

## Abstract

Migration has been an inherent part of population development, and due to its role in shaping settlement system and societal changes also one of the key research interests of social geography. Due to the political regime and the limited movement across state borders, attention was predominantly given to internal migration in Czechia in the second half of the 20th century. Conversely, international migration has only been coming to the fore of academic debate since the 1990s. Despite the broad diversity of aspects of international migration in Czechia and the fact that the city has traditionally been the environment associated with the majority of immigrant population, little consideration has been given to the deeper understanding of the relationship between international migration, the presence of foreign citizens and the urban environment, especially foreigners' influence on socio-spatial differentiation and on social environment of particular urban locales.

Czechia is a specific case: a country which was isolated from international migration for four decades became one of the main immigration countries in the post-socialist Central Europe after 1989. It represents a unique occasion to investigate the connection between international migration and the city in a previously unexplored environment different from the well-known cases of traditional immigration countries. The main difference is the relatively low intensity of migration, lower share of foreigners on population and the absence of previous experience of the Czech society with ethnic diversity. More pronounced immigration to Czechia occurs in time of globalization and interconnectedness between places; at the same time, the impacts of socialism and the subsequent societal transformation are still visible in countries of the former Eastern bloc. Extending the research of migration and the city, which has been paid attention to since long in immigration countries, to the environment where immigration is a new phenomenon, allows to enrich urban studies which have predominantly been informed by evidence from the global North and West, and were leaving aside other parts of the world such as the post-socialist cities.

The thesis consists of two parts. The first puts the research of international migration and the city to the wider theoretical framework and discusses the role of foreigners on various hierarchical levels and in various geographical contexts. It then deals with the methodological challenges arising from the changing society and seeks for their solutions which would provide an appropriate approach to the study of the topic today. The second part consists of five publications which discuss different aspects of migration and the city. After a brief introduction of the papers, mainly their methodology and the key empirical findings, they are presented in full. Their order follows from the wider framework of population spatial mobility to the particular role of foreigners' migration in the city. It also reflects the time position, bringing first to the fore a retrospective view on population spatial mobility and moving on to the present day. It also applies a geographical point of view, commencing by articles dealing with metropolitan areas and the main foreigners' migration destination in Czechia – the capital city of Prague – to the micro level of a selected urban locale with significant share of immigrants on population.

**Key words:** international migration – foreigners – city – socio-spatial differentiation – social environment – Czechia – Prague