The objective of the FBS program was to investigate some of the main aspects of the market for remittances to identify reforms the national government could make to enhance the efficiency of the service and, ultimately, reduce the cost of sending money abroad. The program also aimed to increase the transparency among Remittance Service Providers (RSP) of the cost of sending money from the Czech Republic. In 2009 the more than 630,000 migrants residing in the Czech Republic (either officially or illegally) sent US$3.8 billion home to their families, an amount equivalent to 1.5 percent of the Czech Republic GDP. The cost of sending this money, however, could be as much as 13–14 percent of the amount sent. Reducing that cost by 5 percent enabled migrants to retain the equivalent of US$190 million each year.

To achieve this objective, project activities focused on the following priority areas:

- Undertaking a survey within migrant communities on the ways in which they send money abroad
- Analyzing the results of the survey and creating a detailed report with specific statistical information and figures
- Investigating the different costs associated with sending money from the Czech Republic through the main operators on the market
- Integrating the Czech Republic into the World Bank’s online database “Remittance Prices Worldwide” to increase market transparency of the different components of remittance costs and inform customers about the options available
- Increasing general awareness on the issue of remittances, involving both public authorities and the private sector, with the aim of improving the competition and decreasing the cost for final users of remittances services
- Identifying legal constraints that could hamper the smooth flow of money across borders and advising the authorities about available solutions

Results. An extensive analysis of the Czech market for remittances was conducted, producing a series of confidential and public reports and awareness activities. The survey of the market for remittances among the migrant communities was summarized for the final publication “The Market for Remittance Services in the Czech Republic.” The team completed a series of seminars, both in Prague and Washington, to raise awareness of the findings and increase the local players’ knowledge of the potential of the remittances
market. The Czech Republic was included in the analysis undertaken by the World Bank through the website Remittances Price Worldwide Database (http://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/Country-Corridors/from-Czech-Republic/) in order to monitor the cost of remittances to Ukraine and Vietnam and verify whether, to some extent, the measures implemented during the project had positively affected the market.

**Impact.** Both regulators and private sector representatives operating in the market for remittances increased their knowledge about the main features of this market. The National Statistics Office and the Statistics Department of the Czech National Bank are now better able to track the volume of remittances. The inclusion of the Czech Republic in the Remittance Prices Worldwide Database on the cost of remittances showed that in the last three iterations, the cost of sending US$200 from Czech Republic to both Ukraine and Vietnam has decreased from 12.82 and 13.39 percent to 11.18 and 11.76 percent, respectively.

**Key Partners.** Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic

1 Available at http://elibrary.worldbank.org/content/book/9780821385852