



FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University

Ph.D. in International Relations

STUDENTS

PROSPECTUS

FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

General information

The PhD studies in International Relations are at the Charles University offered by the Department of International Relations and the Department of Security Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Both Departments can offer a stimulating environment with multitude of opportunities to participate in research programmes and teaching activities. The aim of the doctoral study in International Relations is to prepare highly qualified specialists who may further engage in basic and applied research in academia, analytical work in the public sector, government bodies, and various types of mass media and private sector in the Czech or international environment.

The PhD program is research-oriented and to complete the studies, every student shall compose a dissertation and publish at least two scientific articles based on her or his independent research. However, students are also expected to attend several graduate seminars in order to get a better grasp of the core theoretical and methodological approaches used in the contemporary discipline of International Relations. PhD students are also encouraged to engage in teaching at the faculty and participate in larger research projects organized by the faculty of both Departments. Selected students may already during their studies get employed at the university and work at the Centre for Doctoral Studies.

Doctoral studies may be conducted either full-time or part-time. Both full-time study ("internal" study) and part-time study ("external" study) takes four years. Full-time students who do not complete their dissertation within four years may be allowed to continue their studies as part-time students provided, they show substantial progress on their dissertation.

Full-time PhD students get a monthly scholarship to cover their basic expenses. Additional funding may be provided from grants or special scholarships awarded for teaching or research assistance. International students pursuing the program in English pay a tuition fee, but they are also provided the same financial support as full-time students enrolled in the Czech programme and they may participate on research projects or acquire a paid position at the department on the same conditions as students in Czech programme. The seminars of the Programme are all run in English, as the group of Ph.D. students is always international.

The responsibilities of both full-time and part-time students are largely the same. Part-time students are excused from administrative duties, the requirements for their participation in scholarly activities of the Institute are lessened, and they typically have less advantageous positions when applying for some sources of research funding at the university level.

For more detailed information on the rules, process, and opportunities of the Ph.D. studies in International Relations Programme, please, check also [Handbook for Doctoral Students](#).

Last update: December, 2022

Subject Area Board

The Ph.D. Programme of International Relations is governed by the Subject Area Board responsible for the content of the programme and overseeing the quality of the dissertation research of the doctoral students.

[prof. PhDr. Emil Aslan, Ph.D.](#), Professor, Chair and guarantor of the Programme

[Doc. Mats Braun, Ph.D.](#), Associate Professor (Metropolitan University Prague)

[Prof. PhDr. Oldřich Bureš, Ph.D.](#), Professor

[Prof. PhDr. Jan Eichler, CSc.](#), Professor (Institute of International Relations)

[doc. PhDr. Vít Střítecký, Ph.D.](#), Assistant Professor

[Doc. PhDr. Jan Karlas, MA, Ph.D.](#), Associate Professor, Head of Department of International Relations

[Prof. PhDr. Zdeněk Kříž, Ph.D.](#), Professor, (Masaryk University Brno)

[PhDr. Irah Kučerová, Ph.D.](#), Assistant Professor

[Dr. rer. pol. Michal Parížek, M.Sc., Ph.D.](#), Assistant Professor

Supervisory departments – Department of International Relations and Department of Security Studies at the Institute of Political Studies

Department of International Relations (Katedra mezinárodních vztahů, KMV) was established in 1994, with the aim of developing a study and research programme in International Relations. Since its inception, the Department provided an M.A. in International Relations, first only taught in a Czech version. Since 2015, the Department offers also an English version of its M.A. programme (Master in International Relations, MAIN). Overall, approximately 150 students are currently enrolled in the M.A. programme of the Department. The Department's priority is to keep and further strengthen the program's complex character, covering the majority of the main spheres of international relations. The program's core consists of theories of international relations, international institutions, international security, and international economic relations. A considerable part of the program's courses is devoted to European integration.

The research carried out in the Department is marked with the use of innovative theoretical and methodological approaches. A large part of the Department's members associate themselves with the currently dominant, analytically oriented line of research it has been evolving approximately since the 1980s in the USA and in a number of Western and Northern European countries. They seek to enrich this research line, in a cumulative manner, with new and original empirical findings. The Department's members have built an outstanding publication record, with a number of articles published in the main international impact-factor journals. At this moment, the members of the Department are recipients of two research grants provided by the Czech Science Foundation, and of one research project provided by Charles University within the Primus scheme.

In substantive terms, the KMV as a small-size institution concentrates on four concrete research areas: international institutions, global information flows, global environmental politics, and European integration.

Department of Security Studies (Katedra bezpečnostních studií – KBS) was established in 2015 with the aim to focus and cultivate research in four main areas that also reflect concentrations offered in its M.A. programmes (Security Studies – Czech; International Security Studies – English; International Master in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree in cooperation with University of Glasgow, Dublin City University and University of Trento). The first area revolves around issues of security and technology. Here, the focus is primarily on artificial intelligence and machine learning and (socio)political dimensions of cyber security. The second area covers topics related with the agenda of peace and conflict studies. The main attention is devoted to the issues of terrorism and counter-terrorism, radicalization and de-radicalization, human security, and impacts of strategic and security cultures on European and Transatlantic security. The third area involves research interests associated with the field of strategic and war studies. Among the key research agendas belong regulatory and prohibition regimes of WMDs and autonomous weapons systems, hybrid threats and information warfare, and evolution of modern warfare. Finally, the department welcomes research analysing global or regional security agendas, with a particular focus on European and Transatlantic security, great powers competition, and frozen conflicts.

Apart from the Master's programmes, both Departments run in co-operation the doctoral programme in International Relations, and contribute to teaching in the Bachelor's programme of Political Science and International Relations.

Priority topics of the dissertation research for academic year 2023/2024

The following list of supervisors and their priority topics for the upcoming academic year represent the research focus of the departments participating on the Ph.D. Programme. Prospective applicants are advised to contact the particular faculty member and discuss the options of the research design of the dissertation project. In case the applicant submits a well-developed dissertation project addressing one of the topics, s/he may be awarded a priority bonus in the first round of the admission procedure enhancing significantly the chances for being admitted.

Topics beyond this list are also welcome but the applicants should be aware that there may be a problem to find a supervisor for them and they will not receive the priority bonus in the admission process.

Department of International Relations

[Ondřej Ditrych](#)

Terrorism and Revolutionary Violence in Global Politics

Explorations of the faces of contemporary or historical political violence, both from mainstream and critical theoretical or poststructuralist perspectives, and more theoretically inclined or focused on detailed empirical case studies. Thesis proposals focused on ISIS are particularly welcome.

Continental Theory in IR

Interrogations of global politics from the perspectives inspired by Continental Theory. Thesis proposals inspired by Foucault (genealogy, governmentality, biopolitics), Deleuze and Guattari (nomadology), or Schmitt, Benjamin or Agamben (critical political ontology) are particularly welcome, together with proposals inspired by the assemblage theory or practice turn in International Relations and the study of communities of practice.

[Martin Jeřábek](#)

Evropská integrační politika SRN v době krize covid -19

Pandemie COVID-19 zásadně ovlivnila všechny členské státy Evropské unie i priority předsednictví v Radě EU. Spolková republika Německo převzala předsednictví Rady EU ve 2. polovině roku 2020, tedy uprostřed pandemie. Vzhledem k ekonomickému významu SRN v EU a diplomatickým zkušenostem kancléřky Angely Merkelové měly ostatní členské státy na Německo vysoká očekávání. Základním tématem výzkumu budou tři spolu související otázky: 1. Přispěla pandemie a řešení jejích následků ke změně/posílení/modifikaci role SRN v Evropské unii?; 2. Do jaké míry se podařilo německému předsednictví skloubit dlouhodobé strategické zájmy Evropské unie (víceletý finanční rámec, environmentální oblast, digitalizace, sociální soudržnost a koheze, jednotný postoj Evropy v zahraničí, migrace a azyl atd.) s řešením aktuálních ekonomických následků pandemie COVID-19; 3. Zda (případně nakolik) se projevila při „evropském“ řešení následků pandemie zvýšená „domácí politizace“ německé *Europapolitik*.

Global cooperation and institutions

The PhD dissertations falling into this area will explore how states seek to deal with global problems through international institutions. In theoretical/substantive terms, the following topics, among others, can be addressed: preferences and positions of national governments in negotiations (in particular those of the major powers); coalition-building; institutional design of treaties and institutions; effectiveness of cooperation; treaty ratification and implementation, etc. The theses are expected to proceed from a solid grasp of the current theoretical knowledge on the respective issues and have a sound research design (either quantitative or qualitative). In empirical terms, dissertations concentrating on security, economic, or environmental institutions are particularly welcome.

International cooperation and environmental problems

This topic area includes various possible issues connected with international cooperation in the field of the environment. Among those issues, we can find state attitudes towards international environmental cooperation, or the design and performance of international environmental institutions. Other issues include the influence of domestic politics on international environmental cooperation, or the involvement of transnational actors. Topics focusing on climate change would be especially welcome; however, other empirical choices are equally possible. In theoretical terms, the dissertations should proceed from IR theories or, alternatively, from theoretical approaches employed in comparative politics, public policy, or other relevant disciplines. The research designs can have both a quantitative and qualitative orientation.

Policy-making in the EU

This topic area is suggested for PhD dissertations that aim at studying the various possible aspects of policy-making in the EU. Some of them may focus on the relationship between domestic politics and European integration (the roles played by societal actors or national institutions). Others may address state positions in EU negotiations, or the implementation of EU decisions at the national level. Other dissertations may deal with policy-making at the EU level. The research designs of the theses belonging to this area should be anchored in the existing theoretical research on the given specific topics and employ either quantitative or qualitative research methods.

Irah Kučerová

Brexit

Brexit je bezesporu nejvýraznější mezník ve vývoji evropské integrace, a to jak ve smyslu dopadů Brexitu na další vývoj v EU či na britskou ekonomiku. Lze jednoznačně analyzovat rozhodnutí Britů v referendu jako možný projev spill-back effect integrace nebo jako důsledek tradičního specifického postoje Britů k evropskému kontinentu? Jaké byly příčiny rozhodnutí Britů v referendu? Nelze ani opominout postoj EU k Brexitu, proces vyjednávání s britskou vládou. Na druhé straně je třeba posoudit zájmy jednotlivých členských zájmů nenegociačním procesem Brexitu.

Dělicí linie v Evropské unii v ekonomické oblasti

Členská základna EU je stále silně heterogenní v mnoha směrech. Nabízí se využít teorie cleavages aplikovanou na ekonomicko-sociální diferenciaci členských států. Sledované faktory diferenciacie: a) struktura ekonomik (podíl jednotlivých sektorů); b) přístup k integračním výzvám – jak domácí politika a situace přispívá k jejich postojům; c) „koalice“ v rámci EU vyjednávacích procesů, pozice v EU (jádro × periferie/semiperiferie). Identifikace dělicích linií v rámci EU je zřetelná v severo-jihní ose vnitřní diferenciacie EU; západovýchodní ose; případně jako štěpné linie mezi EU15 (14) a EU13.

Viera Martinková

The emergence of the European public sphere

Is there a European public sphere? Instead of just 27 national debates, the existence of genuine European debate is often seen as a necessary precondition for functioning European democracy. But despite some signs of Europeanisation of national public spheres, the emergence of an actual European public sphere may require conditions that have not yet been met in the EU. However, the events of recent years, such as migration crisis, Brexit, COVID-19 could bring them about. Their impact has raised questions of European solidarity, shared identity defined through facing common threats, common language. On the other hand, many would claim that any of these developments are happening predominantly on the elite level and cannot bring about a true European public sphere. Thesis proposals under this topic should examine the preconditions of a European public sphere from the theoretical perspective and suggest a research design that would evaluate their presence in the EU.

Michal Parížek

Communication and information in international politics

The doctoral thesis will consider the patterns and/or effects of communication and information flows in international politics. It will likely study communication among states, but a focus on other actors (e.g. international organizations) is also possible. The thesis may seek to explore, for example, how information relevant for domestic and international politics flows across states, or the political communication patterns in world politics. It may also focus on communication within specific country dyads or country groups, or on communication within a specific issue area. It may focus on societal or elite level. The thesis will be empirically rich, based on collection of new empirical evidence, whether qualitative, quantitative, or both. While based in IR, the thesis may also draw on approaches e.g. from media studies, sociology or economics. The thesis will be based on a careful application of chosen analytical and methodological tools.

Doctoral research on this topic may benefit from connection to the Global Flows of Political Information (GLOWIN, <https://glowin.cuni.cz/>) project led by M. Parížek.

Globalization and globalization backlash

This topic aims at exploration of the key aspects of economic and societal globalization and on the patterns of global interdependences in the last years or several decades. The doctoral thesis may focus on how globalization processes impact on the patterns of cooperation and contest in world politics. It may also focus, however, on how some key states have been responding to globalization in recent years, the growing societal and political globalization backlash, and possible deglobalization (decoupling) trends. The thesis may focus on a specific issue area or on specific actors, e.g. states, or group of actors. The thesis will be empirically rich, based on novel empirical data, whether qualitative or quantitative (or mixed). It will be rooted in classical political science/IR literature on globalization and interdependence, but it may draw inspiration from beyond IR, possibly from international political economy or political sociology. The thesis will be based on a careful application of chosen analytical and methodological tools.

Doctoral research on this topic may benefit from connection to the Global Flows of Political Information (GLOWIN, <https://glowin.cuni.cz/>) project led by M. Parížek.

Legitimacy and Performance of International Organizations

The doctoral thesis will study the problems of legitimacy and/or performance of a selected international organization (IO) or a group of IOs. It may, for example, study the legitimation strategies of particular IOs, how visible these bodies are to the general public or other relevant audiences, and how IOs are perceived by these constituencies. It may also focus on how various features of IOs, possibly including legitimacy issues, impact on their performance. The thesis is expected to be based on new empirical evidence, carefully mapping the legitimacy and/or performance-related issues of the selected IOs. It is likely to draw on the sizable and growing literature on IO legitimacy, performance

and contestation. The thesis will be based on a careful application of chosen analytical and methodological tools.

Doctoral research on this topic may benefit from connection to the Global Flows of Political Information (GLOWIN, <https://glowin.cuni.cz/>) project led by M. Parížek.

Jakub Tesař

International norms, stability and change in international politics

International norms are an essential research topic of the IR as they are expected to influence how various actors act in world politics. On the one hand, norms influence the behaviour of international actors who have chosen to follow them; on the other hand, they are shaped by specific practices that bring their very existence. Such positive feedback establishes a strong argument for stability in international relations. But shared norms are not only guarantees of stability but also vehicles of change. Emerging norms can modify or replace existing ones and transform the prevailing practices. What conditions lead to the confirmation of the existing norms, which, on the contrary, to their transformation? Where and how do viable alternatives arise? Which actors are decisive in the process of confirmation or contestation of the existing norms?

Formal models of decision-making in IR theory

As in other social sciences, the behavioural revolution has manifested itself in international relations, among other things, in the widespread use of formal models of decision-making. Simplified models of decision theory, rational choice theory, or game theory offer a deeper understanding of many types of social situations, e.g., collective choice, resource use, strategic confrontation, negotiation, and more. However, there are alternatives to the normative theory of choice, drawing from behavioural and psychological insights or alternative concepts of rationality. What is the added value of these alternatives compared to classical decision-making models? What are the possible applications of the recent development in formal modelling for IR theory?

Quantum social science

In the last fifteen years, social research has witnessed a rapid evolution of quantum social science. This umbrella term subsumes various approaches in linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science, which, to understand relevant social phenomena better, utilize the concepts and rules established in the quantum theory. Quantum social science argues that the current understanding of the social world, based on the classical probability theory fails in accounting for human behaviour in its complexity and complements the classical view with

a more nuanced understanding of certain phenomena. Some leading figures in IR have already raised the topic, but it urgently calls for further elaboration.

The interdisciplinary nature of this developing field of social science allows for a wide variety of possible research projects. Interested applicants are welcome to discuss their ideas with the proposed supervisor. Successful applicants can also join the research project "Mutual interaction of the self-perspective and the other-perspective in political decision-making: a perspective of quantum social science" supported by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic for years 2022 to 2024. A part-time job is dedicated to a PhD candidate in this project. Some familiarity with quantum theory is an advantage but is not required to participate in the project.

Department of Security Studies

[Emil Aslan](#)

Micro-dynamic of political violence, including political ethnography and quantitative perspectives

The micro-dynamics of political violence is a relatively novel field within a broader strand of research on irregular conflict that seeks to comprehend the complexity of violent human behaviour shaped by individual incentives, contexts, ideologies, and group logic. A truly interdisciplinary field, it rests on the intersection of sociology, political science, social psychology, criminology, and social anthropology. It predominantly draws on the first-hand data: interviews, participant or non-participant observation, and fieldwork in general, which reflects the scarcity of sources on the related phenomena and the need to acquire quality data from the ground. Such fine-grained data may be used to generate qualitative or, if aggregated on the appropriate level of analysis, quantitative inquiry. This research perspective has emerged as a response to the inherent inability of the “macro” studies on irregular conflict to look beyond established and often flawed paradigms. The micro-level of analysis provides an insight into the microcosm of political violence as it provides answers to previously neglected or misunderstood questions.

Civil wars and insurgencies

Civil wars and insurgencies have dominated world politics. Profoundly social phenomena, they have long escaped scholarly attention as researchers and policymakers alike were driven by the bipolar perception of political violence. Since the turn of the millenia, a novel research paradigm, shaped by grand econometric studies, was established with the aim of disentangling the puzzle of civil war and insurgency. The micro-level research perspective advanced at the Department of Security Studies has emerged as a response to the inherent inability of the “macro” studies on irregular conflict to look beyond established and often flawed paradigms. The micro-level of analysis provides an insight into the microcosm of political violence as it provides answers to previously neglected or misunderstood questions.

Radicalization of Salafi-jihadi groups, foreign fighters, right-wing violence, terrorism-crime nexus

An important strand within the micro-level research on political violence has been centred on the increasingly widespread phenomena of radicalization, violent mobilization, and terrorism-crime nexus. Following multiple waves of violence across the world, Salafi-jihadist groups, including jihadist foreign fighters, have come to the forefront of interest of academics and policymakers. Violence conducted by right-wing groups, too, have become more visible. Employing the micro-level

perspective, scholars have focused on addressing these important challenges of contemporary world politics.

Oldřich Bureš

Counterterrorism in Europe and other regions

For terrorism, especially welcomed are topics related to various aspects of radicalization, foreign fighters, and financing of terrorism. Preferred counterterrorism topics include legal, institutional and operational aspects in all areas, including countering terrorist financing, counter-/de-radicalization, information sharing, police and judicial cooperation, role of the European Union and its agencies (Europol, Eurojust in particular) or other regional organizations. The security-justice-liberty dilemmas are also welcomed. Other contemporary (counter-)terrorism topics can be considered. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs are welcomed. Similarly, all theoretical approaches are welcomed.

Privatization of security

Welcomed are analyses of impact and implications of use of services of private military and security companies in all areas of security provision, especially when it comes to addressing terrorism, organized crime, and piracy. Also welcomed are analyses of activities of regular/non-security private businesses (e.g. financial institutions, transportation companies, utility services providers, and infrastructure owners/operators), which make profit by selling goods and services that traditionally have nothing or little to do with security in the traditional understanding of the term. This especially concerns critical infrastructure operation and protection. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs are welcomed. Similarly, all theoretical approaches are welcomed.

Securitization of migration

Welcomed are analyses of securitization of immigration in European countries and its impact on national migration policies in the aftermath of the 2015-2016 European "migration crisis." While all securitization schools/approaches are welcomed, preference is for analyses following either the Copenhagen school approach to securitization, i.e., focusing on key securitizing actors, their securitizing discourses, and their reception by the relevant audience, or following the Paris school approach to securitization, i.e., focusing on the day-to-day functioning and practices of national migration policies. Non-European countries and other topic and approaches to making sense of the complex relationship between migration and security will be considered on individual basis.

[Nik Hynek](#)

Strategic Studies, Arms Control and Spatiality

This issue area features topics on the continuity and change in the realm of strategic studies and regulation of weapons technologies, all in the context of shifting physical, virtual and cognitive spatialities. Studies focusing on great powers, secondary powers as well as non-state/non-human actors would fall here fine.

AI, Technological Innovation and Politico-Security Order

This issue area would feature how all kinds of technological innovation, whether disruptive, or not, have impacted on security management, regulation and the overall regional/politico-security order. Issues related to international revisionism, and featuring aspects of AI would fall here fine.

[Tomáš Karásek](#)

Security and global health: disciplinary reactions to current developments

The global pandemics of COVID-19 has raised a multitude of questions, including those of disciplinary challenges it may represent for the field of security studies. Though not primarily focusing on public health or related policies, the field has, nevertheless, expanded over the recent decades to be able to creatively incorporate new topics such as this one. Applicants are welcome to seek novel perspectives on and pursue various approaches to the topic, with an emphasis on innovative uses of existing theories and concepts from within security studies, as well as promising cross-fertilizations from other fields.

European and transatlantic security in a transforming global order

European and transatlantic security affairs find themselves in a precarious point at the moment: Trump's one-off but highly disruptive presidency, continuous emergence of novel security challenges as well as the rise or rebirth of traditional international power actors put the Euro-Atlantic area under significant pressure. Applicants are welcome to introduce questions and hypotheses concerning the current state and potential development of both the EU security and defence cooperation, as well as the transatlantic partnership, while focusing on specific policies, institutions, procedures as well as challenges or threats. Special attention should be paid to the global context of the regional cooperation, including both traditional (state-based) and non-traditional security challenges.

Contemporary reflections of strategic/security culture

Strategic (or, more broadly conceived, security) culture has undergone several stages of conceptual development. While not on the forefront of contemporary theoretical debates, it continues to represent a useful tool for incorporating cultural aspects into the analysis of politico-strategic decision-making. Applicants are especially welcome to investigate strategic culture's following aspects: the concept of strategic culture in relation to small states, changes and shifts in strategic culture as an empirical phenomenon and ontological challenge, convergence of strategic cultures within military alliances and security organizations, transformation of strategic cultures in response to non-state security threats.

[Tomáš Kučera](#)

Armed forces in society: perspectives of civil-military relations (CMR) and military sociology

It is commonplace for strategic studies to view armed forces (AF) merely as an instrument at the disposal of security and defence policy. The PhD research concerned with the topic of armed forces in society should diverge and problematise the view of strategic studies. Political, ethical, and normative distinctions between AF and their parent society form the basis of the CMR and military sociology. Moreover, AF may play a crucial role in domestic politics. Rather than a security instrument, it is not such a rare occurrence that AF turns into a threat to the civilian leadership of the state.

Post-Westphalian defence policies: modes of international military integration

This topic invites enquiry into the processes and practices of denationalising defence, such as instrumentalization of national armed forces for alliance activities, military outsourcing and privatisation, or formation of the transnational arms industry. The proposed projects may focus on various past and present attempts to organise military and defence functions outside the framework of the nation-state. The ultimate objective of this research would be to get a deeper understanding of the relationship between defence and the nation-state.

Technological determinism in weapon systems

"Guns don't kill people, people do," an NRA member would say in defence of the Second Amendment. Until present days it has always been people who thrust a sword, shoot an arrow, pull a trigger, release bombs or launch a guided missile. Weapons and military technology, in general, have always had a tremendous effect on the human ability to fight wars and kill other people. Nonetheless, is it only people who act in this story? The term technological determinism suggests that, first, the development of technology follows an internal logic that is independent of social influence; and, second, technological change causes some changes in society and politics (Kline

2001; Dafoe 2015). Pure determinism, according to which technological change is completely outside a meaningful control of human actors, may be too extreme a position to hold. Nonetheless, it is possible to ask how war, politics, and society are affected by changing technologies. After all, the modern history of humanity is a dramatic story of dealing with scientific and technological progress in general and ever-changing military technology in particular.

[Jan Ludvík](#)

Frozen conflicts: theoretical applications of the FCD dataset

I welcome prospective Ph.D. students who are interested in extending earlier work on frozen conflicts by myself and my colleagues. The research should explore the frozen conflicts as a category of conflicts that is neither spatially nor temporally specific. I especially encourage theoretical applications of the Frozen Conflicts Dataset to test old and new hypotheses concerning structural determinants of violent (re-)escalation, as well as attempts to resolve the conflicts peacefully. Potential applications of the FCD can also compare frozen conflicts rigorously with interstate and intrastate conflicts, demonstrating that the frozen conflict concept itself has an analytical value beyond the usual usage by policymakers and the media.

Effects of great power armed conflicts on third states

I welcome prospective Ph.D. students who are interested in studying the effects of great power armed conflicts on third states. I am especially interested in prospective dissertations that cover unintended consequences of great power wars on nonbelligerent countries including regional powers. These effects can range from changes in third countries' geopolitical orientation, their alliance choices, major redesigns of third countries' military postures, evolving regional dynamics, as well as major economic consequences the great power armed conflicts bring for nonbelligerent countries. Dissertations that will employ state of the art qualitative methods for rigorous study of historical cases are especially encouraged.

Military trends and future of warfare: lessons from the conflict in Ukraine and Nagorno Karabakh

Modern interstate wars between peer adversaries have been relatively rare. This limits our understanding of how future major war will look like. This is especially problematic considering major technological changes with the potential to revolutionize warfare as well as the growing great power competition, which makes conflict more likely. I welcome prospective Ph.D. students who are interested in using rigorous case studies of recent conflicts in Ukraine and Nagorno Karabakh to analyze the implications of military trends for the future of warfare. I expect prospective dissertations, which will go beyond usual cliques about the domination of hybrid warfare, drones,

cyber warfare, etc., and study how these changes work in relationship with more traditional strategies.

[Vít Strátecký](#)

Artificial Intelligence and Society

Topics have to revolve around the role of AI in society and its transformative impacts on key sociopolitical processes. The emphasis lies on topics connected to resilience and the long-term sustainability of societies. Research considering regulatory processes would be also welcome.

Online/Offline Revisionism and Conspiracy Theories

Topics have to revolve around social epistemology and its changes caused by the evolving nature of public deliberation. Empirically, the research might involve cases of political revisionism and/or conspiracy theories.

Economic and Financial Statecraft – see *Oldřich Černý Ph.D. Scholarship*

[Petr Špelda](#)

Safety and Security of Machine Learning

Topics of interest have to focus on safe and secure deployments of Machine Learning systems to dynamic environments. A special attention is devoted to topics involving adversarial modelling.

Inductive Reasoning in Security

Topics of interest have to focus on methods used to justify inductive inferences in various security environments, with an emphasis on projects seeking to produce formalisations of the problem.

The Department of Security Studies is a home of UNCE Project [PERICULUM](#), offering opportunity to selected Ph.D. students to participate in its research activities.

Oldřich Černý Ph.D. Scholarship in Economic & Financial Statecraft

With the support of the [Prague Security Studies Institute](#), the Faculty of Social Sciences is offering a 4-year Ph.D. scholarship for one student with a monthly contribution of 10,000,- CZK (a total of 480,000 CZK over a four-year period). The student is expected to structure his/her research in **Economic & Financial Statecraft** and is required to participate in research and policy outreach activities of the **Prague Security Studies Institute** to acquire hands-on experience and expertise in this emerging field.

E&F Statecraft has become a major new threat domain globally, particularly with respect to China and Russia, and is replete with groundbreaking research topics (e.g. investment bans/capital markets sanctions, export controls etc.) and remains an underdeveloped security policy field. Accordingly, the selected Ph.D. candidate will have a wide spectrum of research and writing opportunities. Examples of potential topics which could be incorporated into a dissertation research project include the following:

- Analyzing the projects and transactions of state-controlled enterprises (including those claiming to be private entities) in the legitimate international trading and financial systems to identify: 1) patterns of strategic behavior that are inconsistent with normal market practices; and 2) the underlying Western “targets” of such activity (i.e. non-transparent and security-related motivations).
- Demonstrating, via research and analysis, specific Chinese and Russian enterprises that conduct – often through their network of subsidiaries – strategic missions, unfair trade practices, security-related wrongdoing and human rights abuses under the direction of their respective governments, while still enjoying unfettered access to the international trading and financial systems, including allied capital markets.
- Assessing those military-related SOEs of actual or prospective adversaries that are listed, or traded, on global securities exchanges (i.e. stocks and bonds) to help attract private funding for advanced weapons systems, surveillance technology, IP and technology theft and other malign activities to be later employed against allied interests and fundamental values.
- Analyzing how hostile governments and their enterprises go about fostering dependencies in targeted countries that can later be leveraged to bend the decision-making of host governments in a direction favorable to their strategic interests.
- Examining the current security-oriented screening mechanisms, foreign investment controls of various allied countries and investment bans in their capital markets related to legal transactions of questionable state-controlled enterprises and the present shortcomings of such mechanisms and policy measures.

- Assessing the recent history of Chinese and Russian foreign investment activities, particularly via the acquisition of sophisticated Western technology firms and strategic infrastructure assets, and those transactions that have been blocked by the host governments for national security reasons.
- Analyzing the extent to which Western private sector firms engage (if at all) in security-related due diligence prior to decisions to partner with, or invest in, controversial state-controlled entities in an effort to protect their corporate reputations/brands and share value.
- Evaluating the predatory trade and tender bidding practices of certain strategically-motivated SOEs, offering terms with which Western private sector firms cannot hope to compete (e.g. heavily subsidized financing, bribery, cyber hacking of competitors, threatening broader trade and investment relations, the provision of non-market “sweeteners,” silencing critics of specific SOEs through threats of costly legal action, etc.).
- Examining the alignment, or lack of alignment, of Western policy regimes aimed at mitigating hostile foreign state actor-based economic and financial threats, such as export controls, foreign investment screening, and foreign investment bans, and outlining appropriate reforms in these policy areas
- Evaluating the threat of emerging technology acquisition by hostile foreign state actors through industrial espionage and other means, and analyzing Western governmental efforts to mitigate or prevent such acquisitions

An accepted PhD candidate with a proposal in this issue area has the option to apply for **the Oldřich Černý Ph.D. Scholarship** sponsored by the Prague Security Studies Institute (PSSI). PSSI will provide 480,000 CZK to cover the living expenses stipend for a full-time student of a doctoral programme. The Institute would work with the Ph.D. candidate on an ongoing basis to offer guidance and react to research questions and findings. The Oldřich Černý scholar would be invited to participate in the present “Economic Warfare” course within the curriculum of Charles University’s Master’s Degree Program in International Security Studies (co-sponsored by PSSI). The candidate will also have the opportunity to work within the Institute’s cutting-edge Economic & Financial Threat Program. He or she would be expected to assist the Institute in the preparation of E&F-related funding proposals, the research and writing of reports on breaking developments in the field and event planning and execution.

“I am grateful to PSSI for the opportunity to work in its Economic & Financial Threat Program. I’ve gained practical experience performing a diverse array of tasks in a close-knit, collegial NGO along with valuable intellectual insight from our leadership. In the years I’ve spent in the E&F program, it has been singularly focused on some of the most significant yet underappreciated economic security challenges facing Europe and the U.S. today.” (By Zack Kramer, current Ph.D. Candidate in the E&F Threat Domain)

Schedule of the academic year

The academic year starts in October and runs until the end of September. It is only possible to start Ph.D. studies at the beginning of the academic year.

The deadline for submitting the applications to the Ph.D. Programmes at the Faculty of Social Sciences is by the end of April.

PhD study step by step

This section seeks to provide detailed information about the course of doctoral studies (i.e. study requirements, recommended study plan, key documents, instructions for application and enrolment to the study etc.).

Application

Generally, all applications must include the following:

- official application form: you can apply [online](#) via the information system or fill in the application form SEVT 49 146 0;
- structured curriculum vitae focusing on the academic interests and accomplishments;
- certified copy of Master's degree diploma, an official translation of the diploma into Czech (unless the diploma is issued in Czech or Slovak) and [an official recognition of the degree](#) (so-called nostrification): the applicant must have a Master's degree or its equivalent from their previous studies or is expecting to gain one before the enrolment to the Ph.D. programme;
- receipt showing the payment of the application fee (in case of paper application form).

The application fee is 730 CZK for the electronic form and 780 CZK for the paper form. The recipient's bank account details are as follows:

Bank: Komerční banka, Prague 1

Bank account: **85033011/0100** (Komerční banka)/ IBAN **CZ58 0100 0000 0000 8503 3011**, variable symbol (in case of online application): Each applicant who has submitted her/his application form electronically will be generated via an information system an individual variable code – the number of an electronic form, variable symbol (in case of hard-copy application): date of birth in the following form DDMMYYYY, constant symbol: **0308**, specific symbol: **2023** (*we recommend card payment online, but please note that when paying from abroad the bank charge is payable by the payer*).

Applicants who are in their final year of a Master's degree programme may submit documents to show their expected date of graduation. Applicants who have applied to the Czech authorities for the recognition of foreign higher education, but have not yet received a decision, may submit

documents to show that a decision is pending. In all such cases, however, certificates approving the nostrification must be submitted to the Charles University as soon as they are issued.

All application materials should be sent to:

Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University,
Smetanovo nabrezi 955/6
110 01 Prague
Czech Republic

The **admission procedure is open only once a year** and the new students are then first enrolled for Winter semester starting in October.

The deadline for applications to the academic year 2023/2024 is **30th April 2023**. No extension of this deadline is possible.

Admission procedure

Next to the required materials the applicants have submit a research proposal for her or his PhD dissertation. The proposal should be submitted by the applicant electronically to cds-ips@fsv.cuni.cz and phd.mv-ir@fsv.cuni.cz no later than **12th May 2023**.

The proposal must cover

- clear definition and substantiation of the topic
- review of the literature and the current state of the art in the area of the project
- objectives of the project
- assumed methodology
- a list of references

The project must adhere to the standards of research design in social sciences, and should be between 6-8 000 words, including a list of sources.

Applicants for the doctoral programme in the field of International Relations may choose a dissertation topic from the list of priority topics provided by the Department of International Relations and Department of Security Studies. The applicants are advised to contact the potential supervisor well in advance of the deadlines to consult the potential topics and to present her/him a draft of the project. At this stage, the applicant may receive a feedback in terms of a rationale of the approval/disapproval of the framing of the topic and choice of method before s/he submits the proposal. If an applicant wants to present a project on a topic not included in the priorities list, they should nevertheless contact a member of one of the two relevant Departments whose research interests are close to the proposed topic. Another course of action is to contact the Chair of the Subject Area Board and seek advice on availability of a supervisor for the given topic.

The admission procedure runs in two rounds (in each of the two rounds, applicants can receive maximum of 40 points). In the first round, the admission board evaluates the research proposal on

the basis of its academic value and its compatibility with the priority topics offered by the Departments and sets the required threshold in points for the advance to the second round. The evaluation of the project in the first round – in points – is based on **individual reflections** of the members of the admission board who represent both Departments as well as diverse approaches across wide range of topics within the field. The number of points is an arithmetic average of individual markings, topped up by bonus for priority topic if the project qualifies. The threshold is determined on the basis of the number of applicants, the quality of their projects, the representation of priority themes among the applicants and the distribution among the proposed supervisors. Applicants who pass the threshold are invited for the second round which takes the form of an interview.

The interview aims to assess:

- objectives of the research project
- theoretical and methodological framework of the proposed project
- feasibility of the research plan, its limits.

The interview is evaluated in points as well and the applicant may receive up to 40 points. At this point the admission board **collectively deliberates** to evaluate the answers of the applicant around the fixed set of questions reflecting the aims of the interview. In the second round, 10 points are reserved for an eventual bonus for publications (articles, essays) related to the topic of the dissertation project.

Criteria for final assessment:

The candidate must be a master's degree graduate, preferably in the fields of social science or humanities but different academic background is also welcome. The point limit for accepting applicants is set by the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University, taking into account the number of applicants and the capacity of the faculty. See also the article IV, para 4 of the Conditions of admission proceedings.

The performance of each applicant will be evaluated by the admission Board and the applicant's ranking will be based on her/his score. The applicants are informed about the result of the admission procedure usually within one month after the final round of entrance interviews via mail.

A useful information source for applicants regarding the required knowledge is the list of topics that are covered in the state exams for the Master's in International Relations, which also contains a list of basic literature.

Note: Applicants who are already involved in research activities of a research institution outside the Department of IR or Department of Security Studies, which works on already funded or upcoming research project of the same or close thematic focus must meet the following requirements:

- (i) the submitted proposal must contain a clear and explicit delimitation against existing or planned project (thematic, theoretical, methodological, data, separation of financial costs).
- (ii) The proposal must fulfil the condition of authentication of individual research.
- (iii) The proposal must contain the framework plan of the publications to be reported exclusively by the Department of IR or Department of Security Studies.

Enrolment

An applicant becomes a student on the day of her or his enrolment. The enrolment is completed at the Study Office of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The date of enrolment is stated in the schedule for the respective academic year. Applicants who have been accepted into the PhD program must enroll for the studies on the stated day; if, for serious reasons, they cannot enroll, they must notify the Student Services Office by the last day of enrolment at the latest.

Second- and higher-year students are enrolled automatically at the beginning of each academic year provided that they have fulfilled their study requirements for the previous year and submitted in time the Annual Evaluation and Update of the Individual Study Plan (for further information on these documents, see below).

Study Rules (Framework Study Plan valid from academic year 2021/2022)

The course of study in the doctoral study programme, including the state doctoral examination and defence of the doctoral dissertation, is governed by the [Code of Study and Examination of Charles University](#), the [Rules of study at the Faculty of Social Science](#), and the [Dean's provision 22/2021](#), the [Rules of Study in Ph.D. Programme of International Relations](#) and the [Code of Practice](#).

Framework Study Plan sets out the obligations, which are required to be a part of Individual Study Plan (ISP). The ISP approved by the supervisor shall be submitted to a Chair of Subject Area Board within two months after the enrolment.

Individual Study Plan

The Framework Study Plan defines responsibilities which the student must put into his/her Individual Study Plan (as for the contents of the ISP, see Art. 10 [6] of the Code of the Study and Examination of Charles University in Prague. The particulars of the conditions of fulfilment of the ISP are determined by the Rules of study in the International Relations PhD. study program, as agreed to by the Subject Area Board.

The first-year student, jointly with her or his supervisor, is required to prepare an Individual Study Plan (ISP) till 1st November via University's Information System (SIS).

The ISP must be consistent with the Framework Study Plan of the PhD program in International relations.

The ISP, agreed to by the supervisor, must be approved by the Subject Area Board by January in the first semester of student's studies.

Compulsory parts of the ISP:

1. Dissertation

- a.** Topic of dissertation, synopsis, 10-15 items of basic literature
- b.** Form and contents: either one of two options
 - i.** A monograph 160-300 norm-pages in length (1 norm-page = 1 800 characters), or 50 – 90 000 words, bibliography and attachments not included;
 - ii.** A series of no less than three academic articles that have been published or accepted for publication in indexed journals (see below), also including in addition an Introduction and Conclusion in which the student outlines the aims of the dissertation research, the methods used to reach them, and the contributions of the individual articles to the overall aims. Any changes made to the text of the articles after their publication must be properly noted and explained. This form of dissertation must not be shorter than 40 000 words (without bibliography and attachments). This form of dissertation is only available if the student is the sole author of all the articles.
 - iii.** The student must decide on the form of the dissertation no later than upon the submission of the project up for defence at the end of the second year's Winter Semester.
- c.** Time schedule of work on the dissertation
- d.** Planned schedule for passing the State Doctoral Exam, the small dissertation defence and the large dissertation defence.

2. Publications: one of the following options¹

- a.** At least two articles in journals indexed in either SCOPUS, Web of Science, or ERIH+. At least one of these articles must contain results of the dissertation

Publication of research by students of the doctoral study program are a form of fulfilment of study responsibilities, and for the purposes of record-keeping of research activities, they are considered to be exclusively the results of research projects of either the Department of International Relations or the Department of Security Studies. Publications which are put into the Individual Study Plan, including the dissertation text should it be published after the defence, must not be dedicated by the student to institutions or projects outside of the Department of International Relations or the Department of Security Studies at the Institute for Political Studies.

research. (Valid for students who enrolled in their studies in the academic year 2019/2020 and afterwards)

- b. One journal article, if it contains dissertation research and the journal is placed in the 3rd quartile of Web of Science and above.

3. Courses and exams

- a. Mandatory seminars: Methodological seminar (JPD006), Theories of International Relations (JPD001), European Studies (JPD002), PhD Seminar - International Relations I through VI (JPD008, JPD009, JPD020, JPD024, JPD041, JPD042)
- b. Elective seminar: either European Policies (JPD017), or Security Studies (JPD021) – choice determined by the wider focus of dissertation and has to be approved by the supervisor. This choice will affect the questions asked at the State Doctoral Exam.

4. Internships and stays abroad

- a. Each student will, during the course of their studies, take part in a study or research-oriented stay abroad, no less than three months in length. They may also take part in shorter stays that add up to at least three months total.

5. Grant activities

- a. Mandatory preparation and submission of a project for the Grant Agency of Charles University (GAUK) – either have the grant accepted on the first try or submit two subsequent applications over two years. Students may also fulfil this responsibility by being a member of a grant research team of their supervisor or a member of the Department of IR or the Department of Security Studies (in a position of researcher with obligation of publication - *Jscop*). The publications resulting from the grant may substitute participation in the Specific Academic Research (see below for details).

6. Conferences

- a. Students must take part in at least one international scientific conference and actively present part of their dissertation research.

7. Teaching

- a. Students must teach at least 8 lessons in Bachelor or Master-level seminars that are organized by one of the two Departments. If the Programme Guarantor and the Supervisor agree, the student may fulfil this responsibility by teaching her/his own course.

8. Specific Academic Research (SVV)

- a. During the course of the whole studies, full-time PhD students participate in the so-called **Specific Academic Research** project. This is a grant project that aims to encourage PhD students to write scholarly articles on a regular basis

and under the supervision of senior researchers. Within the framework of this project, the IPS organizes an annual conference in which the work in progress of the project participants is presented and discussed. The participants are required to prepare once every two years one scholarly article for publication. Students are entitled to remuneration based on the quality of the publication.

Mandatory deadlines in the ISP:

a) 1st year:

- Methodological Seminar - PhD
- Theory of International Relations
- PhD Seminar – International Relations I and II
- Submission of updated dissertation project to the supervisor

The passing of the course exam is subject of the fulfilment of obligations related to the seminar.

b) by the end of the 2nd year:

- European Studies
- Submission of at least one grant application (or cooperation on grant of the supervisor)
- Defence of the dissertation project (Project shall be defended at PhD seminar by the end of Summer Semester; JPD022, JPD023)

Overall, by the end of the second year, the student must have passed two exams of the compulsory courses: Theories of International Relations (JPD001) and European Studies (JPD002), pass the Methodological Seminar (JPD006), and at least two PhD seminars and to defend the dissertation project.

c) By the end of the 3rd year, the student must apply for the State Doctoral Exam.

Before submitting the application, the following must be completed

- All courses in Individual Study Plan completed
- Defend the dissertation project successfully
- Submit a publication strategy paper (plan of publications of the dissertation research, including the potential publication venues and current state of preparation of pertinent texts)
- Submit at least one dissertation chapter to the supervisor and send it to phd.mv-ir@fsv.cuni.cz (minimum length of 12 000 words)
- The **State Doctoral Exam** tests the competence of the student in the **entire scope of the field** with the focus set by the relevant documents. Special focus is put upon the ability to theoretically grasp the problem at hand and the ability to scientifically approach the given task. The student answers one question from theories of international relations, and one

question whose topic is based on whether the student decided to pass European Policies or Security Studies. The relevance of the topic for the dissertation research is also considered.

d) By the end of the 4th year, students must sit for their first attempt at passing the State Doctoral Exam

To complete the studies, they must fulfil the following:

- **Small Defence** (=Pre-Defence) – an evaluation of the first draft of the whole dissertation by the proposed two examiners. The results of this process will lay out the next steps in the edits to the dissertation text in order to submit it for the Dissertation Defence. The timespan between the Pre-defence and the Defence is two months minimum.
- **Dissertation Defence** – takes place in accordance with the rules mentioned. In addition to procedures laid out therein, the student will submit to the examiners an electronic version of the text with tracked changes edited after the Small Defence. If the revisions have been substantial, the student will instead provide a separate written report on all the changes that have been made.

Other parts of the ISP and additional obligations

The supervisor can decide about other obligations if these are necessary for processing of the dissertation. Students may apply for the inclusion of additional obligations to ISP if they can contribute to improving the quality of the research.

Students are required to attend the defences of the dissertation proposal and pre-defences.

Full-time students are required to fulfil occasionally technical and administrative support for Department of IR or Department of Security Studies.

Students are required to attend training events organized by the Institute of Political Studies and Department of International Relations and Department of Security Studies.

Full-time students are required to take part in the Specific Academic Research during the whole four years of their studies. (Members of the Centre for Doctoral Studies are excused from this responsibility).

If they secure prior consent of the Guarantor of the relevant study programme, students may also act as supervisors of Bachelor's theses. After they pass their State Doctoral Exams, they may also supervise Master's theses. The contribution of part-time students in this area is lower, adequately to their status.

Conclusion of studies

Proper conclusion of studies

Studies are properly concluded by completion of studies in the study program concerned. The day of conclusion of studies is the date of successful defence of the dissertation.

Upon proper conclusion of studies, a candidate receives an academic title and a University diploma, which is handed to her/him at the PhD graduation ceremony.

Graduates are awarded the academic title "Doctor" (abbreviated to "Ph.D." after the name).

Other Forms of Termination of Studies

Studies are also terminated

- by dropping the studies: the day of termination of studies is the day on which the faculty at which the student is enrolled receives his or her written announcement of dropping the studies;
- by failure to fulfil the obligations arising from a study program in accordance with the Code of Studies of the University: the day of termination of studies is the day when the decision on the termination of studies made by the Dean of the Faculty comes into force;
- by exclusion from studies under disciplinary regulations: the day of termination of studies is the day on which a decision on exclusion from studies comes into force.

The Chair of the Subject Area Board will propose to the Board lower the scholarship or to terminate the study of the student providing she/he fails to meet the mandatory deadlines as stated in the Framework Study Plan (see p. 14-16). The decision rests with the Board.

Interruption of studies

Studies in the doctoral program may be interrupted more than once.

The maximum length of time for which the studies may be interrupted is five years.

Scholarships and fees

Full-time doctoral students are awarded scholarship of 10.500,- CZK for twelve months per year. This scholarship is exempt from income tax.

After passing the State Doctoral Examination, the scholarship is automatically augmented by 2 000 CZK. In the case a student is not making a sufficient progress in her/his studies, the Subject Area Board or the supervisor can propose the Dean to reduce the scholarship by up to 50 percent. Additionally, to scholarship, student's performance is evaluated at the end of each calendar year and extra bonuses are allocated subject to publishing activities, conference participation, grant activities etc. Students can also get financial support through their own grants, like GAUK, or participating in grants of the members of the departments.

The tuition fee for PhD programme in English is 250 EUR per semester (the fee for the students successfully progressing towards their PhD degree may be waived from their second year of studies onwards).

Relevant regulations for PhD students

Regulations for PhD students in English

Dean's provision 22/2021 [Organization of Doctoral Studies at the FSV UK](#) (English version not available yet)

[Rules for Organisation of the Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University](#)

[Code of the Study and Examination of Charles University in Prague](#)

[The Higher Education Act of the Czech Republic](#) (provisional English translation)

[Website for PhD students](#)

Regulations for PhD students in Czech

[Opatření děkanky 22/2021 upravující organizaci postgraduálních studia na FSV UK](#)

[Pravidla pro organizaci studia na FSV UK](#)

[Studijní a zkušební řád UK](#)

[Zákon o vysokých školách](#)

[Stránky o doktorském studiu na FSV](#)