

Abstract

Homelessness is a socio-pathological phenomenon, caused by the inability of an individual to deal with crisis situations and leading to the loss of relationships but also the material environment. As a result of the above, the social exclusion of the individuals gradually becomes unchangeable. Here, Pěnkava (2013) describes the vertical decline within the social stratification, which brings a deep frustration and in a number of cases leads to resignation on the efforts to deal efficiently with the unfavorable situation. The causes of such collapse are multifactorial and hence, in order to solve them there is cooperation on the level of multidisciplinary teams needed. However, numerous issues are currently being solved by social workers only, who in many cases are forced to replace experts in fields such as law, psychology, pedagogy of leisure time, geriatrics or medicine.

The central theme of the dissertation is dealing with the possibilities and limitations of people without home in old age living in the Capital City of Prague. Considering the factors of age, the diversity in satisfying their needs and the associated risks involved, is this a specific group of people that is, moreover, at immediate risk to their lives and health. As a consequence, the dignity of these people is being hurt not only by other homeless people but also by the members of the majority society.

The current system of social services does not address the social situation of people without home directly, since it focuses mainly on covering their basic needs (living, clothing, food, social counselling...). Furthermore, this applies mostly to people in productive age, not seniors. Whereas it is complicated for seniors to use social services, in some cases the services for them are even unreachable.

The theoretical part of this dissertation describes the social aspects of homelessness, focusing specifically on the issues of seniors without home and the existing systemic measures including the relationship of society and the homeless minority.

Within the framework of a combined research, the attention is paid to the attitudes of the seniors towards both, themselves and the social services provided in Prague. The aim is to find out, based on a subjective perception of the situation, whether the existing services, for the sake of solving the situation of the senior users, are acceptable and useful. In this context, the research also focuses on the analysis of the "Concept of Proposals on the Problem of Homelessness in Prague in 2013 - 2020" which so far builds the only conceptual approach to solving homelessness in the metropolis. The findings obtained in the analysis of seniors' needs should serve as a subject of discussion for additional suggestions to the conceptual material mentioned above. The study was conducted through a selection procedure of the research sample of people in presenior and senior age, that is 50 years of age or more.

Key words: homelessness, homeless senior, social-deviance phenomenon, concept, systemic measures, active ageing, public opinion, age category, subjective definition of a situation