
Homelessness Coping Strategies from Housing Ready and Housing First Perspectives

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› **Abstract_** *This article focuses on the extent to which Housing Ready and Housing First approaches impact on various coping strategies adopted by individuals experiencing homelessness. The discussion is centred on homelessness in the Czech Republic, and utilises Paugam's typology of social disqualification as a theoretical framework. Coping strategies in response to difficult life events found in the literature are described in detail: from the denial of a deteriorating personal situation using avoidance strategy; to the acceptance and reconciliation of the situation using positive and passive adaptation, situation instrumentalisation, deserving poor or the discrediting of others mechanisms, and intentional exclusion. Following from this, the role that both Housing Ready and Housing First models play in relation to these coping strategies will be discussed. The final section contextualises the discussion in the case of Czech Republic, where Housing Ready dominates services and accommodation in commercial hostels is widespread.*

› **Keywords_** *Homelessness, social disqualification, coping strategies, Housing Ready, Housing First*

Introduction

Contemporary social work increasingly deals with crises relating to the social protection of its citizens. These crises are characterised by increasing levels of social insecurity in many areas of daily life, including labour market flexibility, increasing family fragility and an ageing population (Keller, 2009). Some of these issues are also linked to processes of social exclusion. Housing exclusion has become one of the key dimensions of social exclusion processes in the 21st century. It affects an increasing number of subgroups of the population, and has resulted in significant problem of access to housing as a basic human right to live a dignified life (Keller, forthcoming).

Furthermore, according to Edgar *et al* (2002), housing vulnerability is understood in the European context as an issue affecting those who are denied access to adequate housing. Thus, vulnerable groups are frequently forced to inhabit over-priced, inadequate, and insecure housing. Likewise, people who fall through the gaps of the housing market and have to seek accommodation through informal connections (for instance with friends, relatives) or in shelters or hostels. Certain groups of the population demonstrate particular vulnerabilities to housing problems. At the extreme end we find homeless people, many of whom become homeless due to an adverse life event that they are unable to deal with.

There are two main approaches to resolving homelessness: Housing Ready and Housing First. As these models are based on different principles, they should evoke different coping strategies used by homeless people as they respond to these adverse life events. Therefore this theoretical essay attempts to explore this hypothesis further, using the example of the Czech Republic in an attempt to provide an exploratory paper to trigger further discussion of future empirical research.

Methodology

Content analysis was conducted across multiple academic texts as part of a thorough literature search into the topic. The search spanned several licensed databases (SCOPUS, Wiley Library online, Web of knowledge, Springerlink, Proquest central, JSTOR and Science Direct) and search terms included: living in poverty, dealing with poverty, living in poor conditions, supported housing, Housing Ready and Housing First. On the basis of these search results – mainly in academic journals and research reports – I initially identified 31 ways in which people coped with difficult life situations. I merged content identical coping strategies together into ‘batteries’ and they were further clustered. As a result, I obtained 11 coping tactics roofed with three umbrella categories that correspond with each other. As a part of my content reflection I matched these individual coping tactics together with phases of social disquali-

fication described by Paugam (1991). Next, I attempted to look for characteristics of supported housing models as described by various authors. I compared the living situations described within those models (theoretically matched to ETHOS – the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) with Paugam’s phases of social disqualification. This comparison enabled me to gain various coping strategies theoretically situated under Housing Ready and Housing First models. The themes then emerging through this thorough literature search were then applied to the situation for homeless people in the Czech Republic.

Social disqualification and coping mechanisms

The following draw on the typology of difficult life situations based on Paugam’s classification, and the coping mechanisms employed by individuals within these situations will be broken down and discussed.

Social disqualification phases

Paugam (1991) presents an analysis of phases of social exclusion and identifies those who are at risk in society. Three situations are presented: *fragility*, *dependency*, and *the fracturing of the social bond*. *Fragility* refers to people who are facing difficulties in engaging in the labour market and securing housing. It is possible that people in this phase that have lost their job, may re-engage in employment in the future. They try to resolve their situation themselves, and they feel ashamed in accessing unemployment benefits as well as a perceived loss of their social status and dignity. These are usually middle-aged or older people, while younger people tend to be more open to drawing on social welfare supports.

Secondly, *dependency* becomes more likely when unemployment persists for long periods of time. People in this phase usually find it very difficult to secure employment or engage in a training course. There may be a deterioration of health due to stress. While initially they consider unemployment benefit demeaning, they gradually become more accepting and later, dependent on it. These people may avoid extreme poverty due to being able to access other resources. In the case of *the fracturing of the social bond* category, an accumulation of issues occurs. These individuals are not engaging in the labour market, they have health problems; they may lose their housing and lose contact with the family. They often end up completely destitute and many are not registered with state social welfare systems but rather depend on drop-in homeless services. Misuse of alcohol or drugs may be common. They experience feelings of hopelessness and feelings of meaninglessness. According to Paugam (1991), phases may not always occur consecutively among all individuals experiencing difficulties. It is possible to move from fragility

to weakening social supports, or alternatively to overcome fragility and integrate back into society. According to Keller (2014), it is the housing loss that has the most negative impact on individuals.

Responses among those experiencing poverty

Many people experiencing poverty try to distance themselves from what society defines as 'poor people'. They seek to avoid the stigma of poverty. Others, however, identify fully with being a part of the poorer sector of society.

Distinction strategies

Avoidance

Duvoux (in Keller, 2013) states that when an individual is trying to hide his or her fragility, and demonstrate unwillingness to be identified as someone who needs help, they strive to remain independent and seek to resolve their worsening situation themselves. Paugam (1991) adds that many people in this category seek to distance themselves from the environment in which they live. Sirovátka (2000) identifies these individuals as having interrupted employment histories, due to child rearing or poor health, for example, yet they continue to aspire to secure employment and a stable income in the future. There is a perceived decrease in confidence towards official institutions (such as the police, local government and community organizations (van der Land and Doff, 2010).

The 'deserving poor'

This group believe that, unlike others, they do not abuse the help that is offered to them. While they do not have strong employment histories, they have other strengths and they believe that they are better parents than other poor parents. These views compensate their low social status (Paugam, 1991).

Discrediting of others

Individuals try to restore their self-esteem by mocking others or regarding those who stigmatise them as being 'weird' (Gaulejac and Léonetti in Keller, 2013).

Adaptation strategies

Situation instrumentalisation

According to Gaulejac and Léonetti (in Keller, 2013) a person in need may outwardly demonstrate, and often even exaggerate, their inferiority in order to maximise the level of assistance or help, offered to them. *Situation instrumentalisation* can also

be found with 'strategic users' described by Leisering and Leibfried (1999), who see social support as one of the tools to enable them to live a certain lifestyle. They are comfortable drawing upon social benefits as their main income. They usually realise themselves they will be unemployed for some time.

Positive adaptation

Van der Land and Doff (2010) describe another way of adaptation to poverty, a liberal and positive approach supported by social interactions with other residents, which are generally harmonious and based on mutual respect. Leisering and Leibfried (1999) refer to such individuals as *pragmatic fighters*, as they use social support as a means to achieve their goals whilst also adapting to limited financial means. Wadsworth (2012) considers these coping strategies useful with regard issues the individual has little control over. Therefore, she regards them as very relevant for the situation of coping with poverty, particularly so given that poverty is often associated with structural barriers, feelings of helplessness and loss of control. According to Wadsworth (2012), social support from the family (financial aid, assistance with child care) may be helpful in these situations; however, poverty often reduces the availability of such support.

Passive adaptation

Others adapt to their adversity in a more passive way. According to van der Land and Doff (2010), individuals choose adaptation to problems, or at least the acceptance of them, which is associated with resignation from the fact that the others in the surroundings will change their behaviour. Acceptance of the situation is not positively motivated but it is rather the result of a resigned approach to the fact that others could change their behaviour. Disturbed neighbourly relations appear in this form. Sirovátka (2000) describes adaptation to life on welfare, when in some cases the decline of aspirations and passivity occur due to disability or loneliness.

Defensive strategies

Total resignation

By giving up on searching for solutions combined with a low sense of self-worth can also be ways of coping for some individuals. Time is confined to only the present within which individuals pursue minimum fulfilment of their immediate needs. In this situation, according to the authors, people do not hesitate in contacting social services. At the same time, they alternate between humiliation and aggression (Gaulejac and Léonetti in Keller, 2013). Leisering and Leibfried (1999) describe those

who adopt the role of 'victim'. They are long-term unemployed, they believe that finding an employment is out of reach, and thus remain dependent on welfare. They experience feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness.

'Let's do something about it'

Van der Land and Doff (2010) describe another defensive coping strategy in which people demonstrate an attitude of 'Let's do something about it' which relates to active efforts to change circumstances. Leisering and Leibfried (1999) call such people 'life fighters'. These are individuals who have big dreams, but also concrete ideas about what the future should look like. Wadsworth (2012) in this context refers to 'active management' of a difficult situation that involves 'problem-solving', 'expressing' and 'managing emotions' as partial solutions. At the same time she defines that poverty often undermines such solutions.

Release

Dubet (in Keller, 2013) as one of the first sociologists explored the experiences of young people aged 16-25 years – many of whom were second-generation immigrants – of life in the suburbs of large cities. What is typical in their behaviour is unpredictable alternation of moods. Many demonstrated a deep sense of apathy combined with sudden outbursts of uncontrolled anger. They live in an environment of acute poverty characterised by continual uncertainty, ample time, and limited income. They do not have the means to move to another district and some have conflicting constructions of identity whereby they seek to forget their past while avoiding thinking about their future. They focus only the present moment and immediate experience. They have a weak sense of solidarity with others, because they also have no one to help them.

Reality escape

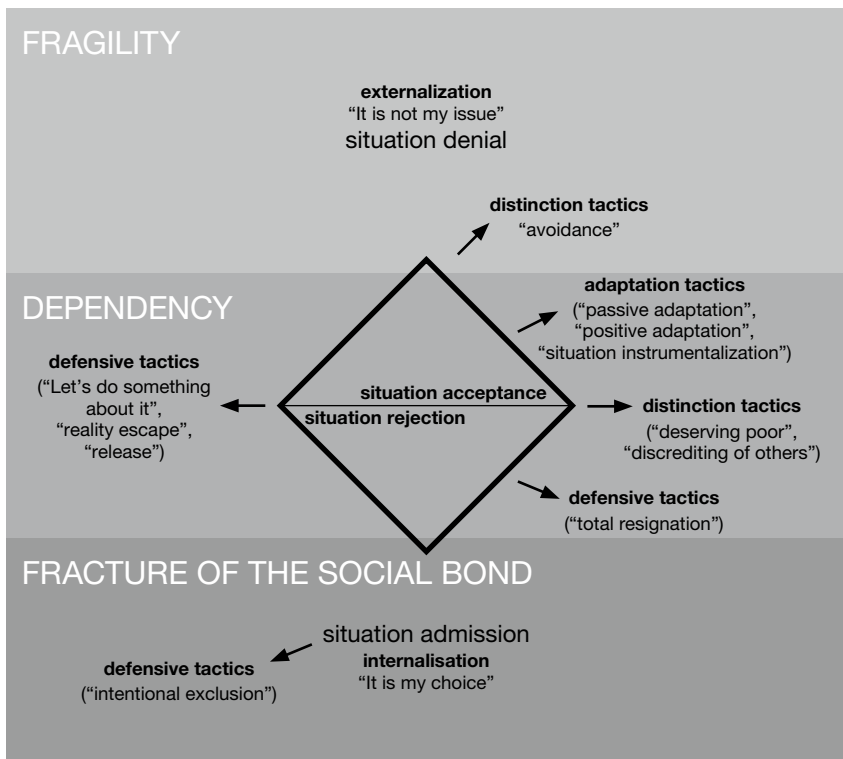
This escape from reality refers to the denial of their current situation. Reality is downplayed or embellished, and personal abilities may be overrated. Socially excluded people often dream of leaving for a different place and starting a new life. However, it is extremely unlikely that they would succeed. Facing reality is often blocked by alcohol and drug consumption (Keller, 2013, Wadsworth, 2012).

Intentional exclusion

The loss of ontological security can lead to rapid deterioration of personal circumstances, yet people hold the illusion that they have the freedom to change their circumstances, not realising that their circumstances are highly constrained. These people want to believe that they can control their lives, even if it is in the form of self-destruction (Gaulejac and Léonetti in Keller, 2013).

Although the use of different coping strategies are dependent on each unique situation, for the purpose of the theoretical development, I discussed the main characteristics of all three umbrella categories and match them to general reactions of people when faced with difficult life events. This denial of your situation and externalising of the problem, accepting it, rejecting it, or internalising it (loosely inspired by Kübler-Ross, 2005). Furthermore, the phases of social disqualification were added as layers framing the whole difficult life situation overview. The following Figure 1 presents the results of this work.

Figure 1 Coping strategies in relation to phases of social disqualification (Lindovská, in: Gojová et al, 2014)



In Figure 1 we may see, when in a position of vulnerability, people may avoid their problems (*avoidance*). After facing a situation, they may choose to take advantage of their circumstances (*situation instrumentalisation*), or adapt to it – in either a passive or positive way (*passive adaptation*; *positive adaptation*). They may identify themselves as deserving poor (*deserving poor*) or by discrediting of

others (*discrediting of others*). Some people don't accept the situation they are faced and tend to reject or revolt in it (*Let's do something about it, a form of release*). Some try to deny it and break away from their situation (*reality escape*). In cases where those strategies do not work, people may then fully resign themselves to the situation (*total resignation*). In some cases people not only admit and accept their difficult position, they internalise it (*intentional exclusion*). As each typology presents only a crude categorisation of coping strategies in difficult life situations, mainly on individual level, we also acknowledge people can employ more than one coping tactic when facing difficulties.

If we assume housing exclusion to be part of social exclusion (as stated by Keller, 2014), then the conceptual categories can also be of relevance for understanding homelessness (Edgar and Meert, 2005) (See Table 1).

Table 1 Social disqualification and homelessness

Phases of Social Disqualification	Conceptual Categories of Homelessness
Fragility	Inadequate housing
Fragility; dependency	Insecure housing
Dependency	Houseless
The fracture of social bond	Roofless

Models of Supported Housing and Homelessness Coping Strategies

There are two main models dealing with the defined conceptual categories of homelessness defined above: Housing Ready and Housing First. Therefore the remainder of this paper discusses the impact in which those models of housing provision have on various coping strategies used by individuals in homeless situations.

Firstly, it is important to acknowledge the current shift away at the European level from the Housing Ready staircase model of homelessness service provision to the Housing First model. Tsemberis (2010, pp.18 – 30) summarises the basic principles of the Housing First model, which includes the provision of independent housing; separation of housing from social services; commitment to work with clients for as long as they want; and adopting a Harm Reduction approach to recovery. Atherton and Nicholls (2008) note that housing itself is not enough to resolve homelessness. Having a stable tenancy must be seen as part of 'an integrated package of support' (Atherton and Nicholls, 2008, pp. 294). The provision of assertive outreach services contributes significantly to maintaining tenancy and stabilising or improving social and health problems of the clients. Busch-Geertsema (2013) in his evaluation of Housing First Europe, piloted in 2011-2013, and which was carried out in five European cities (Glasgow, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Budapest and Lisbon),

demonstrated that rapid allocation of permanent housing with provision of complementary social services was shown to be crucial for success. The services were implemented mainly in the form of assertive community treatment for users with very complex needs, or in the form of intensive case management in cases of complex needs of a lower intensity. It showed high success rates in the programmes with 87.9 percent of the programme users in Amsterdam who sustained their housing, 94 percent in Copenhagen, 92.9 percent in Glasgow and 79.4 percent service users in Lisbon.

Place (2011) points out, when presented in isolation, the Housing First model may incorrectly lead to a narrow understanding of homelessness, with the image of 'chaotic individuals' with high support needs dominating, and attention may be diverted away from the structural causes of homelessness. On the other hand, the Housing First model, according to Busch-Geertsema (2012), shifts affordable housing (and the means of its financing) to the centre of current debates. In other words, the Housing First model can be understood in a wider sense as a concept which promotes housing as a key element in addressing the homelessness issue and does not present a mere niche of work with a group of the most vulnerable and excluded ones.

Coping strategies employed in the Housing First model

This model, relates mainly to the phase of *the fracture of the social bond*, i.e. to a phase that the Housing Ready model lacks capacity to assist or resolve. Many people with complex needs do not have the ability to meet the demands that is expected of them when they are progressing through the transitional housing system, as was argued in a study by Felton (2003). Felton (2003) observes that many homeless people with mental problems and/or those abusing addictive substances circulate among the institutions – primarily overnight shelters, prisons and hospitals without the hope of finding permanent housing. According to Marek *et al* (2012), the specific problem of the Czech situation is that there are no 'wet' housing services that accept homeless people who are in the active phase of addictive substance abuse. These individuals are often unable to obtain the services of homeless hostels due to the threshold being too high. The Housing First model, which does not rely on the philosophy of 'readiness', arranges long-term rented accommodation for such people and identifies further support, for instance in the form of assertive outreach work and case management.

Table 2 Coping Strategies Employed in the Housing First Model

'Housing First' Model			
Social Disqualification	ETHOS	Coping Strategies Tackled	Coping Tactics Produced and Empowered
FRAGILITY	INADEQUATE, INSECURE HOUSING	'avoidance'	
DEPENDENCE	HOUSELESS	'reality escape'	'Let's do something about it'
		'release'	
FRACTURE OF SOCIAL BOND	ROOFLESS	'total resignation'	
		'intentional exclusion'	

Coping strategies employed in the Housing Ready model

Some authors critique the Housing Ready model. Busch-Geertsema (2013, p.16) points out several problems in relation to transitional housing:

- Transition between the individual stages causes stress.
- Lack of choice and limited agency combined with standardised level of support across the different stages of residential services.
- Lack of privacy and limited control over where service users are placed.
- The final transition to independent tenancy may take years and many clients get 'lost' between the individual stages.
- A certain group of people gets 'stuck' in the system and circulates from service to service.

From the description of the Housing Ready model, it becomes obvious that it is primarily employed for those who are in a situation of dependence or in the ETHOS category defined as houseless. The beginnings of the phase of dependence can however be found already when in inadequate or insecure housing. This situation offers an opportunity to incorporate people who use *avoidance* as a way of handling their homelessness. It is worth considering the use of floating support because of the apparent mistrust of official institutions by these people. Analysing the challenging issues of the Housing Ready model brings us to discuss several points. The lack of choice and personal decisions, little privacy and limited control over where users are placed, can enable the use of various coping strategies. In this vicious circle, all adaptation strategies (*passive adaptation, positive adaptation, situation instrumentalisation*) as well as the defensive strategy of *total resignation* can be evoked. Those who become entrenched in the homeless system may be characterised as a group of *the deserving poor* and *those who are discrediting others*. These strategies do not seem to empower people. The question thus remains to

what extent does the process of institutionalisation in hostel settings makes it possible to use the *Let's do something about it* strategy which calls for active engagement to resolve their situation (See Table 3).

Table 3 Coping Strategies Employed in the Housing Ready Model

Housing Ready Model			
Social Disqualification	ETHOS	Coping Strategies Tackled	Coping Strategies Produced and Empowered
FRAGILITY	INADEQUATE AND INSECURE HOUSING	avoidance	
DEPENDENCE	HOUSELESS		passive adaptation
			positive adaptation
			situation instrumentalisation
			deserving poor
			discrediting of others
			total resignation

Homelessness Coping Strategies in the Czech Republic

The situation in the Czech Republic will now be presented in the final section of this paper. Estimates on the number of homeless people or people at risk of homelessness in the Czech Republic are tentative due to incomplete statistical data. In 1996, there were an estimated 9 000 homeless people across 169 municipalities (Horáková, 1997). During the same year, there were 4 500 counted as homeless across 18 homeless hostels (Horáková, 1997). Later there were individual homeless counts in several bigger cities: in Prague in 2004, the total number of homeless people reached 3 096 persons (Hradecký, 2005). Recent statistics have stated there are 11 496 officially counted homeless people in the Czech Republic (Housing and Population census, 2011). There is another indicator mentioned in the statistics 'people housed in emergency and mobile objects' that would, according to the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS), be classified as homeless people too. The Czech Statistics Office counts them among those being 'housed'; their total number was 85 647. (Table 30, Housing and Population Census, 2011) If ETHOS is taken into account, then we can say there are 97 143 homeless people living in the Czech Republic, which is 0.92 percent of the Czech population.

Studies on homelessness in the Czech Republic are limited. Barták *et al* (2005) found that, according to Czech social workers, the most prominent risk factor for homelessness is alcohol misuse and in many cases, serious mental health problems. Šupková (2007) shows that the highest percentage of health problems among homeless people is related to addiction (23 percent), most often alcohol addiction. A survey of mental health among homeless people in the Czech Republic by Dragomirecká and Kubisová (2004) revealed that mental health disorders are

more common among homeless people than the housed population. A quarter of homeless people were found to have mental health problems, in case of women it was almost a half of all homeless women. Štěchová *et al* (2008) reported that 40 percent of shelter users have a criminal record. Prudký and Šmídová (2010) conducted a quantitative survey among 4622 homeless people in which it was revealed that one of the most common reasons for their homelessness was discharge from an institution, such as prison. Mikeszová and Lux (2013) identified the main barriers of successful reintegration of Czech homeless people as the lack of housing stock and personal debts.

Housing homeless people in the Czech Republic

When tackling homelessness, the staircase model, or a transitional housing system, is still widely used in the Czech Republic. Lux *et al* (2010) state this model consists of three phases: firstly, there are shelters and hostels for homeless people; the next phase consists of provision of transitional supported accommodation, during which service users become accustomed to living independently; and the last phase is permanent independent rental housing. Individual social work with a service user is carried out. A lease (or sublease) contract is for a limited period – usually six months, a maximum period of stay goes up to two years. There are three types of such supported accommodation (Lux *et al*, 2010, pp. 7-8):

- Flats owned by a non-profit organisation (a client is a tenant, a non-profit organisation is the manager)
- Flats owned by a municipality (the client is a tenant, the municipality is manager)
- A non-profit organisation hires housing units from other entities (a municipality or a private owner is manager, a non-profit organisation is a tenant, a client is a subtenant)

Another housing option for homeless individuals and families in the Czech Republic are the so-called ‘commercial hostels’. In their study, Jedináková and Pischová (2013) documented practices in those hostels in the third biggest Czech city – Ostrava. Currently there are 31 commercial hostels operating in the city of Ostrava, with over 7 000 beds available. Families living in those hostels usually occupy them from between 5 and 10 years. Those hostels were in the past used for a short-term stay of pitmen and labourers who commuted long distances. Therefore most commercial hostels in Ostrava do not reach standards for long-term occupancy, especially when it comes to families with minors. Specifically there are four main issues appearing:

- Some hostels in Ostrava are not suitable for short-term occupancy. Twenty square meters is assigned for single person occupancy in social housing, but in these facilities, this space can be shared by eight people (adults and children). A kitchen (an empty room with one cooker) and shower facilities (with a limited source of hot water) are shared by families on one floor with communal areas. Childcare facilities are not available.
- A contract is usually agreed for the period of one to three months, outlining the expectations of the tenants, without acknowledging their rights.
- Housing benefit is often used to cover the cost of living in commercial hostels. This can go directly to the landlord so the client has little or no control over it. Sometimes housing benefit for one room with two adults and children is claimed separately for each adult person.
- Floating support workers find it hard to reach their clients, and they are not allowed to enter some commercial hostels. In some hostels, they can talk to their clients only in the presence of a hostel worker (e.g. receptionist), which the support workers find unacceptable. (Jedináková and Pischová, 2013).

Many families sink into debt. Many enter a 'vicious circle' whereby they are in arrears for gas, electricity, and rent. In order to get out of a commercial hostel and rent a flat, people often need to pay a one-month deposit, which they cannot afford and the state does not help to cover these extra costs. Due to rent arrears, they are not eligible for a council flat. The only option, therefore, is to stay in a commercial hostel (Jedináková and Pischová, 2013).

Coping strategies in the context of the Housing Ready approach in the Czech Republic

Structural barriers and barriers to the successful resettlement process of homeless people result in people adapting various coping strategies. For example, we have observed in the context of the Czech Republic, *passive adaptation*, *total resignation*, *situation instrumentalisation*, *deserving poor* and *reality escape* among those living in commercial hostels. With regard to standardisation of rules in the provision of transitional homeless services, it is probable that individuals who use the *reality escape* or *intentional exclusion* strategies – which among other things are characterised by abuse of addictive substances – are likely to fail in the context of strict abstinence rules in the Czech supported housing structure of provision. The Housing Ready system in the Czech Republic seems to be disempowering people in dealing with their difficult life situation.

There seems to be a strong focus of Czech social services on pre-empting potential needs of service users and not reacting to their actual needs. Personal difficulties are viewed by services as individual traits of homeless people rather than caused by the structural issues. By contrast, one of the promising coping strategies could be *Let's do something about it* which seems to be reproduced within the Housing First model. If we presume the Housing First model is capable of working with coping strategies which the Housing Ready model may have difficulties in reacting to, it is surprising that the Housing First model is absent from Czech social work practice. The Conception of Prevention and Solving of Homelessness (The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2013) plans pilot testing of the Housing First model in 2015. Housing and social policy must also adjust and adapt to this new approach for this new pilot test, especially with regard to access to adequate housing. Busch-Geertsema and Sahlin (2007) also observe that while the trigger to homelessness may be linked to personal problems, the processes, which preceded this, can often be linked to housing market or social policies. A Platform for Social Housing, which was established in 2013, brought together non – governmental organizations, academics and experts in social housing to work together against structural barriers in relation to resettlement processes of homeless people in the Czech Republic. It remains to be seen what possible changes this initiative may bring and whether more collective action produces distinct collective coping strategies among those affected by homelessness.

Conclusion

The first part of this article was dedicated to the description of difficult life situations in the form of Paugam's phases of social disqualification: *fragility, dependence* and *the fracture of the social bond* (Paugam, 1991) as well as the classification of coping strategies to adversity. In particular, distinction strategies were described: *avoidance* which is when one denies to themselves their deteriorating situation; *deserving poor* and *discrediting of others* which are characterised by distancing from people in a similar situation; *positive adaptation, passive adaptation* and *situation instrumentalisation* are all varying types of adaptation to these events. Passive coping with the situation may lead to *total resignation*, which was already defined as a defensive coping strategy. *Escaping from reality, release* and *Let's do something about it* were considered another defensive strategy, anticipating non-acceptance of one's situation. The last defensive strategy described, appearing in a situation of complete destitution, was *intentional exclusion*.

In the second part of the article, the role of models of Housing Ready and Housing First in employing various coping strategies used by individuals to cope with the situation of homelessness was discussed. The Housing First model specifically

works to restore social bonds and lifts people almost immediately from the street into permanent, rental housing, which in turn provides a space to employ other coping strategies, which the Housing Ready model has, difficulties to grasp, namely: *intentional exclusion*, *release*, *reality escape*, and *total resignation*. The Housing Ready model results in persistent dependency of many individuals and many return to homeless shelters. This return may result into reproduction of some of the more negative coping strategies, especially the strategies of *deserving poor*, *discrediting of others*, *passive or positive adaptation*, *total resignation* and *situation instrumentalisation*.

The last part of the article described the re-housing system for homeless people in the Czech Republic and the dominance of the Housing Ready model was discussed. This model is implemented through transitional housing, represented by shelters, hostels and supported accommodation. The issue of commercial hostels in the Czech Republic was also discussed. These institutions seem to reproduce *passive adaptation*, *total resignation*, *situation instrumentalisation*, *deserving poor* and *reality escape* coping strategies. People employing *reality escape* and *intentional exclusion* may also fall through the support network of Czech homeless hostels and supported accommodation due to abstinence rules imposed upon them. Most NGOs focus on working with their service users at the individual level, reacting in advance to potential service users' needs. This leads to the absence of the Housing First approach in Czech social work practice, where a *Let's do something about it* strategy could be at the forefront. Despite this, the Conception of Prevention and Solving of Homelessness in the Czech Republic until 2020 (The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2013) outlines the piloting of Housing First as one of its priorities, with The Platform for Social Housing actively advocating its introduction into Czech law. All these activities are considered promising for the future development on the Czech homelessness and housing scene.

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