnection of two areas of human activity.

<sup>27</sup> This definition of trade development is mercantilist rather than liberal.

surprising that no Less Developed Country appears in the priority group of the export strategy: Serbia and Vietnam are included because the strategy concentrates on emerging markets like Russia, India, China and Brazil. More generally, the Ministry supports “an active and rapacious trade policy” (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu České republiky 2005). Incoherencies of the development projects initiated by the Ministry are infamous. For example, it funded a project whose purpose was to train Vietnamese workers on Czech shoemaking machines. In other words, the Ministry turned development cooperation into subjectively coherent export subsidies.

As far as the inter-ministerial coherence is concerned, the MIT, which defines the Czech position to be defended on the common trade policy, is clear about the country’s interests: the liberalization of world trade should not “go beyond the threshold of the EU Common Agricultural Policy reforms”. The domestic interests of the Czech farmers are explicitly given priority before those of any extra-EU countries. The country displays a “rather liberal, not protectionist stance” in regard to the Nordic countries, and within TRIPS talks, it supports the right of the developing and the least developed countries to “make use of patented drugs for serious illnesses.” (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu České republiky 2005).<sup>28</sup> However, this position is not contradictory to its own interests because the Czech pharmaceutical industry with its leader Zentiva at the head is specialized only in generic drugs on the Central and Eastern European market. The free access of the Less Developed Countries to the market of the North is considered as a key priority (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu České republiky 2006), but no mention is made of subsidies to agriculture.<sup>29</sup>

The **Ministry of Agriculture** defines its own position as “liberal-pragmatic”, which means that it is liberal when national interests are not questioned.<sup>30</sup> In reality, it positions itself between France and Sweden, with whom it will share the EU presidency in 2008 and 2009. In the following discussions, the development appeared once - in the context of the development of the Czech rural areas. Developing countries, namely China and India, appeared only as possible markets for European products. Afterwards, the discussion turned to the position of Czech peasants again.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to these preoccupations, the awareness of the effects of the common agricultural policy is almost inexistent. When a foreign company released a 100 thousand tonnes quota on sugar production, it was deplored by the minister. If this quantity was produced by developing countries from cane, their receipts would account for some additional 30 million Euros, which would be roughly equal to the Czech bilateral ODA.<sup>32</sup> While both Ministries claim to take in account the interests of developing countries, they never go beyond existing international commitments, and in a spontaneous discussion, they finish by turning solely to domestic interests, as if they have incorporated the goals of their constituencies.

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<sup>28</sup> The slogan of the Czech EU presidency in 2009 is “Europe without barriers”.

<sup>29</sup> Regarding EPAs, the Czech Republic was “on the side of developing countries”, and Doha Development Round proposals are considered as the best deals for developing countries ever.

<sup>30</sup> As an official self-assessed the Czech position during the seminar Preparing the Czech EU Presidency: Why Should Subventions and Cutting Barriers Harm the Poor?, which was organized by the think tank Glopolis on 13 December 2007.

<sup>31</sup> The slipping of the debate was also characteristic for the MIT official: the discussion turned to the BRICs and, finally, to the competitiveness of the Czech economy.

<sup>32</sup> More research is needed on the estimates of the Czech impact on developing countries *via* the Common Agricultural Policy.

While there is some awareness on the coherence of migration, trade and agricultural policies, the coherence between state guarantees to Czech firms exporting to developing countries has been left under silence until now.<sup>33</sup> Today very few NGOs are interested in the state guarantees for the construction of a nuclear plant in Bulgaria, an EU member, and there has never been any case inciting so many public and political echoes as the approval of the guarantees to the Three Gorges dam construction of the Swiss government in the mid-1990s.

According to the 2005 Annual Report of the **Czech Export Guarantees and Insurance Corporation (EGAP)**, the state-owned company monitors and evaluates the impact of the guaranteed exports on the environment of the destination countries in compliance with the OECD agreement. In 2005, no project was classified under category A (having a considerably negative impact on the environment) or under category B (the environmental impact is less significant and locally restricted, and the negative impact can be eliminated). (EGAP 2006: 12). In 2006, one construction project in Kazakhstan was classified B. The commitment of EGAP to the implementations on anti-bribery measures is, however, less clear. ECA Watch (2005b) states that the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom required “practice to inform investigative authorities of suspicion or sufficient evidence of bribery before support is given“. At the same time, it seems that the Czech Republic, together with Germany and Belgium, created a block to the anti-bribery Action Statement of the OECD's Export Credit Group. Actually, this group considers a simple declaration by the exporter claiming that no corruption was encountered as sufficient proof (ECA Watch 2005a).

The role of the state guarantees should not be underestimated. In 2005, 12% of the Czech exports were insured by EGAP, and more than half of them were backed by the state. As EU importers are not generally concerned, EGAP covers a considerable part of the Czech exports to the developing countries with few exceptions: about ten countries are not insurable at all, including Angola, a priority country of the Czech development cooperation. In this framework, synergies between aid and trade cannot be created.

Incoherencies between development, trade and agriculture policies are among the most cited examples of PCD. As the latter are common policies, they are often presented by domestic actors as a solely European problem. The member states are caught in a Prisoner's Dilemma, and unilateral concessions in favour of developing countries are difficult. The analysis of the Czech actors and of their positions shows

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<sup>33</sup> Among other topics where “more research is needed”, we can rank debt relief, investments and arms export. The part of debt relief in the Czech bilateral ODA is a substantial 15% (Stálá mise České republiky při OECD 2006), but there seems to be no link between debt relief and the Czech development strategy. Most of the loans, of which the Ministry of Finance is in charge, were contracted during the communist era and remain secret (Stojanov 2006). In sum, the whole debt relief strategy of the country is anything but transparent, and its coherence cannot be well evaluated. Then, compared to trade, Czech investments in developing countries are still modest: almost null in Africa and Latin America and accounting for 27 million USD in Asia and 321 million USD in the Middle East. (Česká národní banka 2006). While these numbers are insignificant in comparison to Swiss investments, for example, which are worth 3.6 billion USD in Africa alone (Banque Nationale Suisse 2006: 23), they may become more important in recent years. Too little information is released on arms exports. In theory, the Czech Republic should respect international commitments, but arms may be delivered to Nigeria and Etiopia, whose governments may use them against their political opponents.

that not only the interests of the developing countries are not taken in account, but if by chance they are considered for a while, when the topic is raised, they are misunderstood. In such a situation, PCD implementation at a national level, and indirectly at the European level, is almost impossible.

## **Conclusion**

Policy coherence for development is a very normative concept. As well as for development as such, one cannot say whether coherence is a good thing or not: it depends on the use one makes of it. Implicitly, the concept assumes a shift of interests in favour of the developing world, but it can also dilute responsibilities in a situation where different policies are unsuccessful to attain their respective goals. The actors accountable for development policies may have two basic strategies: coherence can be used to “name and shame” the adverse impact of policies other than development policies on the developing world, or they can emphasize “win-win” situations and new synergies. The latter strategy is more suitable when pragmatic interests of other actors can be invoked; the former will necessarily involve idealistic arguments and emotions.

In the Czech case, PCD is embedded in government decisions, and institutional inter-ministerial mechanisms for its promotion are in place as well. However, the recent transformation of the bilateral cooperation exhausts the capacities of the MFA, which is responsible for the Czech development policy, and incoherencies are not addressed. The Ministry considers that the more development policy is emancipated and independent, the more it can introduce development objectives in other policy areas. Policy coherence cannot be implemented without a recognition of common interests, but this is possible only when the involved actors are aware of the contradictory practices of different government bodies. If policy recommendations are to be effective, they must be based on evidence. Precise analysis of incoherencies is needed as well.

In spite of its idiosyncrasies, the Czech Republic is a re-emerging donor on the way to an alignment of its development policy to those of the experienced donors. The non-implementation of policy coherence is paradoxically due to the Europeanization of the public administration: the European and OCED soft norms have been adopted to mark the belonging of the country to the EU, but the public awareness, political will and analytic capacities are lagging behind because they need more time to emerge.

The case of migration and development coherence in the Czech Republic presents an atypical example of the policy coherence agenda because it is promoted by another Ministry, which is afraid of losing its influence on the Czech development policy after the centralization of the development cooperation. If the European Consensus on Development (European Commission 2005b) is to be applied in all member states and to lead, in some of them, to the reduction of priority sectors, the involvement of the affected Ministries in the debate on coherence could be an alternative strategy for promoting PCD in the name of aid effectiveness.

In the case of trade, despite ongoing awareness activities, the potential implementation of PCD is much more difficult. The MIT and the Ministry of Agriculture



are more connected to the profit-oriented private sector than the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which put a greater accent on public interest, even though the latter risk being influenced more intensely by the private sector, which pushes for more and more qualified workers. But most importantly, there is a severe incompatibility on the conceptual level, which prevents further steps towards the implementation of PCD in trade: some actors consider the development cooperation budget as an export subvention, and there is no consensus on the meaning of "development", which they may identify with trade as such.

In the Czech Republic and other NMS, the development cooperation programmes are considered as a very technical issue, and there are almost no political debates on their priorities on the top level. They also serve as a proof of the "Europeaness" of the post-communist countries. The promotion of PCD may serve, therefore, as an agent of re-politicization of development issues, starting with identifying incoherencies and making them visible in the public space. Actions on the EU level are not sufficient. The Czech Republic intends to promote PCD in the area of environment during its EU presidency in the first six months of 2009 because other donors do so as well, but this does not guarantee enough internal pressure on the promotion of incoherencies on the national level.<sup>34</sup>

What are the most important lessons of the Czech case? On the theoretical level, the trade and development case shows that understanding PCD is very much connected to an understanding of development. As the development studies have offered a wide range of development theories, ranging from modernization and dependence theories to post-development, the concept and the policies implemented in the name of policy coherence deserve a thorough analysis from different standpoints. On the practical level, in a situation where PCD is promoted at the European and OECD level, and where national institutional arrangements are set up without being used, awareness-raising and analysis work appear as the most important elements for discovering conceptual and policy contradictions in the public administration.

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<sup>34</sup> France chose Migration and Development as one of its priorities. The EU Presidencies are an important driver of change of the EU policies, including the promotion of PCD (Egenhofer 2006).

## **Annex: List of interviewees and respondents**

### **Interviewees**

- Martin Pospíšil, Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO, Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN Office in Geneva, 9 July 2007
- Šimon Pánek, Chair of the Board of Directors, FoRS – Czech Forum for Development Co-operation, 20 October 2007
- Petr Jelínek, Head, Development Centre, 23 October 2007
- Hana Ševčíková, Director, Department of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 October 2007
- Jan Hamáček, Chair, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Chamber of Deputies, 1 November 2007
- Jiří Pastvinský, Director, Petr Krupa, and Martina Tuleškovová, Department of Development Aid and Project Co-operation, Ministry of Environment, 29 October 2007
- Dagmar Kuchtová, Deputy General Director, Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, 1 November 2007
- Michal Kaplan, Department of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 November 2008
- Pavla Fridrichová, Asylum and Migration Policy Department, Ministry of Interior, 11 February 2008
- Ivana Vlková, Department of the European Union and International Relations, Ministry of Finance, 14 March 2008 (by telephone)

### **Respondents**

- Jana Vlachová, Department of International Relations, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 30 November 2007
- Ivana Vlková, Department of the European Union and International Relations, Ministry of Finance, 8 January 2008
- Zdenka Caisová, Department for Migration and Integration of Foreigners, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 20 March 2008

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