

Social Enterprises (Entrepreneurship) in the Czech Republic

Spanning sectoral boundaries is now perhaps accelerating, especially with the development of social enterprises that seem to transcend sectors. Nevertheless, a complex approach that would enable reflection on the specific nature of social entrepreneurship in a transitional context as well as on current public debates and policy making discourses on the subject is lacking. This dissertation thesis intends to fill this gap. Since the economic crisis, the interest in social enterprises has increased and various forms of social enterprises have spread. The emergence of social enterprises is associated with the advancement of a civil society in which corporate altruism is on the rise. The discourse on social entrepreneurship is quite different across countries; each region produces specific debates. The definitions of social enterprise are diverse and tend to describe the functions of different types of social enterprises. To deepen the discussion on social enterprises as embodied in Western and Eastern Europe, it is useful to underline the distinct development the civil society in these regions experienced. The process of the institutionalization of social enterprise has often been closely linked to the evolution of public policies, especially regarding the real-world challenges the civil society has to face.

Purpose: The aim of the dissertation thesis is to conduct a critical reflection of the current scientific discourse focused on research of the social entrepreneurship and to provide a comprehensive picture of the social entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic.

New Public Governance and the Czech Republic Reality

Several authors argue that New Public Governance concept should be leading motive for public administration developments in the world. The principle of modern governance and its contents is for example defined by the OECD. The goal of this research is to assess if/how the NPG paradigm is applied in the public administration reality of the Czech Republic. The thesis is about to explore the nature of NPG in the Czech context from the point of the theory and practice of administrative services, public services delivery and public policy implications. Offering a range of theoretical perspectives and providing a critical examination of up-to-date empirical research the thesis is expected to provide answers and explanations to the NPG as a new paradigm for public services delivery in the Czech Republic.

Hybrid organizations and public service delivery

The ongoing transformation of horizontal cross-sectoral links in providing public services is a topic that has been discussed not only in the Anglo-Saxon environment. Hybridization is a highly relevant and, even in (post-) transition economies, still insufficiently explored phenomenon.

The existence of a mix of public service providers (e.g. in the educational, health care, water management, power industry, and transportation sectors) and of various hybrid models (such as purchaser-provider models, contracting out, outsourcing/commissioning, corporatization, public-private partnerships) gives rise to new challenging issues requiring a systemic solution at both the theoretical and practical levels. They will be researched in the dissertation which is expected to determine the percentage of hybrid organisations in the selected sectors of public services and provide comprehensive evaluation of the current state of hybridization under the conditions of the Czech Republic (or, as the case may be, other transition economies) in identifying quasi-market principles. By measuring the impacts of hybridity on the provision of public services (focusing on a specific dimension of such an impact as well as on availability, expense-to-revenue ratio, influence on the labour market, accommodation of target groups' needs, etc.), it is possible to quantitatively evaluate even qualitative attributes of so called mixed enterprises collaboration, while taking account of the legislative, economic and institutional environments and possibly also predicting potential changes.

Purpose: The goal of the dissertation is to establish the share of hybrid organisations in the selected sectors of public services and analyse specific impacts of hybridity on their provision under the conditions of the Czech Republic/Slovakia, or, as the case may be, other (post-) transition economies.