

## **Abstract**

The Czech population is ageing, and the number of seniors continues to grow year on year. At the same time, the number of working seniors, who currently make up one tenth of the Czech workforce, is increasing. There is also a decline in the number of extended family structures, which more often provide the necessary social network and support, compared to narrower nuclear family types. That is not the only reason why there is an increase in the number of lonely seniors, who are isolated from the world and social relations and who stop participating in social activities. It is estimated that one in three seniors across the globe struggles with loneliness. With the advent of modern information technology, the question arises whether virtual contact can help to address the issue of loneliness and improve the social participation of seniors.

The aim of this thesis was to provide a deeper insight into the situation in the Czech Republic, outlining potential benefits and risks as well as possible barriers for this demographic group. This research found that Czech seniors use social media not only to maintain relationships with their family and friends, but also to broaden their horizons in the field of hobbies and take an active interest in current and political events. Social media can thus be a tool for improving the social participation of seniors in the virtual world, but according to the results of this research, it can also be a means to improve communication with loved ones and to increase their personal participation in social events. A specific situation where networks can be beneficial for seniors is the transition period after retirement.