

## **Abstract**

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Europe has been confronted with an increase of irregular migration in connexion to the collapse of the communist regimes. Today, it is estimated that there are from about 2 to 4 million irregular migrants living in the European Union. Most of them take part in local informal economies. Besides traditional immigration countries of Western Europe, the southern European countries have also become a destination region of irregular migration. Recently though, the same can be said about some post-communist European countries, namely Czechia.

The dissertation focuses on irregular migration in Czechia. More specifically, it deals with irregularly working migrants in the period preceding the global economic crisis. As there is insufficient level of knowledge of the phenomenon in Czechia, the dissertation delivers empirical material regarding forms and reasons of irregular migration and structure, volume and strategies of irregularly working migrants. These characteristics are framed within the European context. Moreover, from the terminological point of view, the dissertation tries to bypass the limitations of the Czech literature and presents own terminology of the given processes and their actors.

Finally, the dissertation aims to contribute to current theoretical and methodological debates of irregular migration - not only by a broad discussion of theoretical approaches and their relation to irregular migration but also by innovative application of methods. Specifically, the qualitative Delphi method was used and a new technique for estimating the size of an irregular migrant population was tested.

The dissertation takes form of a monothematic collection of publications. Six own or co-written publications of the author represent its core. They are summarised in Chapter Three and annexed in the full form. Following Chapter One, dedicated to introduction to the topic and the dissertation, Chapter Two represents a theoretical and methodological discussion of irregular migration. Finally, Chapter Four sums up the main conclusions of the dissertation and entails some proposals to migration policy.