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# REZIDENČNÍ MOBILITA A REZIDENČNÍ PREFERENCE MLADÝCH RODIN A STARŠÍCH DOSPĚLÝCH Z PRAŽSKÉHO METROPOLITNÍHO REGIONU

Disertační práce

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**RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY AND RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES OF YOUNG  
FAMILIES AND OLDER ADULTS FROM THE PRAGUE METROPOLITAN  
AREA**

Doctoral thesis

Supervisor: RNDr. Petra Špačková, Ph.D.

Prague, 2023



## Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem disertační práci zpracovala samostatně a že jsem uvedla všechny použité informační zdroje a literaturu. Tato práce ani její podstatná část nebyla předložena k získání jiného nebo stejného akademického titulu.

Praha, 21. 2. 2023

Mgr. Marie Horňáková



## Declaration

I declare that I have prepared my doctoral thesis independently and that I have listed all the information sources and literature used. Neither this thesis nor any substantial part of it has been submitted for another or the same academic degree.

Prague, 21. 2. 2023

Mgr. Marie Horňáková



## List of publications <sup>1</sup>

### Web of Science

SÝKORA, J., HORŇÁKOVÁ M., VISSER, K., BOLT, G. (2022): 'It is natural': sustained place attachment of long-term residents in a gentrifying Prague neighbourhood. *Social & Cultural Geography*.

DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2021): Retiring in the suburbs? Residential strategies in two Prague suburbs. *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography*. 121, 2, 114–127.

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., SÝKORA, J. (2021): From suburbanization to reurbanization? Changing residential mobility flows of families with young children in the Prague Metropolitan Area. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 75, 4, 203–220.

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., JÍCHOVÁ, J. (2020): Deciding where to live: case study of cohousing-inspired residential project in Prague. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 35, 807–827.

### Web of Science (under review)

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., ŠPAČKOVÁ, P.: Having a garden or being in the city? The trade-offs and strategies of young middle-class families. Under review in *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

### Book Chapters

DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2022): Residential Mobility Within the Central Bohemian Suburbs. In: Ouředníček, M. (ed.): *Prague and Central Bohemia: Current Population Processes and Socio-spatial Differentiation*. Karolinum Press, Praha, 131–149.

### Reviewed articles and publications

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N. (2022): Pražská předměstí: Dynamika sociálního prostředí rostoucí metropole. *Kritický katalog*. Univerzita Karlova, Přírodovědecká fakulta. ISBN: 978-80-7444-097-7.

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., JÍCHOVÁ, J. (2021): Sdílené prostory a sousedská blízkost jako důvody pro výběr nového bydlení. *Geografické rozhledy*, 30, 4, 10–13.

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<sup>1</sup> The publications are listed in descending order by year of publication.

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Language proofreading was performed using online software (such as Grammarly, ProWritingAid or ChatGPT). The dissertation is partly theoretically and conceptually based on five presented publications.

## Abstrakt

Disertační projekt se zaměřuje na výzkum procesu rezidenční mobility a rezidenčních preferencí v Pražském metropolitním regionu. S diverzifikací životních trajektorií a životních stylů, ale i rostoucími cenami bydlení se rezidenční mobilita a rezidenční preference stávají stále více heterogenními a nejednoznačnými. Cílem výzkumu je prozkoumání nově se objevujících vzorců rezidenční mobility a rezidenčních preferencí, a hlubší poznání, jak probíhá výběr nového bydlení. Konkrétně se projekt zaměřuje na dvě skupiny obyvatel, v obou případech se jedná o zástupce střední třídy: mladé rodiny a starší obyvatele (empty nesters, senioři). V práci je použita kombinace kvantitativních a kvalitativních výzkumných metod. Práce přispívá k zaplnění existující mezery v poznání o rezidenční mobilitě v postsocialistických městech a procesu výběru bydlení mezi mladými rodinami a staršími dospělými.

## Abstract

The dissertation project examines the process of residential mobility and residential preferences in the Prague Metropolitan Area. With the diversification of life-course trajectories and lifestyles, but also rising housing prices, residential mobility and residential preferences have become more heterogeneous and ambiguous. The research aims to investigate new emerging patterns of residential mobility and residential preferences, and to explore how the selection of a new home is performed. The study focuses on two population groups: middle-class young families and middle-class older adults (empty nesters, seniors). A mixed-method research approach is adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study contributes to filling the gap in knowledge on residential mobility in post-socialist cities and the process of housing choice among young families and older adults.



## Table of content

LIST OF FIGURES .....	13
LIST OF TABLES .....	13
1. INTRODUCTION .....	15
2. RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY AND RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES: FROM YOUNG FAMILIES TO OLDER ADULTS .....	21
2.1 Changes in spatial patterns of residential mobility .....	21
2.2 Residential mobility and residential preferences .....	25
2.3 Residential mobility and residential preferences of young families .....	30
2.4 Residential mobility and residential preferences at older ages .....	32
3. SOCIO-SPATIAL CHANGES AND THE HOUSING MARKET IN CZECHIA AND PRAGUE METROPOLITAN AREA .....	35
3.1 Socio-spatial changes in Czech cities and Prague Metropolitan Area .....	35
3.2 Housing market in Czechia and Prague Metropolitan Area .....	38
4. DATA AND METHODS .....	42
4.1 Residential mobility in Prague Metropolitan Area .....	43
4.2 Forming a decision to move and choosing a new home .....	44
5. INTRODUCTION OF PUBLICATIONS .....	46
5.1 Residential mobility within the Central Bohemian suburbs .....	46
5.2 From suburbanization to reurbanization? Changing residential mobility flows of families with young children in the Prague Metropolitan Area .....	49
5.3 Retiring in the suburbs? Residential strategies in two Prague suburbs .....	52
5.4 Having a garden or being in the city? The trade-offs and strategies of young middle-class families .....	55
5.5 Deciding where to live: Case study of cohousing-inspired residential project in Prague .....	58
6. CONCLUSION .....	60
6.1 Implications for urban planning .....	64
6.2 Implications for future research .....	65
REFERENCES .....	66





## List of figures

Figure 1: Residential zones in the Prague Metropolitan Area .....	37
Figure 2: Average prices of empty flats in current development projects in Prague, 2015–2020 .....	39
Figure 3: Migration from Central Bohemian suburbs to residential types of Prague, 2000–2018.....	48
Figure 4: Considerations, across three different life stages, for moving from current residence.....	53

## List of tables

Table 1: Source-destination matrix of migration and the definition of suburbanization and reurbanization .....	23
Table 2: Population in residential zones of the Prague Metropolitan Area, 2008–2017 .....	37
Table 3: Overview of phases, methods, research questions and the outputs.....	43



## 1. Introduction

The dissertation project focuses on the topic of the complex process of residential mobility and residential preferences and how they are formed. In recent years, we can observe several changes in residential mobility in both Western and post-socialist cities. With the diversification of life-course trajectories (Hochstenbach, Boterman 2017; Lennartz, Helbrecht 2018) and peoples' lifestyles (Ilmonen 2016), but also rising housing prices (Wetzstein 2017; Hoolachan, McKee 2019; Preece et al. 2019; Hochstenbach, Ronald 2020) residential mobility and residential preferences are becoming more heterogeneous and ambiguous (Clapham et al. 2014; Lacroix, Gagnon, Wanner 2020). These are associated with changes in societal and spatial processes.

Compared to their Western counterparts, post-socialist cities have been experiencing various pronounced social, demographic, and physical changes since the fall of the Iron Curtain (Sýkora L., Bouzarovski 2012). These are reflected in a myriad of urban processes such as suburbanization, reurbanization or gentrification. Some of these tendencies are like those in Western cities, however, they are qualitatively different as they occur in a different inherited context (Pastak, Kährik 2021; Sýkora J. et al. 2022; Sýkora J., Špačková 2022).

The changes and processes affect differently various parts of cities: suburbs, housing estates, and inner-city neighbourhoods. Recent research seems to focus predominantly on suburbs and the inner city and they are of interest to many studies in the Western (Buzar, Hall, Ogden 2007; Bouzarovski et al. 2010; Ströbele, Hunziker 2017; Tzaninis 2020) as well as the post-socialist cities (Kährik, Tammaru 2008; Steinführer et al. 2010; Haase et al. 2017; Slaev et al. 2018). Especially when studying metropolitan regions, urban neighbourhoods and suburbs are often contrasted (Karsten 2020; Booi, Boterman, Musterd 2021; Winther 2021). However, what is missing is a slightly more detailed (sensitive) perspective that would consider (distinguish) housing estates as important and specific parts of the urban fabric when studying residential mobility and residential preferences. A considerable share of research is empirically based in Western countries and when comparing different parts of the urban region, the dichotomy of urban neighbourhoods vs. suburbs prevails. When housing estates are specifically addressed in research, it is usually in connection with social housing (Bolt 2018; Wassenberg 2018; Lelévrier 2021). This is understandable as social housing is prevalent there and housing estates make up a relatively low share of housing stock. This implies that conducting research on post-socialist cities, where differences between pre-war inner-city neighbourhoods and post-war housing estates can be closely observed, holds substantial importance. The aim of the dissertation is to fill in the gap in knowledge outlined above and to study changes in the spatial patterns of residential mobility and the process of choosing new housing among residents living in the Prague Metropolitan Area. The main objective is to investigate whether new patterns (trends) of residential mobility and

residential preferences are emerging in the context of the post-socialist city and to explore and understand in greater detail how the selection of a new home is performed.

To allow deeper investigation of these topics, two groups were selected: middle-class young families and older adults (comprised of empty nesters, and seniors). The selection was made in consideration of the evolving conditions and contexts in which both groups live. First, the lifestyles of young families are becoming more diverse in the last decade(s). Second, the first generation of suburbanites in post-socialist cities is growing older. Therefore, studying these groups has the potential to generate novel and valuable insights. The decision to focus on middle-class residents was made because of their higher likelihood of realizing their preferences, particularly when juxtaposed with the recently growing significance of financial constraints.

The diversification of residential preferences, residential mobility, and life trajectories, in general, has a significant impact on both middle-class young families and older adults. Both groups have long been the focus of much research in Western countries. Several Western European authors have recently identified the growing role of families in the process of inner-city neighbourhood change (Karsten 2014; Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Goodsell 2013; Van den Berg 2013; Lilius 2014; Booi, Boterman, Musterd 2021; Hochstenbach 2019; Winther 2021). The older population is given importance in the process of reurbanization (back-to-the-city) (Boddy 2007; Butler 2007) and the issue of ageing in the city and suburbs is emphasized (Stjernborg, Wretstrand, Tesfahuney 2015; Golant 2019; Torres 2020). The group of older adults receives attention also in the post-socialist context (Galčanová, Sýkorová 2015; Sýkorová 2012), although in this case the amount of research on their residential preferences, residential mobility or specifically on the process of housing choice is somewhat limited. Young families seem to be neglected in the research on post-socialist cities in general (an exception is Kährlik et al. 2016).

Under the characteristic of young families, we can include families with young children (preschool or primary school age). This is a population group at a stage of life that brings with it several changes related to the birth of children and further family growth. Households choose where to spend an important part of their lives and raise their children. It is also the group showing the highest intensity of residential mobility (Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Kährlik et al. 2016).

On the contrary, families in the empty-nest phase are at the stage where children have moved out and the problem of space overconsumption may appear. This is sooner or later accompanied by the termination of employment due to retirement, deteriorating health or the death of one of the partners (Wulff, Healy, Reynolds 2004; Clark, Deurloo 2006; Wulff, Champion, Lobo 2010). Hence, while it is true that residential mobility tends to decline with age and duration of stay in a particular location,

older adults remain a significant cohort of movers. Furthermore, their significance is expected to grow in the coming years, given the projected rise in their share of the overall population.

Accordingly, the research questions are as follows:

1. What is the residential mobility behaviour of middle-class young families and older adults living in the Prague Metropolitan Area? (*Changing patterns of residential mobility*)
2. What are the reasons behind their decision to move? (*The process of decision formation*)
3. What were their reasons for choosing a new place to live (location/project)? How do lifestyle and socioeconomic characteristics influence the choice process? (*Process of searching, considering alternatives and employing strategies*)

The thesis is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The first research question focuses on the changing patterns of residential mobility. To answer the first research question, individual-level migration data is analysed. The second research question focuses on the process of decision formation and the third research question deals with the process of searching for new housing, considering alternatives, and employing strategies. To answer the second and third research questions a questionnaire survey and in-depth semi-structured interviews are conducted. The methods outlined are described in greater detail in chapter 4.

By carrying out my dissertation I would like to contribute to filling the knowledge gap also on the national level in the still limited knowledge of the subject. The project develops the topic of migration and residential mobility, which has been traditionally addressed at my research department (i.e., the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development; Čermák 2005; Drbohlav, Čermák 2002; Sýkora L., Ouředníček 2007) and also elsewhere (Haase et al. 2012; Ivan et al. 2013) but looks at it from a different angle. It focuses mainly on the actual process of forming the decision to move and choosing a new residence while existing studies deal with the resulting spatial patterns. This topic is also not addressed by sociological studies, which provide more partial insights into residential preferences and reasons for moving (Bartoš et al. 2015; Lux et al. 2017; Lux et al. 2018; Lux, Sunega 2020; Kubala, Hoření Samec 2021; Lux et al. 2023). They bring knowledge mainly only at the level of Czechia and the spatial dimension is included to a limited extent. In my dissertation, on the contrary, space is a key element. The knowledge gap in Czechia is in greater detail discussed in chapter 3.

I consider the study of this topic to be crucial for understanding the processes transforming the spatial structure of the city. At the same time, understanding how relocation processes are shaped, and what are the priorities and preferences of young families, but also older adults, can help to create quality housing policy instruments and spatial development concepts. In an international context, the thesis

will contribute to the expansion of knowledge on the issue and at the same time bring new insights based on the specific context of Prague as a post-socialist city.

Essentially all major Western European countries, but also the post-socialist ones, are currently dealing with similar problems related to worsening housing affordability, ageing populations, the climate crisis, and sustainable development in general. All these issues are closely related to residential mobility and subsequently to urban planning. In other words, they need to be considered in planning. The issues in question are being addressed not only on a national level but also within the framework of the European Union. Consequently, it is crucial to comprehend the unique local contexts to develop high-quality concepts or strategies at the European Union level.

In the following paragraphs, I would like to briefly outline the importance of the studied topic, which I see in three basic points. All are based on the need to reflect the needs, demands and ideas of residents when planning urban development.

**Firstly**, the importance of the studied topic arises from the currently preferable way of urban development through densification (Dieleman, Wegener 2004; Howley 2009; Haaland, van den Bosch 2015; Blanc, Scanlon, White 2020). This trend can also be observed in Prague, where the Institute of Planning and Development is currently working with the concept of a city of short distances (IPR 2016). The shift from modernist to post-modern city planning can be observed in Prague in connection with the establishment of the aforementioned Institute of Planning and Development back in 2013 and the beginning of the preparation of the still unfinished Metropolitan Plan (IPR 2020). One of the main presented objectives of the Metropolitan Plan is stopping the uncontrolled sprawl of buildings into the surrounding landscape and on the contrary, encouraging the development of previously unused land within the city (brownfields) (IPR 2015).

While urban development through densification is justified and desirable given the negative environmental and social consequences of sprawling suburbanization, it should also be done thoughtfully and sensitively to provide its residents with an adequate place to live (this may include, for example, the provision of privacy and personal space).

**Secondly**, the relevance of the topic under study is based on the ever-increasing price of housing and its deteriorating affordability not only for the poorest group of the population but also for the middle classes. Rising housing prices especially affect young families at the beginning of their housing careers, when they usually have lower incomes (starting families, depending on one salary; it is customary for mothers to stay at home for several years), but also people in older ages. Czechia, and Prague in particular, has been hit by a strong increase in housing prices in recent years (see Samec, Lamač 2018; Lukavec, Kolařík 2019). There are several factors influencing the sustained and steep increase of new

housing prices. It is the stagnation on the new housing supply side, the rising popularity of buying flats as an investment commodity, but also other rather positive<sup>2</sup> factors, such as economic and population growth and foreign migration (Němec 2018). The pace of housing construction in the capital is no longer able to fully reflect the demand. At the same time, Prague's housing market is not flexible enough, which is related to significant administrative delays in the permitting of new buildings within the planning and construction processes (Němec 2018). The unfavourable situation with high housing prices is further aggravated by a problem with a very limited supply of housing types in Czechia (Samec 2018), the growing phenomenon of short-term rentals (Ključnikov, Krajčík, Vincúrová 2018) and limited social municipal housing.

**Thirdly**, the significance of the topic under investigation is highlighted by the rising number of ageing populations in various European countries, including Czechia. This issue is becoming increasingly apparent as the robust generations, born in the 1950s, mid-1960s, and the 1970s, have either already reached or are on the verge of reaching retirement age. By 2060, it is projected that the proportion of Czech citizens aged 65 and above will increase to 31% of the total population, resulting in a rise in the old-age dependency ratio<sup>3</sup> to 0.5. (Lux, Sunega 2020). Although Czech suburbs can still be considered an area with a young population structure, in the not-so-distant future, together with the overall increase in population, an increase in the absolute and relative representation of seniors in the hinterland of Prague is expected. According to the medium variant of the demographic forecast for the Central Bohemian Region, the number of seniors in the suburbs will increase between 2018 and 2050 by 120 thousand inhabitants. Throughout the same period, the relative representation of seniors in the total population will increase by 7 percentage points, from the current 16 per cent to 23 per cent. The most dynamic growth is expected among the oldest citizens aged 85 and over (Kučera, Burcin 2022). It is therefore necessary to verify the residential mobility intentions of older adults. Foreign studies show that they are staying in the suburbs (ageing in place, Golant 2019), yet some reurbanization tendencies can be observed (Butler 2007). Unfortunately, it is not yet clear what the situation is in Czechia, however, this knowledge is crucial for planning the development of social and health infrastructure.

The dissertation comprises 5 distinct publications, accompanied by an introductory text. The introductory text is divided into 6 chapters. The introduction (Chapter 1) is followed by a section

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<sup>2</sup> Positive factors causing the increase in housing prices include economic growth and the favourable situation on the Prague labour market, the situation in the financial sector (long-term low interest rates), a significant amount of free capital and a lack of investment opportunities, strong demand for rental housing, population growth and foreign migration, and expectations of further price increases for new housing (Němec 2018).

<sup>3</sup> The old-age dependency ratio is the ratio of the number of elderly people at an age when they are generally economically inactive (65+), compared to the number of people of working age (15-64 years old) (Eurostat 2018).

devoted to the theoretical setting of the whole thesis (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 focuses on the contextual setting of the thesis, while Chapter 4 introduces the data and methods employed. Chapter 5 is dedicated to the presentation of each individual publication, and Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by summarizing the main results and presenting their implications.

## 2. Residential mobility and residential preferences: From young families to older adults

This chapter reviews the literature which is closely related to the objectives of the dissertation. First, general changes in residential mobility patterns characteristic of post-socialist cities are introduced. Second, I familiarize the reader with the topic of residential mobility and residential preferences. I focus on the main concepts important for the dissertation. Attention is paid to the concept of lifestyle and its connection to residential mobility and preferences. In the third and fourth parts, I go into more detail and focus specifically on two key groups: young families and older residents (empty-nesters, seniors). I present their position within the processes shaping the contemporary spatial patterns of post-socialist cities.

### 2.1 Changes in spatial patterns of residential mobility

During the Socialist era, inner cities and suburban areas were out of focus and developed only to a very limited extent. For young people, these locations were also relatively unattractive. The construction of housing estates was of the main interest and it brought significant transformations to the socio-economic structures of the post-socialist cities. Younger inhabitants with higher educational attainments were the main group moving to the newly built estates. However, over time the relative position of these estates has diminished, which was a consequence of both the ageing of the population and the degradation of the housing stock (Golubchikov, Badyina, Makhrova 2014; Špačková, Pospíšilová, Ouředníček 2016; Kalm et al. 2023).

After the collapse of the Socialist regime, significant changes in migration and residential mobility patterns can be observed in many post-socialist cities, which are manifested in all three zones of urban regions (inner city, housing estate, suburbia) (for more see Sýkora L., Bouzarovski 2012). There is greater diversity (both in terms of socioeconomic characteristics and demographic and ethnic characteristics) among urban residents living within the same housing types (Špačková, Pospíšilová, Ouředníček 2016).

In the post-socialist period, therefore, changes are taking place that can be approached from the perspective of changes in processes (suburbanization, reurbanization) and the perspective of changes in individual urban zones (inner city, housing estate, suburbia). The following chapter aims to create a brief but comprehensive overview of the changes in spatial patterns of residential mobility in post-socialist cities.

**Suburbanization** began to develop strongly in **Western Europe and North America** during the period of Fordism and was closely linked to social mobility and the expansion of the middle class. This was a period of labour emancipation, increased consumption, and technological development associated

mainly with individual automobile transport and the individualization of society (McCann 2009, Vacková 2013). All these elements supported the development of housing beyond the city. The newly emerging middle class began to look for housing that would fit their new idea of an ideal place for family life.

In **post-socialist cities, suburbanization** experienced substantial growth since the 1990s. A significant driving force behind this phenomenon has been a desire to live in a family house with a garden (Kok, Kovács 1999). Moreover, the limited expansion of suburban housing development prior to 1989, as highlighted by Sýkora and Ouředníček (2007), has also played a significant role in shaping this trend. Moreover, the construction of family housing on the city outskirts was unattractive at that time because villages lacked amenities and commuting to the capital was difficult (commuting over longer distances become less problematic with the development of individual car transport). The alteration of the political regime and the institutional and economic reforms created favourable conditions for the emergence of new residential options in proximity to urban regions (Kok, Kovács 1999). Thus, suburban housing became the dominant type of development and a widely studied topic (Kok, Kovács 1999; Timár, Váradi 2016; Kährlik, Tammaru 2008; Špačková, Ouředníček 2012; Kurek, Wójtowicz, Gałka 2015; Špačková, Dvořáková, Tobrmanová 2016; Slaev et al. 2018; Kubeš, Ouředníček 2022).

Despite housing construction gradually slowing down due to the economic crisis of the late 2000s, suburbanization continues to transform intensively the demographic and socio-economic spatial structures of many suburban areas in the Western European and the post-socialist cities (Booi, Boterman 2020; Karsten 2020; Ouředníček 2022).

Alongside suburbanization, post-socialist inner cities have been subject to several social and demographic transformations. The reasons behind these changes are associated not only with the residential mobility of diverse population groups with evolving housing preferences but also with the resulting processes of **gentrification and reurbanization** (Holm, Marcińczak, Ogrodowczyk 2015; Haase et al. 2017) but also to in situ changes in the status of long-term residents (Tammaru et al. 2016; Temelová et al. 2017; Sýkora, Špačková 2022).

My primary focus is on the process of **reurbanization** that has been taking place in recent years, especially in **Western European countries** (see Buzar, Hall, Ogden 2007; Bouzarovski et al. 2010; Haase, Rink 2015), but also in several **post-socialist inner cities** (e.g., Steinführer et al. 2010; Haase et al. 2017). According to Kabisch, Haase and Haase (2010), reurbanization can be understood as a process that entails the relative and absolute expansion of the population within inner cities in contrast to suburban areas. At the neighbourhood level, it is a process of stabilisation of the inner city that occurs after a

prolonged phase of decline. Inner cities are gradually transforming into residential areas and are increasingly diversified in terms of age or socioeconomic status (Haase et al. 2012; Haase, Rink 2015). Authors view the process of reurbanization in different ways, usually depending on the nature of the research objective. In the context of the focus of my dissertation, I find it useful to view reurbanization as a qualitative phenomenon related to the transformation and diversification of residents' (households') lifestyles (see, for example, Kabisch, Haase and Haase (2010). This is because reurbanization is closely linked to the emergence of new lifestyles and ways of living, and it is no longer only singles or cohabiting couples who are part of the process (Karsten 2009; 2014). This view on reurbanization is in my dissertation used in the articles based on qualitative research (these are articles introduced in chapters 5.4 and 5.5).

An alternative conceptualization of reurbanization was introduced by Ouředníček, Šimon, and Kopečná (2015). The authors understand the process as migration from suburbs to cities, in other words, as a return of residents from suburban locations back to the city (see Table 1). They stress that the definition relates more to the local context than to the settlement system. It is therefore important to consider the contextual and compositional characteristics of a given flow (Ouředníček, Šimon, Kopečná 2015). In my dissertation, this conceptualization of reurbanization is used in the articles analysing individual migration data (these are articles in chapters 5.1 and 5.2).

*Table 1: Source-destination matrix of migration and the definition of suburbanization and reurbanization*

Type of settlement		Target of migration		
		City	Suburb	Countryside
Source of migration	City	Intra and inner-city migration	Suburbanization	Counterurbanization
	Suburb	Reurbanization	Tangential migration	Counterurbanization
	Countryside	Urbanization (reurbanization)	Urbanization	Rural migration

Source: Ouředníček, Klsák, Špačková (2019)

Although in Czechia and other post-socialist cities, the reurbanization process has not yet reached the same intensity as that seen elsewhere (Ouředníček, Šimon, Kopečná 2015), the tendency for reurbanization may yet intensify. This might happen especially in connection with the of some rejuvenation inner-city localities and the potential upsurge in residential mobility from the suburbs back to the city, as the children of the first generation of 'suburbanites' entered another life-course phase (Ouředníček, Špačková, Novák 2013).

In the context of the process of reurbanization, it is worth shortly highlighting the process of **gentrification** as these two terms overlap in certain ways, even though I do not focus on this process in my dissertation project. Gentrification has become a focus of interest for many researchers in the

post-socialist context (Sýkora L. 2005; Kubeš, Kovács 2020; Pastak, Kährik 2021; Sýkora J., Špačková 2022). Authors studying gentrification have traditionally focused more on issues such as displacement, social segregation, and improving class or residential status (Haase, Rink 2015). On the contrary, reurbanization is often perceived as a broader concept encompassing a wide range of socio-spatial dynamics (Kabisch, Haase, Haase 2010). In addition to social transformations, reurbanization is also linked to a process of demographic growth involving a diverse range of households (Siedentop, Zakrzewski, Stroms 2018). The post-socialist 'reurbanites' exhibit a broad range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics that may vary from those of the gentrifiers, contingent upon the respective territorial origins of each group of incoming residents (Ouředníček, Šimon, Kopečná 2015).

Changes that only recently started to be intensively studied are those happening at the **housing estates**. Following the World War II, housing estates emerged on the outskirts of European cities to address housing shortages and growing household numbers (Rowlands, Musterd, van Kempen 2009; Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018). The housing estates were highly desirable, especially for working-class families, due to their open housing blocks, ample green space, separation of traffic from other functions, and quality dwellings (Kempen et al. 2005).

While **Northern and Western Europe** saw the rapid construction of these estates, development was slower at the beginning and more protracted in **Eastern Europe**, with some countries continuing construction through the early 1990s (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018; Hess, Tammaru 2019). During the Socialist era, housing allocation was tightly controlled by the government, with residents assigned housing based on occupation, family size, and other social factors, leading to relatively stable residential mobility patterns within housing complexes (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018; Hess, Tammaru 2019).

Over time, housing estates began to face various problems and many of them started to experience a physical and social decline. As a result, the attractiveness of the estates among residents has decreased and, especially in Western Europe, they have been stigmatised strikingly. The weaker stigmatization in Eastern Europe is attributed to the fact that they form a much more important segment in the housing sector and because there are fewer alternatives (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018; Ouředníček, Špačková, Pospíšilová 2018; Kovács, Szabó 2018; Marin, Chelcea 2018; Gunko et al. 2018). However, this situation is not the same everywhere, and there are significant differences between housing estates in different countries, but also between cities and within cities (Musterd, Van Kempen 2007; Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018). The development trajectories of housing estates reflect the specific contexts of individual countries and cities (Musterd, Van Kempen 2007; Kalm et al. 2023). At the same time, they still represent areas where a significant part of the population lives and are therefore an integral part of the housing stock (Hess, Tammaru 2019).

As stated by Hess et al. (2018), the current position of housing estates on the housing ladder is not clear, but European cities are seeing the emergence of new population groups for whom large housing estates can be an appealing housing option. These groups consist mainly of small households such as young singles, elderly, divorced people, foreign students, and temporary workers, but young families should not be excluded either. Not all young families are necessarily drawn to single-family houses in suburban areas with a garden (Karsten 2014; Lilius 2019b; Winther 2021). Instead, they may prefer apartments located in central areas that are easily accessible and provide enough services, as well as being low maintenance (Karsten 2014; Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018; Lilius 2019b). Unfortunately, these inner-city areas may become financially unaffordable even for middle-class families (Karsten 2020; 2022). In combination with rising housing prices housing estates may be a good option for them. As stressed by Karsten (2022), families should be one of the target groups of the recently built housing estates (high-rises), because their development can help to address their diversifying housing aspirations.

According to Booi and Boterman (2020), family households tend to relocate to and settle in the suburbs, while non-family households tend to remain in the city. Nevertheless, this division may become more pronounced due to evolving housing preferences, the growth of middle-class families, and the differentiation of life-course trajectories (Tzaninis, Boterman 2018; Booi, Boterman 2020). Furthermore, housing market conditions, such as the global financial crisis and the resulting decline in new housing supply, have led to a decrease in the overall intensity of residential mobility within metropolitan areas, potentially diversifying the character of mobility flows (Hochstenbach 2019).

## 2.2 Residential mobility and residential preferences

The social differentiation of a city is being transformed through the movement of different groups of inhabitants (for example, those with a certain social status) to different parts of the city. Residentially attractive locations are usually places where new housing developments and housing stock renewal are taking place, and vice versa. Moreover, it is a complex process consisting of multiple phases and is influenced by varied factors (Coulter, Scott 2015; Nowok, Findlay, McCollum 2018, Coulter, Thomas 2020).

First, I define and introduce the reader to several concepts I use in the dissertation. In the whole dissertation project, I focus on residential mobility, which is generally understood as moving within the same region, most often within a city and its hinterland, and is usually carried out over shorter distances. In contrast, long-distance movement (e.g., between different metropolitan areas) is often referred to as migration (Howley 2009; Coulter, Thomas 2020).

Although residential mobility is the most extensively researched response to residential dissatisfaction, a household can also respond by being passive (cognitive adaptation), or by taking their own or collective initiative to improve housing conditions (Herfert, Neugebauer, Smigiel 2013). Some households may lack the financial resources or capabilities necessary to find new housing and relocate (Dieleman 2001). Although external factors also influence the movement of young families and elderly residents, only those households whose main motivations can be considered voluntary and the move intentional are included in the research.

When studying residential mobility, it is important to distinguish and work with **two basic phases: thinking about moving and deciding to move** (Coulter, Scott 2015; Špačková, Dvořáková, Tobrmanová 2016). In the first case, it is the desire to change residence without necessarily considering the feasibility of the decision (Coulter, van Ham, Feijten 2011). If the household (or part of it) decides to move, it is further possible to work with the other three stages of the process, such as Mulder (1996) or Marsh and Gibb (2011). These are housing specification and search strategy, the evaluation phase including a comparison of alternatives and becoming acquainted with the housing supply, and finalization of the decision including a decision to buy or rent a property or to continue searching (Mulder 1996; Marsh, Gibb 2011). According to Hasu (2018), there is an additional stage of post-purchase evaluation that involves assessing whether the decisions made align with the initial preferences.

When studying residential mobility, it is important to distinguish between **housing choice itself and a more general housing preference**, as Ilmonen (2016) argues that people do not necessarily choose what they prefer. Preferences represent an unconstrained assessment of the attractiveness of housing (type of development, location, etc.), whereas choice is a selection already made. A distinction can also be made between stated preferences and revealed preferences, which are based on actual ('performed') housing choices (Jansen, Coolen, Goetgeluk 2011; Ilmonen 2016). Furthermore, housing choices are influenced by housing needs and aspirations, which are often connected to reasons for moving.

In his classical work, Rossi (1955) described the pattern of new parents relocating to a new home in connection with the birth of a child, thus connecting the theory of the **life cycle** and residential mobility. If there is a disparity between a household's current status and the aspirations of its members, it may result in a choice to relocate (Rossi 1955; Lu 1998; Brown, Moore 1970; Winstanley, Thorns, Perkins 2002). This classical model assumes a sequential transition of the household through the different phases of the cycle. The trajectory begins upon completion of education, continues through entry into the labour market, marriage, and establishment of a family household, and is completed through parenthood and retirement (Rossi 1955).

Rossi's life cycle model was later replaced by a somewhat more versatile **life course model**, which does not assume the existence of predefined phases for everyone (Dykstra, Hagestad 2007; Geist, McManus 2008; Coulter, Ham, Findlay 2016). It, therefore, reflects the diversity of life trajectories of individual populations. It highlights the variability in the timing and sequencing of life events. It also considers the influence of social context to be important, where different life situations and experiences of different population groups in most cases lead to different mobility trajectories (Geist, McManus 2008; Sander, Bell 2014). Typically, as families move through different life phases, they become less inclined to move and instead choose to remain in the home they purchased when they were younger and in the process of expanding the family (Doling 1976).

**Residential mobility and the selection of a new place of residence are not always the result of individual choice** (Musterd et al. 2016). Housing needs and residential preferences represent one dimension of the decision and are limited by various **constraints and enabling conditions**. Low income is a significant factor that hinders a household's ability to relocate (Coulter, van Ham 2013; Hochstenbach, Boterman 2015), restricts their housing options, or makes them unavailable (Gärling, Friman 2002). Additionally, the housing market, policies, and ownership structures can impact the availability and accessibility of housing (Dieleman 2001; Pacione 2003; Kley, Mulder 2010; Coulter, van Ham 2013). Households lacking the financial means to relocate or find new housing may respond in a passive manner or employ initiatives to enhance their current housing situation (Herfert, Neugebauer, Smigiel 2013).

In this context, many contemporary studies also focus on intergenerational support when acquiring homeownership (Druta, Ronald 2017; Hochstenbach, Boterman 2017; Lennartz, Helbrecht 2018; Lux, Sunega, Kázmér 2021; Ronald, Arundel 2023) and stress the fact that transfers of wealth within one family, especially housing-related wealth, contribute to the reproduction of structurally generated existing patterns of intra-generational inequality (Christophers 2018). This is particularly important for my study as the Czech housing market is dominated by homeownership. Lastly, the usage of different types of capital to acquire housing is under scholarly attention (Boterman 2012; Hochstenbach, Boterman 2015). Boterman (2012), for example, draws on the work of P. Bourdieu, who argues that different forms of capital play a role in the acquisition of material and symbolic goods. Bourdieu went beyond classical conceptions of economic and human capital in his reasoning, as he considered all embodied experiences as a potential source of capital (power) in a particular domain (Boterman 2012). Boterman (2012) applied these ideas to housing and in his research considered all the ways in which housing as a form of capital could lead to the acquisition of housing. Access to housing is then influenced by the amount and type of capital available to the individual (household). This is not the result of a given and unchanging class position, but the result of the dynamic interaction of different

dispositions of actors and their behaviour. Individuals' housing choice behaviour should be understood as biased and strategic, but also as (un)consciously constructed through a habitus that is historically shaped by objective structures (Boterman 2012). In Boterman's (2012) view, the housing market should be viewed as a set of areas where class position plays an important role, but where strategic practices and tactics ultimately yield results. The author, therefore, understands housing acquisition as a process that is sometimes strategic (the result of reflexive behaviour) and sometimes tactical (an intuitive response to constraints imposed by the market and institutional conditions).

**In summary**, the residential choices of individuals are always in some ways constrained (Butler, Hamnett 2012). People mostly must consider trade-offs and evaluate the advantages and drawbacks of living in urban or suburban areas (R  rat, 2020). Those living in inner cities may have limited housing options due to the smaller living spaces available and the inability to acquire a home, while suburban residents face long commutes and limited retail choices (Barlindhaug 2022; Kooiman 2020; Winther 2021). Given these factors, households adopt various strategies to navigate the housing market and satisfy their housing requirements and preferences as much as possible.

With the diversification of residential mobility patterns and residential preferences, many scholars have shown that decisions about residential mobility are not only influenced by the traditionally studied demographic composition of a particular household and its economic situation, but also by residential preferences linked to **people's lifestyles** (Beamish, Carucci Goss, Emmel 2001;   r   2006; Karsten 2007; 2009; Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Kooiman 2020; Lilius 2019b).

The concept of lifestyle was first brought up by the sociologist Max Weber in the 1920s (for more see Jansen, Coolen and Goetgeluk (2011) or Ilmonen (2016)) and subsequently further developed by two prominent sociologists, Anthony Giddens (1991) and Pierre Bourdieu (1986), as well as by several other scholars (Wirth 1938; Merton 1957; Bell 1938; Chaney 1996). Definitions of lifestyle vary considerably between and within disciplines. Despite the differences in defining the concept, according to Jansen, Coolen and Goetgeluk (2011), the various definitions agree that the concept of lifestyle should provide a context within which the behaviour of one or more actors can be understood (particularly in terms of stability, coherence, and purposefulness of action).

According to   r   (2006), the concept of lifestyle allows explaining individuals' relationship to housing and the reasons behind the way they choose to live. Its usefulness also lies in the fact that it works with subjective patterns of orientation, preferences, and cultural affiliation (  r   2006). Moreover, the use of the lifestyle concept allows us to improve the prediction of housing demand by obtaining more accurate information about consumers' preferences and choices (Jansen, Coolen, Goetgeluk 2011). Recently researchers pointed to the need of adapting the concept of lifestyle to the specific

context of a given study (de Jong et al. 2018; Winther 2021). Winther (2021) stressed the importance of incorporating lifestyle and values into the study of housing choices to get more nuanced answers. The author believes that a multifaceted approach to housing choice research should include social and cultural dimensions, such as lifestyle. This is in addition to the usual focus on macro-scale norms.

As Ilmonen (2016) argues, a major contribution of the lifestyle discussion to the field of residential preference research is an understanding of the importance of structure and the importance of symbolic processes - that is, how meanings are constructed. In both Giddens' and Bourdieu's view, decisions made even by residents of lower economic status have the power to create identity and habitus by differentiating themselves from others and joining the identity of a particular group (Ilmonen 2016). In the area of choosing a new residence (neighbourhood, home), the use of a two-dimensional model of lifestyle classification is a way of distinguishing oneself from others, in other words, a way of self-expression (Ilmonen 2016).

In addition to the benefits of using the concept outlined by Ilmonen (2016), I consider the two-dimensionality Bourdieu worked with, and the related linking of lifestyle to class status, to be important for my dissertation. The choice of place and type of residence can represent not only a manifestation of lifestyle but also of the associated social status. I also consider the possibility of changing lifestyles over time, as pointed out by Giddens (1991), to be significant. Starting a family and entering retirement age are major life events that bring about an essentially inevitable change in lifestyle. For some households, however, their original lifestyle may be important, and they may employ different strategies to maintain it. One of these may be the choice of where to live.

**Lastly**, we should not forget about the **role of social norms** (i.e., shared societal expectations and standards passed through socialization) that influence residential preferences and, in a way, the aforementioned lifestyle. Specifically, social norms can have a significant effect on the idea of an ideal home for a family (Brun, Fagnani 1994; Kooiman 2020). Within the literature on residential preferences, these norms are commonly referred to as cultural scripts (Kley, Stenpaß 2020) or collective references (Tannier, Morer, Ansel 2016). The transmission of residential preferences across generations is significant, as these preferences are typically acquired through socialization. Studies have found that individuals often prefer to reside in a manner that resembles their upbringing, such as living in the suburbs (Jean, 2014), having a home with a garden (Kley, Stenpaß 2020), or owning a home (Vobecká et al. 2014).

## 2.3 Residential mobility and residential preferences of young families

In the previous subsections, I discussed residential mobility and residential preferences from a general perspective and defined the concept of lifestyle. The following subchapter takes a closer look at the residential preferences of young families and their changes. The focus is on the processes within which they are important actors. The discussion is closely linked to the topic of lifestyle.

The location of people in the city in relation to lifestyle was already discussed by Bell (1968), who identified three aspects of lifestyle linked to residential mobility: family orientation (*familism or familialism*), career orientation and consumption orientation (*consumerism*). Family orientation refers to the perceived high value of family life, career orientation to the emphasis on upward social mobility and consumption orientation to the pursuit of a high standard of living in the present. Bell (1968) found that emphasis on children and family rather than a career was the main motive of middle-class respondents for moving to the suburbs. Conversely, career-oriented households tended to be found closer to urban centres, as they wanted to spend their leisure time as efficiently as possible. The question remains whether today's young families who choose to live in the city are primarily career-oriented and less family-oriented.

Families are an integral and important group of people living in cities. The importance of studying young families is underlined by several factors. Young families are at a stage in their lives that is associated with several changes relating to the birth of children and the further expansion of the family. They are choosing where to spend a significant part of their lives and raise their children.

The process of suburbanization is primarily driven by young families, who tend to relocate from urban cores to suburban areas (Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Booi, Boterman 2020). The trend towards suburbanization among this group is mainly attributed to the desire for larger housing sizes, private green spaces for children's play, safe environments, good schools, lower housing costs relative to the city, and the opportunity to become homeowners (Brun, Fagnani 1994; Jean 2014; Frank, Weck 2018; Kley, Stenpaß 2020; Barlindhaug 2022; Karsten 2022). However, some scholars argue that suburban housing may not be exactly the best, but an acceptable option for parents as it may not meet their needs and preferences (Jean 2014; Kooiman 2020). Nonetheless, the concept of 'proper housing' for families has evolved in recent decades, and scholars suggest that 'moral geographies of mothering' vary across different geographical contexts (Holloway 1998). As gender relations shift and women's labour force participation increases, norms of good parenting are also changing over time.

As new lifestyles and living arrangements emerge, inner cities are increasingly appealing to young families who desire easy access to employment opportunities and a variety of cultural and social amenities. This enables young couples to balance child-rearing, career pursuits, and the fulfillment of

their consumer needs. Furthermore, living in the city can help ease the significant transition from life before to life after having children (Lilius 2014; 2019a). Typically, young couples tend to relocate to urban areas that provide ample living space, safety, and proximity to quality schools (Kabisch, Haase, Haase 2010; Jean 2016; Hochstenbach, Boterman 2017; Hochstenbach 2019). Living in a city offers a means to navigate the opportunities and challenges of modern family life. These opportunities and challenges encompass a range of factors, such as the growing number of women in the workforce, longer commutes from suburban areas, the heightened importance of centralization in some sectors of the economy, efficient time management, and the appeal of urban living (Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Jean 2014). Furthermore, the city serves as a social brand and enhances the family's way of life, effectively becoming an integral component of their identities (Jean 2016).

For some families, time management becomes crucial. **Time is a valuable form** (or a specific dimension) **of capital**, and the choice of where to live can be a strategy for optimizing a household's time budget (Boterman, Karsten, Musterd 2010; Boterman 2012). Place of residence can significantly simplify (but also complicate) families' daily mobility, which is not only about travelling to work or shopping, but also about taking children to nurseries, schools, and leisure activities. Moreover, time burden contributes to the use of specific services that facilitate everyday life (e.g., babysitting, meal, or grocery deliveries) (Jean 2016).

However, obtaining a place of residence that facilitates the family's daily mobility requires the investment of adequate financial resources. When a household (family) does not have sufficient financial capital, it must use **other forms of capital** (financial, cultural, and social) to obtain the most appropriate housing (Boterman 2012). Socioeconomic status (class) is therefore very important in terms of access to housing and is closely linked to lifestyle. Middle-class households have more capital than lower-class households and are therefore more successful in obtaining housing (Brun, Fragnani 1994; Boterman 2012). Middle-class families not only have more financial capital but may also have better access to information and a wider social network.

**In conclusion**, the decision to reside in the inner city is influenced by a combination of socio-economic factors, lifestyle considerations, and life stage (Kährlik et al. 2016). Within this framework, Karsten (2014) identified three justifications for why some families opt for urban living over suburban lifestyles: (1) the time-space advantages of urban living; (2) social embedding; and (3) families' self-perception as urban residents who reject suburbs as appealing or suitable habitats (Karsten 2014).

Furthermore, as the families who decide to remain in the inner city are typically dual-income, middle-class households with higher education, and able to leverage sufficient financial resources to purchase a city apartment, they represent key agents of urban revitalization and potential gentrification (Karsten

2014; Hochstenbach 2019). Consequently, inner-city neighbourhoods are evolving not only due to an influx of well-paid, young middle-class professionals ('yuppies'), transitory 'urbanites' (i.e., city or town dwellers), singles, and cohabiting couples but also through the settlement of demographically and socially varied populations (Haase et al. 2010). As Marguerite van den Berg (2013) argues, gentrification is no longer just about alternative lifestyles and middle-class families play a significant role.

Furthermore, housing estates should be also considered an important urban destination for young families in the post-socialist context, even though there aren't many studies focusing on residential mobility and residential preferences of young families towards housing estates. This lack of scientific knowledge probably stems from the still prevailing dichotomy of the city vs. suburbs, which most Western studies work with (Booi, Boterman, Musterd 2021; Winther 2021; Barlindhaug 2022). The importance of housing estates as a destination for young families arises especially given the lower prices compared with the inner city, which makes such estates especially attractive (Temelová et al. 2011). The potential lies also in the benefits stemming from their localization within the city, good accessibility, provision of services and low maintenance (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham 2018), which could make them more attractive than suburban localities with single-family houses.

#### 2.4 Residential mobility and residential preferences at older ages

I will now move from young families to older adults, and more specifically I will focus on people in the pre-retirement (empty nesters) and post-retirement (seniors) phases of life. Attention will also be paid to the topic of residential immobility and ageing in place which is quite relevant, especially for older residents.

A particular group of individuals who undergo relocation, separate from young adults and more aligned with early retirees and older adults in general, are commonly referred to as '**empty nesters**'. During the empty-nest stage, households often experience a shift in their composition, with adult children leaving home, spouses divorcing, or adults altering their lifestyles. After children have moved out, family houses commonly contain a surplus of living space (Clark, Deurloo 2006; Wulff, Healy, Reynolds 2004). All these factors may lead to a change of residence and are also one of the reasons why empty nesters are mentioned in the literature in the context of the process of reurbanization (or even gentrification) (Lanberd, Boddy 2002; Boddy 2007; Butler 2007; Ouředníček, Šimon, Kopečná 2015) and must be considered as one of the important actors in this process.

Typically, individuals nearing retirement age are more inclined to relocate from metropolitan areas to less populated regions that have a greater number of empty-nest households. However, for some individuals, cities remain desirable, primarily because of the available amenities (Winstanley, Thorns,

Perkins 2002; Wulff, Champion, Lobo 2010). Additionally, rural, picturesque, and amenity-rich areas are among the most sought-after places to reside (Bures 1997; Stockdale, Macleod, Philip 2013).

The aforementioned changes may be over time accompanied by the termination of employment for householders due to retirement, thus eliminating proximity to work as an important characteristic of the home (Bures 1997; Wulff, Champion, Lobo 2010). As individuals age, deteriorating health or the loss of a partner can make life in a family home burdensome (Longino and Bradley 2006; Golant 2019). Furthermore, the impact of reduced income around retirement age should also be taken into consideration. Residing in an ageing property necessitates increased expenditure on maintenance and renovations, as well as higher costs associated with inefficient heating systems. In addition, dwellings designed for younger families do not meet the requirements and capabilities of older adults, with features such as outdoor and indoor steps, slippery floors, and poor lighting creating hindrances to safe mobility. Age-related constraints intensify the demands of maintaining both the home and garden (Golant 2019). In search of new identities and to adapt to the new situation, individuals may consider relocating (Winstanley, Thorns, Perkins 2002; Wulff, Champion, Lobo 2010).

In 1980, Wiseman formulated **the behavioural model** that incorporated factors that prompt residential relocation, while examining the migration of elderly individuals. The model is related to incongruences between older adults' needs and the characteristics of their residential environment. Discrepancy leads to dissatisfaction with the current residential environment, and the elderly start to consider moving to a different place of residence. According to Wiseman (1980), push factors are generally based on personal changes such as a decline in health or the death of a spouse, and undesirable changes in the neighbourhood. In contrast, pull factors can be seen in the strengths of new residential locations or dwellings. As stated by Haacke et al. (2019), push factors rather affect older adults with lower household incomes and poor mental health, while pull factors (for example an attractive environment) affect those with higher incomes and homeowners.

Litwak and Longino (1987) put forth **the developmental model**, which posits that residential relocations are driven by various stages in the life cycle. The first type of move is amenity-driven, usually takes place after entering retirement, and is prevalent among rich married couples. The second is connected to the need for assistance or to some form of adjustment. As part of this type of move, people often move for informal care, to be closer to their children, or they return to a place of former residence, known to them from previous experience of it. The second type of movement usually occurs after the deterioration of health and is also typical for widowed people (Bures 1997; Lundholm 2012). The final, institutional move is typical for the phase of life during which serious health problems and the insufficient capacity of relatives to help mean that elderly people may move into formal care institutions (Longino & Bradley, 2006).

According to Thomas, Stillwell, and Gould (2016), the longer individuals reside in a specific location, the less likely they are to relocate in the future due to an accumulation of moving costs. This aligns with the common trend that as individuals age, they tend to stay put. Older adults often view their home as a representation of their autonomy, independence, and privacy, as well as a place of shared memories and a sense of belonging, which intensifies over time (Philips, Ajrouch, Hillcoat-Nallétamby 2010; Martin-Matthews, Cloutier 2019). Moreover, it is worth noting that as individuals experience the place they live in, they acquire a certain set of advantages and disadvantages, thereby constituting what is known as an endowment, which they would lose in case of moving (Clark, Lisowski 2017; Morrison, Clark 2016).

The topic of **ageing in place or ageing, in general**, is quite widespread in international studies (Golant 2011; 2019). We can encounter papers focusing on ageing in gentrifying inner cities (Pinkster, Boterman 2017; Buffel, Phillipson 2019; Torres 2020; Sýkora J. et al. 2022), in other ways changing inner neighbourhoods (Vidovičová 2013; Galčanová, Sýkorová 2015; Lager, Van Hoven, Huigen 2016) as well as in suburbs (Després, Lord 2005; Stjernborg, Wretstrand, Tesfahuney 2015; Golant 2019).

In connection with ageing in place, Golant (2011, 2019) developed **the theory of residential normalcy**, according to which two distinct zones of residential experience can be identified: residential conformity and residential mastery. The former pertains to older individuals who regard their living conditions with positive emotional sentiments, whereas the latter is characterized by older individuals who possess a sense of competence and control over their environment and lives (Schulz, Heckhausen 1996). It follows that if older adults achieve these two outcomes, they are inclined to remain in their present place of residence. Conversely, if they do not, they are more likely to consider relocating.

According to the theory of residential normalcy, older individuals utilize various coping mechanisms to manage unfavourable environmental conditions and attain residential conformity and mastery. One of these approaches is active assimilative coping strategies, which involve addressing problematic aspects of their environment by adapting their housing, creating a more suitable living space or relocating (Golant 2011). Conversely, accommodative coping strategies involve rationalization or denial of incongruent residential arrangements, which may cause older adults to remain in residences that fail to meet their needs and avoid moving to a more suitable environment despite adversity (Golant 2011).

### 3. Socio-spatial changes and the housing market in Czechia and Prague Metropolitan Area

The following chapter places the whole research in the context of Czechia and the Prague Metropolitan Area. First, I outline the socio-spatial transformations that have taken place in our territory over the last 30 years. Then I introduce the reader to the situation on the housing market (I focus on new construction or housing prices, which are factors considerably influencing residential mobility). At the very end, I discuss the research topics that we encounter in Czechia, and which, on the contrary, we miss. I outline the gap in knowledge.

#### 3.1 Socio-spatial changes in Czech cities and Prague Metropolitan Area

**During the Socialist period**, in Czechia, the construction of new housing estates was the focus of interest and on the contrary, the inner cities were neglected in terms of spatial development. Young people with higher education were directed to the housing estates at that time. Inner cities were places of decline and physical decay, characterised by a greater proportion of older adults and lower social status (Špačková, Pospíšilová, Ouředníček 2016). Some exceptions were the more prestigious parts of the inner cities, such as the residential districts, which retained a higher social status even in this period (Sýkora L. 2001; Sýkora, Špačková 2022). Suburbanization was essentially non-existent in the form we know today (i.e., after 1990) (Ouředníček 2005).

**In the last thirty years**, Prague and other Czech cities have been the centres of great changes. After the collapse of the Communism regime, their social and physical transformation began to take place gradually. Spontaneous economic, social, and cultural transformations began to manifest themselves through various processes that caused the emergence of new urban forms (Sýkora L., Bouzarovski 2012). The new spatial patterns were primarily created by the increasingly selective mobility of residents with different residential preferences along with the growing differentiation of the housing stock (Ouředníček, Temelová 2009). However, it is important to mention that Czechs are characterised by quite a high degree of residential stability (Vobecká, Kostecký, Lux 2014; Lux et al. 2017). The distribution of job opportunities in Czechia has very little influence on residential mobility, as Czechs are not very willing to move for work (Lux, Sunega 2007; Špačková, Dvořáková, Tobrmanová 2016) and residential mobility of older adults is even lower - they do not move (Čermák, Novák, Ouředníček 2011). Nevertheless, a change in the socioeconomic status of a household can be a reason for moving within a city (Kopečná 2013). This situation is reflected in the ownership structure, with approximately 36% of the population in Czechia living in family houses and 20% in privately owned apartments (ČSÚ 2011).

**Peripheral parts of cities** have undergone an extreme transformation due to **suburbanization** (Sýkora L. 1996; Sýkora L., Bouzarovski 2012). In **Prague**, the initial suburbs emerged in the periphery and selected municipalities dispersed throughout the metropolitan area, primarily in the vicinity of previously developed villages. The spatial arrangement of Prague's suburbs was shaped by the dense network of the city and the absence of large-scale greenfield projects (Ouředníček 2007; Zévl, Ouředníček 2021). In general, inhabitants of these suburban localities were younger and possessed a higher level of education. Between 2009 and 2016, municipalities in suburban zones grew at an average rate of 37 ‰ per year (Ouředníček et al. 2018). Over the years, the spatial patterns of the suburbs have undergone a significant transformation, and currently, 5% of Czechs are suburbanites (Ouředníček, Klsák, Špačková 2019).

In addition to the increasingly pronounced process of suburbanization, which reached its peak at the beginning of the new millennium (Ouředníček 2007; Kubeš 2015) and is expected to continue in the future (Ouředníček, Klsák, Špačková 2019), other processes are also at work in Czech cities.

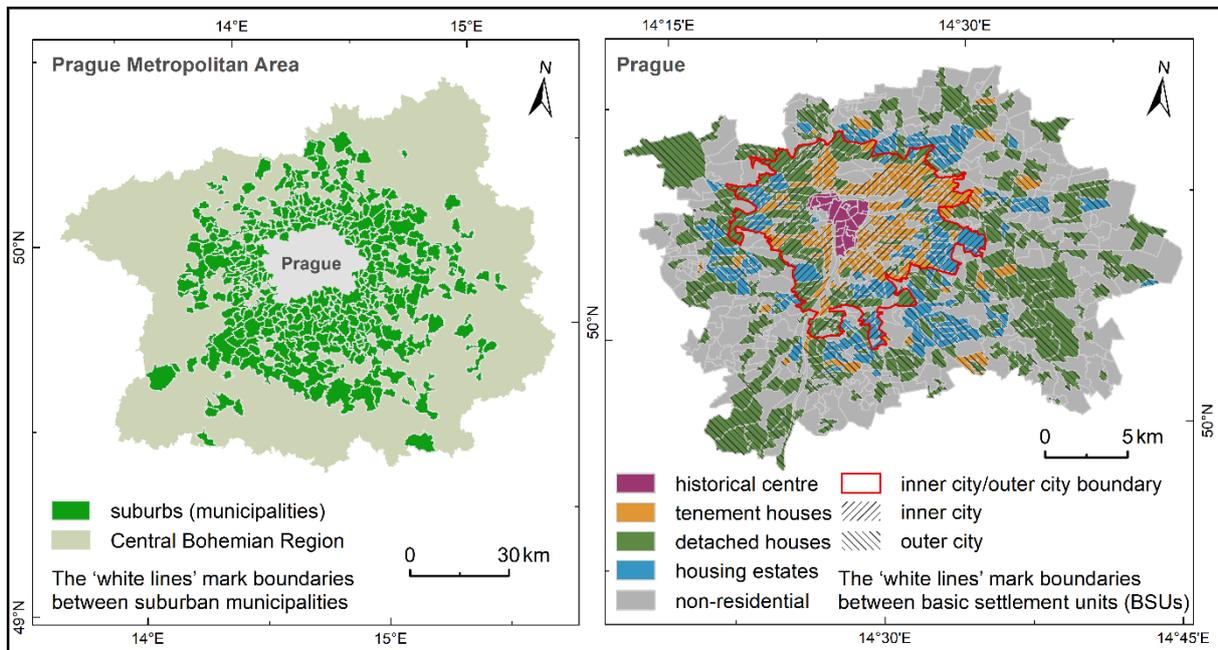
After 2005, we can observe signs of **reurbanization tendencies** in large Czech cities, where selected neighbourhoods have gradually started to gain population (Klusáček, Vaishar 2008; Ouředníček, Šimon, Kopečná 2015). These are mainly areas with a significant share of new construction. In the case of Prague, we can mention Vysočany or Holešovice. According to Haase et al. (2017), reurbanization in Czechia is tightly connected with in- and outflows of international population, which are simultaneously dependent on economic developments. In the context of the ongoing revitalisation and regeneration of brownfields, it can be expected that this process will extend to other districts (Haase et al. 2017).

Various social and physical transformations are also happening at the **housing estates**, which can be found in Prague's **outer and inner-city** territories (for a detailed division of residential zones in the Prague Metropolitan Area and their population see Figure 1 and Table 2). Most of this development was built during the Socialist era. However, the first post-war housing estate in Prague (Solidarita) was built already in 1947-1949 and several houses from the most recent generation (e.g., Černý Most II) were completed four years after the Velvet Revolution, in 1993 (Ouředníček, Špačková, Pospíšilová 2018).

Until today, housing estates remain an important part of the housing market with approximately two-fifths of Prague's population living there (Temelová et al. 2011; Šimáček et al. 2015). They represent one-third of the Czech housing stock. In Prague, their representation is even greater, housing estates comprise 40% of the housing stock (Ouředníček, Špačková, Pospíšilová 2018). These are housing estates with good transport accessibility and location within the city (Petřiny, Červený Vrch, Pankrác

or Solidarity), but also those located in the outskirts (Jižní Město, Černý Most, etc.) (Temelová et al. 2011; Šimáček et al. 2015). Between 2008 and 2017 approximately 50% of the PMA population lived in the two most populated residential zones, which are the suburbs and outer-city housing estates. Additionally, over 80% lived in the four most populated residential zones (Table 2).

Figure 1: Residential zones in the Prague Metropolitan Area



Source: Retrieved from Horňáková and Sýkora J. (2021)

Table 2: Population in residential zones of the Prague Metropolitan Area, 2008–2017

Residential zone	Mid-year population 2008–2017	Share of PMA* population (%)	Change 2008–2017 (%; 100% = mid-year population in 2008)	
Historical centre	45,628	2.6	-1.9	
Inner city	Tenement houses	323,689	18.4	+2.7
	Detached houses	96,489	5.5	+4.6
	Housing estates	136,698	7.8	+2.0
Outer city	Tenement houses	13,478	0.7	+204.3
	Detached houses	228,556	13.0	+18.8
	Housing estates	403,970	22.9	-0.2
Suburbs	512,345	29.1	+23.8	
Totals	1,760,853	100	+10.5	

Source: Retrieved from Horňáková and Sýkora J. (2021)

Note: \*Prague Metropolitan Area

### 3.2 Housing market in Czechia and Prague Metropolitan Area

The **socialist housing system** and the Czech one was no exception, was characterised by a single ownership structure, with state renting and private ownership providing very high levels of security along with low levels of marketability (Stephens, Lux, Sunega 2015). In contrast, **post-socialist housing systems** are dominated by private ownership (Vobecká, Kostelecký, Lux 2014) which is, among other things, a consequence of the large-scale privatization of public (municipal) housing to tenants (for more, see Sýkora L. 1999; Lux, Kährlik, Sunega 2012; Sýkora L., Bouzarovski 2012). Despite these significant changes, socialist housing systems continue to develop a strong path dependency even 30 years after the fall of the Communist regime. In other words, one can still observe the dependence of the development and current state of the housing system on historical developments (Stephens, Lux, Sunega 2015).

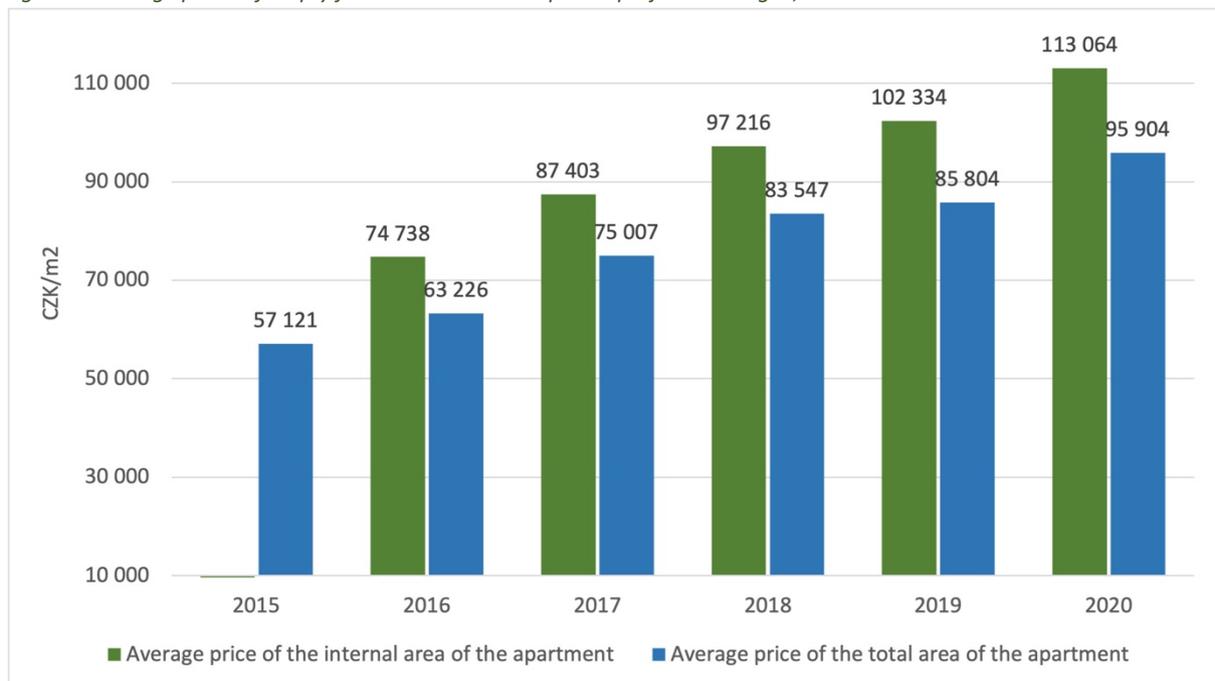
The **preference for personal ownership** has long prevailed in Czechia and is also associated with the aforementioned greater degree of residential stability (Vobecká, Kostelecký, Lux 2014; Lux et al. 2017). According to the 2013 Housing Attitudes Survey, a significant majority (82%) of respondents considered personal ownership as the ideal type of housing (Sunega et al. 2014). In terms of housing type, terraced or detached houses with a garden were preferred. The survey showed that 64% of respondents considered a family house as their ideal home; while only 25.2% said it should be in a suburb (Sociologický ústav 2015). However, preferences for suburbs and single-family homes decreased slightly between 2001 and 2013 (30% to 25% and 69% to 64%, respectively; Sociologický ústav 2006 and 2015).

Residential mobility is significantly influenced by **new housing construction**. The latest analysis by the Institute of Planning and Development (IPR) shows that the most important area in Prague in terms of new housing construction in the long term is the outer city area (IPR uses the term modernist city) (Němec 2020). In September 2020, 40% of the total number of flats allocated in Prague's current development projects were in this area (in 2016 it was 47%). Between 2016 and 2020, the relative importance of the inner city (referred to by IPR as the heterogeneous city and centre) as an area for new housing development increased. Conversely, the importance of the suburbs (referred to as the landscape ring) has decreased. The significance of the city core for new residential development is negligible in the long term. The highest number of current residential development projects (in 2020) was registered in the cadastral areas of Libeň, Smíchov, Strašnice and Karlín. In terms of the total number of flats, the most important cadastral areas were Modřany and Hlubočepy (Němec 2020).

Apartment prices have been rising in Czechia almost continuously since the end of the economic recession, which hit the global housing market in 2008 and reached Czechia with a slight delay. In June

2010, prices of flats in Czechia fell to CZK 1.68 million on average (in September 2008, the average offer price of flats reached over CZK 2.26 million) (Svačina 2019). According to the Territorial Analysis of Current Residential Development Projects in Prague (Němec 2020), between September 2019 and 2020, the offering **prices of new flats** in Prague increased by approximately CZK 10,000 per sqm (by more than 10%). The price growth dynamics have therefore become even stronger. While in September 2019, a new apartment cost an average of CZK 7,348,383, in the same month of 2020 it was priced at an average of CZK 8,455,226. The average price of a new apartment is equivalent to roughly 16.5 times the gross annual wage of an average Prague employee (Němec 2020). The long-term development of average prices of empty flats in current development projects can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Average prices of empty flats in current development projects in Prague, 2015–2020



Source: Němec 2020

Note: For 2015 the average price of the internal area of the apartment was not recorded.

Currently, vulnerable households spend less than half of their income on housing, with food reaching up to 69% of income. The average Czech household spends 31% of its monthly income on housing (29% in Prague) (Český rozhlas and PAQ Research 2022). There is therefore a strong public debate, for example, on housing benefits which should undergo major reform. There are well-founded fears that the abolition of the housing allowance and the housing supplement, together with the ever-increasing housing prices, will lead to a worsening of the current situation (Samec, Trlifajová 2019).

According to Lux and Sunega's (2020) research, anticipated reductions in public pensions and concerns regarding benefits covering living expenses lead people to rely on their housing assets as a supplement

to their welfare benefits. As outlined by Mikeszová and Lux (2020), a majority of Czechs express concerns regarding their financial stability in their post-retirement years.

Moreover, as Samec (2018) points out, we also have a very limited supply of housing types in Czechia, which exacerbates the problem of high prices. According to Blažek (2018), the introduction of the concept of commons<sup>4</sup> would be beneficial in the housing sector, which in his view has the potential to contribute to the development of not only the local society but also the local economy.

In Czechia, the topic of residential mobility and migration has long been studied not only in the field of social geography but also, for example, in sociology. Publications by sociologists have predominantly concentrated on labour mobility and housing (Sunega 2009; Lux, Sunega 2012), ownership preferences and related topics (Vobecká, Kostecký, Lux 2014; Bartoš et al. 2015; Lux et al. 2017; Lux et al. 2018; Lux, Sunega 2020) or housing (un)affordability (Kubala, Hoření Samec 2021; Lux et al. 2023) at the level of Czechia. Research focusing on lower scales (cities, metropolitan regions) or specific parts (zones) of cities seems to be lacking. The surveys usually focus on the following topics: housing satisfaction, migration plans, ideal housing, attitudes towards the state housing policy, or, for example, intergenerational transmission of housing preferences (for example, the Housing Attitudes Survey 2013 or Housing Paths of Millennials 2020). The predominantly quantitative nature of data collection and analysis also corresponds to the thematic focus of the research. Despite this, the use of qualitative methods is more common in sociological studies than in geographical ones (e.g., Lux et al. 2017; Kubala, Hoření Samec 2021).

In the case of geographical research, we can encounter works devoted to the analysis of residential mobility and migration in Czechia (Drbohlav, Čermák 2002; Čermák, Novák, Ouředníček 2011; Štefánková, Drbohlav 2014), but also publications focused on residential mobility and residential preferences at the level of selected cities (Šustrová 2008; Dvořáková, Nemeškal, 2015 and 2019). The individual areas (and related processes) chosen for the project also receive attention, i.e. the inner-city (Sýkora L. 2005; Ilík, Ouředníček 2007; Temelová 2007; Sýkora J., Špačková 2022; Sýkora J. et al. 2022), suburbs (Čermák 2005; Vobecká, Kostecký 2007; Sýkora L., Ouředníček 2007; Špačková, Ouředníček 2012; Sýkora L, Mulíček 2014; Kubeš, Ouředníček 2022) and housing estates (Temelová et al. 2011; Špaček 2012; Špačková, Pospíšilová 2017; Kopecká, Ouředníček 2021; Kalm et al. 2023). All these geographical studies focus on the revealed residential preferences (Jansen, Coolen, Goetgeluk

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<sup>4</sup> Commons is a traditional form of collective governance by a local community called a commune. Housing as a commons is understood as the collective protection and management of the basic human need to live from external influences (Blažek 2018).

2011; Ilmonen 2016), which are reflected in the resulting patterns of residential mobility. However, the stated preferences are out of interest.

If we focus on studies dealing with the age groups central to my dissertation, i.e., young families and the elderly, the situation is quite different. Young families are the focus of only a minimal number of studies (an example is Kährik et al. 2016 or the research project Housing Trajectories of Millennials, but the latter does not focus specifically on young families but on the millennial generation, which can include both young families and singles or childless couples). Elderly (empty-nesters or seniors) have received a bit more attention, although rather than the topic of residential preferences and residential mobility, these studies focus on the lives of seniors in a changing urban environment (Temelová, Dvořáková 2012; Vidovičová 2013; Galčanová, Sýkorová 2015; Sýkora et al. 2022) and often extend into the research field of gerontology (Sýkorová 2007; Sýkorová 2012).

**Overall,** works devoted to a deeper understanding of the process of relocation and choice of a new residence are almost non-existent. For both young families and older adults, we cannot find studies comparing the process of choice of a new residence in different types of areas of the Prague Metropolitan Area (or the Central Bohemian Region).

## 4. Data and methods

The dissertation thesis aims to study changes in the spatial patterns of residential mobility and the process of choosing new housing among residents living in the Prague Metropolitan Area. The main objective is to investigate whether new patterns (trends) of residential mobility and residential preferences are emerging and to explore and understand in greater detail how the selection of a new home is performed. Attention is paid especially to middle-class young families and people at later stages of life (empty nesters, seniors).

The research questions are as follows:

**RQ1** What is the residential mobility behaviour of middle-class young families and older adults living in the Prague Metropolitan Area? (*Changing patterns of residential mobility*)

**RQ2** What are the reasons behind their decision to move? (*The process of decision formation*)

**RQ3** What were their reasons for choosing a new place to live (location/project)? How do lifestyle and socioeconomic characteristics influence the choice process? (*Process of searching, considering alternatives and employing strategies*)

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research (mixed-method research, for more, see Creswell 2014) was chosen to meet the stated objectives and research questions. Specifically, I use the concurrent triangulation approach (Creswell 2014) as I have collected both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and then compared the results of the analyses looking for similarities and differences. Hence, the elaboration of the dissertation can be divided into two main overlapping phases, which correspond to the chosen methods of data collection and analysis (TABLE 3). The **first phase** entitled '**Residential mobility in Prague Metropolitan Area**' aims to explore the changing patterns of residential mobility and leads to answering the first research question (RQ1). The **second phase** entitled '**Forming a decision to move and choosing a new home**' focuses on the process of decision formation and consequent search, consideration of alternatives and employing strategies. It leads to answering the second and third research questions (RQ2, RQ3). The methodology of each publication is briefly outlined in the following paragraphs and described in greater detail in the publications themselves.

Table 3: Overview of phases, methods, research questions and the outputs

PHASES	METHODS	RQ	OUTPUTS
1) Residential mobility in Prague Metropolitan Area	Analysis of individual migration data	RQ1 Changing patterns of residential mobility	DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2022): Residential Mobility Within the Central Bohemian Suburbs. In: Ouředníček, M. (ed.): Prague and Central Bohemia: Current Population Processes and Socio-spatial Differentiation. Karolinum Press, Praha, 131-149.
			HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., SÝKORA, J. (2021): From suburbanization to reurbanization? Changing residential mobility flows of families with young children in the Prague Metropolitan Area. Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift – Norwegian Journal of Geography, 75, 4, 203-220.
2) Forming a decision to move and choosing a new home	Realisation and analysis of a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews	RQ2 The process of decision formation	DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2021): Retiring in the suburbs? Residential strategies in two Prague suburbs. Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography. 121, 2, 114-127.
		RQ3 Process of searching, considering alternatives and employing strategies	HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., ŠPAČKOVÁ, P.: Having a garden or being in the city? The trade-offs and strategies of young middle-class families. Under review in Journal of Urban Affairs.
			HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., JÍCHOVÁ, J. (2020): Deciding where to live: case study of cohousing-inspired residential project in Prague. Journal of Housing and the Built Environment, 35, s. 807-827.

#### 4.1 Residential mobility in Prague Metropolitan Area

This phase focuses on the analysis of residential mobility in the Prague Metropolitan Area in the period 2000-2018. Two publications are the outcome of this phase: Dvořáková and Horňáková (2022) (chapter 5.1) and Horňáková and Sýkora (2021) (chapter 5.2). For both publications falling under this processing phase, individual-level migration data from the Czech Statistical Office relating to individuals are worked with. These data are based on continuous migration records and one data record equals one move. Each data record provides us with information about the previous and current residential location of the mover, the mover's age, citizenship, marital status, and year of relocation. Unfortunately, there are not any other socio-economic characteristics of the mover and it is not possible to track the individual housing trajectories of movers through time. These data are used to examine spatial and temporal shifts in mobility flows. In the case of Prague, the work is carried out at the level of basic settlement units and in the territory of the Central Bohemian Region at the level of municipalities. To classify movements, (1) the spatial typology and zonation of Prague on the level of basic settlement units (Ouředníček et al. 2012 and 2018) and (2) the typology of municipalities of the

Central Bohemian Region (Ouředníček, Klsák, Špačková 2019; Ouředníček, Nemeškal 2022) are used. The data are analysed using the methods of descriptive statistics.

## 4.2 Forming a decision to move and choosing a new home

The second phase focuses on forming a decision to move and choosing a new home. An emphasis is put on the process of decision formation and consequent search, consideration of alternatives and employing strategies. Therefore, the implementation of a questionnaire survey and interviews were chosen as the ideal methods for obtaining the necessary information.

### **Questionnaire survey**

The questionnaire survey was conducted to provide primary insight into the issue of suburbanites' residential preferences during the pre-retirement and retirement phases. It allowed us to describe and explain the residential strategies of Prague's ageing suburbanites. The outcomes are presented in the publication Dvořáková and Horňáková (2021) (chapter 5.3).

The questionnaire survey was evaluated as an ideal method of data collection in the case of conducting research in a clearly defined area (locality) allowing us to reach respondents systematically based on their place of residence. The survey (n=177) was conducted during the spring and summer of 2019 in two suburban municipalities, Jesenice and Psáry, located outside of Prague. The questionnaire survey was administered in delimited localities where family houses were built predominantly between 1990 and 2005, the period in which the suburbanization of Prague began and in which the first wave of migration to these areas peaked. These were the first to experience the effects of the rapid suburbanization process.

Basic exploratory statistical analysis was used to analyse the collected data. We assessed the correlation between nominal variables through crosstabs and Chi-Square tests (including Phi, Cramer's V, and the Chi-square test of independence). We centered our attention on these variables: basic demographics (e.g., age, gender, education, presence of children in the household, marital status, and experience with different types of housing), home ownership, receiving pension benefits, health, the reason for moving to the suburbs, and assessment of residential environment given future requirements.

### **In-depth semi-structured interviews**

In-depth semi-structured interviews were chosen as the ideal method for obtaining more detailed information about the housing selection process and the decision-making process of young middle-class families. The use of this method allowed for deeper insights into the subject matter (Silverman 2000; Smith 2001; Cope 2010; Creswell 2014). A qualitative approach to studying residential

preferences has been used, for example, by Karsten (2007; 2014) or Winstanley, Thorns and Perkins (2002). The research targeted residents who had taken part in the decision to move and in selecting their new home. Two modified versions of interview questions were used following the focus of the individual articles. In sum, the interview questions explored:

- how participants' decisions to move were shaped,
- the selection process (particularly regarding the aspects and alternatives they considered when looking for and obtaining new housing)
- their retrospective evaluation of their decision and their plans

In the case of the article by Horňáková and Jíchová (2020) (chapter 5.4, where we explore the decision-making process that led residents to choose a specific housing project inspired by cohousing). The method of in-depth semi-structured interviews was chosen as ideal for studying one residential project and at the same time a marginal and little-explored type of housing in the Czech context. The first outreach to potential participants was through a closed Facebook group for residents of the residential project. Subsequently, snowball sampling was used. In total 14 interviews were analysed. All the interviews were anonymized. Concerning the focus of the research, the orthographic style of transcription was used (Braun, Clarke 2013; Braun, Clarke 2021). The ATLAS.ti software was used for the analysis of the interviews themselves. A theoretical-thematic (deductive) analysis was utilized, meaning that themes and ideas related to the research question were identified (Cope 2010; Braun, Clarke 2013, 2021). The analysis was guided by existing theories and concepts regarding residential mobility (with an emphasis on the role of lifestyle in forming residential preferences and decisions) and cohousing.

In the case of the article by Horňáková and Špačková (under review) (chapter 5.5, where we examine how young middle-class families from the PMA living in different zones and housing types select their new housing), the method of in-depth semi-structured interviews made it possible to obtain detailed information from young families living in different zones and residential types in the Prague Metropolitan Area. The participants were reached using social networks, the personal networks of the researcher and then through snowball sampling. In total 31 interviews were analysed, ranging in length from 40 to 120 minutes. Similarly, as in the previous publication, all the interviews were anonymized, and an orthographic style of transcription was used. The analysis was performed using ATLAS.ti software and utilizing the theoretical-thematic (deductive) approach. The analysis was guided by existing theories and concepts regarding residential mobility, but the emphasis was put on the role of lifestyle in forming residential preferences and decisions.

## 5. Introduction of publications

This chapter introduces the five publication inputs that are part of the dissertation. The presentation of the publications is arranged to correspond to the answering of each research question. Therefore, the reader is first introduced to publications dealing with the changing spatial patterns of residential mobility, and then to publications dealing with the process of relocating (choice of housing, etc.). For each publication, the general topic is first introduced, followed by the objectives and research questions, and of course the main conclusions in the form of key messages. For each publication, the author's contribution and possible IF are also given.

### 5.1 Residential mobility within the Central Bohemian suburbs

DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2022): Residential Mobility Within the Central Bohemian Suburbs. In: Ouředníček, M. (ed.): Prague and Central Bohemia: Current Population Processes and Socio-spatial Differentiation. Karolinum Press, Praha, 131-149.

Type of result: Chapter in an edited book

Author's share: 45 %

The main objective of this chapter is to study and explain the residential mobility of people living in the suburbs of the Central Bohemian Region focusing on the period 2000–2018. In Czechia, the suburbanization process has been a long-term phenomenon, it still represents one of the most important processes forming the hinterland of our cities, and it is expected it will continue to play a prominent role in the future as well. Moreover, significant changes in the life-cycle structure are occurring there. First, the first generation of empty nesters has emerged. Second, there is the generation of adolescent and adult children, who were born in the mid-1990s, when suburbanization started to develop. It is reasonable to expect that in the future, these two groups will exhibit diverse migration patterns and housing needs and utilize their existing living spaces in unique ways.

Based on migration data, it is evident that most people residing in the suburbs of Central Bohemia relocate within the same vicinity. Hence, our objective is to gain a deeper insight into this trend by examining detailed migration data and conducting a comprehensive analysis of residential mobility, considering the age of individuals and their association with suburban cores of their original place of residence. Additionally, we compare the residential mobility flows of foreigners and the Czech population over time and focus on some specific combinations of the available demographic characteristics of migrants (age, gender). Here, I will focus primarily on the presentation of the results related mainly to PMA, which is central to the dissertation. The migration data analysis is complemented by a questionnaire survey, which focuses on the residential plans of contemporary suburban residents and their adolescent children. The questionnaire survey is presented in greater detail in subchapter 5.3.

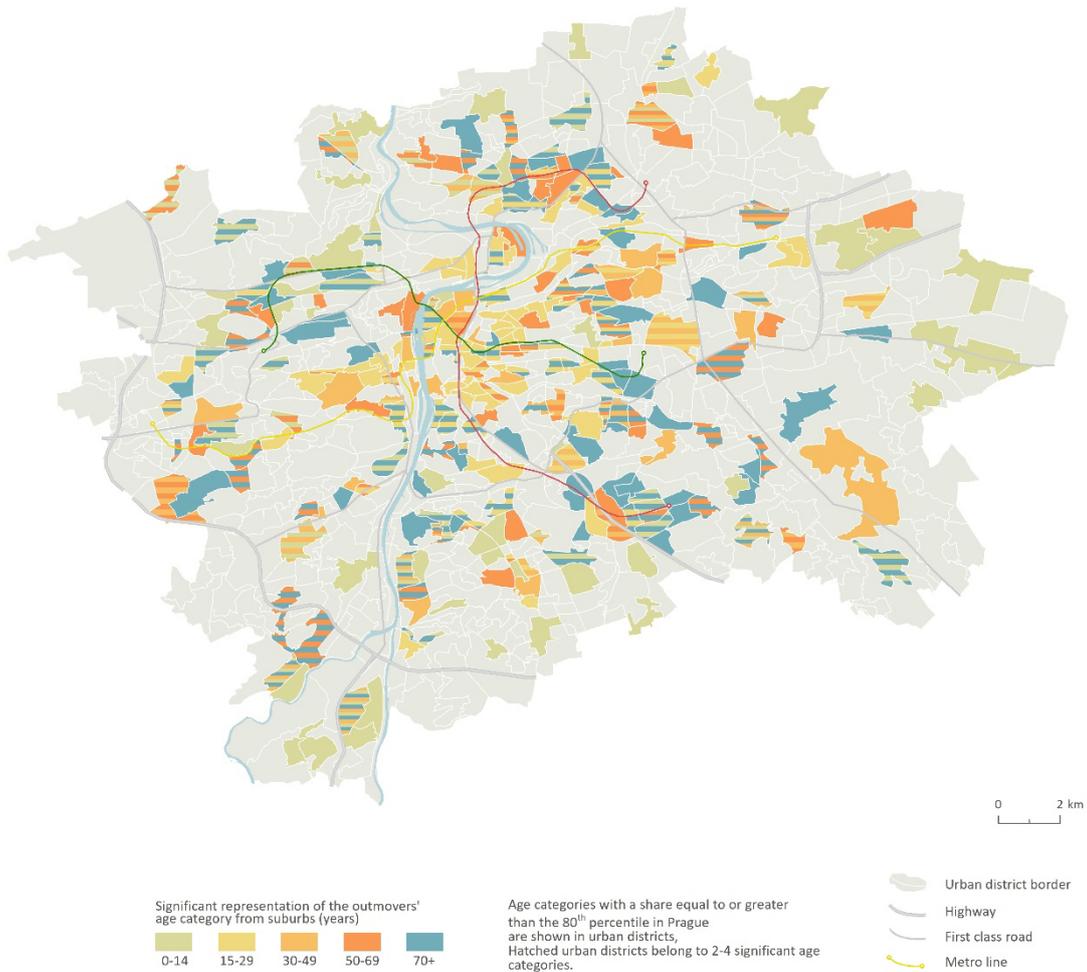
**MESSAGE 1.** Upon analysis, the data indicated a notably consistent distribution of age groups in terms of individual mobility flows. This can be attributed to the decisive role of the frequency in individual age categories of the total population, as well as the population size and, respectively, the supply of housing, which is unevenly distributed between individual types. Although we only observed partial variability among individual flows, we gained insight into the variations in residential behaviour depending on the age of the movers.

**MESSAGE 2.** For the domestic population, the analyses revealed a trend towards the prolongation of the time period of intensive residential mobility and its postponement to a later age (from 19–35 years to 23–43 years). An increase in the number of years with a higher frequency of migration was evident amongst the children’s age groups as well. The shift in mobility activity towards an older age was observable also in the increase of out-migrants 60+. For foreigners the situation was different, in their case, exclusively the postponement of mobility to a later age was apparent. In the article, we discuss that these trends can be attributed to a combination of factors: the change in the age structure of the suburban population or the postponement of important life events, such as starting a family and the related search for new suitable housing. The decline in housing affordability likely had a notable influence as well.

**MESSAGE 3.** In terms of both age and direction of movement, the results indicate that young people are the most mobile demographic, but children and middle-aged people (families) tend to move most frequently within suburbs (*tangential migration*). The less mobile group are seniors. It was clear that while families with children mainly move from the suburbs to those municipalities in the vicinity of Prague and those that are highly accessible – in-migrants who are young are more commonly located in municipalities to the north and east of Prague and in those with larger a population. Contrary, suburban cores (cities) are characterised by a higher rate of senior out-migrants from the suburbs.

**MESSAGE 4.** The popularity of moving to the capital has increased over the studied period, at the expense of other suburban cores. An overview of the spatial differentiation of in-migration of various age groups within Prague is in Figure 3. Despite all age groups moving to Prague, its attractiveness has increased especially for the young generation. Reurbanization tendencies have not strengthened significantly over the years, but together with tangential migration, they have remained the most important flow of mobility from suburbs over the long run. Similarly, to Horňáková and Sýkora J. (2021), we did not observe reurbanization to be a return of families to the inner city, as was detected in several other Western cities. The highest number of in-migrants from the suburbs was registered in the most populous BSUs (apartment buildings in the inner city and housing estates in the outer city). While young people (15–29) very often moved to the inner city, families with children mainly relocated to housing estates in the outer city. This type of unit was also very attractive to the senior population.

Figure 3: Migration from Central Bohemian suburbs to residential types of Prague, 2000–2018.



	Age group (%)				
	0–15	15–29	30–49	50–69	70+
<b>Historical core (n=26)</b>	8	27	15	31	19
<b>Tenement houses (n=135)</b>	4	42	13	21	19
<b>Villa houses (n=52)</b>	23	13	12	13	38
<b>Housing estates (n=148)</b>	18	20	7	22	34
<b>Working class houses (n=74)</b>	26	11	16	19	28
<b>Inner suburbs (n=116)</b>	40	5	12	19	24
<b>Others (n=10)</b>	20	20	30	10	20
<b>Total (561)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>

Source: Retrieved from Dvořáková and Horňáková (2022)

Note: The choropleth and table highlight municipalities in which the share of in-migrants in a given age group is equal to or higher than the eightieth percentile of in-migrants from the suburbs in the monitored target municipalities. Some BSUs are represented in multiple age groups. These BSUs are shown by hatching. Using the choropleth, only BSUs to which more than 25 inhabitants move from the suburbs are shown.

## 5.2 From suburbanization to reurbanization? Changing residential mobility flows of families with young children in the Prague Metropolitan Area

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., SÝKORA, J. (2021): From suburbanization to reurbanization? Changing residential mobility flows of families with young children in the Prague Metropolitan Area. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift – Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 75, 4, 203-220.

Type of result: Journal article, IF = 1.977 (2021)

Author's share: 60 %

In the article, we aim to analyse the residential mobility of families with young children living in the Prague Metropolitan Area (PMA), to identify transforming spatial and temporal trends in their housing-related behaviour in relation to ongoing urbanization processes. We examine whether there have been significant changes in the residential mobility patterns of families with young children in the PMA. Since the fall of the Socialist regime in 1989, suburbanization has dominated the urban patterns in Prague. However, recent changes in social and physical structures suggest a gradual diversification. Our study examines the changing patterns among families with young children and the rest of the population, identifying similarities and differences. Furthermore, we investigate whether the residential mobility patterns and trends identified in the PMA align with those in Western cities, where the context of residential mobility differs from that in Czech cities. In particular, we explore the highly debated topic of the increasing preference for inner-city locations among families.

To broaden the discussion beyond the traditional countryside-suburb-city spectrum, we are expanding the discourse to incorporate the current variety of residential mobility. Accordingly, we focus on various types of residential zones and housing, using migration data relating to individuals for the period 2008–2017. We investigate residential mobility across eight distinct residential zones in the PMA. We focus on three aspects of residential mobility: (1) the movement type (defined by the previous and current residential location in the residential zone of the PMA); (2) the demographic profile of the mover (age, marital status); and (3) the period in which the move occurred. We compare frequencies of individual movement types between two demographic groups and between five periods.

**MESSAGE 1.** Based on the analysis, there was an overall increase in residential mobility between 2008 and 2017, which aligns with the global social trends of that time. This increase is mainly attributed to the higher intensity of residential mobility that followed the economic crisis of 2008. In line with L. van den Berg et al. (1982), our study suggests that 'traditional' urbanization processes tend to occur concurrently, with one process usually prevailing at a given time. Between 2008 and 2017 in the PMA, suburbanization prevailed as a significant number of families moved from other PMA areas to zones designated for 'family housing' (i.e., the suburbs, and outer-city detached houses). The movement of the rest of the population resulted in suburbanization being the primary urbanization process,

although the extent of its dominance is less clear. The findings are in line with the relatively recent suggestion made by Ouředníček, Klsák and Špačková (2019) that the suburbanization trend will persist. Our findings are consistent with the suburban patterns observed in metropolitan regions in the West.

**MESSAGE 2.** We also observed the diversification of families' residential mobility patterns in the PMA, with the weakening of the most dominant flows, the reinforcing of previously less-intensive flows, and the gradual rise of new flows. For example, the diversification became apparent through the weakening of suburbanization flows towards the suburbs or detached houses in the outer city, and contrastingly in a strengthening of flows from those two zones. It appears that families in our study exhibited a wider range of residential trajectories, which is consistent with similar trends observed in various other Western urban areas. It is still uncertain how much of the increase in suburbanization was a result of shifts in residential preferences versus the impact of housing market trends, such as the rise of housing costs, which has been recently prevalent in many parts of the PMA.

**MESSAGE 3.** We did not identify the 'traditional' reurbanization process and therefore it was not possible to observe reurbanization as a return of families to the inner city, as has been detected in several Western cities. We have noticed a trend towards reurbanization, particularly in the outer-city housing estates. Even though the number of people moving to these areas in the PMA remained relatively low between 2008 and 2017, we did observe a slight increase in the percentage of families among all those who relocated. In addition, this pattern became apparent when we compared the relative appeal of various zones. However, it is important to mention that suburban families still tended to move to other suburbs or outside the PMA, rather than returning to the city. (i.e., to the outer-city and inner-city zones).

**MESSAGE 4.** Our analysis emphasized the importance of relocations within the same type of zone and housing type. We found that certain residential areas were more appealing to families within the same PMA zone than others. For example, the patterns of mobility within suburbs were more robust than the suburbanization flows from the historical centre, inner-city zone, and outer-city zone, and they became even stronger in the period 2008–2017. The movement of families within suburbs can be described as *tangential migration*. Likewise, the pattern of moves to the same housing type was evident within the inner city and historical centre (*inner-city migration*). Moreover, the flow of families heading from inner-city tenement houses to outer-city housing estates gradually decreased from 2008 to 2017. Although the estates continued to be appealing to families relocating from other zones (such as suburbs, outer city, and outside the PMA), it appears that housing costs were not the primary factor that deterred inner-city families from relocating to these areas, as they remained financially feasible for them. However, the decline in mobility to these areas was not due to a general decrease in residential mobility among inner-city families, as movements within the inner city continued to be

frequent. This suggests that inner-city families who relocated after starting a family chose to remain within the inner city rather than moving elsewhere. Therefore, if families living in the PMA contributed to any changes in the inner-city neighbourhoods, it was primarily due to those who already resided there, with those moving in from other residential zones playing a secondary role.

**MESSAGE 5.** When comparing the housing-related behaviour of families to that of the general population between 2008 and 2017, there were no notable differences found. Any discrepancies that were observed were minor and pertained only to the scale of the identified modifications. However, this article did not delve into identifying the causal mechanisms that accounted for these similarities and differences, as it was beyond the scope of our focus.

### 5.3 Retiring in the suburbs? Residential strategies in two Prague suburbs

DVOŘÁKOVÁ, N., HORŇÁKOVÁ, M. (2021): Retiring in the suburbs? Residential strategies in two Prague suburbs. *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography*. 121, 2, 114-127.

Type of result: Journal article, IF = 2.320 (2021)

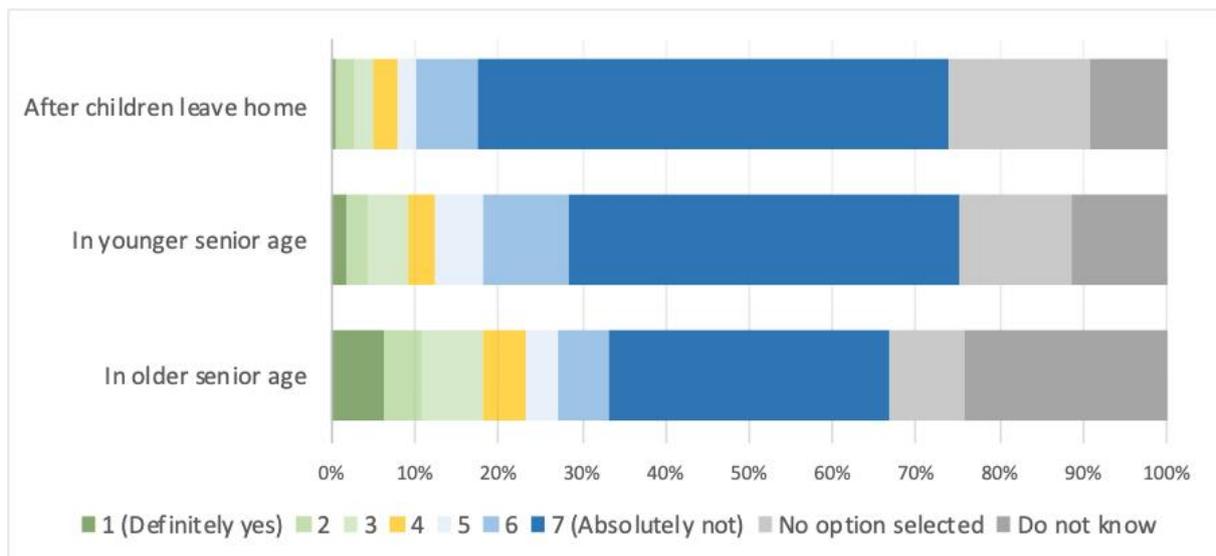
Author's share: 45 %

This article provides primary insight into the issue of suburbanites' residential preferences during the pre-retirement and retirement phases. We aim to describe and explain the residential strategies of Prague's ageing suburbanites. In addition, we investigate the intentions of individuals residing in the suburbs, examining whether they are contemplating a relocation and, if so, to where. Our focus encompasses both those who are planning to move and those who intend to stay. We scrutinize the particular plans and approaches of these two distinct groups, namely, those who are intending to relocate (movers) and those who plan to remain (stayers). Our research loosely follows Ouředníček et al. (2015), who proposed that the connections between suburbanization and reurbanization represent a substantial but under-explored topic in post-socialist countries. Our research addresses this gap in scientific knowledge and enhances our understanding of the issue. Additionally, the significance of our findings is highlighted by the ageing population of many European countries, including Czechia. This trend has become more prominent as the strong generation (born in the 1950s and mid-1960s) has now reached retirement age.

The research is based on a questionnaire-based survey (n=177) in two suburban municipalities, Jesenice and Psáry, located outside of Prague. Basic exploratory statistical analysis is used to analyse the data. We focus on these variables: basic demographics (e.g., age, gender, education, presence of children in the household, marital status, and experience with different types of housing), home ownership, receiving pension benefits, health, the reason for moving to the suburbs, and assessment of residential environment given future requirements.

**MESSAGE 1.** The study revealed that participants perceived their current suburban residences and the surrounding environment to be less appropriate as they grow older. This viewpoint varied based on their age, with younger respondents expressing a more pessimistic evaluation. Despite this, only 21.5% of our respondents think about relocating during the empty-nest phase, pre-retirement, or retirement. The majority of respondents would prefer to age in place. Therefore, we anticipate that most respondents will employ other adaptive coping strategies to deal with undesirable circumstances and adapt to remaining in their present homes rather than relocating. In case the respondents do consider moving, they mostly consider moving when aged 65 or older (Figure 4), and younger respondents are more likely to consider moving than older respondents.

Figure 4: Considerations, across three different life stages, for moving from current residence



Source: Retrieved from Dvořáková and Horňáková (2021)

Note: N = 177 for each life stage.

**MESSAGE 2.** We identified three main adjustment strategies for stayers: repurposing rooms within the house, creating barrier-free housing, and modernizing the home-using technology. However, these coping strategies are somewhat unclear, as only one-fifth of the participants reported considering specific alterations to their residences. This may be because the actual modifications are still quite distant in the future, making it difficult for respondents to imagine them. Alternatively, this difficulty may be related to the role of context. Furthermore, the possibility of reductions in public pension benefits is likely to impact our participants' future financial circumstances. Even though our sample consists of middle-class individuals, these reductions may require many respondents to supplement public welfare provisions with their own housing equity. Being asset-rich but cash-poor could result in increased residential mobility among older adults during their retirement years. It's possible that these individuals might need to sell their current home and relocate to more affordable housing to supplement their modest public pension benefits.

**MESSAGE 3.** After analysing the data, we have concluded that individuals in the category of movers tend to be more dissatisfied with their current living arrangements and perceive discrepancies between their present homes and their future requirements. We identified four main reasons for potential moves in later life: the onset of old age, overconsumption of housing, the desire for change, and the changing role of the family. According to the data, movers expressed a preference for Prague as their top choice of destination, followed by municipalities that are similar in size to their current ones. These results are in line with those of Dvořáková and Horňáková (2022), where we concluded that over the previous two decades, whilst reurbanization tendencies showed no significant strengthening, the crucial long-term flow from the suburbs remained, as did relocations within suburbs

(i.e., *tangential migration*). We think that it is likely that this trend will persist, and reurbanization will not attain the same degree of intensity as has been observed in Western Europe.

**MESSAGE 4.** The survey revealed that respondents showed a preference for moving to a family house rather than a flat, which came as a surprise given the assumption that flats require less maintenance. This inclination towards a house with a garden, even among older homeowners, may be attributed to the prevailing belief in Czechia that this type of housing is ideal. It is worth noting that a minimal number of respondents expressed a desire to pass on their current homes to their children. Instead, they were more likely to consider selling or renting out their properties as a means of supplementing their retirement income.

## 5.4 Having a garden or being in the city? The trade-offs and strategies of young middle-class families

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., ŠPAČKOVÁ, P.: Having a garden or being in the city? The trade-offs and strategies of young middle-class families. Under review in *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

Type of result: Journal article, IF = 2.559 (2021)

Author's share: 70 %

In this paper, we examine how young middle-class families living in different zones in the PMA and different housing types select their new housing. In particular, we want to point out the importance of different motivations based on lifestyle when moving to different neighbourhoods (inner city, housing estates, and suburbs) in a post-socialist city. We explore the aspects that they consider when they decide between different alternatives and meet their needs.

This study contributes to the literature on housing and young families by examining their residential preferences in the post-socialist context. It presents evidence from the context with a different history of urban planning and construction compared to the Western cities where most of the knowledge is produced. Furthermore, while studies on Western cities examine the contrast between the inner city and suburbs, housing estates in the outer city play an important role in post-socialist cities. First, they represent a significant part of the housing market. Second, large-scale housing estates were built in the 1970s and 1980s (when most of our interviewees were born) and suburbanization was non-existent. This cannot be omitted when trying to understand the residential preferences of young families today and their idea of appropriate housing.

To fulfil the aims and answer our research questions, we chose semi-structured in-depth interviews (total = 31) with young middle-class families. Our analysis showed that, when looking for new housing, participants evaluated aspects mainly related to the beginning or growth of their families. However, mobility responses to the (family) transition and the same situation in the housing market appeared to be heterogeneous as they had different requirements, ideas, and aspirations for their family residences. We constructed a typology of adaptation strategies in the housing decision-making process that are based on trade-offs between their preferences. A pronounced tension was found across two lines: between having a garden and living in the city without the need to commute. Among others, it points to the differences in the parental discourse of a good childhood among middle-class families and the difficult combination of care and paid work in the suburbs. Although many patterns were similar to the Western cities, we observed several differences.

**MESSAGE 1.** Our study found that, contrary to popular belief, our informants preferred a family house in the city as their ideal home, rather than a suburban one. They considered the trade-offs between having a garden and commuting and ultimately chose the option that was more desirable. **For**

**suburban residents**, the target destination was the type of housing: a family house with a garden. This preference was associated with the concept of a fulfilling life with children and a desire for privacy. The size of the home was deemed less important than the availability of a garden. In this respect, we argue in the article that privatism<sup>5</sup> tendencies are key in understanding the differences between Western and post-socialist cities. If a suburban home is chosen, privatism seems to be as important as the notion of good parenting. In addition, whereas the preference for suburban housing is a cultural script transmitted by socialisation in Western cities, the inclination towards a family house in (post)socialist cities may also be attributed to a preference for privacy as a response to the collectivist nature of socialism. Suburban areas are chosen mainly due to their affordability. **For urban residents**, the target destination was the location: the neighbourhood within the compact city (in the inner city or housing estates). This aligns with the findings from cities in the West.

**MESSAGE 2.** Based on the analysis, interestingly, the predominant affinity for suburbia was not evident in our interviews. Suburbia was not a 'default choice' and urban neighbourhoods were not considered unsuitable for raising children. In our article, we ascribe this to the influence of intensive housing estate development between the 1970s and early 1990s, as well as the later development of suburbanization since the late 1990s, which has exposed our informants to a wider range of housing preferences.

**MESSAGE 3.** Housing estates proved to be a good option for young families. While high-rise housing is still viewed as inconvenient and unappealing for young families in Western cities, the same cannot be said for Prague, where housing estates, despite being perceived as the least desirable form of housing, are not stigmatized and are considered suitable for young families. Additionally, they dispose of quality playgrounds and outdoor spaces for children. The potential of housing estates becoming a major destination for young families and the emergence of reurbanization tendencies toward outer-city housing estates have been discussed already in the article by Horňáková and Sýkora J. (2021).

**MESSAGE 4.** According to our informants, homeownership held significant value. They cited financial reasons as the primary motivation for acquiring new housing, as it provided security for old age, which is typical in Czech society. Moreover, during that time, the relatively lower housing prices did not force our informants to choose between homeownership and renting, as is often the case in Western cities.

**MESSAGE 5.** Complementing a significant role of lifestyle, *transferred experience* from participants' peers or family members influenced the decisions of young families. In the article, we argue that the concept of transferred experiences complements the concepts of collective references or cultural scripts. Participants' cultural scripts were important in terms of preference for homeownership, for a

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<sup>5</sup> A term used by Hirt (2012) to refer to a cultural preference for privacy and family orientation in responding to the unfulfilled ambitions of socialism.

family house with a garden (long-term residential preferences), and in 'openness' to live in the inner city or housing estate. In turn, the transferred experiences played a crucial role in determining whether our informants move to the suburbs because they could not draw on their individual or collective experience from childhood (suburbanization was not yet prevalent).

## 5.5 Deciding where to live: Case study of cohousing-inspired residential project in Prague

HORŇÁKOVÁ, M., JÍCHOVÁ, J. (2020): Deciding where to live: case study of cohousing-inspired residential project in Prague. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 35, s. 807-827.

Type of result: Journal article, IF = 2.033 (2021)

Author's share: 90 %

Similarly, as in the previous paper, in this paper, we focus on the process of selecting a new place of residence. For this study, we have selected a unique residential development, Alfarezidence, which draws inspiration from the concept of cohousing. It seems very appropriate to study these processes in different types of areas of the Prague Metropolitan Area (housing estates, suburbs) and in different types of residential buildings in the inner city. Our primary objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the elements that influenced the current residents' decision to choose Alfarezidence over other options and to examine the impact of Alfarezidence's specific features in their decision-making process. In-depth semi-structured interviews (n=14) were chosen as an ideal method for fulfilling our research aims.

Alfarezidence, located in the inner city, is in many respects different to classic residential projects, especially those found in suburbs. It is characterized by its specific architectural layout, shared spaces, and small scale. The distinctive characteristics of Alfarezidence may appeal to particular groups of individuals with comparable values, needs, or ways of life. We view cohousing as a novel option that deviates from conventional suburban living and offers individuals an opportunity to reside in the city while enjoying a high-quality environment. The rationale behind selecting Alfarezidence was primarily due to its location in Prague and its significant size, as most cohousing-inspired projects in Czechia tend to be smaller in scale, typically comprising a few families.

**MESSAGE 1.** Analysis of the interviews revealed a clear link between relocation and changes in the life cycle stage. The primary reason for dissatisfaction with their previous housing and the subsequent move was related to changes associated with transitioning to a new life phase. The life trajectories of our participants were highly varied. The timing of family formation varied greatly among the participants we encountered, with families who had children at a young age while others were couples who had children later in life.

**MESSAGE 2.** However, it was evident that a change in the life cycle was not the only reason for moving. The impact of development at different hierarchical levels and social context also played a role. Certain participants were compelled to relocate due to elevated rental costs brought about by gradual deregulation, while others decided to take advantage of the favourable real-estate market situation (low mortgage interest rate) and invested in a new flat. In terms of the social context, a continued

preference for private ownership and a lifestyle centred around living in a family home with a garden was evidenced in the participants' accounts. None of the individuals interviewed resided in a rented apartment, including young couples and singles. While the preference for living in a house with a garden was present in the narratives, home ownership emerged as the more significant factor. It was considered to live close to the workplace and urban activities. The participants' ideal living situation involved a family home with a garden located in the wider city centre; unfortunately, this type of housing was no longer within their financial means. As a result, barriers in the form of housing affordability entered the process of selecting a new residence. Despite their financial stability, the participants found an alternative in Alfarezidence, which provided the convenience of living near the city centre or workplace along with the experience of having their 'own (full-sized) garden', achieved through private front gardens and shared mezzanines. Furthermore, intergenerational support played a crucial role enabling some of the interviewees to obtain new housing.

**MESSAGE 3.** Upon analysis, it can be determined that the participants prioritize high-quality housing with convenient proximity to workplaces and schools. In terms of their living standards, the apartment's layout is important to them, to accommodate the needs of families with children. We state that the informants can be predominantly associated with the term 'yupps' defined by Karsten (2014). The urban environment enables the participants to balance high workloads with childcare responsibilities, making time management a critical aspect of their daily routine. At the same time, they possess financial stability, allowing them to seek additional assistance, such as babysitting, cleaning services, or private nurseries that accommodate younger children. This is also linked to increased female economic activity during and after maternity leave.

**MESSAGE 5.** Although none of the participants was actively seeking a cohousing type of living, they had a positive view of certain elements taken from cohousing and incorporated into this residential project, particularly the smaller scale and spatial layout. These features served as a significant advantage, distinguishing Alfarezidence from other potential alternatives. Interestingly, the participants placed greater emphasis on the architectural and visual components rather than community aspects. This is also reflected in their daily lives, as the principles of cohousing are only partially fulfilled, and certain spaces remain underutilized. Nevertheless, since it is a developer-led model of cohousing, neighbourhood ties and ongoing community activities can be considered sufficient.

## 6. Conclusion

The dissertation project focused on studying changes in the spatial patterns of residential mobility and the process of choosing new housing among residents living in the Prague Metropolitan Area. The main objective was to investigate whether new patterns (trends) of residential mobility and residential preferences are emerging and to explore and understand in greater detail how the selection of a new home is performed. Attention was paid especially to young families and adults at later stages of life (empty nesters, seniors). A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used. I was able to answer the predetermined research questions and achieve the stated objectives. The dissertation is composed of a collection of five articles. The main findings of the thesis are presented in the following paragraphs in relation to the research questions.

### **RQ1 What is the residential mobility behaviour of middle-class young families and older adults living in the Prague Metropolitan Area? (*Changing patterns of residential mobility*)**

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**In general**, the analysis showed that residential mobility has been intensifying (Urry 2007; Halfacree 2012) over the studied period of the last two decades and the ‘traditional’ urbanization processes have been overlapping (van den Berg, Drewett, Klaassen 1982). In Prague Metropolitan Area, suburbanization remains the main urbanization process, but housing trajectories of residents are gradually becoming more variegated and complex (e.g., tangential migration, inner-city migration, reurbanization tendencies) (Horňáková, Sýkora 2021). The analysis also showed a prolongation of the time period of intensive mobility and its postponement to a later age (from 19–35 years to 23–43 years). During the studied period, there has been a noticeable rise in the trend of relocating from suburbs to the capital city, which has resulted in a decline in the popularity of other suburban areas. Although people of all ages have been moving to Prague, it has become increasingly attractive to the younger generation in particular (Dvořáková, Horňáková 2022). Overall, the findings support the suggestion made by Ouředníček, Klsák and Špačková (2019) that the suburbanization trend will persist and correspond with the suburban trends seen in Western metropolitan areas (Booi, Boterman 2020).

Residential mobility patterns of **families with children** living in the Prague Metropolitan Area are diversifying, but it was not possible to identify the ‘traditional’ reurbanization process (return of families to the inner city). Rather, we were able to observe reurbanization towards the outer-city housing estates (Horňáková, Sýkora 2021). This is quite a specific trend, in comparison with the literature on residential mobility of its Western counterparts, which may be to some extent attributed to the dichotomy of urban neighbourhoods vs. suburbs used in most Western studies, which does not deal with housing estates as separate and specific parts of cities. This trend points to the potential of housing estates to become a central destination for families in the future. Lastly, the analysis indicated

the significance of movements within the same type of residential zones and housing types (for example within the inner-city, defined by Ouředníček et al. 2019 as *inner-city migration*), but also suburbs (*tangential migration*, as defined by Ouředníček et al. 2019). There was a tendency to choose similar suburban types, but also those in the vicinity of Prague and those that are highly accessible (Horňáková, Sýkora 2021; Dvořáková, Horňáková 2022).

**Older adults** were in general the less mobile group. Similarly, as young families, housing estates in the outer city were attractive for those moving from the suburbs to Prague (Dvořáková, Horňáková 2022). This trend was specific for families and older adults, contrary, young people (15–29) rather moved to the inner city. Unlike families with children who moved from the suburbs to other suburban municipalities near Prague and those that were well connected, older residents moved more significantly to suburban cores (cities).

**RQ2 What are the reasons behind their decision to move? (*The process of decision formation*)**

**RQ3 What were their reasons for choosing a new place to live (location/project)? How do lifestyle and socioeconomic characteristics influence the choice process? (*Process of searching, considering alternatives and employing strategies*)**

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In general, from the analysis, it was evident that mobility responses to the transition into new life phases and the same situation in the housing market are heterogeneous (Ilmonen 2016; Lacroix, Gagnon, Wanner 2020). Residents have very different requirements, ideas, and aspirations for their residences. Considerable heterogeneity was seen in both age groups. Young families are moving to different parts of the city and older adults are planning to move, but also to stay (age in place).

The analysis of the **residential preferences and plans of older middle-class adults (empty-nesters and seniors) living in the suburbs of Prague** showed that they are aware that their housing will become less suitable as they age, nevertheless, they prefer to age in place (they do not want to move) and use other assimilative coping strategies instead (Golant 2019). Three main adjustment strategies for stayers were identified: repurposing rooms within the house, creating barrier-free housing, and modernizing the home-using technology. As the main reasons for moving, they consider the onset of old age, overconsumption of housing, the desire for change, and the changing role of the family. In the case, they would move, they would choose Prague or a similar municipality they are currently living in (regarding the size) and a family house (Dvořáková, Horňáková 2021). This is in line with Dvořáková and Horňáková (2022), where we concluded that over the previous two decades, whilst reurbanization patterns did not exhibit any noteworthy increase in strength, the crucial long-term flow from the suburbs remained, as did relocations within suburbs (*tangential migration*). Remarkably, a negligible proportion of respondents expressed an interest in bequeathing their current residences to their

offspring. Instead, they were more inclined to sell or rent out their homes, as these funds could serve as an additional source of income during retirement.

In the case of **young middle-class families living in the Prague Metropolitan Area**, the typology of adaptation strategies in the housing decision-making process that were based on trade-offs between preferences showed a pronounced tension between having a garden and living in the city without the need to commute (Horňáková, Špačková, under review). For suburban residents, the target destination was the type of housing: a family house with a garden. Rather than the housing size, a garden was the major motivation for this choice (connected to the idea of a good life with children and privacy). Contrary, for urban residents, the target destination was the location: the neighbourhood within the compact city (in the inner city or housing estates) (this is in line with Brun, Fagnani 1994; Kooiman 2020; Winther 2021). In Horňáková and Jíchová (2020), we refer to young families living in *Alfarezidence* as ‘yupps’ (Karsten 2014), this term can be used also for the urban residents in Horňáková and Špačková (under review). *Alfarezidence* represented an alternative, which provided the convenience of living near the city centre or workplace along with the experience of having their ‘own (full-sized) garden’, achieved through private front gardens and shared mezzanines. The ideal type of housing for young families was a family house in the city and suburbs were not a ‘default’ choice anymore (Horňáková, Jíchová 2020; Horňáková, Špačková, under review). Moreover, housing estates seem to be a good housing option for family life, which further strengthens the potential of them becoming a major destination for young families and the emergence of reurbanization tendencies toward outer-city housing estates discussed in connection with RQ1. Additionally, homeownership was of major importance serving as a way of securitization for old age, which is typical in Czechia (Lux et al. 2018). Lastly, the role of *transferred experience* from participants’ peers or family members was identified as complementing the significant role of lifestyle in the decision-making process (Horňáková, Špačková, under review). We conclude that the concept of transferred experiences complements the concepts of collective references (Tannier, Morer, Ansel 2016) or cultural scripts (Kley, Stenpaß, 2020). The cultural scripts of participants played a significant role in their preferences for homeownership, for a family house with a garden (as a long-term residential option), and in ‘openness’ to live in the inner city or housing estate. Kubala and Hoření Samec (2021) came to similar conclusion when studying the millennials. Furthermore, when deciding whether to move to the suburbs, transferred experiences became a crucial factor for our informants. This is because suburbanization was non-existent during their childhood, and they could not rely on their own individual or collective experiences to inform their decision-making.

By carrying out my dissertation I contributed to filling the knowledge gap in the limited understanding of the topic. The project developed the topic of migration and residential mobility, which had been traditionally addressed in my research department (Department of Social Geography and Regional Development) and elsewhere but looks at it from a different angle. In particular, I have focused on the process of forming the decision to move and the choice of a new residence, while existing studies are concerned with the resulting spatial patterns. This topic also had not been addressed by sociological studies, which provide rather partial insights into residential preferences and reasons for moving. Understanding how relocation processes are shaped, and what are the priorities and preferences of young families, but also older adults, can help to create quality housing policy instruments and spatial development concepts.

I also see a contribution in the case of the analysis of individual migration data, which has followed the traditionally studied changes in spatial patterns of residential mobility. Existing studies were supplemented with up-to-date results and extended with a more detailed view of the issue. Given that most analyses of urbanization processes to date have focused mainly on the continuum of the countryside–suburb–city, I extended the debate by encompassing the contemporary diversity of residential mobility. The analyses were performed at various hierarchical levels implementing the level of residential zones and housing types, and types of suburban municipalities.

At the same time, I consider the study of this topic to be crucial for understanding the processes transforming the spatial structure of the city. In an international context, the work has contributed to the expansion of knowledge on the subject and at the same time brought new insights based on the specific context of Prague as a post-socialist city.

However, it is also necessary to mention the shortcomings of the thesis. In the case of the interviews, a certain shortcoming is that they were carried out in the year 2017-2019 and therefore it is not possible to reflect the current situation of the housing crisis. In the case of the analysis of individual migration data, the very nature of the data itself was a certain shortcoming, as it does not allow, for example, tracking the residential mobility behaviour of people over time, and at the same time, it is not supplemented with additional socio-economic characteristics of the movers, which would allow for an even more detailed and interesting analysis.

Lastly, I would like to end the dissertation with a few implications. First, I will introduce implications for urban planning and then implications for future research.

## 6.1 Implications for urban planning

**FIRST.** As already stated in the introduction of the dissertation, if we are to attempt to plan cities for people, it is necessary to reflect their needs and preferences. The densification of a city is a justifiable and desirable approach considering the adverse environmental and social impacts of sprawling suburbanization. However, it must be undertaken with care and attention to ensure that it creates a high-quality living environment for its residents, including sufficient personal space and privacy.

**SECOND.** When preparing urban planning and housing policies, it is essential to consider the needs of a diverse (not only) middle-class population, particularly young families. Various studies have demonstrated that young families are more likely to remain in the city if they can afford to do so (Booi, Boterman, Musterd 2021; Karsten 2022; Kooiman 2020). To attract and retain these families, the city must offer a range of housing options, including innovative choices such as participatory housing and housing typologies that feature (semi-)private green spaces. Additionally, a variety of tenure possibilities, such as social cooperatives and associations, should be made available. By taking these factors into account, the city can create a thriving community that meets the needs of its residents. The construction or renovation of family flats within the compact city (on the edge of the inner city or in housing estates) seems appropriate (Booi, Boterman, Musterd 2021; Kooiman 2020). However, the flats and the wider environment must meet specific qualities important for young families: greenery and privacy. At least a partial substitution of gardens for high-quality public green spaces (Kley, Stenpaß 2019) or large balconies (Karsten 2020) seems to be a good idea for implementation.

**THIRD.** It is recommended addressing the concept of 'ageing in place' (Buffel, Phillipson 2019) to assist residents in navigating urban transformations and preventing displacement due to ageing as it is evident that the willingness to move will be rather low (Sýkora et al. 2022). When considering the ageing process, it is important to view it as a relational process that is influenced by different forces at varying temporal and spatial scales (Barron 2021). Given the anticipated demographic shift towards an aging population in Czechia, the government should provide financial support and raise public awareness for the adaptation of homes to ensure they are barrier-free. Alternatively, barrier-free solutions might be incorporated during the construction of new houses. Golant (2019) offered a novel viewpoint on ageing that suggests employing innovative technologies as a means to assist individuals in managing daily limitations. In conjunction with cultivating an age-friendly setting, it is imperative to evaluate the request for such services amongst individuals over 65 years old, as well as their capacity to employ these services effectively. It is recommended that municipalities prioritize the establishment of a barrier-free neighbourhood in close proximity to essential amenities that are accessible by walking. In circumstances where this may not be feasible, it is advised that municipalities develop accessible public transportation options for accessing such services. Moreover, favourable rental

legislation (e.g., rent regulation) should be considered, although it may not be politically viable and financially rewarding in the short term. This is particularly pertinent in the post-socialist context where there exists a prevailing public attitude of reservation towards regulatory and planning policies (Vobecká, Kostelecký, Lux 2014).

**FOURTH.** Inspiration for the development of not only public housing can be drawn from cohousing (and other similar forms of housing). As stated by Blažek (2018), it would be beneficial to implement the concept of commons in housing, because it has the potential to develop both the local society and the local economy. Moving forward, it is crucial to alleviate the negative connotations associated with socialist collective housing and increase public awareness of this concept in Czechia. This approach could prove attractive not only to young individuals and families but also to elderly citizens and marginalized communities who would benefit from the communal aspects of this housing model. As stated by Droste (2015), it would be fitting to engage the government in supporting the cohousing model, which would enable less affluent groups to access it while promoting social diversity. Czechia still lacks a diverse range of housing options (Samec 2018).

## 6. 2 Implications for future research

**FIRST.** It would be interesting to include a broader group of young families and older residents. I would find it beneficial to expand the research to include lower classes who are even more affected by the current housing crisis. Specifically, it would be interesting to look at whether these groups are being pushed out of the city to the margins or out of the city altogether.

**SECOND.** It would also be beneficial to include other forms or types of housing (alternative forms of housing) and focus not only on the reasons that led residents to choose a given alternative or atypical form of housing but also on their satisfaction with living in that housing, to better understand the importance of even these more fringe types of housing arrangements.

**THIRD.** A final interesting avenue for future research would be to return to the families I have already interviewed and focus on a retrospective evaluation of their decisions, how their residential preferences have changed since then, and whether and for what reasons they have since moved elsewhere.

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Appendixes