

PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMMES AND POLICY ANALYSIS INSTRUCTION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Abstract: *The aim of the paper is to provide the first systematic review of instruction in public policy programmes (PPP) in the Czech Republic and examine the role and nature of policy analysis therein. First, the Czech higher education system is briefly described. Second, an overview of PPP in the Czech Republic is provided. This analysis is based upon a publicly available list of degree programmes accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, an internet search, e-mail correspondence with public policy and policy analysis instructors, and syllabuses. It is shown that while a diverse set approaches is used, the classical “positivist” perspective is clearly dominant. Third, using survey data (N = 192) we analyse the views of Public and Social Policy graduates on the importance of competences in practice and the quality of actually learnt competences. Last, preliminary conclusions on public policy/policy analysis instruction in the Czech Republic are discussed. It is shown that public policy instruction is rather fragmented and is institutionalized under different disciplines. The respondents were most satisfied with gaining skills in the areas of policy analysis, ability to orient oneself and acquire new knowledge, and strategic and analytical thinking. In contrast, they were least satisfied with acquiring organizational skills, practical professional experience and skills, and computer literacy.*

Keywords: *public policy instruction; policy analysis instruction; graduates survey; Czech Republic*

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INTRODUCTION

The first public policy schools and programmes were created in the US in the late 1960s (Ellwood & Smolensky, 2001). Gradually, policy programmes expanded to most other developed countries (Geva-May, 2006; Geva-May & Maslove, 2007; Geva-May et al., 2008; Fritzen, 2008; Cloete & Rabie, 2008; Wu et al, 2012; Reiter & Töller, 2013). After the fall of communism in 1989, policy programmes started to be established in Central European countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. However, with the exception of evidence on public administration programmes in Central and Eastern European countries (Hajnal, 2003; Hajnal & Jenei, 2008; Hajnal, 2014), virtually nothing is known about such programmes in these countries.

The aim of the paper is to provide the first systematic review of public policy programmes (PPP) in the Czech Republic and examine the role and nature of policy analysis in them. To do so, we focus upon programmes implemented at universities and accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports that provide Bachelors, Masters or doctoral degrees. This is because there is no evidence on non-academic programmes, and to the best of our knowledge, professional and continuing education courses on public policy/policy analysis are virtually non-existent in the Czech Republic.

We ask two interlinked sets of research questions. The first set is mostly descriptive: What public policy programmes are available in the Czech Republic? How are these programmes institutionalized? What role does policy analysis play in the curriculum and how is it taught? The second set of research questions is more evaluative and concerns professional competences: What competences are considered by the graduates as the most important? Is there any gap between the demands of practice and public policy curriculum? These two sets of questions are closely interrelated. While the first concerns the availability and substance of PPP in the Czech Republic, the second is more about the real effects and impact of such programmes.

The paper is structured as follows. First, the Czech higher education system is briefly described. Second, an overview of PPP and related programmes

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METHODOLOGY

To answer our research questions, we proceeded in a several steps. First, we created a list of relevant public policy programmes and courses. We started with a publicly available list of study programmes accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and published on the Ministry’s website. The list contains 9144 study fields in total. We searched especially for study fields that have the term “policy” (*politika*) in title. Because study fields with a strong public policy focus might be hidden under different labels (e.g., political science or economics), we also used an internet search to identify other relevant study programmes and fields of study. Specifically, we looked systematically for courses with titles such as “public policy” or “policy analysis” (in Czech). Given the fact that we have been involved in teaching public policy/policy analysis in the Czech Republic for more than a decade and are part of an informal network, we also used our contacts and colleagues to ensure that all important and relevant programmes were included in our list.

Second, after creating the list of programmes and courses, we explored their substance by analysing publicly available syllabuses. Because these are not always available, we also contacted instructors of the courses to get more information. The data gathering was closed in August 2014. On April 9, 2015, we realized a half-day workshop with policy analysis instructors from the entire Czech Republic and gathered additional evidence to triangulate the results. Generally, it was confirmed that no important programmes and courses were missing from our list. However, it was also clear that meanwhile, in less than a year’s time, changes had been made to several programmes. This suggests that with the exception of three programmes described in more detail below, public policy instruction in the Czech Republic is still rather unsettled and subject to frequent change (courses mostly depend upon a particular instructor).

Third, to get initial insights about the effects and impact of PPP programmes, we carried out our own empirical research. Because no data were available on graduates of Masters programmes in Public Policy (MPP) in Central and Eastern Europe, we realized the first survey on MPP graduates in the region ($N = 192$). Respondents of the survey were graduates of the Masters field of study in Public and Social Policy at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague (both full-time and blended-learning mode)². Data were collected both at an alumni meeting on November 21, 2014, and subsequently through an online application (between December 11, 2014, and January 20, 2015). Firstly, at the alumni meeting, the return rate was 86% (53 graduates of the 62 who got the questionnaire at the meeting returned it). Graduates who are on the alumni mailing list and were not at the alumni meeting were contacted by email with a request to complete the online questionnaire (415 graduates). The return rate of the online survey was 34% (139 of the 415 respondents completed the online questionnaires). Overall, the questionnaire was completed by 192 respondents (53 at the alumni meeting and 139 online), and the total return rate was 40%.

Certainly, there are limits to our data and the results must be interpreted with caution. The first limit is that the sample consists of graduates of only one programme (though by far the largest one). Another limitation is the incompleteness of the alumni mailing list (some contacts are missing and some email addresses no longer exist). It can also be assumed that the graduates who were at the alumni meeting or completed the online questionnaire are likely to be more active in and closer to the field than those who were not involved in the survey. Nevertheless, the evidence presented here is unique and help us draw the first map of a so far completely unexplored territory.

STUDY PROGRAMMES AND STUDY FIELDS IN CZECH HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education in the Czech Republic is governed by Act No. 111/1998 Coll. (the so-called Higher Education Act). Higher education consists of three levels, namely Bachelors degree programmes (usually three years), Masters degree programmes (usually two years) and doctoral degree programmes (lasting three or four years). There are public, state and private higher education institutions. Under the Higher Education Act, they are classified as university-type

2 More about the study field of Public and Social Policy at the Faculty of Social Sciences can be found in the section on public policy programmes in the Czech Republic.

institutions (24 public, 2 state and 3 private) which offer study programmes at all three levels of higher education, and non-university-type institutions (2 public and 43 private) which offer mainly Bachelors programmes but may also provide Masters programmes. Higher education differ profoundly in the size and number of students. The public institutions usually have many more students than the private ones, which often have a very small number of students in a given programme. With a few exceptions, public universities are more research-focused and usually are also more prestigious than private higher education institutions.

Students have to follow a study plan under an accredited degree programme. Accreditation is awarded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on the basis of a recommendation of the Accreditation Commission (*Akreditační komise*). The formation and implementation of degree programmes is one of the recognised academic rights and freedoms of higher education institutions, so their number and prevailing orientation have changed throughout the years. The number and content of programmes depend on the particular institution. In practice the awarding of an accreditation depends more upon the assumed quality of the guarantor of the programme (who must be a professor or associate professor in a given field) and the qualifications of other instructors than on the proposed curriculum. In fact, the actual curriculum is almost exclusively in the hands of the guarantor of the programme and is not determined by any external standards. As a result, programmes with the very same labels may differ substantially in their content and scope. According to the law, there are three modes of study: full-time, distance-learning and a combination of these (blended-learning study).

Study programmes at higher education institutions cover almost all areas of science and the arts. Study programmes (*studijní programy*) are usually subdivided into fields of study (*studijní obory*)³. Thus sometimes a student might be enrolled in a field of study with the same name as the study programme. Sometimes, however, a heterogeneous range of fields of study is included under one study programme. Students usually identify themselves more with their field of study than the general study programme under which it falls, especially if this field of study is highly specialized and distinct from the other fields of study.⁴ Sometimes it is hard to find the connection between the concrete field of study and the study programme under which it is included in the accreditation.

Consequently, for any analysis of instruction it is important to analyse particular fields of study, and not study programmes. However, information about the study programme under which the field of study comes can reveal the institutional and disciplinary roots of the concrete field. This is because a study programme is usually organized only by one higher education unit (usually a department). As a result, different fields of study under the same programme often share the instructors, some courses and usually also the paradigms and methodological approaches. For instance, the 'Public Policy and Human Resources' field of study at Masaryk University in Brno falls under the study programme 'Social Policy and Social Work'. This is organized by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work. It might thus be correctly assumed that while the field of study is generally autonomous and distinct from others, it is embedded in the paradigms and methodologies of social policy and social work.

PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMMES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Now we can focus more specifically upon the programmes and study fields related to public policy. Our analysis is based on the official list of all study programmes and fields of study accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, an internet search, e-mail correspondence with public policy and policy analysis instructors, syllabuses as well as a quantitative analysis of Master's theses in three main public policy programmes. The analytical procedure is detailed in the methodology section.

Table A1 in the Appendix shows the results of our search for accredited study programmes and fields of study. It reveals that only three institutions provide accredited fields of study with a primary focus upon public policy: 1) the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague; 2) the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University in Brno; and 3) the Anglo-American University in Prague. The former two are public universities (and also the two largest ones in the Czech Republic) and the latter is a private university.

First and foremost, public policy can be studied at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague. The Department of Public and Social Policy was established in 1993 under the newly established Institute of Sociological Studies⁵. The first students in the two-year Masters programme in Public and Social Policy (in Czech) enrolled in the 1993/94 academic year.

³ Sometimes the term *studijní obory* is also translated as 'branches of study'.

⁴ In everyday life students speak of their *field* of study (*obor*) and often are unaware that formally it falls under a more general study programme (*program*).

⁵ Since its inception, the Institute has had two departments: the Department of Public and Social Policy and the Department of Sociology.

Gradually, other types of PPP were accredited and opened by the Department. In the 1996/97 academic year, a doctoral programme on Public and Social Policy (in Czech) was launched, which enabled more research in the field. In the 2007/08 academic year, a Masters study programme for professionals (in the so-called 'combined' or blended-learning mode, see above) was introduced. An English version of the Masters field of study in Public and Social Policy was accredited in 2013/14, and an English version of the doctoral programme even one year earlier.

Currently, the Department of Public and Social Policy organizes fields of study in public policy in different modes (full-time and blended-learning), languages (Czech and English) and levels (Masters and doctoral).⁶ The curricula of these fields of study differ slightly depending on mode and language. The overall educational philosophy is, however, essentially the same. All the fields of study include courses on public policy, policy analysis, public administration, social policy and public economics. In addition, students are expected to specialize in one or several policy domains (particularly health, education, or social policy). In the full-time mode, one semester of internship in the public sector is compulsory.

All of these fields of study are officially subsumed under the study programme of Sociology. From the very beginning, many if not most students enrolled in the fields of study organized by the Department of Public and Social Policy (henceforth as DPSP) after graduation from the Bachelors field of study in Sociology and Social Policy organized jointly by the Department of Sociology and the DPSP. As a result, most students in these fields of study have a strong background in sociology. However, the Bachelors programme in Sociology and Social Policy is not exclusively sociological. It contains compulsory courses on public policy and other fields such as economics. The distinctive feature of the 'Prague school of public policy' lies, however, in its strong methodological focus.

Students from other fields and universities are also admitted to the Masters and doctoral fields of study organized by the DPSP. While those fields of study are strongly embedded in sociology, links to other fields have also been gradually established. After a long period of preparation, a new Bachelors field of study called 'Political Science and Public Policy' was accredited in 2014 and will be opened in 2015. Instruction will be organized jointly by the DPSP and the Institute of Political Sciences at the same faculty. For the first time, it will formally fall under the 'Political Science' study programme.

Second, since the year 2009 public policy has been taught at the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University. The 'Public Policy and Human Resources'

field of study falls under the study programme in 'Social Policy and Social Work'. This field of study is organized on different levels (Bachelors and Masters). The Bachelors level is full-time, is taught in Czech, and exists as a double major (students must pick a second major in Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Media Studies and Journalism, Social Anthropology, Gender Studies, Environmental Studies, European Studies, Pedagogy, or Economic Policy). The Masters level is organized in different modes (both full-time and blended-learning) and languages (both Czech and English). Full-time students can choose among three specializations: 'labour market, employment policy and human resources', 'personnel management and organizational development' and 'social policy'. Students in the blended-learning mode can specialize on 'personnel management and organizational development' or 'social policy'. There is not an accredited PPP at the doctoral level, only 'Social Policy and Social Work' (both in Czech and English, both in the full-time and blended-learning modes). The fields of study in public policy are organized by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work. There is also an Institute of Public Policy and Social Work at the same faculty which focuses on research.

Third, public policy is taught at the Anglo-American University, which was founded in 1990 as the oldest private university in the Czech Republic. The Masters study programme (and field of study) in 'Public Policy' at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences has been accredited since the year 2007⁷. This field of study is organized in the full-time mode and taught only in English. The number of graduates is far lower compared to the public universities.

Though only three institutions provide study programmes/fields directly focusing upon public policy, there are many other programmes that involve some courses on public policy or policy analysis⁸. They can be divided into two groups. The first one consists of 'general' disciplines closely related to public policy that involve some elements of public policy in their curricula, and in particular political science, public administration, social policy and social work, regional studies and (public) economics (see Table A2 in the Appendix). Fields of study of the second type focus upon particular policy domains such as economic policy, EU policy or education policy (see Table A3 in the Appendix). Usually, however, the policy perspective is not reflected in the name of the field of study, even though it is clearly present in the curriculum (examples include gender studies, civic sector studies or environmental studies).

7 A Masters study programme (and study field) in Applied Sociology and Public Policy is also accredited at the Anglo-American University, but it was not opened in 2014.

8 Interestingly, there is also the opposite example of an institution with public policy in its title that does not provide any programmes or even courses related to public policy (that is the School of Public Policies in Opava).

6 To date, there are about five hundred graduates of the Masters field of study in Public and Social Policy (both full-time and blended-learning) and forty graduates of the doctoral programme.

POLICY ANALYSIS COURSES

In this section we will focus upon courses on policy analysis. Not surprisingly, the most such courses can be found at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Prague. From the very introduction of the Masters programme in Public and Social Policy in 1993, policy analysis has played a key role in its curriculum, with two connected courses: *Metody analýzy politiky* (literally 'Methods of Policy Analysis') followed by *Metody tvorby politik* (literally 'Methods of Policy Design'). Though the substance of these two courses changed over time, the basic features have lasted for more than two decades. They are based upon students' group projects on *real-life* policy problems and have always had a substantial time allocation (four hours of instruction per week per course). The choice of the policy problem is upon the students, though the instructors help them to find and formulate problems that are manageable within the one-year period. Instead of teaching (and testing) academic knowledge, these two courses have always been based upon the *application* of various policy analysis methods and heuristics in analysing policy problems.

At the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, two courses are taught which are more professional than academic in nature: *Analýza veřejných politik* and *Analýza policy*. The course *Analýza veřejných politik* (the official name in English is Public Policy Analysis) is organized by the Department of Environmental Studies and focuses on environmental issues. Students working in groups apply theoretical knowledge to concrete cases in environmental policy (for example, the promotion of renewable energy sources, the Šumava National Park or coal mining limits). The course *Analýza policy* (the official name in English is Policy Analysis) is organized by the Department of Political Science. The teaching methods include lectures by policy experts, consultations with policy experts, student teamwork and student presentations. The student teams are required to submit a 10-page policy paper on a particular policy area. The policy papers are evaluated by the experts.

Most other courses at Czech universities are more theoretically (academically) oriented. For example, at the Masaryk University, the Faculty of Social Studies teaches *Tvorba a implementace veřejné politiky* (the official name in English is simply Public Policy), and the Faculty of Economics and Administration teaches *Tvorba a implementace veřejné politiky a hodnocení veřejných projektů* (in English, Public Policy – Design and Implementation), *Veřejná politika a tvorba programů* (in English, Public Policy and Creation of Programmes) and others (see Table A4 in the Appendix).

The analysis of textbooks pointed to two main Czech textbooks used. *Analýza a tvorba veřejných politik: Principy, metody a praxe* (in English, Meth-

ods of Policy Analysis and Design: Principles, Methods and Practice) was edited by Arnošt Veselý and Martin Nekola. This textbook was originally inspired by Dunn's book *Public Policy Analysis*, and is also similarly structured. Nevertheless, it was largely modified for the Czech context and also supplemented by additional chapters and methods not covered in Dunn's book. The second book, *Moderní analýza politiky: uvedení do teorií a metod policy analysis* (in English, Modern Policy Analysis: Introduction to the Theories and Methods of Policy Analysis), was written by Petr Fiala and Klaus Schubert (2000). As for foreign books, Dunn's Public Policy Analysis is used the most frequently. It is clear that the instructors prefer 'classical' policy analysis textbooks over interpretive ones.

GRADUATES' PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMMES

Policy analysis may well be viewed as "clinical profession" (Geva-May, 2005). While the controversies on what and how to teach in public policy programmes remain, there is no doubt that such a curriculum should prepare for practice. Surprisingly little attention, however, has been given to practical perspectives. Even in countries with a long tradition of PPP such as the USA, there is rather rare and fragmented empirical evidence on what MPP graduates *actually* do and which skills are important for their work.

Nevertheless, available evidence from the West (e.g., Henderson & Chetkovich, 2006) suggests that the practice is even more complicated than it is usually assumed. The career paths of MPP graduates are diverse. They work in different sectors (government, for-profit and non-profit organizations) and use different types of skills. The skills that are used in practice and valued by graduates are not necessarily those that are taught in PPP. In Henderson and Chetkovich's (2006) survey of MPP alumni from Harvard Kennedy School, respondents obtained a list of 23 skill and knowledge areas related to aspects of the curriculum and expected to be relevant to professional practice. For each item, they were asked to rate how extensively they had actually used the skill/knowledge area in their own career. Among the MPP alumni as a whole, the skill/knowledge areas with the highest mean scores of use included written and oral communication, systematic thinking about problems, managing a heavy workload, and group work. The least extensively used skill/knowledge areas included ethical reasoning, organizing/mobilization, political analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and statistics.

No such data are available for MPP in Central and Eastern Europe. To bridge the gap we have realized the first survey among graduates of the Public

and Social Policy programme taught since 1993 at Charles University in Prague. Despite the limitations of this survey (see the methodology section above), it provides initial empirical evidence on the skills of MPP graduates in the region. In this regard, we asked the alumni two questions. The first concerned the *assumed importance* of particular types of skill/knowledge, and the second concerned the level of skill/knowledge *actually learnt* by studying in the programme.

Table 1 shows the mean scores for each item. According to the respondents, the most important skills in practice include the ability to orient oneself and acquire new knowledge, communication skills, argumentation and critical thinking skills as well as strategic and analytical thinking. On the other hand, among the least important (though certainly *not unimportant*) they saw policy analysis skills, professional theoretical knowledge and policy design skills. This finding must be taken with caution because more generic skills (such as the ability to learn new things) are obviously useful in more contexts than relatively specific skills such as policy analysis or policy design. It also in line with Henderson and Chetkovich's (2006) finding mentioned above that the least extensively used skill/knowledge areas were also the most specific ones such as political analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and statistics. And again, in line with Henderson and Chetkovich's (2006) finding, the graduates in our survey invariably stressed the importance of communication skills and argumentation and critical thinking skills.

The second question regarded the level of competence acquired by studying in the Public and Social Policy Masters programme. The respondents were most satisfied with gaining skills in policy analysis, in the ability to orient oneself and acquire new knowledge and strategic and analytical thinking. On the other hand, they were least satisfied with acquiring organizational skills, practical professional experience and skills and computer literacy.

Because assumed importance of a particular skill/knowledge and the level of actually acquired skill/knowledge were measured in the same way, we were able to compare the two variables. The last column in Table 1 (titled "difference") shows the mean value of Q1 after subtracting Q2. This may be viewed as a gap between "what the ideal is" and "what actually exists"⁹. The highest gap between what is demanded by practice and how the graduates felt they were prepared occurred in the following competences: computer literacy, organizational skills, practical professional experience and skills and also communication skills. On the other hand, the graduates felt that they were prepared more

that adequately in terms of policy design skills, professional theoretical knowledge and policy analysis skills.

Table 1 The importance of competences in practice and the quality of actually learnt competences

	Q1: Skills in practice			Q2: Skills learnt			Difference
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	
Practical professional experience and skills	1.75	190	1.09	2.86	188	1.12	-1.11
Professional theoretical knowledge	2.46	190	1.02	2.12	190	0.91	0.34
Computer literacy	1.76	191	0.96	3.42	189	1.32	-1.66
Self-presentation skills	1.69	190	0.92	2.48	189	0.95	-0.79
Organizational skills	1.57	189	0.83	2.84	189	1.03	-1.27
Creativity	2.02	191	0.94	2.76	189	1.01	-0.74
Strategic and analytical thinking	1.51	189	0.85	2.02	188	0.94	-0.51
Ability to orient oneself and acquire new knowledge	1.46	191	0.81	1.96	189	0.96	-0.50
Ability to work in teams	1.77	191	0.91	2.37	188	1.13	-0.60
Tolerance, respect for different opinions	1.96	187	0.94	2.31	191	1.11	-0.35
Communication skills	1.48	190	0.80	2.46	191	1.02	-0.98
Argumentation and critical thinking skills	1.49	188	0.80	2.04	189	0.98	-0.55

⁹ We should not, however, go too far and interpret the difference as a "skills surplus" or "skill shortage". It is simply one possible indicator of skills importance from the graduates' perspective.

Policy analysis skills	2.36	190	1.19	1.85	191	0.89	0.51
Policy design skills	2.48	190	1.22	2.16	190	1.00	0.33

Notes: The exact wording of questions was as follows: Q1) In your opinion, how important are the following competences for being successful in practice? Q2) In your opinion, concerning this skill/knowledge how sufficiently were you prepared after graduating from the public and social policy program? The respondents were asked to rate each item on a scale 1 to 5, where 1 means "very important" (Q1) or "excellently" (Q2) and 5 means "not at all important" (Q1) or "insufficiently" (Q2). The variables are ranked in the order of the questionnaire.

As discussed above, the graduates' perspective on the importance of skills might differ according to actual job in which they are employed. Because policy analysis is practiced in different economic sectors, instead of distinguishing between sectors, we drew the line between those who work in the public policy field and those who do not. 67 per cent of graduates in our sample reported working in the field¹⁰. Table A5 in the Appendix shows that those who work and do not work in the public policy field did not differ in most items. There were, however, important exceptions. Graduates who work in the field rate the following competences as significantly more important: professional theoretical knowledge, strategic and analytical thinking, policy analysis skills and policy design skills. On the other hand, graduates working outside the field seemed to rate a bit more computer literacy, although this is not statistically significant at the level of $P < 0.05$.

As for competences actually learnt by studying at the Public and Social Policy programme, graduates working in the field felt significantly more prepared in the following competences: professional theoretical knowledge, creativity, communication skills, argumentation and critical thinking skills and policy design skills. Perhaps not surprisingly, graduates working outside the public policy field felt less prepared in all other competences, although these differences were not statistically significant.

CONCLUSIONS

Public policy is a growing field both internationally and in the CEE region. During the last decade many PPP programmes and courses have been created. Nevertheless, our evidence on this development is very limited. As explained above, virtually no data are available on the situation in Central and Eastern European countries. Because of these limitations, we should avoid impetuous generalizations about the ways to improve policy analysis instruction. We are also unable to link the findings presented in this paper to similar research elsewhere, simply because nothing similar has been realized in the CEE region.

In any case, the data we have been able to gather at least suggest some preliminary conclusions as well as directions for the future. First, it is clear that the landscape of public policy instruction in the Czech Republic is highly fragmented. A policy aspect is present in many study programmes and fields of study, yet public policy is taught systematically only at three institutions. Our analysis has revealed that with one exception (Anglo-American University), there is no study *programme* on public policy, policy studies or policy analysis. Thus a *field* of study of public policy always falls under a study programme related to a different discipline, namely Social Policy and Social Work in Brno and Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Prague. This suggests that public policy is not yet recognized as an autonomous discipline in the Czech Republic, still 'standing on the shoulders of other disciplines'. This is not, however, very exceptional. Public policy has different roots and different connections in different countries. In Germany, a country which shares a lot with the Czech Republic in terms of history and culture, public policy and policy analysis are predominantly associated with political science (Reiter & Töller, 2013). At the same time, by no means can this be interpreted as a promise that the introduction of a study *programme* in "Public Policy" would mean a real and significant change. As explained, the classification of study programmes and fields is rather administrative in nature, with quite a limited impact on how public policy instruction is actually practiced¹¹. Our analysis also revealed that in many programmes the nature of public policy courses is rather unsettled and depends profoundly upon the idiosyncratic features of the instructor.

Second, because of the hegemonic position of the Faculty of Social Sciences in the provision of public policy instruction in the country, the field is heavily

¹⁰ The exact wording of the question was as follows: "Taking into account your study at the Public and Social Policy programme, do you work in this field?" Respondents were given four options: certainly yes, rather yes, rather not, certainly not. We grouped "certainly yes" and "rather yes" to one category ("working in the field"), while the rest was classified as working outside the public policy field.

¹¹ Moreover, a substantial change is currently being planned in the system of accreditation in the Czech Republic. A new category of "study area" will be introduced, while the category "study field" will be abolished. The consequences of this change for public policy instruction are hard to predict at the moment.

influenced by the “Prague School’s” orientation. Most importantly, this is visible in the emphasis of Czech scholars upon methodology (mostly, though not exclusively, quantitative) and in their strong sociological affiliation. It is difficult, however, to generalize about public policy instruction in the Czech Republic. There are similarities (such as the strong emphasis upon methodology both in Prague and Brno), but also differences, and not all other institutions follow the Prague School’s orientation. Moreover, the Prague School has been re-orienting itself with the new generation of scholars who place more emphasis upon postpositivist methodology.

Third, in contrast to some other countries (e.g., Germany), all Czech Republic public policy programmes have traditionally had a strong professional orientation. They seek to provide students with skills useful in practice, rather than (only) academic knowledge. Nevertheless, despite this fact, practical professional experience and skills represent one of the competences PPP graduates (at least those from the Faculty of Social Sciences) are the least satisfied with. It certainly does not follow that theoretical instruction should be reduced in favour of practical competences. Rather, there is some room for considering the ways to make the curriculum more “clinical”. As Iris Geva-May (2005) put it: “It is therefore important that policy analysis students be involved in actual ‘environments’ that forge and allow embodying, storing and recalling, as are medical or psychology students when they are exposed to real patients and diagnostic problems” (Geva-May, 2005. p. 36–37).

Fourth, in line with the current discussion on changes in policy work (e.g., Colebatch, Hoppe & Noordegraaf, 2010) it seems clear that several types of competences are increasingly essential for public policy graduates. These include communication (both written and verbal), critical thinking and argumentation and also ICT. While the former two competences are often discussed, the latter has been rather neglected. Our analysis also revealed that these competences are perceived as universal by all graduates, including those who, for whatever reason, steer their careers outside the field of public policy. That does not mean, however, that the “classical” approach to policy analysis has been found unimportant, irrelevant, or replaceable by emphasis on these “new skills”. Rather, it seems that we should look at the ways these approaches could be integrated together.

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Appendix

Table A1 Accredited public policy programmes in the Czech Republic

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study program	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
Charles University in Prague	Faculty of Social Sciences	Sociology	Sociology and Social policy	Bc	CZ	Introduction to Public Policy Problems of Czech Society and Public Policy Social Problems
			Public and Social Policy	Mgr, PhD	CZ, EN	Public Policy Methods of Policy Analysis Policy Design Methods Political Aspects of Policy Making The Policy-Making Process Regulatory Impact Assessment: Theory and Practice Managerial Methods in Public and Social Policy Evaluation of Public Policies and Programmes
		Political science	Political science and public policy	Bc	CZ	Introduction to Public Policy Political Aspects of Policy Making
Masaryk University	Faculty of Social Studies	Social Policy and Social Work	Public Policy and Human Resources	Bc	CZ	Introduction to Public Policy European Union Public Policy Public Policy Analysis
		Social Policy and Social Work	Public Policy and Human Resources	Mgr	CZ, EN	Implementation of Public Programmes Decision-making in Public Policy

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study program	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
Anglo-American University	School of Humanities and Social Sciences	Applied Sociology and Public Policy	Applied Sociology and Public Policy	Mgr	EN	Study programme was not opened in 2014.
		Public Policy	Public Policy	Mgr	EN	Public Policy in Knowledge Based Societies Public Policy as a Discipline Comparative European Public Policies Methods of Policy Analysis and Design

Source: Authors. Based upon the list of programmes and fields accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the web pages of the given institutions.

Table A2 Other study programmes and fields of study related to public policy and policy analysis (public administration, political science, social policy and social work and public economics)

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study program	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
Charles University in Prague	Faculty of Arts	Social Policy and Social Work	Social Work	Bc, Mgr	CZ	Introduction to Public Policy and Public Administration I, II
Masaryk University	Faculty of Social Studies	Social Policy and Social Work	Social Policy and Social Work	Bc, Mgr, PhD	CZ (PhD in CZ + EN)	Public Policy Analysis Decision-making in Public Policy Implementation of Social Policy

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study program	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
		Social Policy and Social Work	Social Work	Bc, Mgr,	CZ	Public Policy Analysis Decision-making in Public Policy Public Policy Psychology and Public Policy
		Political Science	Political Science	Mgr	CZ	Policy Analysis Decision-making in Public Policy Public Policy Analysis
	Faculty of Economics and Administration	Economic Policy and Administration	Public Economics and Administration	Mgr	CZ, EN	Governance and Public Policy European Union Public Policy Public Policy – Design and Implementation Public and Social Policy
		Economic Policy and Administration	Public Economics	Mgr	CZ, EN	Governance and Public Policy
		Economic Policy and Administration	Public Administration (L'Administration publique)	Mgr	CZ	Public Policy – Design and Implementation
University of West Bohemia	Faculty of Philosophy and Arts	Political Science	Political Science	Bc, Mgr, PhD	CZ	Policy Analysis
Silesian University in Opava	Faculty of Public Policies in Opava	Social Policy and Social Work	Public Administration and Regional Policy	Bc	CZ	Public Policy

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study program	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
		Social Policy and Social Work	Public Administration and Social Policy	Mgr	CZ	Public Policy
Technical University of Ostrava	Faculty of Economics	Economic Policy and Administration	Public Economics and Administration	Bc, Mgr, PhD	CZ	Public Policy
University of Economics, Prague				Mgr	CZ	Public Policy
University of Finance and Administration	Faculty of Social Studies	Social Policy and Social Work	Social Policy	Bc	CZ	Public Policies
		Political Science	Political Science	Bc	CZ	Decision-making and Policy Analysis

Table A3 Other study programmes and study fields related to public policy and policy analysis (various policy domains)

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study programme	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
Charles University in Prague	Faculty of Humanities	Humanities	Civic Sector Studies	Mgr PhD	CZ, EN	Public Policy

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study programme	Study field	Degree	Language	Selected courses related to policy analysis
Masaryk University	Faculty of Social Studies	Environmental Humanities	Environmental Studies	Bc Mgr	CZ	Public Policy Analysis
		Sociology	Gender Studies	Bc	CZ	Public Policy Analysis
	Faculty of Economics and Administration	Economic Policy and Administration	Economy and Management of Nongovernmental and Nonprofit Organizations	Bc	CZ	Public Policy and Creation of Programmes
University of International and Public Relations	---	International and Public Relations	European Studies and Public Administration	Mgr	CZ	Analysis and Decision-making in Policy

Table A4 Policy analysis courses in higher education curriculum in the Czech Republic

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study field	Name of the course	Instructor(s)	Basic literature
Charles University in Prague	Faculty of Social Sciences	Public and Social Policy (full-time, in Czech)	Metody analýzy politik (Methods of Policy Analysis)	Martin Nekola	Veselý, Nekola (2007) Nekola, Geissler, Moulalová (2011)

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study field	Name of the course	Instructor(s)	Basic literature
			Metody tvorby politik (Methods of Policy Design)	Arnošt Veselý	Bardach (2000) Dunn (2003) Nekola, Geissler, Moulalová (2011) Patton, Sawicki (1993) Potůček et al. (2006) Veselý, Nekola (2007) Veselý (2009)
	Public and Social Policy (blended-learning, in Czech)		Metody analýzy a tvorby politik I. (Methods of Policy Analysis and Policy Design I.)	Arnošt Veselý	Veselý, Nekola (2007) Veselý (2009)
			Metody analýzy a tvorby politik II. (Methods of Policy Analysis and Policy Design II.)	Arnošt Veselý	Veselý, Nekola (2007)
	Public and Social Policy (full-time, in English)		Policy Analysis	Arnošt Veselý, Martin Nekola	Bardach (2000) Dunn (2003) Patton, Sawicki (1993)

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study field	Name of the course	Instructor(s)	Basic literature
Masaryk University	Faculty of Social Studies	Public Policy and Human Resources,	Analýza veřejných politik (Public Policy Analysis)	Karel Čada, Bohuslav Binka	Veselý, Nekola (2007) Lijphart (2012) Howlett, Ramesh (2003) Kingdon (1995) Moran, Rein, Goodin (2006) Lenschow (2010) Hill (2005) Mankiw (2009) Bovens, Hart, Kuipers (2006) Dryzek (2010)
		Social Policy and Social Work,			
		Social work, Political Science, Environmental Studies, Gender Studies			
		Political Science	Analýza policy (Policy Analysis)	Stanislav Balík, Ondřej Krutílek	Peters, Pierre (2006) McGann, Johnson (2005) Fiala, Schubert (2000) John (1998)
		Social Work	Tvorba a implementace veřejné politiky (Public Policy)	Jiří Winkler, Imrich Vašečka	Winkler (2002) Winkler (2007) Parsons (1995) Hill (1997) Howlett, Ramesh (2003)
	Faculty of Economics and Administration	Public Economics and Administration Public Administration	Tvorba a implementace veřejné politiky a hodnocení veřejných projektů (Public Policy – Design and Implementation)	Alain Darre, Ivan Malý, Marek Pavlík, Jiří Špalek	Potůček (2005) Jabłoński (2006) Potůček (1997) Malý, Pavlík (2007)

HE institution	Faculty/school	Study field	Name of the course	Instructor(s)	Basic literature
University of West Bohemia		Economy and Management of Nongovernmental and Nonprofit Organizations	Veřejná politika a tvorba programů (Public Policy and Creation of Programmes)	Marek Pavlík	Malý, Pavlík (2007) Malý, Pavlík (2004)
		Policy analysis (Policy Analysis)		Petr Jurek	Veselý, Nekola (2007) Potůček (2005) Fiala, Schubert (2000) Patton, Sawicki (1993) Weimer, Vining (2005) Hogwood, Gunn (1984) Dunn (2003)
Anglo-American University	School of Humanities and Social Sciences	Public Policy	Methods of Policy Analysis and Design	Steven Gawthorpe	Bardach (2000) Dunn (2003) Lazareviciute (2003) Patton, Sawicki (1993) Proctor (2005) Staroňová (2002) Start, Holand (2004) Weimer, Vining (2005)
University of International and Public Relations	---	European Studies and Public Administration	Rozhodování a analýza v politice (Analysis and Decision-making in Policy)	Vladimír Prorok	Prokop (2012) Fiala, Schubert (2000)

Table A5 The importance of competences in practice and the quality of actually learnt competences (graduates working and not working in the public policy field)

	Importance of Skill/Knowledge in Practice						Skill/Knowledge Actually Learnt in Programme							
	Work in PP			Do not Work in PP			Work in PP			Do not Work in PP				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Practical professional experience and skills	127	1.66	1.085	63	1.92	1.097	.124	127	2.84	1.191	61	2.89	.950	.807
Professional theoretical knowledge	128	2.30	.999	62	2.79	.994	.002	128	2.02	.883	62	2.32	.937	.033
Computer literacy	128	1.84	.943	63	1.59	.994	.084	128	3.38	1.447	61	3.51	1.027	.520
Self-presentation skills	127	1.72	.872	63	1.65	1.003	.642	127	2.46	.898	62	2.52	1.052	.727
Organizational skills	127	1.54	.743	62	1.65	.977	.393	127	2.79	1.013	62	2.95	1.062	.313
Creativity	128	1.96	.900	63	2.13	1.008	.251	127	2.65	.964	62	2.98	1.063	.030
Strategic and analytical thinking	126	1.40	.761	63	1.71	.991	.032	126	1.92	.854	62	2.23	1.062	.052

Ability to orient oneself and acquire new knowledge	128	1.39	.786	63	1.59	.854	.116	127	1.92	.887	62	2.03	1.086	.455
Ability to work in teams	128	1.69	.858	63	1.94	.998	.076	127	2.28	1.118	61	2.57	1.147	.091
Tolerance, respect for different opinions	125	1.95	.906	62	1.98	1.016	.828	128	2.27	1.112	63	2.41	1.116	.392
Communication skills	128	1.47	.803	62	1.50	.805	.802	128	2.36	.970	63	2.67	1.092	.050
Argumentation and critical thinking skills	126	1.48	.836	62	1.52	.741	.750	128	1.94	.945	61	2.26	1.031	.033
Policy analysis skills	127	2.18	1.244	63	2.73	.987	.003	128	1.80	.908	63	1.97	.861	.214
Policy design skills	127	2.33	1.279	63	2.79	1.019	.013	128	2.04	.983	62	2.40	.999	.018

Test of significance of the means difference between graduates working and not working in the public policy field: independent t-Test (two-tailed).