

# Chapter 6

## Ethics and Integrity Training for Czech Public Officials


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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the contribution is to present a newly designed training programme for public administrators in ethics and integrity. The programme was developed based on a broad empirical research among public administrators at the central and local levels of public administration aiming at identification of core values, major ethical issues, attitudes, and ethics instruments in place on the one hand and the training needs of civil servants and other public administrators on the other hand. Attention was paid to differences among rank-and-file administrators and managers and to differences between men and women where relevant.*

### INTRODUCTION

The low performance of Czech public administration compared to the European Union (EU) and OECD member states<sup>1</sup> can be attributed mainly to a lacking commitment of Czech politicians to implement the necessary public service reform in line with the principles of good governance. Not surprisingly, in this environment, capacity building, including education and training of public administrators has been neglected. The situation might improve with the implementation of a new client-oriented strategy

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adopted in 2020, which puts education and training at the centre. The authors of this chapter are convinced that ethics and integrity training should become a key driver of the anticipated organizational and behavioural change.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: A BRIEF COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW**

The training of public administration personnel in the worldwide perspective takes the most diverse forms. This is due to the different legislation and institution systems, tertiary education systems, and the various ways public administration works in each country of the world. According to Vidláková (2000), this is the list of the significant differences between countries that influence the methods of education and training of public administration officers at the start of their professional careers:

- size and structure of public administration, including civil servants and other public administration officers,
- internal structure and organizational arrangement,
- the way civil service or employment is entered,
- career advancement and mobility of employees,
- salary scales.

Concerning the education type, it is essential whether a given country has adopted a career or position(merit) system. While a career system requires further career advancement with the retraining and adaptation education of generalists being necessary, specialists are recruited in a position system. However, even specialists need additional education to cope with the changing needs and expectations of society as well as the advancements of technology.

The training of public administration officers has been changing in response to the reforms carried out after WW2, particularly those after the 1980's. The United States is a country with the most advanced university studies of generalists with a tradition going back to the 1930s. This is a comprehensive education emphasizing the skills required to resolve everyday problems correctly. These are the aspects of administrative responsibility, including ethics strongly promoted by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). An impetus to teaching ethics in public administration in the US was provided by the legislation put in place. For example, in the 1970s, approximately 12 Master in Public Administration (MPA) graduate programs introduced ethics courses in their curricula in the US. After adopting the Ethics in Government Act in 1978, NASPAA conducted a survey showing that 43% of the responding providers of MPA programs reported that their programs included a course on ethics. In 2015, ethics was taught in 192 programs at 178 schools accredited by NASPAA.

In contrast to the US, in continental Europe, even in the mid 1980s, the teaching of generalists was by no means a commonplace occurrence, except in Denmark and Sweden, where courses for generalists were offered by some universities on law, political science, administration, and economics. In most countries of continental Europe, the curricula mainly provide the study of law especially for senior positions in public administration. This is due to the tradition, especially in the German-speaking countries and in France. So far, the authors have been unable to detect courses dedicated to ethics in public administra-

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