

Czech Semiconductor Centre Launches in Brno, Strengthening Europe's Chip Autonomy

BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC, April 9 — A new chapter in Europe's semiconductor independence has begun in Brno with the launch of the Czech Semiconductor Centre (CSC). The centre, located in one of Europe's strongest regions for chip design, will focus on supporting innovation, prototyping, and the growth of European fabless companies. As the Czech national competence centre under the European Chips Act, CSC aims to strengthen Europe's semiconductor independence.

The CSC is led by Brno University of Technology, in collaboration with Czech Technical University in Prague, onsemi, Codasip, the Czech National Semiconductor Cluster, and innovation agency JIC. Together, they aim to build a European hub of excellence in chip design, education and talent development, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) support.

Powering Europe's Chip Future: Focus on Design and RISC-V Innovation

The centre will support European fabless companies with mentoring, financial guidance, access to advanced design tools, prototyping platforms, and small-scale chip production — all critical for the growth of European SMEs in semiconductor design and instrumentation, and for reducing reliance on overseas supply chains. To achieve this, the CSC will leverage the Brno region's deep expertise in IP design, Electronic Design Automation (EDA) tool development, and extensive materials research and characterization — capabilities concentrated at Brno University of Technology and CEITEC.

[The Brno region](#) is already a semiconductor design powerhouse. It is home to Codasip, a pioneer in developing processor cores based on the open RISC-V standard, now powering more than 3 billion chips worldwide. **Karel Masarik**, Codasip's founder, has been appointed director of CSC and explains: "Our goal is to create a strong foundation for European startups and SMEs to design their own semiconductor solutions in the Czech Republic."

Another key partner is onsemi's Brno-based design centre, holder of over 300 patents in semiconductor technologies — further cementing the city's role as one of Europe's rising technology capitals.

Brno: Where One-Third of the World's Electron Microscopes Are Made

Besides chip design, what makes the Brno region's role in the semiconductor landscape particularly unique is its dominance in electron microscopy — technology crucial for semiconductor development, manufacturing, and quality control throughout the entire chip lifecycle.

"One in every three electron microscopes used globally comes from Brno. This concentration of electron microscopy expertise strengthens a strategic advantage for Europe's semiconductor ambitions in terms of a resilient supply chain," says **Petr Strelec**, director of the Brno site of Thermo Fisher Scientific.

Brno is home to three global leaders in electron microscopy—Thermo Fisher Scientific, Tescan, and Delong Instruments—as well as dozens of specialized suppliers. In 2023, these three companies generated over €1.3 billion in revenue, exporting 93% of their production worldwide. Their combined R&D investment reached approximately €72.5 million in 2023, representing 48–62% of their added value. This concentration of know-how supports Brno’s position not just as a design centre, but as a location that offers all the building blocks needed to support chip innovation in Europe.

European Semiconductor Integration

In September 2023, the South Moravian Region became the first Czech region to join the European Semiconductor Regions Alliance, a coalition of 36 regions from 13 European states working to strengthen cooperation in semiconductor innovation.

"The Czech semiconductor ecosystem, with Brno at its centre, represents a vital piece of Europe's strategy to reduce reliance on non-European chip production," explains **Karel Masarik** and adds: "With Brno's unique combination of chip design expertise and complementary technologies like electron microscopy, we are contributing critical capabilities to Europe's semiconductor value chain."

The CSC, as part of the European network of competence centres, will play a key role in the Chips for Europe initiative — the first pillar of the European Chips Act — by providing access to design platforms and pilot lines, and by supporting the growth of European semiconductor companies.

[About the Brno region:](#)

The Brno region (Czech Republic, European Union) is a dynamic hub of over 1.2 million residents. Renowned for its universities and research institutions, this area is known for scientific discovery and innovation in electron microscopy. Other key sectors include cyber security, space industry and game development.

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