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Indo-Pacific strategy and Europe – from politics through defence and economy to cultural and AI diplomacy. The example of the Czech Republic

Abstract: In the past decades, the increase in the importance of the Indo-Pacific region, which has become not only a new geopolitical and geoeconomic, but also a geotechnical centre, led to a series of activities both of individual countries and the European Union and its member-states, resulting in a set of strategies for the Indo-Pacific during the second decade of the 21st century. The same process continued in the current, third decade. Due to their significance, the enacted strategies soon became the subject of study, whereas lately the focus has been placed exactly on analyzing the activities of individual countries. On this occasion, we have dedicated attention to the research of the activities of the Czech Republic, which adopted its strategy in 2022, immediately after the adoption of the European Union's Strategy for the Indo-Pacific (2021) and subsequently, this region also found its place in the official politics of this country, namely in the Foreign Policy Concept (2025), as well in the National Cybersecurity Strategy (2025).

Keywords: European Union, Czech Republic, Indo-Pacific, strategy, activities

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific region has become increasingly important in the past decades due to the changes on the geopolitical scene in the past few years, the dominant of which is the Ukraine-Russia conflict

and the question of relations with the PR China, on the one hand, and the relations between the USA and the PR China, as well as Indo-Pacific, on the other hand. That is why several strategies for the Indo-Pacific have been enacted and their number is continuously increasing. Thus, respective strategies

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were adopted by Japan (2016), which took the first steps in that direction as early as 2007, Australia, which dedicated separate chapters to this region within its four documents (2012, 2016, 2017, 2020), and the USA (2022), while India initiated that question in 2015, 2018, and then in 2025, although it still has not adopted its official strategy (Kironska et al., 2023; Abbondanza, Grgić, 2025).^[2] Furthermore, in line with the shift towards the Indo-Pacific, which has practically become not only a new geopolitical, but also a geoeconomic and geotechnological centre, the strategies were adopted first by France, (2019, 2022), the Netherlands (2020) and Germany (2021), and then by the European Union as well (2021). At the same time or soon afterwards, white papers, strategies, foundations for their adoption, or guidelines for activities, were published by Ireland (2020 strategy updated in 2023), Great Britain (2021 strategy updated in 2023), the Czech Republic (2022 strategy), as well as South Korea, or the Republic of Korea (2022), Canada (2023) and Lithuania (2023), while Sweden issued a document regarding defence policy in 2024 (Kironska et al., 2023; Abbondanza, Grgić, 2025). Switzerland also adopted its own strategy, although short-term (South East Asia Strategy 2023–2026). Based on the research so far, Slovakia will probably soon define its own strategy too (Kironska et al., 2023).

The scope of the EU's main interests also conditioned the definition of seven key priority areas of cooperation (Sustainable and inclusive prosperity, Green transition, Ocean governance, Digital governance and partnerships, Connectivity, Security and defence, Human security) (EU Indo-Pacific Strategy, 2021), while the EU's work and activities within this strategy, as well as the activities within the Digital Compass (2030 Digital Compass, 2021) also led to the agreements on digital partnership with South Korea, Singapore and Japan (Digital Partnerships, 2025).

However, the fact that every country also implements its own activities within local strategies and, of course, interests, raises the question as to how each of them approaches the given region and what activities it implements. That is exactly why on this occasion we decided to pay attention to the Indo-Pacific strategy of the Czech Republic and its accompanying activities, as well as to the results so far, having in mind that it is a country that may be ranked among those whose activities (and orientations) can be monitored in continuity and that strives to become an entry for the Indo-Pacific countries, and particularly some of them, into Europe.^[3] In addition, it implements its activities continuously and in several spheres, including the above-mentioned ones, while data

[2] Although India has not adopted the official strategy in terms of a document, its definition and its form are being developed through various official statements and activities (Obrenović, 2024).

[3] In that respect, it is necessary to highlight the statement by Minister Martin Kupka from 2023, from which it is possible to see clearly the plan of the economic aspiration for the Czech Republic to further breakthrough into the Indo-Pacific ("Singapore can be a gateway for our businesses to enter the Southeast Asian market", Minister of Transport Kupka in Singapore, 2023).

about its activities are presented transparently on official pages, which ensures their monitoring.^[4]

Yet, before we look at that question, it is necessary to point to the main directions of research regarding the Indo-Pacific and the accompanying strategies, concepts and activities that may now be seen in the literature as distinct.

In that respect, it is necessary to point out that there are several questions arising as the chief ones in literature. First of all, we should start from the definition of the Indo-Pacific, earlier known in literature as the Asian-Pacific region, which, with being renamed, was extended to the Indian Ocean and India, and which is defined in the EU's Strategy as a region "stretching from East Africa to the Pacific islands" (for a detailed overview of different definitions, see: Beriša, 2024; Abbondanza, Grgić, 2025). Then, there is also a question of the analysis of the adopted strategies and white papers, while the current questions include both the position of individual countries of the EU and its member-states towards the Indo-Pacific, and the activities of individual countries from the given region, as well as the questions of economic, security and normative engagement. Of course, in line with the importance and position in the world, in numerous cases attention is also dedicated to the PC China and its place within these acts.^[5] However,

the papers dealing with the activities of individual EU countries in this region are still few and far between, although their number has slightly increased in the past two years, i.e., during 2024 and 2025, while part of them are also general analyses of the activities of member-states in the preparation of future strategies at the local level, for example, the analysis of the direction to be taken by Slovakia, when analyzing both the existing strategies and their elements (Kironksa et al., 2023). Finally, it need to be emphasized that, in line with the fact that these are relatively new events, the number of research papers dedicated to the question of strategies – either local, i.e., of individual states, or of the EU – and important activities and countries of the Indo-Pacific, has continually increased in the past two years, while the question itself is also becoming the topic of separate collections (also see the collection: *Geostrategy of the Indo-Pacific*, 2024). Speaking of the Czech Republic, in these papers it is mostly mentioned in terms of the comparison of strategies, except for the cases where its activities are analyzed in slightly more detail within the same question (Kironksa et al., 2023; Sinopsis, 2023; Zemánek, 2024), or in relation to certain countries from this region, e.g., Taiwan (Tsung-Yen Chen, 2023).

[4] In fact, the Czech Republic ranks among the most transparent countries because it not only allows insight into its activities successively and publicly, but also brings out publications about its activities from the previous year, including those about the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see also: Czech Diplomacy 2024, 2025).

[5] China as a separate question appears continuously in all analyses, while the greatest number of papers is dedicated exactly to China. Since on this occasion China has not been considered separately having in mind the given topic, we do not believe it is relevant to analyze or just list the papers dealing with this country both within the Indo-Pacific strategy or outside it.

Strategy of the Czech Republic and accompanying activities for the Indo-pacific

Following the happenings on the horizon, the Czech Republic very early became involved in the Indo-Pacific question in modern trends, and it was itself actively included in the adoption of the EU strategy; in September 2022, it published a document entitled The Czech Republic's Strategy for Cooperation with the Indo-Pacific – Closer Than We Think. The Czech Republic defines the Indo-Pacific as a region "surrounded by the Indian Ocean and the Pacific", which consists of 40 states and territories, with Taiwan standing out among the countries of relevance, which is subsequently said only about Lithuania. Speaking of the strategy and partnerships, in addition to listing the EU, the NATO and the Visegrád Four, to which the Czech Republic belongs, it also explicitly mentions the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), a diplomatic-security network whose members are Australia, India, Japan and the USA, which has been done only by France as well. In the analyses of the Czech strategy so far, it is stressed that, in addition to the above-mentioned partners, it also lists the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),^[6] Australia, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the USA, as well as the AUKUS with its members: Australia, the UK and the USA.^[7] In relation to goals, political participa-

tion of the EU and the cooperation with the ASEAN are also emphasized. As regards China, the Czech Republic follows the course of the EU (Kironska et al., 2023; Zemánek, 2024).

The main highlighted priorities, except for peace, are also partnership, security, prosperity/economic interests and (self-)sustainability. Within security, the following is mentioned: cybersecurity, resilience building, preventing hybrid threats and terrorism, security dialogue and preventing disasters and conflicts. Within economic interests, the primary accent is placed on the expansion of Czech business activities, academic and scientific cooperation and mutual interaction, and increased participation in trade and supply, whereas one of the main goals is the recognition of the Czech Republic and Czech companies in the Indo-Pacific. Finally, speaking of self-sustainability, the highlighted goals are agriculture, green economy, worker mobility, environmental protection and the green agenda, but also diplomacy in terms of raw materials, regional connectivity and cooperation, and even the construction of medical institutions. However, as observed by Zemánek, in terms of connectivity, the Czech Republic follows the EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy from 2019 and the EU Global Gateway from 2021 (Zemánek, 2024).

In the context of all the above-mentioned, Tsung-Yen Chen (Tsung-Yen Chen, 2023) emphasizes that, according to the given strategy as the

[6] The ASEAN has 10 member-states: Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore and Myanmar. For more details about the position of the ASEAN in politics and the Indo-Pacific region, as well as about the economically relevant elements of this Association, see: Stanojević, 2024; Qiao-Franco, Karmazin & Kolmaš, 2024; Lin, 2024.

[7] For more details about the role of AUKUS in the Indo-Pacific, see: Scholik & Gerstl, 2022.



Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala addresses the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, a business event to attract investments to the Gujarat state, in Gandhinagar, India, January 10, 2024.

Photo: Guliver Images

basis in the interests of the Czech Republic, it is possible to clearly distinguish the following three dimensions: geopolitics, economy and alignment with the existing international order. Furthermore, in addition to the NATO, other outstanding partners are Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, so-called Indo-Pacific Four (IP4 countries),

while the USA is seen as a partner in relation to the Chinese question. Regarding the Indo-Pacific, the same author emphasizes its geoeconomic status in the Strategy. Finally, when it comes to Taiwan, the author also stresses good relations between Taiwan and the Czech Republic, as well as the fact that Taiwan is recognized as an important strategic

30 | partner in the Strategy, not only declaratively, since the activities of Czech politics confirm it (Tsung-Yen Chen, 2023).^[8]

As a special item, the Indo-Pacific question also appears within the Foreign Policy Concept (Foreign Policy Concept, 2025), which first emphasizes that it is a region with a growing influence, while as outstanding primary powers are India, Japan, South Korea and the ASEAN members, and the conflict over Taiwan as a potential crisis. Within the same document, the foreign policy goals also refer to the harmonization of the Czech Republic with the White Paper for European Defence and the ReArm Europe Plan Readiness 2030, published just before the adoption of the Concept in March 2025, which, except for the reference to China, points out that Europe should explore the cooperation in the sphere of defence with the Indo-Pacific, and particularly with Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand (White Paper, 2025). Finally, the Concept especially points out the strategic partnership with India, Japan and South Korea, as well as with the leading members of the ASEAN, and in particular with India, while within goals, the emphasis is on further active involvement of the Czech Republic in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as in relation to the ASEAN, through traditional industry and the use of the diplomatic network and activities of the respective embassies (Foreign Policy Concept, 2025). Speaking of the Indo-Pacific, it needs to be emphasized that the Concept cites

the Czech Export Strategy adopted back in 2023 (Czech Export Strategy 2023–2033, 2023), which emphasized that one of the tasks was the establishment of free trade with that region, as well as a form of cooperation as a “trade and technological council” (TTC) with the USA or India, or so-called Indian-Pacific digital partnerships” (Czech Export Strategy 2023–2033, 2023).

However, speaking of the activities of the Czech Republic and modern diplomacy, it is necessary to point out that modern diplomacy is based on those activities connecting domestic policy ones with the foreign policy activities and relations. In that respect, the Concept includes activities starting from defence and security, via economic, cultural and scientific, to diplomacy and AI (Foreign Policy Concept, 2025), which has been defined as a separate field more recently.^[9] It is exactly in this field that the Indo-Pacific is once again mentioned within the new National Cybersecurity Strategy of the Czech Republic, adopted by this country in September 2025, or several months after the Concept. In this Strategy, planned to come into force in 2026, the potential crisis in the Indo-Pacific is also mentioned once again, first regarding Taiwan (whereas there is an additional emphasis on the danger of the high presence of Chinese technology within the critical infrastructure). At the same time, in the chapter about the establishment of new strategic partnerships and the strengthening of the existing ones, the Strategy emphasizes the deepening of the

[8] About the special importance of Taiwan, as well as of the Indo-Pacific countries as semi-conductors, see: Stekić, 2024.

[9] This can also be seen from the speech of David Lammy, Foreign Secretary of the UK, from July 2025, who clearly points to the intersection of AI and diplomacy, with a special emphasis on foreign policy relations and relations in the domain of defence closely related to the Indo-Pacific itself and some countries in this region (Lammy, 2025).

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European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas speaks during a media conference after the EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum meeting at the European Council building in Brussels, November 2025.

Photo: Guliver Images

cooperation with the IP4 countries, i.e., Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand, while further pointing out that the deepening of the relations both with the Indo-Pacific and with other relevant regions will be worked on through intensive

diplomacy via cyber attachés, whose number, as announced in the Strategy, will be increased in the forthcoming period and placed on a larger number of locations.^[10] The Indo-Pacific is once again mentioned at the very end of the new strategy in terms

[10] Currently, the Czech Republic has a total of five cyber attachés, with the attaché for the Indo-Pacific is based in Canberra, Australia. Others are based in Brussels – for the NATO and the EU; in Tel Aviv, for Israel and in Washington for the USA and Canada (Cyber Attaché, The National Cyber and Information Security Agency, or NÚKIB). In that context, it can

of emphasizing further cooperation and exchange of knowledge with that region (National Cybersecurity Strategy, 2025).

In line with all the above-mentioned, the activities of the Czech Republic in relation to the Indo-Pacific may be observed from different perspectives. Speaking of foreign policy activities, according to the adopted strategy, the official visits to some countries followed. Namely, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Lipavský visited India (February–March 2023); Prime Minister Petr Fiala visited the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and two Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (April 2023), and then India (January 2024), while in 2024, the Czech Republic was already one of the partners at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit. On that occasion, the Joint Statement for Strategic Partnership on Innovation was issued. To put an emphasis on friendship, India decided that its Centre of Artificial Intelligence, Robotics & Cybernetics, inaugurated in Jaipur in 2024, should be named after Czech scientist and professor Vladimír Mařík. Afterwards, the Indo-Pacific route was once again taken by Jan Lipavský, who visited India, Australia and Japan. Without further details about these visits, which have been perfectly analyzed and presented by Zemánek (Zemánek, 2024), who also looks at the relations between the Czech Republic and the Philippines, and even the

question of defence industry (while pointing out the promotion of the Czech Republic), we will only highlight that, in line with the importance of the Indo-Pacific, as well as of Australia, for the Czech Republic, this country has appointed a cyber attaché for the Indo-Pacific among its five cyber attachés, with the seat of his office in Canberra, Australia (Zemánek, 2024). However, it should be emphasized that the Czech strategy, as it can be seen from the example of the relations with Taiwan, only continues to follow the state's orientation that was clearly visible earlier – President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Miloš Vystrčil paid an official visit to Taiwan back in 2020 (Tsung-Yen Chen, 2023).^[11]

In the end, the fact emphasized by Zemánek (Zemánek, 2024) in relation to Japan is that on the occasion of Jan Lipavský's visit to Japan, the fourth Czech Republic–Japan Business and Investment Forum was inaugurated, the emphasis of which is placed on the increase of Japanese business activities in this country and vice versa, whereas Japan is at the same time the second largest foreign investor in the Czech Republic (Zemánek, 2024); in fact, this is something that may be seen as a general direction of the Czech Republic's economic politics, while the new forum of this type was also held on the occasion of President Petr Pavel's visit to Japan in July 2025. (President of the Czech

be expected that future cyber attachés will be appointed for other relevant countries in the Indo-Pacific, such as Korea, Japan or Singapore, having in mind the fact that, when speaking of geotechnology, the Indo-Pacific countries can be ranked among the so-called smart nations (for more details about the term "smart nation" in a broader sense, see: Sipahi and Sayyi, 2024; Das & Kwek, 2024).

[11] It is interesting to mention that in his speech in the Parliament in Taiwan, he said: "I am a Taiwanese" (Tsung-Yen Chen, 2023: 46), alluding to J. F. Kennedy's speech in Berlin or Mark Cicero's speech in the Senate (Kennedy, 1963).



Emperor Naruhito of Japan received Czech President Petr Pavel (left) at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, Japan, July 25, 2025.

Photo: Guliver Images

Republic Petr Pavel visited Japan, 2025). Having in mind the economic orientation, when speaking of business forums, we should not ignore the Czech Republic–Singapore Business Forum in Singapore in 2023 (Czech Republic–Singapore Business Forum, 2023). Moreover, the fact that should not be ignored is that the Czech Republic, under the auspices of the government trade promotion agency known as CzechTrade, had initiated, just as in the case of other countries, the promotion of Czech companies and of the cooperation in the Indo-Pa-

cific even before the adoption of the Strategy; in fact, the above-mentioned the Czech Republic–Singapore Business Forum was actually only the continuation of the activities of the Czech-Singapore Chamber of Commerce and the fact that as early as 2021 the Czech-Singapore Committee was founded within the Czech Chamber of Commerce. At the founding ceremony of this Committee, it was pointed out that Singapore was one of fourteen priority countries for expanding Czech business activities (Establishment of the Czech-Singapore

Committee at the Czech Chamber of Commerce, 2021). A detailed insight into the work of local offices in this region, as well as into the activities of embassies and diplomacy, can be obtained on the webpages of local embassies, and also on the webpages promoting the activities of individual diplomats, such as official LinkedIn profiles (for more details about the Czech Republic's economic diplomacy and data availability, see: Szczepańska-Dudziak, 2024). Speaking of economic relations, the activities of the Czech Chamber of Commerce should not be forgotten – in addition to a number of agreements, it also signed the one with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in October 2025 (Memorandum of Understanding between the Chamber of Commerce of the Czech Republic and JCCI, 2025).

At the end of the review of the relations between the Czech Republic and the Indo-Pacific, it should be pointed out that the activities of this country may also be followed in the sphere of cultural diplomacy, particularly within its participation in the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), whose member it has been since 2004. According to the above-mentioned, the emphasis must be placed on the continually increasing engagement of the Czech Republic in the Indo-Pacific with the passage of time, and in the framework of economy, international relations and security, whereas the literature further points out that in this last sphere, the state is still making a modest contri-

bution (Abbondanza, Grgić, 2025, T. 2.7.) and that this engagement must be accordingly adjusted in the spheres of cultural and scientific diplomacy. In that respect, it is also necessary to highlight the activities of the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research, whose stands are recognizable at education fairs by the slogan "Study in the Czech Republic". Speaking of the presence of this Agency, we must also mention its attendance at the conference of the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE), held in Australia in 2024 (Representation of Czech Education in Australia, 2024).^[12] In the end, the fact should not be ignored that at the beginning of 2025 the Czech Republic opened the labour market for the citizens of nine countries, five of which are exactly the ones relevant for the Indo-Pacific region, i.e., the countries primarily standing out within the Strategy and the Concept, namely Australia, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand (IP4 countries) and Singapore (Free access to the Czech labour market for citizens of nine selected countries, 2025).^[13]

At the very end of the review of the relations between the Czech Republic and the Indo-Pacific region, and the highlighted elements of the Strategy and the accompanying documents such as the Concept or the Cyber Strategy, it should be pointed out that only in the past few years, the Czech Republic has signed several important agreements on strategic cooperation, including,

[12] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the first time highlighted scientific diplomacy as one of its priorities to foreign diplomats in 2024 (MFA Presented Priorities of Scientific Diplomacy to Foreign Diplomats, 2024). For more details about the position of the Czech Republic to the innovation and research, see: Ruixia and Yuncheng, 2025.

[13] Other traditional allies of the Czech Republic include: the USA, Great Britain, Canada and Israel.

besides the already-mentioned strategic partnership with India (Joint Statement for Czechia-India Strategic Partnership on Innovation, 2024), the one with South Korea (Joint Statement between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Republic of Korea on Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership, 2024), and the one with Vietnam (Joint Statement on upgrading Viet Nam-Czech Republic relations to strategic partnership, 2025).^[14]

Conclusion

Finally, we must emphasize that the EU Strategy, as well as local strategies, or aspirations of the EU member-states to independently achieve best possible results in their own activities and for

the benefit of their own states, actually turn the Indo-Pacific region into a place of conflict over the member-states' individual interests. In that respect, it can be freely said that the activities of the Czech Republic, as well as its diplomacy, are clearly heard, and in the foreseeable future they might lead to an extremely good position of the Czech Republic in the Indo-Pacific region and its outstanding place among other EU member-states. Its engagement is increasing continuously and this increase and activities should be monitored in the future not only from the perspective of the Indo-Pacific, but also from the perspective of special relations of the Czech Republic and individual countries in this region, in order to get a comprehensive insight into each of these activities and the Czech Republic's relations with those countries.

[14] In that respect, a new agreement can be expected between the Czech Republic and Japan, having in mind that the previous document, namely the Action Plan for Cooperation, signed in 2021, was time-structured until 2025 (Action Plan for Cooperation between the Czech Republic and Japan for the period of 2021–2025, 2021).

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