

## **Parent-led schools operating under the umbrella of home education - analysis of a new phenomenon in the Czech education system**

### **Introduction**

According to social science, growing up and receiving skills and information has many aspects to it, reflection of which is embedded in the use of language, such as learning, teaching, schooling, socialisation, praxis and many more. *“For many of us, the concept of learning immediately conjures up images of classrooms, training sessions, teachers, textbooks, homework, and exercises. Yet in our experience, learning is an integral part of our everyday lives. It is part of our participation in our communities and organizations. The problem is not that we do not know this, but rather that we do not have very systematic ways of talking about this familiar experience”* (Wenger, 1998, p. 8). Learning is a participation in what Wenger (1998) calls *communities of practice* and comprises of four ingredients: meaning (learning through experience), practice (learning as doing), identity (learning as becoming) and community (learning as belonging).

This thick description of learning sheds a different light upon the idea of a school. What is a school today? What are its purposes, functions, and obligations, overt and covert messages? Ranging from a baby-sitting organisation to an expert producer, its characteristics are rooted namely in being a transmitter of society’s values, with all its consequences. Should the values change, so will the content and/or method of schooling? That is the reason for the state being such a careful gatekeeper in letting individuals and/or organisations into the process of curriculum formation, methodology certification and exam creation. Everybody who wishes to establish a new school must go through a careful and complicated process of accreditation and fitting its goals into the approved standard. Parent-led schools, which are being established under umbrella of home education, however, have a possibility to deviate to great extent from such characteristic features of a school.

### **1. Current State of Research in the Field in Parent-led home-based education<sup>1</sup>**

Parent-led home-based education is by many envisioned as a compromise between the standardised expectancies on the side of the state, measured and approved through regular examination period, and freedom of parenthood and family life, where children are taught what does not fit into the state curriculum (most often various forms of religious practice, or specific ways of conduct and values). It is a form of education where children are educated outside traditional educational institutions usually by their parents (Ray 2017). The modern home education movement has begun to spread in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. At the beginning, home-schoolers were in rather a precarious position (Gaither 2008). They were misunderstood and held in suspicion not only by their neighbours, but sometimes as well by their family members. Many of them also felt confused about the legal status of home education and occasionally were subject to persecution by authorities (ibid.). The full legalization of home education, which took place gradually in individual US states in the 1980s and early 1990s, was considered a great achievement of the home education movement and has created the basis for its further development. From the United States, home education movement spread to other countries worldwide, including many in European.

Ever since, the popularity of home education is quickly growing, especially in the United States and other Anglo-Saxon countries. Lines (1999), drawing on a retrospective estimate, believes that 10,000 to 15,000 K-12 students were educated at home in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s. According to recent estimates, there are roughly 2.4 million students in the United States educated at home nowadays (Ray 2017). This marks a huge increase in the number of home educated children over the last decades. However, there is not only a growth in the number of home educated children but also the visible increase of public confidence in this type of education. Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll has

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<sup>1</sup> The terms home education and homeschooling are commonly used as synonyms. While *homeschooling* is more commonly used in American literature, *home education* in the European literature. For the purposes of this text the term home education will be used primarily.

repeatedly asked respondents whether they thought home education was a good or bad thing for the nation. While in 1985, only 16% said it was a good thing, in 2001 it was already 41% respondents, who believed home education to be a good thing for the nation (Lyons, Gordon 2002). *“This rise in the number of children being home-schooled may stem from increasing dissatisfaction among parents with the conventional school system, coupled with growing public legitimation of this practice”* (Neuman, Guterman 2017a, p. 149).

### *1.1. Home educated children in the Czech Republic – basic information*

Until 1996, the concept of a modern form of home education was unknown in the Czech Republic. In 1997 The Society of Friends of Homeschooling was set up to gather supporters of this form of education, to inform the public about this alternative, and above all to seek legalization of home education. The Society managed after a short but intense lobbying to convince the Ministry of Education to launch from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1998 the project of experimental assessment of home education as a specific form of basic education<sup>2</sup> (Kostecká 2017). However, only primary school pupils could participate in this project. In addition, in the first year of experimental assessment, home education was only possible under the supervision of two schools that were mandated by the Ministry of Education to oversee this form of education. Due to considerable interest of the parents, other schools have joined the project in the coming years. From the very beginning, great powers were given to school principals who had the right to decide whom to allow to enter home education, to set conditions under which home education could be realized and to decide how assessment of home education outcomes should be organized. Schools fully used the freedom they obtained. Consequently, home education differed significantly under the supervision of various schools (so called “supervising schools”).

In 2004, the amendment to the Education Act legalized home education in the country (Act 561/2004, 2004). The conditions for home education provided by the law remain quite strict and put parents in a subordinate position towards schools, since they must obtain permission from a school to educate their children at home to start with (Kašparová 2015, Kostecká 2012). School directors issue permission to home education only if *“serious reasons for home education exist”* (Education Act, § 41.3a). Moreover, the law allows them to substantially shape the practical realization of home education as they set up conditions for assessment of academic progress of home educated children. However, the Education Act gave the right to supervise home education to any basic school, both public and private. This, seemingly small change of the conditions under which home education can be practiced, combined with the right of parents to choose freely a basic school for their children, have dramatically reinforced the position of parents and, on the contrary, weakened the position of originally very powerful schools, respectively directors of schools.

Data clearly shows increasing popularity of home education in the Czech Republic. Number of home educated children more than tripled between 2012 and 2018. The Statistical Yearbook of Education (2018) that provides data describing the situation at schools on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 stated that altogether 2591 home schooled children were enrolled in Czech basic schools, out of which 1977 were enrolled at primary school level, while remaining 614 at lower secondary school level. It represents 0.27 % of all children of that age, respective 0.34 % of children enrolled in primary schools and 0.16 % of children enrolled in schools at the lower secondary school level<sup>3</sup>.

Schools may have different motives to enrol home educating children. For some, it is a willingness to provide a tailor-made service to those families who demand it, while sympathizing with this form of education; for others it may be a strategy how to cope with decreasing number of school-age children,

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<sup>2</sup> The Czech Republic is a state with compulsory school attendance starting at the age of 6 (since September 2017, also the last year of pre-primary education is compulsory) and lasts 9 years. Primary education (ISCED 1, grades 1 to 5, for children aged 6 to 11 years) and lower secondary education (ISCED 2, grades 6 to 9, for children aged 11 to 15 years) is mostly organized within nine-year single structure basic schools (ISCED 1+ISCED 2), European Commission (2018).

<sup>3</sup> This includes children enrolled in Grades 6 to 9 of basic schools (ISCED 2) as well as children enrolled in the lower fourth grades of multi-year secondary general school and first and second grade of 6-year secondary general schools (both ISCED 2+3).

due to demographic changes and geographical shifts of population. It should be noted that the number of enrolled children is a key criterion used by the decision makers to decide whether the school should exist. Schools in which the number of pupils decreases below a certain threshold are most probably first to be closed down or merged with some other school. It should be also emphasized that the number of enrolled pupils is important for school revenues, and therefore for school financial sustainability. Since early 90/s until 2018, in a Czech education system (The Education System in the Czech Republic 2011) educational costs like salaries and teaching aids were paid by the state and allocated to schools basically on the per capita principle<sup>4</sup>. Schools receive 100% normative for a regularly schooled child and 25% normative for a home-schooled child enrolled. Still, the basic principle remains the same: the higher number of enrolled pupils, the higher the state subsidy for a school. For schools that enrol few home-schoolers such decision does not generate any substantial revenue (it rather generates additional expenditures); for schools with high proportion of home-schoolers among enrolled children, the normative they bring represents an important source of income. Currently, home-schoolers exceed the number of regularly schooled pupils in 6 out of 231 schools. This figure suggests that some schools decided to specialize on home educating community. Although theoretically Czech basic schools provide standardized education, there clearly must be a difference between a school that has 576 home-schoolers out of 784 totally enrolled pupils and a school, where a home schooler is a single one out of its 669 enrolled pupils.

The legislative changes, interests of supervising schools, and the rising interest of parents in home education led to transformation of the relationship between home educating parents and schools. They were transformed from the relationship between an applicant and a decision-making administrative officer into a relationship of a customer and a service provider. The whole logic of mutual dependencies between home educating families and their school have changed according to the logic of the market in which both sides seem to be rather satisfied at the moment, since rising demand is met with a rising and varied supply.

To conclude the introduction, it is possible to say that since the change of political regime in 1989, home education has become an established form of an alternative way of fulfilling the demand of compulsory schooling in the Czech Republic. Fully legalised since 2016, all over the country today, there are to be found individual families, who have opted for the possibility to step out of the traditional way of schooling and spend time together in learning and teaching each other at home instead. Their reasons for home education vary (Collom 2005, Kašparová 2019, Neuman, Guterman 2019), as well as their learning and teaching methods (ibid).

### *1.2. Parent-led schools operating under the umbrella of home education - a new phenomenon officially discovered by the Czech School Inspectorate*

Homeschooling parents are willing to take responsibility for the content and method of their children's learning. However, it is not a mere value-free information that a child is receiving through learning but quite the opposite. It is a world-view and a value system that is transmitted through learning (see e. g. Holt 1982, Illich 1971, Liessmann 2008). In order to achieve this, home educating families often re-organise their life in sense of parental occupation or place of living in order to be able to spend time with their children and enrich each other through learning together. However, as already noted above, home educating families were and are obliged to comply with regulations of the Education Act, § 41, when it comes to standards of learning and knowledge, as they are regularly tested by basic schools and overseen by the Czech School Inspectorate<sup>5</sup>.

In 2015, Inspectorate was commissioned to write a thematic report on home education *“to evaluate conditions, development and results of home-education at primary school level and thus provide the first relevant feedback on experiences of basic schools with this form of alternative education”*

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<sup>4</sup> However, the normative amount of state subsidy differed in accordance to which of the four age categories children belong. It is generally somewhat rising with the increasing age.

<sup>5</sup> The Czech School Inspectorate, a state office established by the ministry of education as a body overseeing the quality of the education system by evaluating and analysing the operation in schools and school facilities.

(Tematická zpráva 2016, p. 3). To do so, Inspectorate conducted an online survey among all 231 Czech basic schools in which at least one home educated pupil was enrolled. Respondents were directors of these schools. After the electronic survey, Inspectorate conducted evaluation in-situ, during the period of a mid-term wave of bi-annual evaluations of pupils' academic performance that were organized in January and February 2016. Inspectors visited a sample of 54 schools, most of them being schools in which at least three home-schoolers were enrolled. Besides inspecting examinations of pupils, inspectors conducted face-to-face interviews with 297 of their parents using a structured questionnaire. During the in-situ inspection activities and interviews with school heads and legal guardians and pupils' educators, Czech School Inspectorate found out that some pupils are not educated at home by their parents or legal guardians, but by other persons or even in an institution that could be described as a parent-led school even though it has not legal status of a school. Under such regime, children are no more home educated, but rather schooled, while parents are mainly in a role of financial sponsors of their child's education.

Not just Inspectorate but also our previous research (e.g. Hána, Kostelecká 2019) points to the fact that the institute of home education is also becoming both temporal and permanent channel through which a new praxis of special kind of schooling occurs. Simply, that alike minded parents get together, hire a teacher and send their children to these learning groups, where schooling occurs under the supervision of a hired teacher, out of home, while parents continue their career or housework uninterrupted. Though such arrangement is not in a direct contradiction with the Czech law, the Czech School Inspectorate noted that this situation is not fully corresponding to the idea of individual education (Tematická zpráva 2016), because home education is mostly perceived as a "*practice in which parents do not send their children to school but educate them at home instead*" (Neuman, Guterman 2017a, p. 148).

Although the conclusions of the Czech School Inspectorate report on home education were generally positive, it provoked discussion within the community of Czech education professionals on possible risks of creating a parallel educational system without state control, or with limited state control, where different values could be promoted and sustained. Such debate played upon the note of parallel polis and detachment from the society's value system, which could consequently lead to exclusion, separation and disharmony, thus creating a scapegoat to blame for possible future problems. According to our research, the existence of parent-led schools is not only a Czech phenomenon but is an internationally spread practice. Some states define it directly in legislative documents. For example home education in Flanders can be organised in two ways, as either (1) individual home teaching in which parents can teach their children themselves or appoint a private tutor; or (2) collective home teaching in which parents can send their children to a private school or can organise home teaching for their children together with a number of other parents (European Commission/Belgium 2018). On the contrary, other countries limit the practice of collective home teaching or parent-led school education under the umbrella of home education. For example, in the Swiss canton of Zurich, education in a group of only up to five students is considered home education. Similar situation exists in Portugal where legislation defines *individual education* as education, in which: "*a qualified teacher teaches one pupil outside the school*" and *home education* as education in which a child is toughed in household "*by the relatives or the person living with him*" (Decreto-Lei n. 553/80).

Czech legislation does not regulate collective home teaching or parent-led school education conducted under the heading of home education. Thus, all forms of education (individual, group and school) are currently possible as home education and they are not in conflict with the law. Although in recent years the number of publications on home education has been steadily increasing (e.g. Davies 2015, Neuman, Guterman 2017a,b,c, 2018), there are hardly any texts that examine the issue of collective teaching or parent-led school education under the heading of home education, the benefits and risks of this phenomenon for the individual children as well as for the society as a whole. Starting off at this point of reason, the knowledge gap upon the topic calls for filling up. The proposed research aims at identifying and analysing the benefits and risks of such practice, regarding the position of the state, safety of children, their academic results, and freedom of choice for the parents. We propose to do so by a mixture of research methods and transdisciplinary approach, encompassing pedagogy, psychology, sociology, social anthropology and andragogy.

## 2. Research objectives

The main aim of the project is to identify and to analyse potential benefits and risks of education obtained by children in so-called parent-led schools (institutions without legal status of a school) operated under the umbrella of home education. We will concentrate on (1) the position of the state, (2) safety of children, (3) their academic results, and (4) freedom of choice for the parents. In order to fulfil the main goal, we will answer following research questions:

- 1) To what extend are parent-led schools a common practice in the home education community? Do some supervising schools specialize in dealing with parent-led schools?
- 2) What are the parents' reasons and motivations for such practice? Do they want to continue their careers without interruption while benefiting from the individualized education of their children provided by teachers of their choice? Do they want to have control over education of their children while avoiding potential decrease of their living standard? Do they distrust their own abilities to teach and instead they rely on the professional qualities of hired (qualified) teachers? Do they want their children to be educated in the community of other children while still under parent control?
- 3) How do the supervising schools, responsible for overseeing the academic results of home-schooled children, perceive parent-led schools? Do they cooperate with their teachers? Have they created cooperation rules? Do they pursue the same goals? Do they support each other?
- 4) What are characteristic features of parent-led schools? Who are their teachers (e.g. their educational background, qualification, teaching experience)? What is the quality of school equipment and learning space? How do the supervising schools evaluate the learning outcomes of children educated in parent-led schools?
- 5) Since home education, alike other forms of education, "*is not just about education*" (Neuman, Guterman 2017a) we will enquire about potential risks connected to the existence of parent-led schools regarding a child and the society (see e.g. Myers, Bhopal 2018). Does this practice bring about possible ideological detachment from the mainstream society, establishment of a parallel polis or alienation from the majority value system on the site of the families involved?

In addition, we hope that by finding answers to our research questions, we will shed more light on more general questions regarding school role in today's society, parents' expectations from schools, risks associated with the school's failure to fulfil the expected role, possibilities of the state to regulate parents' desires and the role of social science and pedagogy experts in this encounter.

## 3. Data and methodology of the research

### 3.1 Entering the field

Due to the former research of the applicant and co-applicant (Kašparová 2019, Kostelecká 2017), the database of basic schools that enrol home educated children already exists and a contact with their directors has already been established. We plan to build upon these existing contacts and through them to identify those supervising schools, under whose supervision the teaching of home educated children is conducted by a third party, rather than a parent. Subsequently, supervising schools, parent-led schools and their hired teachers will be contacted, along with the parents of such home educated children, in order to gain access to interviews, participant observation and focus groups set up.

### 3.2. Methodology used

Research will be based on qualitative participant-centred research methodology based on the hermeneutic phenomenological approach which focuses on interpretations of reality (e.g. Glense, Peshkin 1992, Neuman, Guterman 2018a). In-depth interviews, both structured and unstructured, with the participants (parents, teachers in parent-led schools, directors/teachers of supervising schools) will be one of the central tools in present research and means to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the practice. All the interviews will be transcribed and data subsequently analysed through the standard method of open coding, as well as using the MAXQDA and Atlas ti. professional software for

qualitative & mixed methods research. Beside in-depth interviews we propose to carry out a simple on-line survey among the directors of supervising schools, focus group with representatives of stakeholders, and in-situ observations both in the parent-led schools and during mid-term wave of bi-annual evaluations of pupils' academic performance at supervising schools. Primary data gathering and analysis will be accompanied by analysis of secondary sources, namely the research of literature on home education and the role of modern school today, as well as political and legislative documents related to the phenomenon. Literature analysis will provide us with relevant information on the current praxis as well as the relationships between home education and schooling.

### *3.2.1. To what extent are parent-led schools a common practice in the home education community?*

For the purposes of this research, we will define parent-led school as an institution in which (1) at least two children are together educated full-time by a teacher hired by parents; (2) school has no official registration; (3) pupils in this school perform compulsory schooling individually within home education regime and under the control of supervising school. To answer the question, we will carry out the simple electronic survey, using the web based tool Click4Survey, among the directors of supervising schools (or persons responsible for supervising home education) in order to identify parent-led schools that teach home educated children whose education is supervised by supervising schools. The questionnaire will be addressed to all schools with at least two enrolled home-schooled pupils (it will concern approximately 114 schools out of a total of 231 schools with at least one home schooled pupil). To ensure a higher response rate, we will inform respondents that although this practice may be considered unusual, it is not against the law. Information from supervising schools will be complemented by information from the Czech School Inspectorate, the Home-school Association (the NGO established by home educating parents) as well as from home educating parents themselves who will be approached via short questionnaire using snow-balling method. All collected data will help us (after applying simple statistical methods) identify extent of this phenomenon in the Czech Republic.

### *3.2.2. What are the reasons and motivations for such practice on the side of the parents?*

To answer this question, we will carry out 30-40 in-depth interviews with the parents involved in parent-led schools, both structured and unstructured. During the interviews we will try to identify what parents expect from ideal education, the reasons why they chose to educate children through parent-led school, their expectations of this form of education, advantages and disadvantages of this way of teaching with respect to the child well-being, family life, etc. Also, we will try to identify the parents' previous experiences with school education of their children (if any) and their view of the role of school in modern society. We will also be interested to see if parents plan to educate the child in this way for a long time, or it is just a temporary solution of the specific situation for them.

### *3.2.3. How supervising schools, responsible for overseeing the academic results of home-schooled children, perceive parent-led schools and what is the relation between the parent-led schools and supervising school?*

To answer this question, we will carry out 10-20 in-depth interviews with (1) representatives of the supervising schools (e.g. directors and/or persons responsible for overseeing home education) and (2) teachers of parent-led schools teaching pupils who are enrolled as home educated in the supervising school. The aim is to find out whether both subjects (supervising schools and parent-led schools, respectively their representatives) work together to educate home schooled children. We will be interested in the extent to which they support each other and share similar values on issues related to children's education. We will also seek to identify areas of potential conflicts.

### *3.2.4. What are characteristic features of parent-led schools?*

To answer this question, we will carry out 5-10 in-depth interviews with hired teachers to mapping their educational background, qualification and teaching experience as well as experience with teaching in parent-led schools. In addition to the interview, we will implement 5-10 in-situ observations in such schools to see used teaching methods, analysing educational content in comparison with *School Educational Program*, quality of school equipment and learning space. During mid-term wave of bi-annual evaluations of pupils' academic performance we will carry out 5-10 observation and interviews

with examining teachers. Like the interviews, all the field diaries from in-situ observation will be transcribed and data subsequently analysed through the standard method of open coding.

3.5.5. Are there any potential risks connected to the existence of parent-led school (regarding child and society)?

To answer this question, we will put together all the representatives (parents, teachers, directors) and moreover representative of the decisive sphere and *Home-School Association (HAS)* representatives to conduct focus group. The aim is to identify potential risks connected to the existence of parent-led schools. Focus group will be audio and video recorded, data will be transcribed and subsequently analysed through the standard method of open coding.

It is estimated there will be in between 50 to 75 interviews and in-situ observation in total, in addition 1 focus group and electronic questionnaire survey.

#### 4. Project Time Schedule and Planned Results

Task	2019				2020				2021			
	1. Q	2. Q	3. Q	4. Q	1. Q	2. Q	3. Q	4. Q	1. Q	2. Q	3. Q	4. Q
<i>Establishing and building the contacts with schools</i>												
<i>Identify parent-led schools</i>												
<b>1. Interview setting (total 50-75 interviews)</b>												
a) <i>In-depth interviews with parents</i>												
b) <i>In-depth interviews with supervising school representatives</i>												
c) <i>In-depth interviews with hired teachers</i>												
d) <i>Transcription, coding and analysing interviews</i>												
<b>2. Observations in situ</b>												
a) <i>Used teaching methods</i>												
b) <i>Educational content</i>												
c) <i>Quality of school equipment and learning space</i>												
d) <i>Examination of pupils during bi-annual evaluations</i>												
e) <i>Coding and analysing field diaries</i>												
<b>Focus groups (total 2)</b>												
a) <i>Preparing and conducting a focus group</i>												
b) <i>Transcription, coding and analysing data</i>												
<b>Secondary data analysis</b>												
a) <i>Literature research</i>												
b) <i>Political and legal documents</i>												
c) <i>Reports of the Czech School Inspectorate</i>												
<b>Synthesis and data analysis</b>												
a) <i>Analysis of all acquired data.</i>												
<b>Deliverables</b>												
a) <i>Working the data into the Anthropology of Education Course (MA Sociology, FSS MU Brno)</i>												
b) <i>5 public forum (conference) presentation of results</i>												
c) <i>1 monograph</i>												
d) <i>3 articles in a journal with an impact factor (WOS)</i>												
e) <i>3 articles in a journal in SCOPUS database</i>												

Project stage 1 (2020):

We will carry out literature review and submit an article on home education in the Czech Republic. State of the Art will be presented at international conference. The field will be entered. Contact with 40 stake holders will be established and 40 in-depth interviews completed. Primary data will be transcribed and coded. Focus group will be organised and conducted. One article will be submitted to an academic journal *Orbis scholae* or *Studia Paedagogica*.

#### Project stage 2 (2021):

Preliminary data will be drawn together and presented at international conferences. Comments from international audience will be re-worked into the preliminary findings and submitted in a form of promised articles. We propose to address *The Journal of Pedagogy* and *Paedagogica Historica*, depending on the outcomes of the research. The rest of in-depth interviews will be completed, primary data transcribed and coded. Focus group will be transcribed, coded and analysed. A chapter on schooling, homeschooling and community schooling will be prepared for the final monograph. Preliminary conclusions will be drawn, and additional literature studied in order to provide background for newly acquired data.

#### Project stage 3 (2022):

Analytical work will proceed upon all levels of primary data, including additional literature review of what we expect to be new directions in thinking about the topic, as suggested by the primary data. Selected final data will be presented at an international conference and comments worked into the final publications. The research data will be re-worked into Sociology Masters Course Anthropology of Education, SOC 586 at Masaryk University Brno. Monograph will be completed with chapters analysing the research topic and turned over to a publishing house. Scientific work will be handed over for reviews as specified in the table above. We propose to address *Sociology of Education*, *Sociologický časopis* and *Journal of Education Policy*. The field will be left by notifying all the stakeholders, inviting them to take part in the coming out of the book event.

### **5. Applicant and Applicant's Department Information and the Project Team**

The project applicant is Irena Kašparová, M.A., Ph.D., Head of Social Anthropology Study Program and Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology – Faculty of Social Studies Masaryk University. The applicant has led and participated in several research projects, both in basic and applied research. The applicant will coordinate all the activities, conduct interviews, focus groups and participant observation and contribute with her analysis to the publication of results. Her participation in the project in terms of working hours will equal 0.6 FTE (full-time equivalent).

Research Assistant will be hired from among the Ph.D. or Master students. His/her duty will be to assist the applicant during fieldwork, literature review and data analysis, as well as organisation of paperwork and bureaucratic work. Further students from among the M.A. and Ph.D. students from the Department of Sociology, Masaryk University Brno will be hired for data transcription.

The Department of Sociology – Faculty of Social Studies Masaryk University has all the required technical and administrative equipment necessary to carry out the proposed project.

### **6. Co-applicant and the Co-applicant's Department Information Description**

The Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague has all the required technical and administrative equipment necessary to carry out the proposed project.

The project co-applicant is Yvona Kostecká, Ph.D., a researcher and the former director of the Institute of Professional Development at the Faculty of Education of Charles University. The co-applicant has led and participated in several research projects, both in basic and applied research. The co-applicant will focus on all the activities related to children's education (e.g. teacher's educational background, teacher's teaching experience, teaching methods, children results) and will contribute to the publication of results. Her participation in the project in terms of working hours will equal 0.3 FTE (full-time equivalent).



## 7. Applicant's and the Co-applicant's Cooperation with International Research Institutions on this topic

The applicant has co-operated with Professor Iveta Silova, Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College, Arizona State University and Dr. Zsuzsa Millei, an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education and Culture, University of Tampere, Finland. The outcome of this co-operation is a book *Childhood and Schooling in (Post)Socialist Societies* (Palgrave MacMillan 2018) and an exhibition of the same name at the University of Tampere (May – July 2019). The applicant also co-operates as the leader of the Czech team, with Professor Fernando Barragán Medero of Universidad de La Laguna, Department of Educational Research Didactics, upon the preparation of the research project on school violence and violence against the children, which is to be launched in September 2019.

The co-applicant has worked with Christian Watkin Beck, Associate Professor at the University of Oslo, with whom she has collaborated on the publication of a thematic issue of the *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education* that was edited by Professor Beck. The co-applicant has also worked with Milton Gaither, Professor of Education at Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA, USA, with whom she collaborated on the completion of a monograph titled *The Handbook of Home Education*, edited by professor Gaither that was published in the USA by Wiley Blackwell Publishing.

## 8. References:

*Act 561/2004 on preschool, elementary, secondary, tertiary professional and other education (the Education Act)* [Zákon 561/2004 Sb. o předškolním, základním, středním, vyšším odborném a jiném vzdělávání (School Act)].

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