

IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIONS

EXPERIENCE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

SOCIOLOGY



EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT



Implementation of Innovations in Sociology

Experience of the Czech Republic

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Part One

General Characteristics of the Development of Sociology in Contemporary Czechia

1993 as a Watershed: Not a Break in Tradition, but a Reorganisation of Czech Sociological Science

The dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the emergence of the independent Czech Republic on 1 January 1993 did not create Czech sociology ex nihilo. What 1993 changed was not the existence of the discipline, but the institutional and political frame within which it was henceforth organised, funded, published, taught, and publicly legitimised. Czech sociology had already re-entered an active phase after 1989, when it was released from the ideological constraints of late state socialism, when persecuted or marginalised scholars could return more openly to academic life, and when new generations entered the field. In that sense, 1993 should be read not as a civilisational “year zero”, but as the moment when post-communist renewal was translated into a specifically Czech national academic order. This distinction is methodologically important. If one mistakes 1993 for a total beginning, one misunderstands both the continuity of personnel and the continuity of institutions that linked the late Czechoslovak and early Czech phases. If, however, one ignores 1993, one misses the crucial fact that the discipline now had to function within a different state architecture, different public priorities, and different institutional sovereignties. The proper interpretation therefore lies between rupture and continuity. Czech sociology after 1993 was neither simply the continuation of the old order nor a brand-new invention, but the reorganisation of an already restored field into the structures of an independent Czech state.

This becomes clearer when one recalls that the decisive institutional recovery of sociology had already begun before 1993. The Institute of Sociology was re-established in 1990 as an independent body separated from the former sociological section of the Ústav pro filosofii a sociologii ČSAV, and this move had already given Czech sociology a central research institution of its own. Yet the process was not completed overnight. According to the institutional history of the Institute, even the organisational and property separation from the earlier framework took more than a decade to finalise. Thus, the early 1990s were marked by a layered temporality: formal restoration came quickly, but full institutional consolidation came slowly. This matters because it shows that 1993 fell into the middle of an ongoing process rather than standing at its absolute beginning. The independent Czech Republic inherited a sociological institution that had already been re-founded, but which still had to stabilise its material base, redefine its staffing structure, and locate itself within the newly transformed Academy of Sciences. In historical terms, then, 1993 represented the nationalisation of a post-1989 reconstruction rather than the birth of sociology itself.

At the level of institutional sovereignty, however, 1993 was genuinely decisive. The transformation of ČSAV into AV ČR altered the framework within which sociology was governed, financed, and represented. The Institute of Sociology entered the new state not as a federal institution with a Czech branch logic, but as a research body directly embedded in the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. This had consequences not only for formal

administration, but also for symbolic identity. A discipline that had long existed within broader Czechoslovak structures now acquired a more clearly delimited Czech institutional centre of gravity. The change also clarified lines of accountability and made the Czech academic field more self-contained in relation to state science policy. At the same time, it did not produce a complete intellectual isolation, because the sociological tradition, the personnel pool, and many thematic questions remained historically Czechoslovak in background. Thus, 1993 should be seen as the moment at which Czech sociology gained a nationally defined institutional shell without losing the longer intellectual memory from which it had emerged. That is precisely why the year is best understood as a watershed of reorganisation rather than of disciplinary creation.

The Institute of Sociology itself illustrates this duality of continuity and selective restructuring with particular clarity. Its institutional history records that, after 1990, the renewed Institute took over the publication of *Sociologický časopis* and in 1993 began publishing *Czech Sociological Review*, which later merged with the Czech-language journal in 2002. This alone reveals the scale of the transformation. The Institute was not only preserving an inherited disciplinary core, but was also deliberately constructing a dual publication system capable of serving both domestic and international scholarly communication. At the staffing level, the renewal was equally selective. Some of the most compromised representatives of normalisation sociology left the Institute, while a number of rehabilitated sociologists from the 1960s, including Lubomír Brokl and Pavel Machonin, were brought in. Yet the majority of staff still came from the former Ústav pro filosofii a sociologii ČSAV. This is an almost textbook example of post-authoritarian disciplinary restructuring: neither a total purge nor simple continuity, but a controlled recomposition of personnel and legitimacy. In other words, the discipline entered the Czech state in a morally and institutionally filtered form.

The human dimension of this transition is especially important. Miloslav Petrušek later observed that post-communist Czech sociology managed to come to terms with some of the darker aspects of its past, including collaboration with the regime, without descending into destructive personal conflicts. His formulation may be somewhat stylised, but it captures an important feature of the Czech case. The discipline did not spend the 1990s paralysed by internal purges or symbolic civil war. Instead, it appears to have moved relatively quickly towards reconstruction, thematic reorientation, and the filling of its informational gaps in relation to Western sociology. Petrušek also stressed that the post-1989 field was able to formulate alternative interpretations of transformation processes and to cultivate previously neglected subject areas. This matters greatly for understanding 1993. The transition to independent statehood did not freeze sociology in retrospective moral bookkeeping. Rather, the new Czech setting provided the frame in which the discipline could normalise itself sufficiently to begin producing systematic knowledge about the society that was itself undergoing systemic change.

At the same time, the first years of independent Czechia were structurally demanding. The institutional history of the Institute explicitly notes that the opening of new sociology departments at universities coincided with reductions in the budget of the Academy of Sciences, including the well-known austerity measures of the Klaus era. This had a double effect. On the one hand, it weakened the monopolistic position any single institution might have enjoyed and created a more dispersed field. On the other hand, it intensified competition for resources, staff, and prestige at precisely the moment when sociology was still recovering from its earlier suppression. Hence 1993 did not simply bring clarity and autonomy; it also

exposed the discipline to a more demanding ecology of scarce funding and organisational improvisation. The field had to learn how to survive under conditions of project dependency, personnel mobility, and institutional multiplication. In this respect, the Czech case resembles wider post-socialist academic transformations, but its sociological field seems to have adapted with notable speed. The result was not institutional collapse, but the beginning of a genuinely polycentric discipline.

The Prague university context provides one of the clearest illustrations of this reorganisation. On the newly established Fakulta sociálních věd Univerzity Karlovy, a Katedra sociologie and a department of public and social policy were created in 1990, and in 1993 Dean Miloslav Petrusek pushed through an institutional reform that established four institutes, including the Institut sociologických studií. The ISS then emerged from the merger of the already existing departments with the remnants of the dissolved Ústav sociálně politických věd. This sequence is highly revealing. It shows that, by 1993, sociology at Charles University was no longer merely reviving old academic habits; it was being built into a modern faculty structure with institutes, departments, research agendas, and degree programmes aligned to the requirements of a contemporary social-science faculty. The year 1993 therefore mattered not only at the level of the Academy, but also in the remaking of university sociology. It redefined how teaching, research, and public policy inquiry were institutionally bundled together in Prague. This was one of the most important foundations for the later strength of Czech sociology in the capital.

The development at Charles University also reveals a broader structural point. The establishment of Fakulta sociálních věd in 1990 was itself the culmination of a longer search for an institutional home for the social sciences within the university. Its official history stresses that the post-war and late-socialist trajectories of the social sciences had been unstable and politically constrained, and that the creation of the Faculty represented a new concentration of social-science teaching and research inside Charles University. In this light, 1993 becomes even more significant. The new Czech state did not simply inherit a faculty already functioning in stable equilibrium; rather, it inherited a still-young institution whose rapid internal differentiation was inseparable from the broader national reorganisation of the discipline. That is why the early Czech years should be read as years of constitutional and academic co-formation. The state was redefining its post-federal identity, and sociology was simultaneously redefining its institutional place within that state. Such synchrony of political and disciplinary reorganisation is one of the key features of the Czech sociological experience after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

Brno, however, represents the complementary side of the same story. The Department of Sociology at Masarykova univerzita could draw on a much longer lineage reaching back to 1921 and to the interwar Brno school associated with Inocenc Arnošt Bláha. Yet its post-1990 role was not merely antiquarian or commemorative. According to its own institutional history, under the leadership of Ivo Možný after 1990 the department underwent major organisational changes, radically reformed teaching, opened itself to international cooperation and competition, placed stronger emphasis on research, and experienced significant growth in student numbers. It also served as the birthplace of several newly emerging disciplines and departments and contributed to the broader reconstruction and rehabilitation of the social sciences in the Czech Republic. This is crucial for interpreting 1993. The independent Czech state did not create Brno sociology, but it provided the conditions under which its historical prestige could be converted into a new post-socialist vitality. Continuity of tradition and innovation of form met there in a particularly productive way.

The Brno case also warns against a Prague-centred reading of Czech sociology. If one looked only at the Academy and Charles University, one might imagine that the discipline's key trajectory lay in the institutional rationalisation of capital-city structures. Yet Masaryk University shows that the early Czech period also reactivated older regional intellectual traditions and allowed them to become fully competitive in the new order. The interwar "Brno school of sociology" was not merely remembered as a symbolic ancestor; it functioned as a legitimating historical resource for a department that was modernising its curriculum, enlarging its student body, and intensifying its research ambitions. In this sense, 1993 was also a moment in which historical memory became an asset in disciplinary reconstruction. The independent Czech Republic enabled sociology to be reimagined not simply as a single national centre radiating outward, but as a field with multiple legitimate sites of authority. This helps explain why later Czech sociology developed as a polycentric network rather than as a rigidly centralised hierarchy. The foundations of that polycentricity were laid in the early 1990s.

A further indicator of reorganisation rather than rupture is the fate of the professional sociological association. The entry for *Česká sociologická společnost* states that the Society, known between 1993 and 2016 as *Masarykova česká sociologická společnost*, formally took shape after the emergence of the independent Czech Republic and explicitly continued the tradition of the earlier Czechoslovak association. That formulation is highly significant. It acknowledges a break in statehood but simultaneously asserts a continuity of disciplinary lineage. The Society did not present itself as the first sociological association of a new civilisation. It presented itself as the Czech successor to an earlier Czechoslovak professional form. Yet it also differed in one important respect: unlike its communist-era predecessor, it became a voluntary academic association with limited institutional support, dependent above all on the interest and activity of its members. This change is not secondary. It shows that 1993 redefined not only the national framework of sociology, but also its mode of professional self-organisation. The discipline moved from a state-socialist corporative context to a more civil, more voluntary, and at the same time more fragile associational order.

The 1990s were not, however, a heroic age of uninterrupted associative growth. The same encyclopaedia entry notes that the number of activities organised by the Society sharply declined in the 1990s, that regional branches disappeared, and that many of its former functions were taken over by other actors. This is a highly revealing detail, because it tempers any overly celebratory narrative about immediate post-1993 flourishing. The discipline was expanding, but not all of its older organisational forms were strengthened in equal measure. Some functions migrated from the professional society to universities, institutes, specialised sections, journals, and informal project networks. In other words, the field was becoming more differentiated, but this differentiation partly weakened the integrative capacity of the traditional learned society. The decline was only temporary, as younger sociologists later re-entered the Society in greater numbers, but in the 1990s it indicates a dispersal of disciplinary energy rather than a simple consolidation. This too is part of the meaning of 1993: the new Czech setting created freedom of association, but also redistributed authority away from the single umbrella organisation.

If the Society reflected the new associational order, the journal landscape reflected the new communicative order. The 1994 issue of *Sociologický časopis* shows that the Institute of Sociology published both *Sociologický časopis* and *Czech Sociological Review*, the first quarterly in Czech and the second half-yearly in English. The same issue describes *Sociologický časopis* as a scholarly review open to professional and societal problems,

sociological theory and methodology, and the results and interpretation of sociological research, while also aspiring to be useful in solving practical problems of Czech social and economic policy. The English-language presentation of *Czech Sociological Review* makes the same ambition visible in a more international register. This dual-publication model is one of the clearest institutional signatures of the 1993 watershed. It demonstrates that Czech sociology, at the very moment of national reorganisation, was already designing for itself a two-level communicative architecture: one channel for disciplinary cultivation in Czech, another for international visibility and exchange. The creation of an English-language review in 1993 is therefore not a marginal publishing fact, but one of the strongest symbols of the discipline's strategic reorientation.

The internal standards of this publication system are equally revealing. The same 1994 journal material specifies anonymous peer review, formal manuscript requirements, abstracts and summaries in both languages, and an editorial ambition to meet international standards. Miloš Havelka, writing in that issue, explicitly noted that the outgoing editor Jiří Večerník had succeeded, through rigorous review procedures and high editorial demands, in profiling *Sociologický časopis* at a level corresponding to international standards. Here one can see that reorganisation in 1993 was not merely administrative. It also involved the deliberate codification of scholarly procedures, norms of review, and expectations of quality. The Czech field was making itself legible both to itself and to the wider world through editorial discipline. Such developments matter because journals are not just containers of texts; they are institutions that standardise what counts as valid sociology. In the Czech case, the early 1990s therefore saw not only a new state and new organisations, but also a conscious rebuilding of disciplinary quality control.

Even more striking is the composition of the 1994 editorial board. It brought together figures from the Institute of Sociology, Fakulta sociálních věd UK, Masarykova univerzita, the labour-research sector, and international or transnational positions such as Münster and the Central European University milieu. Among the names listed were Lubomír Brokl, Jiří Kabele, Petr Matějů, Ivo Možný, Jiří Musil, Miloslav Petrušek, Ladislav Rabušic, and Jadwiga Šanderová. Such a board can be read as a compressed map of the field in the first full year of independent Czech statehood. It shows Prague and Brno linked rather than opposed, research institutes and universities placed in active communication, and the discipline already oriented towards cross-border scholarly dialogue. In that sense, the editorial board itself was a sociological fact. It embodied the network through which Czech sociology was rebuilding its authority after 1989 and redefining itself after 1993. The field was national in institutional location, but decidedly non-parochial in aspiration.

The thematic profile of the early Czech period confirms the same interpretation. The contents of the 1994 issue include pieces on contemporary sociological paradigms, myth and transformation, market and administration in social transformation, media landscapes, professional structure, public opinion in 1993, the history of sociology, and reports from the congress of Masarykova česká sociologická společnost. Such contents show a discipline grappling simultaneously with theory, transition, public policy, communication, professional change, and its own historical self-understanding. Petrušek's 2002 retrospective reinforces this image when he argues that Czech sociology rapidly formulated alternative interpretations of transformation processes and productively cultivated neglected areas. The point here is not simply that the 1990s had "interesting topics". It is that the new Czech sociological field reorganised itself around questions that were structurally generated by the transformation of

society itself. The discipline became, in a strong sense, coeval with its object. It was not merely observing change; it was intellectually constituted by the very transformation it sought to analyse.

Another fundamental component of the watershed was the reintegration of Czech sociology into broader European and global intellectual circulation. Petrusek emphasised that, between 1971 and 1989, not a single sociological book of Western provenance had appeared in Czech, whereas after 1989 the informational gap in relation to Western sociology was filled relatively quickly and a great many previously inaccessible works became available. This remark should not be read simply as a complaint about the past. It indicates the scale of epistemic reorientation that underlay the discipline's post-1993 development. Independent Czech sociology was being organised not only under a new state, but also under new cognitive conditions: translation, reception, theoretical pluralisation, and the reopening of the canon. The rebuilding of the field therefore had an intellectual-import dimension alongside its institutional one. Czech sociology after 1993 was not only administratively Czech; it was also methodologically and theoretically reconnected to wider sociological debate. That reconnection would later make possible the deeper internationalisation of the 2000s and 2010s, but its foundations were unmistakably laid in the early years of independence.

The same can be said of disciplinary self-knowledge. The later project *Dějiny a současnost české sociologie* explicitly stated that, after 1989, Czech sociology experienced major development, gradually re-entered the international field, saw the return of persecuted or exiled scholars, and witnessed the creation of new workplaces; yet it also argued that further qualitative development and broader societal use of sociological knowledge were hindered by insufficient knowledge of the discipline's own history, fragmentation, and limited public visibility. This self-diagnosis is highly instructive when retrojected onto 1993. It suggests that the watershed was not simply a success story of liberal emancipation, but also the beginning of a long struggle to produce disciplinary coherence, public recognisability, and historical self-understanding. The field was freer, larger, and more plural than before, but also more fragmented and more in need of reflexive integration. In that respect, 1993 initiated both the possibilities and the problems of contemporary Czech sociology. Its legacy was productive, but not automatically harmonising.

For all these reasons, 1993 should be conceptualised neither as a dramatic epistemic rupture nor as a merely formal constitutional date. It was a structural turning point in which several processes converged: the national redefinition of the Academy system, the recomposition of the Institute of Sociology, the rise of university-based sociology in Prague and Brno, the formal constitution of a Czech professional society, the establishment of a dual publication regime, and the rapid opening of the field to international theory and debate. It was also a moment when the discipline had to learn to operate under new conditions of austerity, institutional competition, and project dependence. These elements taken together constitute a profound reorganisation of sociological science. The discipline that entered 1993 had already been revived; the discipline that emerged from the 1990s had become recognisably Czech in institutional form, plural in organisational ecology, and increasingly European in its ambitions. Without grasping this specific meaning of the watershed, one cannot properly understand the later consolidation of Czech sociology in the 2000s, its internationalisation in the 2010s, or its publicly engaged maturity in the 2020s. That is why 1993 belongs at the head of the story: not as the birth of Czech sociology, but as the beginning of its independent national architecture.

The First Post-Czechoslovak Stage: The 1990s and the Early 2000s as a Period of Recovery, Institutional Adaptation, and Post-Transformational Self-Definition

The first decade of independent Czechia and the first years of the new millennium were, for sociology, not simply a period of liberal release after the end of state socialism, but a much more complex phase of reconstruction. In retrospect, it is tempting to describe the 1990s as a straightforward story of academic emancipation, international opening, and thematic expansion. Yet such a description would be too smooth and too celebratory. Czech sociology had indeed recovered its intellectual freedom after 1989, but by the time the independent Czech Republic emerged in 1993 the field still had to stabilise its institutions, recompose its staff, rebuild its public authority, and define its research agenda under conditions of limited resources and rapid social change. The discipline was therefore working simultaneously on several fronts: organisational survival, theoretical renewal, empirical investigation, curricular reform, and public relevance. The term “recovery” is important here, because sociology had to regain capacities that had either been weakened or ideologically distorted during the previous regime. The term “adaptation” is equally important, because those capacities could not simply be restored in their old form: they had to be reconfigured for a democratic, market-based, and increasingly European context. What emerged from the 1990s was not merely a freer version of the old discipline, but a field that had begun to redefine itself through the problems of post-transformational society.

At the centre of this early stage stood the reconstruction of institutional ecology. The renewed Sociologický ústav AV ČR was indispensable, but it no longer existed in a space where one academy-based workplace could dominate the field without serious competition. At the same time, universities were reasserting themselves as places not only of teaching but also of active sociological research. Charles University, through Fakulta sociálních věd and its later Institut sociologických studií, and Masaryk University, through its historically prestigious Katedra sociologie, became the two strongest academic poles alongside the Academy-based institute. This structural pluralisation was one of the decisive characteristics of the first post-Czechoslovak stage. Czech sociology was not reconstituted as a single hierarchical system, but as a more distributed network of institutions with partially overlapping, partially competing roles. That mattered for the discipline’s later vitality, because polycentric fields tend to produce more varied research cultures, more diverse thematic repertoires, and a less rigid monopoly of intellectual legitimacy. The 1990s were therefore a period in which sociology learned to exist within a new institutional pluralism. This pluralism was not always comfortable, but it became one of the permanent strengths of the Czech case.

The role of Sociologický ústav AV ČR in this context was foundational, yet it was not that of a stable bureaucracy calmly extending its influence. The Institute itself was undergoing the after-effects of re-establishment, selective staff recomposition, changing research priorities, and financial pressure. Its later historical self-descriptions make clear that after 1990 it inherited both personnel from the former socialist-era structures and, selectively, researchers whose careers had been interrupted or marginalised after 1968. This gave the Institute an unusual mixture of continuity and correction. The same institution that represented central disciplinary authority also had to cope with the moral and intellectual burden of its own past, while facing a new environment in which universities were rapidly becoming stronger. In practice, that

meant the Institute had to justify itself not only as the official academic centre of Czech sociology, but as a place capable of producing research of a standard and relevance suited to the transformed society. It did so partly through its publication system, partly through empirical projects, and partly through its ability to serve as a hub for new methodological capacities. The early stage of independent Czech sociology was thus inseparable from the Institute's transition from restored institution to competitive research centre.

In Prague, the most important expression of this change was the building of a modern university base for sociology at Fakulta sociálních věd Univerzity Karlovy. The formal chronology is telling: in 1990 a Katedra sociologie and an organisational unit for veřejná a sociální politika were created, while the old Ústav sociálně politických věd was also restored; then, in 1993, Miloslav Petrušek as dean pushed through the reform that established four institutes, including Institut sociologických studií. The ISS subsequently emerged from the merging of previously existing departments with the remnants of the dissolved institute. This process was not just an administrative tidying-up exercise. It signified the emergence of a more coherent social-science faculty structure in which sociology was embedded alongside policy studies and other neighbouring disciplines. The result was a university setting that was better suited to modern research, graduate education, interdisciplinary cooperation, and later internationalisation. The early post-Czechoslovak period therefore marked the transition of Prague sociology from fragmented restoration to an institutional form capable of long-term self-reproduction. It also helped explain why Charles University became one of the main sites where Czech sociology could combine theoretical reflection, empirical research, and policy relevance.

Brno developed along a different but equally important trajectory. There the key issue was not the creation of sociology from near-instability within a newly organised faculty, but the reactivation of a very old institutional lineage under new post-socialist conditions. The Katedra sociologie at Masarykova univerzita explicitly presents itself as one of the oldest sociological workplaces in Europe, with roots in 1921 and deep links to the interwar "Brno School". Yet its importance for the 1990s lies not in historical prestige alone. Under Ivo Možný, the department underwent substantial internal reform, modernised its curriculum, opened itself to international influences, strengthened its research emphasis, and saw significant student growth. It also became a seedbed for newly forming directions and departments. That is especially important because it shows that early independent Czech sociology was not a one-centre recovery managed from Prague. Brno functioned as a major site of innovation in teaching, research orientation, and thematic diversification. It thereby ensured that the first post-1993 stage had a genuinely national rather than merely capital-city profile.

The field was also becoming more differentiated beyond these two principal poles. A 2002 overview of sociological workplaces noted that any report on the state of Czech sociology would be incomplete without information on the scientific and pedagogical activities of sociologists at a wide range of institutions. That observation reflects a real shift in the structure of the discipline. The post-1989 and post-1993 years saw sociology spread into specialised university departments, policy-oriented centres, labour and social-research institutes, and later more differentiated thematic units. Even where these workplaces were not equally strong in research terms, their existence widened the social and educational base of the discipline. It also meant that sociology's themes were no longer generated only inside a narrow academy-based canon. They increasingly arose from contact with education policy, labour-market research, regional studies, demography, religion, public administration, and the analysis of social problems. The early Czech period was therefore a period of institutional widening as

much as one of internal stabilisation. The expanding number of workplaces helped create the conditions for later thematic schools, even if in the 1990s the resulting field still looked somewhat uneven and fragmented.

A similar ambivalence characterised the profession's associational life. Česká sociologická společnost formally emerged in the context of the independent Czech state and deliberately presented itself as the continuation of an earlier Czechoslovak professional tradition. Yet its conditions of existence were quite different from those of its predecessor under state socialism. It became a voluntary learned association with limited institutional backing, dependent mainly on the willingness of scholars to organise sections, events, and disciplinary exchange. In this sense, the 1990s meant freedom, but also fragility. The Society's later historical account shows that its activities declined sharply during the 1990s, regional branches disappeared, and many integrative functions migrated elsewhere. This should not be misread as a sign of disciplinary weakness alone. It also reflected the fact that the field's energy was being redistributed into institutes, departments, journals, conferences, and project networks. Still, the relative weakening of the umbrella society shows that the recovery of sociology in Czechia was not centrally orchestrated. It was a dispersed process, and one price of that dispersion was the temporary reduction of a single representative centre for the profession as a whole.

One of the most important mechanisms through which the discipline held itself together during this phase was the publication sphere. The early 1990s already saw the Institute of Sociology publish *Sociologický časopis* in Czech and *Czech Sociological Review* in English, thereby constructing a dual communicative infrastructure almost from the outset of the independent Czech period. By 2002 the journal operated with six issues per year, four in Czech and two in English, which is a particularly telling detail. It indicates not only organisational capacity, but also a strategic conception of what Czech sociology needed: domestic disciplinary cultivation and international visibility at the same time. The journals provided a place where sociology could debate transformation, theory, democracy, stratification, religion, family, and methodology, while also learning the editorial and peer-review norms expected in broader scholarly circulation. In effect, the discipline used its journals to institutionalise quality at the same time as it institutionalised pluralism. This was one of the great achievements of the first stage. Without such a journal architecture, the field might well have remained either domestically vibrant but internationally obscure, or internationally imitative but weakly rooted in Czech scholarly debate. Instead, it became both national and outward-looking.

Miloslav Petrušek's retrospective interpretation of the period remains especially helpful in understanding the intellectual climate of these years. He argued that after 1989 Czech sociology was able to fill informational and theoretical gaps in relation to Western sociology rather quickly and to avoid becoming trapped in endless internal conflict over its compromised past. More importantly, he maintained that the field showed an ability to formulate alternative interpretations of social transformation rather than simply reproduce imported schemes. This remark is highly significant for the period from the 1990s to the early 2000s. Czech sociology was not merely translating Western textbooks and celebrating its rediscovered normality. It was trying to understand a society undergoing rapid institutional and moral reordering. In doing so, it had to combine borrowed concepts with locally grounded empirical materials. The result was a discipline that was simultaneously receptive and self-defining. The early stage was thus not only one of institutional adaptation, but also one of epistemic self-positioning: Czech

sociology was deciding what kind of knowledge it wanted to become after the end of ideological closure.

The first major thematic cluster of this period was the sociology of post-communist transformation itself. Here Czech sociology very quickly became analytically ambitious. Studies such as Petr Matějů and Blanka Řeháková's work on mobility, and Petr Matějů and Nelson Lim's analysis of who had "gotten ahead" after the fall of communism, treated transformation not as a rhetorical slogan but as a problem of changing opportunity structures, human capital, social capital, and status redistribution. The latter study concluded that social capital was a particularly strong force in shaping careers during the post-communist transformation. That finding is emblematic of the Czech contribution. Rather than assuming that the transition to markets would automatically reward merit in a simple fashion, Czech sociologists were attentive to hybrid mechanisms of advantage and the unequal conversion of old and new resources. This gave the field a degree of analytical sobriety that distinguished it from more triumphalist transition narratives. The early post-Czechoslovak stage was therefore intellectually grounded in a sociology of transformation that was empirical, critical, and institutionally aware.

A second major cluster concerned democracy, public institutions, and political culture. This was not surprising in a society that had recently undergone regime change and was still building the legitimacy of its new institutional order. Klára Vlachová's 2001 study on the legitimacy of democracy and trust in political institutions in the Czech Republic is exemplary here. It distinguished between support for democracy as a form of government and satisfaction with the actual development of democracy in the country, and found that the legitimacy of democracy depended more on political culture than on institutional trust alone. This is an important marker of the field's maturity in the early 2000s. Czech sociology was not satisfied with simply recording approval ratings or public moods; it was trying to model the deeper structure of democratic legitimacy in a transforming society. Such work linked empirical survey research to normative and historical questions about democratic consolidation. It also helped move sociology towards a strong interface with political sociology and public opinion research, a direction that would remain highly visible in later decades.

The transfer of the public-opinion research centre into the Institute of Sociology in 2001 strengthened this line still further. The current CVVM page records that the present centre was created in 2001 when its predecessor, IVVM, was moved from the Czech Statistical Office into the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences. This was a structurally important development. It meant that survey-based public-opinion research gained a more direct embedding within a scientific institution rather than remaining primarily an administrative or quasi-administrative tool. Such an insertion improved the professional and epistemic status of opinion research, giving it stronger disciplinary backing and connecting it more closely to sociological theory and methodology. In the broader history of the first post-Czechoslovak stage, this matters because it shows how Czech sociology was gradually building institutions capable of linking academic analysis with socially visible empirical monitoring. Public-opinion research became not merely an adjunct to politics or journalism, but a durable component of the sociological field itself.

A third important thematic area was the sociology of the family, demography, and changing everyday life. Ladislav Rabušic's 2001 work on value change and demographic behaviour in the Czech Republic argued that the profound structural changes of the previous decade had

deeply affected fertility, marriage, and everyday behavioural patterns, and interpreted those shifts as part of a second demographic transition beginning in the mid-1990s. This line of analysis is especially revealing because it shows that Czech sociology was not focused only on elites, markets, and state institutions. It was also studying how regime change reconfigured intimate life, family formation, generational patterns, and reproductive behaviour. In this respect, the discipline was moving beyond the narrow sociology of transition to a broader sociology of social transformation. The family and demographic sphere became one of the places where abstract systemic change could be observed in its most concrete human consequences. That would later feed into stronger Czech work on family sociology, gender, and life course studies. But already in the early 2000s it showed that sociology was defining itself through an enlarged conception of what counted as historically significant social change.

Religion and secularisation formed another early line of post-transformational self-definition. Dušan Lužný and Jolana Navrátilová's 2001 article on religion and secularisation argued that the Czech Republic might be the most secularised country in Europe, framing the Czech case within broader debates on the decline of tradition and the changing social role of religious institutions. This was not a marginal side-theme. It illustrated the fact that Czech sociology was beginning to interpret its society comparatively and to identify features of Czech modernity that were distinctive on a European scale. The question was no longer merely how Czech society was changing after communism, but what kind of society Czechia had become in relation to other European societies. The religious field was especially well suited for this because it combined long historical trajectories with the peculiarities of post-socialist and post-Catholic development. In this way, early work on religion and secularisation also contributed to Czech sociology's broader move from transition analysis to comparative self-interpretation. It helped the discipline understand not only what had been transformed, but what kind of social formation had emerged.

What made these thematic advances durable rather than episodic was the parallel growth of methodological infrastructure. The creation of the Sociologický datový archiv in 1998, later renamed Český sociálněvědní datový archiv, was one of the most consequential institutional steps of the period. According to the archive's own history, it was founded in the Institute of Sociology in 1998 and became a member of CESSDA in 2001, thereby entering the system of international data exchange. This development can hardly be overstated. It marked the transition from a discipline that conducted valuable empirical studies to one that was beginning to build reusable, comparable, and internationally connected data resources. The archive also signalled a shift in professional culture: sociology was becoming more conscious of preservation, documentation, secondary analysis, and shared methodological standards. Such capacities are often invisible in broad historical narratives, but they are among the clearest markers of disciplinary maturation. By the early 2000s, Czech sociology was already laying the groundwork for the stronger data infrastructures of its later development.

The same holds for the relation between sociology and practical policy questions. Already in the 1990s the Czech sociological field did not confine itself to abstract theoretical reconstruction. The very institutional configuration of ISS at Charles University, combining sociology with public and social policy, suggests a discipline oriented towards analytically informed engagement with contemporary social issues. Likewise, the early mission of *Sociologický časopis* explicitly included usefulness for the practical problems of Czech social and economic policy. This is a telling feature of the first post-Czechoslovak stage. Sociology in Czechia was not only trying to restore its disciplinary autonomy; it was also attempting to prove

its relevance to a society undergoing profound institutional redesign. Under such conditions, empirical and policy-oriented sociology could acquire a legitimacy that was both scientific and civic. The field's self-definition therefore included not only questions of theory and method, but also the question of public usefulness. That combination later became one of the distinguishing marks of Czech sociology more broadly.

Yet one should not romanticise this stage as one of perfect balance or easy synthesis. The same processes that made the discipline more open and plural also made it more uneven. The professional society lost part of its integrative role, the field dispersed across multiple institutions, universities expanded faster than stable funding did, and the Academy sector faced budgetary constraints. The discipline's public visibility remained limited in comparison with its actual intellectual productivity, as later self-reflections would acknowledge. Moreover, the widening of the field necessarily brought different standards, vocabularies, and levels of methodological sophistication into closer contact. The 1990s and early 2000s were therefore years of energetic growth, but also of internal differentiation that had not yet been fully coordinated. Precisely for that reason, the period is best described as one of post-transformational self-definition. Czech sociology was learning not only what it wished to study, but how it wished to exist as a discipline under democratic and competitive conditions. The answers were not given in advance; they were worked out through journals, institutes, departments, empirical projects, and the gradual formation of new scholarly generations.

Seen as a whole, the first post-Czechoslovak stage created the preconditions for everything that followed. It stabilised the Academy-based centre without allowing it to suffocate university sociology. It enabled Prague and Brno to emerge as complementary poles of a polycentric field. It established a dual Czech-English publication architecture. It embedded survey research and later data archiving more firmly inside the discipline. It produced a first wave of empirically grounded studies on transformation, democracy, family change, religion, and public life. And it accustomed Czech sociology to functioning simultaneously as an academic, empirical, and socially responsive enterprise. None of this meant that by the early 2000s the field had already achieved full maturity. What it did mean was that sociology in Czechia had passed beyond the immediate emergency of post-authoritarian restoration and had begun to acquire a stable structure, a recognisable agenda, and a more confident sense of its own place. In that sense, the 1990s and early 2000s were not only a period of recovery. They were the stage on which contemporary Czech sociology first became recognisably itself.

The Stage of Consolidation: The 2000s as the Formation of a Stable Research Architecture of Czech Sociology

If the 1990s and the early 2000s were a period of recovery, adaptation, and post-transformational self-definition, the core of the 2000s may be described more precisely as a stage of consolidation. By this point, Czech sociology had already survived the most acute phase of post-socialist and post-federal reorganisation. The discipline no longer existed merely as a restored field reclaiming space after ideological subordination; it was increasingly becoming a structured national science with recognisable institutions, clearer channels of reproduction, more stable publication formats, and stronger links between empirical research and public relevance. Consolidation does not mean that all tensions disappeared. On the

contrary, institutional competition, uneven resources, and thematic pluralisation remained central features of the field. Yet the difference was that these tensions were now being managed within a more stable architecture rather than in a situation of basic disciplinary uncertainty. The 2000s, therefore, were the decade in which Czech sociology ceased to be a field primarily defined by recovery and began to function as a comparatively mature research system. This transformation affected institutes, universities, journals, archives, and the public standing of sociological expertise alike.

One of the clearest markers of this consolidation was the stabilisation of the relationship between the Academy sector and university sociology. In the first post-1989 phase, the re-established Sociologický ústav AV ČR had been indispensable as a central institutional anchor, but the long-term shape of the field remained unsettled as universities rapidly expanded their own ambitions. During the 2000s, however, this relationship became more structurally legible. The Institute no longer looked like a temporarily restored successor to a compromised past; it increasingly functioned as a specialised research centre with an established publication infrastructure, thematic breadth, and institutional memory. At the same time, universities in Prague and Brno ceased to be merely places for training future sociologists and became long-term intellectual platforms in their own right. What gradually emerged was not a hierarchy in which one centre monopolised sociological legitimacy, but a differentiated ecology in which the Academy and the universities played complementary roles. The Academy offered continuity, large-scale research capacity, and editorial and infrastructural resources, while universities intensified theoretical innovation, teaching reproduction, and thematic diversification. This distribution of roles was not fixed once and for all, but by the 2000s it had become sufficiently durable to support a stable research architecture.

The Prague case illustrates this especially well. The Institut sociologických studií FSV UK, created in 1993 through the merger of the Department of Sociology and Social Policy with the Institute of Social and Political Sciences, entered the 2000s no longer as a newly improvised structure but as an established part of the Faculty's academic system. The official history of ISS makes clear that the broader purpose of Fakulta sociálních věd was to raise the level of Czech social-science scholarship and research to international standards, and this long-term mission became increasingly operational in the 2000s. Sociology in Prague was therefore institutionalised not merely as a teaching subject but as a full research and graduate-training environment. This mattered greatly for the discipline as a whole, because it created a durable metropolitan site where sociological theory, social policy, public debate, and international scholarly aspirations could be brought together. The consolidation of Prague sociology was also important in curricular terms: it normalised the reproduction of future sociologists through structured BA, MA, and PhD pathways inside a mature faculty setting. The importance of the 2000s lies precisely in the fact that such structures stopped being provisional and became part of the regular order of the field. The result was a much stronger university-based sociological pole in the capital.

Brno followed a parallel but differently textured route. Masarykova univerzita did not need to invent sociological legitimacy from scratch, because its Department of Sociology could rely on a distinguished lineage reaching back to the interwar Brno school. Yet in the 2000s this historical capital was translated into contemporary institutional strength. The department's own history explicitly notes that after 1990, and especially under the influence of Ivo Možný, it experienced major organisational change, curriculum reform, international opening, a stronger research orientation, and substantial student growth. By the 2000s these processes had

ceased to be merely reformist impulses and had become part of the normalised operation of one of the country's leading sociological workplaces. This is especially important because it demonstrates that Czech sociology's consolidation was not centred in Prague alone. Brno provided the discipline with a second major intellectual pole, one shaped by strong traditions in family sociology, demographic analysis, and broader social theory. Such dual-centre development prevented excessive concentration and encouraged a healthier diversity of agendas, styles, and institutional strategies. In that sense, the consolidation of the 2000s was inseparable from the entrenchment of Czech sociology's polycentric structure.

The journal sphere offers another unusually clear window into this stage. By the early 2000s, *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* was no longer simply a restored post-1989 venue attempting to re-establish standards. Its front matter in 2003 described the journal as a bimonthly publication issued by the Institute of Sociology, with four issues in Czech and two in English. That model is highly significant. It indicates that Czech sociology had succeeded in institutionalising a dual scholarly public: one rooted in Czech-language disciplinary debate and one explicitly directed towards wider international circulation. Such a two-track publication strategy is one of the strongest signs that a field has entered a stage of stable self-organisation. It no longer publishes reactively, but according to a clear communicative design. Moreover, the journal's indexing in international citation and abstracting systems, already highlighted in the 2003 and 2007 journal materials, demonstrates that Czech sociology in the 2000s was not only reproducing internal standards but also earning external scholarly recognition. Consolidation thus meant not only more publications, but a more institutionalised and internationally legible publication order.

The bilingual structure of the journal deserves particular emphasis because it tells us something fundamental about the strategic culture of Czech sociology in the 2000s. A smaller national discipline has several possible choices when facing internationalisation. It may remain inward-looking and risk provincialisation; it may switch almost completely to English and weaken domestic conceptual life; or it may try to sustain both levels at once. The Czech sociological field clearly pursued the third strategy. The continued use of Czech preserved the discipline's capacity to intervene in public debate, educate students, and develop locally meaningful conceptual vocabulary. The English-language issues, by contrast, made it possible to place Czech material into broader scholarly conversations and to maintain visibility beyond national boundaries. This bilingual equilibrium is one of the reasons the 2000s should be interpreted as a phase of consolidation rather than merely transition. The field was no longer improvising between domestic relevance and international aspiration; it was building institutional mechanisms to serve both. In Central European terms, that was a substantial achievement.

Thematic differentiation also became far more visible during the 2000s, and the journal record itself provides important evidence of that development. The 2003 thematic issue *Higher Education* and the editorial "Czech Higher Education at the Crossroads" by Petr Matějů and Jiří Večerník show that sociology in Czechia was by then capable of organising focused scholarly debate around structurally important policy domains. This was not just a matter of one well-chosen topic. It reflected a broader trend whereby Czech sociology increasingly moved from a general sociology of transformation to more specialised domains such as higher education, inequality, religion, family, housing, and public opinion. Thematic consolidation is a key aspect of research architecture because it signals the emergence of semi-stable subfields, specialised empirical repertoires, and identifiable circles of expertise. The 2000s did not

produce rigid schools in every area, but they clearly created the conditions under which such schools could later be named and analysed. In other words, the discipline was becoming internally articulated. Specialisation did not replace general sociology, but it made it more productive.

The sociology of education illustrates this particularly well. The 2003 higher-education issue did not merely note that universities were changing; it framed Czech higher education as a structural sociological problem involving access, equity, social background, and systemic crossroads. This is highly revealing, because it shows the degree to which Czech sociology in the 2000s had begun to treat education not simply as a pedagogical matter but as a core domain of social reproduction and stratification. Such a move represents a hallmark of disciplinary maturation. It requires stronger data, more refined concepts, and more sustained dialogue between sociology and policy analysis. The fact that education appeared so prominently in one of the discipline's leading journals indicates that Czech sociology had already moved beyond a general concern with "transition" toward the analysis of the institutional mechanisms through which inequality and opportunity were being reorganised. The later strength of Czech sociology of education did not appear suddenly in the 2010s; it was consolidated intellectually and editorially in the 2000s. That decade provided the field with a thematic platform and an institutional vocabulary for studying educational differentiation.

The same can be said of family sociology and demographic analysis. Ladislav Rabušic's work at the turn of the decade, especially his analysis of value change and demographic behaviour, showed that Czech sociology was increasingly capable of linking macro-level transformation with intimate life, fertility, marriage, and the reshaping of everyday expectations. During the 2000s this line did not remain an isolated intervention. It became part of a broader consolidation of sociological work on family, reproduction, and value change, especially strong in Brno. This was important not only because the Czech Republic was experiencing demographic shifts, but because the sociology of the family became one of the fields through which the discipline could observe how systemic transformation entered personal life. Such research helped Czech sociology move away from the narrow language of political and economic reform and towards a more complete sociology of post-socialist society. It also strengthened one of the country's enduring comparative advantages: the ability to connect demographic and family change with cultural values, institutional settings, and broader modernisation processes. In the consolidated architecture of the 2000s, family sociology was one of the areas that clearly matured into a stable specialism rather than a temporary by-product of transition studies.

A similarly important development took place in the sociology of religion and values. The early 2000s saw Czech sociology confront a theme that would become one of its recognisable comparative signatures: the question of radical secularisation in Czech society. Dušan Lužný and Jolana Navrátilová's study on religion and secularisation made precisely this point, and the journal editorial surrounding it explicitly highlighted the Czech case as one of the most secularised in Europe. What matters here is not simply that religion became a topic. More important is that Czech sociology was increasingly willing to interpret its own society comparatively and conceptually, not only descriptively. The sociology of religion became one of the fields through which Czechia could be analysed as a distinctive European case rather than merely as a post-communist society among others. That required a more mature research architecture: stable journals, specialised researchers, comparative framing, and an institutional setting in which such work could be sustained. Thus, by the 2000s the discipline

had clearly begun to develop specialist lines capable of connecting Czech empirical material with broader theoretical debates on secularisation, modernity, and cultural change.

Another decisive component of consolidation was the strengthening of empirical infrastructure. The creation of the Sociologický datový archiv in 1998 and its admission into CESSDA in 2001 were not merely technical or administrative steps. They marked the emergence of a more mature data culture within Czech sociology. The archive's own history makes clear that from the beginning it was conceived as a publicly accessible social-science data archive, and that joining the European network in 2001 integrated Czech sociology into a transnational system of data exchange and methodological norms. This is one of the most important reasons why the 2000s deserve to be called a stage of architectural formation. Stable research architecture does not consist only of departments and journals; it also requires institutions that preserve data, facilitate secondary analysis, and anchor methodological continuity across generations and projects. By embedding itself within CESSDA, Czech sociology moved closer to European best practice in research infrastructure. The long-term consequences of that step would become even more visible in the 2010s, but its decisive infrastructural foundations belong to the 2000s.

Public-opinion research was consolidated in a parallel way. According to the history of CVVM, the current centre emerged in 2001 when its predecessor, IVVM, was transferred from the Czech Statistical Office to the Institute of Sociology. This transfer was highly consequential for the field. It meant that public-opinion research ceased to exist at the margins of official statistical practice and was more firmly embedded in a scientific institution with sociological expertise, editorial resources, and academic legitimacy. The 2019 CVVM materials explicitly state that incorporation into a scientific institution guaranteed stronger professional backing and greater credibility. That observation is crucial for understanding the 2000s. During this decade, Czech sociology did not simply expand the volume of survey research; it raised the institutional status of that research and linked it more closely to disciplinary development. CVVM thereby became one of the places where sociology met the public sphere in a stable, routinised, and recognisable form. This connection between academic sociology and socially visible empirical monitoring was one of the major institutional gains of the decade.

The consolidation of the 2000s also meant the gradual emergence of more specialised thematic clusters within the Institute of Sociology itself and in its broader publication system. Contemporary departmental descriptions cannot simply be projected backwards without caution, but they clearly reflect trajectories that matured in the 2000s rather than appearing only later. The existence today of clearly profiled domains such as local and regional studies, housing, gender sociology, public opinion research, and values-and-politics research suggests that the 2000s were the period when these fields were institutionally and publication-wise becoming sufficiently stable to sustain themselves over time. This is reinforced by the Institute's publication listings, where work on housing policy, regional disparities, labour, family, gender, and education is already visibly represented in the 2000s. Such evidence indicates that consolidation was not merely about the strengthening of a few general institutions. It also involved the gradual sedimentation of specialist subfields that would later become some of the strongest areas of Czech sociological achievement. The architecture of the discipline was therefore becoming both more solid and more differentiated. That combination is a defining characteristic of genuine maturation.

At the same time, this decade sharpened the policy-facing orientation of Czech sociology. The project description for *Dějiny a současnost české sociologie* later observed that after 1989 the field grew significantly, new workplaces emerged, persecuted or exiled scholars could return, and a new research generation entered the profession, but it also noted that the wider social use of sociological knowledge remained limited by fragmentation and insufficient visibility. This diagnosis is especially useful for understanding the 2000s. Consolidation did not mean that sociology had already fully solved the problem of how to make itself publicly indispensable. Rather, it meant that the institutional and thematic preconditions for such indispensability were being established. The discipline was increasingly present in debates on democracy, education, housing, family policy, religion, and public opinion, but it was also becoming aware of the need to integrate its own history, improve coordination, and increase the social intelligibility of its findings. In this sense, consolidation in the 2000s had a reflexive dimension. Czech sociology was not only producing knowledge about society; it was beginning to understand its own conditions of effectiveness inside that society.

Nor should one overlook the symbolic importance of the recognition accumulated by key scholars and leading institutions during this period. The 2002 issue dedicated in part to Ivo Možný as “an outstanding personality in contemporary Czech sociology” is illustrative here. On one level, it is a standard scholarly gesture of recognition. On another, it tells us something more structural: by the early 2000s Czech sociology had once again produced living figures whose work could anchor subfields, organise research agendas, and legitimise institutional centres. Consolidated disciplines require not only organisations but also visible intellectual personalities around whom schools, themes, and generations can cohere. During the 2000s such figures became more prominent in Prague, Brno, and the Academy-based environment alike. This reinforced the sense that Czech sociology had passed beyond emergency restoration and entered a phase of cumulative development. The field was once again capable of recognising its own major contributors within a stable and functioning professional order. That symbolic maturity should not be underestimated.

The methodological consequences of all this were substantial. A field that has stable institutions, specialised journals, a functioning data archive, university-based graduate training, public-opinion infrastructure, and thematic subfields is no longer operating under conditions of mere survival. It is in a position to refine research design, build cumulative datasets, sustain specialist debate, and train scholars into recognisable traditions of inquiry. This is precisely what the Czech case increasingly displays in the 2000s. Sociology became more systematic in its empirical practice and more deliberate in its relation to international standards, but it did so without dissolving its Czech-language and nationally rooted dimensions. Such a balance is difficult to achieve, particularly in a smaller country where the pressure either to provincialise or to mimic external models can be strong. The 2000s show Czech sociology negotiating that balance with growing institutional intelligence. The field was consolidating not by narrowing its ambitions, but by making them organisationally sustainable. That is why the decade deserves to be understood as formative in the strongest sense.

In retrospect, the consolidation of the 2000s may therefore be defined as the stage at which Czech sociology acquired a stable research architecture composed of six interrelated elements: a functioning Academy-based centre, strong university poles in Prague and Brno, a bilingual and internationally visible journal system, expanding empirical and data infrastructures, increasingly specialised thematic fields, and a clearer link between sociological analysis and public issues. The architecture was not uniform, and it certainly did

not eliminate disciplinary fragmentation. Yet it created enough stability for the next stage to become possible. Without the consolidation of the 2000s, Czech sociology could not have entered the 2010s as a discipline capable of stronger internationalisation, denser methodological integration, and broader European participation. The decade thus occupies a pivotal place in the developmental logic of the field. It was the moment when restoration became structure, when pluralisation became organised differentiation, and when sociological work in Czechia began to operate within a genuinely durable national framework. In that lies the historical significance of the stage of consolidation.

The Stage of Internationalisation: The 2010s as a Period of Czech Sociology's Stable Entry into the European and Global Research Space

The 2010s marked a qualitatively new stage in the development of Czech sociology because the discipline no longer appeared merely as a nationally consolidated post-transformational field, but as a research system increasingly embedded in stable European and global scholarly circuits. The key change was not simply that Czech sociologists published more abroad or travelled more often to international conferences. The deeper shift lay in the fact that the institutional architecture of the field had become capable of sustaining internationalisation on a regular basis. Journals were organised in ways legible to external audiences, comparative survey infrastructures were integrated into European systems, research data were archived and documented according to transnational standards, and sociological topics in Czechia were increasingly articulated as part of broader debates on democracy, inequality, values, migration, religion, housing, and social cohesion. In this sense, the 2010s should not be described as a period of occasional outward-looking activity, but as the stage in which Czech sociology entered a stable regime of international scholarly participation. This entry was not a surrender of national specificity. On the contrary, it was precisely the Czech empirical experience that was being reformulated in ways that made it analytically relevant beyond the Czech Republic. Internationalisation, therefore, was a structural translation of a nationally matured discipline into a wider research space.

One of the clearest symbols of this transformation was the profile assumed by *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* during the decade. By the 2010s and into the early 2020s, the journal explicitly presented itself as a peer-reviewed open-access platform serving the advancement of sociological theory and methodology in Central and Eastern Europe and inviting submissions from all branches of sociology and related disciplines. It also emphasised that manuscripts were selected for originality, theoretical and methodological robustness, and their ability to bridge Central and Eastern European, European, and world sociology. This formulation is particularly revealing. It shows that Czech sociology no longer treated itself as a peripheral national tradition merely trying to “catch up” with international standards. Instead, it claimed a mediating role: it positioned itself as a platform through which regional knowledge could enter wider sociological debate. The journal's inclusion in Journal Citation Reports, Web of Science, SSCI, Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest, EBSCO, and other major databases confirms that this was not only an aspiration but an institutional reality. In the 2010s, therefore, Czech sociology had a flagship journal that was simultaneously rooted in Czech institutional life and internationally visible.

The continued bilingual publication model of the journal also deserves emphasis because it reveals the strategic intelligence of Czech sociology's internationalisation. Rather than abandoning Czech-language scholarship in favour of complete Anglicisation, the journal maintained four Czech issues and two English issues annually. Such a model is highly significant for a medium-sized scholarly community. It allows for the preservation of domestic conceptual debate, teaching relevance, and public intelligibility, while at the same time maintaining a stable channel for entry into broader international circulation. This was not merely a publishing compromise. It was a deliberate intellectual arrangement that protected Czech sociology from two opposite risks: provincial isolation on the one hand, and de-localised imitation on the other. Through this structure, Czech sociology could continue to generate nationally grounded analyses while simultaneously presenting them in a form suitable for comparative scholarship. The journal thereby became one of the most important instruments through which Czech sociology learned to inhabit two scholarly scales at once. That dual-scale competence is one of the defining marks of the 2010s.

Internationalisation in the 2010s was not confined to one journal alone. The role of *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* is equally important because it demonstrates that the Czech sociological field was able to sustain internationalisation not only in its general disciplinary flagship but also in specialised and transdisciplinary domains. The journal is described by the Institute of Sociology as a peer-reviewed transdisciplinary journal of gender studies and feminist theory, publishing articles in Czech or English across sociology, philosophy, political science, cultural studies, and other social sciences and humanities. It is also indexed in Scopus, ERIH PLUS, CEJSH, and other databases. This is significant for two reasons. First, it shows that Czech sociology's internationalisation extended into one of its strongest substantive areas, namely gender and feminist research. Secondly, it reveals that the discipline's global integration was not based solely on "mainstream" sociology in the narrow sense, but also on interdisciplinary fields where Czech scholarship had developed substantial expertise and networked visibility. Thus, the 2010s brought not just a wider international reach, but a more diversified international profile.

The internationalisation of the discipline also rested on the broader institutional orientation of the Institute of Sociology itself. The Institute's official profile states that it conducts ongoing and one-time empirical surveys, comparative research studies, public-opinion surveys, and case studies, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, while also cultivating sociological theory and methodology. This may appear as a broad institutional mission statement, but in the context of the 2010s it carries a more precise meaning. It indicates that comparative research and methodological sophistication were no longer exceptional add-ons to a domestically focused field. They had become normal features of the Institute's work. The Institute also united under one roof not only research departments but the Czech Social Science Data Archive and the Public Opinion Research Centre. Such organisational concentration mattered because it linked empirical production, methodological services, data preservation, and public-facing survey research within a single institutional system. Internationalisation, in other words, was not built on isolated star researchers alone. It was grounded in a research institute whose internal composition itself reflected international standards of sociological organisation.

A crucial infrastructural element of this process was the transformation of the Czech Social Science Data Archive into a fully embedded European node. According to its own institutional history, the archive is the Czech national node of CESSDA ERIC and serves as its service

provider in the Czech Republic. Its functions include acquiring, processing, documenting, and storing digital data files from scientific projects, making them available for secondary use in research and teaching, supporting large-scale research surveys such as Czech ISSP surveys, promoting data standardisation and harmonisation, and advancing FAIR data principles. Its historical timeline is even more instructive. The archive was established in 1998, joined CESSDA in 2001, was incorporated into the Czech research infrastructures roadmap in 2010, and, when CESSDA was formally constituted as a distributed European research infrastructure in 2013, the Czech Republic became a founding member with ČSDA as its national node. This sequence reveals the very essence of the 2010s stage. Czech sociology was no longer merely consuming international data infrastructures; it was institutionally embedded in building and maintaining them.

The significance of ČSDA for the 2010s goes beyond the archive itself. A field capable of internationalisation in a durable sense needs more than publications and conference participation; it needs data preservation, documentation standards, training in data reuse, and institutional memory for empirical research. ČSDA explicitly presents itself as a national data services centre focused on the reuse of data in research and teaching and on connecting Czech and international data sources. This is an important sign of methodological maturity. Internationalisation here is inseparable from the secondary analysis culture that allows Czech datasets to be reused, compared, harmonised, and placed into wider analytical contexts. It also strengthens teaching and doctoral training because students and researchers gain access to high-quality archived materials rather than being restricted to one-off project outputs. In this sense, the 2010s did not only internationalise Czech sociology outwardly. They also internationalised its internal research culture by normalising data stewardship, harmonisation, and cross-national methodological compatibility. This is one of the least visible but most consequential transformations of the decade.

The European Social Survey played an especially important role in this transformation. The Institute of Sociology's ESS project page makes clear that the main aim of the project running from 2010 to 2015 was to create the Czech national node of ESS ERIC and to realise the fifth, sixth, and seventh rounds of the ESS survey in the Czech Republic. The page also lists the thematic breadth of ESS modules, including citizenship, democracy, immigration, family and well-being, health and care-seeking, economic morality, ageism, welfare attitudes, and life-course organisation. The importance of this project lies in more than participation in a prestigious survey. ESS is one of the most influential academically driven cross-national social surveys in Europe, and Czech participation meant sustained insertion into a common comparative measurement system. That in turn affected research questions, methodological expectations, and the international comparability of Czech findings. By hosting a national ESS node and implementing multiple rounds, Czech sociology deepened its integration into one of Europe's central empirical infrastructures. This is one of the core reasons the 2010s should be considered the decade of stable European entry rather than intermittent collaboration.

The International Social Survey Programme and the European Values Study complemented this integration by giving Czech sociology access to longer-term comparative series on values, citizenship, religion, and public attitudes. The Institute's own ISSP materials describe the programme as an international series of annual questionnaire surveys designed for longitudinal comparative social research and explicitly refer to Czech participation and data accessibility. The EVS materials available through the Czech sociological publication system similarly indicate that Czech data were deposited in the Sociological Archives and made

available both domestically and internationally. These infrastructures mattered because they allowed Czech society to be analysed not only as a post-communist national case, but as a participant in large cross-national value and attitude landscapes. The Czech Republic could thereby be studied in relation to democratic support, religiosity, tolerance, social trust, family norms, and civic culture across Europe. This comparative embedding changed the discipline's intellectual horizon. It made internationalisation substantive rather than decorative, because the central empirical questions themselves were increasingly framed through comparable transnational indicators.

By the late 2010s, this comparative orientation was already visible in publications explicitly using EVS and ESS data to situate Czech society within Europe. The Institute's publication page for "Civic Values in the Czech Republic in a European context" notes that the analysis is based on the fifth wave of the European Values Study and the ninth wave of the European Social Survey fielded in 2018. It examines political interest, efficacy, participation, trust, life satisfaction, support for democracy, confidence in political institutions, national pride, and political tolerance. This example is particularly important because it illustrates the mature form of internationalisation achieved in the decade. Czech sociology was no longer participating in major European surveys merely to prove that it could do so. It was using them to produce substantive analyses of Czech civic culture in explicit comparative perspective. That shift from participation to analytical exploitation is a hallmark of a mature internationally connected discipline. It shows that Czech sociology in the 2010s had gained not only access to European infrastructures but also the intellectual routines required to work productively with them.

The emergence of large-scale panel research in the second half of the decade also marks an important step forward. The Czech Household Panel Survey, as described by the Institute of Sociology, is a longitudinal survey repeatedly interviewing a random sample of households living in the Czech Republic. Between 2015 and 2019, five waves were carried out, and related datasets, questionnaires, and documentation were made available through the Czech Social Science Data Archive. This development is especially significant because panel surveys represent a higher level of empirical sophistication than one-off cross-sectional studies. They enable sociologists to analyse continuity and change at the household level, to link objective and subjective dimensions of life, and to track social processes over time. The launch of CHPS in the mid-2010s therefore signals more than a successful project. It indicates that Czech sociology had entered a stage where it could build nationally rooted longitudinal infrastructures of a kind fully compatible with international research standards. Such infrastructures also strengthened the country's visibility in comparative debates on well-being, inequality, family change, and crisis response.

A related aspect of internationalisation was the growing visibility of Czech sociology through large synthetic English-language outputs aimed at foreign audiences. The Institute's 2016 edited volume *Contemporary Czech Society*, edited by Pat Lyons and Rita Kindlerová, was explicitly presented as a broad interdisciplinary portrait of Czech society for an international readership. This is not a trivial publication fact. It reflects a field increasingly confident in its ability to explain itself outwardly in a synthetic scholarly form. The transition from isolated articles to large edited volumes written for non-Czech readers signals a mature stage of internationalisation. It means that Czech sociology was no longer simply contributing occasional data points to external debates; it was also producing comprehensive narratives about Czech society on its own terms and in internationally accessible language. Such

publications matter for the symbolic economy of a discipline. They position a national field not only as a provider of case studies, but as a legitimate interpreter of its own society for the world. This was one of the important cultural achievements of Czech sociology in the 2010s.

The same decade also deepened the internationalisation of the university sector. The Institut sociologických studií at Charles University today presents itself as offering English-taught Bachelor's programmes in Social Sciences alongside Master's and PhD studies in Sociology and Public and Social Policy. While this current formulation extends beyond the decade itself, it reflects an institutional trajectory that was already clearly underway in the 2010s: the integration of Czech sociology into international academic training circuits, not only through research collaboration but also through programme design and doctoral education. What matters analytically is that internationalisation was not happening solely at the level of publications and research infrastructure. It was also becoming part of the reproduction of the discipline through study programmes, supervision cultures, and the increasing normality of English as a language of advanced sociological communication. This broadened the social basis of internationalisation, making it part of the everyday academic life of departments rather than a specialised activity reserved for a narrow elite. The 2010s therefore transformed internationalisation from an external relation into an internal institutional habit.

Masaryk University's sociology environment provides a complementary perspective on this shift. The Department of Sociology in Brno now offers PhD fellowships aimed at outstanding international students, including one in Population Studies that explicitly welcomes proposals using Generations and Gender Programme data and taking a comparative approach. Although this specific formulation belongs to the present institutional profile, it reveals the kind of research culture that was consolidated through the 2010s: one in which comparative demography, transnational data use, and international doctoral recruitment became natural extensions of the department's mission. The broader projects environment at the department likewise shows participation in numerous international and European funding and cooperation frameworks. Taken together, this indicates that Czech sociology's internationalisation was not confined to the Academy-based institute in Prague. By the close of the 2010s, major university-based sociology in Brno was also operating in a research environment where comparative approaches, international mobility, and externally networked projects were structurally normal. This further entrenched the polycentric internationalisation of the field.

Another notable feature of the decade was that internationalisation did not erase substantive specificity. On the contrary, some of the most internationally legible Czech sociological work emerged precisely from areas where Czech researchers had strong national expertise. The values-and-politics profile of the Institute highlights topics such as the European Union, elites, legitimacy, civil society, politics, political attitudes, transformation, and electoral research. The local and regional studies profile likewise stresses social and spatial inequalities, unequal access to property, education, housing, security, and health, and the spatial conditions that foster or constrain life opportunities. These departmental emphases show that Czech sociology entered the international space not by abandoning its core themes but by rendering them comparable and analytically transferable. Questions of post-socialist transformation, democratic legitimacy, social inequality, regional disparities, and housing were not provincial leftovers from the 1990s. In the 2010s they became the very themes through which Czech sociology could contribute distinctive knowledge to wider European conversations. This is one of the clearest signs of successful internationalisation: the field becomes more global without becoming less itself.

For all these reasons, the 2010s should be understood as the decade in which Czech sociology achieved a stable form of internationalisation. It had an internationally indexed flagship journal with an explicit CEE-to-world mission, a specialised transdisciplinary journal in gender studies with international database presence, an Institute whose routine work included comparative research and public-opinion surveys, a national data archive embedded in CESSDA ERIC, a national ESS node implementing multiple survey rounds, sustained participation in ISSP and EVS, an increasingly sophisticated panel-survey culture, and university environments progressively shaped by comparative, English-language, and internationally networked research. This was not yet the final stage of the discipline's development. The 2020s would add stronger public engagement with crises, risks, and systemic shocks. But without the stable internationalisation of the 2010s, that later stage would have rested on a much weaker foundation. The 2010s thus represent the moment when Czech sociology ceased merely to rejoin Europe and began to function as one of its established sociological participants. In that lies the historical meaning of the stage.

The Contemporary Stage: 2020–2025 as a Phase of Public Engagement, Data Infrastructures, and Research on Systemic Risks

The period from 2020 to 2025 represents a new stage in the development of Czech sociology because the discipline was no longer defined primarily by post-transformational consolidation or by stable European integration alone. It increasingly assumed the role of a publicly engaged science of social vulnerability, resilience, risk communication, and institutional adaptation under conditions of overlapping crises. The pandemic, the war in Ukraine, inflationary pressures, food insecurity, educational disruption, labour-market uncertainty, and growing concern about democratic legitimacy created a social environment in which sociological knowledge acquired unusual practical salience. In this setting, Czech sociology did not retreat into abstract disciplinary self-reflection. On the contrary, it entered more visibly into the analysis of immediate public problems, while drawing on the stronger research infrastructures, panel data, survey systems, and comparative competences developed in earlier stages. This combination is essential for understanding the specificity of the contemporary period. The 2020s did not replace the previous phases of development, but they reoriented their accumulated capacities towards crises that were systemic, cross-sectoral, and politically sensitive. What emerged was a sociology more strongly positioned at the intersection of academic rigour, public explanation, and policy-relevant evidence.

One of the clearest institutional expressions of this new stage is the National Institute for Research on the Socioeconomic Impact of Diseases and Systemic Risks, SYRI. Official project descriptions state that SYRI was established on 1 June 2022, that it brings together experts from Masaryk University, Charles University, and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and that it is designed to provide real-time solutions and recommendations on the social and economic impacts of systemic health and related risks. The Science at Charles University page characterises it as a virtual scientific hub for interdisciplinary cooperation, while the Institute of Sociology's project page specifies that the project focuses on public administration and communication under health risk, the social and economic determinants of health risks, and economic recovery from health or security crises, including poverty, labour-market issues,

education, and unemployment. The Institute's 2024 annual report adds further precision: SYRI covered nine research areas, from communication, risk, and uncertainty to inequalities, polarisation and populism, education, labour, and the health system, and the Institute of Sociology was involved in six of the nine research groups. This is not merely a matter of project participation. It indicates that sociology in Czechia had become structurally embedded in one of the country's principal research frameworks for understanding crisis-ridden society. In the contemporary stage, therefore, sociology functioned not only as an observer of change, but also as a core analytical component of national risk research.

The significance of SYRI lies above all in the type of sociology it helps institutionalise. Earlier phases of Czech sociology had already cultivated public-opinion research, policy analysis, and comparative survey work, but the 2020s brought these capacities into much tighter contact with questions of resilience, public communication, social inequalities, and systemic governance. The Institute's annual report explicitly notes that the project was the first to focus in an integrated manner on new systemic risks linked to pandemics and wider societal threats, covering communication between public administration and the public, the behaviour of society under health threat, the effectiveness of care, lifestyle and socioeconomic determinants of risk, and recovery after health or security crises. Such an agenda illustrates a major shift in the scale of sociological ambition. The discipline was no longer simply documenting social consequences after the fact. It was helping to frame how crises themselves should be analysed and how their social effects could be anticipated, communicated, and managed. This is one of the strongest indicators that Czech sociology in 2020–2025 entered a stage of public engagement different in kind from the more classical internationalisation of the 2010s. It became a sociology of systemic risk in the strongest institutional sense.

The contemporary stage is equally marked by the increasing centrality of longitudinal data infrastructures. The Czech Household Panel Survey had already been launched in the previous decade, but its subsequent development made it particularly important for the 2020–2025 period. The official CHPS documentation states that the survey repeatedly interviewed a random sample of households in the Czech Republic, that five waves were carried out between 2015 and 2019, and that in 2020 and 2021 two smaller data collections dedicated specifically to the Covid-19 pandemic were conducted. The 2024 data manual further demonstrates that the infrastructure remained active into the new period. This matters greatly because it shows that Czech sociology entered the pandemic and post-pandemic years with a ready-made longitudinal platform rather than with only ad hoc cross-sectional responses. Such preparedness made it possible to analyse not merely isolated attitudes or snapshots of hardship, but evolving household conditions, coping strategies, subjective well-being, and inequalities over time. In the context of the 2020s, CHPS became more than a successful survey. It became one of the foundations on which crisis-sensitive Czech sociology could build durable analyses of everyday life under systemic strain.

The existence of the “Living through the Pandemic” data collections adds a further layer to this development. The Institute's 2025 publication page on food security and health explicitly states that the study drew on a cross-sectional survey, “Living through the Pandemic”, collected in October 2022 as part of a Czech longitudinal survey. This is analytically important because it shows how Czech sociology used longitudinal infrastructures flexibly, generating additional pandemic-specific modules rather than abandoning core research architecture in favour of improvised one-off responses. The same publication reports that more than 30 per

cent of respondents were at risk of food insecurity during the late Covid-19 pandemic in Czechia, with younger adults, people with lower education, those with lower incomes, and persons with limited mobility particularly vulnerable. This example is highly instructive for understanding the contemporary stage. It demonstrates how infrastructure, public-health relevance, and inequality analysis converged in a single sociological output. Contemporary Czech sociology did not merely study Covid as a medical event; it traced its implications for diet, class disadvantage, mobility, and health-related inequality. Such work is emblematic of the 2020–2025 period.

A similarly important innovation of the contemporary phase is the extension of longitudinal sociology into the educational sphere through the Czech Education Panel Survey. The project page on the dynamics of adolescents' attitudes toward outgroups states that in autumn 2023 the first wave of data collection was carried out among first-year secondary-school students, involving 249 schools and more than 24,000 students from across the Czech Republic, with schools selected by random sampling. The same source stresses that the size of the sample, the representation of educational tracks, and the longitudinal design make the research unique in the Czech setting. The Institute's annual report further notes the 2024 publication of the report from the first wave of data collection. This is one of the most important signs of the contemporary stage because it reveals the emergence of a major national panel focused on adolescence, school trajectories, and attitudes to outgroups. In a period marked by polarisation, migration, war-related anxieties, and debates about social cohesion, such a project gives Czech sociology the means to study the formation of attitudes, identities, and inequalities among younger generations in a way that is both nationally representative and longitudinally robust. The contemporary stage is thus also a stage of deeper temporalisation of sociological inquiry.

The same pattern is visible in the educational work connected to SYRI. The Institute's annual report records specific 2024 outputs from the Panel 150 surveys of teachers and pupils in Czech primary schools carried out within the SYRI framework. This detail matters because it shows that contemporary Czech sociology is not only analysing crises through attitudes and public communication, but also entering the institutional world of schools in order to understand resilience, inequality, and educational stress. Public schools are treated here not merely as sites of pedagogical delivery, but as key social environments in which broader crises become visible in everyday practice. The connection between SYRI and panel research in schools therefore marks a deeper transformation of Czech sociology's public mission. It is increasingly concerned with how crisis conditions are experienced and mediated in concrete institutional settings, especially those central to social reproduction. Such work moves beyond the classic sociology of educational inequality into a more crisis-aware sociology of schooling and socialisation. That too is characteristic of the 2020–2025 phase.

The war in Ukraine and its consequences for Czech society form another major axis of the contemporary period. Here the Institute's annual report is particularly revealing. It records outputs including a "Panel survey – Ukraine – wave 8", documents on the attitudes of the Czech public towards accepting refugees from Ukraine in February 2024, and reports on citizens' views of the situation in Ukraine. It also notes scholarly and infrastructural cooperation around the collecting, preserving, and disseminating of social data in wartime Ukraine in relation to CESSDA and the Czech Social Data Archive. These materials show that the discipline's response to the war was not confined to public-opinion snapshots. It also involved the development of data-archival cooperation, the study of refugee reception, and sustained

panel-based monitoring. Czech sociology thereby addressed the Ukrainian crisis not only as an external geopolitical event but as a domestic social transformation involving migration, solidarity, institutional pressure, local adaptation, and public opinion. This is precisely the type of multidimensional engagement that marks a mature and publicly responsive discipline.

The refugee dimension of this work is further underlined by more specialised research outputs. The Institute's publications search page summarises a cross-sectional study on mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia, reporting a sample of 1,347 Ukrainian war refugees and focusing on depression, anxiety, recognition of mental-health problems, and help-seeking. Although this particular work is interdisciplinary in its framing, its institutional placement inside the Institute's publication environment is significant. It shows how contemporary Czech sociology intersects with public health, migration research, and the sociology of support systems. In the 2020s, therefore, migration is no longer studied only as labour-market incorporation or identity formation. It is analysed through trauma, vulnerability, access to support, and the institutional capacities of the receiving society. This broadening of perspective reflects the impact of the war but also the discipline's expanded methodological and thematic readiness. Czech sociology is increasingly capable of dealing with forced migration as a complex social fact rather than as a narrowly demographic or policy problem.

Public-opinion research remained central throughout the period, but its role became even more explicitly linked to the diagnosis of democratic stability, social confidence, and crisis-related attitudes. The Institute's 2024 annual report lists a large number of CVVM outputs on contentment with life, citizens' perceptions of their ability to influence public affairs and freedom of speech, opinions on the functioning of democracy and non-democratic alternatives, attitudes to Ukrainian refugees, views of the situation in Ukraine, trust in leading politicians, and assessments of the economic situation and standard of living. This breadth is important. It indicates that contemporary Czech sociology retained and strengthened a routinised capacity to monitor social mood under strain. Such monitoring becomes especially valuable in periods of overlapping crises, when democratic legitimacy, economic insecurity, and external threats interact in unstable ways. The significance of CVVM in the 2020s therefore lies not merely in continuity. It lies in the fact that its long-running infrastructure allowed Czech sociology to track the social atmosphere of crisis society with regularity and institutional authority. This contributes directly to the discipline's public relevance in the contemporary stage.

The 2020–2025 period also brought a more visible engagement with inequalities in academia and institutional life itself. A 2024 study published by the Institute analysed sexual and gender-based harassment at universities on the basis of the 2023 annual reports of twenty-five public universities in the Czech Republic. The publication page states that the study examined how universities fulfil the 7P model and the minimum standards for a safe environment in research and education, found that the number and diversity of implemented measures had increased since 2021, and at the same time identified significant differences among universities in both implementation and reporting. This example is especially important because it shows that contemporary Czech sociology is willing to turn its analytical gaze onto the institutions of higher education themselves. The result is a sociology that does not merely study “society out there” but also diagnoses the quality, safety, and equality conditions of the academic system in which sociology itself participates. Such reflexive public engagement is one of the strongest

signs of disciplinary maturity. It indicates that the contemporary phase includes institutional self-critique as part of sociology's public mission.

Thematic expansion in the contemporary stage also includes the growing salience of food, lifestyle, environment, and everyday sustainability under crisis conditions. The 2025 Institute publication on food security in late-pandemic Czechia linked diet and household vulnerability, while related work indexed through the Institute's publication system connects gardening, fruit and vegetable consumption, and broader health and lifestyle questions in Czech urbanised society. In addition, journal issues in 2023 included work on the perception of links between the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change in the Czech blogosphere, showing that the Institute's publication environment was also engaging with the discursive intersection between health crisis and environmental crisis. These examples matter because they reveal a widening of sociological attention from classic macro-institutions toward the material practices of everyday life. Contemporary Czech sociology is increasingly interested in how risk is lived, communicated, and mitigated through food, care, local networks, and environmental discourse. This does not mean abandoning larger structural questions. It means that the contemporary phase interprets such structures through a denser sociology of daily vulnerability and adaptation.

The same can be said of the local and regional dimension. Although some of the most visible outputs on small municipalities and crisis management appeared in 2025 or 2026, the Institute's project and publication environment makes clear that sociologists were already analysing how local communities experienced both the pandemic and the refugee crisis. The annual report's references to school panels, Ukrainian-related surveys, and crisis-oriented SYRI participation, together with later publications stemming from the same environment, point to a sociology increasingly attentive to the territorial differentiation of crises. This is a natural but important extension of earlier Czech strengths in regional and socio-spatial studies. In the contemporary phase, localities are not treated simply as units in a map of inequality. They become sites where overlapping emergencies—health, migration, education, labour, and public communication—are negotiated in everyday practice. The public role of sociology thereby expands from national diagnosis to territorially differentiated explanation. This too is a sign that Czech sociology in the 2020s is operating with a more complex and grounded understanding of systemic risk.

What makes the contemporary stage especially significant is that all these developments are cumulative rather than episodic. The public engagement of Czech sociology in 2020–2025 rests on the consolidated institutions of earlier decades, on the international infrastructures embedded in the 2010s, and on a publication culture capable of combining Czech-language public relevance with internationally visible research outputs. That cumulative quality is visible in the coexistence of several forms of sociological practice: routine CVVM monitoring, national panel surveys such as CHPS and CZEPS, European infrastructure work through CESSDA and ESS, SYRI-based interdisciplinary risk analysis, and topical studies on food insecurity, refugees, harassment, education, and democracy. The field is therefore not reacting to each crisis with a completely new ad hoc structure. It is using a relatively mature ecosystem of institutions and methods to analyse changing risks in a connected way. This is one of the strongest reasons to distinguish 2020–2025 from the previous decade. Internationalisation remains present, but it is now coupled with an intensified capacity for socially immediate and publicly intelligible analysis. The discipline becomes more visible precisely because it already possesses the structures required for rapid yet robust response.

For these reasons, the contemporary period may be defined as a phase of public engagement, data infrastructures, and research on systemic risks. It is public because sociology increasingly addresses issues central to democratic life, schools, households, refugees, food security, higher education, and the legitimacy of institutions. It is infrastructural because the period depends heavily on panel surveys, public-opinion systems, data archives, and European research networks rather than on isolated studies alone. And it is risk-oriented because the discipline is increasingly organised around the social consequences of pandemic disease, war, inflation, inequality, insecurity, and institutional stress. This combination gives contemporary Czech sociology a distinctive profile within Central Europe. It is not only a sociology of transformation, nor only a sociology of comparative European integration. By 2025 it had become a sociology of a complex society under recurrent shock, equipped with the empirical tools and institutional frameworks needed to analyse that condition in real time. In that lies the historical meaning of the contemporary stage.

The Main Features of the Contemporary State of Sociology in Czechia by 2025

By 2025, Czech sociology may be described as a mature, polycentric, and institutionally differentiated research system. It is no longer possible to reduce the discipline to one single centre, one single methodological style, or one single dominant intellectual agenda. Instead, the field operates through an interacting network of major academic and research institutions, above all the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Sociological Studies at Charles University, and the Department of Sociology at Masaryk University. Each of these centres contributes differently to the life of the discipline, yet none of them functions in complete isolation from the others. This polycentricity is one of the strongest signs of maturity, because it makes the discipline more resilient, less dependent on one institutional hierarchy, and more open to thematic and methodological diversity. At the same time, polycentricity in Czechia does not mean fragmentation without structure. By 2025, it functions more as a distributed national ecology of sociology than as a loose collection of unrelated workplaces. In this lies one of the defining features of the contemporary state of Czech sociology.

A second major feature is the stable coexistence and interaction of academy-based and university-based sociology. The Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences remains the most important specialised national research institution in the field, with a broad internal departmental structure and major infrastructures such as the Public Opinion Research Centre and the Czech Social Science Data Archive. At the same time, the Institute of Sociological Studies at Charles University explicitly presents itself as a place combining English-taught BA, MA, and PhD programmes with active research, while its doctoral sociology programme is described as the result of the synergy of two major sociological centres, namely the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Masaryk University, for its part, offers full study pathways in sociology, including English-language programmes and doctoral training directed towards original research and international careers. This distribution of roles is highly significant. It means that Czech sociology by 2025 is not split between a “research-only” academy and “teaching-only”

universities, but structured through overlapping functions of teaching, research, supervision, publication, and project work. The contemporary field is therefore characterised by institutional complementarity rather than rigid separation.

A third important feature is the high degree of internal thematic differentiation. The departmental structure of the Institute of Sociology alone already reveals a discipline organised around clearly profiled research domains: economic and religious studies, gender and sociology, local and regional studies, public opinion research, social stratification, socioeconomics of housing, and values and politics. Such differentiation is not purely administrative. It indicates that Czech sociology has reached a stage where major substantive fields are institutionalised as durable research environments with their own personnel, projects, and publication traditions. Charles University's Department of Sociology likewise highlights research in civil society, public opinion, social movements, social stratification, social exclusion, mass media, health, information technologies, consumption, and sports, while also giving special attention to ethnicity, nationalism, migration, urban space, and religiosity. This thematic breadth shows that the contemporary discipline is no longer centred only on the sociology of post-communist transition. Instead, it operates as a broad modern sociology capable of addressing both classical and emerging domains of social life. Thematic plurality has therefore become one of the central structural characteristics of Czech sociology by 2025.

A fourth defining feature is methodological and infrastructural maturity. The Czech Social Science Data Archive presents itself as a national data services centre for the social sciences that acquires, processes, documents, and stores digital data files from scientific projects and makes them available for secondary analytical use in research and university teaching. It is the Czech national node of CESSDA ERIC and part of the national roadmap of large research infrastructures. Its functions include technical and organisational support for large-scale surveys, support for secondary data analysis, and education in data management, methodology, and analysis. This means that Czech sociology has by 2025 developed not merely a culture of empirical inquiry, but a culture of data stewardship, reuse, harmonisation, and long-term accessibility. Such infrastructures are indispensable for advanced social science, because they allow cumulative research rather than isolated project outputs alone. The presence of ČSDA as an integral part of the field is therefore one of the clearest markers of the discipline's maturity.

Closely connected with this is a fifth feature: the strong embedding of Czech sociology in European research infrastructures and comparative research. ČSDA explicitly identifies itself as the Czech national node of CESSDA ERIC, while its international cooperation page stresses that CESSDA provides an integrated European system of data services and a platform for standards, best practices, methodologies, and international comparative research. The Institute of Sociology has also hosted Czech participation in ESS and sustained involvement in ISSP and EVS, thereby ensuring that the Czech Republic is not treated merely as an isolated national case but as part of a larger comparative social-science landscape. This European embedding has two major consequences. It raises methodological expectations by tying Czech sociology to internationally standardised research environments, and it allows Czech findings to be interpreted within broader debates on values, democracy, religion, inequality, migration, and well-being. Thus, by 2025 Czech sociology is not simply open to Europe in a general rhetorical sense. It is operationally embedded in European infrastructures of data and comparison.

A sixth feature is the unusually strong place occupied by public-opinion research within the discipline. The Public Opinion Research Centre is described as one of the research departments of the Institute of Sociology and as a public research institution rather than a private polling agency. Its departmental profile emphasises regular omnibus surveys that monitor developments and changes in public opinion on political, economic, and other social topics, while also addressing questions of methodology and theory in public-opinion research. This arrangement is highly important for understanding the current state of Czech sociology. It means that the discipline possesses a stable institutional mechanism for observing the changing social climate, democratic legitimacy, public trust, and attitudes towards crises, migration, economics, and public affairs. In a period marked by pandemics, war, inflation, and democratic uncertainty, such a research unit gives sociology a visible and socially valuable role in national public life. The integration of CVVM inside the sociological field is therefore one of the most distinctive strengths of Czech sociology by 2025.

A seventh defining feature is the increasing importance of longitudinal and panel-based research. The Czech Household Panel Survey, later supplemented by pandemic-related waves, and the Czech Education Panel Survey both illustrate the degree to which Czech sociology has moved beyond purely cross-sectional modes of inquiry. Panel surveys enable the discipline to analyse continuity and change in households, educational environments, attitudes, and inequalities over time rather than merely taking one-time snapshots. This development is of major significance because it changes the temporal logic of sociological explanation. A mature sociology must be able not only to describe social conditions at a given moment, but also to analyse trajectories, shocks, adaptation, and cumulative disadvantage. The contemporary Czech field increasingly possesses exactly these capacities. By 2025, therefore, Czech sociology is not only a survey-rich discipline; it is becoming a genuinely longitudinal one. This temporal depth is one of the strongest signs of its present methodological sophistication.

An eighth feature is the persistent centrality of inequality as a unifying problem across otherwise diverse research fields. The Social Stratification Department explicitly presents itself as specialising in modern stratification research, going beyond the description of social inequalities to examine the causes and effects of subjective well-being, quality of life, and health, with particular attention to the family, the education system, and the labour market. The Local and Regional Studies department likewise describes social and spatial inequalities as one of its key concerns, focusing on unequal access to property, education, quality housing, security, and health, as well as the contextual conditions of spatial environments. These descriptions are highly revealing because they show that contemporary Czech sociology does not treat inequality as one topic among many. Rather, inequality functions as a transversal analytical principle linking education, family, labour, health, space, and housing. In this respect, Czech sociology by 2025 appears as a discipline deeply shaped by the analysis of unequal life chances and differential access to resources. This gives the field a strong internal coherence despite its thematic plurality.

A ninth characteristic is the exceptional strength of housing and socio-spatial research within the national disciplinary profile. The Socioeconomics of Housing department is described as working on the social and economic aspects of housing, including housing attitudes, housing preferences, affordability, international comparison of housing policy, social housing systems, simulations of policy reforms, housing finance, market efficiency, and house price indices. This is more than a specialised niche. It reflects one of the areas in which Czech sociology has built

a particularly recognisable and policy-relevant expertise. In contemporary societies, housing has become a central axis of inequality, intergenerational tension, urban restructuring, and social exclusion, and Czech sociology is institutionally equipped to address these issues in a sustained way. The same is true of its regional and socio-spatial work, where territorial inequalities are analysed alongside housing, mobility, and opportunities in life. By 2025, therefore, the field's profile includes a strong capacity to study the material geography of society rather than only its attitudinal or institutional dimensions. This materially grounded sociology is one of the notable strengths of the Czech case.

A tenth feature is the balance between theory, methodology, and empirically oriented applied research. The Department of Sociology at Charles University explicitly states that it places strong emphasis on social theory and methodology while simultaneously researching civil society, public opinion, social movements, exclusion, media, health, information technologies, and consumption. The flagship journal, *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, defines itself as an international platform for advancing sociological theory and methodology in Central and Eastern Europe, while also welcoming original empirical research from all branches of sociology. This balance is crucial. It means that Czech sociology by 2025 cannot be reduced either to survey empiricism without conceptual ambition or to abstract theorising detached from evidence. Its stronger centres attempt to maintain both dimensions together. Such balance is difficult to sustain, especially in smaller academic systems facing publication pressure and public expectations. The fact that Czech sociology continues to preserve it is one of the signs of its intellectual maturity.

An eleventh feature is the maintenance of a dual communicative regime combining domestic relevance with international visibility. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* explicitly seeks to advance communication among sociologists in Central Europe and to increase the international visibility of Central European sociology; it also invites papers presenting original research on Central and Eastern European societies and serves as an international open-access journal. At the same time, the journal continues to be published six times a year with four issues in Czech and two in English. This arrangement is highly significant because it prevents the discipline from becoming either provincially monolingual or detached from its own language community. Czech sociology by 2025 still possesses a strong Czech-language discursive space while also participating in English-language scholarly communication. The coexistence of these two modes is one of the most important characteristics of the field's present condition. It enables the discipline to speak both to domestic researchers and to the wider international scholarly world without sacrificing one audience to the other.

A twelfth feature is the internationalisation of teaching and disciplinary reproduction. The Institute of Sociological Studies at Charles University states that it offers English-taught BA, MA, and doctoral programmes in sociology and public and social policy, and its Department of Sociology notes that doctoral students are exposed to the work of both the Faculty and the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Masaryk University similarly offers study programmes in both Czech and English, including English-language Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral options. These institutional facts matter because they show that internationalisation has become embedded not only in publication and infrastructure, but also in the very reproduction of future sociologists. English is now part of the discipline's ordinary academic environment, especially at higher levels of study, while Czech remains central to national teaching and public relevance. This makes Czech sociology by 2025 both nationally

rooted and internationally trainable. In the long run, this feature is likely to shape the next generation of Czech sociologists at least as strongly as journals or datasets do.

A thirteenth feature is the widening public mission of sociology under conditions of systemic risk. The current phase of the discipline is strongly influenced by projects such as SYRI, by pandemic-sensitive panel surveys, by Ukrainian-related survey and refugee research, and by a large number of CVVM outputs on democracy, life satisfaction, trust, refugees, and social conditions. This indicates that contemporary Czech sociology increasingly functions as a discipline of public diagnosis. It is not simply producing specialist knowledge for internal academic consumption. It is also helping to explain how Czech society reacts to crisis, how citizens understand democracy, how inequality and vulnerability are distributed, and how institutions mediate collective uncertainty. This public role is especially important in the 2020–2025 period because the social demand for reliable interpretation has grown alongside the complexity of the crises themselves. Czech sociology by 2025 therefore appears as a discipline with an expanded civic significance. It has become more visible precisely because its empirical and institutional capacities allow it to respond to urgent public questions.

A fourteenth characteristic is the discipline's growing reflexivity regarding institutions of knowledge and expertise themselves. The presence of the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science within the Institute's departmental structure, together with the wider role of gender and science policy research, indicates that contemporary Czech sociology is increasingly attentive to the organisation of academia, equality in research careers, and institutional cultures within universities and science itself. This is an important development because it demonstrates a sociology that is not satisfied with observing society from a distance. It is also prepared to examine the conditions of research, authority, safety, and inequality within the institutions that produce knowledge. Such reflexivity is a hallmark of mature social science. By 2025, Czech sociology is therefore not only externally analytical but internally critical. It studies the social order while also interrogating the academic order within which it is embedded.

Taken together, these features allow the contemporary state of sociology in Czechia by 2025 to be summarised as the combination of polycentric institutional organisation, academy-university complementarity, strong thematic differentiation, advanced data and survey infrastructure, deep European embedding, a powerful public-opinion research component, increasing reliance on longitudinal designs, a transversal focus on inequality, notable strength in housing and socio-spatial studies, a balance of theory and empirical work, bilingual and internationally visible publication culture, internationally oriented teaching, an enlarged public mission under crisis conditions, and growing institutional reflexivity. This is a remarkably complex profile for a country of Czechia's size. It indicates that sociology in Czechia has moved beyond both post-socialist recovery and mere international incorporation. By 2025, it functions as a mature discipline with its research ecology, strong public relevance, and an increasingly confident place in Central European and wider European sociology. In that sense, the contemporary state of Czech sociology is best understood not simply as “developed”, but as structurally mature, methodologically self-aware, and socially consequential.

Part Two

The Main Achievements of Sociology in Czechia and the Principal Schools of Contemporary Sociological Thought

The Major Achievements of Czech Sociology, 1993–2025

The major achievements of Czech sociology between 1993 and 2025 can only be properly understood if one avoids reducing them to a mere list of successful publications or prominent personalities. The real achievement of the discipline lies first of all in the fact that, after the disintegration of the federal Czechoslovak framework and after the intellectual damage caused by the socialist decades, Czech sociology managed to transform itself into a stable, differentiated, and internationally recognised research system. This was not guaranteed in advance. Many post-socialist disciplines in Europe regained formal freedom after 1989 but remained institutionally fragile, thematically fragmented, or overly dependent on imported agendas. Czech sociology, by contrast, gradually built a balanced model in which national empirical relevance, methodological seriousness, institutional continuity, and international comparability reinforced rather than cancelled one another. That long-term success itself should be regarded as the first and most fundamental achievement. By 2025, sociology in Czechia no longer appeared as a recovering post-communist field, but as a mature social science with its own research infrastructures, strong journals, specialist departments, public visibility, and recognisable substantive strengths. The rest of its achievements unfolded on that foundation.

The first major concrete achievement is therefore institutional consolidation on a national scale. The Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences developed into a central research institution with a broad internal structure encompassing public opinion, social stratification, housing, regional studies, gender, values and politics, economic and religious studies, and major infrastructural units such as the Czech Social Science Data Archive. At the same time, university sociology in Prague and Brno acquired stable and productive forms. Charles University's Institute of Sociological Studies became a major metropolitan centre combining sociology and public policy, while Masaryk University strengthened the historical Brno tradition and turned it into a modern, research-active department with strong international and doctoral dimensions. The crucial point is that Czech sociology did not consolidate around one monopolistic centre. It created a polycentric field in which the Academy sector and university centres developed complementary strengths. This polycentric institutional architecture is one of the discipline's lasting achievements because it gave Czech sociology resilience, intellectual diversity, and a more flexible system of scholarly reproduction than a rigidly centralised model could have provided.

A second major achievement lies in the construction of an internationally visible and methodologically credible publication system. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* developed into a peer-reviewed open-access journal that explicitly presents itself as an international platform for advancing sociological theory and methodology in Central and Eastern Europe. It publishes six issues per year, four in Czech and two in English, and is indexed in Journal Citation Reports, Web of Science, SSCI, Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest, EBSCO, and

other databases. This is an important achievement not only because of prestige. It means that Czech sociology succeeded in institutionalising a dual communicative model: it retained a strong Czech-language space for domestic conceptual development and public intelligibility while also sustaining a durable English-language outlet with recognised international standing. The existence of such a journal protected the discipline from two opposite dangers, provincial isolation and the de-nationalised abandonment of its own scholarly language. In addition, specialised journals such as *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* extended this success into strong thematic subfields. The creation and maintenance of a journal ecology that is simultaneously national and international must therefore be counted among the central achievements of Czech sociology after 1993.

A third major achievement is the building of advanced social-science data infrastructures. The Czech Social Science Data Archive, established in 1998, became a member of CESSDA in 2001, entered the Czech research-infrastructure roadmap in 2010, and later served as the Czech national node of CESSDA ERIC when the distributed European infrastructure was formally constituted. This development is of enormous significance. A mature sociology needs more than good articles and successful researchers; it requires long-term data preservation, documentation, secondary-use culture, harmonisation practices, and institutional support for empirical continuity. ČSDA made these things possible in Czechia. It turned data from one-off research products into reusable scientific resources. It also linked Czech sociology to European standards in data management, accessibility, and interoperability. In this respect, the discipline's achievement is not simply that it "uses data", but that it has created one of the central institutional conditions under which cumulative and internationally comparable social science can exist. This infrastructural achievement is among the deepest and most enduring accomplishments of Czech sociology since independence.

A fourth major achievement is the strong integration of Czech sociology into large European comparative research programmes. The Institute of Sociology served as the Czech national node for the European Social Survey and implemented multiple ESS rounds, while Czech sociologists also worked within ISSP and EVS frameworks. Such participation may sound routine from the outside, but in fact it marks a decisive transition in the epistemic status of the field. It means that Czech society could be studied through instruments directly comparable with those used across Europe, and that Czech sociologists were not merely observers of foreign debates but participants in the production of a shared empirical research space. The benefit was twofold. On the one hand, it improved the quality and standardisation of Czech data collection. On the other hand, it enabled Czech cases to be situated analytically within larger arguments about democracy, trust, religion, migration, civic values, inequality, and life satisfaction. The achievement here is therefore both methodological and intellectual: Czech sociology entered a position where it could compare, not merely describe. That is one of the core reasons it became fully Europeanised without losing its national distinctiveness.

A fifth major achievement is the development of one of the strongest research traditions in Central Europe in the field of post-communist transformation, social stratification, and inequality. From the 1990s onward, Czech sociologists such as Petr Matějů, Jiří Večerník, Blanka Řeháková, Klára Vlachová, and others analysed the changing structure of opportunity, the role of human and social capital, status mobility, democratic legitimacy, and the reorganisation of inequality after the fall of state socialism. This body of work mattered because it treated transformation not as a rhetorical narrative of "return to Europe", but as an analytically measurable reconfiguration of chances, rewards, institutions, and attitudes. The

later continuation of this line is visible in work on social space, life chances, well-being, and comparative stratification in the Visegrád region. What makes this an achievement is not only the amount of research, but the fact that Czech sociology became one of the places where post-socialist transformation was studied with both empirical precision and theoretical seriousness. In other words, the Czech case was not simply observed; it became one of the key sites from which the sociology of systemic transformation itself was rethought.

A sixth major achievement is the formation of a particularly strong sociology of education and educational inequality. The Institute's project pages state explicitly that social inequalities in access to higher education in Czechia are among the largest in the OECD and that their roots lie deep in the structure of the educational system and in the social structure of Czech society. Other project descriptions note that Czech sociology of education has for years produced a substantial body of original studies on educational inequalities and mobility, but that new work was needed to connect these into a long-term and more comprehensive understanding of the Czech stratification system. This is highly revealing. It shows that Czech sociology did not simply notice educational disparities; it developed a sustained research tradition around them. The achievements of this field include identifying the structural sources of inequality in school transitions, connecting educational selectivity to broader class and stratification processes, and placing Czech educational outcomes into international comparison. By 2025, sociology of education had become one of the most empirically robust and policy-relevant areas of Czech sociological thought. It is one of the clearest examples of how the discipline translated a national social problem into a long-term research programme of both domestic and international importance.

A seventh major achievement is the institutionalisation of gender sociology and feminist social research as a stable and internationally visible component of Czech sociology. The existence of the *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* journal, published by the Gender & Sociology Department of the Institute of Sociology and indexed in Scopus, ERIH PLUS, CEJSH, and other databases, is itself evidence of this achievement. Yet the importance of the field goes beyond one journal. The wider institutional environment of gender research within the Institute made it possible for Czech sociology to study gender not as an isolated moral theme but as a structural dimension of work, entrepreneurship, care, science, knowledge production, academic inequality, and social policy. This gave Czech sociology a broader analytical range and strengthened its transdisciplinary connections with philosophy, political science, history, and cultural studies. The achievement is therefore double: Czech sociology succeeded in legitimising gender as a central sociological concern, and it did so in a form visible to international academia. In a post-socialist region where gender research often faced intellectual and political resistance, this institutional and scholarly consolidation is a particularly notable accomplishment.

An eighth major achievement lies in the sociology of the family, demographic behaviour, and the life course. Ladislav Rabušic's analysis of value change and demographic behaviour in the Czech Republic, together with later lines of work on childlessness, family change, and generational reproduction, show that Czech sociology developed a sustained and nuanced understanding of how large-scale social transformation entered intimate life. This was not merely demographic bookkeeping. Czech sociologists used fertility, marriage, postponement of childbearing, and family expectations as indicators of broader cultural modernisation, institutional uncertainty, and changing value patterns. The field thereby connected population processes to questions of social norms, welfare, intergenerational transmission, and the

restructuring of everyday life after socialism. This is an important achievement because it prevented sociology from becoming overly macro-institutional in its post-1989 focus. It ensured that Czech sociology remained attentive to the lived, household-level, and generational consequences of systemic change. By 2025, this line had become one of the recognised strengths of the Czech sociological field, especially in dialogue with demography and gender studies.

A ninth achievement is the development of a remarkably strong sociology of religion and secularisation. Czech society is often described as one of the most secularised in Europe, and Czech sociologists used this not as a journalistic cliché but as a serious comparative problem. Studies on religion and secularisation helped position the Czech Republic within wider European debates on modernity, church decline, belief, values, and collective identity. What makes this achievement important is that it gave Czech sociology a distinctive empirical and theoretical niche. It was able to contribute to sociology not simply by echoing general secularisation theory, but by studying one of Europe's most striking cases in a disciplined and conceptually rich manner. In addition, the field developed in close interaction with historical sociology and the sociology of culture, making it broader than a narrowly institutional study of religion. The Czech case thus became an important site for reflecting on the limits, variants, and meanings of secular modernity. This has remained one of the intellectually recognisable contributions of Czech sociology in the wider European landscape.

A tenth major achievement is the construction of a powerful research line in housing, urban inequality, and socio-spatial differentiation. The Socioeconomics of Housing department of the Institute of Sociology studies housing affordability, housing preferences, social housing systems, housing finance, policy reform, and house-price indices, while the Local and Regional Studies department focuses on spatially conditioned inequalities, unequal access to education, housing, security, and health, and the contextual conditions shaping life opportunities. This is a particularly important achievement because housing has become one of the key axes of inequality in contemporary Europe, and Czech sociology has built a specialised and policy-relevant competence in this field. Evidence of the public and scholarly weight of this line also appears in the record of awards and project descriptions related to Martin Lux and the housing-research unit, which stress both the public resonance of the work and its impact on housing policy in the Czech Republic. The field's strength lies in its combination of empirical rigour, policy relevance, and sociological interpretation of material living conditions. By 2025, socioeconomics of housing had become one of the areas in which Czech sociology most clearly influenced both scholarly debate and public policy.

An eleventh major achievement is the durable integration of public-opinion research into the sociological discipline. The Public Opinion Research Centre is not a peripheral adjunct but an integral department of the Institute of Sociology, and it conducts regular omnibus surveys on political, economic, and social topics while also addressing methodological and theoretical questions in public-opinion research. This arrangement gave Czech sociology something many national sociologies lack: a routinised and scientifically anchored mechanism for monitoring the changing social atmosphere. The value of this achievement became particularly visible in the 2020s, when issues such as democracy, public trust, war, refugees, inflation, and life satisfaction required continuous and reliable empirical observation. Yet the deeper importance of CVVM extends beyond crisis periods. It embeds sociology in the national public sphere and gives the discipline an institutional role in explaining social moods and civic orientations. In this respect, Czech sociology achieved not only academic strength but also a

durable form of social visibility. That is one of the reasons it entered the 2020s with such a strong public profile.

A twelfth major achievement is the transition from one-off survey traditions to more sophisticated longitudinal and panel-based sociology. The Czech Household Panel Survey and, later, the Czech Education Panel Survey represent major advances in the temporal depth of Czech sociological research. They allow the discipline to analyse households, educational pathways, attitudes, and social inequalities over time rather than as static snapshots. This is methodologically and substantively significant. A sociology capable of panel analysis is much better equipped to study shocks, adaptation, persistence, cumulative disadvantage, and changing life trajectories. The fact that Czech sociology has developed such capacities means that it can now address complex social dynamics in a more advanced way than would be possible through cross-sectional data alone. This achievement is especially important in the context of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and rising economic insecurity, because these crises are processes, not moments. Czech sociology by 2025 had at its disposal instruments capable of analysing such processes in temporal depth. That is one of the strongest markers of its contemporary maturity.

A thirteenth achievement is the discipline's capacity to move from international integration to public engagement in moments of systemic crisis. The SYRI project is especially important here because it placed sociology in an interdisciplinary national framework analysing the socioeconomic impacts of disease and systemic risks. Through SYRI and related research, Czech sociology entered questions of communication under uncertainty, social resilience, poverty, labour, education, health risks, democratic tension, and institutional trust with unusual immediacy. This represents an important achievement because it shows that the discipline did not remain confined to post-hoc commentary. It built or joined institutional mechanisms for analysing crises while they were unfolding. In doing so, it expanded its civic role and demonstrated the practical value of its earlier methodological and infrastructural development. The war in Ukraine, refugee reception, pandemic-related vulnerability, food insecurity, and the social consequences of inflation all became areas in which Czech sociology proved capable of producing timely and evidence-based analysis. This shift toward a sociology of systemic risk is among the most characteristic achievements of the most recent phase.

A fourteenth major achievement is the successful creation of a synthetic, internationally readable portrait of Czech society for external audiences. Works such as *Contemporary Czech Society*, presented as a broad interdisciplinary portrait of Czech society for an international audience, show that Czech sociology had become capable not only of generating individual case studies and journal articles, but of explaining the country as a whole in a coherent and outward-facing scholarly form. This is more important than it may first appear. A mature national discipline must be able to interpret its own society both inwardly and outwardly. It must speak to domestic scholars and public debate, but it must also be able to present itself to international readers without relying solely on outside interpreters. The production of large synthetic English-language works is therefore one of the signs that Czech sociology has achieved intellectual confidence and interpretive autonomy. By 2025, the field was no longer merely supplying data to the outside world; it was also authoritatively narrating Czech society to that world. That is a substantial scholarly accomplishment.

Taken together, these achievements show that Czech sociology since 1993 has accomplished something more significant than simple institutional survival or ordinary academic growth. It

has created a national sociology that is simultaneously empirical and theoretical, public and scholarly, Czech-speaking and internationally legible, specialised and yet held together by strong common concerns such as inequality, democracy, values, housing, family, and social risk. It has built journals, archives, survey centres, comparative nodes, panel infrastructures, and specialist departments. It has produced strong lines of work in transformation, education, gender, family, religion, housing, public opinion, and crisis sociology. It has embedded itself in European research systems without dissolving its own analytical identity. And it has become publicly relevant at moments when society most needed disciplined social explanation. These are not minor successes. Together they amount to the formation of one of the most substantial sociological fields in Central Europe after 1989. In this consists the major historical achievement of Czech sociology between 1993 and 2025.

The Principal Directions and Schools of Contemporary Czech Sociology

In contemporary Czechia, it is more accurate to speak not of one dominant sociological school, but of a differentiated constellation of strong directions, research clusters, and institutionalised specialisms. Some of them are tied to long-standing intellectual lineages, such as the Brno sociological tradition or the Prague sociological-policy environment. Others are better understood as thematic schools in the modern sense: not philosophical systems built around one master thinker, but durable research formations with their own journals, projects, methods, departments, doctoral training, and international links. By 2025, Czech sociology had developed enough institutional density for such directions to be identified with confidence. The task is therefore not to impose artificial labels on every topic, but to distinguish those areas in which Czech sociology has generated sustained, recognisable, and cumulatively organised research agendas. What follows should be read in precisely this sense. The term “school” is used analytically to indicate those domains in which research has become sufficiently concentrated, reproduced, and externally visible to form a stable component of the national discipline. In some cases, these are clearly organised institutional schools; in others they are best understood as strong thematic directions with school-like coherence.

The first and historically most influential direction is the Czech school of post-communist transformation, social stratification, and inequality. This direction emerged from the need to understand how the collapse of state socialism, the rise of market institutions, and the rebuilding of democratic life altered life chances, social mobility, elite formation, and subjective perceptions of fairness and legitimacy. It was in this field that Czech sociology first acquired strong visibility after 1989 and after the formation of the independent Czech Republic. Over time, this line evolved from the classic sociology of transition into a more refined sociology of social space, educational and cultural capital, health and quality of life, labour-market differentiation, and class-related life chances. The current profile of the Social Stratification Department is especially revealing here. It presents the department as specialising in modern stratification research that moves beyond description toward the analysis of subjective well-being, health, and causal mechanisms, with particular attention to the family, education, and the labour market. This shows that the original transformation-oriented agenda has matured into a broader and methodologically more ambitious school of inequality research.

The second major direction is the Czech school of sociology of education and educational inequality. This is one of the most analytically important and socially consequential branches of the discipline. Its significance lies not only in the study of schools and universities as institutions, but in the demonstration that educational processes are among the most decisive mechanisms through which social inequality is reproduced in Czech society. The educational direction in Czech sociology connects family background, educational selectivity, school trajectories, cultural capital, and later life outcomes in a coherent analytical framework. It has also grown more methodologically sophisticated over time, moving from cross-sectional inequality research towards longitudinal and panel-based educational research. The project on the dynamics of adolescents' attitudes toward outgroups is emblematic here, because it explicitly studies the role of school and class environments in the development of attitudes towards foreigners using panel data from a representative national sample of upper-secondary students. This demonstrates that Czech sociology of education now encompasses not only attainment and mobility, but also school socialisation, civic attitudes, and the formation of tolerance and exclusion.

The 3rd major direction is the Czech school of gender sociology and feminist social research. In this field, Czech sociology has achieved one of its clearest forms of institutionalisation. The Gender & Sociology Research Department of the Institute of Sociology explicitly describes itself as the key research institution in the Czech Republic specialising in gender studies and feminist theory and methodology. It publishes the transdisciplinary journal *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research*, its members participate in expert networks in Europe, cooperate with international research organisations, teach at Czech and foreign universities, and provide consultation on gender-equality issues. This is a particularly strong sign of school formation, because the field possesses a specialised journal, a dedicated department, international networking, and an identifiable thematic profile. Its contribution reaches far beyond women's studies in the narrow sense. It includes the analysis of labour, care, entrepreneurship, science policy, academic careers, gendered institutional cultures, and knowledge production itself. In other words, Czech gender sociology functions as both a substantive and a reflexive school within the wider discipline.

The 4th major direction is the Czech school of family sociology, demographic behaviour, and life-course research. This direction has deep roots in Czech sociology, especially in Brno, where family demography and sociological work on reproduction, household forms, and value change have long been prominent. By 2025, this line had become integrated not only into classic family sociology but also into the analysis of time use, sleep, work-family relations, parenthood, childlessness, and household dynamics. The Czech Household Panel Survey has been especially important for this school because it allows family and household issues to be studied longitudinally rather than only through static indicators. The Masaryk University sociology PhD profile is also telling in this respect: its Population Studies fellowship explicitly welcomes proposals in family demography using Generations and Gender Programme data and taking a comparative approach. This indicates that family and demographic sociology in Czechia is not only historically strong but also actively reproduced through contemporary doctoral and comparative research. The school is especially significant because it connects demographic processes with values, gender, social reproduction, and broader questions of inequality.

The 5th major direction is the Czech school of sociology of religion, secularisation, and cultural identity. This direction is particularly important because Czechia occupies a distinctive

position within Europe as one of the most secularised societies on the continent. The sociological significance of this fact lies not in the repetition of a cliché about “atheist Czechia”, but in the possibility of studying secularisation, cultural memory, residual religiosity, value patterns, and identity formation in a highly unusual social setting. Although religion is not represented today by a separately named department equivalent to housing or gender, it remains deeply embedded in the discipline’s research ecology. This is reflected in the way university sociology in Prague explicitly identifies religiosity, ethnicity, nationalism, and migration as important areas of special focus, and in the long-standing role of Czech research on religion in comparative sociological debate. This direction therefore combines empirical distinctiveness with comparative intellectual leverage. Its school-like quality comes from its ability to use the Czech case to illuminate larger questions about modernity, post-communist culture, and the varied social meanings of secularisation in Europe.

The 6th major direction is the Czech school of housing studies, urban sociology, and socio-spatial differentiation. This is one of the clearest cases in which a thematic direction has acquired an unmistakably institutional form. The Socioeconomics of Housing department states that it originated from a housing team within economic sociology and was established as a separate department in 2009. It studies housing attitudes, affordability, policy, social housing systems, finance, reform simulations, market efficiency, and price indices, while maintaining strong links to international networks such as the European Network for Housing Research. The department also publishes the journal *Critical Housing Analysis*. At the same time, the Local and Regional Studies department analyses social and spatial inequalities, property, education, quality housing, security, health, mobility, poverty, homelessness, regional differences, and the contrast between urban and rural environments. These two units together form one of the strongest school-like clusters in Czech sociology. They show that the discipline in Czechia does not treat space merely as background, but as a constitutive dimension of inequality, social opportunity, and crisis experience.

This socio-spatial school deserves separate emphasis because it represents one of the most practically relevant and internationally recognisable achievements of Czech sociology. In many academic systems, housing remains split between economics, policy studies, geography, and planning. In the Czech case, by contrast, housing has become a distinctly sociological object studied through affordability, tenure, class, family strategies, and public policy. Likewise, regional and local research does not simply map differences between places; it investigates how those differences are reproduced through unequal access to key resources and how they shape life trajectories, mobility, and disadvantage. The school is therefore doubly important. It makes Czech sociology stronger analytically by integrating material living conditions into the heart of social analysis, and it makes it stronger publicly by addressing one of the most urgent social issues of contemporary Europe. Housing and socio-spatial inequality thus form one of the most policy-relevant and institutionally mature directions in the discipline by 2025.

The 7th major direction is the Czech school of migration studies, ethnicity, nationalism, and cultural sociology. This school is especially visible in university sociology, above all at Charles University and Masaryk University. The Department of Sociology at ISS explicitly identifies ethnicity, nationalism, migration, and urban space as areas of special attention within its social-anthropological and sociological profile. At Masaryk University, sociology and social anthropology programmes are described as being based on long-standing research and theoretical work on migration, social inequalities, and the development of post-socialist

societies, while the research-meeting archive clearly reveals a sustained intellectual environment around the Center for the Cultural Sociology of Migration. These materials are extremely important because they show that migration in Czech sociology is not treated merely as a technical issue of integration policy. It is studied through symbolic boundaries, activism, multiculturalism, transnational family relations, advocacy, and meaning-centred analysis. This gives the Czech migration school a broader and more culturally sophisticated profile than a purely administrative sociology of foreigners would have had.

The 8th major direction is the Czech school of public-opinion research, political sociology, and democratic culture. Here the institutional centre of gravity clearly lies in the Public Opinion Research Centre and the Values and Politics Department of the Institute of Sociology, but the school also has strong links to university sociology in Prague and to the journal and comparative-survey infrastructure. The CVVM profile states that the centre conducts regular omnibus surveys on political, economic, and social topics and addresses questions of methodology and theory in public-opinion research. The Values and Politics department describes itself as studying political systems, parties, electoral behaviour, national identity, migration attitudes, corruption, public safety, family values, civic participation, and trust in political institutions, while also noting that it manages the European Social Survey in the Czech Republic and contributes to the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and the European Election Study. This is about as clear a case of a school as one can find in contemporary Czech sociology. It combines regular data production, comparative infrastructure, thematic coherence, and direct public relevance. It also links sociology to political analysis without dissolving into political science, since its focus remains firmly on social attitudes, value structures, and the societal conditions of politics.

The 9th major direction is the Czech school of methodology, survey research, and data infrastructures. This direction is less visible to the general public than housing or public opinion, but from the standpoint of disciplinary development it is absolutely central. The Czech Social Science Data Archive is not merely a technical service. It is a national centre for the acquisition, processing, documentation, storage, and re-use of digital social-science data, and it serves as the Czech node of CESSDA ERIC. It supports large-scale surveys, secondary analysis, teaching, FAIR principles, and methodological training. The Public Opinion Research Centre also explicitly links its work to methodological and theoretical issues in public-opinion research. This means that Czech sociology has developed a strong infrastructural-methodological school that underpins much of the field's empirical quality. Its achievement lies not only in producing data but in establishing a culture of data stewardship, harmonisation, longitudinal continuity, and methodological reflexivity. In a mature discipline, such work is not ancillary but constitutive. By 2025, Czech sociology clearly possesses this kind of constitutive methodological school.

The 10th major direction is the emerging Czech school of sociology of risk, crisis, and systemic vulnerability. This direction is newer than the others, but it has rapidly become one of the most distinctive features of the contemporary field. Its strongest institutional embodiment is SYRI, which brings together researchers from major universities and the Academy of Sciences to study public communication under risk, inequalities, labour, education, health systems, poverty, and the social consequences of pandemics and other systemic threats. What makes this school especially important is that it draws together capacities developed in earlier stages—public opinion, panel research, social stratification, education, migration, and institutional analysis—and reorients them towards the study of overlapping crises. It is

therefore not a wholly separate field but a higher-order integration of several existing directions. Nevertheless, by 2025 it had acquired sufficient institutional and thematic coherence to be regarded as a distinct school in formation. It reflects the discipline's movement from the sociology of transformation to the sociology of societies under recurrent shock.

The educational and household panels developed in the 2020s reinforce the emergence of this risk-oriented school. The Czech Household Panel Survey gives sociologists a longitudinal instrument for examining households, well-being, stress, cultural capital, work, family obligations, and attitudes to immigrants over time. The adolescent attitudes panel studies the effects of education and school environments on outgroup attitudes through representative continuous data collection. Together these projects reveal a sociology increasingly equipped to analyse crisis society not only at the level of macro indicators but through temporally sensitive and institutionally grounded evidence. They also demonstrate that the sociology of risk in Czechia is not merely speculative or rhetorical. It is tied to panel infrastructures, social-psychological mechanisms, school environments, household trajectories, and the changing everyday life of society under pressure. Such methodological depth gives the new risk school a stronger foundation than many crisis discourses elsewhere in Europe enjoy.

The 11th important direction, which overlaps with several of the above but deserves separate mention, is the Czech school of civil-society, social-movement, and citizenship research. Charles University's Department of Sociology explicitly lists civil society and social movements among its principal areas of research, and its self-description emphasises that many faculty members gained their sociological insight through living and working in a rapidly transforming post-authoritarian society. This is significant because it shows that Czech sociology has cultivated not only institutional and inequality-centred lines but also a strong interest in collective mobilisation, citizenship, public action, and the social conditions of democratic participation. Such work is closely related to the study of political culture, but it also extends beyond formal institutions into activism, mobilisation, public discourse, and civic agency. In the Czech context, where post-1989 democratic development and later populist or crisis-related tensions remain crucial analytical issues, this line of research has both historical depth and contemporary urgency. It therefore deserves recognition as one of the important directions shaping the broader school of Czech political and civic sociology.

Taken together, these directions show that the principal schools of contemporary Czech sociology form neither a random mosaic nor a single unified paradigm. Rather, they constitute a structured plurality. Some, such as social stratification, housing, public opinion, and gender sociology, have highly visible institutional embodiments in the departments of the Institute of Sociology. Others, such as migration studies, cultural sociology, family demography, and civil-society research, are more strongly anchored in university environments, especially in Prague and Brno. Still others, such as the sociology of risk and crisis, arise from interdisciplinary platforms that integrate older strengths into new frameworks. This plurality is not a weakness. It is one of the discipline's defining achievements. It allows Czech sociology to remain both analytically coherent and institutionally flexible, capable of combining long-term specialisation with responsiveness to new social realities. The principal directions and schools of Czech sociology by 2025 therefore testify above all to the fact that the discipline has reached a mature stage of organised diversity.

The Czech School of Post-Communist Transformation, Stratification, and Social Inequality

The Czech school of post-communist transformation, stratification, and social inequality is the foundational school of contemporary Czech sociology because it was here that the discipline first found both its central post-1989 research object and its most internationally legible analytical language. After the collapse of state socialism and the creation of the independent Czech Republic, Czech sociologists were confronted with the need to explain not simply political democratisation or market reform as such, but the deeper restructuring of social positions, opportunity structures, value hierarchies, life chances, and perceptions of fairness. The field that emerged from this need quickly moved beyond journalistic transition narratives. It became a long-term sociological investigation of how the social order was being rebuilt: who advanced, who lost ground, what new mechanisms of inequality appeared, how mobility changed, and how all this affected legitimacy, justice, and the social perception of reform. For this reason, the school should be seen not merely as one branch of Czech sociology, but as its original post-socialist core. It gave the discipline both a national object of inquiry and a methodological route into broader European and comparative debates.

Institutionally, this school is rooted above all in the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where the contemporary Social Stratification Department explicitly presents itself as a centre of modern stratification research. Its profile states that the department goes beyond the simple description of social inequalities and instead examines the causes and effects of subjective well-being, quality of life, and health, with particular attention to stratification processes in the family, the education system, and the labour market. This formulation is important because it reveals the evolution of the school itself. What began in the 1990s as an urgent effort to interpret post-communist change has, by 2025, become a broad and mature research programme connecting class structure, educational inequality, labour-market outcomes, household life, and social legitimacy. The institutional persistence of this department demonstrates that the school is not merely retrospective. It remains one of the active conceptual and organisational centres of Czech sociology.

Historically, the school has a deeper genealogy than the year 1993 alone would suggest. The official project page on social stratification in the Czech Republic and Central Europe states that empirical stratification research in the former Czechoslovakia began in the later 1960s and that the modern project compares the development of social structure and stratification research in Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia from communist times onward, also in relation to Austria. This historical framing is analytically crucial. It shows that the Czech stratification school does not understand itself as a purely post-communist invention. Instead, it sees itself as the continuation and transformation of an interrupted empirical tradition, one that was reactivated after 1989 and reoriented after 1993 toward the explanation of the new social order. This continuity with earlier stratification research gives the school unusual historical depth. It also helps explain why Czech sociology in this area developed with such speed and confidence in the 1990s: it was drawing on remembered methods, concepts, and empirical ambitions rather than improvising everything from scratch.

One of the school's earliest and most important strengths was its refusal to treat post-communist transformation as a merely ideological or juridical process. Already in the early 1990s, Pavel Machonin and his collaborators framed the question in terms of changing social structure and modernisation. The article "Social and Political Transformation in the Czech

Republic” presented transformation as a deep restructuring of inequality, elites, and social order, while the historical comparison of social structures in 1984 and 1993 turned the transition into a measurable empirical problem. This was a decisive move. It meant that Czech sociology entered the transition era not simply as a chronicler of political events, but as a discipline capable of mapping the social anatomy of systemic change. The school thereby established one of its lasting features: the insistence that social transformation must be studied through structure, mobility, inequality, and institutional effects rather than through rhetoric alone.

The school gained even greater analytical force when it began to focus on winners and losers of transformation. Petr Matějů and Nelson Lim’s well-known article “Who Has Gotten Ahead after the Fall of Communism?” argued, on the basis of Czech data, that social capital played an especially important role in the early post-communist stratification order. This was important for at least two reasons. First, it challenged naïve assumptions that the new order would automatically become meritocratic simply because socialist privileges had been dismantled. Secondly, it demonstrated that post-communist inequality had to be understood through the conversion of different forms of capital, not just through income or occupation. The Czech school thereby placed itself in direct conversation with larger sociological debates on market transition, capital conversion, and the reproduction of advantage. At the same time, it retained a distinctly Czech empirical grounding, since the analysis was tied closely to the particular trajectory of Czech transformation.

Another major contribution of this school was its ability to connect stratification with educational reproduction. The article “Transition to University under Communism and after Its Demise” explicitly compares inequality of access to higher education under socialist and post-socialist conditions, and it shows that socio-economic background remained highly consequential in shaping tertiary transitions. This was a key achievement because it expanded the school’s object. Social stratification was no longer studied only in terms of occupational categories, class positions, or distributive outcomes; it was also analysed through educational pathways, school selection, and inherited cultural and social resources. In effect, the Czech stratification school became one of the principal intellectual foundations of Czech sociology of education. This internal expansion greatly strengthened the school, since it allowed it to explain how inequality is reproduced before it fully appears in labour-market and status outcomes. It also increased the school’s relevance to public debate, because education was one of the most politically sensitive and socially consequential institutions of the post-socialist period.

At the same time, the school never confined itself to objective indicators of inequality. A distinctive feature of the Czech tradition is the close link between social structure and the subjective perception of mobility, deprivation, legitimacy, and justice. This line is visible already in work on subjective mobility and later in studies of distributive justice and system legitimacy. Such research mattered because post-communist societies could not be understood only through income distributions or employment structures. They also had to be analysed through the ways in which people perceived fairness, closure, improvement, decline, and entitlement. The Czech school was especially strong in recognising this. It therefore contributed to a richer sociology of transformation, one that linked material change with normative evaluation and political culture. This combination remains one of its defining characteristics.

The school also gradually broadened from the Czech case toward Central Europe as a comparative region. Jiří Večerník's book *Social Stratification in Central Europe* explicitly addresses Visegrád societies and politics, beginning with the long-term development of key dimensions of social structure during post-communist transition and then moving to topics such as subjective well-being, couples' status, cultural activities, and retirees. Likewise, the 2023 overview by Zdeněk R. Nešpor and Jiří Večerník situates Czech stratification research within the wider history of empirical stratification studies in the Visegrád countries. This comparative widening is one of the school's major achievements because it transformed a nationally rooted field into a regionally significant one. Czech sociology was no longer using comparison only to benchmark itself. It was helping define what stratification research in post-communist Central Europe looked like as a coherent intellectual domain.

This widening did not weaken the Czech specificity of the school. On the contrary, the Czech case remained one of its most analytically fertile terrains precisely because it combined several features that made stratification research especially revealing: relatively rapid market reform, a comparatively strong educational tradition, a highly secular social environment, historically strong sociological institutions, and later a public debate shaped by housing pressures, educational inequality, and democratic legitimacy. The school's distinctive contribution lies in showing how these factors interacted rather than treating them as separate domains. Czech stratification research thus became more than a sociology of class in the narrow sense. It turned into a sociology of how multiple institutions—education, family, labour, politics, and housing—interact in the production of unequal life chances. This multidimensionality is one of the strongest reasons to regard it as a genuine school rather than a temporary thematic cluster.

Another defining trait of the school is its methodological seriousness. From its earlier large-survey tradition to its present departmental profile, the field has consistently emphasised empirical methods and the analysis of causal processes. The Social Stratification Department explicitly states that it applies and develops modern empirical methods of data analysis and methodologies enabling the study of causal processes. This is not a trivial institutional slogan. It signals that Czech stratification sociology sees itself not merely as descriptive social reporting, but as a methodologically self-aware field seeking robust explanatory leverage. This methodological ambition is one reason why the school has remained internationally legible. Comparative and historical arguments about transformation carry much more weight when they are anchored in strong data and explicit analytical models. By 2025, that methodological culture had become one of the school's permanent assets.

The school is also notable for the way it has linked macro-social change to everyday life. Večerník's earlier work on markets and people already pointed in this direction, and later developments of the school continued it. Social stratification in Czech sociology is not studied only at the level of classes, elites, or macro indicators. It is analysed through standards of living, household conditions, cultural participation, retirement, educational pathways, and subjective well-being. This broadening greatly enriched the field. It prevented the school from becoming overly abstract or locked into old models of industrial class analysis. Instead, it adapted to the realities of late post-socialist and contemporary Czech society, where inequality appears through housing conditions, family resources, educational choices, health, and symbolic status as much as through occupation alone. In that sense, the Czech school of stratification has shown a notable ability to modernise itself without abandoning its original problematics.

By the late 2010s and early 2020s, the school had also become one of the bases from which Czech sociology could respond to newer social tensions. Although the field remains historically rooted in the interpretation of post-communist transformation, its present institutional form clearly extends into contemporary concerns such as quality of life, health, educational differentiation, and the broader effects of inequality on social cohesion. This makes the school especially important for the contemporary phase of Czech sociology. It is not a museum of the 1990s. Rather, it has become one of the frameworks through which Czech sociology can address the long afterlife of transformation in present-day society. In this respect, the school demonstrates both continuity and adaptability. Its key questions remain recognisable, but their empirical content has shifted toward new forms of stratification and vulnerability.

A further reason for the school's importance is its intellectual productivity across several neighbouring fields. It has nourished the sociology of education, informed research on public opinion and legitimacy, contributed to debates on democracy and distributive justice, and intersected with housing and quality-of-life research. This breadth is one of the reasons it continues to occupy such a central place in Czech sociology. A school that remains influential only within its original niche eventually becomes historically interesting but sociologically marginal. The Czech school of post-communist transformation, stratification, and inequality did not follow that path. It kept generating concepts, methods, and research problems useful across the wider discipline. That generative quality is one of the clearest signs of its continuing vitality.

In sum, the Czech school of post-communist transformation, stratification, and social inequality should be seen as the first great school of contemporary Czech sociology. It emerged from the need to interpret the rebuilding of social order after socialism, but it evolved into a broad and mature field connecting class, mobility, education, justice, legitimacy, household life, and comparative Central European development. It possesses institutional anchoring, historical depth, methodological seriousness, and wide substantive influence. It also provided the discipline with one of its strongest routes into international sociology, precisely because the Czech experience of transformation could be analysed in ways relevant far beyond the Czech case itself. Historically, this school gave Czech sociology its initial post-1993 centre of gravity. Intellectually, it continues to define one of its strongest traditions.

The Czech School of Sociology of Education and Educational Inequality

The Czech school of sociology of education and educational inequality is one of the most intellectually substantial and publicly consequential directions of contemporary Czech sociology. Its importance derives from the fact that, in the Czech case, education has never been studied merely as a pedagogical subsystem or a neutral mechanism of skills acquisition. Instead, it has been analysed as one of the principal institutions through which social origin, family resources, cultural capital, educational aspirations, and class position are translated into unequal life chances. This school therefore occupies a strategic position between sociology of stratification, sociology of the family, public policy, and the sociology of adolescence. It is deeply rooted in the post-1989 and post-1993 transformation of Czech society, but it has gradually moved far beyond the narrow sociology of transition. By 2025, it

had become a broad and methodologically mature field concerned with school structures, higher education, educational mobility, track differentiation, academic expectations, school choice, and the long-term reproduction of inequality. What gives this school particular weight is that its central object is not a marginal social phenomenon but one of the main mechanisms through which contemporary Czech society reproduces itself. In that sense, it is a school that lies close to the core of the Czech social order itself. Its significance for sociology in Czechia is therefore both theoretical and strategic.

A defining characteristic of this school is its insistence that educational inequality in Czechia is structural rather than incidental. The major project on unequal access to education at the Institute of Sociology stated explicitly that the Czech Republic still occupied a leading position in unequal access to higher education among OECD countries and that one of the central causes of this inequality lay not only in students' socio-economic background but also in the outdated structure of the educational system and its low degree of openness and permeability. This argument is of foundational importance. It shifts the sociological focus away from individual deficits and towards institutional design. In other words, the school does not ask only why some pupils succeed and others do not; it asks how the architecture of the educational system itself amplifies initial social differences. This is one of the reasons the Czech sociology of education acquired such analytical force. It connected questions of opportunity, merit, and mobility to the actual organisation of schools and transitions. This structural lens became the hallmark of the school and remains one of its strongest intellectual contributions. It also explains why this direction has remained so relevant to public policy debates.

Institutionally, the school is unusually rich and polycentric. One of its central bases has long been the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially through its projects on unequal access to education, educational mobility, and the educational roots of life success. Another strong institutional base is the Ústav výzkumu a rozvoje vzdělávání at the Faculty of Education of Charles University, where Jana Straková and Jaroslava Simonová are among the visible members of staff. A further key pole is the Institute of Sociological Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University, particularly through the Department of Public and Social Policy, where education appears as an important field of policy analysis and strategic governance. Masaryk University in Brno adds a major comparative and stratification-oriented dimension through Tomáš Katrňák and the broader sociology environment of the Faculty of Social Studies. These different sites do not produce identical work, yet together they form a recognisable school. Some study inequality through social structure and mobility, some through school systems and educational measurement, and others through governance and policy design. Their coexistence is one of the strengths of Czech sociology of education: the field is concentrated enough to be coherent, but diverse enough to avoid narrowness.

Historically, the school rests on a longer research lineage than the post-1993 period alone might suggest. The project on educational mobility and educational inequalities between 1936 and 2004 explicitly argued that, apart from a few partial analyses of the socialist period, there had been a lack of knowledge both about the development of educational mobility after 1989 and about the comparison of the post-1989 period with earlier historical stages. This observation is crucial because it reveals how the school defined one of its own tasks. It did not present contemporary educational inequality as an entirely new post-socialist phenomenon. Rather, it sought to reconstruct a long historical trajectory in which pre-socialist, socialist, and post-socialist mobility regimes could be compared. Such a long *durée* perspective greatly

increased the school's explanatory depth. It allowed Czech researchers to examine whether the educational system had become more open or more closed over time, and under which institutional conditions relative inequalities intensified or weakened. This historical reflexivity is one of the qualities that distinguish the Czech school from more short-term policy commentary. The school studies contemporary inequality with a strong historical memory.

The monographic line of this school further confirms its depth. The Institute of Sociology's monograph *Vzdělanostní nerovnosti v české společnosti. Vývoj od počátku 20. století do současnosti* is described as outlining the major turning points in the study of educational inequality, providing basic quantitative data on transitions to higher education in Czechia, examining functional literacy in the adult population, and summarising the development of inequalities in access to secondary and tertiary education. It also offers a new analysis of the intergenerational transmission of educational attainment using mobility tables and log-linear models. This description is highly revealing because it captures the school's full analytical range. It is not confined to one educational level, one generation, or one policy issue. It integrates access, attainment, literacy, intergenerational transmission, and long-term structural development. In doing so, it also confirms the school's methodological seriousness. Educational inequality is treated not as a moral slogan but as an empirically reconstructible pattern. Such monographic work helped give the field its cumulative and school-like character.

A central theme of the school is the relationship between educational inequality and broader social stratification. In the Czech case, sociology of education did not become a detached specialist field disconnected from class analysis. On the contrary, it remained deeply linked to the wider sociology of inequality, family background, and mobility. The educational projects of the Institute of Sociology were explicitly framed in terms of life success, economic, social, and cultural resources, and the roots of inequality in both the school system and the social structure of Czech society. This is analytically important because it shows that education is approached not only as a sequence of institutional transitions but as one of the main mechanisms through which the social order reproduces itself. The school thereby refuses to separate "education research" from "real sociology". It treats school outcomes, aspirations, and transitions as constitutive parts of the wider stratification system. This integrated view is one of the reasons the Czech sociology of education has had enduring power. It ties educational processes directly to social structure, rather than leaving them in a narrower pedagogical compartment.

One of the school's strongest early achievements was the analysis of unequal access to tertiary education. The project on unequal access to education stated clearly that its primary goal was to identify the main causes of unequal access to higher education in the Czech Republic by using longitudinal data, follow-up surveys, and OECD comparisons. That framing is significant because higher education became the most visible arena in which post-socialist educational inequality could be observed and publicly debated. University access combined issues of merit, class background, aspirations, and state policy in a single problem field. Czech sociologists used this to demonstrate that educational inequality could not be reduced to one transition point; nevertheless, the university gateway remained a particularly revealing site for analysis. Research on tertiary access helped uncover the cumulative role of family resources, prior school selection, and the broader rigidity of the educational system. It also made the school highly legible to policymakers and to international comparative sociology. Through the higher-education question, the school entered one of the most important debates of the post-1989 Czech Republic.

At the same time, the school gradually moved beyond the university transition itself and began to study earlier stages of educational differentiation. This was a crucial development. Once the Czech sociologists recognised that inequalities visible at the tertiary level were rooted in much earlier institutional processes, the field naturally broadened to include primary-school choice, secondary-school tracking, and the organisational structure of the school system as a whole. Jana Straková's work on the impact of the education system's structure on the development of educational inequalities became especially important in this regard. The argument was that the structure of the Czech educational system itself helps generate and reproduce inequality. This broadened the school's explanatory focus. It no longer concentrated only on outcomes at the end of schooling, but on the pathways through which children were differentially channelled from a relatively early age. Such an orientation made the school more sociological in the full sense. It analysed how institutions organise trajectories.

The issue of primary-school choice became one of the strongest examples of this newer phase. Research by Jana Straková and Jaroslava Simonová on primary-school choice examined the factors shaping parental and household decisions in the Czech context and treated school choice as a socially structured process rather than as a simple expression of parental preference. This was a major conceptual gain for the school. It showed that educational inequality begins not only when formal transitions occur but also when families navigate and exploit the possibilities of school differentiation within compulsory education. Such navigation is socially uneven, because families differ in information, aspirations, cultural confidence, and capacity to use choice strategically. The school thereby widened its analytical lens from institutions alone to institutionally mediated family action. This is one of the reasons Czech sociology of education has become richer over time. It no longer studies only systems or only families, but their interaction. The concept of school choice thus became an important bridge between macro-structure and micro-strategy.

A similarly important development was the study of academic futility and educational climates in secondary schooling. Work by Straková, Soukup, and Simonová on academic futility in Czech secondary education is emblematic here. The notion of academic futility allows sociologists to examine whether pupils perceive effort and academic investment as meaningful within their school environments. This matters greatly in a system marked by track differentiation, because institutional settings do not simply distribute resources; they also shape expectations, motivation, and the social meaning of learning. By introducing this concept into Czech research, the school deepened its understanding of how inequality is reproduced through school cultures and student perceptions. This is a substantial advance beyond older models focused only on access and attainment. It means that Czech sociology of education now analyses not just whether students reach certain levels, but how they come to understand the value and plausibility of academic success in the first place. In this sense, the school has moved toward a more sociologically complete account of educational reproduction.

The school's interest in secondary tracks further strengthens this shift. The 2024 study on the effect of different secondary-school tracks on cognitive and non-cognitive learning outcomes demonstrates a concern not only with formal transitions but with the differentiated consequences of educational pathways once students have entered them. This is analytically important because tracked systems may shape not only grades or final attainment but also broader developmental outcomes, social attitudes, self-confidence, and behavioural dispositions. A sociology of education that studies track effects in this wider sense moves

beyond administrative classification and enters the field of institutional socialisation. The Czech school has clearly reached this stage. It now investigates how educational forms themselves shape young people's capacities and orientations. This represents a more mature sociology of educational institutions, one attentive to both formal inequality and the broader production of selves. Such work also increases the school's relevance to debates about school reform, since track effects are among the most politically sensitive features of the Czech system.

Another important feature of the school is its comparative ambition. Already the project on unequal access to education emphasised OECD research and comparative analyses, and later work explicitly placed Czech educational inequalities in European context. Natalie Simonová's research on educational inequalities and educational mobility under socialism and after the Velvet Revolution is especially significant here, because it compares Czech developments across different historical regimes and situates them within broader European patterns. This comparative perspective is one of the strongest achievements of the school. It prevents Czech sociology of education from becoming parochial. Instead of presenting Czechia as a uniquely problematic case that can only be understood internally, the school analyses it as a historically specific variant of broader processes of educational expansion, differentiation, and social reproduction. That comparative lens also sharpens national diagnosis. It helps identify which features of Czech educational inequality are regionally common and which are distinctively Czech. In this respect, comparison serves explanation rather than mere benchmarking.

The school also owes much of its strength to the interaction between sociological research and educational research proper. The Ústav výzkumu a rozvoje vzdělávání at Charles University provides an especially important institutional setting for this. Its staff includes not only Jana Straková and Jaroslava Simonová but also a wider team of scholars working on contemporary educational issues, measurement, language education, psychology, and school practice. The composition of the team reveals how the Czech school of educational inequality has developed in an interdisciplinary yet still strongly sociological environment. This is an advantage rather than a dilution. It allows the school to combine macro-sociological questions about inequality with educational measurement, school practice, and psychological or curricular dimensions. Such institutional cross-fertilisation helps explain why the Czech sociology of education has remained analytically rich. It benefits from proximity to educational research without giving up its central sociological preoccupation with unequal life chances. This institutional ecology is one of the school's hidden strengths.

At the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University, the policy dimension of the school is particularly visible. The Department of Public and Social Policy describes its research focus as encompassing the design, formulation, and implementation of public policies, the relationship between politics and policy, public-sector decision-making, and policy analysis, while the doctoral programme explicitly notes that graduates may work in policy design in areas including education. This matters because educational inequality is not only a matter of family background and school structure; it is also a matter of governance. Reforms of access, permeability, finance, and school design depend on public-policy choices. The policy wing of the school therefore broadens its reach. It ensures that educational sociology in Czechia does not stop at diagnosis but is also linked to the analysis of policy architecture, strategic governance, and the institutional conditions of reform. This makes the school especially valuable in the public sphere. It can explain both how inequality is reproduced and why reform is so difficult.

The Brno contribution, represented especially by Tomáš Katrňák, gives the school a further comparative and class-analytical dimension. His staff profile at Masaryk University explicitly identifies the sociology of stratification and inequality, social mobility, social statistics, and the role of education in class and educational reproduction over time as his main fields. This is important because it shows that the sociology of education in Czechia has never been reducible to Prague-based educational institutes alone. Brno contributes a strong line in which education is analysed in close relation to class reproduction, homogamy, mobility, and the long-term development of social stratification. Katrňák's more recent work on educational expansion, inequality of educational opportunity, and the gender-gap reversal in tertiary education illustrates how this branch of the school moves between the Czech case and wider European trends. It therefore protects the school against excessive narrowness. Educational inequality remains tied to class and mobility, and Czech developments are understood comparatively rather than in isolation. This makes the Brno branch indispensable to the school's overall profile.

A major sign of the school's contemporary vitality is the Czech Education Panel Survey. The project overview states that the first wave of data collection took place in autumn 2023 among more than 24,000 first-year upper-secondary students from 249 schools across all regions of the Czech Republic and that data collection will continue annually until 2026. This is a very substantial development. It means that Czech sociology of education now possesses a large-scale longitudinal research platform focused on school environments, adolescent development, and changes over the course of upper-secondary education. The project's goal is not limited to cognitive outcomes. It seeks to capture the effects of school environments throughout the whole period of high-school studies, thereby opening the way to a much richer sociology of educational trajectories. This is one of the strongest contemporary achievements of the school. It signals the move from static inequality analysis to dynamic panel-based sociology of adolescence, school climate, and attitude formation. The educational school thus enters the 2020s with a notably advanced methodological infrastructure.

The CZEPS research team also shows that the school is expanding conceptually. The project's main researcher, Aleš Kudrnáč, is described as working at the intersection of sociology, political science, and social psychology, with a long-standing interest in the formation of political attitudes in adolescence and in how the school and the environment shape behaviour, prejudices, and perceptions of politics. Other team members bring expertise in quantitative methodology, well-being, mental health, sociology of education, identity formation, and attitudes towards otherness. This composition is highly revealing. It demonstrates that the Czech school of educational inequality is no longer limited to social origin and educational attainment in the classical sense. It now also studies how educational institutions shape prejudice, civic orientations, belonging, and political perception. Such a broadening is intellectually important because it makes education central not only to the sociology of inequality but also to the sociology of democratic culture and social cohesion. It shows that the school is evolving rather than merely repeating its original themes.

Methodologically, this school is one of the strongest in Czech sociology. It combines historical mobility analysis, comparative European and OECD perspectives, survey-based quantitative analysis, panel designs, educational measurement, and institutional analysis. It is therefore not surprising that many of its leading figures work at the intersection of sociology, educational research, public policy, and statistical analysis. The project on educational mobility and inequalities between 1936 and 2004 already stressed the need to approach inequality through

the optic of chances and their ratios, using technical statistical approaches capable of distinguishing relative inequalities from more superficial mobility counts. Later projects extended this sophistication to longitudinal educational panels and international comparisons. This methodological seriousness is one of the main reasons the school has achieved such authority. It has not relied on moral urgency alone, even though its object is socially urgent. It has built its arguments on cumulative data and increasingly advanced designs. That methodological culture is one of its defining features by 2025.

Publicly, the school has become one of the most consequential directions of Czech sociology. Educational inequality is a socially resonant issue because it touches not only pupils and parents but also class reproduction, regional differentiation, labour-market opportunities, and the legitimacy of meritocratic claims in society as a whole. The school's repeated demonstration that the Czech educational system is highly selective, that social inequalities in access to higher education are among the largest in developed countries, and that the roots of these inequalities are deeply embedded in both school structure and social structure gives the field unusual public force. Unlike some more abstract sociological schools, this one addresses a problem that is immediately intelligible to a wide audience. Yet it does so without sacrificing analytical depth. This combination of public relevance and scientific seriousness is one of the reasons it remains so central to contemporary Czech sociology. In effect, it is a school that speaks simultaneously to researchers, policymakers, and society at large.

Another reason for its importance is that it has become one of the main points where Czech sociology can connect national diagnosis with international discussion. Questions of tracking, permeability, educational aspirations, relative inequality, and the effects of school environments are not uniquely Czech, but the Czech case gives them particular analytical sharpness because the country combines strong educational traditions with persistent social selectivity. The school has therefore positioned Czech sociology within broader debates on educational expansion, comparative inequality, and the social limits of meritocracy. This is a considerable achievement. It means that Czech sociology of education contributes not only to understanding Czech schools but also to understanding how educational systems mediate modern inequality in Europe. The national case becomes theoretically productive precisely because it is studied comparatively and historically. In this respect, the school exemplifies one of the best tendencies of Czech sociology as a whole. It uses Czech empirical material to speak to larger sociological problems.

In sum, the Czech school of sociology of education and educational inequality has become one of the great schools of contemporary Czech sociology because it links historical depth, structural diagnosis, methodological strength, and strong public relevance. It is rooted in the sociology of stratification but has evolved into a broad field embracing higher education, school choice, tracking, adolescent attitudes, educational policy, and comparative opportunity structures. Its major strength lies in the demonstration that educational inequality in Czechia is neither accidental nor merely residual. It is built into the interaction between institutional design, social structure, and family resources. Through this insight, the school has helped explain one of the central mechanisms of social reproduction in contemporary Czech society. Its leading centres in the Institute of Sociology, Charles University, and Masaryk University ensure that it is institutionally durable, while projects such as CZEPS show that it is also methodologically and conceptually renewing itself. For all these reasons, it stands as one of the most powerful and socially significant directions in Czech sociology by 2025.

The Czech School of Gender Sociology and Feminist Social Theory

The Czech school of gender sociology and feminist social theory is one of the most institutionally consolidated and conceptually mature directions of contemporary Czech sociology. Its significance lies in the fact that it transformed gender from a marginal or morally framed topic into a central analytical category for understanding work, care, family, social policy, science, organisations, inequality, and power. In the Czech case, this development was especially important because the post-socialist transformation created a social environment in which old arrangements of labour and care were not simply abolished, but reconfigured in new market, policy, and cultural conditions. Gender sociology therefore did not emerge merely as an imported academic fashion. It became a way of explaining how Czech society itself was being restructured after 1989 and especially after 1993. By 2025, this school had acquired a stable institutional base, a specialised journal, strong international links, policy relevance, and a broad range of substantive themes. It is one of the clearest examples in Czech sociology of how a thematic field can grow into a fully developed school. It also demonstrates that contemporary Czech sociology is capable of producing theoretically informed and internationally visible work on one of the key axes of modern inequality. In this respect, the gender school is not peripheral to Czech sociology; it is one of its strongest modernising forces.

Institutionally, the centre of gravity of this school lies in the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The official profile of the Gender & Sociology Research Department describes it as the key research institution in the Czech Republic specialising in gender studies and feminist theory and methodology. It also states that the department publishes the transdisciplinary journal *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research*, that its members belong to expert networks in Europe, provide consultation on gender-equality issues, work with international research organisations, and teach at Czech and foreign universities. This is a particularly strong institutional self-description. It indicates not only that gender research exists, but that it has become an organised, recognised, and outward-facing component of Czech sociology. The department is not presented as a small specialist enclave. It is described as a national centre of expertise with scholarly, pedagogical, and consultative functions. This degree of institutional concentration is one of the reasons why it is justified to speak here of a school rather than only of a thematic field. The school possesses a recognisable organisational core and a durable research identity.

A second institutional pillar of this school is the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science. Its official profile describes it as the only specialised research department in the country focusing specifically on gender sociology of science, feminist science and technology studies, and gender equality in research. The profile also notes that the centre was established as a team in 2001 and became an independent department in 2015. This timeline is analytically important. It shows that the gender school in Czech sociology did not develop only around labour, family, and social policy, but also extended into the sociology of science, research careers, academic governance, and knowledge production. Such an extension is a major sign of maturity. A school becomes fully developed when it no longer studies only “society out there”, but also analyses the institutions that produce expertise, authority, and scientific legitimacy. In the Czech case, the presence of a dedicated gender-and-science department gave the school a second organisational centre alongside Gender & Sociology proper. That dual

structure is one of the features that make this school unusually robust within the national disciplinary field.

The journal *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* represents another decisive institutional achievement of the school. The official journal page defines it as a peer-reviewed transdisciplinary journal of gender studies and feminist theory that publishes articles in Czech or English with gender or feminist perspectives across sociology, philosophy, political science, cultural studies, and other branches of the social sciences and humanities. The journal's own website confirms the same profile and shows that it continues to publish current issues in the 2020s. This is highly significant because it means the school has its own regular and visible publication platform rather than relying only on occasional articles in general sociological journals. The existence of such a journal helps consolidate terminology, debate, methodological standards, and thematic continuity. It also allows Czech gender sociology to remain bilingual and thus speak simultaneously to domestic and international audiences. In this respect, the journal plays a role analogous to that of *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* for the broader discipline. It is one of the key mechanisms through which the school reproduces itself intellectually.

One of the defining features of the Czech gender school is its refusal to reduce gender to a single social sphere. Instead, it uses gender as an organising principle through which many different institutions can be analysed together. The profile of Alena Křížková, who heads the Gender & Sociology Department, is especially revealing here. Her research is said to focus on economic and social justice, the gender pay gap, work-life balance, the production of inequality in organisations, entrepreneurship and innovation, and technological change, and it explicitly notes her use of both qualitative and quantitative methods and her development of an intersectional approach to social inequalities. This profile effectively summarises the school's range. Gender is treated not as a cultural add-on, but as a dimension of labour, institutions, class, innovation, and justice. It follows that Czech gender sociology is not confined to feminist critique in the narrow sense. It is also a sociology of work, organisations, labour markets, and technological restructuring. This breadth is one of the main reasons why the school has remained intellectually productive rather than narrow or repetitive.

The labour market and the relationship between employment and care form one of the core thematic axes of this school. The publication page for "The Labour Market and Work-Life Balance in the Czech Republic in Historical Perspective" states that the chapter analyses the development of women's position in the labour market and of the conditions for work-life balance from the 1950s to the present, while arguing that high female employment does not automatically imply emancipation or the full realisation of women's rights in a society shaped by a gender contract that places work and care in tension. This argument is central to the Czech school. It captures one of its most important conceptual insights: post-socialist and even late-socialist Czech society cannot be understood through simplistic assumptions that female labour-force participation equals gender equality. The Czech case shows instead that women's high employment can coexist with persistent gendered expectations in care and with deep structural asymmetries in the organisation of work and family life. By foregrounding this contradiction, the school made a major contribution to both Czech and wider Central European sociology. It showed that labour-market inclusion and gender justice are not synonymous.

This labour-and-care perspective also gave the school one of its strongest bridges to social citizenship theory. The volume *Women and Social Citizenship in Czech Society*, referenced on the Institute's site, situates labour-market participation, care, and social-policy development within a larger discussion of citizenship, continuity, and change. This is analytically important because it means Czech gender sociology does not approach work-life balance simply as a management or family issue. It interprets it as part of the unequal distribution of social rights, obligations, and institutional recognition. That move gave the school considerable depth. It connected the everyday realities of working parents and caregivers to broader questions of welfare, justice, and citizenship in post-socialist society. In doing so, it also anchored Czech gender sociology within wider European debates on social rights and the gendered welfare state. The school thereby became more than a set of studies about women's employment. It developed into a sociological analysis of how citizenship itself is gendered in a changing society.

A second major thematic axis of the school is reproduction, parenthood, and changing intimate lives. The profile of Hana Hašková states that she examines the gender aspects of and links between changes to intimate lives, reproduction, families, and the labour market, and explores relations between policies, discourses, and practices of care in historical and international perspective. This formulation is especially valuable because it shows that the gender school in Czech sociology has not limited itself to the analysis of labour-market inequality. It has also studied the transformation of parenthood, childlessness, one-child families, family imagination, and the social norms surrounding reproduction. The project page on childlessness and one-child families confirms this emphasis and lists outputs dealing with pathways to childlessness, reproductive plans, and gendered visions of family life among Czech young people. These themes are not secondary. They are central to understanding how modern Czech society reproduces itself biologically, culturally, and socially. Through them, the gender school has made a major contribution to the sociology of family and life course while retaining its distinctively gendered analytical lens.

The school is particularly strong when it analyses the relationship between social policy and reproductive norms. The publication page for "Selective pronatalism in childcare and reproductive health policies in Czechoslovakia" shows that Hana Hašková and Radka Dudová approached childcare and reproductive health not simply as demographic issues but as historically selective and normatively loaded policy fields. This historical perspective is important because it demonstrates that the Czech gender school is not limited to present-day inequalities alone. It also investigates the institutional and ideological histories through which such inequalities have been shaped. This gives the school a longer temporal horizon and protects it from presentism. It can explain not only what current gender arrangements look like, but how they came to be historically organised. In the Czech and Czechoslovak context, where both socialism and post-socialist liberalisation reconfigured care and reproduction in distinct ways, such historical sociology is especially valuable. It adds a layer of structural explanation that purely contemporary analysis would miss.

A third major axis is the analysis of low fertility, childlessness, and the diversification of parenthood. The project page on childlessness and one-child families explicitly frames these phenomena as part of a broader effort to explain low fertility in the Czech Republic. This is a highly consequential move because it places gender sociology directly into one of the central social questions of contemporary Europe: why and how reproduction patterns are changing. In the Czech school, these issues are not interpreted through demographic aggregates alone.

They are analysed through union histories, gendered expectations, social barriers, and the transformation of family ideals. This gives the school a richer explanatory vocabulary than purely demographic research typically provides. It also helps connect gender sociology to the sociology of youth, intimate citizenship, and social policy. By treating low fertility as a problem of gendered life chances and reproductive imagination, the school extends its reach well beyond classical feminist labour-market themes.

Another defining contribution of this school is the development of an explicitly intersectional perspective. The project “Intersectionality in sociological research of social inequalities” states that its aim was to develop an intersectional approach to the study of social inequalities in Czech sociology and to use it to map the impact of the economic crisis on employment. The editorial “Intersectional Approach in Social Inequalities Research” reinforces this orientation, presenting intersectionality as a framework for understanding the relationship between identity, social context, power relations, and complex inequalities. This is a major conceptual advance because it shows that the Czech school of gender sociology is not satisfied with analysing gender in isolation. Instead, it seeks to understand how gender is co-produced with class, age, labour-market position, and other forms of social differentiation. That move significantly increased the theoretical sophistication of the school. It also made it more relevant to broader sociological debates on social justice and inequality. In this respect, Czech gender sociology has contributed not only to the study of women and men, but to the refinement of inequality theory more generally.

The use of intersectionality also strengthened the school’s empirical sensitivity to marginalised groups and differentiated biographies. The publication page for “I would take any job, but...” analyses the biographies of low-educated women at the intersection of class and gender in the Czech Republic. The summary explicitly connects the transition to a market economy, the declining symbolic capital of blue-collar and service work, familialist social policy, and a labour market discouraging the combination of paid employment and care, thereby exposing low-educated women to gender discrimination and secondary labour-market positions. This is exactly the kind of empirically grounded intersectional sociology that gives the school much of its power. It demonstrates how abstract categories such as class and gender become lived constraints in concrete biographies. It also shows that the Czech school uses gender not as a universal category applicable in the same way to all women, but as one that must be differentiated by education, class location, and labour-market position. This gives its account of inequality a notable social realism.

A fourth major thematic axis of the school is the sociology of science, academic institutions, and gendered organisations. Marcela Linková’s profile states that her research focuses on the sociology of gendered organisations, research careers, governance of research, and research assessment from a gender perspective. The profile of the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science adds that this department focuses specifically on gender sociology of science, feminist science and technology studies, and gender equality in research. This is a remarkable expansion of the school. It means that Czech gender sociology has moved deeply into the study of academic institutions themselves, examining how knowledge production, assessment criteria, and institutional hierarchies are gendered. Such work is especially important in the contemporary knowledge economy, where claims of neutrality and excellence often obscure structured inequalities. By bringing gender analysis into the sociology of science, the Czech school has placed itself at the forefront of a highly contemporary and internationally relevant field. It is one of the strongest signs of the school’s maturity.

Linková's work on academic excellence is one of the clearest expressions of this line. The publication page for "Academic Excellence and Gender Bias in the Practices and Perceptions of Scientists in Leadership and Decision-making Positions" and the associated PDF show that the article examined how ideals of excellence operate in ways that produce gendered outcomes, and the PDF explicitly provides the DOI. This contribution is significant because it moves beyond counting women in academic positions. It analyses the institutional culture of excellence itself and shows how apparently neutral evaluative criteria may reproduce a care ceiling and other structural biases. This is exactly the kind of contribution that makes the Czech school theoretically significant beyond the national case. It speaks directly to international debates on academic capitalism, audit cultures, and the gendered organisation of merit. By producing such work, Czech gender sociology has expanded from the study of labour and care into the sociology of institutional knowledge power.

Closely related to this is the school's engagement with European research and innovation policy. The National Contact Centre for Gender & Science has been involved in projects such as Women and Science III, the 2017–2020 national contact-centre activities, GENDERACTIONplus, and the GE Academy. The project pages make clear that these initiatives addressed gender equality and gender mainstreaming in Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe contexts, built capacities for structural change in research institutions, created networks of trainers, and provided strategic policy advice at both national and European levels. This matters because it shows that Czech gender sociology is not inward-looking. It is embedded in the European Research Area and helps shape gender-equality agendas in research and innovation. Such policy and institutional engagement is one of the school's distinctive strengths. It transforms sociological insight into organisational practice and governance tools. In this regard, the school has become an actor not only in analysis but in the practical design of institutional change.

A fifth major axis of the school is its response to technological and economic change. The profile of Alena Křížková explicitly mentions entrepreneurship, innovation, and technological change among her research interests, and the Institute's news page on the 2020 issue of *Gender and Research* states that the issue was devoted to "Economy 4.0 — The Digitalization of Labour from a Gender Perspective". This is a highly significant development. It means that the Czech gender school does not remain anchored only in older debates about labour-market inequality and family policy. It also studies how digitalisation, new labour regimes, and technological transformation reshape gender relations. Such work is particularly important because it positions the school within the sociology of contemporary capitalism. It analyses not only inherited inequalities but also emerging ones. By doing so, it ensures that feminist social theory in Czech sociology remains conceptually current and empirically attuned to new forms of work and precarity.

The Covid-19 pandemic further demonstrated the school's vitality and social relevance. The project "Gendering the pandemic: redefinition of care as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis?" explicitly states that it analyses the impacts of the pandemic in the Czech Republic from a gender and intersectional perspective, focusing on both the micro-social level of households and the meso-social level of selected professions, and combining qualitative intersectional and quantitative approaches. This is highly revealing of the school's method and scope. It shows that Czech gender sociology reacted to the pandemic not simply by noting that women were affected. It set out to analyse the reorganisation of care, labour, and household burdens through a systematic research design. Related publication pages, such as "Czech

Parents Under Lockdown” and work on nurses and the burden of “double care”, further confirm that the school approached the pandemic as a gendered crisis of social reproduction. This is one of its major contemporary contributions. It demonstrates how feminist social theory can illuminate the social costs of systemic shocks.

The pandemic also revealed one of the school’s central theoretical strengths: the capacity to make care visible as a structuring principle of society. In crisis conditions, care is often rhetorically celebrated while remaining socially undervalued and unequally distributed. The Czech gender school responded to this by treating care not as a private moral virtue but as a sociological institution linked to labour markets, professions, households, and public policy. This is particularly clear in its pandemic projects, but it also continues earlier work on work-life balance and social citizenship. The continuity matters. It shows that the school did not opportunistically discover care during Covid-19; rather, it used the pandemic to deepen a long-standing research agenda. This capacity to connect emergency conditions to pre-existing theoretical work is one of the marks of a mature school. It allows Czech gender sociology to interpret crises not as anomalies but as moments that reveal underlying structures of inequality.

Another important dimension of the school is its role in connecting academic work to public and governmental strategy. Hana Hašková’s profile notes her participation in the governmental working group on labour market and work-life balance and in the Committee on Work, Family and Private Life Reconciliation under the Government Council on Equality of Women and Men. This type of engagement is analytically important because it shows that the school has become part of the Czech public-policy environment. It is not only producing academic critique from outside institutions; it is also shaping strategic thinking from within advisory and consultative frameworks. This does not mean that research is reduced to policy service. Rather, it means that sociological knowledge on gender inequality has achieved sufficient authority to enter formal policy processes. Such a role further strengthens the school’s public significance. It also confirms that gender sociology in Czechia is one of the discipline’s most practically consequential directions.

The school’s intellectual identity is also strengthened by its transdisciplinarity. The journal *Gender and Research* explicitly spans sociology, philosophy, political science, history, cultural studies, and other social sciences and humanities. This is not a sign of conceptual vagueness. In the Czech case, it has allowed the school to integrate feminist theory with empirical sociology, social-policy analysis, institutional research, and cultural critique. Such transdisciplinarity is especially useful in the study of gender, because gender relations are simultaneously institutional, symbolic, political, and embodied. The Czech school has used this broadness productively. It has not abandoned sociological rigour, but it has enriched sociology through feminist theory and neighbouring fields. As a result, it has become one of the main channels through which theoretical innovation has entered Czech sociology in the post-1993 period. In this sense, the school has modernised the discipline from within.

By 2025, the Czech school of gender sociology and feminist social theory can therefore be characterised by several interlocking strengths. It has a strong institutional base in the Institute of Sociology, a specialised and internationally visible journal, a second organisational centre in the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science, and a broad thematic range covering labour, care, family, reproduction, inequality, science, organisations, and crisis. It has contributed to the sociology of social citizenship, work-life balance, intersectionality,

academic governance, and digital labour. It has shown the value of feminist theory for interpreting both long-term structures and acute shocks. It has maintained strong European connections and participated in shaping gender-equality agendas in research and innovation. And it has combined scholarly depth with public and policy relevance. For all these reasons, it should be regarded as one of the most developed and theoretically consequential schools of contemporary Czech sociology.

The Czech School of Family Sociology, Life Course Studies, and Ageing Research

The Czech school of family sociology, life course studies, and ageing research is one of the most substantial and internally differentiated schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Its importance lies in the fact that it studies the social order not only through institutions such as the labour market, education, or politics, but through the trajectories of intimate life, partnership, parenthood, intergenerational relations, care, and old age. In the Czech case, this perspective has been especially productive because the social transformations after 1989 and after the establishment of the independent Czech Republic deeply reshaped family life without abolishing the structural constraints inherited from earlier decades. Czech sociologists therefore approached the family neither as a stable moral unit nor as a purely private matter, but as a key arena in which social inequalities, demographic shifts, policy changes, and cultural norms intersect. Over time, this school expanded further into the sociology of ageing, old age, and the life course, thereby linking childhood, adulthood, parenthood, care, and later life into one larger analytical horizon. This combination of family sociology, life-course studies, and ageing research gives the school unusual breadth. It enables Czech sociology to interpret the intimate and intergenerational structure of society with considerable nuance. By 2025, this school had become one of the strongest examples of how Czech sociology can connect private life to wider institutional and historical processes. In this respect, it is one of the most humanly immediate and analytically rich directions of the discipline.

Institutionally, the school is anchored in several mutually reinforcing centres. One important base lies in the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially through the Gender & Sociology department and through the work of Dana Hamplová in the Social Stratification department. Another major pole is Masaryk University in Brno, where the Centre for Research on Ageing explicitly defines itself as a working group within the Department of Sociology focused on age, ageing, and old age from a sociological perspective. The centre states that it has long been involved in the sociology of ageing, age discrimination, active ageing, and age mainstreaming, while also participating in research projects for national and international institutions. A further important institutional base is the Contemporary Czech Family branch of the Generations and Gender Programme at Masaryk University, coordinated by Martin Kreidl and developed into a broader Czech national cluster for family research. These institutional locations are not accidental. They show that this school is neither a single-department speciality nor a diffuse set of isolated interests. Rather, it forms a polycentric but coherent research formation linking Prague and Brno, family demography and critical sociology of care, and life-course analysis with social gerontology. This broad institutional ecology is one of the reasons the school has developed such thematic richness and durability.

A defining characteristic of the school is its life-course perspective. The project “Changes in partnership and family forms and arrangements from a life-course perspective” states explicitly that its aim is to explain structurally and institutionally based diversification and new norms concerning private-life arrangements, the combining of work and care, and the resulting needs and risks. This formulation is extremely revealing. It shows that Czech family sociology does not study the family as a static unit or one ideal type. Instead, it studies sequences, pathways, transitions, and changing forms of intimacy across the life course. Partnership, childbearing, parenthood, divorce, widowhood, caregiving, and old age are all seen as stages or turning points in evolving biographies rather than isolated statuses. This perspective is analytically powerful because it allows Czech sociologists to connect demographic events with institutional conditions and cultural expectations. It also makes visible the diversification of family life after socialism without treating diversity as a simple expression of individual freedom. The life-course approach therefore gives the school both sociological depth and historical sensitivity. It is one of the concepts through which this school differentiates itself from more static family research traditions.

One of the school’s strongest substantive contributions is the analysis of low fertility, childlessness, and one-child families. The Institute of Sociology project “Childlessness and one-child families: explaining the low fertility rate in the Czech Republic” states that it aimed to contribute to knowledge on the causes, experiences, and mechanisms underpinning sub-replacement fertility, using a mixed-method design that combined secondary analysis of quantitative life-history data with biographical interviews. This framing is especially important because it shows how the Czech school of family sociology moved beyond aggregate demographic indicators. It did not simply observe that fertility was low. It sought to explain low fertility through personal trajectories, constraints, expectations, and meanings. Childlessness and one-child families were treated not as anomalies but as analytically central manifestations of contemporary demographic change. This gave Czech sociology a more refined vocabulary for understanding reproduction in post-socialist society. It also allowed the school to connect fertility decisions to labour-market pressures, gender norms, partnership instability, and social-policy regimes. In doing so, the school helped transform demographic problems into sociological ones.

The study of childlessness in Czech sociology is especially important because it is not framed in a narrowly biomedical or moral way. Hana Hašková’s profile emphasises her focus on the links between intimate lives, reproduction, families, and the labour market and on the relationship between policies, discourses, and practices of care in historical and international perspective. This is precisely the analytical orientation that gave the Czech family school much of its strength. Reproduction is studied as a social process shaped by institutions, norms, labour regimes, and policy environments rather than as a private matter of preference alone. This approach makes it possible to connect childlessness to economic uncertainty, gendered divisions of labour, and broader transformations of partnership and parenthood. It also allows Czech sociology to place low fertility in the wider context of post-socialist and European family change. In this respect, the Czech school does not merely describe family decline or diversification. It investigates the structured conditions under which some family forms become more difficult, less desirable, or differently imagined than before. That sociological reframing is one of its most important achievements.

Another major feature of the school is its close attention to childcare, parenting, and the social organisation of parental expectations. The project “Diversity of childcare attitudes and

parenting practices: their sources and outcomes” states that it systematically explores variation in childcare attitudes and parenting practices in the Czech Republic, with a comparative perspective, and highlights the growing dominance of an “intensive parenting” model that places high demands on parents’ time and financial resources. This is a highly consequential line of inquiry. It shows that Czech family sociology has moved beyond counting births or marriages and into the analysis of parental cultures and the moral economy of childrearing. Intensive parenting is not simply a lifestyle choice. It is a socially stratified model that interacts with class resources, work demands, and institutional expectations. By studying it, the Czech school examines how contemporary family life becomes more demanding, more unequal, and more time-intensive. This line of work also links family sociology to the sociology of education, since parenting practices increasingly shape children’s educational trajectories and aspirations. In this respect, the school captures the family as a site where emotional, temporal, and material inequalities are actively reproduced.

The school is also particularly strong in analysing the relationship between work and family. The project “Work–Life Balance from the Perspective of Gender Relations and Social and Employer Policies of the Czech Republic” describes itself as a comprehensive study of the conditions for achieving work-life balance in Czech society, focusing on legislative, social, political, institutional, employer, and individual aspects of how individuals, couples, and families balance work and family obligations. This formulation is extremely important because it makes clear that work-family balance is not treated as a matter of personal time management alone. It is approached as a social-structural issue shaped by employment regimes, family policy, workplace culture, and the gender order. That approach gives the Czech school a great deal of explanatory power. It can connect macro-level policy arrangements to the daily realities of families and to the unequal burdens they carry. It also allows sociologists to examine how post-socialist transformation and later labour-market flexibilisation altered the practical possibility of combining paid work and care. This work-family perspective forms one of the central bridges between family sociology, gender sociology, and life-course studies in Czech sociology.

The work-family line also demonstrates the school’s ability to historicise contemporary family life. The publication page for “The Labour Market and Work-Life Balance in the Czech Republic in Historical Perspective” states that the chapter analyses the development of women’s position in the labour market and the conditions of work-life balance from the 1950s to the present, arguing that high female employment does not automatically imply emancipation and the fulfilment of women’s rights in a society built on a gender contract where work and care remain conflicting spheres. This argument is highly significant for the school as a whole. It means that family sociology in Czechia does not simply describe the family after socialism as if everything began anew in 1989. It studies work and care historically, tracing continuities and discontinuities across state socialism, postsocialism, and contemporary capitalism. That historical layering gives Czech family sociology unusual depth. It also prevents overly simplistic narratives about “traditional” versus “modern” family life. Instead, the school shows how different regimes of work and care leave long institutional and cultural after-effects that continue to shape intimate life.

Dana Hamplová occupies a particularly important position within this school because she links family behaviour to stratification, well-being, and social values. Her staff profile at the Institute of Sociology states that her research focuses on social stratification, family behaviours, well-being, and religion. This combination is analytically telling. It means that

family sociology in Czechia is not treated as a separate specialist enclave detached from general sociology. Through Hamplová's work, it remains directly connected to broader questions of social structure and subjective quality of life. This is a major strength of the Czech school. Family forms, partnership behaviour, and parenting are not analysed only as private choices. They are studied in relation to inequality, social expectations, and perceived well-being. Such an orientation helps explain why the Czech school has remained conceptually broader than a narrowly demographic or policy-oriented family research tradition. It also keeps the family firmly inside general sociological theory.

Hamplová's work further illustrates the school's ability to connect the family to both subjective and structural outcomes. Her publication page on "Partners' Relative Income and the Risk of Union Dissolution in Two Institutional Contexts" shows a concern with the relationship between economic arrangements inside couples and the stability of unions. Another publication page on gender differences in the link between family scholarly culture and parental educational aspirations demonstrates the intersection of family resources, educational expectations, and gender. Her article on social jetlag in the context of work and family shows the same principle in another domain: family life is studied as something deeply entangled with time structures, employment patterns, and everyday well-being. These examples are significant because they reveal the analytical breadth of the school. Family life is not isolated from income, work, educational aspiration, or bodily rhythms. It is understood as a node where multiple social forces intersect. This gives Czech family sociology both empirical richness and conceptual flexibility.

Martin Kreidl represents another major line within this school, namely family demography, partnership dynamics, and intergenerational relations approached through advanced demographic and survey-based methods. His staff profile at Masaryk University identifies him as a sociologist and social demographer studying family, life course, intergenerational relations, social inequality, and methods of sociological inquiry, and notes that he is the country coordinator of the Generations and Gender Programme. This is particularly important because it shows that the family school in Czech sociology is not only qualitative, interpretive, or policy-facing. It also has a strong demographic and methodological core. Kreidl's work helps anchor the school in comparative life-course demography and in internationally connected data infrastructures. His institutional role in the GGP makes this especially clear. Through him, Czech family sociology is directly linked to one of the major international research frameworks for studying generations, gender, family dynamics, and intergenerational support. This adds a significant comparative and infrastructural dimension to the school.

The Contemporary Czech Family branch of the Generations and Gender Programme is one of the school's most important recent achievements. The GGP-CZ pages state that the project has produced contemporary Czech family data documentation, runs a Czech national cluster for family research, and continues to develop new waves and modules of family-related survey infrastructure. The archive page on "Social Science Data on COVID-19 in Czechia and Slovakia" adds that Martin Kreidl introduced the Contemporary Czech Family project at the turn of 2020/2021 and that one of its findings was a considerable decline in relationship quality during the pandemic. These facts are analytically significant because they show how the school combines large-scale demographic survey research with timely analysis of crisis effects on intimate life. The family school in Czech sociology is therefore not only retrospective and explanatory. It is capable of tracking contemporary changes in family relations almost in real time. Such infrastructural capacity places it among the strongest life-course and family

research traditions in the region. It also shows how family sociology in Czechia has become both nationally grounded and internationally networked.

The school also addresses partnership diversity and the changing meaning of marriage. The GGP-related page on the stability of co-residential partnerships after first birth states that the study examined whether unmarried and married couples differed in stability and whether the sequence of marriage and childbirth affected union durability, finding that unmarried couples were less stable than married couples. This line of research is highly relevant because it reveals how the school studies partnerships not simply as status categories but as changing institutional arrangements with different levels of durability, legitimacy, and social meaning. Such work fits squarely into the life-course perspective because it treats partnership, cohabitation, marriage, and parenthood as linked transitions. It also connects Czech family sociology to wider European debates on the decline of marriage, the rise of cohabitation, and the changing “protective effect” of marriage. In the Czech context, these questions are particularly important because the school can compare post-1989 developments with earlier arrangements and examine how changing educational and gender structures reshape intimate commitments. This makes partnership sociology one of the most dynamic branches of the school.

Ageing research constitutes a major second pillar of this school. The Centre for Research on Ageing at Masaryk University explicitly describes itself as a working group in the Department of Sociology researching age, ageing, and old age from a sociological perspective, with long-term involvement in age discrimination, active ageing, and age mainstreaming. This institutional profile is highly significant because it confirms that ageing in Czech sociology is not a side theme folded occasionally into family or health research. It is a dedicated and visible field with its own organisational base, research themes, and external partnerships. The centre’s pages on ageism, ageing and everyday life, ageing and environment, and technologies and robotics show the breadth of the field. Ageing is studied as a social and cultural process, as a question of discrimination and exclusion, as a matter of place and environment, and as an issue shaped by technological change. This institutional concentration gives the ageing branch of the school a clear and durable identity. It also shows that Czech sociology of old age is much broader than classic demographic ageing research.

Jaroslava Hasmanová Marhánková represents one of the key intellectual directions within this ageing branch, especially through her work on active ageing. Her CV, available through the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University, lists the book *Aktivita jako projekt: Diskurz aktivního stárnutí a jeho odezvy v životech českých seniorů a seniorek*, as well as edited work on changing partnerships and various chapters on ageing and leisure. These materials are very revealing because they show that Czech ageing sociology is not only statistical or policy-oriented. It also critically analyses the discourse of active ageing itself, asking how such norms are received, interpreted, and lived by older people. This is an important contribution because the concept of active ageing often circulates as an unquestioned policy good. The Czech school, by contrast, studies it sociologically as a discourse, a moral demand, and a socially differentiated practice. In doing so, it adds critical depth to gerontological research. It also links ageing studies to cultural sociology and discourse analysis.

Lucie Vidovičová and Marcela Petrová Kafková have helped build another important line in the ageing branch: the sociology of ageism, discrimination, environment, and active ageing in concrete contexts. Vidovičová’s profile at Masaryk University states that her long-term

research interests include the sociology of ageing, age discrimination, active ageing, and social exclusion, and that she is also involved in research on environmental gerontology, social policy, labour market, and family. The Centre for Research on Ageing also notes that Marcela Petrová Kafková has long been involved in the sociology of ageing and social gerontology, focusing on active ageing, intergenerational relationships, and old age. These profiles matter because they show that Czech ageing sociology is highly attentive to social exclusion and discrimination rather than only to “successful” or “healthy” ageing. It studies not just how older people remain active, but how societies classify, marginalise, and spatially organise later life. This makes the ageing branch of the school more critical and more sociologically grounded than a purely policy-promotional gerontology would be.

The ageing branch is also notable for its sensitivity to place, rurality, and environment. The Centre for Research on Ageing’s publications and project pages show current work on ageing and the everyday life, ageing and environment, and ageing in rural areas as a mode of active ageing. This is an important line of development because it means that Czech sociology of ageing does not analyse old age in an abstracted social vacuum. It considers where ageing takes place, how food, housing, mobility, and environment shape later life, and how rural or unstable settings influence quality of life and care. Such work connects ageing research to local and regional sociology, environmental sociology, and socio-spatial analysis. It therefore broadens the family-and-life-course school in an especially productive way. Older age is treated not only as a demographic stage or a moral discourse but as an embodied and spatially situated social condition. This adds a further layer of realism and complexity to the school’s account of later life.

Intergenerational relations and care form one of the most important bridges between the family and ageing components of the school. The article “Caring for Elderly Parents: A New Commitment of the Third Age” explores elderly care in the Czech Republic from a life-course perspective, while publication pages on long-term family care and cash-for-care policies analyse care allowance, care responsibilities, and the monetary and relational organisation of support inside families. These works are highly significant because they show how the school links ageing to intergenerational obligations, gender, policy, and economic arrangements. Older age is not treated simply as a stage of decline. It is analysed through relations of dependence, solidarity, obligation, and the unequal distribution of care work. In the Czech context, where family care remains strongly emphasised and institutional care is often approached ambivalently, this research has strong public and sociological relevance. It also reinforces the life-course logic of the school: caring for elderly parents, for disabled children, and for other dependent family members are not separate issues but related manifestations of how care is organised across biographies and generations.

The school has also shown a strong ability to respond to crisis conditions. The GGP-CZ pages report work on family dynamics during Covid-19, while GGP-related news indicates that working from home intensified work-family conflicts, especially among men and parents of children under fifteen. The ageing centre’s project on “Seniors in Crises” similarly shows attention to the protection of the health and quality of life of older adults in unstable environments and emergency situations. These examples are important because they demonstrate that Czech family and ageing sociology is not confined to long-term historical or demographic analysis. It can also respond to acute shocks and examine how crisis redistributes care burdens, weakens partnership quality, and exposes vulnerabilities among older people and families. This responsiveness greatly strengthens the school’s contemporary

relevance. It shows that family and ageing research in Czech sociology has become one of the lenses through which broader social resilience and fragility can be studied. In this respect, the school contributes directly to the sociology of systemic risk in the 2020s.

By 2025, the Czech school of family sociology, life course studies, and ageing research had therefore become one of the most comprehensive and socially insightful schools in the discipline. It combines analysis of fertility, childlessness, parenting, work-family balance, partnership dynamics, intergenerational relations, care, active ageing, ageism, environment, and crisis. It is institutionally grounded in both Prague and Brno, methodologically diverse, and conceptually unified by its life-course perspective. It connects intimate life to public policy, labour markets, social rights, and long-term demographic change. It links the sociology of families to the sociology of ageing rather than treating them as unrelated fields. And it does all this while remaining attentive to gender, inequality, and social structure. For these reasons, it should be regarded as one of the most mature and analytically fertile schools of contemporary Czech sociology. It explains not only how Czech families and older people live, but how Czech society itself reproduces and transforms its intimate and intergenerational order.

The Czech School of Sociology of Religion, Secularisation, and Collective Memory

The Czech school of sociology of religion, secularisation, and collective memory occupies a special place within contemporary Czech sociology because it studies one of the most distinctive and internationally discussed features of Czech society: its unusually high level of secularisation, its weak attachment to institutional churches, and the complex cultural afterlife of religion in a society often described as one of the least religious in Europe. Yet the importance of this school lies precisely in the fact that it does not accept that formula at face value. Czech sociologists of religion have consistently shown that the Czech case cannot be reduced to simple irreligion, militant atheism, or the linear triumph of secular modernity. Instead, they have analysed Czech society as a historically specific configuration in which church membership, belief, practice, collective memory, national identity, and post-communist transformation interact in distinctive ways. This makes the school both nationally central and comparatively important. It is one of the places where Czech sociology speaks most directly to wider European debates on secularisation, pluralisation, lived religion, post-Christianity, and the social meaning of non-belief. By 2025, this school had become one of the most recognisable directions of Czech sociological thought. It had also broadened beyond classic sociology of religion into the analysis of memory, trauma, public history, and the cultural afterlife of religion. That widening is one of the reasons it deserves to be treated as a major school rather than a narrow specialty.

Institutionally, this school is more polycentric than some of the other Czech sociological schools. Its strongest research anchor within the Academy-based environment is the Economic and Religious Studies Department at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, whose official profile explicitly lists “religion and religiosity” among its central topics and names Zdeněk R. Nešpor as its head. At the university level, an important sociological centre is the Department of Sociology at Masaryk University, where Roman Vido’s profile and teaching record show a sustained focus on sociology of religion, secularisation, and

modernisation. Another major pole lies in Olomouc, where institutional evaluations explicitly identify Dušan Lužný as one of the most important Czech figures in the sociology of religion and describe him as having built an indispensable workplace in the domestic context. A further branch has developed in Plzeň, where Jan Váně and colleagues have linked sociology of religion to collective memory, local identity, prison religion, and religious communities. The result is not a single centralised school dominated by one institution. Rather, it is a networked school with a strong Prague-Academy core, a Brno comparative-theoretical line, an Olomouc research tradition shaped strongly by Lužný, and a Plzeň branch oriented toward memory and qualitative-cultural analysis. This polycentricity is one of the school's strengths. It has allowed the Czech sociology of religion to develop in several directions at once without losing thematic coherence.

Historically, the school is important because it has combined long disciplinary memory with a very strong post-1989 reconstruction. Zdeněk R. Nešpor's review "Fifty Years of Czech Sociology of Religion in the Pages of Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review" shows that the Czech sociology of religion has a much longer history than the post-communist period alone, but also that its growth after 1989 was particularly marked and diversified. That review is important because it demonstrates that Czech sociology of religion is not simply a late post-socialist import or a secondary offshoot of theology or religious studies. It is a field with its own domestic history, its own internal debates, and its own publication tradition. At the same time, the review also implies that the field underwent a major transformation in the post-communist era, especially through the work of figures such as Zdeněk R. Nešpor, Dušan Lužný, and Roman Vido. This means that the school combines inherited disciplinary memory with an unmistakably contemporary agenda. It is both historical and new. This combination has helped it become one of the most intellectually self-aware branches of Czech sociology.

One of the school's foundational achievements was its early and systematic engagement with the secularisation debate. Dušan Lužný and Jolana Navrátilová's 2001 article "Religion and Secularisation in the Czech Republic" became one of the seminal texts in this regard. The article framed Czech society in relation to broader secularisation theory, while at the same time showing that the Czech case required more careful sociological interpretation than simple labels could provide. Its significance lies in the fact that it put Czech sociology of religion into direct dialogue with one of the core debates of modern sociology: whether modernisation leads to declining religion, transformation of religion, or a more complex restructuring of belief and practice. By analysing the Czech Republic through this lens, Lužný and Navrátilová helped establish the school's analytical tone. It would not be a school of celebratory descriptions of "atheist Czechia," but a school of theoretically informed empirical scrutiny. In this sense, the secularisation question became the school's entry point into both national self-interpretation and wider European sociology. It gave the field its first major conceptual axis in the post-1993 era.

Zdeněk R. Nešpor's 2004 article "Religious Processes in Contemporary Czech Society" deepened and refined this initial framing. Rather than treating religion in binary terms of presence or absence, belief or non-belief, it analysed ongoing processes of change inside Czech religiosity, including pluralisation, privatisation, institutional weakening, and the changing cultural location of religion. This was a major conceptual advance because it allowed Czech sociology to move away from overly blunt statistical language and toward a processual understanding of religious transformation. It also linked the Czech case to wider theoretical themes such as invisible religion, individualisation, and the complex fate of institutional

religion in modern societies. The article helped show that a society can be deeply secularised in one sense and yet still shaped by religious residues, symbolic forms, and unstable modes of belonging in another. This more differentiated analysis became one of the hallmarks of the school. It also strengthened its credibility internationally, because it demonstrated that Czech sociologists were contributing to theory rather than merely supplying an exotic empirical case. Through Nešpor, the school acquired one of its strongest conceptual voices.

A particularly important step in the development of the school came with the challenge to the very notion that the Czech Republic is simply “the least religious country in the world”. Olga Nešporová and Zdeněk R. Nešpor’s influential 2009 article “Religion: An Unsolved Problem for the Modern Czech Nation” explicitly questioned both the international cliché and the self-identification of many Czechs with radical irreligiosity. Their argument was not that Czech society is secretly religious in a conventional sense. Rather, it was that religion in the Czech context remains an unresolved, culturally and nationally mediated problem rather than a settled absence. This was a highly important contribution because it shifted the debate from quantification alone to the level of national self-understanding, symbolic boundary-making, and unresolved historical legacies. It connected sociology of religion to sociology of the nation. It also helped explain why religion can remain socially important even where church participation is weak and public discourse often treats religion as marginal. This was one of the clearest examples of how the Czech school turned a seemingly simple empirical claim into a complex sociological object.

The school’s originality also lies in its capacity to reinterpret Czech secularity historically and comparatively. Petr Pabian’s “Alternative Story of Czech Secularity” is especially important here because it questions older narratives of Czech exceptionalism and situates Czech secularisation within longer historical-comparative frames rather than treating it as an obvious national destiny. This intervention matters because it shows that the school is not satisfied even with its own earlier formulas. It continues to re-examine the foundations of the Czech secularisation story. Such internal critical revision is a sign of maturity. It prevents the field from hardening into doctrinal repetition and keeps it open to new theoretical and comparative perspectives. The Czech school of religion and secularisation has therefore developed not only through accumulating studies, but through repeated reinterpretation of its core object. This reflexive quality is one of its strongest intellectual features. It makes the school both empirically grounded and historiographically alert.

Roman Vido’s work adds another important dimension to this school, especially through his sustained engagement with secularisation theory, religion in modern Europe, and the sociology of modernisation. His profile and teaching record at Masaryk University show repeated courses and work on “Sociology of modernization: religion and secularism”, “Sociology of religion”, and related themes, while his publications page indicates continuing work on secularisation and religion in Europe. This is significant because it demonstrates that the Brno branch of the school is not confined to local empirical studies. It maintains strong conceptual dialogue with general sociological theory. In Vido’s case, the Czech school of religion remains explicitly tied to classical and contemporary debates on modernity, secularisation, and social integration. That theoretical continuity is important for the field as a whole. It helps maintain a strong link between Czech empirical material and broader European sociology. Without such figures, the school might have become empirically rich but theoretically thin. Instead, it has preserved a clear analytical engagement with sociology’s large conceptual questions.

Dušan Lužný represents another decisive current within the school, particularly through his work on secularisation, non-institutional religiosity, religious communities, and alternative forms of belief. His official profile at Palacký University lists works such as “Komunita jako nová naděje? Náboženské (ne)institucionalizované komunity optikou sociologie náboženství” and “Konec velkého vyprávění? Sekularizace v sociologické perspektivě”. This profile, together with the Olomouc self-evaluation materials, makes clear that Lužný is considered one of the most prominent personalities of Czech sociology of religion and that his influence extends beyond sociology narrowly understood. This is important because Lužný helped broaden the school beyond church statistics and classic secularisation debates. He paid close attention to religious communities, alternative religiosities, and the reconfiguration of belonging in a society where institutional religion had weakened. That broadened the Czech school’s empirical range and prevented it from reducing religion to church decline alone. Through Lužný, the school became more attentive to how religion persists, mutates, and reorganises itself beyond its most conventional forms. This is one of the reasons the Olomouc line remains so important within the wider Czech field.

The sociology of religion in Czechia has also been notable for its capacity to move from abstract secularisation debates to concrete institutional and lived settings. Olga Nešporová’s work on funeral practices, death, and afterlife attitudes is a strong example of this. Her 2007 article on believers’ perspectives on death and funeral practices in the Czech Republic studied how deep-rooted taboos around death coexist with specific patterns of belief and ritual practice in a highly secularised context. This matters because it shows that the school does not study religion only through explicit doctrinal affiliation or survey declarations. It also investigates how religious and quasi-religious meanings remain embedded in rites of passage, moral attitudes, and culturally significant practices. Such research broadens the sociology of religion into the sociology of ritual, mortality, and symbolic order. It also makes the Czech case particularly interesting, because funeral practices can reveal latent religious or cultural forms that census categories do not capture well. This line of work contributes to the school’s sensitivity to the indirect and socially embedded presence of religion. It is one of the ways the school has moved beyond simple models of belief versus unbelief.

A similar expansion is visible in more recent studies of hospital chaplaincy and religion in public institutions. The 2022 article on the self-perception of Czech hospital chaplains examined a relatively understudied topic in the Czech context and thereby demonstrated that religion in contemporary Czechia is not confined to churches or private spirituality. It also appears in professional care settings, in the moral infrastructure of institutions, and in forms of support addressed to people who may not themselves practise religion. This is an important contribution because it complicates the image of Czech religion as purely residual or culturally invisible. It suggests that religion can remain publicly relevant in specialised and socially legitimised institutional forms even where general church-going is low. Such work also connects sociology of religion with medical sociology and the sociology of professions. It shows that the Czech school is capable of analysing religion as a living social practice in contemporary institutions rather than only as a declining inheritance. This institutional turn adds another layer of realism and present-day relevance to the school.

One of the most interesting developments of the school in the 2010s and 2020s has been the emergence of a memory-oriented branch. Here, the school increasingly overlaps with collective-memory studies, local identity research, and historical sociology. This is especially visible in work from Plzeň and Olomouc. The Plzeň sociology pages and working-paper

materials show Jan Váně and colleagues linking religion to regional identity, post-Sudetenland memory, and the social transmission of religious meanings. The working paper on the Tachov region and its religious memory is especially telling because it studies religious memory in a territory marked by forced population replacement, historical rupture, and weak religious continuity. This is an important move for Czech sociology of religion. It shows that religion is not only a matter of current belief and practice but also of interrupted memory, local historical loss, and symbolic reconstruction. The school thereby enters a much richer terrain in which secularisation and collective memory are deeply intertwined. In such contexts, the weakness of present-day religion cannot be understood apart from the destruction and partial reassembly of religious memory.

Theoretical support for this memory turn is strengthened by the broader Czech sociology of collective memory. Jiří Šubrt's article "Collective Memory: A Note on a Legend" and CVVM materials on plurality of memory and the communist past show that collective memory is an established sociological field in Czechia rather than a purely imported mnemonic fashion. This broader memory sociology is important for the religion school because it supplies conceptual tools for analysing the transmission, rupture, and reinterpretation of religious meanings across generations and historical breaks. Czech sociology of religion thus increasingly draws on memory theory not as an ornament but as a genuine explanatory resource. That is particularly valuable in a society where religious institutions were profoundly disrupted by communism and where post-1989 developments cannot be fully understood without attention to what was forgotten, silenced, or symbolically displaced. The incorporation of collective memory therefore deepens the school analytically. It also allows it to connect religious decline with national history, trauma, and regional experience. This is one of the most important intellectual developments of the school in recent years.

The Plzeň and Olomouc branches of this memory-oriented line are especially notable because they combine theory with innovative methodology. František Kalvas's profile in Plzeň explicitly states that he researches religious collective memory and uses methodologies such as multi-agent modelling, survey-data analysis, and Q-methodology. Conference materials and publication listings further show work on mapping the current form of Czech religious collective memory and modelling religious memory as a process. Patrik Polášek's profiles and dissertation listings at Palacký University likewise show research on the production and reproduction of religious collective memory in Czech rural environments and on religious collective memory and trauma in a post-communist country. These developments are highly significant. They show that the memory branch of the school is not just theoretically suggestive; it is becoming methodologically organised and empirically specific. It investigates transmission across generations, the modelling of memory processes, and the relationship between local history and present-day religious orientations. This is precisely the kind of focused cumulative work through which an emerging branch becomes a stable part of a school.

The school also connects religion to nationhood and public history in more general ways. Nešporová and Nešpor's 2009 article already framed religion as an unresolved problem for the modern Czech nation, and subsequent work on church restitution, memory, and state-church relations has extended this issue into the sociology of public controversies. The 2023 article on the restitution of church property in the Czech Republic is particularly important because it analyses not only legal or institutional processes but the discursive dimension of the long public debate. This demonstrates that Czech sociology of religion does not treat church-state

relations as a purely juridical matter. It studies how these relations are discussed, politicised, depoliticised, and symbolically framed in public life. Such work is valuable because restitution debates in Czechia are inseparable from wider social memory about communism, church power, historical injustice, and the place of religion in the nation. Through this line, the school moves from sociology of religion toward public-memory sociology and political discourse analysis. That expansion further confirms its contemporary vitality.

Another important achievement of the school is its willingness to examine the social forms of non-belief itself. Works such as the discussion around Czech non-affiliation and the article on people who did not declare denominational belonging in the census indicate that the school has not treated non-belief as a residual category unworthy of sociological analysis. On the contrary, it has increasingly examined the internal heterogeneity of the “non-religious”, including apatheists, hidden believers, culturally Christian but institutionally detached populations, and other ambiguous positions. This is highly significant because in the Czech case the non-religious are not a small marginal minority. They are a central part of the social structure. A mature sociology of religion in Czechia therefore had to become, in part, a sociology of non-religion and weak affiliation. The school has gradually moved in this direction. In doing so, it has contributed to broader international debates about secularity, post-Christian identity, and the social forms of indifference. It is precisely in such analyses that the Czech case becomes globally interesting.

The school’s relationship to religious studies is also sociologically important. Czech sociology of religion does not exist in isolation from religionistika, and this interdisciplinarity is both a strength and a source of productive tension. Sources from Masaryk University and Palacký University show significant overlap between sociological, anthropological, and religious-studies approaches to religion. Dušan Lužný, for example, stands at the intersection of sociology and broader religion-related scholarship, while Roman Vido’s work and teaching at a sociology department keep the sociological identity of the field explicit. This means the Czech school is not organised as a closed disciplinary enclave. It benefits from proximity to the study of religions, anthropology, memory studies, and historical sociology. That broadness helps explain its conceptual richness. At the same time, the continuing presence of clearly sociological questions—modernisation, institutions, identity, inequality, memory, and public legitimacy—ensures that the school remains recognisably sociological rather than dissolving into undifferentiated interdisciplinarity. This balance is one of its major strengths.

By 2025, the Czech school of sociology of religion, secularisation, and collective memory can therefore be characterised by several interconnected strengths. It has a strong Academy-based institutional core in Economic and Religious Studies, a theoretically active Brno line around secularisation and modernity, an influential Olomouc tradition shaped by Dušan Lužný, and a growing Plzeň-Olomouc memory-oriented branch focused on religious collective memory, trauma, and local identity. It has made major contributions to the secularisation debate, challenged simplistic claims about Czech irreligion, studied ritual and lived religion, analysed church-state controversies, and increasingly integrated collective-memory perspectives into the sociology of religion. It has also developed outward-looking relevance because the Czech case remains one of the most analytically interesting laboratories for studying weak institutional religion, strong secularity, and unresolved religious memory in Europe. The school’s lasting value lies in precisely this combination: it interprets Czech society through religion, but it also uses the Czech case to reinterpret religion sociologically. For these reasons, it should be regarded as one of the most original and intellectually fertile schools of

contemporary Czech sociology. It explains not only the decline of religion, but also the social persistence of memory, identity, and symbolic forms in a deeply secular society.

The Czech School of Housing Studies, Urban Sociology, and Socio-Spatial Differentiation

The Czech school of housing studies, urban sociology, and socio-spatial differentiation is one of the most practically consequential and conceptually distinctive schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Its importance lies in the fact that it transformed housing from a narrowly technical or policy-administrative issue into a major sociological object through which inequality, intergenerational dependence, market transformation, local development, and social exclusion can be analysed together. In the Czech context this move was especially significant because the post-socialist transformation profoundly altered property regimes, rental markets, restitution patterns, and the symbolic status of homeownership. Housing therefore became a key site where the social consequences of postsocialist restructuring could be observed with unusual clarity. At the same time, the school developed a broader spatial imagination, linking housing to metropolitan development, suburbanisation, regional differentiation, internal peripheries, and the uneven distribution of life chances across urban and rural settings. By 2025, this school had become one of the strongest examples of how Czech sociology connects material living conditions to general social theory. It is also one of the clearest cases where Czech sociology has combined policy relevance, methodological sophistication, and international visibility. That combination makes it one of the discipline's most mature and publicly significant directions.

Institutionally, the school rests above all on two strongly profiled departments within the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences: Socioeconomics of Housing and Local and Regional Studies. The Local and Regional Studies department states that it focuses on local and regional aspects of social dynamics, the spatial structure of society, and phenomena intersecting sociological, geographical, and political research, with long-term interests including social and spatial inequalities, public administration and urban, municipal, and regional planning, identity and the sociocultural environment, environmental aspects of social processes, and mobility and migration. The Socioeconomics of Housing department, through its staff pages and project descriptions, presents itself as a specialised unit dealing with housing affordability, housing finance, social housing, housing inequalities, housing wealth, homelessness, housing financialisation, and the social mechanisms shaping housing choices. Together these two departments give the school both a strong housing-specific base and a broader socio-spatial and urban-regional frame. This dual structure is highly important. It means that Czech sociology does not study housing in isolation from wider territorial processes, and it does not analyse regions or localities without attention to housing and material conditions. The school is therefore institutionally configured around the interaction between dwelling, place, and inequality. That configuration is one of its defining strengths.

A particularly notable feature of this school is its explicit effort to build a bridge between sociology and economics in housing research. The current project “Pragmatic Socioeconomics: a new bridge between sociology and economics in housing studies” argues that housing price trends and their volatility have become major determinants of wealth,

social, intergenerational, and spatial inequalities, yet mainstream housing economics has often failed to capture important social factors behind those dynamics. This formulation is analytically very significant. It shows that the Czech school does not simply borrow economic models and add sociological vocabulary around them. Rather, it proposes that markets themselves must be understood through social norms, expectations, institutions, family support, and historically sedimented housing cultures. Such an approach greatly enriches the sociology of housing. It also explains why the Czech housing field has been able to contribute both to social theory and to policy analysis. The notion of “pragmatic socioeconomics” is thus more than a project title: it summarises one of the school’s key ambitions, namely to interpret housing markets as socially embedded and socially productive rather than purely allocative mechanisms. In this sense, the Czech school has contributed to a more genuinely sociological theory of housing systems.

The school’s historical importance in Czech sociology stems from the way it treated the post-socialist housing transformation as one of the main engines of new inequality. Tomáš Kostecký’s article “Housing and Its Influence on the Development of Social Inequalities in the Post-Communist Czech Republic” made this point very clearly already in 2000, while later work by Martin Lux, Petr Sunega, and others developed it further. Housing in the Czech Republic was not simply another sector adapting to markets; it was a key domain in which restitution, privatisation, tenure change, and changing subsidy systems redistributed advantages and disadvantages. The school showed that the transformation of housing affected much more than where people lived. It reshaped wealth accumulation, security, access to urban opportunity, and the relation between generations. In doing so, it connected housing directly to the wider sociology of stratification. This was an important conceptual move because it established housing as part of the structure of social inequality rather than as a secondary lifestyle topic. The Czech school therefore played a major role in demonstrating that postsocialist inequality cannot be understood without taking housing seriously. This remains one of its foundational achievements.

Martin Lux and Petr Sunega have been especially important in shaping the housing branch of the school around the concept of the post-socialist “super-homeownership” regime. Their more recent publications page summarises the argument that housing wealth inequality is becoming an increasingly important dimension of social inequality in post-socialist super-homeownership countries, using the Czech Republic as a case study, and that housing wealth inequality is higher than income inequality and tends to grow over time because of spatially uneven house-price appreciation. Their 2020 article on “the traps of super-homeownership” further conceptualises housing regime change through path dependence. These arguments are crucial because they show how the school moved from the early sociology of post-communist housing transformation toward a more general theory of how postsocialist housing systems reproduce inequality. Homeownership is not treated as a universal solution or as the natural endpoint of housing modernisation. Instead, it is analysed as a socially and historically specific regime with strong distributive consequences. This conceptualisation has given Czech housing sociology a clear international profile. It also connects the Czech case to larger debates about asset-based welfare, wealth inequality, and generational closure.

A central strength of the school is its attention to the relationship between housing systems and intergenerational dependence. The publication “Housing wealth inequality, intergenerational transfers and young households in the super-homeownership system” states that intergenerational housing-related within-family resource transfers in Czechia

currently mitigate housing wealth inequality, but that discontinuation of such transfers would significantly increase inequality in the future, especially among young families. This is an analytically powerful finding. It shows that the Czech school of housing studies does not view housing inequality only through market prices or tenure categories. It also studies the family as a housing institution and intergenerational support as a mechanism that both compensates for and reproduces structural inequality. This insight is especially important in the Czech context, where homeownership has become a strong social norm and where access to owner-occupation increasingly depends on inherited assets or family backing. The school therefore connects housing to kinship, generation, and social reproduction in a very direct way. Such analysis has widened the field beyond classic urban sociology and into the broader sociology of family wealth and intergenerational inequality. This is one of the reasons the Czech housing school has become so intellectually significant.

Closely related to this is the school's sustained analysis of affordability. Staff pages and publication pages for Martin Lux, Petr Sunega, and Martina Mikeszová show repeated work on overcrowding, objective and subjective housing affordability, regional rental unaffordability, and affordability among young households. These studies matter because the Czech school does not treat affordability as a simple ratio between costs and incomes. It also examines subjective perception, the social meaning of adequacy, and the differentiated vulnerability of households under changing market conditions. Such work is especially important in a postsocialist housing system where official ownership rates and formal tenure categories can easily obscure real social strain. By combining objective indicators with subjective perceptions, the school offers a much more sociologically adequate account of housing stress. It thereby avoids both purely economistic and purely moralised accounts of the housing problem. In this respect, the Czech school has made a major methodological and substantive contribution to housing sociology. It has shown how affordability is lived, perceived, negotiated, and stratified.

The school has also been remarkably strong in social-housing research. The publication page for "Social housing in the Czech Republic: the change of a trend?" states that the article describes the history and recent development of the Czech social housing system and critically assesses attempts to address the country's lack of a social-housing strategy. This is significant because it illustrates a broader pattern in Czech housing sociology: the combination of historical reconstruction, policy critique, and sociological interpretation. Social housing is not analysed merely as a legal category or administrative tool. It is studied as a field in which welfare assumptions, local governance, housing-market structures, and social exclusion interact. This perspective has been especially important in a country where social housing has long remained underdeveloped and politically contested. The school's contribution lies in showing that the weakness of social housing is not only a policy gap but a sociological phenomenon linked to wider housing norms and state-society relations. By addressing this, Czech housing sociology has remained deeply relevant to public debate. It has also built an important bridge between critical housing studies and practical policy analysis.

Another major contribution of the school is its attention to the cultural and normative dimensions of housing behaviour. The project "The Application of Sociological Methods to Detect Housing Market Disequilibrium" states that it focuses on the influence of general social constructs and typical social interactions on housing preferences, expectations, and actual choices and aims to strengthen critical discourse in international housing research. Similarly, staff publication pages list work on "reasoning behind choices" and on social norms in the

housing-market behaviour of first-time buyers in the Czech Republic. These formulations are highly important because they demonstrate that the school does not reduce housing decisions to rational calculation. It studies the normative expectations, family influences, symbolic meanings, and inherited cultural dispositions that shape housing choices. This is one of the strongest ways in which the Czech school contributes to general sociology. It treats housing behaviour as socially embedded action. That makes it possible to explain why certain forms of tenure become socially normalised, why particular market responses occur, and why apparently irrational choices may in fact be socially rational within a given cultural setting. This gives the school an especially rich account of housing practices.

The school's urban-sociological branch is equally important. Tomáš Kostecký and Daniel Čermák's monograph "Metropolitan Areas in the Czech Republic: Definitions, Basic Characteristics, Patterns of Suburbanisation and Their Impact on Political Behaviour" was based on the International Metropolitan Observatory Project and developed criteria for delineating metropolitan areas in the Czech Republic, identifying Prague, Brno, Pilsen, and Ostrava as the four principal metropolitan areas. This work is highly significant because it shows that the Czech school of urban sociology was not satisfied with impressionistic discussion of "the city" or "the metropolis." It sought to define metropolitan areas systematically and to analyse suburbanisation as a social and political process. That methodological seriousness is one of the school's strengths. It also helps explain why later work on socio-spatial inequalities in metropolitan areas and on the political consequences of suburbanisation could develop in a cumulative fashion. By treating metropolitan restructuring as a central sociological problem, the school widened the housing field into a broader urban sociology of postsocialist development. This gave Czech sociology an important framework for understanding the changing geography of advantage and political behaviour around major cities.

This metropolitan and suburban line has been extended through later work on socio-spatial inequalities in Czech metropolitan areas. The publication page "Socio-Spatial Inequalities in the Czech Metropolitan Areas: The Case of Prague Metro" explicitly links metropolitan analysis to social inequalities and to governance in metropolitan areas. The significance of this is considerable. It shows that the school does not study urban growth simply as demographic expansion or market dynamism. It studies metropolitan development as the production of differentiated spatial positions within which access to housing, services, status, and political influence becomes unevenly distributed. This is one of the key ways in which urban sociology and stratification research are brought together in the Czech context. Metropolitan areas are analysed as social spaces, not merely administrative zones. This in turn enables Czech sociology to study how suburbanisation, inner-city change, and metropolitan governance reshape life chances. The urban branch of the school is therefore deeply connected to the broader sociology of inequality. It is not a separate urbanism detached from social structure.

The concept of reurbanisation has also played an important role in this school. The publication page on "The reurbanisation concept and its utility for contemporary research on post-socialist cities: the case of Prague" states that the paper evaluates the concept of reurbanisation in current Czech conditions and presents a specific understanding of reurbanisation as suburban-to-urban migration. This matters because it shows that Czech urban sociology does not simply adopt concepts developed elsewhere and apply them mechanically. It critically assesses and adapts them to the realities of post-socialist cities. Such reflexivity is a sign of maturity. It allows the school to use the Czech case not only to test theories but also to refine

them. In the case of Prague and other Czech cities, this means analysing urban change through the interplay of suburbanisation, selective return migration, housing-market pressures, and differentiated residential environments. The school thereby contributes to broader debates on postsocialist urbanism while preserving close empirical attention to Czech metropolitan realities. This balance between concept and case is one of its notable strengths.

The regional and rural branch of the school is no less important than the urban one. The Local and Regional Studies department states that one of its long-term interests is social and spatial inequalities, and Josef Bernard with Martin Šimon's work on internal peripheries gives this line especially strong expression. The publication page "Vnitřní periferie v Česku: Multidimenzionalita sociálního vyloučení ve venkovských oblastech" presents internal peripheries as multidimensional sites of social exclusion in rural Czechia. This is a major contribution because it prevents Czech sociology from equating spatial inequality with urban problems alone. The school shows that peripheral rural settings may concentrate multiple disadvantages related to infrastructure, employment, accessibility, and social exclusion. At the same time, this work is theoretically richer than a simple centre-periphery map. It focuses on the interaction between individual vulnerabilities and spatial context. This gives the Czech school of socio-spatial differentiation one of its most distinctive insights: place is not just where inequality happens, but part of how inequality is produced and experienced. That insight has become central to the school's wider regional sociology.

This rural-peripheral line has been strengthened by the concept of local or regional opportunity structures. Search results from the Institute's publication environment explicitly identify "Regional opportunity structures: A research agenda to link spatial and social inequalities in rural areas" as part of the department's output. This concept is extremely useful because it gives the school a framework for connecting local institutional context, social resources, labour opportunities, accessibility, and everyday strategies of coping with disadvantage. It therefore avoids two simplifications at once: it does not reduce regional inequality to macroeconomic indicators, and it does not individualise poverty as merely a failure of personal adaptation. Instead, it shows how local structures enable or constrain life chances. In Czech sociology, this has been especially fruitful because it allows the analysis of rural decline, internal peripheries, and "left-behind" places to be grounded in concrete social mechanisms. It also connects regional studies to current European debates on territorial resentment, populism, and regional divergence. In this way, the Czech school contributes both to national diagnosis and to broader comparative sociology.

Another key strength of this school is that it links socio-spatial differentiation to political sociology and governance. The Local and Regional Studies department explicitly includes public administration and urban, municipal, and regional planning among its main areas, and the metropolitan observatory work studied not just spatial patterns but also their impact on political behaviour. This is important because it prevents the school from becoming merely descriptive or cartographic. Space is analysed as politically constituted and politically consequential. Metropolitan governance, regional elites, municipal cooperation, and crisis governance in small municipalities all enter the field as questions of how territory and power interact. This broadens the scope of the school considerably. It means that housing and spatial differentiation are linked not only to social exclusion but also to state capacity, local democracy, and regional administration. In the Czech context, where municipal fragmentation and local government structures have long played a strong role, this connection is particularly

important. It helps explain why the school sits so productively between sociology, political research, and territorial studies.

The school has also been highly responsive to recent crises. Search results from the Institute's publication environment show work on how small municipalities in Czechia adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian refugee crisis and contributed to governance robustness. This is a valuable extension of the school because it demonstrates that local and regional sociology in Czechia is not restricted to long-term structural issues alone. It can also examine how different territorial units cope with sudden shocks, and how pre-existing inequalities in governance, communication, and institutional capacity shape crisis response. This adds a contemporary dimension to the socio-spatial school. It suggests that place matters not only for ordinary life chances but also for collective resilience under stress. Such work links the older concern with local opportunity structures and peripherality to the newer sociology of systemic risk. It also reinforces the public significance of the school. By 2025, Czech socio-spatial sociology had become one of the key lenses through which territorial resilience and vulnerability could be studied.

A further distinctive contribution of the housing branch is its attention to financialisation, debt, and collaborative forms of provision. Staff pages for Tomáš Hoření Samec identify research topics such as discourse analysis in the housing context, housing financialisation, and new forms of housing provision, including new co-operative housing and new municipal housing. Publication listings connected to Petr Kodenko Kubala and Hoření Samec include work on millennials' views of the urban housing affordability crisis, collaborative housing, and the dual responsabilisation of young adults in a housing crisis. This is an important development because it shows how the school has moved into some of the most contemporary issues of European housing sociology. It studies not only traditional tenures and welfare arrangements but also debt, financial subjectivity, generational moderation, and emergent alternatives to conventional provision. This gives the Czech school a strong contemporary edge. It is not simply describing a postsocialist legacy; it is analysing how that legacy intersects with present-day financialisation and generational housing distress. Such work greatly enriches the sociological study of housing in Czechia.

The journal *Critical Housing Analysis* has played an important role in consolidating the housing branch of this school. The Institute's "Journals published by the institute" page includes *Critical Housing Analysis*, and project pages explicitly refer to it as an international journal launched in connection with the housing-research environment at the Institute. Staff pages also show Martin Lux, Petr Sunega, and Martina Mikeszová as editors or review editors and list numerous articles in the journal by members of the housing department. This matters because it means that Czech housing sociology has not only produced research but also helped sustain an international publication platform for the field. The existence of such a platform strengthens the school's institutional identity, its international communication, and its ability to shape debate beyond the Czech national case. It also demonstrates that the housing branch is not merely a policy consultancy environment. It is a research school with its own visible scholarly outlet. That strengthens its claim to be one of the major schools of contemporary Czech sociology.

Methodologically, the school is notable for its range. It combines econometric modelling, microsimulation, survey research, qualitative interviews, discourse analysis, ethnographic sensitivity, and spatially informed social analysis. This is visible across project descriptions

and publication summaries, from the use of microsimulation in housing wealth and intergenerational-transfer research, to the mixed qualitative and quantitative methods of the housing-market disequilibrium project, to the metropolitan and peripheral studies drawing on regional and municipal-level data. Such methodological breadth is one of the school's major strengths. It allows Czech sociologists to study housing and spatial inequality both as structural phenomena and as lived social experiences. It also enables dialogue between critical and policy-oriented work. A school with only one method can easily become narrow; this one has remained plural without losing focus. Its methods are diverse, but its core object remains coherent: the social production of spatially and materially organised inequality. This coherence in diversity is a mark of maturity.

By 2025, the Czech school of housing studies, urban sociology, and socio-spatial differentiation had therefore become one of the strongest and most socially important schools in the discipline. It has shown that housing is a central mechanism of stratification, that the post-socialist homeownership regime generates its inequalities and dependencies, that metropolitan development and suburbanisation reshape political and social space, and that internal peripheries and local opportunity structures are crucial for understanding disadvantage in rural and regional settings. It has also built specialised institutional bases, sustained a visible publication platform, and developed a remarkable capacity to combine social theory, empirical research, and public relevance. The school's broader significance lies in the fact that it renders material conditions sociologically visible. It demonstrates that class, generation, policy, family support, territory, and governance converge in the spaces where people live. In doing so, it gives Czech sociology one of its clearest ways of explaining how inequality is built into everyday environments. For these reasons, this school should be regarded as one of the most original, mature, and practically consequential achievements of contemporary Czech sociological thought.

The Czech School of Migration Studies and the Sociology of Integration

The Czech school of migration studies and the sociology of integration has become one of the most dynamic and thematically expanding schools of contemporary Czech sociology because it addresses one of the most profound transformations of Czech society after 1989 and especially after 1993: the country's gradual transition from a predominantly emigration and transit space into an immigration-receiving society. In this process, Czech sociology was compelled to rethink not only the presence of foreigners as a demographic fact, but also the meaning of incorporation, labour-market segmentation, integration, exclusion, belonging, and public attitudes in a society that had long imagined itself as relatively homogeneous. The school therefore developed at the intersection of several broader lines of Czech sociology: post-socialist transformation, urban sociology, social inequality, family sociology, cultural sociology, and public-opinion research. Over time, it ceased to be a marginal or issue-specific field and became one of the principal ways in which Czech sociologists interpret contemporary change. What makes this school especially important is its internal diversity. It includes labour-migration studies, transnationalism, migrant families, public attitudes, the politics of integration, urban segregation, educational incorporation, and more recently refugee studies and crisis-related mobility. In that sense, the Czech migration school does not form a narrow

enclave. It is a broad and increasingly central field for understanding Czech society in the late post-socialist and contemporary periods.

Institutionally, the school is distinctly polycentric. One of its most important bases lies within the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially through the work of Yana Leontiyeva and the migration-related activities linked to the Czech Social Science Data Archive, the publication programme of the Institute, and the Local and Regional Studies department. Another important pole lies at the Institute of Sociological Studies of Charles University, where the Department of Sociology explicitly lists ethnicity, nationalism, migration, and urban space among its areas of special focus, while the public-policy environment at the same faculty provides a second line oriented towards migrant integration and governance. A third pole is Masaryk University, where the PhD profile in sociology explicitly includes migration, cultural studies of migration, and transnationalism, and where researchers such as Bernadette Nadya Jaworsky, Adéla Souralová, and Csaba Szaló have contributed to migration research through cultural sociology, kinship studies, and migration theory. This institutional spread is highly significant. It means that migration studies in Czech sociology are not concentrated in one method or one department. Instead, the school draws strength from the coexistence of policy-oriented, cultural-sociological, anthropological, demographic, and socio-spatial approaches. That plurality has helped make the field more resilient and conceptually richer.

One of the school's defining features is that it treats migration not only as movement across borders but as a long-term process of social incorporation. This is already clearly visible in the chapter "Foreigners in the Social System of the Czech Republic", which states that integration must be studied through the migrant's access to "core" institutions such as social security, healthcare, education, and the labour market. This formulation is crucial because it rejects both administrative minimalism and purely culturalist interpretations of integration. Migrants are not analysed only in terms of legal status or identity performance. They are studied through their relation to the major institutions that determine socio-economic status, opportunities, and available resources. That approach gave Czech migration sociology one of its central analytical premises: integration is multidimensional and institutionally structured. It is not reducible to cultural adaptation or to legal residence alone. This perspective has remained fundamental to the school and helps explain its continuing relevance to public sociology and policy analysis.

The labour-market branch of the school has been especially important in the Czech context because labour migration was one of the main forms through which immigration first became socially visible after socialism. Yana Leontiyeva's publication on the education-employment mismatch among Ukrainian migrants in the Czech Republic is exemplary here. The publication page states that the article examines labour migration from Ukraine and explores the degree to which Ukrainian labour migrants are able to utilise their skills on the Czech labour market. This is analytically very important because it shifts the focus from simple employment rates to the issue of de-qualification and the unequal recognition of migrants' human capital. It shows that labour-market integration is not exhausted by access to work. It must also be studied in terms of how migrants' educational and occupational capacities are translated, downgraded, or blocked in the destination society. In the Czech migration school, this line has become one of the main ways of connecting migration to social inequality. It also links the school to the broader Czech sociology of stratification.

A related achievement of the school is its attention to the ambivalent position between temporary migration and permanent settlement. Josef Bernard and Renáta Mikešová's influential article "The Socio-cultural Integration of Immigrants: In Between Temporary Migration and Permanent Settlement" is particularly important in this regard. The article, as reflected in the official journal page and associated metadata, examines the integration of Ukrainians and Vietnamese in the Czech Republic and shows that integration unfolds under conditions where settlement intentions, legality, labour-market roles, and social ties may remain unstable or mixed. This was a major conceptual advance because it challenged overly linear models of incorporation. Migrants were not treated as clearly temporary or clearly settled, but as positioned in-between. That in-between condition matters greatly in the Czech context, where labour migration often evolved into more durable forms of residence without always producing full institutional or socio-cultural incorporation. The Czech school thereby contributed to a more processual sociology of integration. It showed that integration is often suspended, partial, and socially uneven.

The family perspective has been another decisive contribution of this school. The Institute of Sociology monograph *Rodiny přistěhovalců II.* explicitly notes that immigration is approached there from a family perspective that had largely been overlooked in Czech migration research, and that the analysis focuses on immigrants from Ukraine, Vietnam, and Bulgaria through qualitative fieldwork in non-mixed families. This is highly significant because it broadens Czech migration sociology beyond labour-market entry, legal status, or public attitudes. It shows that family networks, household strategies, care, childrearing, and everyday life are central to understanding how migrants actually live in Czech society. The migration school thereby intersects directly with Czech family sociology and life-course studies. This is one of its strongest features. It prevents migration from being analysed only through institutional incorporation from above and instead shows how settlement, belonging, and adaptation are also organised through kinship and household relations. In the Czech case, that move has been especially fruitful in research on Vietnamese and Ukrainian migrants.

Adéla Souralová's work represents one of the most important expressions of this family-and-kinship branch. Her staff profile states that she specialises in migration, intergenerational relations, caregiving, and kinship, and that her research focuses on Vietnamese families in the Czech Republic, three-generation cohabitation, and relationships between grandchildren and grandparents. This is a major contribution because it demonstrates that migrant incorporation in Czechia is not only a question of labour or state policy but also of intergenerational family forms and caregiving arrangements. Vietnamese migration, in particular, has become one of the main empirical sites where Czech sociology studies family continuity, cultural transmission, and everyday coexistence under migration conditions. Such work also enriches migration studies conceptually. It brings kinship, care, temporality, and relationality into a field that could otherwise remain too focused on institutions or attitudes. Through this branch, the Czech migration school becomes more anthropological and microsociological without ceasing to be sociological. It is one of the clearest examples of productive dialogue between cultural sociology, migration studies, and family sociology in Czechia.

The school has also contributed significantly to the sociology of transnationalism. This is visible in the 2022 thematic issue on integration and transnationalism in *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* and especially in Luděk Jirka and Yana Leontiyeva's article on the example of student migration from Ukraine to the Czech Republic. The available journal and search materials show that this article discusses the variability and dynamics of integration and

transnationalism through the case of Ukrainian students and argues that these processes may be both antagonistic and synergetic depending on self-identification. This is a conceptually important intervention. It rejects the simplistic assumption that transnational ties necessarily hinder integration, but also refuses the opposite claim that they always facilitate it. In doing so, the Czech migration school enters a sophisticated international debate on the coexistence of multiple forms of belonging. It also shows that student migration is not only an educational phenomenon but a revealing case of identity formation and transnational positioning. This gives the school a stronger connection to contemporary European migration theory.

A similar point applies to the cultural-sociological branch of the school at Masaryk University. Bernadette Nadya Jaworsky's staff page states that her major publications include a book titled *A Critical Cultural Sociological Exploration of Attitudes toward Migration in Czechia: What Lies Beneath the Fear of the Thirteenth Migrant*, and it lists a series of migration-related projects from 2018 to 2022, including "The thirteenth immigrant? An in-depth exploration of the public perception of migration in the Czech Republic". This is highly revealing because it shows that Czech migration sociology is not confined to institutional integration or demographic incorporation. It also studies the symbolic and narrative structures through which migration is imagined, feared, and publicly debated. Jaworsky's work helps give the school a strong cultural-sociological dimension. Migration attitudes are approached not simply as survey responses but as meaning-making processes embedded in broader narratives of belonging, threat, normality, and the nation. This adds an important interpretive layer to the field. It also strengthens the school's theoretical diversity.

The importance of public attitudes in the Czech migration school cannot be overstated. The monograph *Postoje k imigrantům* explicitly presents itself as a study of attitudes toward migrants in Czech society, while also situating Czech respondents within an international context. The publication page notes that the topic is especially current because the foreign population in the Czech Republic had been growing rapidly. This line of work is important because migration in Czechia has often been politically salient even when everyday contact with migrants has been unevenly distributed. Public-attitude research therefore became one of the ways Czech sociologists could analyse the discrepancy between actual migration realities and public perception. It also connected migration studies to the already strong Czech traditions of public-opinion research and value studies. The school thereby acquired one of its most publicly visible branches. It could examine not only migrants and institutions, but also the host society's moral, emotional, and symbolic responses to growing diversity.

Recent work has deepened this public-attitudes line by moving beyond national averages and into local contexts. Ivana Rapoš Božič's article "'We Have Always Been like This': The Local Embeddedness of Migration Attitudes" is especially important here. The search materials show that the study analyses how city context shapes migration attitudes and that it is based on two Czech cities, Teplice and Vyšší Brod. This is a major contribution because it introduces a genuinely local turn into Czech migration sociology. Instead of assuming that anti-immigrant or pro-immigrant attitudes can be understood solely through national politics, it shows how local coexistence, the composition of migrant populations, and inherited local narratives shape public orientations. This is analytically valuable because it connects migration sociology to urban and local sociology. It also helps explain why attitudes in Czechia may vary in ways that large national surveys cannot capture adequately. In this branch, the migration school becomes distinctly socio-spatial and contextual.

This contextualisation of attitudes is further strengthened by work on the legitimacy of migration and asylum policy. The article “The Legitimacy of European Union Migration and Asylum Policy among the Czech Public”, by Jan Krotký and Bernadette Nadya Jaworsky, contributes to the analysis of how migration is evaluated not only as a social fact but as a matter of political legitimacy and supranational governance. The search results indicate that the article is based on a three-year study entitled “The thirteenth immigrant?” and carries the DOI 10.13060/csr.2023.003. This line is important because it demonstrates that Czech migration sociology is not limited to the sociology of migrants or host attitudes in a narrow sense. It also studies how migration becomes a problem of European legitimacy, sovereignty, and policy trust. In this respect, the school intersects strongly with political sociology and European studies. It examines migration as a key site where domestic public opinion, national identity, and EU governance interact. That makes the school particularly relevant to contemporary political sociology in Czechia.

The urban and socio-spatial branch of the school has become one of its strongest recent developments. The project “Residential segregation and mobility of foreign citizens: analysis of neighbourhoods, housing trajectories, and neighbourhood context” explicitly states that it examines residential segregation and mobility using innovative methods and previously unexplored data and that it aims to understand the effects of segregation on social inclusion. This is highly significant because it shows how migration studies in Czechia have been brought into close dialogue with the strong national school of housing studies and socio-spatial differentiation. Migrants are not studied only as workers, families, or policy subjects. They are also analysed as residents whose neighbourhood trajectories, spatial concentration, and housing conditions shape integration. This expands the meaning of integration itself. It becomes a spatially mediated process rather than merely a cultural or economic one. Such work has added a major new dimension to the Czech migration school and made it more visibly connected to current European urban sociology.

Martin Šimon and Ivana Křížková’s publication on measuring residential segregation of non-European migrants in Czechia provides one of the clearest examples of this development. The official publication page states that Czechia is the main immigrant-receiving country in the Eastern European post-socialist context and that the study compares Czech segregation patterns with those found in north-western European countries using an individualised scalable neighbourhood method. The conclusions reported on the page are particularly important: non-European migrants are less concentrated in Czechia at all scales, and large-scale neighbourhoods with considerable non-European concentration, known from other countries, are close to non-existent in Czechia. This is a major comparative contribution. It shows that Czechia can be understood as a new immigrant-receiving context with lower levels of large-scale segregation than are often observed in older western destinations. The Czech migration school thereby contributes to broader debates on segregation by showing that post-socialist immigrant destinations may follow different spatial patterns. It is an example of how Czech empirical work can refine European migration theory.

The same socio-spatial orientation is visible in work on Prague and the Central Bohemian region. Publication pages on the role of foreign migration in the changing socio-spatial differentiation of Prague and on residential segregation in Prague and the Central Bohemian region indicate a sustained interest in how the growing ethnic heterogeneity of urban populations is reflected in spatial distribution. This is sociologically important because Prague has functioned as the most important urban gateway for immigration in Czechia. The migration

school thus uses Prague as both an empirical laboratory and a conceptual site where new urban diversity, housing inequalities, and neighbourhood differentiation can be studied together. This work also helps to connect migration research with debates on postsocialist urban change. It suggests that urban migration patterns in Czechia cannot simply be read through western European models of immigrant concentration or through classic assimilationism. They have to be understood in relation to the housing regime, the distribution of rental markets, and the spatial structure of the post-socialist city. This gives Czech urban migration sociology a particularly distinctive profile.

The school also extends into the policy sphere in an unusually direct way. The article “Migration Integration in the Czech Republic: An Analysis of the Priorities the Country Has Set and Its Support for Them” examines the evolution of the concept of integration through a dataset of 3,061 projects implemented in Czechia between 2010 and 2019. According to the journal materials, the study shows that funding for migrant integration has increased since 2016 but that support is allocated very unevenly. This is a major contribution because it moves beyond abstract discussion of “integration policy” and analyses actual patterns of institutional support, priority-setting, and implementation. It also demonstrates that Czech migration sociology is capable of studying policy infrastructures empirically rather than only normatively. The result is a more realistic sociology of integration: one that examines not only declared goals but actual institutional backing. This line also helps explain why some dimensions of integration advance while others remain underdeveloped. It is one of the school’s strongest links to public policy analysis.

This policy-oriented direction is also visible in the MINTE project at Charles University. The project page states that it focuses especially on migrants, and particularly Ukrainians in refugee-like situations, in receiving countries and aims to develop workable integration policies for municipalities in the Czech Republic and Poland while also studying digital skills and communication. This is significant for several reasons. First, it shows that Czech migration sociology increasingly treats municipalities as important actors in integration rather than seeing integration as a purely national affair. Secondly, it links migration studies to digital communication and local governance, both of which have become more important in the 2020s. Thirdly, it demonstrates that the school is able to combine research, policy learning, and pedagogical outputs such as courses on international migration. In this respect, Czech migration sociology functions not just as an observer of integration but as a knowledge-producing partner in the shaping of local integration practice. That gives it unusual practical relevance.

The war in Ukraine and the refugee influx after 2022 gave the school a further new dimension. The Institute of Sociology publication page on “Mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia” states that the study screened Ukrainian war refugees for depression and anxiety and assessed problem recognition and help-seeking on a sample of 1,347 respondents. This is highly important because it shows that Czech migration sociology has expanded from labour migration and integration into refugee vulnerability, mental health, and support systems. It also demonstrates how the school intersects with medical sociology, public health, and crisis studies. In the 2020s, migration in Czechia could no longer be analysed only through labour and settlement. Forced migration, trauma, uncertainty, and the institutional treatment of refugees became central topics. The school adapted to this shift rapidly and convincingly. This responsiveness is one of the signs of its

maturity. It also reveals how migration studies have become one of the lenses through which Czech society understands its own crises and solidarities.

The same contemporary turn is visible in work on Ukrainian refugees' resilience and labour-market adaptation. The 2025 article "‘The Plan Is No Plan’: Ontological Security and Resilience of Ukrainian Refugees in the Czech Labour Market" analyses semistructured interviews with highly skilled Ukrainian refugees and focuses on ontological security and migration aspirations. This indicates an important conceptual broadening. The school is no longer concerned only with whether migrants find work or whether the public accepts them. It also studies how refugees orient themselves in radically disrupted futures, how they negotiate uncertainty, and how labour markets intersect with existential security. Such work is especially valuable because it brings together migration sociology, labour-market sociology, and the sociology of uncertainty. It also shows that the Czech school is able to respond quickly to new empirical realities while maintaining conceptual sophistication. This contemporary branch gives the school a stronger connection to the sociology of systemic risk and crisis.

By 2025, the Czech school of migration studies and the sociology of integration had therefore become one of the most varied and intellectually fertile schools of contemporary Czech sociology. It includes a labour-market branch focused on incorporation and mismatch, a family-and-kinship branch centred on Vietnamese and Ukrainian households, a transnational branch analysing mobile identifications, a cultural-sociological branch exploring fear, narratives, and belonging, a public-attitudes branch linked to CVVM-type traditions, a policy branch focused on integration frameworks and municipal practice, and a socio-spatial branch studying segregation, neighbourhood context, and urban diversification. More recently, it has also become one of the key fields through which Czech sociology analyses the consequences of the Ukrainian refugee crisis. What holds this diversity together is a shared concern with how migrants are positioned in Czech society and how Czech society redefines itself through migration. The school does not treat migration as an external add-on to national life. It treats it as one of the processes through which contemporary Czech society is being remade. That is why it now belongs among the major schools of Czech sociology rather than at its margins.

The Czech School of Public Opinion Research, Political Sociology, and Democratic Culture

The Czech school of public opinion research, political sociology, and democratic culture is one of the most publicly visible and institutionally distinctive schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Its central importance lies in the fact that it studies the relationship between society and politics not only through formal institutions, parties, and elections, but through attitudes, trust, political culture, civic participation, legitimacy, and the everyday evaluative relationship that citizens maintain with democracy itself. In the Czech case, this field acquired particular weight after 1989 and after the establishment of the independent Czech Republic in 1993, because democratic institutions had to be consolidated in a society still marked by the memory of state socialism, rapid socio-economic transformation, and new forms of stratification. The school therefore emerged at the point where sociology of transition, public-opinion research, and democratic theory converged. Over time, it expanded well beyond its original post-transition concerns and became one of the main ways Czech sociology interprets

elections, parties, turnout, trust, civic life, political values, and the symbolic assessment of democracy. By 2025, it had become a mature school with a strong institutional base, rich empirical infrastructure, and a durable presence in public debate. Its significance is enhanced by the fact that it provides a bridge between academic sociology and socially visible empirical monitoring. This gives it a role unlike that of most other Czech sociological schools. It is at once a research tradition, a public observatory, and a component of democratic self-description.

Institutionally, the school rests above all on two major pillars at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences: the Public Opinion Research Centre and the Department of Values and Politics. The Public Opinion Research Centre, CVVM, describes itself as a research department of the Institute of Sociology whose history goes back to 1946, when the Czechoslovak Public Opinion Research Institute operated within the Ministry of Information; the current centre was created in 2001 by transferring its predecessor, IVVM, from the Czech Statistical Office into the Institute of Sociology. This historical continuity is extremely important because it gives the Czech school of public-opinion research a much longer institutional memory than might be assumed from the post-1989 perspective alone. It also indicates that public-opinion research in Czechia has become firmly embedded inside an academic institution rather than remaining the preserve of private polling or administrative observation. Alongside CVVM, the Department of Values and Politics provides the school with a research platform focused on political systems, political parties, electoral behaviour, national identity, migration attitudes, corruption, trust, and political engagement. Together, these two institutional pillars create a school that is both empirically productive and theoretically organised. One produces regular and socially visible data flows; the other links them to broader political-sociological and value-oriented research agendas. Their coexistence is one of the main reasons the Czech school has such unusual depth and public presence.

The school is strengthened further by its close ties to university sociology, above all at Charles University. The Department of Sociology at the Institute of Sociological Studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences explicitly states that its research covers civil society, public opinion, social movements, social stratification, and social exclusion, with further emphases on nationalism, migration, urban space, and religiosity. This is important because it means that the school is not confined to Academy-based survey research or institutional political sociology. It also has a university branch where political culture, civic participation, and public life are linked to social theory, anthropology, and broader sociological reflection. The result is a field that is richer than a simple polling-and-elections framework. It includes the sociology of civil society, the sociology of participation, the study of collective actors, and the analysis of symbolic politics in everyday life. Such a profile greatly widens the school's analytical reach. It also ensures that public opinion is not treated merely as a set of percentages, but as a socially embedded phenomenon shaped by institutions, identities, and group experiences. In this way, the Charles University pole complements the Academy-based environment and contributes to the school's polycentric structure. The Czech political-sociological school thus combines regular measurement with broader sociological interpretation.

One of the defining features of the school is that it treats public opinion as a social phenomenon in its own right rather than as a derivative of electoral strategy or media commentary. The CVVM departmental profile explicitly states that, in addition to conducting regular omnibus surveys on political, economic, and other social topics, the department addresses methodology and general theory related to public opinion and public-opinion research, and that its researchers study public opinion as a social phenomenon within their

specialisations. This statement is of great analytical significance. It means that the Czech school does not understand opinion polling merely as a practical technique for recording preferences. It sees public opinion as an object of sociological inquiry that requires theoretical reflection, methodological discipline, and historical interpretation. This elevates the school above the level of applied survey work. It also explains why Czech public-opinion research has been able to produce academically relevant outputs rather than only media-oriented indicators. The school is therefore not simply a national pollster attached to sociology. It is a sociological tradition that uses public opinion to investigate deeper structures of trust, legitimacy, political engagement, and value orientation. This is one of its most important distinguishing features.

The methodological infrastructure of this school is unusually strong by Central European standards. CVVM's "About us" page explains that the Our Society Panel is built through randomly drawn addresses, uses stratified multi-stage sampling, follows standards comparable to foreign probabilistic online panels, and respects the principles of AAPOR, ESOMAR/WAPOR, and SIMAR. It also states that around twelve surveys per year are conducted on the panel, with omnibus questionnaires covering political, economic, and social topics, and that repeated questions are used to track change over time. This is highly significant because it means the school has institutionalised not only repetition but comparability and methodological reflexivity. A democratic-culture school without reliable, repeated, and professionally maintained data collection would remain conceptually ambitious but empirically weak. The Czech case is different. It possesses an organised and publicly visible infrastructure for tracing continuity and change in social attitudes. This allows sociologists to study democratic legitimacy, distrust, political alienation, moral panic, social cohesion, and crisis reactions with an empirical continuity that many fields lack. The Our Society Panel thus gives the school a temporal depth that reinforces its analytical authority.

Another crucial feature of the school is its historical consciousness. It does not study contemporary politics as if democratic culture began in 1993. On the contrary, its research repeatedly revisits the longer trajectories of political attitudes, including the communist period, the Prague Spring, the post-1989 transition, and the memory of regime change. Pat Lyons's work is especially important in this regard. The Institute's publication page for "Satisfied, sceptical or simply indifferent? Current public opinion toward the fall of communism in the Czech Republic" shows his sustained interest in how people evaluate the meaning of 1989 and the communist past. Likewise, his book-length study on attitudes during the Prague Spring, cited on the Institute's staff and publication pages, demonstrates a historical depth unusual for public-opinion research. This historical orientation matters because democratic culture in Czechia is shaped not only by current government performance but also by remembered reform attempts, disillusionment, post-communist expectations, and retrospective judgments of the socialist era. The school therefore combines attitude measurement with social memory. That makes it much richer than a merely contemporary political sociology. It also links it directly to broader Czech debates on legitimacy, transformation, and collective interpretation of the past.

The school's early post-1993 intellectual centre was the problem of democratic legitimacy. Klára Vlachová's influential study "The Legitimacy of Democracy and Trust in the Political Institutions in the Czech Republic" remains one of the foundational texts of the field. The article, as reflected in the journal materials and editorial introduction, addressed what kind of support democracy received, how Czech citizens assessed its development, and whether trust

in institutions contributed to democratic legitimacy. The editorial note to the issue highlighted these questions as “basic to Czech democracy”, and the article itself concluded that democratic legitimacy depended more on political culture than on institutional trust alone. This is analytically important because it established a central proposition of the Czech school: democracy must be studied not only as a formal regime but as a culturally embedded and socially evaluated order. The legitimacy of democracy is neither purely procedural nor purely performance-based. It is socially mediated through values, class, age, trust, and historical evaluation. This argument had lasting influence on the school because it tied political sociology to the sociology of values and social structure. It also gave Czech sociology one of its strongest contributions to post-communist democratic studies.

Zdenka Mansfeldová’s work added another important dimension to this legitimacy line by linking democratic values to political culture and civil society. Her publication page for “The Czech Republic: critical democrats and the persistence of democratic values” states that the chapter, based on World Values Survey data, describes support for democracy and autocracy, political involvement, confidence in institutions, and attitudes relevant to the ethos of political and civil community, while examining the hypothesis that Czech society maintained democratic values despite the communist regime. This is a highly significant formulation. It indicates that the Czech school did not frame the population simply as a blank slate waiting to learn democracy after 1989. Instead, it asked whether elements of democratic orientation persisted, even under authoritarian conditions, and how those elements could be activated or reconfigured in the new order. This gives the school a richer sociological understanding of democratic transition. Democracy is not reduced to institutional implantation; it is studied as a cultural and moral infrastructure with deeper social roots. Mansfeldová’s contribution also helped anchor the school in comparative democracy research and in the study of civil community. This made the Czech field more historically nuanced and less dependent on simplistic “before and after” narratives.

A closely related branch of the school concerns civic participation and the third sector. Petra Rakušanová’s chapter “Třetí sektor a občanská participace v České republice” describes the role of NGOs, the character of the third sector in the Czech Republic and its Central European context, the membership of non-governmental organisations, and the barriers facing the civil sector. This is an important contribution because it shows that the Czech school of public opinion and democratic culture does not stop at elections, parties, and state institutions. It also studies organised civil society as a crucial mediator between citizens and politics. In a post-communist society, where civic participation had to be rebuilt under conditions of institutional distrust and social fatigue, this line of work was especially significant. It helped explain how associations, NGOs, and civic groups function as sites of articulation, representation, and social learning. It also connected Czech political sociology to broader debates on participation and governance in the European Union and among new member states. Through this branch, the school widened from public-opinion sociology toward the sociology of associational life and civic infrastructure. That enlargement remains one of its key strengths.

The election-research branch of the school has been equally central. Lukáš Linek’s staff profile identifies his research focus as voting behaviour, political attitudes, political parties, and parliamentarism, while his teaching includes political sociology, voting behaviour, and public opinion. This profile encapsulates a major segment of the school. It is concerned with how citizens translate values, class positions, loyalties, and evaluations into concrete electoral

behaviour. The strength of this line is that it does not treat elections as mere institutional rituals. It studies them as moments in which broader social orientations are crystallised, transformed, or suspended. This allows Czech sociology to connect public-opinion research to theories of party systems, turnout, issue voting, and political representation. In the Czech case, this is especially important because post-communist democratic development involved rapid party-system change, fluctuating turnout, and repeated questions about the social anchoring of parties. Through researchers such as Linek, the school became one of the key sites for understanding the social basis of Czech electoral politics.

Linek's article on turnout in general elections is particularly revealing of the school's explanatory ambitions. The paper "Why Did Voter Turnout in the Czech General Elections Change between 1996 and 2010?" explicitly seeks to explain considerable variation in turnout over time. That framing matters because it shows that turnout is not treated as an inert background statistic, but as a sociological variable in its own right, shaped by political competition, issue salience, party mobilisation, voter engagement, and the changing relationship between citizens and politics. The Czech school thereby moves beyond a descriptive political sociology and into a sociology of participation mechanisms. It asks why people vote less or more, and what that reveals about democratic culture. Such work is highly valuable in a context where democratic legitimacy cannot be inferred automatically from institutional continuity. If turnout shifts substantially, sociology must explain why. The school's attention to turnout therefore deepens its overall analysis of political engagement and civic integration. It also strengthens the bridge between micro-level attitudes and macro-level democratic performance.

Pat Lyons and Lukáš Linek's joint work on party-system nationalisation adds another important branch to the school. Their study of nationalisation and non-uniform vote switching, as shown in the journal PDF and the author biographies, examines how voters relate to party politics across territorial contexts and links individual behaviour to the national structure of party competition. This is significant because it demonstrates that the Czech school of public opinion and political sociology is not limited to attitudes in the narrow sense. It also studies the territorial and systemic organisation of electoral politics. That widens the field considerably. It shows how opinion, turnout, and party competition intersect with the broader nationalisation of political space. This is especially important in a country where regional variation, political restructuring, and the changing role of parties have been key features of post-1989 democratic development. The school thereby acquires a stronger macro-political dimension without losing its sociological grounding in attitudes and participation. It can explain not only what citizens think, but how their behaviour helps structure the political system itself.

The public-opinion branch of the school has also produced a particularly valuable synthetic tradition. The Institute's publication page for *25 Years of Czech Democracy through the Eyes of the Public* explains that the volume presents the development of public opinion in relation to the political system and its actors in both domestic and foreign policy, and aims to map, in broad historical context, the processes characteristic of citizens' perception and evaluation of post-1989 transformation on the basis of CVVM surveys. This is a major achievement because it shows that the school is capable not only of producing individual survey-based articles, but also of constructing long synthetic narratives of democratic experience. Such works are crucial for the intellectual maturity of the field. They allow researchers to interpret separate fluctuations as part of a longer societal pattern. They also show how public-opinion research can become historical sociology of democracy in survey form. In Czech sociology, this

synthetic capability is one of the reasons the school has remained central. It does not merely produce data; it interprets democratic life across time. That makes it both publicly useful and academically durable.

Jiří Vinopal and Paulína Tabery represent another important development of the school: the broadening of democratic-culture analysis toward social trust, cohesion, and normative order. The publication page for *25 Years of Czech Democracy through the Eyes of the Public* lists both among its contributors, while the Public Opinion Research Centre profile situates their work inside a department that studies trust and social phenomena through public-opinion research. This matters because democratic culture is not reducible to parties and elections. It also includes trust in institutions, interpersonal trust, confidence in procedures, and broader attitudes toward social cooperation. The Czech school has become increasingly strong in this wider field. It analyses democratic life not only through formal politics, but through the social climate that sustains or undermines politics. This is one of the ways in which the school overlaps productively with the sociology of social cohesion. It is also one of the reasons it remained highly relevant in the crisis-ridden 2020s. Questions of trust and cohesion moved from the background to the centre of democratic analysis.

The article “The network structure of trust in the COVID-19 pandemic” is emblematic of this broader trust-oriented direction. The Institute’s publication page states explicitly that trust is considered an essential part of a democratic society and that the study uses social network analysis to examine relations between different types of trust during the coronavirus crisis, finding that institutions and actors directly involved in resolving the crisis, such as security institutions and medical professionals, occupied the centre of the trust network. This is an important contribution for two reasons. First, it shows that the Czech school of democratic culture has adapted to crisis conditions without abandoning its core concern with legitimacy and trust. Secondly, it demonstrates conceptual and methodological innovation: trust is analysed not only through isolated indicators but through network structure. Such work significantly broadens the school. It links political sociology to crisis sociology and to more complex modelling of attitudes. It also shows that democratic culture in Czechia is studied as something dynamic, relational, and situation-sensitive rather than fixed. This is one of the major ways the school renewed itself in the 2020s.

Public memory and the evaluation of 1989 form another important strand of this school. The publication page for Lyons and Bernardyová’s work on current public opinion toward the fall of communism shows that the school is deeply concerned with how citizens retrospectively evaluate the transformative moment that founded the contemporary regime. This is sociologically important because democratic culture is not only about trust in today’s institutions. It also depends on how the population understands the legitimacy, promises, and disappointments of the founding political break. In Czechia, where 1989 remains both a symbolic resource and a field of disillusionment, such retrospective evaluations matter enormously. They shape interpretations of democracy, reform, justice, and sovereignty. The school’s work in this area therefore connects public-opinion research to collective memory and political identity. It also helps explain why political attitudes in Czechia cannot be understood without reference to the meanings attached to the post-communist transformation itself. This memory-sensitive dimension is one of the reasons the school remains deeper than simple polling.

The Values and Politics Department gives the school a particularly broad agenda by linking public opinion to family, corruption, crime, identity, migration, and security. Its official profile states that it studies political systems, electoral behaviour, civic participation, trust in institutions, public engagement, corruption, family values, national identity, and attitudes towards migrants, and that it manages the European Social Survey in the Czech Republic while contributing to post-election research within the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and the European Election Study. This is a remarkable concentration of capacities. It means that the Czech school of political sociology is not narrow party sociology. It studies democratic culture across a broad spectrum of socially resonant themes. The management of ESS in the Czech Republic is especially important, because it links the school directly to one of the major comparative infrastructures of European social science. That gives Czech political sociology a consistent comparative dimension. It also allows Czech democratic culture to be interpreted against wider European patterns rather than in isolation. This combination of broad thematic scope and comparative infrastructure is one of the school's greatest strengths.

Another important feature of the school is its capacity to combine high public visibility with academic credibility. CVVM's "About us" page emphasises that its incorporation into a scientific institution guarantees high-quality professional background and credibility, and that academics, researchers, civil servants, and policymakers use its data to monitor social change. This matters because public-opinion research can easily become either academically shallow or publicly ignored. The Czech school has largely avoided both pitfalls. It has remained methodologically serious and institutionally embedded in the Academy, while also maintaining strong connections to journalists, public communication, and policy audiences. The archive of press releases from 1990 onwards and the transfer of data files to the Czech Social Science Data Archive further reinforce this role. This combination of openness and professionalism gives the school a special status within Czech sociology. It is one of the few schools whose outputs regularly circulate far beyond academia without being reduced to populist simplification. That is a major institutional achievement.

The school is also notable for its ability to connect political sociology to civil-society research without collapsing one into the other. The Charles University sociology profile includes civil society and social movements among its main research areas, while the Values and Politics and Mansfeldová-Rakušanová line adds work on participation, accountability, and the third sector. This matters because democratic culture in Czechia is not reducible to elections and opinion indicators. It also involves organised civic life, associational participation, mobilisation, and the broader ecology of citizen action. By studying these areas alongside voting, trust, and political values, the school maintains a richer understanding of democracy. It sees democracy as a social form sustained through multiple channels of participation and evaluation. This broadening also protects the school from an overly institutionalist bias. Politics is not just what happens in parliament or in government; it is also what happens in associations, campaigns, social movements, and everyday civic engagement. The Czech school of political sociology has benefited greatly from preserving this wider horizon.

By 2025, the Czech school of public opinion research, political sociology, and democratic culture had therefore become one of the most mature and publicly consequential schools of the national discipline. It had a long historical lineage through public-opinion research, a strong Academy-based infrastructure in CVVM and Values and Politics, an important university branch at Charles University, and a rich set of thematic concerns ranging from democratic legitimacy, trust, turnout, and party politics to civil society, political memory, identity, and

crisis governance. It combined survey infrastructure, comparative European embedding, theoretically informed research on legitimacy and values, and high public visibility. It also renewed itself over time by moving from classic transition-era questions about support for democracy toward more complex analyses of trust networks, memory of communism, and local embeddedness of migration-related politics. What holds these diverse strands together is a shared concern with how democracy is lived, evaluated, reproduced, doubted, and publicly narrated. In that sense, the school studies not politics alone, but the social conditions of politics. This is why it occupies such a central place in contemporary Czech sociology. It explains not only what Czech citizens think, but how democratic society understands itself through those thoughts.

The Czech School of Methodology, Survey Research, and Data Infrastructures

The Czech school of methodology, survey research, and data infrastructures occupies a special position in contemporary Czech sociology because it is not defined primarily by one substantive object such as family, housing, migration, or religion, but by the epistemic and organisational conditions that make all those fields possible. In other words, this school studies how sociological knowledge is produced, documented, standardised, evaluated, preserved, and reused. Its central importance lies in the fact that Czech sociology did not become mature only because it developed strong themes; it also became mature because it built an infrastructure of methods, archives, standards, survey designs, and data services capable of sustaining cumulative research. This is why the methodological school should not be seen as merely technical or auxiliary. It forms one of the hidden but decisive foundations of the entire discipline. By 2025, the Czech field had developed a remarkably dense methodological environment that included the Czech Social Science Data Archive, ESS-CZ, public-opinion survey infrastructures, data-management protocols, documentation standards, methodological publications, and increasingly reflexive practices of quality control and comparability. This school is therefore central to understanding why Czech sociology has been able to combine empirical breadth with international credibility. Without it, many of the other Czech sociological schools would remain analytically weaker and institutionally more fragile. For that reason, the methodological school deserves to be treated as one of the principal schools of contemporary Czech sociology.

Institutionally, the main organisational centre of this school is the Czech Social Science Data Archive, ČSDA, which is part of the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The archive's official profile states that it collects data files resulting from Czech sociological surveys, public-opinion polls, and international surveys involving Czech participation, while making these data accessible for academic research and education. Its independent archive site describes it even more broadly as an institution that acquires, stores, and makes available social-science research data over the long term and provides knowledge on how to search for data and work with them. These formulations are highly significant because they show that the archive is not simply a repository. It is a methodological and infrastructural centre that links data acquisition, documentation, preservation, dissemination, and pedagogical support. This organisational profile is crucial for the school as a whole. It means that Czech methodology

developed not only through isolated scholars writing about measurement or sampling, but also through a dedicated institution whose mission is to sustain the full life cycle of social data. The existence of such an institution sharply distinguishes a mature research system from a merely productive one. In the Czech case, methodological school-building has therefore been deeply institutional from the outset.

The historical development of ČSDA is one of the clearest signs that methodology and data stewardship became central to Czech sociology relatively early after 1989. The archive's own history states that a publicly accessible social-science data archive was first established at the Institute of Sociology in 1998 under the name Sociological Data Archive, that in 2001 it became a member of CESSDA and joined the international data-exchange system, and that in 2010 it was included in the Czech roadmap of large research infrastructures. The same page further states that when CESSDA was constituted as a distributed European research infrastructure in 2013, the Czech Republic became one of its founding members and ČSDA its national node and service provider. This timeline is analytically crucial. It shows that the Czech methodological school was not formed only through internal disciplinary need, but also through an early and sustained orientation towards European data-infrastructure integration. Czech sociology was thus building methodological capacity at the same time as it was entering comparative survey networks and international research standards. That dual movement made the field both nationally organised and transnationally compatible. It also gave methodological work a level of institutional visibility unusual for a medium-sized national sociology. By 2025, this development had become one of the main structural achievements of Czech social science.

The archive's role in contemporary Czech sociology goes significantly beyond the passive preservation of datasets. The official "Who we are" and "International cooperation" pages stress that ČSDA supports the secondary analysis of data, the development of standards and best practices, the strengthening of the basis for international comparative research, and the implementation of FAIR principles. Its "Condition of Use" and "Data access" pages likewise present data sharing not as a casual convenience but as a professionally regulated process linked to user accounts, citation requirements, and access conditions for research and teaching. These details are sociologically important because they show how the methodological school transformed the ethos of research itself. Data became something to be documented, preserved, cited, and reused under clear professional rules, rather than remaining an exhausted by-product of one project and one research team. This shift had major consequences for the discipline's cumulative capacity. It enabled replication, reanalysis, training, and broader scholarly circulation. It also normalised the idea that methodological quality includes what happens after fieldwork, namely the long-term organisation of data as a scientific resource. In this sense, the Czech methodological school has been a school of both epistemic discipline and institutional memory.

A particularly important feature of the school is its explicit investment in documentation standards and metadata quality. The project "The Implementation of the International Documentation Standard DDI and the New Technology for Management and Dissemination of the Data" states that its aim was to implement the Data Documentation Initiative, apply NESSTAR technology within the archive, and further integrate the Czech archive into international networks, especially CESSDA. The archive glossary explains that DDI is an international standard and methodology for describing the content, presentation, transport, and storage of dataset metadata in the social and behavioural sciences. These facts matter

because they show that Czech methodology did not stop at archiving raw data. It moved toward internationally standardised metadata architecture. This is one of the least visible but most decisive forms of disciplinary modernisation. Without high-quality metadata and shared documentation standards, archived data remain difficult to interpret, compare, and reuse. By investing early in DDI and NESSTAR, the Czech methodological school positioned itself within the international movement toward interoperable social-science data. That move significantly increased both the usability and the international legibility of Czech data resources. It also helped embed Czech methodology into the technical infrastructure of European social science.

Jindřich Krejčí has been one of the most important figures in shaping this school conceptually and institutionally. His official staff profile states that his main focus includes data management, social research infrastructure, methods of survey research, and research on data quality. The article “Access to Czech Social Survey Data” further shows how he approached the methodological field not only as a scholar but also as an organiser of access, comparability, and data services. The article explicitly presents practical information on sources of Czech social-survey data for researchers and data professionals and places Czech data access within a longer history affected by communism but renewed after 1989. This is significant because it indicates that Krejčí’s contribution lies not in one single method, but in the creation of a methodological culture. He has consistently linked survey practice, infrastructure, access, documentation, and quality. This broad role is important for understanding the Czech methodological school, because schools of this kind depend not only on statistical innovation but also on institutional brokerage. Through figures such as Krejčí, methodological thinking became embedded in the architecture of Czech sociology rather than remaining a marginal technical specialty.

Krejčí’s 2010 article “Approaching Quality in Survey Research: Towards a Comprehensive Perspective” is particularly important because it illustrates one of the core intellectual achievements of this school. According to the article’s summary on the journal page, one goal was to draw attention to the inappropriate treatment of survey-data quality issues in the social sciences, while another was to introduce the basic principles of contemporary approaches to survey quality. This is a highly significant methodological intervention. It shows that the Czech school has not reduced quality to representativeness or sampling error alone. Instead, it adopts a more comprehensive view in which questionnaire design, data processing, documentation, management, and the whole survey process matter. That broader quality paradigm is one of the hallmarks of mature survey methodology internationally, and its articulation within Czech sociology marks a major step in the discipline’s development. It also helps explain why the Czech field has been able to operate with increasing confidence in international comparative settings. A school that reflects critically on quality across the whole research process is much better prepared for cumulative and comparative work than one focused only on isolated technical stages. Krejčí’s intervention therefore became one of the methodological manifestos of this school.

The methodological school also advanced significantly through its explicit focus on data management as a substantive scholarly issue. Krejčí’s 2014 book *Introduction to the Management of Social Survey Data* is described on the Institute’s publication page as showing that data management is rarely treated as a separate subject in the methodology and practice of survey research, even though database construction, data processing, documentation, and other operations can fundamentally influence research results. The page adds that archiving

and open access to social-science data for secondary analysis have become highly important parts of scientific work, thereby increasing demands on professional data management. This formulation is highly instructive. It shows that the Czech methodological school helped turn data management from an invisible background activity into an object of explicit sociological-methodological reflection. That is a considerable achievement. It means that the school understands knowledge production not only at the point of fieldwork or analysis, but across the full technical and organisational chain that makes results possible and reproducible. In this respect, Czech methodology has contributed to the professionalisation of social science in a profound way. It has made the backstage of research visible, discussable, and governable.

Another important dimension of the school is its insistence on preserving both quantitative and qualitative data. While the Czech Social Science Data Archive is best known for quantitative survey data, the publication “Archiv MEDARD v roce 2006” and the archive’s “Our data” page show that MEDARD functions as an evolving stand-alone digital library of qualitative data from sociological and other social-science research. This is an important point because it demonstrates that the Czech methodological school is not equated with survey quantification alone. It also attends to qualitative preservation, documentation, and reuse. That broadens its epistemic profile considerably. A national methodological school that preserves only surveys tends to reproduce a narrow view of sociology. In the Czech case, the existence of MEDARD indicates a wider understanding of data as plural and of archival work as relevant across methodological traditions. This contributes to the school’s maturity and internal inclusiveness. It also strengthens the discipline’s capacity for mixed-method research and for long-term preservation of interpretive materials. Czech methodology thus became infrastructural across more than one epistemic style.

The school’s strength is also visible in its embedding in large comparative survey infrastructures. The official ESS project page states that the main aim of the relevant project was the creation of the Czech national node of ESS ERIC and the realisation of the fifth, sixth, and seventh rounds of the European Social Survey in the Czech Republic. The archive’s international-cooperation pages and related news show that ESS-CZ operates as part of the broader CSDA/ESS-CZ infrastructure and that Czechia has participated in the ESS from the beginning of the project in 2001. These facts are methodologically very important. They show that the Czech school of survey research is not nationally self-contained. It has become one of the mechanisms through which Czech sociology is inserted into standardised, academically driven, cross-national social surveys. This insertion has major consequences: it raises expectations about sampling, fieldwork, question design, comparability, and documentation. It also makes methodological learning cumulative, because Czech survey researchers must work within internationally coordinated frameworks rather than purely domestic habits. ESS participation is therefore not only comparative research; it is also a training ground for methodological modernisation. In this sense, the Czech methodological school and European comparative infrastructures have grown together.

The same applies to broader comparative-survey ecosystems such as ISSP and other international programmes. ČSDA’s official mission states that it supports Czech participation in international survey research programmes, while Krejčí’s 2002 and 2014 publications explicitly present data access and management as connected to comparative survey research and data sharing. These links matter because they have helped create a methodological culture in which Czech social data are not conceived as isolated national files, but as part of a wider comparative and reusable data ecosystem. Such a culture increases the discipline’s

analytical possibilities. It allows researchers to combine national specificity with cross-national testing, to build secondary analyses, and to assess comparability problems more systematically. It also has pedagogical value because students and early-career researchers learn to treat survey data as objects requiring harmonisation, metadata awareness, and comparative caution. In this respect, the Czech methodological school helped normalise a more internationally literate form of empirical sociology. That is one of its major contributions to the discipline as a whole. It built the technical habits needed for Czech sociology to function in European research space.

Public-opinion research is another major component of this school. CVVM's official profile states that it is a research department of the Institute of Sociology and that its history goes back to 1946, while its current form dates from 2001, when IVVM was transferred from the Czech Statistical Office to the Institute of Sociology. The profile also emphasises that the centre conducts regular omnibus surveys and addresses methodology and theory related to public-opinion research. This is highly significant because it shows that survey methodology in Czech sociology is not confined to academic archives and comparative-infrastructure work. It also has a highly visible public branch. CVVM functions as a place where methodological standards directly affect socially visible knowledge about politics, the economy, culture, migration, and public life. In the Czech case, that public role strengthens the methodological school rather than diluting it. It keeps methodological work connected to issues of interpretation, questionnaire design, trend comparability, and communication of uncertainty. A methodological school that remains embedded in public-opinion practice thereby gains both relevance and reflexive discipline. CVVM is one of the institutions through which that link has been stabilised.

The contemporary Our Society Probability Panel illustrates this especially clearly. CVVM's "About us" page explains that the panel is built through random sampling and stratified procedures and is designed to approximate the standards of high-quality probabilistic online panels abroad. The press releases from 2025 and 2026 further show that the centre repeatedly alerted users to a methodology change and explicitly warned that some newer results were not directly comparable with earlier series. This is an important methodological sign. It reveals a school that does not hide changes in measurement behind the illusion of seamless continuity. Instead, it foregrounds comparability limits and treats methodological change as something that must be communicated publicly and professionally. This kind of reflexive transparency is a mark of mature survey research. It shows that the Czech school of methodology is capable not only of building instruments but also of publicly acknowledging their limits and transitions. In an era of rapid changes in survey environments and response patterns, that kind of openness is especially valuable. It strengthens the credibility of the field rather than weakening it.

The school has also developed more specialised methodological innovations in the area of measurement error and measurement invariance. The archive tutorial by Johana Chylíková on acquiescent response style in confirmatory factor analysis and her staff and team profiles explicitly identify her as working in methodological research and data management within ČSDA. This is significant because it shows that the Czech methodological school includes more advanced psychometric and survey-measurement concerns, not just sampling and archiving. Chylíková's role indicates that the archive environment has become a site of methodological research in the full sense, including work on response styles, factor modelling, and validation problems. That is an important development for the discipline. It means that Czech survey methodology is not only operational but analytically self-critical. It studies the

quality and structure of survey responses themselves. Such work is essential for the credibility of comparative and longitudinal research, where measurement artefacts can seriously distort interpretation. The presence of this line within ČSDA demonstrates how the Czech school has moved into more advanced levels of methodological reflexivity.

Jiří Vinopal represents another important direction within this school, namely the development of methodological tools for substantive social measurement. His staff profile states that he has worked since 2001 as a research fellow and methodologist at CVVM, served as head of the department from 2004 to 2013, and lectures on sociological research methodology and public-opinion sociology. The publication pages on the quality-of-working-life instrument and on its measurement invariance over time are particularly revealing. They explain that a new tool was designed to measure quality of working life in the Czech Republic using standard large-scale questionnaire surveys and that later work tested the instrument's invariance between 2009 and 2019 to determine whether the results remained comparable despite changes in the questionnaire. This is a highly important contribution because it shows methodology as active instrument construction rather than passive data handling. The Czech school has thus contributed not only to general survey quality and data management, but also to the design, validation, and temporal comparability of complex social indicators. This broadens the meaning of methodological school-building considerably. It shows that methodological innovation in Czech sociology can emerge directly out of substantive research problems.

The quality-of-working-life line also illustrates another strong feature of this school: the integration of methodology with public-policy feedback. The project "Changes of working life quality" states that improving social and economic policy and public administration requires feedback systems, continuous evaluation, and modern methods, and that the project would provide tools for monitoring the value, importance, and satisfaction associated with work among the Czech population. This is important because it shows that methodology in Czech sociology is not cultivated as an abstract self-enclosed domain. It is also developed as a means for constructing better social indicators and more policy-relevant measurements. Such work strengthens the discipline's public role while preserving methodological rigour. It also shows how methodological innovations can diffuse into wider applied sociology without being reduced to consultancy. In this respect, the Czech methodological school contributes not only to the internal quality of sociology but also to the quality of public knowledge about society. It is a school of instruments as much as a school of standards. And that instrumental capacity is one of the reasons the discipline as a whole has remained socially visible and usable.

Another important feature of the school is its orientation toward trusted preservation, long-term accessibility, and ethical data governance. The archive's depositing-data page states that ČSDA's status as a trusted archive is confirmed by its CoreTrustSeal certification, while other archive pages explain that data are accepted on the basis of formal agreements, stored in preservable formats, and prepared for long-term integrity and convertibility. These elements matter because methodological maturity today depends not only on better questionnaires and more advanced statistics, but also on responsible stewardship. A school that aspires to cumulative science must provide trustworthy preservation, controlled access, and clear ethical rules for reuse. The Czech methodological school has evidently recognised this. It institutionalised preservation policy, archive conditions, and deposit procedures as parts of research quality. This is another example of how the school made the infrastructural backstage of sociology visible and rule-governed. It also means that Czech data infrastructures are not

only technically present but normatively organised. That strengthens both user trust and the long-term durability of the field.

The school's wider significance becomes especially clear when one considers its effects on the whole discipline. Without robust archives, metadata standards, survey-quality frameworks, comparative-survey infrastructures, public-opinion panels, and instrument-validation practices, Czech sociology would have far weaker capacities in fields such as migration, education, political culture, crisis studies, housing, or family research. The methodological school therefore does not stand beside the other schools; it underpins them. It makes possible their cumulative and comparative ambitions. It also creates a common professional language across otherwise diverse substantive domains. When Czech sociologists work with ESS, archival datasets, CVVM series, or newly validated indicators, they are participating—often implicitly—in the work of this school. That gives it a foundational status inside the national discipline. It is one of the reasons Czech sociology has been able to combine thematic diversification with a relatively high level of empirical coherence. In structural terms, this methodological school is one of the hidden integrative mechanisms of the entire field.

By 2025, the Czech school of methodology, survey research, and data infrastructures could therefore be characterised by several interlocking strengths: a strong archival centre in ČSDA; deep integration into European infrastructures through CESSDA and ESS; explicit attention to data management, metadata, and long-term preservation; sustained work on survey quality and measurement error; a highly visible public-opinion research branch in CVVM; growing expertise in advanced validation and measurement invariance; and the ability to connect methodological work with substantive research and public policy. This school does not command attention through one spectacular theme. Its importance is subtler but, in many ways, more fundamental. It supplies the discipline with memory, comparability, reproducibility, and professional self-awareness. It has helped make Czech sociology cumulative rather than episodic, documented rather than merely productive, and internationally compatible rather than nationally enclosed. For these reasons, it should be regarded as one of the key schools of contemporary Czech sociology. It explains not a segment of society, but the disciplined conditions under which Czech sociology can explain society at all.

The Contemporary Czech Sociology of Risks, Crises, and Systemic Vulnerability

The contemporary Czech sociology of risks, crises, and systemic vulnerability is the newest of the principal schools of Czech sociology, but by 2025 it had already acquired enough institutional density, thematic coherence, and public visibility to be treated as a distinct direction in its own right. Its emergence reflects a major shift in the discipline's orientation. Earlier schools of Czech sociology were organised mainly around long-term structural themes such as stratification, education, housing, family, migration, or democratic culture. The new school does not replace those themes, but rather integrates them under conditions of intensified turbulence. Its central object is society under stress: society exposed to pandemics, war-related displacement, inflationary pressures, food insecurity, mental-health

strain, crisis communication failures, and cumulative institutional overload. What distinguishes this school is that it studies crises not as exceptional interruptions external to social order, but as events that reveal the underlying architecture of social vulnerability and resilience. It therefore occupies a synthetic position within contemporary Czech sociology. In this sense, it is less a narrow specialism than a new higher-order sociological formation built on the convergence of several older schools.

The rise of this school was made possible by the fact that Czech sociology entered the 2020s with unusually strong empirical and infrastructural capacities. It did not have to respond to Covid-19, the Ukrainian refugee crisis, or subsequent social pressures from scratch. On the contrary, it already possessed panel-survey infrastructures, public-opinion research institutions, archival facilities, and a strong tradition of inequality analysis. What changed in the early 2020s was not the existence of sociological expertise, but the way in which this expertise was reassembled around the study of systemic threats. The pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the broader sense of social insecurity created a new object for Czech sociology: not simply this or that problem, but the interaction of problems across institutions, territories, and groups. The discipline therefore became more explicitly concerned with resilience, robustness, adaptation, vulnerability, and social response under conditions of uncertainty. This marks a real shift in sociological imagination. Czech sociology in the 2020s increasingly studies how society functions when normal routines are destabilised.

The strongest institutional embodiment of this new school is the National Institute for Research on the Socioeconomic Impact of Diseases and Systemic Risks, SYRI. The official project materials describe SYRI as a major research framework supported by the EXCELES programme, while the Charles University science page presents it as a virtual scientific hub bringing together experts from Masaryk University, Charles University, and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences in order to provide real-time solutions and recommendations. This institutional model is very important. It signals that Czech sociology of crisis is not a loose assemblage of isolated studies reacting belatedly to public events. It is embedded in a formal interdisciplinary platform designed precisely to address the socioeconomic impact of diseases and systemic risks. Such a platform gives the new school both visibility and legitimacy. It also helps explain why Czech sociology in the 2020s became more publicly engaged. It was drawn into a research environment explicitly organised around crisis relevance, multi-sectoral analysis, and real-time applicability. That is one of the clearest markers of a new school in formation.

The importance of SYRI lies not only in its organisational scale, but in the kind of sociology it promotes. The official project description indicates that the institute focuses on the social and economic determinants of health risks, communication between public administration and the public, and the broader recovery from health or security crises. This is analytically significant because it places sociology at the centre of crisis research rather than at its margins. Crises are not treated merely as medical events, economic shocks, or administrative challenges. They are understood as socially mediated processes whose outcomes depend on inequality, communication, trust, institutions, and behavioural responses. This gives Czech sociology of risk a broad and genuinely sociological agenda. It also means that the school is not defined by one substantive field alone. It studies crises across labour, education, public communication, governance, family life, and vulnerability. In that sense, it is one of the most integrative schools of the contemporary discipline. It connects the sociology of institutions with the sociology of everyday life under pressure.

Longitudinal infrastructure is one of the decisive foundations of this school, and the Czech Household Panel Survey is especially important in that regard. The Institute's publication page for the CHPS data manual states that the survey repeatedly interviewed a random sample of households in the Czech Republic, that five waves were conducted between 2015 and 2019, and that in 2020 and 2021 two smaller data collections specifically dedicated to the Covid-19 pandemic were carried out. This is a very consequential methodological fact. It means that Czech sociologists were able to study crisis impacts against an already existing longitudinal background rather than relying solely on improvised cross-sectional instruments. The value of this for crisis sociology is enormous. It allows the analysis of change over time, rather than only snapshots of distress or attitude at a single moment. It also makes possible the study of cumulative effects, adaptation, and diverging household trajectories under crisis conditions. The CHPS thus became one of the key methodological pillars of the new school.

The "Living through the Pandemic" data collected within this broader survey environment exemplify the school's substantive potential. The 2025 publication on food security, fruit and vegetable consumption, and health-related factors during the late Covid-19 pandemic in Czechia states that the analysis was based on a cross-sectional survey collected in October 2022 as part of a Czech longitudinal survey and that about one-third of the study population was at risk of food insecurity during the late-pandemic period. This is analytically important because it shows how the crisis school connects broad macro-shocks to concrete and measurable forms of everyday vulnerability. Food insecurity is not treated here as a marginal welfare problem. It becomes a lens for examining how crisis conditions translate into material and health-related inequalities. The study also highlights social differentiation, showing that risk is not evenly distributed. In this way, crisis sociology in Czechia remains tightly linked to older stratification concerns. It shows that crises reveal and intensify underlying social inequalities rather than affecting all households uniformly.

The school has also developed a major adolescent and educational branch through the Czech Education Panel Survey. The project page on the dynamics of adolescents' attitudes toward outgroups states that the first wave of data collection was carried out in autumn 2023 among more than 24,000 first-year secondary-school students from 249 schools across all Czech regions, and that the project aims to test mechanisms shaping adolescents' attitudes using a panel design. This is a remarkable development for several reasons. First, it gives Czech crisis sociology a large-scale longitudinal tool focused on adolescence and school life. Secondly, it allows researchers to study how insecurity, polarisation, and outgroup attitudes form under changing social conditions rather than treating these as static properties. Thirdly, it connects the sociology of crisis to the sociology of education and socialisation. This means that the school does not study crises only through adult politics or household economics. It also analyses how younger generations internalise, reinterpret, or resist wider social tensions. That gives the school a longer temporal horizon and a deeper account of social reproduction under stress.

The adolescent branch is particularly important because it shows that systemic vulnerability is not limited to material deprivation or institutional breakdown. It also concerns identity formation, prejudice, trust, and the social-emotional consequences of living in unstable times. The project's associated outputs, including the second-wave research report and the 2026 validation study of an ultra-short identity-style instrument based on first-wave CZEPS data, demonstrate that Czech sociology is building a substantial empirical platform for analysing how younger people process social uncertainty. This is highly significant. It broadens the

concept of crisis beyond emergency management or economic decline and brings it into the realm of developmental sociology. Schools are treated not merely as educational institutions, but as environments in which crisis society becomes visible in attitudes, identity styles, and perceptions of others. This gives Czech crisis sociology a socially reproductive dimension. It studies not only present turbulence, but also the formation of future social orientations under conditions of turbulence.

Public-opinion research remains another major pillar of this school, but its meaning changed in the 2020s. In earlier decades, public-opinion research in Czech sociology primarily served the analysis of democratic legitimacy, trust, and political culture. In the new crisis school, these functions remain important, but they are supplemented by a more explicit concern with how crisis conditions reshape trust, institutional evaluations, and public interpretations of uncertainty. The article “The network structure of trust in the COVID-19 pandemic” is especially revealing in this respect. The Institute’s publication page states that the study used social network analysis to examine trust relations during the pandemic and found central roles for institutions and actors directly involved in crisis management, such as medical professionals and security institutions. This is a major conceptual advance. It means that trust is not treated simply as a general attitude or a single variable. It is analysed as a structured relational field shaped by crisis circumstances. This approach greatly strengthens the school’s account of democratic and social resilience under stress.

The social media and discourse branch of the school adds another important dimension. Daniel Čermák, Jana Stachová, and Matouš Pilnáček’s article on the perception of links between the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change in the Czech blogosphere shows that Czech sociologists have also approached crises as discursive events. The PDF abstract states that the article reflects on the links between the climate crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic crisis in Czech social media and specifically the Czech blogosphere. This matters because it broadens crisis sociology beyond institutional responses and material impacts. It asks how crises are connected, interpreted, and narratively stabilised in public discourse. Such work is particularly important in an era of polycrisis, where one event is frequently understood through the language of another. It also indicates that Czech sociology is sensitive to the symbolic and mediated dimensions of risk. Crises are not only experienced; they are framed and made meaningful through communication environments. This communication-oriented line is one of the ways in which the new school overlaps with media sociology and cultural sociology.

Local governance under crisis is another one of the school’s strongest and most original branches. The 2025 article “How Small Municipalities Contribute to Robust Crisis Governance—Experiences From Two Recent Large-scale Crises in Czechia” explicitly states that it examines how small Czech municipalities adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian refugee crisis and thereby contributed to governance robustness. The article is based on 24 semi-structured interviews with mayors and underlines the importance of local leadership, adaptability, volunteer engagement, and horizontal cooperation with neighbouring municipalities and regional authorities. This is a highly significant contribution because it demonstrates that Czech crisis sociology is not centred only on national institutions or large urban settings. It studies how small municipalities, which are numerically central in the Czech territorial system, respond to turbulence and compensate for national-level weaknesses. In doing so, it links crisis sociology to local and regional studies. It also shows that social resilience may depend heavily on informal coordination, local knowledge, and municipal

improvisation. This territorial grounding is one of the most distinctive features of the Czech school.

The same local-governance line is visible in the chapter “Navigating the Pandemic: Coordination and Communication in Small Czech Municipalities.” The official publication page states that the chapter analyses how small municipalities navigated the Covid-19 pandemic in a highly fragmented local government system, drawing on crisis legislation, epidemiological data, and interviews with mayors. This is important because it reinforces the argument that Czech sociology of crisis does not reduce governance to formal emergency plans or state decrees. It studies how local actors actually interpret, communicate, and operationalise crisis measures in everyday practice. Such work makes the school more sociologically concrete. It moves from macro statements about “the state response” to meso- and micro-level analyses of public administration under pressure. It also suggests that Czech sociology has developed a specifically localised account of crisis robustness. In a country with many small municipalities, this is not a peripheral issue. It is one of the key ways in which systemic vulnerability and resilience are organised territorially.

The school has also made important contributions through intersectional and gender-sensitive crisis analysis. The publication page “The COVID-19 Pandemic and Gender+ Inequalities in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia” states that various research studies indicate that women and other vulnerable groups were disproportionately affected by the pandemic and that these groups were often omitted from policies mitigating pandemic effects because of their invisibility in the policy-knowledge nexus. The associated RESISTIRÉ project page similarly describes a European project aimed at understanding how Covid-19 policy responses affected behavioural, social, and economic inequalities through a gender+ framework and at devising policy responses. These materials are highly significant because they show that Czech crisis sociology does not treat vulnerability as a universal, undifferentiated condition. It studies how crisis effects are distributed across gendered and socially vulnerable positions. This strengthens the school conceptually by tying it to older Czech work on gender, care, work-life balance, and inequality. It also ensures that the sociology of crises in Czechia is not limited to macro governance or public opinion. It includes the uneven social body of crisis.

Forced migration after the Russian invasion of Ukraine gave the school another decisive dimension. The Institute of Sociology publication page on mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia states that the study screened refugees for depression and anxiety and assessed recognition of personal mental-health problems and related help-seeking on a sample of 1,347 respondents. This is an important contribution because it shows that the crisis school has expanded from classic migration sociology into the sociology of displacement, trauma, and psychosocial vulnerability. Refugees are not treated merely as labour-market entrants or integration subjects. They are analysed as people living through radical disruption and uncertainty with direct implications for well-being and institutional support systems. Such work also demonstrates the school’s interdisciplinary openness. It intersects with public health, mental-health research, and social care, yet remains distinctly sociological in its attention to help-seeking, recognition, and the social conditions of distress. This adds depth to Czech migration and crisis sociology alike.

A related line is visible in the 2025 article “‘The Plan Is No Plan’: Ontological Security and Resilience of Ukrainian Refugees in the Czech Labour Market.” The PDF abstract states that the study used 19 semistructured interviews with highly skilled Ukrainian refugees in different

parts of the Czech Republic and focused on ontological security and migration aspirations. This is conceptually significant because it brings existential security, uncertainty, and future orientation into Czech crisis sociology. The school thus goes beyond measuring objective harm. It also studies how people orient themselves under prolonged instability when legal status, return possibilities, work trajectories, and life plans remain unresolved. Such work is especially important in the sociology of crises because it shows that vulnerability is not only material or institutional. It is also temporal and existential. Refugees' relationship to the future becomes itself a sociological object. Through this, the Czech school of systemic vulnerability gains a more phenomenological and life-course dimension.

The school's conceptual originality lies partly in the way it binds together crises that are often studied separately. Pandemic management, refugee reception, food insecurity, trust, climate-related discourse, local governance, and school-based attitude formation are treated not as unrelated topics, but as manifestations of a more general problem: how societies manage turbulence when multiple institutions and inequalities are simultaneously under strain. This is why the term "systemic vulnerability" is especially appropriate. It indicates that the object is not merely this or that crisis, but the patterned exposure of social groups, places, and institutions to cascading pressures. Czech sociology has developed this perspective through the cumulative interaction of older schools. Stratification research made inequalities visible, housing research highlighted material insecurity, migration research illuminated new vulnerabilities, democratic-culture research analysed trust, and the new crisis school integrated these lines into a more general sociology of turbulence. This synthetic role is one of its key achievements. It makes the school analytically broader than the sum of its topics.

The annual-report environment of the Institute of Sociology confirms how central this orientation had become by 2024–2025. The 2024 annual report of the Institute, issued in 2025, shows an organisation whose activities include large-scale projects on systemic risks, public research infrastructures, international cooperation, and an extensive publication portfolio. Even where the report functions primarily as an institutional document, it reveals something important sociologically: crisis-oriented research had become embedded in the ordinary structure of Czech sociology rather than remaining exceptional. This institutionalisation matters. It means that the crisis school is not a temporary response to one emergency but part of the discipline's current research architecture. The school now has projects, publications, survey modules, organisational bases, and interdisciplinary partnerships. That is one of the strongest possible indicators that it has become a stable school rather than a passing agenda. In this respect, the annual report captures the school not only as a body of topics but as a durable institutional reality.

Another reason the school matters is that it has strengthened the public mission of Czech sociology. Crises create strong demand for interpretation, and the Czech field has responded by providing not just descriptive commentary but evidence-based analysis of household vulnerability, adolescent socialisation, trust, refugee well-being, and local governance. This public role is especially important in a media and political environment often tempted by simplification. The new school offers more disciplined alternatives. It shows that crisis conditions can be analysed through robust data, panel designs, interviews, and institutional research rather than through panic or anecdote alone. In that sense, the school enhances not only academic knowledge but also public reasoning. It contributes to what might be called sociological crisis literacy. This is one of the reasons it should be regarded as one of the most consequential developments in Czech sociology in the 2020s.

By 2025, the contemporary Czech sociology of risks, crises, and systemic vulnerability could therefore be characterised by several interlocking strengths: a major interdisciplinary institutional platform in SYRI; strong longitudinal infrastructures such as CHPS and CZEPS; an active public-opinion and trust-research component; strong local-governance and municipal-crisis research; intersectional analysis of pandemic inequalities; a refugee and displacement branch attentive to mental health and ontological insecurity; and a growing capacity to think in terms of polycrisis rather than single isolated events. What unifies these elements is a common sociological question: how do institutions, households, communities, and individuals cope when ordinary patterns of stability are disrupted? Czech sociology has answered that question not by abandoning its older schools, but by drawing them together into a more integrated framework of turbulence, vulnerability, and resilience. This is why the school deserves a place at the end of Part Two. It is both the newest and, in many ways, the most synthetic of the principal schools of contemporary Czech sociology. It shows how the discipline has adapted to a world in which social order must increasingly be understood through stress, contingency, and uneven capacity to endure.

Part Three

Leading Figures of Contemporary Czech Sociology and Their Contribution

The Czech School of Post-Communist Transformation, Stratification, and Social Inequality

Among the principal schools of contemporary Czech sociology, the school of post-communist transformation, social stratification, and inequality occupies a foundational place. It was in this field that Czech sociology first achieved its strongest post-1989 and post-1993 intellectual visibility, because the discipline was compelled to explain not only the institutional transition from state socialism to democratic capitalism, but also the deeper restructuring of social chances, class relations, mobility patterns, educational opportunities, distributive beliefs, and democratic legitimacy. Over time, this field ceased to be merely a sociology of “transition” in the narrow historical sense. It became a broader and more conceptually mature school of research into inequality, social structure, educational attainment, distributive justice, life chances, and social closure. The present profile of the Social Stratification department at the Institute of Sociology explicitly confirms this continuity, defining the department as a centre of modern stratification research that analyses social inequalities, subjective well-being, quality of life, and health in relation to family, education, and labour-market structures. What began as a research response to post-socialist transformation thus evolved into one of the central long-term analytical cores of Czech sociology.

The school also has a clear institutional history. It grew primarily within the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences, but its intellectual influence extended into Charles University, later into educational sociology and policy studies, and into broader comparative debates on the Visegrád countries and Central Europe. The significance of this school lies in the fact that it combined empirical sophistication with a strong comparative horizon. Czech stratification research did not restrict itself to describing social changes inside one national case. It treated Czech society as a laboratory for the study of wider post-communist transformations and later, more broadly, as one among several Central European societies shaped by shared historical legacies but divergent contemporary outcomes. The school is therefore important not only within Czech sociology, but within the sociology of post-socialist Europe more generally. Its leading figures helped move the field from descriptive transition narratives towards theoretically informed and data-driven analyses of inequality, mobility, political legitimacy, and educational differentiation.

A further strength of this school is its internal continuity across generations. Pavel Machonin provided the historical and conceptual bridge from the 1960s empirical stratification tradition into the post-1989 and post-1993 period. Petr Matějů and Jiří Večerník then became the two most important architects of the school in the new era, though in rather different ways: Matějů by linking stratification to education, mobility, and the politics of winners and losers; Večerník by documenting the social and economic transformation of Czech society through large-scale empirical work and synthesis. Around them, researchers such as Blanka Řeháková and Klára Vlachová deepened the analysis of subjective mobility, justice, legitimacy, and distributive beliefs, while Michael L. Smith later extended the school into educational pathways, class

attainment, value change, and the re-stratification of politics. This continuity across generations is one of the reasons the field deserves to be called a school rather than a loose thematic cluster. It has a cumulative history, a shared problem field, and a recognisable intellectual lineage.

Pavel Machonin

The researcher occupies a singular place in this school because he stands at the point where the pre-1968 empirical sociology of stratification in Czechoslovakia meets the post-1993 reconstruction of Czech sociology. Even though much of his classical work belongs to the earlier period, his importance for contemporary Czech sociology lies in the fact that he re-entered sociological debate after 1989 and helped provide a historical and conceptual bridge for the new era. The memorial notice published in *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* explicitly recalls that he had led the path-breaking 1967 stratification survey, returned to professional sociology in 1990, and in the 1990s published new studies and articles on transformation and social structure. This made him far more than a symbolic elder of the field. He supplied post-1993 Czech sociology with a living connection to the most important interrupted empirical tradition in Czech and Czechoslovak sociology. His role was therefore both historiographical and analytical: he connected the rediscovered sociology of stratification with the urgent need to interpret post-communist transformation.

Machonin's contribution to the contemporary school is especially important in the way he framed transformation as a problem of changing social structure rather than merely of market reform or political liberalisation. In his work on historical comparison, modernisation, and transformation, he insisted on tracing the emergence of new class configurations, the re-stratification of society, and the links between economic change and broader social metamorphosis. His approach was not restricted to short-term transition commentary. It was rooted in long historical comparison, and that is what gave the school one of its strongest features: the ability to interpret post-1989 changes against the background of earlier state-socialist and even pre-socialist social formations. For contemporary Czech sociology, Machonin thus represents the founding historical consciousness of the entire transformation-and-stratification tradition. Without his work, the later achievements of the school would have lacked an important dimension of temporal depth and methodological memory.

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Petr Matějů

The researcher was one of the central architects of the post-1989 and post-1993 school of transformation, stratification, and educational inequality. The memorial bibliography published in *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* makes the breadth of his contribution unmistakable. His work ranged from intra-generational mobility and the identification of winners and losers in the transformation, through the analysis of class and party alignment, to the reproduction of educational inequalities and the role of education in life success. What distinguishes Matějů within the Czech context is that he consistently linked the sociology of stratification with the sociology of education and with the political consequences of inequality. He did not treat social structure as a fixed table of occupations or incomes. Rather, he analysed it as a dynamic system in which educational opportunities, mobility chances, distributive beliefs, and political orientations were deeply interconnected. In this respect, he helped define the modern Czech understanding of stratification as a multi-dimensional process.

Matějů's contribution is also crucial because he gave Czech sociology one of its strongest internationally legible agendas. His work on educational inequalities, university access, and the relationship between social origin and educational trajectories moved Czech sociology into broader comparative debate. At the same time, his studies of winners and losers, left-turns, and class-party relationships ensured that the school retained a strong connection between social structure and democratic politics. This dual contribution—education and politics within the wider field of inequality—made him one of the key figures through whom Czech sociology entered both the sociology of post-communist transition and the sociology of social reproduction. The memorial bibliography further shows that he was not only productive but also highly coherent as an intellectual figure: the same core questions recur across his work, but with increasing sophistication and widening comparative scope. For that reason, Matějů may be regarded as the principal system-building figure of this school in the 1990s and 2000s.

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Jiří Večerník

The researcher is the major empirical chronicler and analyst of Czech social and economic transformation. The jubilee essay “Jiří Večerník at 70” is especially illuminating in this respect. It notes that he was one of the key operators in the resurrection of the Institute of Sociology after 1990, that he established the Department of Economic Sociology, became the first editor-

in-chief of *Sociologický časopis* in the new era, and launched the English-language *Czech Sociological Review* in 1992. It also stresses that, in collaboration with Petr Matějů, he initiated the large project of documenting the Czech transition through statistical analysis, empirical surveys, research bulletins, teaching activities, the establishment of the Sociological Data Archive, and synthesising social reports. This description makes clear that Večerník's role was not confined to individual publications. He helped create the institutional and empirical machinery through which the school of transformation and inequality could function as a durable research formation.

Substantively, Večerník's work gave the school its distinctive "from below" perspective on transformation. His book *Markets and People* explicitly presented the Czech reform experience as it was lived by individuals and households, examining labour markets, household resources, poverty, hardship, and changing living standards in comparative perspective. Later work on social structure, the middle class, and Central European stratification further extended this agenda. What is especially important is that Večerník refused to reduce transition to ideology or formal reform. He consistently analysed how markets, social policy, standards of living, and stratification interacted in practice. This empirical breadth is one reason why his work remains indispensable for understanding not only the 1990s but the longer-term reconfiguration of Czech society after 1989. In the history of contemporary Czech sociology, he stands as the scholar who most systematically documented the social reality of transformation while simultaneously helping to build the institutions through which that reality could be studied.

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Blanka Řeháková

The researcher belongs to the core analytical generation that transformed Czech stratification research from broad descriptions of change into more precise work on mobility, education, justice, and legitimacy. Already in the early 1990s author notes in *Czech Sociological Review* identified her as a member of the social stratification team at the Institute of Sociology specialising in social and educational inequalities and in professional and educational mobility. This characterisation remains highly accurate as a summary of her place within the school. Her work consistently occupies the intersection between objective structure and subjective perception: mobility and deprivation, distributive beliefs, educational inequality, and the social legitimacy of the stratification system. Such themes are analytically central to the Czech school because they connect measurable structural change with lived experience and evaluative judgment. In this respect, Řeháková helped ensure that Czech stratification research remained sociological in the fullest sense, attentive not only to class positions but also to how people understand and assess them.

Her contribution is especially important in three connected areas. First, she helped conceptualise the winners-and-losers dynamic of post-communist transformation by co-authoring early studies of intra-generational mobility and subjective mobility. Secondly, she became an important contributor to the sociology of educational inequality, particularly in work on the transition to university and the role of socio-economic background. Thirdly, she contributed to the analysis of social justice and legitimacy, thereby linking stratification research to the moral foundations of post-socialist society. This combination is highly significant, because it shows that the Czech school of transformation did not remain trapped in the study of structure alone. Through researchers such as Řeháková, it also became a school of perceptions, legitimacy, and justice. Her role in the field is therefore that of a key mediator between social structure and social consciousness.

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Klára Vlachová

The researcher represents the branch of this school in which stratification research opens directly into political sociology, democratic legitimacy, and distributive beliefs. Early author notes in *Czech Sociological Review* described her first as a younger member of the social stratification team working on social justice and relative deprivation, and later as a senior researcher at the Institute of Sociology. This trajectory itself is highly meaningful. It shows how the Czech school of transformation nurtured researchers who began with questions of justice and subjective deprivation and then developed these into broader analyses of democracy, trust, institutions, and political culture. Vlachová's position in the school is therefore distinctive. She belongs to the stratification tradition, but her work demonstrates how that tradition could be extended into the study of the societal conditions of democratic order. That extension was of major importance in a post-communist society where legitimacy and justice could not be separated from one another.

Her work on legitimacy and democracy remains one of the clearest examples of how Czech stratification research was able to speak to larger sociological debates. The publication page for her 2001 article makes clear that she distinguished between support for democracy as a form of government and satisfaction with the development of democracy in a particular country, and investigated the role of institutional trust, political culture, and individual characteristics. This is analytically important because it moves beyond polling or regime

approval in the narrow sense. It treats democratic legitimacy as a sociological phenomenon structured by value orientations, social experience, and institutional evaluation. Her work on economic justice further demonstrates the same orientation. In Vlachová's case, the school of social inequality becomes a school of democratic sociology, one capable of analysing how distributive beliefs and institutional confidence are linked inside post-communist modernity.

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- Vlachová, K. (2000). *Economic Justice in the Czech Republic, 1991–1995*. In D. S. Mason & J. R. Kluegel (Eds.), *Marketing Democracy: Changing Opinion about Inequality and Politics in East Central Europe* (pp. 45–77). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Vlachová, K. (2001). The Legitimacy of Democracy and Trust in Political Institutions in the Czech Republic. *Czech Sociological Review*, 9(1), 13–33. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2001.37.11.05>
- Matějů, P., & Vlachová, K. (1998). *Values and Electoral Decisions in the Czech Republic. Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 31(3), 249–269. <https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2017/03/07.pdf>

Michael L. Smith

The researcher represents a later but highly important phase in the development of this school. His own staff profile states that he is devoted to both basic and applied research and to obtaining grants for large-scale social surveys and research into fundamental questions of social and economic inequality in the Czech Republic and around the world. This self-description is revealing because it captures the broad role he plays within Czech sociology. Smith is not merely an author of specialist papers. He is one of the figures who helped carry the original transformation-and-stratification school into new domains, especially educational pathways, value change, political participation, corruption, and comparative inequality research. In his case, the school becomes more explicitly comparative, more methodologically diversified, and more attuned to questions that connect the Czech Republic with other European and non-European societies. He therefore represents both continuity and renewal within the tradition.

What makes Smith especially important is the way he rearticulates classic Czech concerns in newer analytical languages. His work on educational pathways and class attainment reframes the old sociology of education and mobility by moving beyond the highest attained level of education to the sequential structure of pathways themselves. His work with Petr Matějů on distributive justice, educational aspirations, and the re-stratification of politics shows how the older transformation school could be extended into the 2000s and 2010s without losing its focus on inequality. He also broadens the school's range by engaging with corruption, local democracy, and cross-national skill returns. In this sense, Smith is one of the key figures who ensured that the Czech school of transformation and inequality remained intellectually alive rather than merely memorialised. His contribution lies in making the school travel into new topics while preserving its central concern with social differentiation and life chances.

Selected works:

- Smith, M. L. (2010). Perceived Corruption, Distributive Justice, and the Legitimacy of the System of Social Stratification in the Czech Republic. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 43(4), 439–451. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2010.10.005>
- Smith, M. L., & Matějů, P. (2011). The Re-Stratification of Czech Politics: Class-Based Electoral Behavior in the Czech Republic, 1992–2010. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 47(1), 33–59. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2011.47.1.03>
- Smith, M. L., & Matějů, P. (2012). Two Decades of Value Change: The Crystallization of Meritocratic and Egalitarian Beliefs in the Czech Republic. *Social Justice Research*, 25(4), 421–439. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-012-0164-9>
- Smith, M. L. (2019). Educational Pathways and their Role in Occupational and Class Attainment in Czech Society. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 55(6), 853–878. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2020.55.6.494>

Taken together, these figures show why the Czech school of post-communist transformation, stratification, and social inequality should be regarded as one of the central achievements of Czech sociology after 1993. Pavel Machonin gave it historical memory and a bridge to the interrupted empirical sociology of the 1960s. Petr Matějů turned it into an intellectually powerful synthesis of mobility, education, stratification, and politics. Jiří Večerník provided its great empirical mapping of transition and helped build the institutional platforms through which it could operate. Blanka Řeháková deepened the school's sensitivity to subjective mobility, justice, and educational inequalities. Klára Vlachová extended it into democratic legitimacy, trust, and economic justice. Michael L. Smith carried it further into educational pathways, value change, political re-stratification, and comparative inequality research. Through them, Czech sociology created not only a body of important publications, but a durable analytical tradition capable of explaining how social structure changes, how people experience those changes, and how such changes reshape education, politics, and legitimacy in a post-socialist society.

The Czech School of Sociology of Education and Educational Inequality

Among the principal schools of contemporary Czech sociology, the school of sociology of education and educational inequality occupies a particularly important place because it links one of the country's most persistent social problems with one of the most analytically productive lines of post-1989 sociology. In the Czech case, education has never been treated merely as a pedagogical subsystem. It has increasingly been analysed as one of the central mechanisms through which social origin, family resources, cultural capital, institutional selectivity, and wider stratification patterns are reproduced across generations. This school therefore stands at the intersection of social stratification, sociology of education, public policy, and, in its newer forms, the sociology of adolescence and school socialisation. Its importance lies not only in the quantity of research produced, but in the fact that Czech sociologists have consistently shown that the Czech educational system remains one of the most socially selective in Europe and that this selectivity is embedded in the structure of the system itself rather than being reducible to individual ability alone. That analytical move gave the school both scientific depth and public relevance.

Institutionally, this school is spread across several closely connected settings. One of its principal bases has long been the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially through projects on unequal access to education, educational mobility, and educational aspirations. Another major base is the Ústav výzkumu a rozvoje vzdělávání at the Faculty of Education of Charles University, where Jana Straková and Jaroslava Simonová are part of the staff and where educational inequality, school choice, educational quality, and contemporary school research are strongly represented. A third important pole lies at Charles University's Faculty of Social Sciences, especially through the public-policy environment represented by Arnošt Veselý and the Department of Public and Social Policy, where education is analysed as a strategic and policy field rather than only as a social outcome. Masaryk University adds a further dimension through Tomáš Katriňák's work on inequality of educational opportunity, educational homogamy, and comparative educational expansion. What emerges from these institutional links is a school that is both polycentric and coherent: its members work in different departments and faculties, yet they are united by a common concern with the social production of educational inequality.

The school is also methodologically notable. It combines comparative educational research, panel analysis, historical mobility analysis, school-level and student-level data, policy analysis, and quantitative modelling of educational pathways. It makes active use of Czech data and also of international datasets such as PISA and related comparative sources. In its more recent phase, the school has expanded beyond the classic study of educational transitions and tertiary access to include school choice, academic futility, secondary tracking, and the impact of educational structures on both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes. This broadening is highly significant. It shows that Czech sociology of education has moved from the study of unequal access to a more complex sociology of educational environments, institutional effects, and the formation of attitudes and expectations. It is therefore one of the clearest examples of how a thematic direction in Czech sociology has developed into a durable school with its own research traditions, conceptual vocabulary, and public importance.

Jana Straková

The researcher is one of the central figures of the Czech sociology of education because she has consistently linked the analysis of educational inequalities with the institutional structure of the school system. Her work is particularly important because it demonstrates that educational inequality in Czechia cannot be explained simply by the unequal resources of families; it must also be analysed through the ways in which early tracking, school differentiation, and the permeability of educational pathways shape the relationship between family background and educational outcomes. This line of work gave Czech sociology of education one of its core arguments: the Czech educational system itself helps amplify the connection between social origin and educational success. Her long-term role in this field is also evident institutionally. She has been associated first with the Institute of Sociology and later with the Faculty of Education at Charles University, where she remains one of the principal researchers in educational inequality and educational quality. In this sense, Straková serves as one of the main bridges between sociological inequality research and educational research in the narrower sense.

What makes Straková especially important is that her work has retained both systemic and school-level perspectives. On the one hand, she has analysed the overall structure of the Czech education system, its low permeability, and the relationship between school

differentiation and inequality. On the other hand, her later work on primary-school choice, academic futility, and the effects of different secondary-school tracks shows a stronger interest in how institutional arrangements are experienced by pupils and families in concrete educational settings. This broadening matters because it moves Czech sociology of education beyond macro-level access patterns and toward the lived mechanisms through which inequality is generated and reinforced. Straková therefore represents a mature phase of the school in which structure, school culture, and educational outcomes are studied together rather than separately.

Selected works:

- Straková, J. (2007). *The Impact of the Structure of the Education System on the Development of Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic*. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(3), 589–610.
<https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.3.04>
- Straková, J., & Simonová, J. (2015). *Primary School Choice in the Czech Republic and Related Factors*. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 51(4), 587–606.
<https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2015/04/01.pdf>
- Straková, J., Soukup, P., & Simonová, J. (2020). *Testing the Concept of Academic Futility in Czech Secondary Education*. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 56(5), 631–652. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2020.042>
- Straková, J., Simonová, J., & Soukup, P. (2024). *The Effect of Different Secondary School Tracks on Cognitive and Non-cognitive Learning Outcomes: The Application of Propensity Score Matching*. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 60(4).
<https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2023.044>

Natalie Simonová

The researcher is one of the leading figures of Czech educational inequality research in its historical and comparative form. Her staff profile at the Institute of Sociology makes clear that her core focus includes educational mobility in socialist Czechoslovakia, the development of inequality in access to tertiary education during the post-socialist period, and the sources and evolution of educational inequalities more generally. This orientation is highly significant because it shows that Simonová's work is not limited to one educational reform cycle or one policy debate. It spans several regimes and several historical phases, allowing her to analyse educational inequality as a long-term process rather than a purely post-1989 phenomenon. In this respect, her contribution gave the school a temporal depth comparable to what Pavel Machonin gave to the school of social stratification more broadly. Simonová helped demonstrate that contemporary educational inequalities in Czechia are rooted in deeper historical and institutional patterns rather than emerging suddenly after the collapse of state socialism.

Her role within the school is especially important because she brought together historical comparison, international comparison, and transition analysis. Her work on educational inequalities under socialism and after the Velvet Revolution shows that the reproduction of inequality did not disappear under state socialism and did not simply take a wholly new form after 1989; rather, the mechanisms changed, intensified, and became newly legible in comparative perspective. Simonová also played an important role in connecting Czech research with broader European debates on educational expansion and educational mobility. This makes her one of the key figures through whom Czech sociology of education became

genuinely comparative rather than merely national. She helped turn educational inequality into a field where Czechia could be studied alongside Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, and other countries, thereby strengthening the school's international standing.

Selected works:

- Simonová, N. (2003). The Evolution of Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic after 1989. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(4), 471–485.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3593316>
- Simonová, N. (2008). Educational Inequalities and Educational Mobility under Socialism in the Czech Republic. *The Sociological Review*, 56(3), 429–453.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2008.00798.x>
- Simonová, N., & Soukup, P. (2008). *Evolution and Determination of Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic between 1955 and 2002 in the European Context*. Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Simonová, N., & Soukup, P. (2009). The Reproduction of Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic since the Velvet Revolution in a European Context. In R. Becker & A. Hadjar (Eds.), *Expected and Unexpected Consequences of the Educational Expansion in Europe and USA* (pp. 133–151). Bern: Haupt.

Petr Soukup

The researcher occupies an important place in this school as one of the principal methodological and analytical collaborators in Czech educational-inequality research. His staff profile at the Institute of Sociology shows his long-term presence in the institution, and his publication record connects him directly with some of the most important works in the field, especially those on educational aspirations, educational transitions, and academic futility. Soukup's significance lies partly in his methodological strength. He belongs to the group of researchers who helped give the school a more rigorous quantitative basis, especially in comparative and large-scale survey analysis. Without such methodological consolidation, Czech sociology of education could have remained rich in interpretation but weaker in analytical precision. Soukup helped prevent that outcome. He ensured that the school could speak both to substantive issues of inequality and to the demands of advanced survey-based analysis.

His contribution also lies in his capacity to work across institutional and thematic boundaries. He collaborated with Natalie Simonová on long-term analyses of educational inequality in historical and European perspective, with Josef Basl and Petr Matějů on educational aspirations in OECD countries, and with Jana Straková and Jaroslava Simonová on academic futility in Czech secondary education. This pattern of co-authorship is not accidental. It shows that Soukup acts as one of the integrating figures of the school: he connects historical inequality research, international comparative aspirations research, and recent school-level sociological work. In that sense, his role resembles that of a methodological backbone within the educational-inequality tradition. He may be less publicly visible than some of the other figures, but he is crucial to the school's cumulative coherence.

Selected works:

- Matějů, P., Soukup, P., & Basl, J. (2007). *Educational Aspirations in a Comparative Perspective: The Role of Individual, Contextual and Structural Factors in the Formation of Educational Aspirations in OECD Countries*. Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

- Matějů, P., Smith, M. L., Soukup, P., & Basl, J. (2007). Determination of College Expectations in OECD Countries: The Role of Individual and Structural Factors. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(6), 1121–1148. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.6.02>
- Simonová, N., & Soukup, P. (2008). *Evolution and Determination of Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic between 1955 and 2002 in the European Context*. Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Straková, J., Soukup, P., & Simonová, J. (2020). Testing the Concept of Academic Futility in Czech Secondary Education. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 56(5), 631–652. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2020.042>

Jaroslava Simonová

The researcher represents the newer school-based and educational-environment branch of Czech sociology of education. Her profile at the Ústav výzkumu a rozvoje vzdělávání and the Faculty of Education confirms her institutional location in Prague, while her dissertation topic, as stated on her profile page, focused on school choice in primary education as an important mechanism influencing fair access to education. This theme is highly characteristic of the newer phase of the school. Whereas earlier work concentrated strongly on tertiary access and large-scale educational mobility, Jaroslava Simonová's research highlights the mechanisms through which inequality emerges earlier, through school selection, parental choice, local opportunity structures, and the everyday organisation of compulsory education. That shift is analytically important because it broadens Czech sociology of education from transition points alone to the institutional ecology of school reproduction.

Her contribution is especially valuable because it links educational inequality to school choice and to the micro-mechanisms of differentiation within compulsory education. Co-authored work with Jana Straková on primary-school choice and later work on academic futility and secondary-school tracking show a sustained concern with how educational systems classify, separate, and shape students long before the final transition to higher education. In this respect, Simonová contributes to a more processual sociology of education. She helps show that inequality is not merely reproduced at the university gate; it is generated earlier, through repeated institutional and parental decisions, school compositions, and differential educational climates. This contribution makes her one of the key figures in the extension of Czech educational sociology into school-level and trajectory-level analysis.

Selected works:

- Straková, J., & Simonová, J. (2015). Primary School Choice in the Czech Republic and Related Factors. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 51(4), 587–606. <https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2015/04/01.pdf>
- Straková, J., Soukup, P., & Simonová, J. (2020). Testing the Concept of Academic Futility in Czech Secondary Education. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 56(5), 631–652. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2020.042>
- Straková, J., Simonová, J., & Soukup, P. (2024). The Effect of Different Secondary School Tracks on Cognitive and Non-cognitive Learning Outcomes: The Application of Propensity Score Matching. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 60(4). <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2023.044>

- Simonová, J. (profile and dissertation theme). *Volba školy v primárním vzdělávání jako důležitý mechanismus ovlivňující spravedlivý přístup ke vzdělávání*.
<https://pages.pedf.cuni.cz/uvrv/jaroslavsimonova/>

Arnošt Veselý

The researcher represents the policy-analytical wing of this school. His place within Czech sociology of education is somewhat different from that of Straková or Simonová, because he approaches education primarily through public policy, governance, strategy-making, and the sociology of policy systems. His official profile at the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Department of Public and Social Policy identifies him as one of the principal academics in that environment, while the department's own description lists education policy and strategy-making among its substantive areas. This makes Veselý indispensable to the school because educational inequality in Czechia is not simply a matter of classroom or family processes; it is also a matter of policy architecture, public governance, reform capacity, and strategic state action. Veselý's contribution lies in bringing this policy dimension into the school in a way that remains sociologically informed.

His role is especially important because he broadens the school from social reproduction to the governance of educational systems. Through work on the White Paper and on broader trends, risks, and opportunities in Czech education, he addresses the strategic framework within which schools, inequalities, and reforms operate. In that sense, he links sociology of education to public-policy studies without allowing it to collapse into technocratic reform discourse. This is significant for contemporary Czech sociology because it shows that educational inequality cannot be adequately analysed without understanding the governance structures that sustain or fail to reduce it. Veselý therefore occupies an important border position between sociology, educational policy, and strategic governance. It is precisely such figures that make a school intellectually complete rather than one-sided.

Selected works:

- Veselý, A. (2009). *The National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic — White Paper*. In *Strategic Governance and the Czech Republic*. Prague: Karolinum.
- Veselý, A., & Muralová, M. (2009). *Vzdělávání*. In *Česká republika — trendy, ohrožení, příležitosti* (pp. 220–257). Prague: Karolinum.
- Veselý, A. (faculty profile and publication list). Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University.
- Department of Public and Social Policy. (staff and thematic profile indicating education policy and strategy-making).

Tomáš Katrňák

The researcher is an important figure because he carries the educational-inequality tradition strongly into comparative and European sociology. His staff profile at the Department of Sociology of Masaryk University defines his professional orientation through the sociology of stratification and inequality, social mobility, class analysis, and social statistics, while his research interests explicitly include the role of education in class and educational reproduction over time. This profile clearly places him within the educational-inequality school, even though he is not institutionally based in the main Prague centres of educational research. His significance lies in the fact that he helps ensure that Czech sociology of

education remains strongly connected to general stratification theory, class analysis, and comparative sociology rather than becoming isolated within national education debates. He therefore acts as one of the most important Brno-based representatives of this school.

Katrňák's recent work is particularly important because it shows how the Czech school of educational inequality has entered broader European debates on educational expansion, gender-gap reversal, and inequality of opportunity. His more recent publications at Masaryk University and in *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* examine how educational expansion affects the reproduction of inequality and how tertiary educational opportunities are changing across Europe. This comparative perspective is an important achievement. It means that educational inequality in Czech sociology is no longer framed solely as a national pathology. It is studied as part of a wider European transformation, albeit one in which Czechia retains some specific structural features. Katrňák thus represents the school's stronger comparative and macro-sociological pole. Through him, the Czech sociology of education remains tied to broader debates about class, educational sorting, and European social change.

Selected works:

- Katrňák, T. (2006). Unequal Chances in Education: Educational Inequalities in the Czech Republic [review essay]. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 42(3). <https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2006/03/07.pdf>
- Katrňák, T., & Hubatková, B. (2022). *Transitional Inequality Offset: Educational Expansion and Inequality of Educational Opportunity in European Countries between 2000 and 2018*. European Sociological Review.
- Katrňák, T. (2024). The Gender-gap Reversal in Tertiary Education and Its Implications for Inequality of Educational Opportunity in European Countries. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 60(6). <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2024.008>
- Katrňák, T. (staff profile and selected publications). Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University. <https://soc.fss.muni.cz/en/people/staff/doc-phdr-tomas-katrnak-phd>

Taken together, these figures show why the Czech school of sociology of education and educational inequality should be regarded as one of the strongest and most socially significant directions of contemporary Czech sociology. Jana Straková gave the school one of its decisive structural arguments by showing the role of system design and tracking in the production of inequality. Natalie Simonová supplied historical depth and comparative breadth, linking socialist and post-socialist educational mobility. Petr Soukup helped provide the school with a stronger quantitative and methodological backbone. Jaroslava Simonová extended the school toward school choice, academic futility, and the institutional micro-mechanisms of differentiation. Arnošt Veselý ensured that educational inequality was also analysed as a matter of public policy and governance. Tomáš Katrňák connected the Czech case to broader European debates on educational expansion, class reproduction, and opportunity structures. Through them, Czech sociology has built not simply a body of research on schools, but a durable analytical tradition showing how education works as one of the main engines of social inequality, stratification, and civic formation in contemporary Czech society.

The Czech School of Gender Sociology, Family, and Life Course Research

The Czech school of gender sociology, family, and life course research is one of the most internally differentiated and institutionally stable branches of contemporary Czech sociology. Its core strength lies in the fact that it does not isolate gender, family, or ageing as separate subfields, but analyses them as mutually constitutive dimensions of social order. In the Czech context, this school has been built above all around the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where the Gender & Sociology department is led by Alena Křížková, and around Masaryk University in Brno, where Martin Kreidl's family-demographic work and the CERA Centre for Research on Ageing have provided a strong life-course and ageing axis. An adjacent and important institutional extension of the school is the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science under Marcela Linková, which broadened Czech gender sociology toward the study of research careers, academic organisations, and gender equality in science. Together, these nodes created a school that is simultaneously empirical, policy-relevant, and theoretically ambitious.

What distinguishes this school from narrower gender studies or demographic analysis is its insistence that labour, care, parenthood, partnership, fertility, masculinity, ageing, and intergenerational support must be studied within one shared analytical horizon. Křížková's work on wages, care, entrepreneurship, and work-life balance, Hašková's studies of childlessness and reproductive futures, Dudová's research on fatherhood, abortion, and informal care, Maříková's work on family, masculinity, and parenting, Kreidl's family-demographic and intergenerational analyses, and Vidovičová's sociology of ageing together illustrate that Czech sociology has developed a genuinely integrated school rather than a loose thematic cluster. The result is a research tradition that can move from labour-market inequalities to intimate biographies, and from household strategies to the social organisation of old age.

Historically, this school became especially important because post-socialist Czech society combined several structurally tense processes: high female labour-force participation inherited from state socialism, re-familialisation of care after 1989, low fertility, diversification of partnership trajectories, and rapid population ageing. Czech sociologists working in this field responded by developing a life-course perspective capable of linking institutional change to intimate life. That is why this school has become so central to the sociology of contemporary Czechia: it explains how large social transformations are lived through families, reproductive decisions, parenting regimes, care obligations, and ageing biographies.

Hana Hašková

The researcher is one of the key architects of the Czech synthesis between gender sociology, family research, and life-course analysis. As a senior research fellow at the Institute of Sociology, she has consistently worked on gender, parenting, and family, and her research has helped move Czech sociology beyond simple descriptions of fertility decline or work-life conflict toward a more historically grounded analysis of how social policy, labour-market conditions, and intimate aspirations interact. Her work is especially important because it showed that childlessness, postponed parenthood, and changing family trajectories in Czechia are not merely demographic trends but socially structured outcomes of gendered opportunity regimes.

Hašková's contribution to this school is also methodological and conceptual. She helped frame Czech research on childlessness and one-child families as a life-course problem, connected family change to social citizenship and care, and analysed pronatalist policy legacies without reproducing conservative demographic narratives. Her work on precarious labour and care responsibilities also widened the school toward the sociology of insecurity, showing how women's family and work trajectories are shaped by the interplay of refamilialisation, weak labour protections, and unequal care burdens. Through these contributions, she has been one of the scholars who gave this school its distinctly post-socialist and institutionally embedded character.

Selected works:

- Hašková, H. (2007). Fertility decline, the postponement of childbearing and the increase in childlessness in Central and Eastern Europe: A gender equity approach. In R. Crompton, S. Lewis, & C. Lyonette (eds.), *Women, Men, Work and Family in Europe* (pp. 76–85). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hašková, H. (2009). *Fenomén bezdětnosti*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Hašková, H., & Uhde, Z. (eds.). (2009). *Women and Social Citizenship in Czech Society: Continuity and Change*. Praha: Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.
- Hašková, H., & Dudová, R. (2017). Precarious work and care responsibilities in the economic crisis. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 23(1), 47–63.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0959680116672279>
- Hašková, H., & Dudová, R. (2020). Selective pronatalism in childcare and reproductive health policies in Czechoslovakia. *The History of the Family*, 25(4), 627–648.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1081602X.2020.1737561>
- Hašková, H., Maříková, H., Sloboda, Z., & Pospíšilová, K. (2022). Childlessness and Barriers to Gay Parenthood in Czechia. *Social Inclusion*, 10(3), 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v10i3.5246>

Alena Křížková

The researcher occupies a central place in the Czech school of gender sociology because she helped transform gender inequality into a fully sociological question of labour, care, wages, organisational power, and social justice. As head of the Gender & Sociology department at the Institute of Sociology, she has developed an approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods and explicitly works with an intersectional understanding of inequality. Her research spans the gender pay gap, work-life balance, entrepreneurship, technological change, and the production of inequalities in organisations, making her one of the most important scholars linking Czech gender sociology to wider European debates on work, welfare, and institutional discrimination.

Within this school, Křížková's importance lies above all in her analysis of the labour-care nexus. She has shown that parenthood in Czechia functions as a socially structured handicap, especially for women, because the labour market, welfare arrangements, and workplace cultures are built around a persistent separation of work and care. At the same time, her work on within-job wage inequality and women's entrepreneurship has extended the school from family policy into the sociology of organisations and market institutions. This made her one of the main figures who ensured that Czech gender sociology would not remain confined to symbolic critique, but would become a rigorous empirical analysis of how inequality is produced in everyday institutional settings.

Selected works:

- Křížková, A. (2002). Česká žena v práci a rodině posledního tisíciletí. In *Současná česká společnost* (pp. 148–160). Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Křížková, A., Dudová, R., & Maříková, H. (2005). *Reconciling Work and Private Life in the Czech Republic*. Manchester: EGGSIE — EC's Expert Group on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment.
- Křížková, A., & Vohlídalová, M. (2009). Rodiče na trhu práce: mezi prací a péčí. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 45(1), 31–60. <https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2009/01/03.pdf>
- Křížková, A., Penner, A. M., & Petersen, T. (2010). The legacy of equality and the weakness of law: Within-job gender wage inequality in the Czech Republic. *European Sociological Review*, 26, 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcp007>
- Branchet, B., & Křížková, A. (2015). Gender and entrepreneurial intentions in a transition economy context: case of the Czech Republic. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 25(3), 260–281. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJESB.2015.069696>

Radka Dudová

The researcher is one of the scholars who most clearly connected Czech gender sociology to the sociology of intimate life, parenthood after union dissolution, and care across the life course. Her profile at the Institute of Sociology defines her focus in terms of gender sociology, family and intimate life, public policy, childcare, abortion, prostitution, and parenthood after marital separation. This breadth is crucial. It shows that Dudová's contribution has never been limited to one issue; instead, she has consistently investigated how reproductive norms, family breakdown, state regulation, and everyday care are connected in the post-socialist Czech context.

Dudová's place in this school is especially important because she helped extend family sociology beyond the study of "normal" household forms. Her work on fatherhood after divorce, lone parenthood, abortion discourses, and elderly care showed that family life must be analysed through rupture, asymmetry, and obligation, not only through stable partnership models. In later work, she also became one of the strongest Czech voices on informal elderly care, linking gender and age in a way that broadened the school toward later-life vulnerability and intergenerational dependency. Through this move from post-divorce fatherhood to eldercare and care allowances, Dudová gave the school a distinctly life-course and care-centred depth.

Selected works:

- Dudová, R. (2005). *Otcovství po rozchodu rodičovského páru*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Dudová, R. (2006). Old Obligations in the Modern World: The Father as Provider before and after Divorce. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 42(3), 573–590. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2006.42.3.06>
- Dudová, R. (2015). Caring for Elderly Parents: New Commitment of the Third Age. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 51(6), 903–928. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2015.51.6.223>

- Dudová, R. (2018). Doing gender and age: The case of informal elderly care in the Czech Republic. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, 12(1), 41–73.
<https://doi.org/10.3384/ijal.1652-8670.17325>
- Dudová, R. (2021). Cash for Care as Special Money: The Meaning and Uses of the Care Allowance in Close Relationships in the Czech Republic. *Feminist Economics*.

Hana Maříková

The researcher belongs to the senior generation that helped institutionalise gender and family sociology in Czechia. Her official profile identifies her focus as the sociology of gender, the sociology of family and private life, social and family policies, labour-market inequalities, feminist and qualitative methodologies, and theories of masculinity. This combination is intellectually significant. It means that Maříková has worked at the conceptual intersection of family research, gender justice, and masculinity studies, helping shape the school not only empirically but also theoretically.

Maříková's distinctive contribution lies in showing that fatherhood, motherhood, childlessness, and masculinity must be analysed relationally. Her work on caring fathers challenged simplified claims about growing paternal involvement, while her studies of motherhood and work examined the persistent asymmetry between ideals of shared parenting and actual gendered divisions of labour. In more recent years, her research on male childlessness and co-authored work on barriers to gay parenthood broadened the field toward forms of parenthood and non-parenthood that older Czech family sociology had often neglected. In that sense, Maříková helped the school expand from family policy and motherhood into a broader sociology of gendered family subjectivities.

Selected works:

- Maříková, H. (2008). Mateřství, rodina a práce z pohledu matek malých dětí. *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, 9(2), 45–55. https://www.genderonline.cz/artkey/gav-200802-0006_maternity-family-and-work-in-the-view-of-mothers-with-young-children.php
- Maříková, H. (2011). Work and Care in the Life Course of Working Mothers: Different Breadwinning Contexts. In V. Cuzzocrea & J. Laws (eds.), *Value of Work: Updates on Old Issues* (pp. 139–146). Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press.
- Maříková, H. (2020). Male Childlessness from the Perspective of Hegemonic Masculinity. *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research*, 21(1), 130–153.
<https://doi.org/10.13060/GAV.2020.007>
- Hašková, H., Maříková, H., Sloboda, Z., & Pospíšilová, K. (2022). Childlessness and Barriers to Gay Parenthood in Czechia. *Social Inclusion*, 10(3), 124–137.
<https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v10i3.5246>

Martin Kreidl

The researcher represents the strongest family-demographic and intergenerational branch of this school. At Masaryk University he is presented as a sociologist and social demographer whose professional orientation includes families, partnerships, intergenerational exchange and relations, social stratification and mobility, and methodology; he is also described as the country coordinator of the Generations and Gender Programme. This profile is highly revealing because it places him exactly at the interface between life-course demography, family sociology, and inequality research.

Kreidl's contribution has been especially important in bringing Czech family sociology into comparative and quantitatively sophisticated debate. His work on marriage entry, parental separation, grandparenting, and multigenerational co-residence showed that family life is shaped by both historical regimes and contemporary cross-national variation. He is therefore crucial to this school not only because he studies families, but because he studies them comparatively, relationally, and with strong demographic methodology. Through his research, the Czech family school became more explicitly connected to international life-course research and to the study of intergenerational ties as structured social relations rather than merely private moral bonds.

Selected works:

- Kreidl, M. (2004). Politics and Secondary School Tracking in Socialist Czechoslovakia, 1948–1989. *European Sociological Review*, 20(2), 123–139. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jch008>
- Kreidl, M. (2012). Educational Stratification of Marriage Entry under Different Political and Economic Regimes: Evidence from the Czech Republic during the Second Half of the 20th Century. *Population Review*, 52, 151–178. <https://doi.org/10.1353/prv.2012.0014>
- Kreidl, M., Štípková, M., & Hubatková, B. (2017). Parental Separation and Children's Education in a Comparative Perspective: Does the Burden Disappear When Separation Is More Common? *Demographic Research*, 36(3), 73–110. <https://www.demographic-research.org/articles/volume/36/3>
- Lakomý, M., & Kreidl, M. (2015). Full-time versus part-time employment: Does it influence frequency of grandparental childcare? *European Journal of Ageing*, 12(4), 321–331. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-015-0349-9>
- Žilinčiková, Z., & Kreidl, M. (2018). Grandparenting after divorce: Variations across countries. *Advances in Life Course Research*, 38, 61–71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2018.08.003>

Lucie Vidovičová

The researcher is the leading figure connecting Czech family and life-course sociology with social gerontology and ageing studies. Her Masaryk University profile describes her as a sociologist and social gerontologist, co-founder of the CERA Centre for Research on Ageing, long-term researcher at the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, and since 2023 president of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee on Ageing (RC11). Her long-term interests are explicitly defined as the sociology of ageing, age discrimination, active ageing, social exclusion, environmental gerontology, social policy, labour market, and family. This profile makes clear that she brought ageing from the margins of Czech sociology into one of its most visible and internationally connected domains.

Vidovičová's importance within this school lies in the way she linked ageing to place, policy, activity, and exclusion. Her work did not treat old age simply as a demographic category; it analysed it as a socially differentiated life stage shaped by cities, rural environments, ageist norms, active-ageing policies, and intergenerational relations. In doing so, she gave Czech sociology a life-course perspective that extended beyond midlife family arrangements into later life. This has been essential for the overall school because it prevented family and life-course research from stopping at parenthood or middle adulthood. Vidovičová made old age itself a central sociological object.

Selected works:

- Vidovičová, L. (2005). To be active or not to be active, that is the question: The preference model of activity in advanced age. *Ageing International*, 30, 343–362.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12126-005-1020-0>
- Perek-Białas, J., Ruzik, A., & Vidovičová, L. (2008). Active ageing policies in the Czech Republic and Poland. *International Social Science Journal*, 58(190), 559–570.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2451.2008.00655.x>
- Vidovičová, L. (2018). Age-Friendly Rural Areas. The Challenges of Measurement and Evaluation in Czech Older Adults. *Sociální studia / Social Studies*, 15(1), 25–43.
<https://doi.org/10.5817/SOC2018-1-25>
- Vidovičová, L., Galčanová, L., Petrová Kafková, M., & Sýkorová, D. (2013). *Stáří ve městě, město v životě seniorů / Ageing in the City, City in the Life of Seniors*.
- Vidovičová, L., Petrová Kafková, M., Galčanová Batista, L., & Hubatková, B. (2019). *Stárnutí na venkově. Podoby aktivního stárnutí a kvalita života v rurálních oblastech / Rural Ageing. Forms of Active Ageing and Quality of Life in the Countryside*.

Taken together, these six figures show why the Czech school of gender sociology, family, and life course research should be regarded as one of the most developed schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Hašková supplied one of its strongest frameworks for childlessness, reproductive futures, and social citizenship; Křížková gave it a labour-market and organisational core; Dudová brought in intimate disruption, fatherhood, abortion, and care; Maříková deepened its reflection on parenting, masculinity, and non-parenthood; Kreidl provided comparative life-course demography and intergenerational analysis; and Vidovičová extended the school into ageing, ageism, and later-life sociology. The result is not merely a body of work about women, families, or seniors in isolation, but a coherent Czech tradition explaining how gendered inequalities are produced and transformed across the whole life course.

The Czech School of Religion, Secularisation, and Cultural Sociology

The Czech school of religion, secularisation, and cultural sociology occupies a special place within contemporary Czech sociology because it addresses one of the most distinctive and most widely discussed features of Czech society: very weak attachment to institutional churches combined with a complex and historically sedimented afterlife of religion in values, ritual, memory, identity, and public discourse. The importance of this school lies precisely in the fact that it has not accepted the cliché of the Czech Republic as simply an “atheist” or “non-believing” country. Instead, Czech sociologists have repeatedly shown that the Czech case must be analysed through more differentiated categories: weak church belonging, invisible religion, residual Christianity, secularised ritual forms, and the cultural memory of religion in a post-communist society.

Institutionally, this school is polycentric. Its strongest Academy-based anchor lies in the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially in the Economic and Religious Studies department headed by Zdeněk R. Nešpor. A major university pole is Masaryk University in Brno, where Roman Vido has sustained a strongly theoretical and comparative sociology-of-religion line. Another important branch is Palacký University in Olomouc, where

Dušan Lužný helped build an influential research environment around secularisation, new religious movements, and religious diversity. This plurality of centres gave the Czech school a distinctive advantage: it did not become a narrow Prague-centred field, but developed through overlapping lines of historical sociology, theory of secularisation, empirical research on belief and non-belief, and increasingly also cultural-memory analysis.

What also distinguishes this school is its widening toward cultural sociology in the stronger sense. Czech scholars of religion have not limited themselves to census religiosity or church attendance. They have studied funerals, roadside memorials, religion in families and households, welfare provided by churches in a weakly religious society, generational differences in religiosity, and the symbolic residue of Christianity in public culture. In this way, the Czech school moved from a classical sociology of secularisation toward a broader sociology of how religion persists, mutates, becomes privatised, becomes culturally diluted, or returns in weak and indirect forms. That widening is one of the main reasons this school deserves to be treated as one of the major schools of contemporary Czech sociology.

For the present section, the strongest core figures are Zdeněk R. Nešpor, Olga Nešporová, Dušan Lužný, Roman Vido, and Dana Hamplová. Together they represent the historical-sociological, ritual-cultural, theoretical-comparative, and empirical-attitudinal branches of the school. They also show why Czech sociology of religion has become internationally visible: it uses the Czech case not simply as an example of church decline, but as a laboratory for studying weak affiliation, secularisation, invisible religion, and the cultural afterlife of belief in late modern Europe.

Zdeněk R. Nešpor

The researcher is the central organising figure of the Czech sociology of religion in its Academy-based form. His official profile at the Institute of Sociology defines his focus in terms of sociology of religion and culture, history of religion, social anthropology, and history of sociology, while the Institute's departmental profile identifies him as head of Economic and Religious Studies. This combination is decisive for understanding his contribution. Nešpor did not build a narrowly empirical church-sociology; he built a broader field in which contemporary religiosity, historical trajectories of secularisation, cultural residues of Christianity, and the social history of Czech religion could be analysed together. He also helped institutionalise the field through editorial and encyclopaedic work, including the online Encyclopaedia of Religion.

Nešpor's contribution to this school lies above all in his ability to reinterpret Czech secularity without reducing it to a simplistic narrative of irreligion. His work repeatedly shows that religion in Czech society survives in fragmented, weakly institutional, culturally mediated, and historically layered forms. He has also linked secularisation to family, household, public discourse, and church-state relations, which means that his sociology of religion is always simultaneously a sociology of culture and of historical modernity. In the Czech context, this was crucial: without Nešpor's line of work, the field might have remained dominated either by census descriptions or by journalistic claims about Czech atheism. Instead, it developed into a more nuanced sociology of weak religion, non-religion, and post-Christian culture.

Selected works:

- Nešpor, Z. R. (2004). Religious Processes in Contemporary Czech Society. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 40(3), 277–295.

- Nešporová, O., & Nešpor, Z. R. (2009). Religion: An Unsolved Problem for the Modern Czech Nation. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 45(6), 1215–1237. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2009.45.6.03>
- Nešpor, Z. R. (2010). *Příliš slábi ve víře: Česká ne/religiozita v evropském kontextu*. Praha: Kalich.
- Nešpor, Z. R. (2015). Attitudes towards Religion(s) in a ‘Non-believing’ Czech Republic. *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*, 19(1), 68–84. <https://doi.org/10.3167/ajec.2010.190106>
- Nešpor, Z. R. (2018). Religious Situation in Contemporary Czech Society. In D. Václavík et al., *Religious Situation in Contemporary Czech Society*.
- Nešpor, Z. R. (2012). Czech Republic. In M. Juergensmeyer & W. C. Roof (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Olga Nešporová

The researcher represents the branch of this school that most clearly connects religion to ritual, death, mourning, memory, and the symbolic organisation of public space. Her Charles University profile defines her research areas as burial and funeral rites, attitudes toward death and the afterlife, critical heritage studies, and also family and intergenerational relations. Earlier publication records at the Institute of Sociology place her within Economic and Religious Studies, where she worked on religion and religiosity from a perspective that was already broader than conventional church sociology. This positioning is particularly important because it gave the Czech school a strong cultural-sociological and ritual-sociological dimension.

Nešporová's contribution lies in demonstrating that religion in Czechia cannot be understood only through formal declarations of belief or church membership. It must also be traced in funeral practices, roadside memorials, afterlife attitudes, and other symbolic forms in which grief, memory, and meaning are publicly expressed. In a highly secularised society, such practices often preserve or transform religious motifs in indirect ways. By studying them, Nešporová extended Czech sociology of religion toward necrogeography, public memory, and ritual symbolism. This move was intellectually consequential: it helped the school go beyond the dichotomy of belief versus unbelief and toward the analysis of culturally persistent forms of meaning in a weakly institutional religious environment.

Selected works:

- Nešporová, O., & Nešpor, Z. R. (2009). Religion: An Unsolved Problem for the Modern Czech Nation. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 45(6), 1215–1237. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2009.45.6.03>
- Nešporová, O. (2009). Last Rites in a Post-Communist Country. The Introduction of Civil Funeral Rites during the Communist Era and its Consequences for Contemporary Czech Society. In M. Rotar & M. Sozzi (eds.), *Dying and Death in 18th–21st Centuries Europe* (pp. 50–66). Cluj-Napoca: Editura Accent.
- Nešporová, O. (2011). Obřady loučení se zemřelými: Sekulární, náboženské nebo raději žádné pohřby? *Sociální studia*, 8(2), 57–85. <https://doi.org/10.5817/SOC2011-2-57>
- Nešporová, O. (2011). New Phenomenon: Roadside Memorials. In M. Rotar & A. Teodorescu (Eds.), *Dying and Death in 18th–21st Century Europe* (pp. 423–439).

- Nešporová, O. (2011). Everprivate Grief in Public Space: Roadside Memorials in the Czech Republic. In M. Rotar & A. Teodorescu (Eds.), *Dying and Death in 18th–21st Century Europe* (pp. 331–350).
- Nešporová, O., & Nešpor, Z. R. (2016). V žáru lásky se život započal — v žáru ohně se končí.” In M. Rotar & M. Sozzi (Eds.), *From Confessional Cemeteries to Ashes at Home* (pp. 129–144).

Dušan Lužný

The researcher is one of the decisive builders of the Olomouc line within the Czech sociology of religion. His official Palacký University profile identifies him with the Department of Sociology, Andragogy and Cultural Anthropology, while his publication record at Masaryk University shows a long-standing body of work on religion and secularisation in the Czech Republic, new religious movements, religious diversity, ecology and religion, and the sociological interpretation of modernity. This breadth is essential. Lužný did not confine himself to church decline or traditional religiosity; he brought alternative religion, global religious change, and non-institutional forms of belief into the Czech conversation.

His importance for this school lies in widening its empirical and theoretical horizon. Lužný's classic work on religion and secularisation helped establish the Czech Republic as a key European case in the secularisation debate, but his later writings on religious diversity, new religious movements, and even highly contemporary phenomena such as the “Jedi religion” and the “Church of Beer” prevented the field from ossifying into a sociology of decline. He showed that even in a weakly institutional religious environment, new forms of symbolic affiliation, alternative religiosity, and cultural experimentation continue to emerge. In this sense, Lužný was crucial for making Czech sociology of religion attentive not only to loss, but also to mutation and reconfiguration.

Selected works:

- Lužný, D., & Navrátilová, J. (2001). Religion and Secularisation in the Czech Republic. *Czech Sociological Review*, 9(1), 85–98.
<https://sreview.soc.cas.cz/pdfs/csr/2001/11/13.pdf>
- Lužný, D. (1999). *Náboženství a moderní společnost: Sociologické teorie modernizace a sekularizace*. Brno.
- Lužný, D. (2012). The Study of Religious Diversity in the Czech Lands—Diversity in Academic Studies of Religions. *Human Affairs*, 22, 497–506.
<https://doi.org/10.2478/s13374-012-0044-x>
- Lužný, D. (2021). The Jedi Religion and the Church of Beer in the Czech Context. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*.
- Lužný, D. (2021). Religious Memory in a Changing Society: The Case of India and Papua New Guinea. *Changing Societies & Personalities*, 5(1), 36–62.
<https://doi.org/10.15826/csp.2021.5.1.121>

Roman Vido

The researcher represents the Brno line of the school in its most explicitly theoretical and conceptually self-conscious form. His staff profile at Masaryk University states that he is primarily interested in the relationship between religion and society in the modern era and that his key topics are secularisation, religious change, and the influence of religious or secular values on human action. The project information for his GAČR research on secularisation

shows the same orientation: he set out to reconstruct the social and theoretical sources of the secularisation debate, the emergence of the secularisation paradigm, and its multidimensional use in empirical research.

Vido's importance within this school lies in the fact that he helped keep Czech sociology of religion in direct dialogue with general sociological theory. His work on definitions of religion, on secularisation, on urban modernity and religion, and on Czech atheism or non-religion ensured that the Czech case was not treated as a merely descriptive anomaly. Instead, it became a site for testing broader theories of secular modernity, public religion, and the social differentiation of belief. This theoretical continuity matters greatly. Without it, the Czech school could have become empirically rich but analytically thin. Vido has helped prevent that outcome by making Czech religion sociology a place where large conceptual questions remain active.

Selected works:

- Vido, R. (2003). K definici náboženství v sociálních vědách. *Religio*, 11(2), 259–274. <https://digilib.phil.muni.cz/sites/default/files/pdf/125059.pdf>
- Vido, R. (2006). Město zbožné a město bezbožné. *Sociální studia / Social Studies*, 3(2), 65–84. <https://doi.org/10.5817/SOC2006-2-65>
- Laudátová, M., & Vido, R. (2010). Současná česká religiozita v generační perspektivě. *Sociální studia / Social Studies*, 7(4), 37–61. <https://doi.org/10.5817/SOC2010-4-37>
- Vido, R. (2011). *Konec velkého vyprávění? Sekularizace v sociologické perspektivě*. Brno: CDK.
- Vido, R., Václavík, D., & Paleček, A. (2016). “Czech Republic: The Promised Land for Atheists?” In R. Cipriani & F. Garelli (Eds.), *Sociology of Atheism* (pp. 201–232). Leiden: Brill.

Dana Hamplová

The researcher occupies a somewhat distinctive position within this school because she links sociology of religion to family behaviour, value orientations, well-being, and social stratification. Her official profile at the Institute of Sociology identifies her research focus precisely in these terms and also notes her role in international comparative infrastructures such as ISSP. This positioning made her contribution especially important: she did not approach religion only as an institutional or historical phenomenon, but as something connected to household life, gender, welfare, subjective well-being, and social inequalities.

Hamplová's work significantly expanded Czech sociology of religion toward empirical analysis of invisible religion, gendered religiosity, and the public relevance of churches in an otherwise weakly religious society. Her collaboration with Nešpor on invisible religion and church welfare is particularly important because it challenged the superficial assumption that low church attendance simply equals social irrelevance of religion. She also helped show that religion in Czechia often survives in private belief, diffuse spirituality, welfare institutions, and gendered patterns of meaning rather than in dense church participation alone. In that sense, Hamplová gave the school one of its strongest empirical correctives to oversimplified narratives of Czech secularity.

Selected works:

- Hamplová, D. (2013). *Czech Religion at the Beginning of the 3rd Millennium*. Praha: Karolinum.

- Hamplová, D., & Nešpor, Z. R. (2013). Invisible Religion in a 'Non-believing' Country: The Case of the Czech Republic. *Social Compass*, 60(4), 581–597. <https://www.sci-hub.ru/10.1177/0037768609345975>
- Hamplová, D. (2011). Religion and Gender: Why Are Women More Religious Than Men? *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 47(2), 297–323. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2011.47.2.04>
- Nešpor, Z. R., & Hamplová, D. (2022). Irreplaceable Church Welfare in the Least Religious Country: The Case of the Czech Republic. In M. Glatzer & P. Manuel (Eds), *Faith-Based Organizations and Social Welfare. Palgrave Studies in Religion, Politics, and Policy* (pp. 221–236). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Hamplová, D. (2001). Institucionalizované a neinstitucionalizované náboženství v českém poválečném vývoji. *Soudobé dějiny*, 8(2-3), 294–311. <https://sd.usd.cas.cz/pdfs/sod/2001/02/02.pdf>
- Hamplová, D. (2013). *Čemu Češi věří?* Praha.

Taken together, these five figures show the full architecture of the Czech school of religion, secularisation, and cultural sociology. Nešpor gave it historical-sociological breadth and institutional leadership; Olga Nešporová opened it toward ritual, funerary culture, and symbolic memory; Lužný widened it toward diversity, alternative religiosity, and late-modern mutation; Vido preserved its theoretical dialogue with secularisation theory and general sociology; and Hamplová added a strong empirical line on invisible religion, family, gender, and welfare. The result is a school that explains not only why Czechia is often perceived as highly secular, but also why such secularity must itself be studied as a culturally structured and historically layered social formation rather than as a simple absence of religion.

The Czech School of Housing, Urban, and Regional Sociology

The Czech school of housing, urban, and regional sociology is one of the most policy-relevant and methodologically diversified branches of contemporary Czech sociology. Its institutional centre of gravity lies above all in two departments of the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences: Socioeconomics of Housing, headed by Martin Lux, and Local and Regional Studies, headed by Josef Bernard. The first explicitly defines its agenda through housing attitudes, housing preferences, affordability, comparative housing policy, social-housing systems, housing finance, market efficiency, and house-price indices, while the second focuses on social and spatial inequalities, public administration, urban and regional planning, local identities, environmental aspects of social processes, and mobility. Together, these two departments gave Czech sociology a durable framework for treating housing not as a narrow technical matter, and territory not as a passive background, but as core dimensions of social inequality and social change.

What makes this school particularly strong is its fusion of several traditions that elsewhere often remain fragmented: economic sociology of housing, urban sociology, local-government research, rural sociology, socio-spatial differentiation, and post-socialist urban studies. In the Czech case, housing policy, suburbanisation, metropolitan governance, regional disparities, peripheral rural disadvantage, and the afterlives of socialist urbanism have increasingly been studied within one broader analytical field. This field is not confined to Prague-based Academy

sociology alone. It extends into Charles University's urban and regional research environment, where Jana Temelová works in the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development and the Urban and Regional Laboratory, and into the post-socialist urban-theory line represented by Slavomíra Ferenčuhová. The result is a school that is partly sociological in the stricter institutional sense and partly an interdisciplinary Czech urban-regional formation with sociology at its core.

Historically, this school became especially important because post-1989 and post-1993 Czechia experienced a combination of developments that forced sociologists to think spatially: privatisation and restitution of housing, the rise of super-homeownership, weakening rental alternatives, strong metropolitan concentration, suburban expansion, differentiated regional opportunity structures, and the persistence of rural and inner-urban disadvantage. Czech scholars in this field therefore had to explain how markets, policies, local governance, social inequality, and everyday residential strategies intersect. That is why the school's best work repeatedly moves between the household, the neighbourhood, the city, the region, and the state. In contemporary Czech sociology, few schools have been as successful in connecting micro-level life chances with meso-level territorial structures and macro-level institutional change.

For this section, the strongest representative circle consists of Martin Lux, Petr Sunega, Tomáš Kostecký, Jana Temelová, Slavomíra Ferenčuhová, and Josef Bernard. Lux and Sunega represent the socioeconomics of housing in its most analytically developed form; Kostecký and Bernard anchor the regional, metropolitan, and peripheral-inequality branches; Temelová embodies the urban social-differentiation and neighbourhood-change line; and Ferenčuhová gives the school a theoretically ambitious interpretation of post-socialist cities, planning, and housing estates. Together, they show why Czech housing, urban, and regional sociology has become one of the most recognisable domains of Czech social science since the 1990s.

Martin Lux

The researcher is the central figure of the Czech socioeconomics of housing. His official profile at the Institute of Sociology places him at the head of the Socioeconomics of Housing department, and his publication record shows a long-term agenda spanning housing-policy design, housing finance, affordability, intergenerational transfers, private renting, homeownership reproduction, housing-market instability, and comparative post-socialist housing regimes. This breadth matters because Lux did not build merely a specialist niche in housing policy. He helped create a fully sociological framework in which tenure, affordability, family transfers, welfare expectations, and market institutions could be analysed together. In the Czech context, where housing has become one of the main mechanisms of inequality reproduction, that contribution has been foundational.

Lux's distinctive contribution lies in showing that Czech housing is not only a question of supply and demand, but of path dependence, social norms, and family-mediated strategies in a super-homeownership system. His more recent work on young households, millennials' housing attitudes, housing wealth inequality, and within-family assistance demonstrates that the Czech housing system reproduces inequality through both markets and kinship. At the same time, his earlier work on rent deregulation, subsidies, and housing allowances made him one of the strongest Czech voices connecting sociological analysis to housing-policy design. Through this double orientation toward theory and policy, Lux effectively turned housing into one of the central sociological objects of post-socialist Czechia.

Selected works:

- Lux, M., Sunega, P., & Boelhouwer, P. (2009). The effectiveness of selected housing subsidies in the Czech Republic. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 23(3), 249–269. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-009-9153-1>
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2007). Housing allowances in the Czech Republic in comparative perspective. In P. A. Kemp (Ed.), *Housing Allowances in Comparative Perspective* (pp. 239–264). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2012). Labour Mobility and Housing: The Impact of Housing Tenure and Housing Affordability on Labour Migration in the Czech Republic. *Urban Studies*, 49(3), 599–614. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098011405693>
- Lux, M., Cirman, A., & Sunega, P. (2017). Housing restitution policies among post-socialist countries: explaining divergence. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 17, 145–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616718.2016.1246602>
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2020). Using Path Dependence Theory to Explain Housing Regime Change: The Traps of Super-Homeownership. *Critical Housing Analysis*, 7(1), 25–35. <https://doi.org/10.13060/23362839.2020.7.1.501>
- Lux, M., Kubala, P. K., & Sunega, P. (2023). Why so moderate? Understanding millennials' views on the urban housing affordability crisis in the post-socialist context of the Czech Republic. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 38(3), 1601–1617. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-022-10005-x>

Petr Sunega

The researcher is one of the principal co-builders of the Czech housing school and the scholar who most clearly represents its policy-modelling and affordability-analysis wing. His official profile defines his focus through housing, housing and social policy, housing allowances and subsidies, and simulation modelling. This description is highly accurate. Sunega's work has been especially important in translating general sociological questions about inequality and housing tenure into analytically specific research on allowances, affordability indicators, market equilibria, and labour mobility. In Czech housing sociology, he has therefore played the role of the scholar who repeatedly converts broad structural problems into measurable policy-sensitive mechanisms.

Sunega's contribution to this school lies in two especially important areas. First, he helped explain how state instruments such as housing allowances actually function within the Czech housing system, which made sociological housing research directly relevant to social policy. Secondly, together with Lux, he developed one of the strongest post-socialist research lines on the consequences of tenure structures, affordability, and intergenerational transfers. His work on overcrowding and affordability indicators, labour migration under constrained housing conditions, and housing wealth inequality among young households shows that housing in Czechia is never just a market issue; it is a social-policy issue, a mobility issue, and an inequality issue at once.

Selected works:

- Sunega, P. (2001). *Adresný příspěvek na nájemné v prostředí České republiky: komparace vybraných modelů*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

- Sunega, P. (2003). Současná a budoucí podoba příspěvku na bydlení v České republice. *Urbanismus a územní rozvoj*, 6(4), 33–39. https://seb.soc.cas.cz/images/publikace_download/uur_2003_prispevek.pdf
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2007). Housing allowances in the Czech Republic in comparative perspective. In P. A. Kemp (Ed.), *Housing Allowances in Comparative Perspective* (pp. 239–264). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2012). Labour Mobility and Housing: The Impact of Housing Tenure and Housing Affordability on Labour Migration in the Czech Republic. *Urban Studies*, 49(3), 599–614. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098011405693>
- Sunega, P., & Lux, M. (2016). Subjective perception versus objective indicators of overcrowding and housing affordability. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 31(4), 695–717. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-016-9496-3>
- Lux, M., & Sunega, P. (2023). Housing wealth inequality, intergenerational transfers and young households in the super-homeownership system. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 25(2), 349–371. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2023.2269618>

Tomáš Kostecký

The researcher is one of the leading architects of the Czech regional and metropolitan branch of this school. His official profile at the Institute of Sociology identifies him as a senior researcher in Local and Regional Studies and defines his topics through housing, city and village, migration and mobility, politics and political attitudes, regions, and elections and electoral research. This wide range is not accidental. Kostecký's work has long stood at the intersection of socio-spatial differentiation, metropolitan development, regional government performance, suburbanisation, and the political consequences of uneven territorial development. He is therefore one of the figures who prevented Czech urban-regional sociology from becoming either purely spatial or purely political.

His specific contribution to this school lies in demonstrating that spatial inequalities have both social and political consequences. Kostecký's analyses of metropolitan governance, suburbanisation, regional performance, and socio-spatial inequality in Prague's metropolitan region showed that post-socialist transformation did not produce only new class relations; it also produced new territorial configurations of inequality and new patterns of political behaviour. His work therefore tied together metropolitan sociology, regional development, housing inequality, and the geographies of discontent. In the Czech context, this was a major conceptual gain, because it connected territorial structure directly to the wider sociology of cohesion and legitimacy.

Selected works:

- Kostecký, T. (2000). Housing and Its Influence on the Development of Social Inequalities in the Post-Communist Czech Republic. *Czech Sociological Review*, 8(2), 177–193. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2000.36.12.07>
- Kostecký, T., & Čermák, D. (2004). *Metropolitan Areas in the Czech Republic — Definitions, Basic Characteristics, Patterns of Suburbanisation and Their Impact on Political Behaviour*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Kostecký, T., Patočková, V., & Vobecká, J. (2007). Regions in the Czech Republic — Are There Connections between Economic Development, Social Capital, and Government

Performance? *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(5), 911–943.
<https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.5.06>

- Kostelecký, T., Illner, M., & Vobecká, J. (2007). Metropolitan Governance in the Czech Republic. In J.-P. Collin & M. Robertson (Eds.), *Governing Metropolises: Profiles of Issues and Experiments on Four Continents* (pp. 235–258). Sainte-Foy (Quebec City): Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Kostelecký, T., & Vobecká, J. (2017). Socio-Spatial Inequalities in the Czech Metropolitan Areas: The Case of Prague Metro. In J. M. Sellers, M. Arretche, D. Kübler, & E. Razin (Eds.), *Inequality and Governance in the Metropolis: Place Equality Regimes and Fiscal Choices in Eleven Countries* (pp. 221–236). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Kostelecký, T. (with team) (2023–2025). *Social and Political Consequences of Spatial Inequalities: East-Central Europe Case Study*. [Project profile]. Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

Jana Temelová

The researcher represents the urban-social and neighbourhood-differentiation wing of the Czech school. Her profile at Charles University places her in the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development and the Urban and Regional Laboratory, and her projects and publications concentrate on metropolitan social environments, neighbourhood change, inner-city transformation, socio-spatial differentiation, and suburban safety. Although institutionally she comes from social geography, her work belongs squarely within the Czech urban-sociological field because it repeatedly treats neighbourhoods, estates, suburbs, and inner-city streets as socially structured environments shaped by inequality, selective mobility, and post-socialist restructuring. Her inclusion in this school is therefore analytically necessary.

Temelová's importance lies in her micro- and meso-level attention to urban change. Where Kostelecký often works at the metropolitan and governance scale, Temelová shows how socio-spatial differentiation is lived and reproduced in housing estates, inner-city neighbourhoods, and suburban developments. Her work on Prague's inner city, on housing estates after socialism, and on marginalised urban populations in the city centre demonstrates that post-socialist urban inequality in Czechia often emerges at very fine spatial scales. She has therefore been essential for making Czech urban sociology more attentive to everyday urban life, neighbourhood trajectories, safety perceptions, and the differentiated outcomes of urban restructuring.

Selected works:

- Temelová, J., Novák, J., Ouředníček, M., & Puldová, P. (2011). Housing Estates in the Czech Republic after Socialism: Various Trajectories and Inner Differentiation. *Urban Studies*, 48(9), 1811–1834. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098010379279>
- Temelová, J., & Novák, J. (2011). Daily street life in the inner city of Prague under transformation: the visual experience of socio-spatial differentiation and temporal rhythms. *Visual Studies*, 26(3), 213–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2011.610944>
- Temelová, J., Novák, J., Kährik, A., & Tammaru, T. (2017). Neighbourhood Trajectories in the Inner Cities of Prague and Tallinn: What Affects the Speed of Social and Demographic Change? *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 98(4), 349–366. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geob.12109>

- Temelová, J., Novák, J., & Jíchová, J. (2016). Safe life in the suburbs? Crime and perceptions of safety in new residential developments in Prague's hinterland, Czech Republic. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 23(4), 677–696. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776414534254>
- Temelová, J., Pospíšilová, L., Jíchová, M., & Dvořáková, N. (2016). Urban Social Problems and Marginalized Populations in Postsocialist Transition Societies: Perceptions of the City Center of Prague, Czechia. *Urban Affairs Review*, 53(4), 663–690. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087415620304>

Slavomíra Ferenčuhová

The researcher gives the Czech housing-urban-regional school one of its strongest theoretical and historical dimensions. Her current profile at the Institute of Sociology and the CESCAME project presents her as a researcher specialising in urban sociology, the history of urban planning, the post-socialist city, and climate change and cities. Her earlier academic trajectory at Masaryk University and her continued publication profile show that she has consistently worked on post-socialist urbanism, Czechoslovak planning history, large housing estates, and the theoretical place of East-Central European cities in global urban thought. This makes her one of the main scholars through whom Czech urban sociology entered broader international theory debates.

Ferenčuhová's contribution is especially important because she insists that post-socialist cities should not be treated as marginal empirical anomalies. Instead, they should be used to rethink urban theory itself. Her work on cities behind the Iron Curtain, on definitions of post-socialist cities, on the relational history of socialist planning, and on everyday responses to climate change in Czech cities moves the Czech school beyond applied urban analysis toward conceptual innovation. She thus connects housing estates, planning, climate, and socialist urban legacies to a much larger discussion about how cities are theorised from East-Central Europe. In the Czech context, this has been a major intellectual expansion of the field.

Selected works

- Ferenčuhová, S. (2013). *Sociologie města 20. a 21. století*. Praha/Brno: SLON / Muni Press.
- Ferenčuhová, S. (2011). *Meno, mesto, vec. Urbánne plánovanie v sociológii mesta a prípad (post)socialistického Brna*. Brno: Masaryk University.
- Ferenčuhová, S. (2016). Accounts from behind the curtain: On history and geography in the critical analysis of urban theory. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40(1), 113–131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12332>
- Ferenčuhová, S. (2016). Explicit Definitions and Implicit Assumptions about Post-Socialist Cities in Academic Writings. *Geography Compass*, 10(12), 514–524. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12282>
- Ferenčuhová, S. (2021). Thinking relationally about socialist cities: cross-border connections in Czechoslovak post-war urban planning and housing construction. *Planning Perspectives*, 36(4), 667–687. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2020.1844042>
- Ferenčuhová, S. (2022). Inconspicuous adaptations to climate change in everyday life: Sustainable household responses to drought and heat in Czech cities. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 22(3), 729–746. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14695405211013955>

Josef Bernard

The researcher represents the branch of this school most closely concerned with rural sociology, peripherality, local opportunity structures, and the spatial organisation of disadvantage. His official profile at the Institute of Sociology identifies him as head of Local and Regional Studies and defines his focus through rural and urban sociology, social and spatial inequalities, local and regional development, local government, and elections. This is a particularly important position in the Czech context, because it makes clear that regional sociology is not limited to administrative-territorial comparison. In Bernard's work, it becomes a sociology of how opportunities, deprivation, mobility, and public life are territorially organised.

Bernard's major contribution lies in conceptualising peripheral rural regions not simply as economically weaker spaces, but as places where poor opportunity structures, weak service accessibility, low-quality jobs, and concentrated social disadvantage intersect. His work on rural poverty, quality of life, peripheral families, and coping strategies has helped define one of the strongest Czech lines in spatial inequality research. He also brought Czech rural sociology into comparative European discussion by showing that the rural–urban gap and the differentiation within rural areas must be explained through broader structural opportunity environments rather than romantic or decline-centred images of the countryside. In this sense, Bernard gave the Czech school one of its clearest concepts for linking space and inequality: regional opportunity structures.

Selected works:

- Bernard, J., & Šimon, M. (2016). Rural Idyll Without Rural Sociology? Changing Features, Functions and Research of the Czech Countryside. *East European Countryside*, 22(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1515/eec-2016-0003>
- Bernard, J. (2019). Where have all the rural poor gone? Explaining the rural–urban poverty gap in European countries. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 59(3), 369–392. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12235>.
- Bernard, J. (2019). Families and local opportunities in rural peripheries: Intersections between resources, ambitions and the residential environment. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 66, 43–51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.01.025>.
- Bernard, J., Contzen, S., Decker, A., & Shucksmith, M. (2019). Poverty and social exclusion in diversified rural contexts. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 59(3), 353–368. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12260>
- Bernard, J., Steinführer, A., Klärner, A., & Keim-Klärner, S. (2023). Regional opportunity structures: A research agenda to link spatial and social inequalities in rural areas. *Progress in Human Geography*, 47(1), 103–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325221139980>
- Bernard, J., & Decker, A. (2024). Living and dealing with limited opportunities: Social disadvantage and coping strategies in rural peripheries. *Sociální studia / Social Studies*, 13(2), 29–53. <https://doi.org/10.5817/SOC2016-2-29>

Taken together, these six figures show why the Czech school of housing, urban, and regional sociology has become one of the most substantial schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Lux and Sunega made housing into a central sociological problem of inequality, welfare, and intergenerational transfer; Kostecký linked metropolitan development and regional differentiation to governance and political consequences; Temelová analysed the fine-grained urban textures of neighbourhood change, segregation, and everyday socio-spatial difference;

Ferenčuhová brought post-socialist urbanism into dialogue with general urban theory; and Bernard gave the field one of its strongest frameworks for understanding peripherality, rural disadvantage, and spatial opportunity structures. The result is a school that explains Czech society not only through classes, values, or institutions, but through the territories, dwellings, neighbourhoods, and regional structures in which those social relations are materially organised.

The Czech School of Migration Studies and Integration Research

The Czech school of migration studies and integration research emerged as a distinct branch of contemporary Czech sociology when immigration to Czechia ceased to be treated as a temporary labour-market side effect and became recognised as a durable transformation of the country's social composition, urban structure, local governance, and public culture. What makes this school important is that it does not study migration only as border crossing or labour inflow. It studies migrant incorporation, residential trajectories, school integration, community formation, public attitudes, and the differentiated position of Ukrainians, Vietnamese, and, more recently, Ukrainian war refugees within Czech society. In institutional terms, the school is anchored above all in the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, especially in the Czech Social Science Data Archive, Local and Regional Studies, and the migration-related projects that connect survey research, spatial analysis, and policy-oriented integration research.

A second defining feature of this school is its combination of integration research with socio-spatial and methodological sophistication. Czech migration sociology has not developed primarily as a narrowly legal or administrative field. Instead, it has been built through research on migrant communities, immigrant incorporation into schools and neighbourhoods, residential segregation, internal mobility of foreigners, and majority-society responses to migration. This is why the school sits at the intersection of migration sociology, urban and regional sociology, public-opinion research, and social methodology. Its strongest representatives have shown that migration in Czechia must be analysed simultaneously through labour, education, housing, community life, and local institutional capacity.

For the purposes of this section, the author narrows the preliminary circle to the four most directly migration-centred figures whose work is most clearly documented as a sustained contribution to migration and integration research in contemporary Czech sociology: Yana Leontiyeva, Josef Bernard, Renáta Mikešová, and Martin Šimon. This does not diminish the importance of adjacent contributors such as Paulína Tabery, Martin Spurný, or Jana Vitíková in refugee-survey and migration-attitudes research; it simply keeps the section focused on the scholars whose core profile is most tightly connected to migration and integration as a substantive sociological field.

Yana Leontiyeva

The researcher is one of the central figures of Czech migration sociology in the strict sense. Her official profile at the Institute of Sociology identifies her as head of the Czech Social Science Data Archive and defines her main topics as research methodology, migration and mobility, and sociological data, while her stated research focus includes international migration and

minority studies. This institutional location is important. Leontiyeva helped connect migration research in Czechia not only to substantive questions of migrant incorporation but also to the methodological challenges of surveying foreigners, building usable datasets, and embedding Czech migration research in comparative social-science infrastructure.

Her substantive contribution lies above all in making Ukrainian migration, migrant skill use, minority community organisation, and refugee well-being central objects of Czech sociology. She has studied labour migrants, students, minorities, and refugees, and has consistently shown that integration is not a single process but a layered one that includes labour-market mismatch, transnational identification, community representation, and access to support systems. In that sense, Leontiyeva gave the Czech school one of its strongest bridges between empirical migration research, integration theory, and data-based policy relevance.

Selected works:

- Leontiyeva, Yana. 2014. The Education–Employment Mismatch among Ukrainian Migrants in the Czech Republic. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 3(1), 63–84. <https://ceemr.uw.edu.pl/vol-3-no-1-june-2014/articles/education-employment-mismatch-among-ukrainian-migrants-czech-republic>
- Jirka, Luděk D. K., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2022). Transnationalism, Integration and Identification: A Discussion of the Variability and Dynamics of Social Processes through the Example of Student Migration from Ukraine to the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 58(1), 29–51. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2022.009>
- Leontiyeva, Y. (2009). Komunitní život a reprezentace zájmů ukrajinské menšiny ČR. In V. Nováková & P. Vaškovič (Eds.), *Multikulturalita v řízení globalizované firmy* (pp. 11–24). Praha: ČVUT.
- Leontiyeva, Y., & Tollarová, B. (2011). *Results from a Survey of Foreigners' Incomes, Expenditures and Remittances. Main Findings Concerning Remittances*. Research report.
- Leontiyeva, Y., Vitíková, J., Spurný, M., Pilnáček, M., Kyselá, M., Zhmurko, O., Tabery, P. & Winkler, P. (2023). Mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia: A cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 329. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2023.115552>

Josef Bernard

The researcher represents the branch of the Czech migration school that links migrant integration to place, local opportunity structures, and internal mobility. His official profile identifies his topics as city and village, migration and mobility, regions, social inequalities, and public administration, while his department leads projects on foreigners' migratory patterns in Czechia and on socio-spatial disadvantage in peripheral regions. This positioning is analytically important because Bernard's migration sociology is never detached from territorial sociology. He studies migrants not only as individuals entering the country, but as actors distributed across cities, villages, and regional structures of opportunity and constraint.

Bernard's main contribution to this school lies in his analysis of socio-cultural integration and internal redistribution of immigrants within Czechia. He helped show that integration depends on different mechanisms for different migrant communities and that secondary mobility of foreigners is crucial for understanding whether migrant settlement leads to concentration or diffusion. In his work, migration is therefore inseparable from neighbourhood context,

settlement patterns, and local social incorporation. This made him one of the scholars who gave Czech migration sociology its socio-spatial and regionally differentiated character.

Selected works:

- Bernard, J., & Mikešová, R. (2014). The Socio-cultural Integration of Immigrants: In Between Temporary Migration and Permanent Settlement. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 50(4). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2014.50.4.30>
- Bernard, J. (2007). Soziale Integration von Großstadt-Dorf-MigrantInnen in Österreich und in der Tschechischen Republik. *SWS-Rundschau*, 47(2), 140–163. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-164531>
- Bernard, J., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2013). Cizinci jako obtížně dosažitelná populace. *SDA Info*, 7, 57–80. <https://www.soc.cas.cz/cz/publikace/cizinci-jako-obtizne-dosazitelna-populace>
- Janska, E., & Bernard, J. (2015). What shapes the concentration/deconcentration processes? The factors influencing internal migration of immigrants in Czechia. *Geografie*, 120(4), 585–602. <https://doi.org/10.37040/geografie2015120040585>

Renáta Mikešová

The researcher belongs to the younger generation that decisively expanded Czech migration sociology toward local governance, school integration, and the refugee crisis after 2022. Her official profile in Local and Regional Studies states that her research focus includes international migration and integration, the education of pupils with a migration background, local politics, and regional differentiation of voting behaviour. This profile makes her unusually well placed within the migration school: she works at the intersection of migrant incorporation, local institutions, and territorial governance.

Mikešová's contribution lies in extending earlier Czech migration research from labour and community questions toward the local governance and educational dimensions of integration. She has co-authored one of the key Czech articles on the integration trajectories of Ukrainians and Vietnamese, participated in the major project on residential segregation and mobility of foreign citizens, and more recently led research on the education of foreigners in Czech schools and on small municipalities coping with the Ukrainian refugee influx. Through this work, she helped move the school from classical immigrant integration research toward the study of how municipalities, schools, and local service systems absorb migration-related pressures.

Selected works:

- Bernard, J., & Mikešová, R. (2014). The Socio-cultural Integration of Immigrants: In Between Temporary Migration and Permanent Settlement. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 50(4). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2014.50.4.30>
- Leontiyeva, Y., R. Mikešová, B. Tollarová. 2018. *Pražané s cizím pasem. Výsledky výzkumu cizinců a cizinek ze zemí mimo EU žijících v české metropoli*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR, v. v. i. Strategie AV21 Špičkový výzkum ve veřejném zájmu. <https://doi.org/10.13060/m.2018.69>
- Mikešová, R., Čermák, D., & Špaček, D. (2026). *Small Municipalities and Ukrainian Migrant Crisis*. In D. Špaček & S. Balík (Eds.), *Fragmented Local Government Systems and Crises. Experiences from Czechia* (pp. 143–168). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-01897-7_6.

- Čermák, D., & Mikešová, R. (2025). How small municipalities contribute to robust crisis governance—Experiences from two recent large-scale crises in Czechia. *State and Local Government Review*, 57(3), 241–252. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0160323X251320135>
- Mikešová, R., Stachová, J., Šimon, M., Zhmurko, O., Leontiyeva, Y. (2024). *Education of Foreigners in Schools and Its Impact on Successful Integration into Czech Society*. Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, Department of Local and regional studies. <https://www.soc.cas.cz/en/projects/vzdelavani-cizincu-ve-skolach-jeho-dopad-na-uspesne-zacleneni-do-ceske-spolecnosti>

Martin Šimon

The researcher represents the urban-spatial and segregation-analytic line of the Czech migration school. His official profile states that he is the principal investigator of the Czech Science Foundation grant on the residential segregation and mobility of foreign citizens and that he has published in leading international journals; the project page further defines this agenda through neighbourhoods, housing trajectories, and neighbourhood context. This is a major contribution because it gave Czech migration sociology one of its most advanced spatial-analytical branches. In Šimon's work, migration is studied not simply through flows but through the differentiated urban locations where migrant incorporation or separation actually occurs.

Šimon's importance within the school lies in showing that Czechia, though often treated as a “new destination country”, already exhibits identifiable patterns of ethnic segregation, gateway-city differentiation, and foreign-citizen mobility that must be analysed with sophisticated spatial methods. His work on Prague and Central Bohemia, on multiscalar segregation, and on the new urban diversity of Central European cities moved Czech migration research beyond descriptive mapping and into comparative urban migration studies. Through that move, he connected Czech sociology to broader European debates on immigrant settlement, segregation, and spatial assimilation in post-socialist urban contexts.

Selected works:

- Šimon, M., Křížková, I., & Klsák, A. (2021). New urban diversity at and after the economic downturn: recent trajectories of ethnic segregation in Central European cities. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 10(2), 23–47. <https://doi.org/10.17467/ceemr.2021.11>.
- Křížková, I., Klsák, A., & Šimon, M. (2022). Migration and residential mobility of foreign citizens in Prague and the Central Bohemian Region. In M. Ouředníček (Ed.), *Prague and Central Bohemia: Current Population Processes and Socio-Spatial Differentiation* (pp. 59–72). Praha: Karolinum.
- Šimon, M., Křížková, I., & Klsák, A. (2022). Residential segregation in Prague and Central Bohemian Region 2012–2018: A multiscalar approach using individualized neighbourhoods. In M. Ouředníček (ed.), *Prague and Central Bohemia: Current Population Processes and Socio-Spatial Differentiation* (pp. 73–90). Praha: Karolinum.
- Šimon, M., Křížková, I., Klsák, A., Mikešová, R., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2021). Základní trendy rozmístění cizinců v Česku 2008–2015: rezidenční segregace perspektivou různě velkých individualizovaných sousedství. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.17467/ceemr.2021.11>

Taken together, these four figures show the internal architecture of the Czech school of migration studies and integration research. Leontiyeva gave it a strong empirical and methodological centre around migrant communities, Ukrainian migration, and refugee data. Bernard connected migration to local and regional structures of incorporation and internal mobility. Mikešová extended the field toward school integration, municipal governance, and the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Šimon supplied the advanced spatial and segregation-analytic branch that linked Czech migration research to broader Central European urban debates. The result is a Czech migration school that is not merely descriptive or policy-administrative, but genuinely sociological: it explains how migration becomes part of the country's labour market, neighbourhood system, school system, local governance, and social imagination.

The Czech School of Public Opinion, Political Sociology, and Democratic Culture

The Czech school of public opinion, political sociology, and democratic culture is one of the core schools of contemporary Czech sociology because it studies the relationship between citizens and the political order at several interconnected levels: electoral behaviour, party competition, civic participation, trust in institutions, support for democracy, legitimacy, national identity, and the public interpretation of political change. In the current institutional structure of the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, this school is anchored above all in two closely connected units: Values and Politics, which explicitly studies political engagement, civic participation, public trust in institutions, national identity, and attitudes towards migration, and the Public Opinion Research Centre, headed by Paulína Tabery and focused on public opinion as a substantive and methodological field.

What makes this school especially important in the Czech case is that it emerged directly from the post-1989 and post-1993 need to understand how democracy is received, interpreted, trusted, criticised, and reproduced in a society that experienced both state socialism and rapid democratic-market transformation. Czech scholars in this field did not limit themselves to electoral statistics or institutional description. They studied democratic legitimacy, turnout decline, the social bases of party support, the meaning of political knowledge, the role of civic culture, the persistence of national identity, and the changing balance between liberty and security. This gave Czech sociology a distinctive capacity to analyse democracy not only as a constitutional order but as a lived social relation between citizens, elites, parties, institutions, and public discourse.

A further strength of this school is its combination of historical depth with empirical sophistication. Some of its most important figures work through long-term survey series, election studies, ISSP data, comparative post-communist analysis, and the reconstruction of older public-opinion archives, including material from the Prague Spring era. Others analyse democratic legitimacy, civil society, parliamentary politics, and value-based voting through a broader historical-sociological lens. As a result, Czech political sociology has developed not as a narrow branch of political science, but as a strongly sociological field concerned with how political order is embedded in values, inequalities, identities, memories, and patterns of trust.

For the present section, the most representative core figures are Lukáš Linek, Paulína Tabery, Pat Lyons, Zdenka Mansfeldová, and Klára Vlachová. Together, they represent the main

internal lines of the school: electoral behaviour and party politics; public opinion and trust; democratic knowledge and political attitudes; civil society, representation, and accountability; and the foundational study of democratic legitimacy, values, and national identity.

Lukáš Linek

The researcher is one of the principal contemporary figures of Czech political sociology in its strict electoral and party-political form. His official profile at the Institute of Sociology places him in the Values and Politics department and defines his thematic focus through politics and political attitudes, public opinion, and elections and electoral research. This positioning is highly revealing, because it shows that Linek's work stands at the exact junction where political behaviour, party competition, turnout, and public attitudes meet. He is not simply an election analyst in a technical sense; he is a sociologist of how democratic participation, partisanship, and representation are socially structured in Czech society.

Linek's contribution to this school lies above all in explaining the social and political mechanisms behind turnout change, party membership weakness, second-order elections, and the nationalisation of party competition. His work repeatedly shows that Czech democracy cannot be understood only through formal institutions; it must also be analysed through changing motivations for participation, rising inequalities in turnout, weak organised partisanship, and the differentiated territorial or social embedding of parties. In this sense, he helped transform Czech electoral sociology from descriptive election commentary into a more cumulative analysis of participation, party organisation, and democratic inclusion.

Selected works:

- Linek, L. (2011). Proč se měnila úroveň účasti ve volbách do Poslanecké sněmovny v letech 1996–2010? *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 47(1), 9–32. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2011.47.1.02>
- Linek, L. (2013). Rostoucí sociální nerovnosti ve volební účasti v Česku v letech 1990–2010. *NAŠE SPOLEČNOST*, 1, 3–14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13060/1214-438X.2013.11.1.1>
- Linek, L., & Lyons, P. (2010). Party System Nationalization and Non-Uniform Vote Switching: Evidence from the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 46(3), 375–399. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2010.46.3.03>
- Linek, L., & Pachacek, S. (2013). Low Membership in Czech Political Parties: Party Strategy or Structural Determinants? *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 23(2), 259–275. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523270701317539>
- Linek, L., & Lyons, P. (2007). Zdroje a motivace volební účasti. In *Voliči a volby 2006* (pp. 63–85). Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Linek, L. (Ed.). 2012. *Voliči a volby 2010*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Paulína Tabery

The researcher represents the public-opinion branch of this school in its most institutionally visible contemporary form. Her official profile identifies her as head of the Public Opinion Research Centre, with topics in social policy, public policy, and public opinion. This position matters because the Czech school of political sociology has long depended on the ability to connect democratic culture not only to theory or election studies, but also to systematic measurement of trust, security attitudes, public-policy reception, and opinion formation in crisis conditions. Tabery stands at the centre of exactly that interface.

Her main contribution lies in turning public opinion into a serious sociological object rather than treating it merely as polling. Her work examines how public opinion relates to public policy, how trust is structured in times of crisis, and how citizens balance liberty and security under perceived threat. Through this agenda, she has strengthened the analytical bridge between public-opinion infrastructure and broader democratic-culture research. In the contemporary Czech setting, this has been especially important because trust, legitimacy, and crisis-related attitudes increasingly determine how democracy functions in practice.

Selected works:

- Tabery, P. (2016). Public opinion and public policy in the Czech Republic. In A. Veselý, M. Nekola, & E. Hejzlarová (Eds.), *Policy Analysis in the Czech Republic* (pp. 177–202). Policy Press.
- Tabery, P., & Pilnáček, M. (2021). The network structure of trust in the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Societies*, 23, 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2020.1834597>
- Pilnáček, M., Tabery, P., Heřmanová, M., Šlerka, J., & Čejková, L. (2024). What explains the belief in conspiracy theories? Composite concepts as a new approach to studying conspiracy theories. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*.
<https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-5682677/v1>

Pat Lyons

The researcher is one of the key figures who gave Czech political sociology a strong comparative-democratic and knowledge-centred dimension. His publication pages at the Institute of Sociology place him within *Values and Politics*, and his major books and articles focus on political knowledge, democratic attitudes, trust in institutions, EU-related public opinion, and the historical reconstruction of mass and elite opinion during the Prague Spring. This combination is distinctive. It means that Lyons does not study democratic culture only at one moment or through one survey; he reconstructs it across historical regimes and across several dimensions of cognition, legitimacy, and participation.

Lyons's contribution to this school lies above all in showing that democratic culture in Czechia must be analysed through knowledge, historical continuity, regime memory, and differentiated trust. His work on political knowledge turned an often loosely used concept into a major empirical research programme. His work on democratic “adjectives” and the Prague Spring linked contemporary Czech political sociology to a deeper historical genealogy of democratic attitudes under both socialist and liberal regimes. In doing so, he widened Czech political sociology beyond elections and opinion snapshots toward a historically layered sociology of democratic understanding.

Selected works:

- Lyons, P. (2017). *Political Knowledge in the Czech Republic*. Praha: Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.
- Lyons, P. (2013). *Adjectives of Democracy: Citizenship and Political Attitudes under Socialist and Liberal Democracy in the Czech Republic*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Lyons, P. (2009). *Mass and Elite Attitudes during the Prague Spring Era: Importance and Legacy*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

- Lyons, P. (2013). Impact of salience on differential trust across political institutions in the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 49(3), 347–374. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2013.49.3.01>
- Lyons, P. (2007). “It’s the Economy, Stupid” Popular Support for EU Accession in the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(3), 523–560. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.3.02>
- Linek, L., & Lyons, P. (2010). Party System Nationalization and Non-Uniform Vote Switching: Evidence from the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 46(3), 375–399. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2010.46.3.03>

Zdenka Mansfeldová

The researcher is one of the principal architects of the Czech line that links political sociology to civil society, representation, accountability, interest intermediation, and institutional design. Her official profile at the Institute of Sociology places her in *Values and Politics* and defines her main topics as civil society and politics and political attitudes. This is an unusually important position within the school, because it means that her work continuously mediates between democratic culture “from below” and political institutions “from above”. In the Czech field, she has therefore been crucial in preventing political sociology from collapsing into either electoral sociology alone or abstract democratic theory alone.

Mansfeldová’s contribution is especially strong in the analysis of post-communist party systems, social partnership, civil-society development, representation of interests, and parliamentary accountability. Her work repeatedly addresses how democracy functions through organisations, intermediary structures, and institutional channels that connect society to the state. In a post-socialist context, this was decisive: it meant that Czech political sociology did not only ask whether democracy was supported, but also how it was organisationally mediated through parties, interest groups, parliaments, and civic actors. That institutional-societal perspective remains one of the most valuable features of her work.

Selected works:

- Kitschelt, H., Mansfeldová, Z., Markowski, R., & Tóka, G. (1999). *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brokl, L., & Mansfeldová, Z. (1995). *Social Partnership in the Czech Republic*. In *Austro-Corporatism: Past, Present, Future* (pp. 151–156). New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Čambáliková, M., & Mansfeldová, Z. (1997). Social Partnership in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. *Sociológia / Slovak Sociological Review*, 29(3), 301–314. <https://www.cceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=172214>
- Mansfeldová, Z., & Kroupa, A. (Eds.). (2008). *Proměny reprezentace zájmů po vstupu do Evropské unie*. Praha: SLON.
- Mansfeldová, Z. (2004). The Politics between Parliament and Government — the Institutional Framework and the Reality within the Czech Parliament. In *Central European Parliaments* (pp. 28–47). Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Klára Vlachová

The researcher belongs to the foundational generation of the Czech school of political sociology and democratic culture. Her 2001 article on the legitimacy of democracy explicitly identifies her as affiliated with the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences in Prague,

and her body of work from the late 1990s onward shows a sustained engagement with democratic legitimacy, trust in institutions, electoral behaviour, national identity, justice, and the value bases of political choice. In historical terms, she is one of the figures who helped define the central research questions of the Czech political-sociological field in the first decade after independence.

Vlachová's particular importance lies in the fact that she combined three lines that became structurally decisive for the school: first, the study of democratic legitimacy and institutional trust; secondly, the study of value-based electoral behaviour and party-voter alignment; and thirdly, the study of national identity and national pride in Czech and wider European perspective. Through this combination, she helped establish that democratic culture in Czechia must be analysed not only through institutions or turnout, but also through perceptions of justice, evaluative legitimacy, symbolic nationhood, and the internal structure of political attitudes. For the development of Czech sociology after 1993, that was a foundational achievement.

Selected works:

- Vlachová, K. (2001). The Legitimacy of Democracy and Trust in Political Institutions in the Czech Republic. *Czech Sociological Review*, 9(1), 13–33.
<https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2001.37.11.05>
- Matějů, P., & Vlachová, K. (1998). Values and Electoral Decisions in the Czech Republic. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 31(3), 249–269.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X\(98\)00011-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X(98)00011-7)
- Vlachová, K. (2000). Economic Justice in the Czech Republic, 1991–1995. In *Marketing Democracy: Changing Opinion about Inequality and Politics in East Central Europe* (pp. 45–77). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Vlachová, K. (2004). Democratic Development, the Legitimacy of Democracy, Social Inequality, and Social Justice: The Case of the Czech Republic 1989–2000. In *Democratic Values in Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. 31–48). Frankfurt: Institute for Transformation Studies.
- Vlachová, K., & Řeháková, B. (2009). Identity of non-self-evident nation: Czech national identity after the break-up of Czechoslovakia and before accession to the European Union. *Nations and Nationalism*, 15(2), 254–279. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2009.00379.x>
- Vlachová, K. (2019). “This Country is not for Anyone”. Explanations of Low National Pride in the Czech Republic. *Nationalities Papers*, 47(6), 1000–1012.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/NPS.2018.22>

Taken together, these five figures show the internal architecture of the Czech school of public opinion, political sociology, and democratic culture. Linek gave it a powerful line in electoral behaviour, turnout, and party organisation; Tabery strengthened the public-opinion and trust branch in its contemporary institutional form; Lyons connected democratic culture to political knowledge, historical survey archives, and regime memory; Mansfeldová anchored the school in civil society, accountability, and representation; and Vlachová provided some of its foundational analyses of legitimacy, values, identity, and justice. The result is a Czech school that does not reduce politics to institutions alone or to attitudes alone, but studies the full social ecology of democratic life: voting, trust, knowledge, civil society, legitimacy, identity, and the public interpretation of political order.

The Czech School of Methodology, Survey Research, and Social Data Infrastructures

The Czech school of methodology, survey research, and social data infrastructures is one of the quiet foundations of contemporary Czech sociology. Unlike schools built primarily around a substantive topic such as religion, housing, or family, this one provides the discipline with its epistemic machinery: survey design, measurement, data quality standards, metadata, archiving, harmonisation, secondary analysis, and the long-term preservation of empirical materials. Its institutional core lies above all in the Czech Social Science Data Archive (CSDA) at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, which collects data from Czech sociological surveys, public-opinion polling, and international surveys with Czech participation, makes them available for research and teaching, and explicitly prioritises methodology and data quality. The same infrastructure is embedded in broader European networks through CESSDA and EDAN, and its staff participate in Czech implementations of the ISSP and ESS.

What makes this school especially important is that Czech sociology did not stop at building archives in the narrow technical sense. It also produced a distinct culture of methodological self-reflection. In Prague, Petr Soukup at the Institute of Sociological Studies of Charles University developed one of the strongest Czech lines in quantitative methodology, statistical interpretation, and validity questions. At the Public Opinion Research Centre, Jiří Vinopal linked cognitive survey methodology with public-opinion research and instrument design. Within CSDA, Jindřich Krejčí, Martin Vávra, and Yana Leontiyeva built the data-management, documentation, standardisation, and accessibility side of the field. Together, these figures turned methodology from a supporting craft into a recognised research direction in its own right.

This school is also one of the clearest signs of the structural maturity of Czech sociology after 1993. The creation and expansion of CSDA, the implementation of international documentation standards such as DDI, the use of technologies for long-term dissemination and online analysis, and the explicit focus on data comparability and harmonisation all show that Czech sociology gradually moved from one-off empirical production toward cumulative and reusable scientific evidence. In a medium-sized national discipline, that is a major achievement. It means that Czech sociology can preserve its datasets, expose them to reanalysis, connect them to comparative infrastructures, and subject its own empirical foundations to methodological critique.

For the present section, the most representative core figures are Jindřich Krejčí, Petr Soukup, Jiří Vinopal, Martin Vávra, and Yana Leontiyeva. This selection captures the main internal lines of the school: survey quality and archive-building; advanced quantitative methodology; cognitive aspects of questionnaire research and public-opinion measurement; data documentation and historical reconstruction of empirical sociology; and the linkage between data infrastructures, hard-to-reach populations, and the management of social-science datasets.

Jindřich Krejčí

The researcher is the central architect of Czech social-science data infrastructure. His official profile states that he has headed the Czech Social Science Data Archive since 1999, founded

the Sociological Data Archive in 1998, and serves as Deputy Director for Scientific and Project Activities of the Institute of Sociology. The same profile also shows his long-standing involvement in CESSDA, ISSP, and the editorial development of *Data a výzkum / Data & Research*, which makes clear that his role has extended far beyond archive administration into international coordination, research infrastructure policy, and methodological standard-setting.

Krejčí's scholarly contribution lies in making survey quality and data stewardship central concerns of Czech sociology. His work on non-response, total survey error, and the broader concept of survey quality pushed Czech empirical sociology away from a narrow fixation on sampling or descriptive representativeness alone and toward a more comprehensive view of data production. At the same time, his books and projects on data management made archiving, documentation, and secondary use part of the discipline's professional culture. In practice, he helped build the conditions under which Czech sociology could become cumulative, comparable, and internationally legible.

Selected works:

- Krejčí, J. (2002). Access to Czech Social Survey Data. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 38(6), 809–826. <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2002.38.6.07>
- Krejčí, J. (2007). Non-Response in Probability Sample Surveys in the Czech Republic. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(3). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.3.03>
- Krejčí, J. (2008). *Kvalita sociálněvědních výběrových šetření v České republice*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Krejčí, J. (2010). Approaching Quality in Survey Research: Towards a Comprehensive Perspective. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 46(6). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2010.46.6.06>
- Krejčí, J., & Leontiyeva, Y. (eds.). (2012). *Cesty k datům. Zdroje a management sociálněvědních dat v České republice*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Krejčí, J. (2014). *Introduction to the Management of Social Survey Data*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Petr Soukup

The researcher represents the Charles University line of the Czech methodological school. His profile places him at the Institute of Sociological Studies, Department of Sociology, while publication and author materials describe him as focusing on advanced quantitative data analysis, especially multivariate analysis, regression approaches, categorical-data analysis, statistical inference, and later also issues of measurement and invariance. In institutional terms, he is the figure who most clearly links Czech sociological methodology to university-based training in advanced quantitative analysis.

Soukup's main contribution has been the sustained critique of mechanical statistical practice in Czech social science. His work on the misuse of statistical significance, on substantive significance, on different scales and their consequences, and on measurement questions helped cultivate a more reflexive quantitative culture in Czech sociology. He repeatedly insisted that empirical research cannot rely on p-values alone and must confront validity, interpretability, and the substantive size of effects. Through that intervention, he became one of the main figures modernising the statistical conscience of Czech sociology.

Selected works:

- Soukup, P., & Rabušic, L. (2007). *Několik poznámek k jedné obsesi českých sociálních věd — statistické významnosti. Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 43(2). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2007.43.2.06>
- Soukup, P. (2010). *Nesprávná užívání statistické významnosti a jejich možná řešení. Data a výzkum — SDA Info*, 4(2), 77–104. <https://is.cuni.cz/studium/predmety/index.php?do=predmet&kod=JSM033&skr=2011>
- Soukup, P. (2013). *Věcná významnost výsledků a její možnosti měření. Data a výzkum — SDA Info*, 7(2), 125–148. <https://doi.org/10.13060/23362391.2013.127.2.41>
- Soukup, P. (2019). The Use of Statistical and Substantive Significance in the Czech Social Sciences. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 55(2). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2019.55.2.459>
- Soukup, P. (2019). Způsobují různé stupnice různé výsledky? Statisticko-metodologická polemika k článku “Iné škály, iné výsledky”. *Sociológia*, 51(5), 525–528. https://www.sav.sk/?doc=journal-list&journal_article_no=17512
- Straková, J., Soukup, P., & Simonová, J. (2020). Testing the Concept of Academic Futility in Czech Secondary Education. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 56(5). <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2020.042>

Jiří Vinopal

The researcher represents the methodological branch of public-opinion research. His official profile states that since 2001 he has worked as a research fellow and methodologist at the Public Opinion Research Centre of the Institute of Sociology, served as its head from 2004 to 2013, and later led the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. The same profile defines his focus through sociological research methodology, cognitive aspects of survey methodology, sociology of public opinion, and the quality of working life. That combination is exceptionally revealing: Vinopal's work stands exactly at the intersection of questionnaire design, public-opinion research, and measurement construction.

His main contribution lies in demonstrating that survey methodology is not only about samples and fieldwork but also about cognition, wording, scale construction, and conceptualisation of what is being measured. His best-known work on the Subjective Quality of Working Life Indicator (SQWLI) shows this clearly: he built an original survey instrument, discussed its theoretical and methodological premises, and later tested its invariance over time. In doing so, he gave Czech sociology a concrete example of how rigorous instrument development can connect substantive sociology with methodological innovation.

Selected works:

- Vinopal, J. (2009). *Situace standardizovaného dotazování z hlediska kognitivních přístupů [The Situation of the Standardised Interview from the Perspective of Cognitive Approaches]. Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 45(2). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2009.45.2.09>
- Vinopal, J. (2011). *Indikátor subjektivní kvality pracovního života / Subjective Quality of Working Life Indicator. Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 47(5). <https://doi.org/10.13060/00380288.2011.47.5.03>
- Vinopal, J. (2011). *Subjective Quality of Working Life and its Measurement in the Czech Republic over the Last 20 Years. WISO. Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitische Zeitschrift*, 34

- (special issue), 81–95. <https://www.soc.cas.cz/en/publications/subjective-quality-working-life-and-its-measurement-czech-republic-over-last-20-years>
- Vinopal, J. (2012). *The Discussion of Subjective Quality of Working Life Indicators*. *Sociológia / Slovak Sociological Review*, 44(3), 385–401. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279573822_The_Discussion_of_Subjective_Quality_of_Working_Life_Indicators
 - Vinopal, J., & Pospíšilová, K. (2021). *Measurement Invariance of the SQWLi Instrument Over Time*. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 57(3), 343–376. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2020.048>
 - Vinopal, J. (2006). Metodologické aspekty zkoumání kvality pracovního života. In N. Čadová, & M. Paleček (Eds.), *Jak je v Česku vnímána práce* (pp. 185–192). Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Martin Vávra

The researcher represents the branch of the school concerned with data management, documentation, and the historical sociology of empirical research itself. His official profile identifies him as a researcher in the Czech Social Science Data Archive, with a focus on the management of sociological data and values in society. The same staff materials note his editorial role in *Data a výzkum / Data & Research*, which underlines that his contribution has not been limited to technical archiving but has also included shaping the Czech methodological discussion in print.

Vávra's importance lies in the way he connects current data stewardship with the historical memory of Czech empirical sociology. His work on archiving sociological data, standardising variables, and documenting public-opinion research before 1989 shows that infrastructures are not neutral repositories: they are built on classifications, documentation choices, and historical recoveries of earlier empirical traditions. In that sense, he helped broaden the Czech methodological school from contemporary data handling toward reflexive work on the history and organisation of empirical knowledge itself.

Selected works:

- Vávra, M. (2007). Archivace sociologických dat. *Data a výzkum — SDA Info*, 1, 7–18. http://dav.soc.cas.cz/uploads/6ebc693a35832b6473927fd1147cbb8f7ddea63b_DaV0701_p7_18.pdf
- Krejčí, J., & Vávra, M. (2012). Standardy dokumentace a archivace dat. In J. Krejčí, & Y. Leontiyeva (Eds.), *Cesty k datům. Zdroje a management sociálněvědních dat v České republice* (pp. 68–81). Praha: SLON.
- Vávra, M., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2012). Standardizace proměnných v sociálněvědním výzkumu. In J. Krejčí, & Y. Leontiyeva (eds.), *Cesty k datům. Zdroje a management sociálněvědních dat v České republice* (pp. 96–117). Praha: SLON.
- Čížek, T., Chylíková, J., & Vávra, M. (2014). Empirická sociologie za normalizace. In L. Mistríková, & E. Laiferová (Eds.), *Sociológia v ére normalizácie — program, funkcie, perspektívy*. Bratislava.
- Vávra, M., & Čížek, T. (2020). Výzkum veřejného mínění před rokem 1989: služba vědě, státnímu aparátu a veřejnosti. *Naše společnost*, 18(1), 11–31. <https://doi.org/10.13060/1214438X.2020.1.18.517>

Yana Leontiyeva

The researcher stands at the point where data infrastructure, methodological work, and difficult empirical populations meet. Her official profile identifies her as head of the Czech Social Science Data Archive, with topics in research methodology, sociological data, and migration and mobility. This dual profile is significant. It shows that her role in the school is not only organisational. She also represents a line of methodological work concerned with how sociologists collect, document, and interpret data on populations that are hard to reach, mobile, or poorly captured by standard survey instruments.

Leontiyeva's contribution to this school lies in linking archive-building and data management to concrete methodological problems in field research. Her work on *Pathways to Data*, on data sources and management in Czech social science, on foreigners as a hard-to-reach population, and on remittance surveys among migrants shows that methodological sophistication emerges precisely where standardised instruments encounter socially complex empirical worlds. In that sense, she broadened Czech data-infrastructure sociology beyond preservation and metadata toward the design of better evidence for populations that are otherwise poorly represented in official knowledge.

Selected works:

- Krejčí, J., & Leontiyeva, Y. (eds.). (2012). *Cesty k datům. Zdroje a management sociálněvědních dat v České republice*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Krejčí, J., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2012). Cesty k datům pro sociálněvědní výzkum. In J. Krejčí, & Y. Leontiyeva (Eds.), *Cesty k datům. Zdroje a management sociálněvědních dat v České republice* (pp. 12–19). Praha: SLON.
- Bernard, J., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2013). Cizinci jako obtížně dosažitelná populace. *Data a výzkum — SDA Info*, 7(1), 57–80. <https://doi.org/10.13060/1802-8152.2013.7.1.3>
- Leontiyeva, Y., & Tollarová, B. (2011). *Results from a Survey of Foreigners' Incomes, Expenditures and Remittances. Main Findings Concerning Remittances*. Research report.
- Leontiyeva, Y. (2014). The Education–Employment Mismatch among Ukrainian Migrants in the Czech Republic. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 3(1), 63–84. <https://www.soc.cas.cz/en/publications/education-employment-mismatch-among-ukrainian-migrants-czech-republic>

Taken together, these five figures show why the Czech school of methodology, survey research, and social data infrastructures deserves to be treated as one of the major schools of contemporary Czech sociology. Krejčí built the archive and quality-infrastructure core; Soukup sharpened Czech quantitative methodology and its critique of superficial statistical practice; Vinopal connected cognitive survey methodology to public-opinion and instrument design; Vávra linked current data management to the historical memory of empirical sociology; and Leontiyeva tied data infrastructures to the difficult realities of hard-to-reach populations and complex field settings. The result is a school that does not merely support Czech sociology from the background. It actively shapes what counts as valid evidence, how social reality is measured, how datasets are preserved, and how Czech sociology enters European comparative research as a methodologically credible discipline.

The New Czech Sociology of Risks, Crises, and Systemic Change

The new Czech sociology of risks, crises, and systemic change crystallised most clearly in the 2020s, when Czech sociology began to treat pandemic disruption, war-related displacement, public-health vulnerability, energy transition, institutional strain, and democratic uncertainty not as isolated topics but as interlinked systemic processes. The strongest institutional expression of this turn has been SYRI—the National Institute for Research on the Socioeconomic Impact of Diseases and Systemic Risks—which the Institute of Sociology describes as a framework focused on communication, risk and uncertainty, systems resilience, socio-economic inequalities, polarisation and populism, health-system effectiveness, education, economic impacts, and the labour market. The Institute's 2024 annual report also states that its researchers were involved in six of the nine research groups and that, within the communication, risk, and uncertainty stream, the Institute-side lead was Paulína Tabery.

What distinguishes this school from older Czech lines in political sociology, migration, or public-opinion research is the way it integrates several crisis fields into one sociological horizon. In the current Czech case, this includes trust structures during the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity and health inequality during the late pandemic period, the mental-health and support needs of Ukrainian war refugees, public attitudes toward climate and energy transition, and the governance crises of higher education and research institutions confronting gender-based violence and precarity. At the same time, this school reaches beyond narrow “emergency sociology” toward broader questions of Anthropocene change, biosociality, public health, and the instability of contemporary knowledge regimes.

For the present section, the most convincing core constellation consists of Tereza Stöckelová, Marcela Linková, Dana Hamplová, Paulína Tabery, Yana Leontiyeva, and Matouš Pilnáček. Together, they represent the main internal lines of the new school: science-and-technology studies of systemic transformation, institutional vulnerability in academia and research governance, inequality and public-health vulnerability, crisis communication and trust, refugee and migration-related systemic strain, and the data-driven analysis of opinion, behaviour, and risk-related public reasoning.

Tereza Stöckelová

The researcher gives this school one of its most conceptually ambitious foundations. Her official profile at the Institute of Sociology defines her work through the social studies of science, technology, and medicine, and specifically through climate change, public health, environment, and the concept of extended metabolism in technologically mediated biosociality. This is significant because it places crisis sociology in Czechia not only within public-opinion or policy-response research, but also within a deeper sociology of how knowledge, bodies, environments, and infrastructures are reorganised under Anthropocenic conditions.

Her contribution to the new school lies in showing that systemic change is not exhausted by institutional breakdown or public fear. It also involves transformations in scientific governance, research assessment, metabolic knowledge, ecological distress, and the unstable boundaries between science and politics. Stöckelová's work on bypass controversies, research assessment, predatory publishing, and more recent biosocial and ecological themes has therefore supplied Czech sociology with a language for analysing crisis not only as an event,

but as a condition of knowledge production and social metabolism. In that sense, she brings STS, political ecology, and the sociology of expertise directly into the Czech sociology of risks.

Selected works:

- Stöckelová, T. (2012). *Nebezpečné známosti. O vztahu sociálních věd a společnosti*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství SLON.
- Stöckelová, T., Konopásek, Z., & Zamykalová, L. (2008). Making Pure Science and Pure Politics: On the Expertise of Bypass and the Bypass of Expertise. *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 33(4), 529–553. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243907306699>
- Stöckelová, T. (2011/2012). Immutable Mobiles Derailed: STS, Geopolitics, and Research Assessment. *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 37(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243911415872>
- Felt, U., Barben, D., Irwin, A., Joly, P.-B., Rip, A., Stirling, A., & Stöckelová, T. (2013). *Science in Society: Caring for our Futures in Turbulent Times*. European Science Foundation, Science Policy Briefing 50.
- de Rijcke, S., & Stöckelová, T. (2020). Predatory Publishing and the Imperative of International Productivity: Feeding Off and Feeding Up the Dominant. In M. Biagioli & A. Lippman (Eds.), *Gaming the Metrics: Misconduct and Manipulation in Academic Research* (pp. 101–110). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Stöckelová, T., Senft, L., & Kolářová, K. (2022/2023). Sympoietic growth: living and producing with fungi in times of ecological distress. *Agriculture and Human Values*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-022-10366-7>

Marcela Linková

The researcher represents the branch of this school that analyses crisis inside knowledge institutions themselves. Her staff profile at the Institute of Sociology identifies her as head of the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science, with research on the impacts of research assessment, the dynamisation of research, organisations, subjectivities, and the gendered dimensions of research governance and policy implementation. This is a crucial contribution to the new school, because it shows that systemic risk in contemporary Czech sociology also includes institutional precarity, academic assessment regimes, unequal vulnerability, and failures of safety within universities and research organisations.

Linková's importance for this school lies in the way she turns academia itself into an object of crisis sociology. Her work on academic excellence, labour-market segmentation in science, neoliberal restructuring, gender-based violence, and zero-tolerance governance demonstrates that institutions of knowledge are not neutral shelters above crisis. They are sites where power, insecurity, care deficits, and violence become visible in concentrated form. By connecting organisational sociology, science policy, and gendered vulnerability, she has broadened Czech crisis sociology toward institutional breakdown, unsafe environments, and the politics of repair in higher education and research.

Selected works:

- Linková, M. (2017). Academic Excellence and Gender Bias in the Practices and Perceptions of Scientists in Leadership and Decision-making Positions. *Gender and Research*, 18(1), 42–66. <https://doi.org/10.13060/25706578.2017.18.1.349>
- Vohlídalová, M., & Linková, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Gender and Neoliberalism in Czech Academia*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství.

- Linková, M., Langhammerová, G., Andreska, Z., & Oliva, E. (2023). Co-creating gender equality in Czech Academia: External and internal factors. *Sociologica*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.1971-8853/16915>
- Donnovalová, A., Andreska, Z., & Linková, M. (2024). *Sexual and gender-based harassment at universities — the analysis of annual university reports for 2023*. Praha: MŠMT.
- Bondestam, F., Strid, S., Fikejzová, M., & Linková, M. (2024). *D2.1 GenderSAFE — Report on zero-tolerance approaches to gender-violence in higher education and research*. Prague: Institute of Sociology CAS / GenderSAFE.

Dana Hamplová

The researcher occupies a bridging position in this school. Her official profile identifies her topics as religion and religiosity, family, social inequalities, and public health, while her research medallion highlights well-being, family behaviour, and inequality. She is not a crisis sociologist in the narrowest event-driven sense, but she has been important for giving the new school a stronger vocabulary of vulnerability, health, and quality of life. This matters because systemic crises become sociologically visible not only through emergency governance or public discourse, but also through deterioration in well-being, family stress, health inequalities, and cumulative disadvantage.

Hamplová's contribution to the new school lies precisely in this translation of macro-crisis into lived vulnerability. Her work on self-rated health, family and health, work and happiness, and the social patterning of harmful behaviour helps explain how shocks and structural inequalities are filtered through everyday life. In the Czech context, where pandemic, inflationary, and broader insecurity-related effects intersected with pre-existing stratification, such an approach is indispensable. Hamplová therefore strengthens the school's health-and-well-being axis and connects crisis sociology to the deeper sociology of inequality and life quality.

Selected works:

- Hamplová, D. (2019). Does work make mothers happy? *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 20(2), 471–497. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-018-9958-2>
- Hamplová, D., Klusáček, J., & Mráček, T. (2022). Assessment of self-rated health: The relative importance of physiological, mental, and socioeconomic factors. *PLOS ONE*, 17(4), e0267115. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0267115>
- Hamplová, D. et al. (2014). *Rodina a zdraví — jejich vzájemné souvislosti*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Hamplová, D. (2018). Marital Status, Smoking and Binge Drinking in Comparative Perspective. *Sociológia*, 50(6), 647–671. <https://doi.org/10.31577/sociologia.2018.50.6.24>
- Hamplová, D. (2015). *Proč potřebujeme rodinu, práci a přátele*. Praha: Fortuna Libri.

Paulína Tabery

The researcher is one of the central institutional figures of the new Czech sociology of risks because she stands at the point where public opinion, crisis communication, trust, and policy response meet. Her official profile describes her as head of the Public Opinion Research Centre, with a focus on opinion formation, interpersonal and media communication, political communication, public opinion, and public policy. The 2024 annual report further shows that

in the SYRI structure she was the Institute-side lead for the research group on communication, risk, and uncertainty. This combination gives her a pivotal place in the school.

Her substantive contribution lies in demonstrating that crises are socially mediated through trust, communication, reasoning, and opinion formation. Her co-authored work on the network structure of trust during COVID-19, on the relationship between public opinion and public policy, on Ukrainian refugee-related datasets and research, and on public reasoning in education policy shows that democratic societies do not merely “react” to shocks. They interpret them through networks of credibility, communication channels, and structured public attitudes. In this sense, Tabery helped turn Czech crisis sociology into a sociology of mediated uncertainty and public sense-making.

Selected works:

- Tabery, P. (2016). Public opinion and public policy in the Czech Republic. In A. Veselý, M. Nekola, & E. Hejzlarová (Eds.), *Policy Analysis in the Czech Republic* (pp. 177–202). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Tabery, P., & Pilnáček, M. (2020). The network structure of trust in the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Societies*.
- Leontiyeva, Y., Vitíková, J., Spurný, M., Pilnáček, M., Kyselá, M., Zhmurko, O., Tabery, P., & Winkler, P. (2023). Mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia: A cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 329, 115552. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2023.115552>
- Balíková, Z., Červenka, J., Hanzlová, R., Pilnáček, M., Spurný, M., & Tabery, P. et al. (2022). *Public(s), education and education policy: values, attitudes, reasoning and experience*. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Yana Leontiyeva

The researcher gives this school its migration-and-refugee dimension. Her official profile identifies her as head of the Czech Social Science Data Archive, with topics in research methodology, migration and mobility, and sociological data, and explicitly states that her focus includes international migration and minority studies. Her medallion further shows her long-term involvement in migration governance and foreigners’ rights bodies. This combination is highly significant for the new school: Leontiyeva does not treat migration as an isolated demographic fact, but as a field where crisis, data, integration, rights, and public institutions intersect.

Her contribution to the new school became especially visible with research on Ukrainian migrants and, later, Ukrainian war refugees. But the importance of her work predates the full-scale invasion. She had already analysed educational mismatch, student migration, remittances, and community organisation among Ukrainians in Czechia. The refugee crisis after 2022 then gave this line a new urgency, and Leontiyeva’s work helped make migration sociology central to the Czech sociology of systemic change: war, displacement, labour-market incorporation, mental health, and support-seeking became part of one common research horizon.

Selected works:

- Leontiyeva, Y. (2014). The Education–Employment Mismatch among Ukrainian Migrants in the Czech Republic. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 3(1), 63–84.

- <https://ceemr.uw.edu.pl/vol-3-no-1-june-2014/articles/education-employment-mismatch-among-ukrainian-migrants-czech-republic>
- Jírka, L., & Leontiyeva, Y. (2022). Transnacionalismus, integrace a identifikace: Diskuse o proměnlivosti a dynamice sociálních procesů na příkladu studentské migrace z Ukrajiny. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 58(1), 29–52. <https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2022.009>
 - Leontiyeva, Y., & Tollarová, B. (2011). *Results from a Survey of Foreigners' Incomes, Expenditures and Remittances. Main Findings Concerning Remittances*. Research report. Praha: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
 - Leontiyeva, Y. (2009). Komunitní život a reprezentace zájmů ukrajinské menšiny ČR. In V. Nováková & P. Vaškovič (eds.), *Multikulturalita v řízení globalizované firmy* (pp. 11–24). Praha: ČVUT.
 - Leontiyeva, Y., Vitíková, J., Spurný, M., Pilnáček, M., Kyselá, M., Zhmurko, O., Tabery, P., & Winkler, P. (2023). Mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia: A cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 329, 115552. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2023.115552>

Matouš Pilnáček

The researcher represents the younger, analytically agile branch of this school, where public opinion, crisis measurement, behavioural uncertainty, and new issue fields such as climate and energy transition are brought together. His official profile identifies him as head of department at the Public Opinion Research Centre and defines his topics through research methodology, public opinion, and elections and electoral research. His selected publications add a revealing mix: COVID trust, uncertain voters, Ukrainian refugee mental health, and household investment in photovoltaics. This profile shows why he belongs in the new school: he works precisely where systemic crisis becomes measurable through attitudes, expectations, decision-making, and behavioural uncertainty.

Pilnáček's distinctive contribution lies in connecting crisis sociology to formal analytic tools and to issue fields not usually combined within one profile. In one line of work he examines trust and uncertainty during pandemic disruption; in another he studies decision-making under electoral uncertainty; in a third he links crisis discourse to climate change; and in a fourth he addresses the household-level social logic of energy transition. This gives the Czech sociology of risks a flexible empirical edge. Through Pilnáček's work, crisis sociology is not confined to one emergency; it extends across pandemic response, refugee support, climate communication, and energy-transition behaviour.

Selected works:

- Pilnáček, M., & Tabery, P. (2020). The network structure of trust in the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Societies*.
- Pilnáček, M., Tabery, P., Prokop, D., & Kunc, M. (2021). Apportioning Uncertain Voters in Pre-Election Polls in a Multi-Party System. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 33(4), 973–985. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edaa027>
- Čermák, D., Stachová, J., & Pilnáček, M. (2022). Perception of the Connection between the Covid-19 Pandemic and Climate Change in the Czech blogosphere. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*.

- Makešová, M., Valentová, M., & Pilnáček, M. (2023). Motivation for households' investment in photovoltaics in Czechia: An exploratory factor analysis. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 106, 103262. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2023.103262>
- Leontiyeva, Y., Vitíková, J., Spurný, M., Pilnáček, M., Kyselá, M., Zhmurko, O., Tabery, P., & Winkler, P. (2023). Mental health conditions and help-seeking among Ukrainian war refugees in Czechia: A cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 329, 115552. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2023.115552>

Taken together, these six figures show why it is justified to speak of a new Czech sociology of risks, crises, and systemic change rather than only of scattered crisis-related studies. Stöckelová provides the STS and Anthropocene line; Linková analyses institutional precarity, unsafe academia, and governance breakdowns in research; Hamplová contributes the language of health, well-being, and social vulnerability; Tabery anchors risk communication, trust, and public-opinion dynamics; Leontiyeva connects crisis sociology to migration, displacement, and refugee incorporation; and Pilnáček brings a versatile empirical line linking pandemic trust, electoral uncertainty, climate discourse, and energy transition. Together they form a genuinely new school because they treat crisis not as episodic disruption alone, but as a durable mode of social transformation in contemporary Czechia.

Conclusion

Between 1993 and 2025, Czech sociology developed from a restored post-socialist discipline into a mature, differentiated, and internationally legible field of social science. Its path was not linear, but its direction was unmistakably upward. The discipline moved through reorganisation, consolidation, internationalisation, and finally a phase of strong public engagement under conditions of systemic stress. What changed most profoundly was not simply the quantity of research, but the quality of the field's institutional architecture. Czech sociology acquired durable centres of research, stable journals, data infrastructures, comparative-survey participation, specialist departments, and a clearer public role. It also developed a recognisable internal map of schools and directions rather than remaining a loose aggregate of individual projects. The result by 2025 was a discipline that could explain Czech society across several scales at once, from households and schools to regions, institutions, and national public life. In this sense, the history of Czech sociology after 1993 is not merely a story of recovery after state socialism. It is a story of successful disciplinary state-building within the framework of an independent Czech Republic and a wider European research space. That achievement is especially important because it was realised without sacrificing either empirical seriousness or thematic breadth. Czech sociology did not become strong by narrowing its agenda. It became strong by learning how to coordinate plurality within a stable scholarly order.

The year 1993 was decisive not because it created Czech sociology from nothing, but because it gave the discipline a distinct national institutional frame. Czech sociology had already begun to recover after 1989, when ideological constraints weakened and older scholars could re-enter academic life. Yet 1993 transformed this post-1989 revival into a specifically Czech academic configuration. The discipline now had to function under a different state architecture, with a different academy structure, different institutional sovereignties, and different public expectations. The importance of this shift lies in the fact that it produced a national research shell without severing the longer Czechoslovak intellectual memory of the field. Continuity and rupture therefore coexisted from the outset. Czech sociology inherited traditions, personnel, journals, and themes, but it had to reorganise them under new political and administrative conditions. This made the early 1990s a period of structural translation rather than civilisational beginning. The discipline had to decide how to be simultaneously post-communist, Czech, and sociological in the full scholarly sense. That problem shaped the first stage of its development more strongly than any single thematic debate. By solving it successfully, Czech sociology created the preconditions for everything that followed. The discipline's later maturity depends on this early achievement of institutional redefinition.

One of the most important aspects of this development was the rebuilding of a durable institutional ecology. The Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences became the central research institution of the field, but it did not become an all-consuming monopoly. At the same time, university sociology in Prague and Brno developed as strong and increasingly self-confident poles. This dual development prevented the discipline from collapsing either into academy centralism or into fragmented university localism. It created a field in which research, teaching, methodological innovation, and public relevance could be distributed across different institutions without losing overall coherence. Such complementarity is one of the main reasons Czech sociology became resilient. A discipline organised through several

strong centres is better able to absorb political shifts, funding fluctuations, and generational change. In the Czech case, this resilience proved decisive over the long term. It allowed sociology to survive austerity, institutional competition, and the pressures of Europeanisation without losing its continuity. By 2025, this plural but coordinated institutional structure had become one of the discipline's core strengths. It gave Czech sociology a form appropriate to a modern medium-sized European scientific community.

The polycentric character of Czech sociology deserves particular emphasis because it shaped the intellectual style of the discipline as much as its organisation. Prague and Brno did not simply duplicate one another. They represented different traditions, different emphases, and different balances between theory, empirical work, and institutional practice. Prague brought together the Academy-based research environment, Charles University's social-science faculty, public-opinion infrastructures, and strong links to public policy. Brno brought the historical prestige of the interwar sociological tradition, a strong orientation toward family sociology, demography, and life-course analysis, and an important role in doctoral training and comparative research. The coexistence of these poles made it harder for any one paradigm to dominate the field completely. It also encouraged internal competition of a productive kind. The result was not disciplinary fragmentation, but organised diversity. Czech sociology learned to live with plurality not as a sign of weakness, but as a condition of vitality. That is one of the reasons why the field remained innovative across several decades. The existence of multiple centres also helped create multiple lines of disciplinary reproduction. A sociology with several intellectual homes is more likely to renew itself successfully.

Another decisive achievement was the construction of a stable publication culture. The dual existence of Czech-language and English-language scholarly communication became one of the discipline's most intelligent structural choices. On the one hand, Czech sociology preserved a domestic conceptual and pedagogical space in which debate could remain socially rooted and linguistically precise. On the other hand, it built regular channels for international visibility and external scholarly exchange. This prevented the field from becoming either provincially enclosed or superficially internationalised. Journals did more than disseminate findings. They standardised peer review, editorial quality, methodological expectations, and the very definition of what counted as serious sociology. They were therefore constitutive institutions, not secondary appendices. The long-term success of *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* and the development of specialised venues such as *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* show that Czech sociology created not merely outlets, but an editorial order. That order has been one of the great quiet achievements of the discipline. Without it, neither international recognition nor internal thematic differentiation would have reached the same level. A mature discipline is always recognisable in the quality of its journals, and Czech sociology clearly met that test.

This publication order was strengthened by another crucial process, namely the rapid reconnection of the field to wider sociological theory and debate. After decades of restricted access to Western literature, Czech sociology had to rebuild not only institutions but its cognitive horizon. It succeeded in doing so comparatively quickly. The reopening of theoretical pluralism, the translation and reception of once inaccessible works, and the re-entry of Czech scholars into broader academic exchange gave the field a more modern conceptual vocabulary. Yet Czech sociology did not merely import foreign categories passively. It used them to reinterpret its own rapidly transforming society. This balance between reception and autonomous analysis was one of its strongest post-1993 achievements. The field became

more international without becoming intellectually derivative. It used theory to explain Czech realities rather than to overwrite them. That distinction matters because many smaller academic systems struggle precisely at this point. Czech sociology negotiated it better than many comparable post-socialist disciplines. As a result, its later European integration rested on substantive intellectual preparation rather than on formal participation alone.

The 2000s were the decade in which recovery became structure. By then, the discipline no longer had to prove that it could exist again. It had to demonstrate that it could sustain itself as a complex research system. This decade therefore mattered because it normalised the coexistence of academy research, university sociology, specialist subfields, and growing methodological infrastructures. It was during this phase that Czech sociology ceased to be defined mainly by post-socialist improvisation. Instead, it acquired a more stable internal architecture. Thematic differentiation became clearer, institutional roles became more legible, and publication practices became more routine and internationally recognisable. The discipline also became more confident in treating Czech social problems through cumulative specialist research rather than through broad transitional commentary alone. This was a shift of great importance. A science becomes mature when it no longer depends on exceptional historical urgency to justify itself. By the end of the 2000s, Czech sociology had reached that point. It had become a durable analytical field rather than only a necessary interpreter of transition.

The 2010s added a further decisive layer by embedding Czech sociology more deeply in European and global scholarly infrastructures. This was not a superficial matter of more conference participation or more English-language output. It meant the regular integration of Czech researchers and Czech data into international comparison, citation networks, research infrastructures, and methodological standards. The field acquired a stable presence in European survey projects, in comparative value research, and in internationally indexed publication systems. This widened the horizon of Czech sociology in several ways. It made Czech society more analysable as part of common European patterns. It also made Czech findings more exportable as contributions to wider debates on democracy, inequality, religion, housing, gender, and migration. Crucially, however, the discipline did not lose its Czech empirical anchoring in the process. It became internationally legible precisely because it treated Czech realities with enough rigour to make them comparatively meaningful. This is what stable internationalisation looks like in a successful medium-sized scientific culture. Czech sociology achieved it with unusual balance.

No less important than internationalisation was the development of data infrastructures. The Czech Social Science Data Archive became one of the deepest foundations of the discipline's contemporary maturity. A field that can preserve, document, harmonise, and reopen its datasets for secondary analysis becomes cumulative in a way that one-off project cultures cannot. Czech sociology reached that stage. The archive connected the discipline to European standards of data stewardship and methodological transparency. It also improved teaching, doctoral research, and the possibility of long-term empirical continuity. This achievement often appears less visible than a famous monograph or a major school of thought, but in structural terms it is just as important. It altered what Czech sociology could do with evidence. It helped turn empirical findings into reusable scientific resources rather than disposable outputs. In doing so, it changed the time horizon of the discipline itself. Research could now be revisited, compared, and integrated across projects and generations. That is one of the clearest markers of a mature sociological science.

The same is true of comparative survey participation. Czech involvement in the European Social Survey, the International Social Survey Programme, and the European Values Study did not merely add international prestige. It transformed the discipline's epistemic position. Czech sociologists could now interpret their own society within common systems of measurement shared across Europe. This made it possible to distinguish what was specifically Czech from what was more broadly post-socialist, Central European, or European. It also raised methodological expectations because international comparability imposes constraints on question design, sampling, documentation, and interpretation. In that sense, comparative participation deepened the professionalism of the discipline. It also strengthened Czech sociology's ability to contribute to general sociological debates rather than merely to national self-description. A country becomes fully visible in comparative social science only when its data are robust, regular, and analytically exploited. Czech sociology fulfilled these conditions. That achievement helped make the field both more outward-looking and more self-aware. Comparison sharpened national diagnosis rather than diluting it.

A further pillar of the discipline's development was the routinisation of public-opinion research within the sociological field itself. The Public Opinion Research Centre gave Czech sociology a standing mechanism for monitoring democratic legitimacy, institutional trust, economic anxiety, public moods, and civic attitudes. This was an important institutional accomplishment because it tied socially visible survey work to a research-based sociological environment rather than leaving it to purely journalistic or market-driven polling. As a result, Czech sociology retained a permanent window onto the changing social atmosphere of the country. This mattered in stable times, but it became especially valuable during periods of strain. When crises arrived, the discipline already possessed a legitimate, recognised, and methodologically grounded instrument for measuring how society was reacting. Public-opinion research thus became more than a technical service. It became one of the bridges between sociology and the public sphere. This gave Czech sociology a form of civic visibility that many academic disciplines struggle to achieve. It also reinforced the field's relevance to questions of democracy, legitimacy, and social cohesion. The integration of public-opinion research into the discipline must therefore be counted among its central post-1993 achievements.

At the level of substantive thought, the foundational core of contemporary Czech sociology remained the study of post-communist transformation, stratification, and social inequality. This was the field in which the discipline first gained strong post-1989 visibility, and it remained one of its most productive long-term traditions. Czech sociologists did not reduce transformation to constitutional change or market liberalisation. They studied it as the reorganisation of life chances, class relations, mobility, educational access, perceptions of fairness, and the social meaning of success and failure. This gave Czech sociology one of its most important intellectual advantages. It treated the post-socialist transition as a social process rather than as a political slogan. Over time, this school matured from classic transition studies into a broader sociology of inequality, quality of life, and social closure. It thereby preserved continuity with its founding questions while adapting to new realities. The enduring centrality of inequality in the Czech sociological imagination is one of the reasons the field has retained such analytical coherence. Even when themes diversified, the question of unequal life chances remained a unifying principle. That gave Czech sociology both depth and consistency across several decades.

The sociology of education became one of the strongest extensions of this inequality-centred tradition. In the Czech context, educational inequality was not studied as a secondary policy

problem, but as one of the decisive mechanisms through which the entire social order reproduces itself. Czech sociologists demonstrated repeatedly that the structure of the educational system, not only the individual capacities of pupils, shapes unequal trajectories. They connected school transitions, family background, cultural capital, tracking, aspirations, and later life outcomes into one analytical field. This was a major achievement because it made education central to general sociology rather than leaving it as a specialised pedagogical matter. The field also became increasingly methodologically sophisticated, moving from historical mobility analyses and tertiary-access studies toward panel-based research on adolescents, school environments, and outgroup attitudes. This expansion gave the school both depth and range. It could analyse inequality structurally, historically, and developmentally. In a society where educational selectivity remains socially consequential, such work has enormous public relevance. Czech sociology of education therefore stands as one of the discipline's most important contributions to both scholarship and policy. It explains how inequality is transmitted before it fully appears in adult social positions.

Gender sociology and feminist social theory represent another of the discipline's great achievements. In Czech sociology, gender became a strong analytical category because researchers showed that labour, care, family, science, organisations, and policy cannot be adequately understood without it. The field moved well beyond a narrow focus on women's status. It analysed the organisation of work and care, the gender pay gap, academic careers, social citizenship, family formation, parenthood, reproduction, and institutional cultures of inequality. This breadth was made possible by strong institutional bases and by the development of a specialised journal and research departments. The school also integrated intersectionality, which allowed it to analyse gender in relation to class, education, employment, and other structures of difference. This gave Czech gender sociology both conceptual modernity and empirical realism. It did not present gender as a single isolated axis. It showed how gender works inside broader regimes of inequality and institutional power. In doing so, it made one of the major modernising contributions to Czech sociological thought. It also strengthened the discipline's reflexive capacity by bringing the sociology of science and research institutions into view.

Family sociology, life-course studies, and ageing research formed another exceptionally rich branch of Czech sociology. This field is important because it interpreted the transformation of Czech society not only through institutions and policies, but through biographies, households, partnerships, parenthood, intergenerational obligations, care, and old age. Czech sociologists demonstrated that family change cannot be understood as a purely private matter. It must be explained through labour-market arrangements, demographic shifts, policy settings, cultural expectations, and the unequal distribution of care burdens. The life-course perspective was especially fruitful because it linked childhood, adulthood, family formation, divorce, caregiving, and later life into one sociological horizon. The expansion of the field into the sociology of ageing further deepened its analytical range. Old age was not treated simply as demography, but as a socially structured life stage shaped by exclusion, discrimination, public policy, and intergenerational relations. This school therefore connected intimate life to structural change in a particularly convincing way. It also helped Czech sociology remain attentive to the most humanly immediate dimensions of transformation. In a broader sense, it ensured that sociology in Czechia would not become overly absorbed by institutions alone.

The sociology of religion, secularisation, and cultural memory gave Czech sociology one of its most distinctive comparative niches. The Czech Republic's exceptionally secular social profile

became, in the hands of sociologists, not a cliché but a serious analytical problem. Researchers showed that Czech secularity could not be reduced to the simple absence of religion. It had to be studied through weak institutional affiliation, cultural residues, ritual change, symbolic memory, funeral practices, gendered belief patterns, and the broader afterlife of Christianity in a modern post-socialist society. This complexity gave Czech sociology of religion genuine intellectual value. It contributed to European debates on secularisation not by repeating general theory abstractly, but by offering one of the continent's most instructive cases. The field also widened into cultural sociology in the stronger sense, examining how meaning persists or mutates in societies with weak church attachment. In this way, the Czech case became theoretically productive rather than merely exceptional. The school showed that even very secular societies retain culturally structured relations to transcendence, memory, and ritual. That insight is one of the subtle but important contributions of Czech sociology to wider European thought.

Housing, urban sociology, and regional sociology became one of the most policy-relevant and materially grounded achievements of the discipline. Czech sociologists recognised early that housing is not a technical background issue but a major mechanism of inequality reproduction, intergenerational transfer, and territorial differentiation. They studied affordability, social housing, policy regimes, finance, urban development, neighbourhood change, metropolitan governance, rural peripheries, and spatial opportunity structures. This gave Czech sociology an especially strong empirical connection to the everyday material conditions of life. It also made the field highly relevant to public debate, because housing emerged as one of the most pressing social issues of contemporary Czech society. The strength of this school lies in the fact that it unites several dimensions usually separated elsewhere. Housing is linked to family resources, mobility, social policy, market structures, and regional inequality. Urban space is treated as socially produced rather than as a neutral setting. Regional differences are analysed as opportunity structures rather than merely administrative contrasts. In this way, Czech sociology developed one of its clearest material sociologies of inequality. It explained not only who is unequal, but where and through what territorial arrangements inequality is lived.

Migration studies and integration research added another important layer to Czech sociology's modern profile. As immigration to Czechia became more socially significant, sociologists treated it not as a passing labour-market phenomenon but as a durable transformation of the social composition of the country. They studied labour-market mismatch, student migration, Ukrainian and Vietnamese incorporation, residential segregation, school integration, community life, local governance, and refugee support. This work is important because it connected migration to housing, education, public attitudes, urban space, and mental health rather than confining it to demography or administrative policy. The school also gained new urgency after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, when questions of refugee reception, support systems, and war-related vulnerability became socially central. Czech sociology was able to respond because it had already built substantive and methodological capacity in the migration field. This is one of the clearest examples of cumulative strength. Older research on migrants and minorities became immediately relevant under new crisis conditions. The discipline could therefore move from long-term integration research to the sociology of forced displacement without starting from zero. This adaptability showed the maturity of the field.

Public opinion, political sociology, and democratic culture formed another major school whose importance increased rather than diminished over time. Czech sociologists did not treat democracy simply as a constitutional arrangement. They studied it as a lived relationship

between institutions, parties, citizens, trust, legitimacy, national identity, knowledge, and participation. This school's strength lay in its ability to connect electoral behaviour, democratic support, public trust, civic culture, and political communication. It thereby gave Czech sociology a strong place in the analysis of democratic consolidation and its tensions. This was especially important in a society whose post-1989 democratic order had to acquire legitimacy through social experience rather than historical routine. Over time, the school also widened historically, comparing contemporary democratic attitudes to deeper regime memories and earlier public-opinion formations. This gave Czech political sociology an unusual historical thickness. It also helped the field address populism, polarisation, and democratic discontent with greater sophistication. By 2025, this school had become indispensable to understanding the political life of Czech society. It was one of the discipline's most public-facing and methodologically consistent achievements.

Methodology, survey research, and social data infrastructures represent the less visible but absolutely central supporting achievement of Czech sociology. A discipline that develops strong substantive schools without a parallel methodological culture often remains intellectually fragile. Czech sociology avoided this danger. It produced a strong line of work on survey quality, non-response, total survey error, data management, variable standardisation, measurement, statistical interpretation, and the history of empirical research itself. This methodological reflexivity mattered because it improved the credibility of the discipline's empirical claims. It also helped Czech sociology become self-aware about how knowledge is produced, archived, and reused. The presence of a distinct methodological school is one of the strongest signs that the field is genuinely mature. It means that Czech sociology does not only generate data. It interrogates the conditions under which data become valid evidence. This strengthens every substantive school in the discipline. It also gives Czech sociology a more durable place within European research infrastructures. A field with both strong topics and strong methods is far more likely to remain influential over time.

The newest major achievement of the discipline was the emergence of a sociology of risks, crises, and systemic change. This development was not an arbitrary new fashion. It was the result of several earlier strengths converging under new historical pressure. The pandemic, the war in Ukraine, inflationary stress, institutional fragility, health insecurity, and democratic uncertainty demanded a sociology able to think across several interacting crises at once. Czech sociology rose to this challenge. Through projects such as SYRI, through panel surveys, through trust research, through refugee studies, and through new work on food insecurity, climate discourse, and crisis governance, the field began to analyse Czech society as a system living under recurrent shock. This was a major shift in sociological emphasis. The discipline moved from explaining how society had been transformed after socialism to explaining how a mature society manages turbulence, contingency, and uneven resilience. That new school is especially important because it synthesises earlier traditions. Stratification, migration, education, public opinion, and institutional research all flow into it. It may be the newest school of Czech sociology, but in some ways, it is also the most synthetic one.

This new crisis-oriented sociology also reveals something deeper about the development of the field as a whole. Czech sociology did not respond to the 2020s by abandoning its older research lines. It responded by rearticulating them under new conditions. Inequality became visible through food insecurity and unequal crisis exposure. Migration became visible through refugee incorporation and war-related trauma. Public opinion became visible through trust, fear, democratic uncertainty, and attitudes to Ukraine. Education became visible through

disrupted schooling and panel work on adolescents. Gender became visible through the redistribution of care under pandemic conditions and through institutional safety questions in academia. In other words, the sociology of risk did not replace previous schools. It drew them together into a more integrated framework. This is a sign of high disciplinary maturity. A strong field is not one that constantly discards its past agendas, but one that can recombine them under changing historical circumstances. Czech sociology demonstrated exactly this capacity in the contemporary period. That is why the rise of crisis sociology should be understood not merely as a new topic, but as proof of the field's accumulated intellectual depth.

Another decisive achievement of Czech sociology has been its balance between theory and empirical work. The field did not become methodologically rich at the cost of conceptual ambition. Nor did it cultivate theory in isolation from evidence. Instead, its strongest traditions joined empirical inquiry to interpretive and theoretical problems. Stratification research asked not only who moved up or down, but what legitimacy, justice, and opportunity meant in a post-socialist order. Educational sociology asked not only who entered university, but how institutional design structures merit and reproduction. Gender sociology asked not only where women and men stand, but how work, care, and organisational power are conceptually constituted. The sociology of religion used the Czech case to revisit large questions about secular modernity. Housing research linked material conditions to the theory of regimes, path dependence, and social reproduction. This balanced intellectual style gave Czech sociology a notable seriousness. It also protected the field from the weaknesses of both shallow empiricism and detached abstraction. By 2025, the discipline had become strong precisely because it refused that false choice.

The discipline's public relevance is another theme that cannot be overstated. Czech sociology did not remain enclosed within the university or the academy. It became visible through public-opinion surveys, policy-facing research, housing expertise, gender-equality work, educational diagnostics, refugee research, and crisis analysis. This public role matters not simply because visibility is desirable. It matters because it shows that sociological knowledge in Czechia came to be treated as socially useful. That is a major historical achievement for a discipline that had to rebuild both its credibility and its institutional presence after the end of state socialism. Public relevance also reinforced the internal development of the field. When sociologists are repeatedly drawn into real debates about democracy, education, housing, labour, care, and crisis, the discipline is compelled to sharpen its methods, clarify its concepts, and improve its communicative competence. Czech sociology seems to have benefited from this pressure. It became more publicly intelligible without abandoning scholarly standards. Such a balance is difficult to achieve. The fact that Czech sociology managed it so consistently is one of the reasons its trajectory has been so successful.

This development also depended on generational renewal. The discipline could not have matured if it had remained tied only to the founding generation of post-1989 restoration. One of the strengths of Czech sociology was its ability to combine older intellectual authorities with younger researchers and newly institutionalised teams. Over time, this created continuity without stagnation. Established figures built schools, journals, and infrastructures, while younger generations expanded these into new themes such as digital labour, educational panels, refugee mental health, crisis trust, and institutional harassment. This intergenerational dynamic is often less visible than monographs or departments, but it is sociologically decisive. A science becomes durable only when it reproduces itself through living research communities rather than through symbolic memory alone. Czech sociology achieved that. It did not merely

celebrate its founders. It created conditions under which successors could innovate inside an already structured field. By 2025, this generational renewal had become one of the discipline's defining strengths. It ensured that continuity would remain productive rather than conservative.

Another sign of maturity is the discipline's growing reflexivity about itself. Czech sociology increasingly studied not only society at large but also the institutions of knowledge production, research careers, academic evaluation, equality in science, and safe conditions within universities and research organisations. This reflexivity is significant because it shows that sociology in Czechia is prepared to analyse its own environment with the same seriousness it applies to other institutions. Such self-application is not narcissistic. It is a mark of intellectual responsibility. A mature discipline should be able to interrogate the social conditions of its own authority. Czech sociology moved visibly in that direction, especially through gender-and-science research and broader work on academic institutions. This has two consequences. First, it improves the discipline's self-understanding. Secondly, it deepens its general sociological relevance, because research institutions are themselves important parts of modern society. By turning critical attention inward as well as outward, Czech sociology demonstrated a higher level of scholarly reflexivity. That is a late but important achievement of the 1993–2025 period.

At the same time, the development of Czech sociology should not be romanticised as a process without limits or unresolved tensions. The field still faces the classic challenges of smaller European scientific cultures. It must continually balance national relevance against international pressure. It must preserve Czech-language scholarly life while remaining visible in English-language academia. It must sustain methodological depth under conditions of project funding and publication demands. It must avoid fragmentation across many strong schools without forcing artificial unification. It must also maintain public credibility in an environment where expertise is frequently contested. These are real tensions, not theoretical ones. Yet the important point is that Czech sociology faces them from a position of relative strength rather than fragility. The discipline's institutions, journals, archives, and thematic schools give it resources for navigating them. This is itself evidence of how far the field has developed since the early 1990s. Its problems are now the problems of maturity, not the problems of post-authoritarian survival.

In the broader Central European context, Czech sociology occupies a particularly interesting place. It is neither the largest sociological field in the region nor the most internationally dominant. Yet it is one of the most internally coherent and infrastructurally advanced. Its achievement lies in the quality of its balance. It has combined strong national schools with European comparability, public relevance with methodological sophistication, and historical continuity with conceptual renewal. This makes Czech sociology especially instructive as a case of successful disciplinary development in a medium-sized post-socialist country. It shows that scientific maturity does not require sheer scale. It requires institutional intelligence, editorial discipline, infrastructural investment, thematic clarity, and generational continuity. Czech sociology seems to have assembled these conditions unusually well. As a result, it now occupies a confident position in Central European sociology and a credible one in wider European debate. That standing was not inherited automatically. It was built over three decades of cumulative work.

What finally emerges from the period 1993–2025 is a picture of Czech sociology as a science of organised plurality. It is not unified by one doctrine, one master paradigm, or one institutional centre. It is unified instead by a common research ethos. That ethos combines empirical seriousness, comparative awareness, sensitivity to inequality, methodological self-consciousness, and a refusal to separate social theory from real social problems. This common ethos explains why the discipline can sustain such varied schools without disintegrating into incoherence. The sociology of education, gender, family, religion, housing, migration, political culture, methodology, and crisis all differ in object and method. Yet they are linked by a shared commitment to explaining how social structure and lived experience interact. This shared orientation is one of the deepest achievements of Czech sociology. It gave the field not only thematic range but intellectual recognisability. It is the reason the discipline feels cumulative rather than accidental. Beneath its plurality, there is a durable sociological culture.

The most important conclusion, therefore, is that Czech sociology succeeded in converting a historically difficult inheritance into a durable scientific order. It emerged from the shadow of ideological control and institutional rupture without surrendering its historical memory. It built strong research centres without becoming centralised in a rigid way. It entered international infrastructures without losing its Czech analytical identity. It developed specialist schools without severing their relation to general sociology. It became methodologically stronger without becoming merely technical. It became publicly visible without turning into journalistic commentary. It broadened thematically without forfeiting coherence. It acquired reflexive depth without becoming self-enclosed. It became more European while remaining distinctly Czech. It became more contemporary while preserving its historical intelligence. These are not small achievements. Together they define one of the more successful post-1989 disciplinary trajectories in Central Europe.

For that reason, the development of Czech sociology from 1993 to 2025 should be judged not only as nationally important but as sociologically exemplary. It demonstrates how a discipline can rebuild itself after political rupture, deepen itself through institutional differentiation, strengthen itself through data infrastructures and comparative research, and then redirect its accumulated capacities toward the urgent problems of a crisis-prone present. The Czech case shows that sociology remains strongest when it can do several things at once. It must remember historically, measure rigorously, compare intelligently, interpret conceptually, and speak publicly. Czech sociology learned to do all of these with increasing confidence. That is why its achievements matter beyond the Czech Republic itself. They illustrate what a modern national sociology can become when it is intellectually ambitious, institutionally well organised, and socially attentive. By 2025, Czech sociology had become precisely such a discipline. Its future challenges will be real, but they will be faced from a position built on three decades of substantial accomplishment.

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