

PUBLIC LECTURE EVALUATION

Masaryk University

Faculty	Faculty of Social Studies
Procedure field	Social policy and social work
Applicant	PhDr. Pavel Horák, Ph.D.
Lecture date	12 th May 2026, 1:00 p.m.
Lecture topic	Street-Level Bureaucrats and Their Potential to Solve Contemporary Problems in Social Policy and Social Work
Persons present (number)	16
Designated evaluators (board members)	prof. PhDr. Tomáš Sirovátka, CSc. doc. Mgr. Ondřej Hora, Ph.D. doc. PhDr. Alice Gojová, Ph.D.

The aim of the lecture was to discuss the factors that influence the potential of street-level bureaucrats and its application in addressing contemporary issues in social policy and social work.

The topic of the lecture is highly relevant to the field. The candidate adequately justified it and emphasised its significance by pointing out the connection between contemporary problems addressed in social policy and social work / SPSP on the one hand, and the role and potential of street-level bureaucrats / SLB to contribute to their effective solutions.

The lecture was clearly and appropriately structured, and the logical flow of the presentation was clear. It was divided into three parts: 1) Contemporary issues in SPSP and the role of SLBs in addressing them, 2) The potential of SLBs to address contemporary issues and the factors influencing it, 3) The possibility of analysing the potential of SLBs and the factors influencing it through a Comprehensive Framework of Factors Influencing the Potential and Interventions of SLBs. The author adhered to the allotted time.

The lecture was of a standard academic level. The author frequently illustrated general concepts with practical examples. In doing so, he showed a knowledge of contemporary academic discourse and research, as well as the ability to synthesise this information. The candidate applied his own approach to the topic. He showed his own contribution to the creation of a comprehensive framework for analysing the factors that influence the potential of SLB to address contemporary problems in SPSP. He illustrated the application of the framework in his own research.

The evaluation committee raised comments (during the discussion) regarding certain oversimplifications in interpreting the characteristics of the target groups that are in

focus of SLB interventions, as well as the limited support for these interpretations provided by relevant scholarly studies.

Overall, the lecture met the expectations for a candidate in a habilitation procedure, while also raising certain methodological and interpretive questions relevant for further scholarly discussion.

Six or seven questions were raised during the discussion (some of which overlapped). These questions concerned: an assessment of current research in the Czech Republic on the topic and challenges for further research. Furthermore, questions were raised regarding the generalizability of the research findings, which were illustrated in the explanation of the comprehensive analytical framework, the empirical validity of certain findings, and the arguments supporting certain generalisations in interpreting the situation of the target groups. The candidate provided answers to these questions, which partially clarified the discussed aspects; however, some methodological and interpretive questions remained open.

Another set of questions concerned the applicability of a comprehensive framework of factors to various professional categories of street-level bureaucrats and their areas of practice, as well as the significance of a values framework that guides SLBs' work in relation to their approaches. The candidate provided partial explanations to these questions. Regarding the role of the professional orientation of SLBs, the candidate primarily argued by pointing out differences in the potential of SLBs.

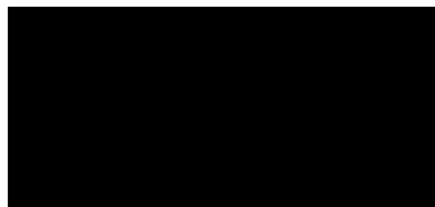
Finally, questions were raised regarding the illustration of the comprehensive framework using an example from the author's own research, the results of which appeared surprisingly positive. The author explained that the research was conducted within a specific organisation and a specific local context, and clarified the significance of regional differences and certain factors influencing those differences.

The committee leaned toward an overall positive assessment of the presentation. At the same time, it expressed reservations regarding gaps it noted in the responses during the discussion.

The lecture delivered by PhDr. Pavel Horák, Ph.D., entitled *Street-Level Bureaucrats and Their Potential to Solve Contemporary Problems in Social Policy and Social Work* and delivered as part of the habilitation procedure, **demonstrated** sufficient scholarly qualifications and pedagogical capabilities expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Social policy and social work.

Date: 12th May 2026

prof. PhDr. Tomáš Sirovátka, CSc.



doc. Mgr. Ondřej Hora, Ph.D.

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doc. PhDr. Alice Gojová, Ph.D.

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