ABSTRACT

The PhD dissertation focuses on the theme of loss of permanent housing together with the problematic of housing affordability in the Czech Republic. In the first part, the objective is to identify the types of households potentially at risk of being unable to afford housing since 2000, and to trace the development of regional differences in the percentage of at-risk households in the Czech Republic. In the regard to the end of deregulation process in recent years, the analysis of housing (un)affordability of “market” rent housing shows the possible social consequences of the process. Owing to the absence of useful aggregate data on incomes and expenditures for different household types in the regions of the Czech Republic, the alternative data sources and the simulation methodology for measuring housing affordability which combines available regional wage statistics and data on market rents were used. The results indicate that the general risk of being unable to afford rental housing and regional differences in housing affordability are both decreasing. Not only the stagnation of market rent growth related to the growth of household income is behind the development. The main reason is the fact that in reference to the deregulation process the concept of housing allowance solves the affordability problem in case the household pays market rent more and more. In consequence, the public social expenditure has grown rapidly. In the second part of the study, the research is focusing on the homeless people themselves. The aim of the analysis is to explore the most common paths into and out of homelessness. The dissertation tries to link the factors behind and barriers to the successful reintegration of the homeless with potential state interventions in the area of housing and housing policy to reinforce the success of reintegration. In order to analyse the paths to homelessness and the factors behind the successful reintegration of the homeless into long-term housing the author draw on findings from the qualitative survey of social workers and homeless people conducted in the Czech Republic’s three largest cities.

The main contribution of this dissertation lies in the combination of multiple perspective and data sources to the analysis of loss of housing risks. Despite the relative broadness of existing studies of homelessness in the Czech Republic, there is none that analyses (1) the risk of loss of housing by the reason of housing unaffordability, (2) the paths to homelessness, and (3) the factors behind and barriers to the successful reintegration of the homeless in greater detail and in reference to the effectiveness of assistance from the housing policy sphere. The dissertation focuses on the situation in the Czech Republic. Nevertheless, given that housing systems in post-socialist countries followed a similar path of development, the conclusions from this research could be of more general validity and could serve as resource for other post-socialist countries.