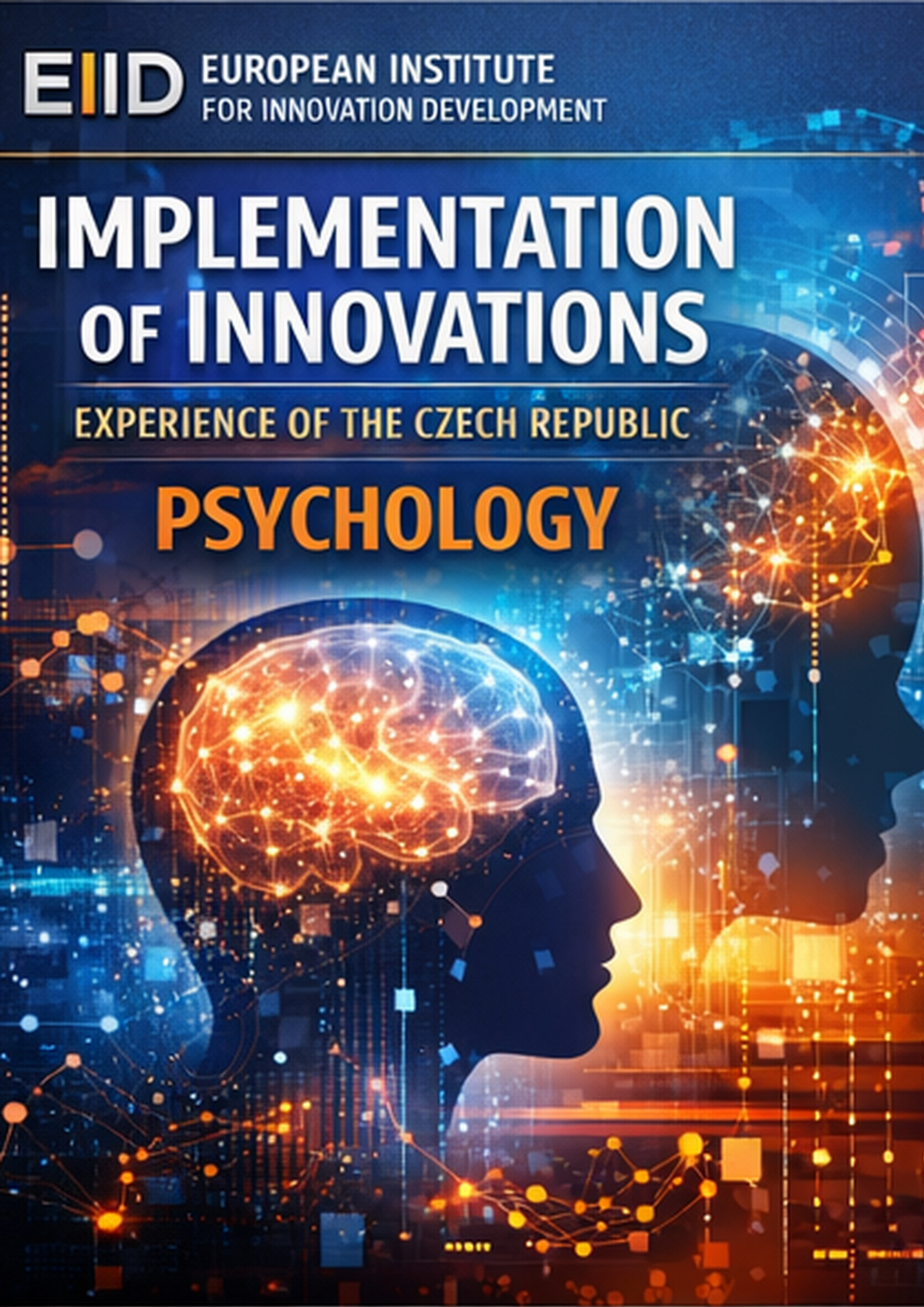


IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIONS

EXPERIENCE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

PSYCHOLOGY



EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT



Implementation of Innovations in Psychology

Experience of the Czech Republic

Dr. Alexander Buychik

Ostrava–Opava, Czech Republic

2026

Imprint

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Designed by Tuculart Studio.

Publisher:

Tuculart Edition (Tuculart s.r.o.), European Institute for Innovation Development, operated by the Tuculart Holding.

Edition:

Buychik, A. Implementation of innovations in psychology: Experience of the Czech Republic. Ostrava, Opava: Tuculart Edition, European Institute for Innovation Development, 2026. — 48 p. (3.6 printed sheets)

ISBN 978-80-88474-40-1

DOI 10.47451/book-2026-03

For citation (in APA):

Buychik, A. (2026). *Implementation of innovations in psychology: Experience of the Czech Republic*. Ostrava, Opava: Tuculart Edition, European Institute for Innovation Development.

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Part One

General Characteristics of the Development of Psychology in Contemporary Czechia

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

The dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the emergence of the independent Czech Republic on 1 January 1993 did not mark a moment of scientific reset for psychology; rather, they marked a moment of institutional reconfiguration of an already existing discipline. This is particularly important to emphasise because, although the state changed radically in formal political terms, Czech psychology retained substantial continuity with the late-Czechoslovak period in epistemic and кадровый terms. Jiří Hoskovec's 2004 review explicitly speaks of "changes since 1993", rather than of the creation of psychology *ex nihilo*; similarly, the 2019 historical survey of psychology in the Czech lands treats the post-communist and post-federal period as a phase of broad restructuring and growth rather than a rupture with tradition. The watershed of 1993 should therefore be understood прежде всего as a transition from psychology functioning within federal Czechoslovakia to psychology operating within an independent Czech academic and legal system. The basic research centres, professional journals, a substantial proportion of academic staff, and the university training tradition were preserved; however, they were transferred into a new system of governance, funding, and external relations. For this reason, 1993 in the history of Czech psychology was not the beginning of the discipline, but the beginning of a new architecture of its existence.

The key institutional milestone here was the transformation of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences into the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic at the turn of 1992–1993. The annual report of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences explicitly states that, in connection with the division of the federal state and the emergence of independent Czechia, the former Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences was transformed into the Czech Academy of Sciences, and in 1993 the leadership of the Institute was moved from Prague to Brno. In this way, psychological science acquired a new centre of gravity: Brno became established not only as a university centre, but also as the national academic hub of Czech psychology. At the same time, two branches of the Institute continued to operate in Prague, one of which was later abolished, with its staff transferred to the system of the Ministry of Defence. This process shows that the early 1990s were marked not only by an expansion of freedom and international openness, but also by real structural selection, redistribution of resources, and a reconfiguration of the country's scientific landscape. Consequently, the first effect of 1993 was that Czech psychology acquired a nationally defined research infrastructure that no longer depended on federal frameworks.

A second important aspect of the 1993 watershed was the change in the conditions of scientific governance and academic freedom. The annual report of the Institute of Psychology stresses that the changes after November 1989 meant the establishment of a scientific council as an explicitly democratic element in the organisation of academic work, the opening of the Institute

to the world, international cooperation, the free choice of research topics, and open scholarly discussion. At the same time, however, the same report also refers to a sharp reduction in the number of staff and the abolition of certain departments during the transformation process through which first the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and then the Czech Academy of Sciences passed. In other words, by the time the independent Czech Republic came into being, psychology was entering the new order not only as a liberated discipline, but also as a structurally thinned one, compelled to redefine its priorities. This is of fundamental importance for the history of the discipline: early independent Czechia did not inherit an ideal and well-endowed institutional environment, but rather a space in which research freedom was combined with the necessity of survival and modernisation. This duality—freedom plus restructuring—determined the entire subsequent dynamics of the 1990s.

Nor should one underestimate the fact that 1993 also became a moment of restructuring in the relationship between university psychology and academic psychology. In the Sovietised model inherited from the 1950s, universities were largely regarded as educational institutions, whereas fundamental research was concentrated in the academies of sciences. In their 1995 review, Brožek and Hoskovec explicitly describe this configuration and show that, in the early post-Czechoslovak stage, the research profile of Academy staff still served as one of the main indicators of the state of the discipline. However, even at that point it was already clear that the new Czechia was moving towards a model in which universities would not only teach, but would also participate much more actively in scientific production. Thus, 1993 may also be regarded as the starting point of a gradual convergence between research and educational logics: academic institutes retained leadership in fundamental research, but university centres were given increasingly greater opportunities and incentives to develop their research schools. This tension and cooperation between the Czech Academy of Sciences and the universities would become one of the defining lines in the development of Czech psychology over the following decades.

Another fundamental point is that, after 1993, Czech psychology preserved its Czech-Slovak scholarly proximity despite the political division of the state. No historical or professional rupture took place: Czech and Slovak psychologists continued to participate in joint conferences, cite one another's work, maintain mutual linguistic intelligibility, and take part in shared publication networks. The *Psychologické Dny 2018* proceedings explicitly emphasise that, as always, the participants included not only Czech but also Slovak colleagues; likewise, the volume marking the thirtieth anniversary of health psychology in Czechia deliberately includes the perspective of the Slovak section and an account of its cooperation with Czech health psychology. This means that 1993 created two states, but it did not destroy the common Czech-Slovak psychological space, which is especially important in the social sciences and humanities. In practice, this provided Czech psychology with a dual resource: it became institutionally nationalised while at the same time retaining a transborder intellectual network.

The watershed of 1993 also had symbolic significance for professional identity. Psychology in the new Czechia had to redefine its place in a society in which it could no longer rely on the centrally organised socialist distribution of roles and statuses. The question concerned not only which topics should be studied, but also how scientific psychology, clinical practice, counselling, education, organisational work, and the emerging private sector were to relate to one another. Early post-federal texts show that the discipline was entering a phase of professional differentiation: university and postgraduate formats, private training structures, associations, and specialised fields were beginning to take shape as more autonomous

segments. This was not chaos, but the beginning of the pluralisation of the psychological field, which would later become one of the distinctive features of the Czech model. For this reason, this stage may be defined as a phase in which psychology in Czechia preserved its scholarly continuity while transforming its institutional framework, administrative geography, mechanisms of legitimation, and modes of professional self-understanding.

In retrospect, it is clear that this watershed laid the foundations for almost all the long-term lines of subsequent development. The transfer of the centre of the Institute of Psychology to Brno created a durable Brno axis of academic psychology. The transformation of the academic system opened the way to a new grant-based logic. The preservation of journals and departments ensured institutional memory. The maintenance of contacts with Slovakia prevented cultural isolation. And the combination of freedom and cutbacks disciplined research priorities and prepared the ground for later specialisation. Therefore, 1993 in the history of Czech psychology should be interpreted as a point of structural turning, without an understanding of which it is impossible to explain either the consolidation of the 2000s, the internationalisation of the 2010s, or the network-based public engagement of the 2020s.

The First Post-Czechoslovak Stage: The 1990s and the Early 2000s as a Period of Recovery, Adaptation, and Professional Differentiation

The first years of independent Czechia were, for psychology, a time of adaptation to new rules of academic and social life. On the one hand, the discipline gained freedom in the choice of research themes, opportunities for active international communication, and a more open intellectual environment. On the other hand, it had to rebuild its sources of funding, mechanisms of staff reproduction, educational trajectories, and forms of professional representation. For this reason, the 1990s and the very beginning of the 2000s cannot be described merely as a period of post-socialist liberalisation and euphoria; it is more accurate to speak of a phase of complex recovery and self-definition. During this period, Czech psychology was addressing several tasks simultaneously: to consolidate itself institutionally within the new republic, to preserve continuity with the preceding scholarly tradition, to integrate into the West European academic world, and to respond to the growing social demand for applied psychology. It is precisely these tasks that define the substance of the first stage of development after 1993.

One of the most important indicators of the state of the discipline during this period is the *Českomoravská psychologická společnost (ČMPS)*. Hoskovec's 2004 review shows that, as of May 2001, the society had 1,060 members organised into nine sections. The hierarchy of the sections by size—clinical, counselling, health psychology, developmental, educational, work and organisational psychology, general and theoretical, forensic, and military—is highly revealing. It demonstrates that, already in the early post-Czechoslovak period, Czech psychology was not exclusively “academic” in the narrow sense: its core interests lay at the intersection of fundamental research with clinical practice, counselling, schooling, health, and organisations. Moreover, the very existence of such a clearly defined sectional structure testifies to a high degree of professional differentiation and self-organisation. In other words, the first phase of independence was not merely a matter of restoring old institutions, but also of actively shaping a specialised professional space.

No less important was the restructuring of higher psychological education. The 1995 review records that, after November 1989, the university programme in psychology returned from a four-year to a five-year format, and training began once again to be organised around more substantial qualification and doctoral trajectories. At Charles University, doctoral specialisation tracks had already been formalised by 1994, while Masaryk University and Palacký University had developed their profiles and specialisations. This material is valuable because it shows that, already in the first half of the 1990s, the task was not simply the “revival” of psychology, but the structuring of it as a discipline with different educational levels, scholarly domains, and professional pathways. At the same time, in the field of applied psychology, university education was supplemented by private and extra-university forms of training, especially in psychotherapy and counselling. Consequently, this stage was characterised by the expansion of the educational ecosystem and the gradual abandonment of a single rigid model of psychologist training.

University centres played a crucial role in this early development, becoming not only sites of teaching but also loci of scholarly activity. As early as 2004, Hoskovec identified Charles University in Prague, Masaryk University in Brno, Palacký University in Olomouc, and the University of Ostrava as the principal institutions producing psychologically significant scholarly literature, alongside the Academy of Sciences in Brno and Prague. This means that, during the 1990s and the early 2000s, the polycentric model of Czech psychology was being strengthened. Research was ceasing to be concentrated entirely in one or two nodes and was becoming increasingly distributed among several university-based centres. This polycentricity later proved to be one of the factors behind further growth: different regions and institutions developed different research styles, applied specialisations, and professional networks. In the long term, this made it possible to avoid excessive concentration and to create several stable schools and clusters.

It was also during this early period that another fundamental line became visible: the gradual transition from post-socialist adaptation to a grant-based and project-based logic of science. Brožek and Hoskovec noted that, at the beginning of the 1990s, two grant structures were established, one for Czechia as a whole and one within the Academy of Sciences, and that the projects funded already reflected the research interests of psychologists. The supported themes included a structural model of personality based on lexical analysis, neuropsychological stress in adolescents, mathematical and statistical methods in psychology, linguistic factors in the understanding of interpersonal behaviour, cross-cultural comparisons of aggressiveness, and studies of creativity, morality, and bullying. This set of themes is extremely important, because it shows that, from the very earliest phase of independence, Czech psychology was already investing in a combination of personality, development, methodology, cross-cultural comparison, and socially significant problems. In other words, the grant-based logic did not merely finance the discipline; it also directed it towards clearer thematic structuring.

Another characteristic feature of the 1990s and the early 2000s was the expanding applied orientation of psychology. The numerical predominance of the clinical and counselling sections within the ČMPS shows that the social demand for psychological knowledge was rapidly extending beyond the bounds of pure academia. In the wake of the systemic transformation of society, new needs emerged: educational difficulties, family conflicts, adaptation to the market economy, organisational change, and the psychological effects of uncertainty and stress. As early as the 1995 review, reference is made to the Prague stress

laboratory's links with the Air Force, to research on motivation for service, the negative effects of air traffic on the population, and interpersonal relations within military collectives. This points to an early willingness on the part of Czech psychology to engage with concrete social and institutional tasks. For this reason, the first stage should be understood not only as a reform of institutions, but also as an expansion of the discipline's social functionality.

The preservation and renewal of the journal landscape was also of great importance for scholarly communication. The journal *Československá Psychologie*, founded in 1957, continued to serve as one of the principal general-disciplinary channels of publication. The very fact that the journal retained its title after the dissolution of the federation is symbolic: it reflected the continuity of the scholarly tradition and the persistence of the Czech-Slovak academic space. Although its digital modernisation and transition to an online format belong to a later period, its survival in the 1990s already signified the existence of a stable scholarly forum in which different directions and generations of researchers could meet. Against this background, the early stage of independence appears not as a period of communicative fragmentation, but rather as a period in which the fundamental channels of communication were preserved while gradually adapting to new international requirements.

The preservation of Czech-Slovak cooperation in this early period deserves particular attention. After the formal political separation, there was a risk of the rapid disintegration of the common academic space, but in psychology this did not occur. Later materials on *Psychologické Dny* and the health-psychology section show that the participation of Slovak colleagues remained the norm rather than the exception. This means that the first phase of independent Czechia was not accompanied by intellectual isolation from its nearest academic environment. On the contrary, the commonality of language, the closeness of professional cultures, and networks that had not yet been severed enabled Czech psychology to retain a useful intermediate scale: it was already national in institutional terms, but it still remained trans-Czech-Slovak in the scholarly circulation of ideas. This arrangement ensured a smoother transition to the new statehood than would have been possible under conditions of a complete rupture in academic ties.

If one attempts to summarise the inner logic of the 1990s and the early 2000s, this was a period in which Czech psychology was simultaneously learning to exist under new political conditions, reassembling its institutional fabric, expanding its educational tracks, mastering the grant-based economy, responding to applied demand, and at the same time preserving continuity with its tradition. It was precisely then that the foundation was laid on which the 2000s could move from adaptation to consolidation. Without this initial phase, there would have been no later clear structure of departments, no international publication dynamics, and no modern research schools. For this reason, this stage should be defined as a period of post-dissolution stabilisation and professional differentiation, in which Czech psychology not only managed to survive, but also succeeded in building the preconditions for subsequent growth.

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

If the 1990s were a period of adaptation and institutional survival, the 2000s became, for Czech psychology, a time of consolidation. By this point, the discipline had already overcome the

most acute consequences of post-socialist and post-federal restructuring and was able to move towards more stable self-reproduction. The principal sign of consolidation lies in the fact that institutions begin not merely to exist, but to function in a relatively stable mode, with a clear departmental structure, staff reproduction, more durable training programmes, and predictable channels of scholarly communication. It is precisely in the 2000s that the transition from early plasticity to structural definition becomes visible in Czech psychology. This applies both to the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, to university departments, to professional associations, and to the thematic directions of research.

This transition is reflected most clearly in the history of the *Psychologický ústav AV ČR*. The Institute's annual report states that, from 2003 onwards, four departments were formed within it: social psychology and personality psychology, cognitive psychology, health psychology, and the methodology of psychological research; in 2013, the Department of Health Psychology was merged with the Department of Personality and Social Psychology. This information is extremely important because it shows that, already in the 2000s, psychology in Czechia acquired not an abstract but an institutionally fixed map of research fields. In this way, the key axes of contemporary Czech academic psychology were established: personality and social behaviour, cognitive processes, health, and methodology. Such a structure did not merely allocate staff; it also set the priorities for grant activity, publication specialisation, and the training of young researchers. It was on this foundation that the modern schools of personality psychology, political psychology, cognitive psychology, and methodology would later develop.

The consolidation of the 2000s also had an organisational and cultural dimension. After the turbulent restructuring of the 1990s, the discipline needed to stabilise its internal procedures, and here academic bodies, departmental structures, and long-term research programmes played a major role. The possibility of planning research several years ahead, rather than merely reacting to the next immediate institutional crisis, radically changes the character of science. In the 2000s, Czech psychology increasingly began to function as a normalised European discipline: with departments, internal scholarly communities, stable conferences, and publication series. This was not yet the peak of internationalisation, but it was already a stage at which institutions had acquired sufficient density to produce knowledge systematically rather than merely maintain disciplinary presence. That condition is precisely the essence of consolidation.

It is precisely at the stage of consolidation that university research centres gain importance as equal, rather than secondary, actors. Masaryk University today emphasises that teaching there is closely integrated with research in developmental and social psychology, digital media, citizenship, and psychotherapy, while the Psychology Research Institute at the Faculty of Social Studies speaks of a long-term focus on developmental, social, and educational psychology, personality psychology, and psychology in the media, underpinned by a strong methodological and statistical foundation. Although these formulations refer to a later period, they reflect processes that were institutionally maturing precisely in the 2000s. Departments and research institutes were ceasing to be merely teaching units and were taking shape as long-term scholarly platforms. Similarly, Palacký University emphasises the nearly seventy-year tradition of its department and its aspiration to combine alignment with current scientific knowledge with the needs of practice and high-quality research. All this demonstrates that the 2000s were the decade in which university psychology in Czechia strengthened itself not only pedagogically, but also as a research enterprise.

Methodological modernisation occupied a particularly important place in this consolidation. Although the early grant themes of the early 1990s already included mathematical and statistical methods in psychology, it was in the 2000s that methodology became a distinct organisational pillar. The very existence of a Department of Methodology of Psychological Research within the Czech Academy of Sciences demonstrates that, for Czech psychology, the question of the quality of measurement, research design, and data analysis had ceased to be peripheral. Such institutionalisation of methodology is especially important for smaller scientific systems: it makes it possible to increase the reliability of research, facilitates international publication, and creates a shared research culture that extends beyond a single institution. The consolidation of the discipline was therefore not only substantive but also procedural: Czech psychology was strengthening its standards of evidential rigour and scientific self-reflection. This aspect would become even more visible in the 2010s and 2020s, but its organisational foundation was laid precisely in the 2000s.

Scholarly periodicals also became noticeably stronger during the 2000s. Alongside *Československá Psychologie*, which retained its importance, the first issue of *E-psychologie* appeared in 2007. The journal defines itself as an electronic scholarly journal in psychology, published by the Czech-Moravian Psychological Society, featuring double-blind review, articles in Czech, Slovak, and English, and open access. The emergence of such a journal in 2007 was not accidental, but rather a sign of the system's maturity. It meant that Czech psychology was ready not only to preserve the traditional printed channel, but also to adopt the digital format, broaden accessibility, and create a platform for more flexible and methodologically diverse publications. Consolidation was thus accompanied by the formation of a two-speed journal landscape: a traditional high-status publication on the one hand, and a modern peer-reviewed electronic journal on the other.

Nor should one overlook the development of health psychology, which during this period definitively ceased to be a peripheral innovation of the late twentieth century. The volume marking thirty years of health psychology in Czechia clearly shows that by 2018 the field could already be described as a discipline that had entered its “mature stage”, possessing its section, conferences, publications, and a constellation of key figures. Yet this result became possible precisely because the 2000s provided health psychology with a stable institutional base and visibility within the Czech psychological system. The field brought together fundamental questions of quality of life, coping, stress, prevention, and well-being with the applied needs of healthcare and education. In a broader sense, this shows that the consolidation of Czech psychology included not only the strengthening of “classical” directions, but also the stabilisation of relatively new fields capable of linking psychology with public health.

The 2000s also saw the strengthening of formats of professional representation. In 1995, the *UPA ČR* was established as a professional union of legal entities, comprising individual psychological associations and the ČMPS. UPA itself defines its mission as the protection of the interests of psychologists, the coordination of the activities of associations, the promotion of the legal regulation of psychological practice, and the protection of the public from unqualified practitioners in the field of applied psychology. Although the organisation was founded in the mid-1990s, it was in the 2000s that its existence began to play a more systematic role in the ordering of the professional field. This means that consolidation affected not only science in the narrow sense, but also the professional and legal infrastructure of the discipline. For contemporary Czechia, this is particularly important, since questions

concerning the status of the psychologist, the quality of practice, and the legal regulation of services outside the medical sector have long been matters of discussion.

Thus, this stage may be characterised as the period in which Czech psychology finally emerged from the condition of post-transformational temporariness and acquired a stable institutional form. It consolidated its departments and research fields, expanded university research platforms, strengthened its methodological culture, reinforced the journal landscape, developed health psychology, and drew support from professional associations. As a result, by the end of the 2000s psychology in Czechia already existed not as a discipline still recovering from a major political rupture, but as a structurally mature national scientific system, ready for its next phase—that of accelerated internationalisation.

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

In the 2010s, Czech psychology entered a qualitatively new phase that may be defined as one of internationalisation, accompanied by thematic complication and methodological strengthening. If the 2000s provided a stable internal structure, the 2010s increasingly translated that structure into the language of international science. Psychology in Czechia began to orient itself more strongly towards journals indexed in international databases, participation in European networks, publication in English, comparable training standards, and research themes of interest not only within the country but also in the wider academic arena. Internationalisation here did not mean abandoning the Czech language or local subject matter; on the contrary, it meant that Czech topics increasingly came to be analysed in forms intelligible and significant to the international scholarly community. In the 2010s, Czech psychology became increasingly visible as a European participant, rather than merely a national discipline.

One of the best indicators of this process is the publication dynamic of the *Psychologický ústav AV ČR*. The annual report for 2023, which reflects on an already established trajectory, states that among more than seventy scholarly outputs produced in 2023, a key share consisted of dozens of articles published in journals indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. The same report also presents bibliometric analyses of the distribution of articles by journal indicators for 2017–2022. These are not merely technical figures; they show that in the 2010s Czech psychology definitively entered a regime in which scholarly reputation became ever more closely tied to internationally indexed publications. For a small country, such a transition is of exceptional importance: it means that the discipline learned to operate according to the global rules of quality assessment. Internationalisation, therefore, was not an abstract orientation towards “Europe”, but a very concrete shift towards internationally verifiable publication competitiveness.

Another important sign of internationalisation was the development of multilingual and internationally readable journals. *Československá psychologie* today defines itself as a peer-reviewed journal published six times a year and accepting articles in Czech, Slovak, and English. *E-psychologie* likewise accepts articles in Czech, Slovak, and English, provides original articles with English abstracts and keywords, uses double-blind review, and appears as an open-access journal. Such a trilingual yet peer-reviewed model is particularly important

in the Central European context: it makes it possible to preserve local scholarly communication while at the same time remaining part of international exchange. In the 2010s, precisely such formats became especially valuable because the discipline was moving ever more actively between local and global scales. Czech psychology did not dissolve into the English-speaking world; rather, it created instruments for translating its themes into internationally accessible form.

Internationalisation is also clearly visible in the case of *Masaryk University*, especially in the field of digital psychology and media. The Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Social Studies explicitly emphasises that teaching is closely integrated with research in developmental and social psychology, digital media, citizenship, and psychotherapy, with a particular emphasis on methodology and critical thinking. The Psychology Research Institute at the same faculty refers to research teams working on measurement in psychology, citizenship and democracy, early development, identity, health, media, sexuality, and other topics. Such institutional self-description shows that, by the 2010s, centres had emerged in Czechia whose research programmes were from the outset oriented towards themes of global academic interest. Particularly illustrative here is the rise of cyberpsychology: in 2021, the journal *Cyberpsychology* received an impact factor of 2.905, was ranked in Q2 in Communication and Multidisciplinary Psychology, and in Q1 in Communication according to SCImago. This success was not achieved in a single year, but was the result of a trajectory that had taken shape over the preceding decade.

The 2010s also saw the strengthening of the Europeanisation of professional standards for the training of psychologists. UPA ČR states that it has been a full member of the EFPA since 1999 and has adopted the EFPA Ethical Code; on its EuroPsy page, it explains that EuroPsy is based on six years of training and supervised practice, and rests on a pan-European framework adopted by EFPA in 2001. Although membership in EFPA dates back to the late 1990s, it was in the 2010s that European qualification standards increasingly began to function as a real point of reference for Czech psychological education and professional legitimisation. Internationalisation here therefore had not only a publication-related, but also a normative and professional character. Czech psychology was becoming ever more clearly embedded in the European architecture of qualifications, ethics, and professional recognition.

Closely connected with this was the broader context of the *Bologna Process*. Czechia became a full participant in the European Higher Education Area in 1999, and the Czech Ministry of Education emphasises that the Bologna Process is aimed not at unification, but at creating conditions for the mutual comparability and transferability of national systems. For psychology, this was of fundamental importance: the 2010s were the period in which Czech training programmes increasingly aligned themselves with pan-European frameworks of degree structure, quality, mobility, and qualification recognition. This contributed to the growth of academic mobility, the strengthening of Erasmus networks, greater transparency in curricula, and the development of international cooperation. The Bologna logic did not make Czech psychology identical to other systems, but it helped to make it comparable and translatable within the wider European space.

It is also important that the internationalisation of the 2010s was not limited to outward visibility; it was accompanied by a growing complexity in the very thematic structure of research. During this period, particularly notable advances were made in political psychology, cross-cultural personality research, developmental psycholinguistics, quality-of-life and

health-related studies, digital media psychology, and methodological questions. The 2019 historical review of psychology in the Czech lands explicitly lists personality psychology, developmental psychology, health psychology, and the methodology of psychological research among the most prominent directions. This demonstrates that internationalisation did not displace substantive diversity; on the contrary, it intensified it. By the 2010s, Czech psychology was no longer defined by a single strong school alone. It increasingly appeared as a multicentred network of thematically mature directions capable of participating in the international division of scholarly labour.

Finally, it was in the 2010s that the transition to digital formats of scholarly life became particularly evident. The first issue of *E-psychologie* had appeared as early as 2007, but in the following decade open access, electronic archives, online journal formats, and the growing role of digital platforms became the norm. This would later find expression in the complete transition of *Československá Psychologie* to an online format in 2021, which represented the logical culmination of a longer digital trajectory. For the discipline, this meant increased accessibility of knowledge, a broader readership, lower entry barriers for younger authors, and greater visibility of Czech publications beyond the country's borders. For this reason, this stage may be defined as the period in which Czech psychology became not merely stable, but internationally connected, digitally adapted, and normatively Europeanised as a field of science.

The Contemporary Stage: 2020–2025 as a Phase of Public Engagement, Network Coordination, and Work with Systemic Risks

The period from 2020 to 2025 signifies not merely the continuation of internationalisation, but the emergence of a new quality: Czech psychology became a visible participant in the analysis and management of social risks. The pandemic, crises of trust, disinformation, polarisation, changes in the educational environment, and problems of mental well-being sharply increased public demand for psychological knowledge. Under these conditions, psychology in Czechia did not retreat into academic self-reflection; rather, it became ever more firmly embedded in interdisciplinary and public-facing formats. This is what distinguishes the contemporary stage from the previous ones: the discipline is no longer only producing articles and training specialists, but is also serving as a source of analysis of societal resilience, the conditions of teachers' well-being, children's digital behaviour, and the psychological mechanisms of social division. This role became especially visible from 2022 onwards, when psychologists began to participate in major national projects dealing with systemic issues.

The central symbol of this phase became *SYRI* (*the National Institute for Research on the Socioeconomic Impact of Diseases and Systemic Risks*). The annual report of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences states that in 2023 the Institute's staff continued to participate in *SYRI*'s work in three research areas: societal resilience, polarisation and populism, and education. Reporting on the *SYRI* 2023 conference, the website of the Czech Academy of Sciences listed among its themes disinformation on social media, the mental condition of teachers, life in the Czech peripheries, and the political-psychological aspects of the pandemic. This represents a completely different mode of existence for psychology compared with the 1990s: it is now embedded in the study of the systemic consequences of

crises and in the production of knowledge of relevance to society as a whole. Thus, the contemporary stage is characterised not only by increased applied orientation, but also by the emergence of a macro-social function of psychological science.

No less significant a phenomenon of the 2020s was the emergence of network coordination among academic sites. The website of the *Sdružení kateder psychologie ČR* reports that a joint *memorandum o spolupráci* was signed on 7 November 2023 in Ostrava by all ten academic sites, and that the aim of the association is to strengthen cooperation among psychological academic institutions, improve the quality of psychological education, exchange experience, and support the interests of students and the professional community. This is an extremely important milestone. Whereas Czech psychology had previously developed as a polycentric but relatively weakly coordinated system, in the 2020s it took a step towards horizontal self-coordination at the national level. What emerged was not a centralised bureaucratic hierarchy, but a consensual network of departments aware of their shared responsibility for the quality of training and the transparency of the discipline.

Documents issued by the *SKP ČR* also show that, in 2024–2025, the association was active in discussions concerning an increase in the number of students oriented towards school psychology, and stressed that it represented all ten sites offering bachelor's and master's programmes in psychology with Czech accreditation. This circumstance is especially important in the context of the growing demand for psychologists in schools, support systems, and public institutions. The contemporary stage is therefore also a period in which Czech psychology has become conscious of itself as a discipline responsible not only for science, but also for the reproduction of personnel for socially significant fields. The question of increasing the number of psychology students while at the same time maintaining the quality of training thus becomes part of the national discussion. In this respect, the 2020s are not only a period of research, but also a period of new responsibility for the scale of the discipline.

The contemporary stage is also characterised by further digital and media maturity. Since 2021, *Československá Psychologie* has appeared exclusively online; *E-psychologie* continues to function as an open-access journal with regular issues and in 2024 published a special issue based on the materials of *Psychologické dny 2024*. This means that the journal life of psychology has not merely survived in the digital environment, but has become an organic part of it. Moreover, the digital environment is both an object and a medium of psychology: on the one hand, disinformation, screen time, cyberbullying, and online identity are studied; on the other hand, scholarly journals, conferences, and professional communication themselves are moving into digital form. This duality is highly characteristic of the 2020s: psychology studies the digital world and at the same time exists within it as a discipline.

At the same time, the years 2020–2025 do not signify the displacement of classical fields by new themes. On the contrary, we see the further development of already established directions—personality psychology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, methodology, health psychology, and school and organisational psychology. The 2023 annual report of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences lists its long-term thematic areas as personality and social psychology, cognitive psychology and methodology, and records 58 impact-factor articles, 48 of them published in foreign journals. This shows that contemporary public engagement does not undermine the fundamental disciplinary fabric, but rather rests upon it. The contemporary stage is important precisely because, in it, Czech psychology combines fundamental stability with a high degree of social responsiveness.

An important sign of maturity is also the fact that contemporary Czech psychology is increasingly engaged in discussion of the quality of professional practice and legal regulation. *UPA ČR* openly formulates as part of its mission the promotion of legislation on psychological practice and a chamber of psychologists, as well as the protection of society from unqualified actors in the field of applied psychology. This indicates that, by the 2020s, psychology in Czechia had come to perceive itself not merely as an academic field, but as a socially significant profession requiring transparent rules of entry, ethics, and quality assurance. Such a step is typical of mature disciplines that have moved beyond local professional circles and have become important to a broad range of social institutions.

Thus, this stage is a phase in which Czech psychology fully manifests itself as a networked, socially relevant, interdisciplinarily integrated, and personnel-responsible science. It participates in the analysis of systemic risks, coordinates the efforts of departments, intensifies digital communication, maintains a high publication standard, and at the same time enters into debates on the quality of practice and the training of new specialists. Compared with 1993, this represents an entirely different scale of disciplinary presence: from a national system undergoing restructuring to a mature actor in the country's public and scholarly space.

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

By 2025, Czech psychology represents a mature polycentric system in which several university and academic centres form a relatively dense national network. It is no longer possible to speak of a single centre or a single dominant paradigm. On the contrary, contemporary Czechia displays a combination of the Brno academic axis centred on the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Masaryk University, the Prague university and medical centres, the Olomouc applied and research line, and the Ostrava and other regional sites. The *SKP ČR* notes that the memorandum of cooperation was signed by all ten academic sites, and that the association itself was created specifically to coordinate and improve the quality of psychological education. Such a picture makes it possible to speak of a developed networked national ecology of the discipline, rather than a set of isolated departments.

The second feature of the contemporary state is methodological maturity. The official description of the Department of Methodology at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences emphasises the development of quantitative and qualitative methodology, narrative and constructivist approaches, as well as the cultivation of diagnostic methods and their critical reflection in the context of practice. *INPSY* at Masaryk University likewise highlights a strong methodological and statistical background as a condition for high-quality basic and applied research and for the development of new psychodiagnostic methods. This means that contemporary Czech psychology is characterised not only by thematic diversity, but also by a reflective attitude towards its instruments. For the discipline, this is a sign of a high level of maturity: psychologists discuss not only results, but also the conditions of their validity, measurability, and interpretability.

The third feature is the balance between fundamental and applied directions. At the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, personality and social psychology, cognitive psychology, and methodology are represented. Palacký University in Olomouc describes its research areas as general cognitive psychology, personality and psychopathology,

psychotherapy, family and partnerships, academic and work environments, and the human factor in traffic. Masaryk University combines developmental and social psychology, digital media, citizenship, and psychotherapy. Taken together, this shows that contemporary Czech psychology cannot be reduced either to experimental laboratory science or to purely practical counselling. Its strength lies precisely in the constant interaction between fundamental and applied lines. It is for this reason that the discipline is able both to publish in international journals and to contribute to solving problems in schooling, healthcare, digital safety, and societal resilience.

The fourth feature is European embeddedness without the loss of regional identity. *UPA ČR* is a member of the *EFPA*, draws on the *EFPA Meta-Code of Ethics*, and promotes EuroPsy as a pan-European standard of education and training. At the same time, Czech psychology preserves its long-standing connection with the Slovak scholarly space: the *Psychologické Dny* conferences and anniversary volumes on health psychology directly demonstrate the participation of Slovak colleagues and reflection on a shared heritage. This combination is especially characteristic of Czechia: the discipline moves towards pan-European standards while retaining the dense ties of Central Europe and the Czech-Slovak scholarly sphere. Thanks to this, it becomes neither a closed national tradition nor a fully depersonalised segment of Anglophone science. The contemporary state may therefore be described as a Europeanised, yet not de-localised, psychology.

The fifth feature is digital maturity and thematic contemporaneity. In Czechia, there is not merely research on the digital environment, but one of the notable European centres of cyberpsychology built around Masaryk University and the journal *Cyberpsychology*. At the same time, both major general-disciplinary journal platforms in psychology now operate in digital form or according to an open-access model, while the research themes themselves are increasingly connected with online risks, screen time, disinformation, media use, digital well-being, and AI-related behaviour. This is a highly important marker of contemporaneity: Czech psychology is not belatedly catching up with the outside world, but is actively engaging with some of the most current issues on the European and global agenda. In this way, the discipline demonstrates its ability not only to preserve tradition, but also to master new objects of research rapidly.

The sixth feature is an expanded public mission. The participation of psychologists in SYRI in the areas of resilience, polarisation and populism, and education, as well as public-facing work on disinformation, the mental condition of teachers, and behavioural risks, shows that by 2025 psychology in Czechia is increasingly acting as a discipline of public explanation. It is no longer simply an auxiliary body of knowledge serving pedagogy or medicine, but an independent analytical resource for understanding how society functions under the pressure of crises. Contemporary Czech psychology increasingly produces knowledge not only about the human being as such, but also about the human mechanisms of resilience, fear, trust, division, and adaptation within complex systems. This substantially elevates its status within the national intellectual field.

In sum, the contemporary state of psychology in Czechia by 2025 may be defined as a combination of six features: polycentricity, methodological maturity, a balance of fundamental and applied work, Europeanisation, digital modernity, and a strong public mission. This configuration did not arise overnight; it is the result of all the preceding stages—post-federal reorganisation, the adaptation of the 1990s, the consolidation of the 2000s, and the internationalisation of the 2010s. For this reason, the present stage effectively brings the entire

trajectory of 1993–2025 to its conclusion: Czech psychology entered the twenty-first century as a discipline capable of preserving historical continuity, meeting European standards, and at the same time remaining sensitive to the specific challenges of its society.

Part Two

The Main Achievements of Psychology in Czechia and the Principal Schools of Psychology at the Contemporary Stage

The Major Achievements of Czech Psychology, 1993–2025

The first fundamental achievement is that, after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, Czech psychology not only preserved its institutional core, but also transformed it into a modern research system. Following the transfer of the leadership of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences to Brno in 1993, the Institute developed a stable structure of research divisions; from 2003 onwards, four departments were formed there—social psychology and personality psychology, cognitive psychology, health psychology, and the methodology of psychological research—and in 2013 health psychology was merged with the personality and social psychology line. This means that Czech psychology succeeded in translating post-federal restructuring into a stable thematic architecture, rather than remaining in a merely transitional condition.

The second achievement is the growth of international publication competitiveness. According to the 2023 annual report of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Institute published 58 articles in peer-reviewed journals with an impact factor, a further 10 articles in other peer-reviewed journals, and 3 articles in the journal *Vesmír*; the report also specifically emphasises that a key place within the body of 2023 outputs was occupied by publications in journals indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. For a national psychological science, this is an indicator not simply of quantitative growth, but of the ability to function within a regime of internationally verifiable quality.

The third achievement is the institutional Europeanisation of psychology both as a profession and as an educational trajectory. *UPA ČR* was established in 1995 as a union of psychological associations and the Czech-Moravian Psychological Society; it explicitly formulates as its aims the representation of psychologists' interests, the coordination of associations, the promotion of the legal regulation of the profession, and the protection of society from unqualified psychological practice. Through EuroPsy, Czech psychology is integrated into a pan-European training standard based on six years of education and one year of supervised practice, which strengthens the comparability of Czech training with European professional frameworks.

The fourth achievement lies in the fact that psychology in Czechia has become not only academically stable but also network-coordinated. *SKP ČR* emerged as a platform for strengthening cooperation among psychological academic centres, improving the quality of psychological education, and representing the interests of students and the professional community; the association's website states that the first coordinating initiative began in 2022, and that the memorandum of cooperation was signed on 7 November 2023 in Ostrava. For the contemporary discipline, this is an extremely important step: it means that Czech psychology has begun to understand itself as an integrated national system rather than as a set of autonomous departments.

The fifth achievement is the formation in Czechia of one of the most prominent regional schools of cyberpsychology and research on the digital environment. The website of IRTIS at Masaryk University emphasises that the team studies the socio-psychological consequences of the internet and technologies, while David Šmahel's profile lists among his principal themes online risks for children and adolescents, digital identity, virtual relationships, online addictive behaviour, online research methods, and well-being. The journal associated with this cluster, *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, had an impact factor of 2.4 by 2024, is indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus, and is ranked in Q1 in Communication. This is no longer merely a national success, but a genuine Czech contribution to global digital psychology.

The sixth achievement is the development of a strong Czech school of personality psychology, social psychology, and the political psychology of democracy. The description of the Department of Personality and Social Psychology at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences emphasises its interest in the study of personality development, intergroup contact, attitudes towards minorities, the quality of life of children after severe illnesses, and the psychological aspects of democracy. In the same context, the 2019 review of psychology in the Czech lands identifies personality, development, health, and methodology as leading contemporary directions. Particularly important is the fact that, in Czechia, the post-socialist experience was translated into full-scale research on democratic culture, citizenship, political psychology, and social cohesion.

The seventh achievement is the strengthening of cognitive psychology, developmental psycholinguistics, and psychological diagnostics, including work based on Czech-language material. Although such research often tends to be dominated by the Anglophone sphere, Czech psychology has succeeded in creating its research infrastructure dealing with perception, attention, language, memory, and developmental processes within a nationally specific context. This is especially important for the diagnosis of children, the development of tools for assessing speech development, and the comparison of cognitive models with the Czech linguistic and cultural environment. The general structure of the research departments at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, together with the 2019 review, makes it possible to regard this area as one of the stable pillars of the contemporary discipline.

The eighth achievement is the maturity of health psychology as an independent field. The anniversary volume marking thirty years of health psychology in Czechia explicitly states that the field, which originated in 1988, had by 2018 reached a *stadium dospělosti* and possessed its section, its conferences, an overview of achievements, an international context, and a body of high-quality publications from 2014–2018. This example is important because it shows that Czech psychology is capable not only of sustaining traditional disciplines, but also of cultivating new applied areas to the point of full academic status.

The ninth achievement is psychology's entry into the field of systemic social risks. The 2023 report of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences records the Institute's participation in the SYRI project in three areas: societal resilience, polarisation and populism, and education. Thus, by the 2020s psychology in Czechia had ceased to be merely a science of the individual in the narrow sense and had become an important part of the analysis of trust, social resilience, crises, school well-being, and political-psychological processes. This is one of the most characteristic signs of the maturity of the contemporary discipline.

The tenth achievement is the strengthening of journal-based, digital, and open scholarly communication. *E-psychologie* defines itself as an electronic scholarly journal in psychology, published by the ČMPS and accepting original, review, and methodological articles that undergo blinded peer review; *Cyberpsychology*, from its very first issue in 2007, developed as an open-access journal and by 2024 had secured a firm place within the international indexing system. Against this background, Czech psychology appears as a discipline that has succeeded in combining national languages, an electronic format, and international visibility.

The Principal Directions and Schools of Contemporary Czech Psychology

1. The Brno Academic School of Personality, Social, and Political Psychology

This is one of the central directions of contemporary Czech psychology and is institutionally associated above all with the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The description of the Department of Personality and Social Psychology shows that research there addresses personality development in adulthood, school well-being, intergroup contact, attitudes towards minorities, the quality of life of children after oncological diseases, and the psychological aspects of democracy. This constellation of themes clearly reveals the profile of the school: it combines classical personality psychology, contemporary social psychology, and the political-psychological study of democratic society.

In substantive terms, this school is important because it has established in Czechia a line of research in which personality is viewed not as an isolated set of traits, but as a system developing within a social and institutional context. It is here that research on the Five-Factor Model, intergroup relations, political culture, citizenship, and well-being in the educational environment has been particularly developed. This direction largely shapes the international profile of Czech psychology, because it links the national post-socialist experience with universally significant themes of democracy, identity, and societal resilience.

2. The Brno School of Cognitive Psychology and Developmental Psycholinguistics

A second important cluster is cognitive psychology, likewise rooted in the structure of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The history of the Institute records cognitive psychology as one of its core departments from as early as 2003, and the contemporary structure of research retains it as a key axis alongside personality and methodology. For contemporary Czechia, this is especially significant, since the cognitive line brings together fundamental questions of perception, attention, memory, and language with applied tasks in diagnosis and developmental research.

A distinctive feature of this school is its treatment of the Czech language and the Czech population as an autonomous field of research. Rather than being merely a consumer of Anglophone models, Czech cognitive psychology develops its developmental psycholinguistics, the psychometrics of language-based instruments, and experimental studies of speech and cognitive development. Owing to this, cognitive psychology in Czechia is at once fundamental and nationally relevant.

3. The Brno School of Psychological Methodology, Psychometrics, and Mixed Methods

The third direction is the methodological school, institutionally constituted as a separate Department of Methodology of Psychological Research. Its very organisational autonomy shows how seriously Czech psychology treats questions of measurement, data analysis, and qualitative and quantitative research strategies. For a small scientific system, this is a key factor of growth: without its methodological culture, it is impossible to develop diagnostics, international publication, or research training on a stable basis.

At the same time, the Czech methodological tradition cannot be reduced to a single statistical line. A 2019 article on qualitative research in psychology in Czechia and Slovakia emphasises that qualitative approaches, after 1989, became a symbol of intellectual liberation and still constitute an important, though not uncomplicated, part of disciplinary dynamics. In the Czech context, this is especially interesting: the country is simultaneously developing a performance-oriented publication culture and preserving a living tradition of methodological pluralism, in which psychometrics, mixed methods, and qualitative inquiry coexist side by side.

4. The Masaryk School of Cyberpsychology and Research on the Digital Environment

In contemporary Czechia, there is probably no more internationally recognisable new school than the Masaryk University cluster centred around *IRTIS* and *Cyberpsychology*. The website of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University emphasises that teaching is closely integrated with research in developmental and social psychology, digital media, citizenship, and psychotherapy, with particular attention to methodology and critical thinking. This shows that digital psychology in Czechia did not emerge on the periphery, but rather within a strong university with a well-developed research infrastructure.

In substantive terms, this school brings together research on online risks, digital identity, virtual relationships, internet addiction, the psychology of children and adolescents online, media well-being, and digital literacy. David Šmahel's profile makes this particularly clear, while the success of the journal *Cyberpsychology* confirms the international institutionalisation of the field. As a result, Czechia has become one of the Central European centres for the study of the human being in the digital environment.

5. The Prague School of Educational, School, and Counselling Psychology

A distinct place belongs to the Prague direction, associated above all with the Faculty of Education of Charles University and, more broadly, with the psychological structures of Charles University as a whole. The Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Education of Charles University explicitly emphasises its orientation towards a higher-quality and safer school environment and offers educational programmes for school psychologists, counsellors, and school prevention specialists. The Master's programme defines its aim as the training of a psychologist with a focus on school, upbringing, and work with children and young people, including learning difficulties, developmental disorders, and personal problems.

This direction is particularly important for contemporary Czechia because it combines research, teacher support, school counselling, preventive work, and the training of personnel for the educational system. Through it, psychology becomes part of school policy, pupils' mental well-being, the prevention of problematic behaviour, and the professionalisation of school psychological support. In public terms, this is one of the most significant Czech schools, because it works directly with the institution of the school as a key site of socialisation.

6. The Prague School of Addictology and the Psychology of Addictive Behaviour

Although addictology in Czechia is interdisciplinary, in scholarly terms it is closely linked to psychology, prevention, and clinical practice. The research platform *adiktologie.cz* shows that this field includes research, teaching, professional identity, prevention and intervention, as well as international educational cooperation. In this way, contemporary Czech addictology represents an example of how psychological knowledge can be transformed into a long-term applied infrastructure.

From a scholarly point of view, this school is important because it brings together public health, preventive psychology, risk behaviour, school interventions, and professional training. In the Czech context, this is one of the directions that most clearly links academia, public policy, and helping practice. For that reason, the contribution of this field is measured not only by publications, but also by the creation of a stable professional domain.

7. The Olomouc School of Applied, Organisational, Clinical, and Transport Psychology

Palacký University forms its strong pole within contemporary Czech psychology. The website of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Arts of Palacký University highlights research on personality development in the family and social context, attachment-related problems, developmental trauma, risky behaviour in adolescence, and digital gaming. It also separately identifies clinical psychology, diagnostics, and psychotherapy, where the relationships between mental health factors and personality structure are studied, together with ways of innovating traditional diagnostic methods. This shows that the Olomouc school combines developmental, clinical, and diagnostic lines within a single applied system.

No less characteristic of Olomouc is its line in work, organisational, and transport psychology. The department's website describes this area as a traditional field of research and teaching, closely connected with public and private organisations. It also refers specifically to the study of behaviour in work environments, mental processes in the context of transport and driving, and cooperation at national and international levels. In its description of transport psychology, the department emphasises a focus on the human factor, safety, and mobility, while completed projects include the adaptation of the Manchester Driver Behaviour Questionnaire for the Czech population. This makes the Olomouc school especially important for applied psychology and human factors research in Czechia.

Contemporary Czech psychology in 1993–2025 has thus attained maturity in several respects at once: it has preserved and modernised its institutional core, strengthened its international publication visibility, embedded itself in European professional frameworks, created

horizontal mechanisms for coordinating academic centres, and formed a number of strong schools—from personality, democracy, and methodology to cyberpsychology, school psychology, addictology, and human factors research. Particularly important, however, is the fact that this growth did not occur through the abandonment of national specificity, but through its translation into internationally relevant research forms.

Part Three

Leading Figures of Contemporary Czech Psychology and Their Contribution

The Brno Academic School of Personality, Social, and Political Psychology

1. Martina Klicperová-Baker

She is one of the key figures in contemporary Czech social and political psychology. Her academic profile is directly associated with the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where she has worked since 1991, while her research career has also included a long-term affiliation with San Diego State University and teaching experience at Stanford, Arizona State University, and Charles University. These institutional links alone show that she is not only a nationally significant scholar, but also one deeply embedded in the international research environment. Her DSc dissertation was explicitly entitled *Psychology of Democracy*, a title that very accurately reflects the principal line of her scholarly work. In contemporary Czech science, she is the figure who has most consistently linked psychology with the analysis of democratic culture, citizenship, post-communist transformation, authoritarian tendencies, and social cohesion. Through her work, Czech psychology entered the circle of Central European traditions that did not merely describe political transition, but translated it into the language of social and political psychology.

Klicperová-Baker's scholarly contribution is especially important because she has consistently developed the psychology of democracy as a distinct field of research. From the mid-1990s to the 2020s, her grant-supported work has been connected with projects on transition to democracy, democratic citizenship, the meanings of citizenship, democratic culture in Czechia, and, more recently, with questions of disinformation, attitudes towards Ukrainian and Russian minorities, social cohesion, and psychological responses to war and the pandemic. Thus, her body of work brings together the classical themes of values and civic culture with newer topics such as crises, propaganda, and democratic resilience. For Czech psychology, this is particularly significant, since it was in her work that the post-socialist experience of Czechia was conceptualised as material for a general theory of democratic development, rather than merely as a local historical case. Her role in the contemporary discipline may therefore be defined as that of a scholar who brought personality, social attitudes, and historical transition into a single analytical horizon.

More broadly, Klicperová-Baker represents the line within Czech psychology in which science does not confine itself to the laboratory or to testing, but engages with the most difficult questions of public life. Her publications of 2024–2025 show that she remains highly active in new contexts as well, ranging from the psychological foundations of democratic resilience to responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the social mechanisms of conspiratorial thinking in the Visegrád countries. This makes her one of the few figures whose research trajectory spans the entire post-Czechoslovak period—from early work on the post-communist syndrome to contemporary studies of disinformation and social cohesion. In this sense, her

contribution is not only thematic but also historiographical: through her body of work, one can trace how the very problematics of Czech social psychology have evolved since 1993.

Leading works:

- Klicperová-Baker, M. (1997). *In the Search for a Post-Communist Syndrome: A Theoretical Framework and Empirical Assessment. Community & Applied Social Psychology.*
- Klicperová-Baker, M., & Košťál, J. (2012). *Diverzita či odlišné chování? Sociální distance od Romů, gayů, lidí s AIDS a dalších menšin. Československá psychologie, 56(4), 297–314.*
- Klicperová-Baker, M., & Urban, M. (2024). *Democratic Spirit, Emotions, Help, and Hope during the Russian War against Ukraine: Experience from the Czech Republic. Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being, 16(3), 986–1004.*
- Hartz, C., Deutsch, F., Goehnke, K., Klicperová-Baker, M., et al. (2025). *Social cohesion and the inclination towards conspiracy mentality: comparing Germany and the Visegrad countries. Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe, 33(2), 375–401.*

2. Martina Hřebíčková

She is one of the central figures in Czech personality psychology and the psychology of intergroup perception. Within the structure of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, she has headed the Department of Personality and Social Psychology since 2013, and her professional trajectory has also included leadership in expert and ethical bodies, as well as participation in scientific councils and expert panels in the social sciences. This institutional role alone shows that Hřebíčková is not merely a researcher, but also one of the architects of the disciplinary field. Her profile combines personality psychology, social perception, cross-cultural comparison, and psychodiagnostics. Of particular importance is the fact that she has embedded Czech data within major international discussions of the Five-Factor Model and of the accuracy of personal and national stereotypes. In this way, she represents not merely a “Czech version” of personality psychology, but a fully-fledged Central European research node within it.

Her scholarly output is especially significant in three directions. The first is the five-factor model of personality and its diagnostic application. Here, both her monograph on the Five-Factor Model and her earlier articles on the NEO-FFI in the Czech, Polish, and Slovak contexts play a key role. The second direction concerns the accuracy of national and regional stereotypes, where Hřebíčková demonstrated that stereotypes can be studied not only as cultural prejudices, but also as psychological judgements with differing degrees of empirical adequacy. The third concerns personality judgement and the variability of personality traits, that is, the relationship between culture, personality description, and social perception. Taken together, this makes her figure especially important for understanding how Czech personality psychology after 1993 moved from local description towards internationally comparable research.

At the level of disciplinary history, Hřebíčková is important for another reason as well: she represents a long research line connecting the late-Czechoslovak legacy with the newest international science. Her publications and organisational work have made the Brno school of personality psychology one of the most stable directions in Czech psychology. For contemporary Czechia, this is critically important: personality research did not disappear under the pressure of the digital agenda or applied demand, but continued to develop as a field

that is both highly theoretical and highly empirical. It is for this reason that Hřebíčková may be regarded as one of the system-forming figures of Czech academic psychology over the past three decades.

Leading works:

- Hřebíčková, M. (2011). *Pětifaktorový model v psychologii osobnosti: Přístupy, diagnostika, uplatnění*. Praha: Grada.
- Hřebíčková, M., Urbánek, T., Čermák, I., Szarota, P., Ficková, E., & Orlická, L. (2004). *The NEO Five-Factor Inventory in Czech, Polish, and Slovak Context*. In *Personality Across Cultures*.
- Kouřilová, S., & Hřebíčková, M. (2011). *Accuracy of Slovak National Stereotypes: Result of Judgment or Intuition?* *Studia Psychologica*, 53(2), 201–213.
- Hřebíčková, M. (2013). *Přesnost regionálních stereotypů a mechanismy jejich vytváření*. *Československá psychologie*, 57(3), 230–245.

3. Marek Blatný

Marek Blatný is one of the key figures of the Brno school of personality, well-being, and life-span development. His official profile at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences records his status as Professor of Social Psychology, his DrSc. degree, his participation in doctoral boards at Masaryk University and Charles University, and his research fellowships at Yale, Amsterdam, the Open University, and Jyväskylä. This is a highly revealing academic biography: it connects the Czech scholarly tradition with West European and North American research training. Through this combination, Blatný became one of the figures through whom modern personality psychology, the longitudinal approach, and the study of subjective well-being took root in Czechia. His name is especially closely associated with the Brno Longitudinal Study on Life-Span Development and with the broader question of how personality changes and endures across the life course.

Blatný's scholarly contribution is structured around three major blocks. The first is the life-span development of personality, in which he analyses the stability and change of personality from childhood to adulthood. The second is well-being and the psychosocial correlates of personal well-being, that is, the study of the relationship between dispositional characteristics, life conditions, and subjective satisfaction. The third is the methodology of psychological research, where he appears not only as an empiricist, but also as an editor and conceptualiser of the methodological culture of Czech psychology. It is telling that his monographs include, side by side, *Personality and Well-Being Across the Life-Span*, *Metodologie psychologického výzkumu*, and works on risky and antisocial behaviour in adolescence. This makes his contribution especially important: he does not confine himself to a single narrow topic, but connects personality, development, well-being, risky behaviour, and research methods within one broad research programme.

In institutional terms, Blatný was one of the figures through whom Brno psychology acquired lasting conceptual depth. His works became important points of reference for the teaching of personality psychology in Czechia, while his editorial activity contributed to the formation of a shared psychological language for the new post-1993 science. His significance therefore extends beyond his individual publications: he belongs to that group of researchers who helped shape the very intellectual environment of contemporary Czech psychology.

Leading works:

- Blatný, M. (Ed.). (2015). *Personality and Well-Being Across the Life-Span*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nielsen Sobotková, V., Blatný, M., Hrdlička, M., & Jelínek, M. (2014). *Rizikové a antisociální chování v adolescenci*. Praha: Grada.
- Blatný, M. (Ed.). (2006). *Metodologie psychologického výzkumu: Konsilience v rozmanitosti*. Praha: Academia.
- Blatný, M. (2007). *On personality stability and change: Main results of Brno Longitudinal Study on Life-Span Development*. *Československá psychologie* (Supplement), 37–49.

4. Kateřina Zábrodská

She represents a contemporary Czech line in which social psychology, gender studies, work psychology, and research on the academic environment are brought together within a single field. Her profile at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences shows a combination of interests in occupational health psychology, work, stress and well-being, gender, workplace bullying, and qualitative methods. This constellation of themes already makes her one of the most contemporary figures in Czech psychology: she works not only with individual traits or classical interpersonal situations, but also with institutional forms of power, inequality, academic labour, and organisational violence. In the Czech context, this is especially important, because it is precisely through such research that psychology has become a visible participant in discussions of working conditions in universities and research organisations.

Zábrodská's scholarly contribution may be described as the development of a critically oriented organisational and social psychology. Her work on bullying, the work environment and well-being, the gendered conditions of academia, and academic managerialism is important because it translates seemingly private distress into the language of institutional analysis. An important point is that she works not only with Czech material, but also within the broader international context of workplace bullying and harassment. This makes her one of the figures through whom Czech psychology entered the study of higher education as a workplace — a topic that has become central to the academic environment across Europe in the twenty-first century. Zábrodská's contribution is particularly evident in the way she combines empirical research, qualitative analysis, and the study of systemic conditions, rather than limiting herself to local descriptions of individual cases.

Her significance for the history of contemporary Czech psychology is also determined by the fact that she helped to shape a direction concerned with the psychology of academic labour. This is a comparatively new field, but by the 2020s it had become one of Czechia's more visible contributions to European research on work and well-being in higher education. In this capacity, Zábrodská represents a new type of researcher: not a classical personality psychologist or clinician, but an analyst of the ways in which psychological processes are embedded in institutional structures and professional careers.

Leading works:

- Zábrodská, K., Ellwood, C., Zaeemdar, S., & Mudrák, J. (2016). *Workplace bullying as sensemaking: An analysis of target and actor perspectives on initial hostile interactions*. *Culture and Organization*, 22, 136–157.
- Zábrodská, K., Mudrák, J., Květon, P., Blatný, M., Machovcová, K., & Šolcová, I. (2014). *Work environment and well-being of academic faculty in Czech universities*. *Studia Paedagogica*, 19(4), 121–144.
- Zábrodská, K., & Květon, P. (2015). *The Czech Republic: Workplace abuse in a post-transitional country*. In M. Omari & M. Paull (Eds.), *Workplace Abuse, Incivility and Bullying: Methodological and Cultural Perspectives* (pp. 124–142). London: Routledge.
- Zábrodská, K. (2014). *Between femininity and feminism: Negotiating the identity of a “Czech socialist woman” in women’s accounts of state socialism*. In H. Havelková & L. Oates-Indruchová (Eds.), *The Politics of Gender Culture under State Socialism: An Expropriated Voice* (pp. 109–132). London: Routledge.

The Brno School of Cognitive Psychology, Psychometrics, and Health Psychology

1. Filip Smolík

He is a leading representative of Czech developmental psycholinguistics. His official profile defines him as a developmental psycholinguist working primarily on the development of grammatical knowledge and the early use of grammar in speech comprehension; it also specifically highlights experimental methods, preferential looking, eye-tracking, language sample analyses, as well as EEG/ERP and fNIRS. This is an extremely important profile for contemporary Czechia, because it shows that cognitive and language psychology in the country is developing not only as general theory, but also as an experimental science with a modern research infrastructure. Thanks to Smolík, Czech psychology has acquired one of the strongest regional lines of research into early language development.

Smolík’s scholarly contribution is built on the combination of three elements. First, there is the fundamental study of the development of grammar, the pronominal system, and morphology in the Czech language. Secondly, there is psychometric and diagnostic work, involving the study of CDI, vocabulary screening tools, and the validity of measures of early language development. Thirdly, there is the integration of Czech data into international psycholinguistics through publications in the *Journal of Child Language*, *Cognition*, *PLOS ONE*, and the *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*. His studies are especially valuable because they are based on Czech material and therefore make it possible not merely to import Anglophone models, but to test general hypotheses in a language with a different morphological structure. As a result, Smolík makes the Czech language visible as a resource for general psychological theory, rather than merely as a local object of description.

At the level of the Czech discipline, Smolík is also important as a public and organisational figure. His profile records that he served as Chair of the Českomoravská psychologická společnost in 2018–2022 and has been a member of a GA ČR panel since 2023. This means that his role extends beyond the laboratory: he participates in the reproduction of the scientific

infrastructure of psychology in Czechia. Taken together, his contribution may be characterised as a combination of experimental precision, psycholinguistic specialisation, and institutional leadership.

Leading works:

- Smolík, F., & Filip, M. (2022). *Corpus-based age of word acquisition: Does it support the validity of adult age-of-acquisition ratings?* *PLOS ONE*, 17(5), e0268504.
- Smolík, F., & Chromá, A. (2022). *About me, you and her: Personal pronouns are developmentally preceded by mental state language.* *Journal of Child Language*, 1–18.
- Smolík, F. (2014). *Noun imageability facilitates the acquisition of plurals: Survival analysis of plural emergence in children.* *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 43, 335–350.
- Marková, G., & Smolík, F. (2014). *What Do You Think? The Relationship between Person Reference and Communication About the Mind in Toddlers.* *Social Development*, 23, 61–79.

2. Jiří Lukavský

He represents the Czech line of research on visual perception, attention, memory, eye movements, and mathematical modelling. His official profile at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences highlights the combination of psychological and computational training, as well as his long-term work at the Institute of Psychology and his teaching at Charles University. Such a profile is in itself highly characteristic of the new Czech cognitive science: it is increasingly built at the intersection of clinical and general psychology, computational methods, and experimental design. Lukavský is precisely this kind of researcher, linking traditional psychology with quantitative cognitive science.

His scholarly contribution is concentrated on eye-tracking, visual scene memory, multiple object tracking, scanpath coherence, and visual attention in rich environments. These topics are especially important because they belong to contemporary global cognitive psychology, and through Lukavský's work Czech science does not remain on the periphery of them. He not only publishes individual articles, but also leads grant-funded projects on tracking moving objects, memory for scenes, and attention. This means that his research is embedded in a long-term experimental programme rather than being fragmented into isolated publications. For Czech psychology, Lukavský is important because he makes it visible in the field of sophisticated experimental research on visual cognition.

At the same time, Lukavský is also interesting as a figure of interdisciplinary linkage. He teaches psychological methods, psychophysics, and Bayesian statistics, that is, he works precisely where cognitive psychology connects directly with methodology. In the contemporary Czech context, this is a very important function: the development of high-quality experimental science requires not only ideas, but also people capable of transmitting complex methodological tools to new generations of researchers. It is in this sense that Lukavský is one of the key figures of contemporary experimental psychology in Czechia.

Leading works:

- Děchtěrenko, F., & Lukavský, J. (2022). *False memories when viewing overlapping scenes.* *PeerJ*, 10, e13187.

- Lukavský, J., & Meyerhoff, H. S. (2023). *Gaze coherence reveals distinct tracking strategies in multiple object and multiple identity tracking. Psychonomic Bulletin & Review.*
- Lukavský, J. (2019). *Scene categorization in the presence of a distractor. Journal of Vision, 19(2), 6.*
- Lukavský, J., & Děchtěrenko, F. (2017). *Visual properties and memorising scenes: Effects of image-space sparseness and uniformity. Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics, 79(7), 2044–2054.*

3. Tomáš Urbánek

He is one of the central figures of Czech psychological methodology and psychometrics. His official profile at the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences shows that he has headed the Department of Methodology since 2003 and has been Director of the Institute since 2017. His research interests include psychometrics, psychosemantics, the quantitative methodology of psychology, statistical analysis of data, and semiotics. This combination alone shows that Urbánek belongs to those researchers who shape not merely a single field, but the methodological framework of the discipline as a whole. In Czech psychology after 1993, figures of this kind became critically important for the transition to an internationally competitive publication culture.

Urbánek's contribution is especially visible in the standardisation and development of assessment instruments. His current and recent publications show work on GHDRS, WJ IV, self-construal questionnaires, assessment in Roma populations, graphomotor diagnostics, and psychometric adaptation. This is not only technical work, but also socially significant work, since it concerns fairness of measurement, cultural validity, and the quality of psychological assessment across different groups. For contemporary Czechia, this is one of the most important contributions: psychological methodology has ceased to be a secondary service area and has become an autonomous scholarly direction in its right. In addition, Urbánek plays the role of an institutional leader who combines research governance with substantive methodology. In this sense, he is perhaps the principal symbol of the Czech methodological school.

The European aspect of his work should also be emphasised. Urbánek's profile records membership in the European Association for Methodology and on the EFPA Board of Assessment, which means that his work is rooted not only in the national field, but also in the wider European domain of psychological assessment and testing. His contribution is thus dual in character: he simultaneously develops Czech psychometrics and represents Czechia within the international infrastructure of quality standards and assessment.

Leading works:

- Mekyska, J., Šafářová, K., Urbánek, T. et al. (2024). *Graphomotor and Handwriting Disabilities Rating Scale (GHDRS): Towards complex and objective assessment. Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties, 29(1), 1–34.*
- Czekóová, K., & Urbánek, T. (2024). *Validity of Intelligence Assessment Among the Roma Minority Population. Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment, 42(2).*
- Lacko, D., Čeněk, J., & Urbánek, T. (2021). *Psychometric Properties of the Independent and Interdependent Self-Construal Questionnaire: Evidence From the Czech Republic. Frontiers in Psychology, 12, 564011.*

- Šafářová, K., Mekyska, J., Urbánek, T. et al. (2022). *Grafomotorické dovednosti: Nové přístupy k diagnostice*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

4. Iva Šolcová

She is one of the most important figures in Czech health psychology and well-being research. Her profile reflects a long professional trajectory: clinical practice, work at the Institute of Physiology, and, from 1992 onwards, research activity at the Institute of Psychology. This means that Šolcová combines experience in clinical, medical, and academic psychology. In contemporary Czechia, such a combination is particularly significant for the development of health psychology as a field in which quality of life, health, coping, resilience, and ageing are examined psychologically, yet always in close connection with medical and social contexts. She is also affiliated with the European Health Psychology Society and the International Association of Applied Psychology, which underscores the international level of her integration.

Šolcová's scholarly contribution is especially visible in research on personal satisfaction, resilience, burnout, gerotranscendence, and health in the long-term perspective. Her list of publications includes both individual works on ageing and health-related topics and co-authored studies on academic burnout and the well-being of university staff. This makes her an important transitional figure between classical health psychology and newer studies of well-being in institutions. For Czech psychology, she is significant because she develops health psychology not as a narrow medical-applied field, but as a broad framework for studying life resilience, satisfaction, and the psychological determinants of health.

A distinctive feature of Šolcová's work is that she helps sustain within Czech psychology the theme of the life course and ageing. At a time when a considerable share of research attention is concentrated on childhood, the digital environment, and education, her work on gerotranscendence and resilience helps preserve a balance among age-related directions and prevents psychology from being reduced to youth-related problems alone. For this reason, her contribution is important not only thematically, but also structurally: it sustains the completeness of the age-related and health-oriented perspective within the contemporary Czech discipline.

Leading works:

- Blatný, M., Šolcová, I., Květon, P., Záborská, K., Mudrák, J., Jelínek, M., & Machovcová, K. (2018). *The influence of personality traits on life satisfaction through work engagement and job satisfaction among academic faculty members*. *Studia Psychologica*, 60(4), 274–286.
- Záborská, K., Mudrák, J., Šolcová, I., Květon, P., Blatný, M., & Machovcová, K. (2018). *Burnout among university faculty: The central role of work-family conflict*. *Educational Psychology*, 38(6), 800–819.
- Šolcová, I., Kebza, V., Kodl, M., & Kernová, V. (2017). *Self-reported health predicting resilience and burnout in longitudinal study*. *Central European Journal of Public Health*, 25(3), 222–227.
- Šolcová, I. (2018). *Gerotranscendence: jiný pohled na stáří*. *Československá psychologie*, 62(6), 616–621.

The Masaryk School of Cyberpsychology and Research on the Digital Environment

1. David Šmahel

He is the most internationally visible figure in contemporary Czech cyberpsychology. His profile at *IRTIS* defines him as a researcher working on the impact of *ICT* on well-being and *HCI*, while at Masaryk University he is presented as a professor and one of the key leaders at the Faculty of Social Studies. *IRTIS* emphasises that this team specifically investigates the use of *ICT* and its impact on individuals and society, and among its research networks it highlights EU Kids Online. Thus, Šmahel appears not merely as an individual author, but as the leader of an entire research cluster through which Czechia has become visible on the map of global digital psychology.

Šmahel's scholarly contribution is associated with several key themes: online risks, adolescence in digital environments, harmful online content, digital skills, sleep and screen time, well-being, and the social implications of *ICT*. This is highly characteristic of the 2000s–2020s: he develops psychology not only of online behaviour as such, but also of digital conditions of life as a new developmental environment. Through his work, Czech psychology has become one of the European centres for the study of online risks among children and adolescents. Significantly, both his current publications at Masaryk University and the activity of *IRTIS* revolve around topics that lie at the very heart of the contemporary research agenda. This makes Šmahel a central figure not only in Czech, but also in Central European cyberpsychology.

More broadly, Šmahel is important as a researcher who helped give digital studies in Czechia a stable institutional form. His role as an organiser, editor, and participant in international networks is no less important than his individual articles. It is thanks to figures of this kind that the psychological study of the digital environment in Czechia ceased to be marginal and came to be perceived as one of the leading directions of contemporary national science.

Leading works:

- Šmahel, D., & Terčová, N. (2025). *Digital Skills' Role in Intended and Unintended Exposure to Harmful Online Content Among European Adolescents. Media and Communication*, 13 (January issue).
- Šaradín Lebedíková, M., Dítě, P., & Šmahel, D. (2025). *Digitální well-being v Česku*. Research report.
- Tkaczyk, M., Kšiňan, A., & Šmahel, D. (2026). *Longitudinal Between- and Within-Person Associations Among Screen Time, Bedtime, and Daytime Sleepiness Among Adolescents: Three-Wave Prospective Panel Study. Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 28.

2. Hana Macháčková

She is one of the key figures of the second generation of Czech cyberpsychology. *IRTIS* explicitly states that, since September 2023, she has served as the leader of the Interdisciplinary Research Team on Internet and Society and that she investigates the role of the internet and technologies in adolescents' lives, while her current research focus includes online

aggression, online communities, health, and well-being. This makes her one of the central figures in the research transition from early internet psychology to a more complex analysis of digital well-being, online aggression, and community dynamics. In the Czech context, she represents precisely the line in which digital psychology is especially closely connected with the developmental and social psychology of adolescence.

Macháčková is important because her research is at once socially significant and conceptually modern. She works on bystander behaviour, cyberhate exposure, anonymity and communication, and the online environments of children and adolescents. These topics occupy a central place in international digital psychology because they move beyond the older question of whether the internet is harmful and towards more complex problems: who protects, who observes, who remains silent, and how digital literacy and perceived discrimination influence exposure to harmful content. For Czech psychology, her contribution is especially important as an example of how internationally legible research can be built from Central European material. Her publication profile at Masaryk University demonstrates both a substantial output and sustained current productivity.

In organisational terms, Macháčková has become a key figure in strengthening IRTIS as an institute rather than merely a research group. This gives her work particular weight: she acts simultaneously as an author, a leader, and a representative of an entire research infrastructure. For the history of contemporary Czech psychology, this is an important transitional moment, because it is precisely figures of this kind that make a field durable and reproducible.

Leading works:

- Jaroň Bedrošová, M., Terčová, N., De Coninck, D., Pyżalski, J., Waechter, N., & Macháčková, H. (2025). *Adolescents' intentional and unintentional cyberhate exposure in Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Portugal: The role of perceived discrimination and digital literacy*. *Journal of Children and Media*, 19(4).
- Macháčková, H. (2025). *Anonymity in online communication: Theoretical and empirical approaches*. In *Research Handbook on Cyberpsychology*.
- Shukla, S., Macháčková, H., Dědková, L., & Görzig, A. (2026). *Defender or Outsider? Understanding Individual, Social, and Contextual Factors in Cyberbystander Behavior in Cyberaggression*. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 46(4).

3. Lenka Dědková

She is an important figure in Czech digital youth research, especially in the areas of parental mediation, online interactions, and sexual solicitation. Her profile at Masaryk University identifies her as Vice-Head of *IRTIS*, while the *IRTIS* project pages list her as a working-group leader with research interests in parental mediation and the online interactions of children and adolescents. This shows that Dědková plays an important role precisely in that part of cyberpsychology in which the digital environment is analysed through family mediation, trust management, and disclosure or non-disclosure to parents. For contemporary Czechia, this is a strategically important area, because it links digital safety with the psychology of the family and adolescent communication.

Dědková's scholarly contribution is especially visible in mixed-method and longitudinal studies of adolescents' online lives. Her current publications at Masaryk University show work

on mHealth app use, body dissatisfaction, physical self-worth, information management in relation to cyberaggression and online sexual solicitation, and also on the reasons why adolescents do not disclose such experiences to their parents. This direction is highly contemporary because it lies at the intersection of cyberpsychology, health psychology, and family communication. For Czech scholarship, her work is important not only because it is well integrated into European research networks, but also because it is grounded in specifically national datasets.

Within Czech cyberpsychology, Dědková represents a more nuanced analytical line than the mere cataloguing of risks. She demonstrates that what matters is not only the frequency of online threats, but also the mechanisms of knowledge, silence, trust, and mediation. In this sense, her contribution belongs to the most psychologically rich segments of digital research, in which the real structure of the relationship between the adolescent, the family, and the digital environment is placed at the centre.

Leading works:

- Gülec, H., Mužík, M., Šmahel, D., & Dědková, L. (2025). *Longitudinal Associations Between Adolescents' mHealth App Use, Body Dissatisfaction, and Physical Self-Worth: Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Study*. *JMIR Mental Health*, 12 (March issue).
- Lisztwan Honusová, B., Dědková, L., & Mýlek, V. (2026). *Why adolescents do not confide in their parents about online sexual solicitation: A mixed-method study*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 180 (January issue).
- Dědková, L. et al. (2023). *Parental mediation of online interactions and its relation to... Information, Communication & Society*.

4. Anna Ševčíková

She represents that part of Czech cyberpsychology which is closely connected with the psychology of sexuality, online risks, and later-life sexuality and relationships. In the available profiles and publications, she is described as a researcher working on sexuality on the internet, psychosexual development, and online risks among children and adolescents, while in more recent projects she has also addressed later-life sexuality and health. Such a trajectory is highly revealing: it takes Czech cyberpsychology beyond the adolescent environment and connects it with broader sexuality and health research. In this sense, Ševčíková occupies a distinctive place in Czech scholarship as a researcher who brings together the digital environment, intimacy, and a lifespan perspective.

Her current publication profile at Masaryk University shows both high productivity and broad thematic range: it includes work on the voices of late-midlife adults concerning sexual changes and help-seeking, on the challenges faced by adolescents in wartime Ukraine, and on men's internet sex addiction and sexual objectification. Within contemporary Czech psychology, this is a very important combination. It shows that cyberpsychology in Czechia has long moved beyond the narrow analysis of "children's online behaviour" and has become a fully-fledged framework for studying sexuality, health, conflict, and life transitions in the digital age. For the Czech school, this expands the very boundaries of the field.

In addition, Ševčíková plays an important role in the methodological expansion of the direction. Her work combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, online behaviour and embodied experience, adolescent risk and adult sexuality. This is one of the most interesting

contributions of contemporary Czech psychology: the digital environment is not treated in isolation, but is incorporated into wider contexts of age, gender, intimacy, war, and health.

Leading works:

- Gore-Górszewska, G., Ševčíková, A., & Hinchliff, S. (2025). *“We Are Too Young to Worry”: Late-Midlife Adults’ Voices on Sexual Changes, Distress, and Help-Seeking Behaviors. Qualitative Health Research.*
- Rečka, K., Ševčíková, A., Loshenko, O., & Danyliuk, I. (2025). *Challenges of Adolescents in War: A Report from Ukraine’s Frontline Territories. Insight: The Psychological Dimensions of Society, 13.*
- Nováková, P., Chvojka, E., Ševčíková, A., Blinka, L., Wright, P., & Kane, S. (2025). *Men’s internet sex addiction predicts sexual objectification of women even after taking pornography consumption frequency into account. Frontiers in Psychology, 16* (February issue).

The Prague School of Educational, School, and Counselling Psychology

1. Irena Smetáčková

She is one of the most prominent figures in contemporary Czech educational and school psychology. Her structured CV identifies research interests in professional development and stress, teaching and learning strategies, gender identity development, and diversity in education, and also notes that since 2019 she has headed the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Education, Charles University. This is a highly important profile, because it shows that Smetáčková works not only within the classical field of school psychology, but also within the broader domain of teacher development, gender, inclusion, and educational inequality. In contemporary Czechia, it is precisely researchers of this kind who translate the psychology of schooling into the language of contemporary educational policy and the analysis of school culture.

Smetáčková’s scholarly contribution is especially visible in three areas. The first is gender and diversity in education, where she works with identity, school experience, and inclusion. The second is mathematics self-evaluation, school success and failure, and learning strategies. The third is teacher stress, school conditions, and pandemic-related transformations of education. This makes her one of the central figures of the Prague school, because she consistently works at the intersection of the psychology of the pupil, the psychology of the teacher, and the structures of the educational environment. In contemporary Czech scholarship, this direction is especially important because the school is regarded not merely as a place of knowledge transmission, but also as a space of social experience, inequality, motivation, and support.

At the level of public role, Smetáčková represents that part of Czech psychology which is closely involved in reforms and debates concerning school policy. Her work on the first COVID lockdown, parental perspectives, and inclusive policy makes her contribution especially significant in the 2020s. Thanks to researchers of this kind, the Prague school of educational

psychology retains high public relevance and remains one of the most visible applied directions in Czech psychology.

Leading works:

- Štěch, S., & Smetáčková, I. (2023). *Teacher and parental views on inclusive education policy lending in the Czech Republic*. *European Journal of Education*, 58(2), 233–244.
- Smetáčková, I., & Štěch, S. (2021). *The first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in primary schools in the Czech Republic: Parental perspectives*. *European Journal of Education*, 56(4), 564–577.
- Smetáčková, I., & Páchová, A. (2016). *Mathematical Self-Evaluation of Grade 4 and 8 Pupils*. *Scientia in Education*.
- Smetáčková, I., Ptáček, R., Vňuková, M., & Děchtěrenko, F. (2023). *Dopad ADHD na plánování, coping a časovou perspektivu v každodenním životě jedince*.

2. Stanislav Štěch

He is one of the senior and most influential figures in Czech pedagogical and school psychology. The profile of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Education of Charles University states that he has worked at the Faculty of Education since 1983, has been Professor of Educational Psychology there since 2007, long headed the Department of Psychology, and served as Vice-Rector of Charles University. His research topics encompass school socialisation, the teaching profession, school psychology, the relationship between educational research and educational policy, and higher education policy. In the Czech context, this makes him one of the system-forming figures, because he brings together school psychology, educational policy, and university governance.

Štěch's scholarly contribution is particularly important at those points where educational psychology moves into the field of education policy and the professional identity of teachers. His recent publications show an interest in inclusive education, distance learning, teacher qualification, the problem of de-professionalisation, and the broader relationship between research and policy. In contemporary Czechia, this line is extremely important, because educational psychology can no longer be confined to observing the classroom; it must also analyse the institutional frameworks within which school experience is formed. This is precisely what Štěch does, acting as a researcher at the intersection of psychology, pedagogy, and policy studies.

In historical terms, Štěch is important as a figure of continuity. Through him, the Prague school of educational psychology preserves its connection with earlier traditions of Czech pedagogy and psychology, while at the same time responding to the challenges of inclusion, the pandemic, and changes in the status of the teaching profession. This makes his contribution particularly significant for understanding the evolution of Czech school psychology from the late twentieth century to the 2020s.

Leading works:

- Štěch, S., & Smetáčková, I. (2023). *Teacher and parental views on inclusive education policy lending in the Czech Republic*. *European Journal of Education*, 58(2), 233–244.
- Štěch, S., & Smetáčková, I. (2021). *L'enseignement distanciel en République tchèque — le miroir familial des inégalités scolaires*. *Administration & Éducation*, (1), 135–140.

- Štěch, S. (2023). *Učitelská kvalifikace dnes — de-profesionalizace praxí? Pedagogická orientace*, 33(1), 46–64.
- Štěch, S. (2023). *Co je inkluzivní a co společné vzdělávání? Svět nadání*, 12(1), 1–9.

3. Václav Mertin

He is one of the most recognisable figures in Czech child, counselling, and school psychology. An official English-language reference in the bulletin of the Czech Office for Personal Data Protection characterises him as a child psychologist with many years of professional practice and as Deputy Head of the Department of Psychology, while materials from Charles University and the profile of his publications show a sustained connection with questions of schooling, individual education, exceptional children and youth, and applied child psychology. This figure is particularly important for understanding the Czech tradition of practice-oriented psychology, in which scholarly writing, counselling, school-related issues, and methodological texts are closely intertwined.

Mertin's scholarly and practical contribution is associated above all with the themes of individual education, educational diagnostics, the behaviour of children and adolescents, school counselling, and the history of practical psychology. His article on the pedagogical and psychological aspects of individual education demonstrates his interest in the ways in which educational psychology conceptualises home schooling and other forms of alternative educational trajectory. His works on Lightner Witmer and practical psychology also place Mertin within a historical-psychological perspective. Finally, his editorial and authorial activity in books and collected volumes makes him an important mediator between academic psychology and school practice. It is precisely here that his special role in contemporary Czechia lies: he not only conducts research, but also translates psychological knowledge into a language accessible and useful to teachers, parents, and counsellors.

Within Czech psychology, Mertin represents a direction that is especially sensitive to the practical consequences of research findings. This makes his contribution less “laboratory-based”, but extremely significant for the public presence of the discipline. Wherever Czech psychology enters the school, the family, and the counselling context, Mertin's name remains one of the most stable reference points.

Leading works:

- Mertin, V. (2003). *Pedagogicko-psychologické aspekty individuálního vzdělávání* [Individual Education from the Point of View of Educational Psychology]. *Pedagogika*, 405–417.
- Mertin, V. (2012). *Lightner Witmer – Origins of practical psychology*.
- Gillernová, I., & Mertin, V. (Eds.). (2001). *Psychologické problémy člověka v měnícím se světě*. Praha: Karolinum.

4. Ilona Gillernová

Ilona Gillernová is one of the key figures of Prague social, educational, and school psychology. Her departmental page and external materials emphasise her long-term work at the Department of Psychology, Charles University, while substantive references to her consistently associate her with social communication, interpersonal relations, teacher competences, the school environment, and social skills. In contemporary Czechia, it is Gillernová who represents the line in which applied social psychology works with the material of the school and the teaching profession. This is especially important, since the Prague school has always been distinguished by its attention to the real pedagogical situation rather than merely to the general theory of learning.

Gillernová's scholarly contribution is built around several stable themes. The first is social communication and interpersonal relations, which is evident from her works on *sociální komunikace* and social skills. The second is the school as a social world, which is especially well reflected in the book *Sociální dovednosti ve škole*. The third is socio-psychological training and the development of the teacher's professional competences. Such a profile makes her one of the most important figures to have translated general social psychology into the sphere of pedagogy, school interaction, and the professional preparation of teachers. This is precisely the distinctive nature of her contribution: she has consistently shown that the psychological effectiveness of the school depends not only on curricula, but also on social skills, communication, atmosphere, and role structure.

More broadly, Gillernová is important as a researcher who has sustained the continuity of Prague applied social psychology over a long period. Her texts and teaching-related works have become part of the corpus through which Czech educational and school psychology preserves its language and tradition. For the contemporary discipline, this is especially important, because it is precisely such figures that maintain continuity between generations of researchers and practitioners.

Leading works:

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Part Four

Conclusion

The development of psychology in contemporary Czechia after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia provides an example of how a national science can move from post-systemic restructuring to a mature, internationally integrated, and socially significant discipline. In 1993, Czech psychology did not begin anew; rather, it entered a new state context while preserving a substantial degree of personnel, institutional, and intellectual continuity. It was precisely this circumstance that determined the specific character of its subsequent evolution: instead of a rupture with the past, the former scientific system was transformed into a new national configuration. Already at an early stage, it became clear that for Czech psychology the crucial task would be not only the preservation of academic structures, but also their adaptation to new conditions of governance, funding, international cooperation, and professional self-regulation. Over the course of three decades, the discipline not only preserved its core, but also expanded its research profile, strengthened its methodological culture, and developed stable forms of engagement with society. As a result, by 2025 psychology in Czechia had come to function as a polycentric network of university and academic centres united by shared professional standards and contemporary research agendas. Such a trajectory shows that psychological science in Czechia has become not a peripheral segment of the social sciences and humanities, but a fully-fledged intellectual and public resource of the country. This conclusion follows directly from the overall logic of the material presented in the handbook.

The first defining moment for contemporary Czech psychology was the watershed year of 1993 itself, when the emergence of the independent Czech Republic led to the institutional reorganisation of the discipline. The most important milestone was the transformation of the former Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences into the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the transfer of the leadership of the Institute of Psychology to Brno. As a result, Brno became firmly established as one of the central academic hubs of Czech psychology, while the discipline as a whole acquired more clearly defined national contours. At the same time, the new situation did not simply mean growth: early independent Czechia inherited not only the freedom of scientific choice, but also the consequences of staff reductions, restructuring, and the abolition of certain divisions. Consequently, Czech psychology entered the new period as both liberated and institutionally vulnerable. Against this background, the preservation of scholarly memory, journals, university departments, and personnel continuity assumed particular importance. No less important was the fact that relations between academic and university psychology began to be reconfigured in the direction of a closer rapprochement between research and teaching. Thus, 1993 became neither the end of the old system nor a beginning from scratch, but rather a point of structural turning that determined the vector of the subsequent history of Czech psychology.

The period of the 1990s and the early 2000s may be characterised as a phase of recovery, adaptation, and professional differentiation. During this time, psychology in Czechia was adjusting to new academic, social, and economic conditions while simultaneously addressing the tasks of internal stabilisation and external positioning. An important indicator of this process was the activity of the *Českomoravská psychologická společnost*, which by the beginning of the 2000s united more than a thousand members across nine sections. The very

structure of these sections already showed that Czech psychology was developing not only as an academic discipline, but also as a field closely connected with clinical work, counselling, schooling, labour and organisation, developmental issues, and questions of health. A substantial role was also played by the restructuring of higher psychological education: training programmes again acquired a longer and more substantial trajectory, while university centres began to develop their research profiles more actively. At the same time, the grant- and project-based logic of science was gaining strength, which contributed to the thematic structuring of research and to a stronger empirical orientation. In these same years, public demand for psychological knowledge increased, giving new impetus to applied psychology and to its professional institutionalisation. For this reason, the first post-Czechoslovak stage should be understood as a period in which the discipline not only survived, but also created the foundation for subsequent consolidation and growth.

In the 2000s, Czech psychology entered a phase of consolidation, in which not merely individual elements but the very research architecture of the discipline acquired a stable form. This is especially evident in the case of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where from 2003 onwards the principal divisions took shape: personality and social psychology, cognitive psychology, health psychology, and the methodology of psychological research. Such a structure not only brought internal order to the work of the Institute, but also established the map of the principal directions of contemporary Czech academic psychology. At the same time, university centres — above all in Prague, Brno, and Olomouc—were ceasing to be merely educational platforms and were increasingly taking shape as autonomous scholarly centres. The methodological component was also significantly strengthened: psychology in Czechia became ever more clearly aware that, without a strong culture of measurement, data analysis, and the development of diagnostic instruments, it would be unable to secure a firm place within the European scientific space. An important symbol of maturity was the journal sphere, where alongside the traditional journal *Československá psychologie* there appeared the peer-reviewed electronic journal *E-psychologie*. In parallel, health psychology was becoming stronger, gradually transforming itself from a relatively new direction into a fully-fledged specialised field. As a result, by the end of the 2000s Czech psychology was already functioning as a structurally mature national scientific system capable of moving to the next phase—accelerated internationalisation.

The 2010s became a period of internationalisation, when Czech psychology increasingly began to speak the language of international science. This was reflected in publication strategy, the strengthening of the English-language presence, participation in European networks, and an orientation towards internationally indexed journals. Of particular importance was the growing publication competitiveness of the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, which by the 2020s was demonstrating sustained activity in journals included in the Web of Science. Multilingual and peer-reviewed Czech journals also began to function as a bridge between the local and the global scholarly space, preserving the Czech and Slovak academic context while simultaneously opening access to an international readership. At the same time, the Europeanisation of professional standards in the training of psychologists intensified, above all through *UPA ČR*, *EFPA*, and an orientation towards EuroPsy. An important background factor in this process was the logic of the Bologna Process, which made Czech psychological education more comparable with pan-European frameworks of qualifications and academic mobility. At the same time, internationalisation did not lead to a unification of content; on the contrary, it was precisely in the 2010s that research themes became markedly

more complex, ranging from the political psychology of democracy to developmental psycholinguistics, health psychology, methodology, and digital psychology. Thus, in Czechia, internationalisation meant not the loss of local specificity, but the translation of national material into forms meaningful for European and world science.

The contemporary stage of 2020–2025 marked an even deeper change in the status of psychology: it became not only a scientific and educational discipline, but also a socially analytical one. The pandemic, crises of trust, the growth of disinformation, the polarisation of society, changes in the school environment, and problems of mental well-being gave psychological knowledge a new degree of public relevance. Under these conditions, Czech psychology became ever more actively involved in interdisciplinary projects dealing with systemic risks and societal resilience. The clearest example was the SYRI project, in which psychologists participated in such areas as resilience, polarisation and populism, and education. This means that Czech psychology moved beyond the traditional understanding of the discipline as a science of the individual and became an important instrument for analysing social processes and crisis situations. At the same time, a new level of horizontal coordination among academic centres emerged, as reflected in the creation of the *Sdružení kateder psychologie ČR* and the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the country's psychological institutions. This gives the contemporary stage particular significance: psychology is no longer only researching society, but is also organising its national academic network as a mature system. As a result, the 2020s transformed Czech psychology into a discipline that is at once scientific, professional, and publicly significant.

One of the most important results of the development of psychology in contemporary Czechia has been the formation of a whole range of strong research schools and directions. Above all, this includes the Brno academic school of personality, social, and political psychology, associated with the Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. This school brought together research on personality, intergroup relations, democratic culture, citizenship, and well-being, turning the post-socialist experience of Czechia into material for internationally significant political-psychological and social-psychological research. No less important was the Brno school of cognitive psychology and developmental psycholinguistics, which has advanced research on language, memory, perception, and developmental processes based on Czech-language material. Particular significance was also acquired by the school of psychological methodology, psychometrics, and mixed methods, through which Czech psychology strengthened its culture of measurement, analysis, and methodological self-reflection. Around Masaryk University there emerged one of the most recognisable European schools of cyberpsychology, studying online risks, digital identity, the media environment, and digital well-being. In Prague, a strong school of educational, school, and counselling psychology took shape, closely linked to Charles University and focused on the school as a space of psychological support, socialisation, and prevention. At the same time, Prague addictology and the Olomouc traditions of applied, clinical, organisational, and transport psychology were also developing, which once again underscores the polycentric and multidisciplinary structure of the contemporary Czech discipline.

No less significant are the concrete achievements of Czech psychology as a science. After 1993, it succeeded not only in preserving its institutional core, but also in modernising it, transforming it into a stable research system. It strengthened its international publication visibility, learned to operate within a regime of global quality assessment, and secured its presence in the indexed academic space. Psychology in Czechia became embedded in

European professional and ethical frameworks, while its educational trajectories became more transparent and more comparable with pan-European standards. At the same time, Czech psychology created its centres of strength in such areas as cyberpsychology, the psychology of democracy, personality psychology, methodology, health psychology, and developmental psycholinguistics. It is also important that the country developed a stable culture of open and digital scholarly communication, in which journals, conferences, and professional networks increasingly exist in electronic form. Czech psychology also entered the field of systemic social risks, becoming part of the national analysis of resilience, crises, and educational problems. All these achievements show that Czech psychology in 1993–2025 attained not only quantitative growth, but also qualitative maturity.

Leading researchers played a particularly important role in this trajectory, for they did not merely publish individual works, but in fact shaped the very face of contemporary Czech psychology. In the field of social and political psychology, one of the central figures was Martina Klicperová-Baker, who turned the psychology of democracy, civic culture, and post-communist transformation into an internationally visible direction. In personality psychology and intergroup perception, Martina Hřebíčková and Marek Blatný played an enormous role, developing research on personality, well-being, and life-span development. In the field of organisational and social psychology, an important contribution was made by Kateřina Zábrowská, whose work addressed academic labour, gender, well-being, and bullying. In cognitive psychology and developmental psycholinguistics, the leading figure was Filip Smolík, who developed one of the strongest regional lines of research on early language development. In methodology and psychometrics, the central place was occupied by Tomáš Urbánek, while in health psychology it was Iva Šolcová. In cyberpsychology, the key names were David Šmahel, Hana Macháčková, Lenka Dědková, and Anna Ševčíková, while in Prague school and educational psychology they were Irena Smetáčková, Stanislav Štěch, Václav Mertin, and Ilona Gillernová. It was through such researchers that contemporary Czech psychology acquired not only institutional stability, but also a human intellectual face.

If one were to define the contemporary state of psychology in Czechia by 2025 in the most concise terms possible, it could be described through several interconnected features. First, it is polycentric: the discipline develops not in a single centre, but through a network of academic and university institutions. Secondly, it possesses a high degree of methodological maturity, making it possible to combine quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches. Thirdly, it maintains a balance between fundamental and applied work, thanks to which psychology preserves scientific depth while also responding to the practical demands of schooling, healthcare, organisations, and the digital environment. Fourthly, it is Europeanly embedded without losing its regional identity, which is especially evident in the combination of an EFPA/EuroPsy orientation and the preservation of Czech-Slovak scholarly proximity. Fifthly, it demonstrates digital maturity and sensitivity to current themes—from online risks and AI-related behaviour to digital well-being and open-access communication. Finally, sixthly, it has an expanded public mission, expressed in psychology's participation in the analysis of resilience, fear, trust, division, and adaptation under conditions of crisis. Taken together, these features make Czech psychology one of the most interesting and dynamically developing disciplines in the Central European space.

Overall, the development of psychology in contemporary Czechia between 1993 and 2025 may be assessed as a successful path from post-dissolution reorganisation to a mature European scientific system. This evolution included several interconnected phases: restructuring after

the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the adaptation of the 1990s, the consolidation of the 2000s, the internationalisation of the 2010s, and the socially oriented networked maturity of the 2020s. At each stage, the discipline not merely maintained its position, but accumulated new resources: institutional, methodological, publication-related, personnel-related, and public. Thanks to this, psychology in Czechia has become a discipline capable of combining continuity with innovation, national specificity with international relevance, and fundamental scholarship with practical usefulness. Its development shows that, under conditions of transformation, a social-scientific and humanistic discipline can do more than merely adapt: it can also work out its model of maturity. For the Institute's trainees, this example is particularly important, because it demonstrates how a modern scientific field can be built consistently within one country—through institutions, schools, professional associations, strong individual figures, and openness to public challenges. It is precisely for this reason that contemporary Czech psychology deserves attention not only as a national experience, but also as a model of productive scientific development in Central Europe. In this lies its broader historical and methodological significance.

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SCIENTIFIC EDITIONS

Alexander Buychik

IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY:
EXPERIENCE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Computer typesetting — Tuculart Studio

Signed for editing on March 1, 2026.

Format: ISO 216, 8.27*11.69 in. (21.0*29.7 cm)

Tuculart Edition European Institute for Innovation Development
Czechia, 71000, Ostrava, Slezská Ostrava, Záměstní, 1155/27
Czechia, 74752, okr. Opava, Hlavnice, 163

Websites: <https://tuculart.eu>, <https://eiid.eu>

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