

# **Reforming legal education in the Czech Republic**

## **Abstract**

Under the influence of globalisation, European integration and digitalisation, knowledge and skills required for performance of legal professions change dramatically. In order to remain relevant Czech law schools have to adapt to this new environment. Presented thesis is comparing legal studies at the Charles University Faculty of Law (CUFL) and University of Utrecht. The aim is to identify state-of-the-art features of the Dutch educational model which could be implemented at CUFL. Comparison concerns main components of educational process (admission, teaching, examination) but also structure of the programs and curriculum. Findings are presented in wider societal context.

Although there are notable differences at the level of educational system (admission, university governance) or national educational policy (funding), a number of findings could be applied in the Czech Republic. Compared to the Dutch study program, CUFL is lacking deeper connection between individual educational elements. Specific educational goals have to be set. These goals should be derived from three main components of legal education – knowledge, skills, and values. General educational goals then have to be represented in goals set for particular courses. In order to improve teaching, academics should be motivated to perfect their teaching skills. Lectures should be replaced by active learning methods or transformed into educational clips accessible online. Oral examination should be remodelled; current practice, used by the majority of the mandatory courses, does not evaluate skills or values. Formative evaluation should be preferred over summative evaluation. Compared to relatively strict course of study in the Netherlands, students of CUFL are given a great deal of freedom in organising their studies. Considering the responsibility lawyers have towards the society, benefits of such approach should be scrutinised. Dividing the study program into bachelor's and master's degree could be beneficial. In conclusion, CUFL has the necessary know-how to provide state-of-the-art legal education. Above-mentioned changes could unleash the full potential.