

Civil Service Politicization and the Roles of Ministerial Advisers in the Czech Republic

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Abstract: It has been conventionally argued that civil service politicization in the Czech Republic is relatively low, at least in the context of Central and Eastern Europe. That conclusion is typically based on qualitative observations and data from expert surveys. However, until 2014, civil service law did not even exist, and since then, it has undergone several important modifications that led critics to claim their main goal was to increase political control over the ministerial bureaucracy. The aim of the paper is threefold. Firstly, it assesses the level of CS politicization at the government ministries by measuring the biannual turnover of managerial-level civil servants. It enables us to see whether there has been a link between the level of turnovers and changes in the political composition of the government. Secondly, it explores the profiles of junior ministers (*politický náměstek*) in order to assess the importance of their party-political connection. Thirdly, it maps the formal status and informal *modus operandi* of ministerial advisers. The paper covers the period between 2017 and 2022 that includes four different governing coalitions. The main puzzle is to establish how the context of bureaucratic politicization (civil service politicization and possible party-political background of junior ministers) shapes the roles and functions of ministerial advisers.