

## **Abstract**

The thesis deals with choices made by women on maternity leave living in Prague, predominantly in the area of work and family life. Women's choices do not always represent their preferences and are strongly influenced by the institutional conditions and family interests. Women's preferences are also determined by the idea of maternity preferred by them- Another focus of the thesis is the construction of symbolic boundaries between mothers and childless women. Mothers differentiate themselves from childless women based on moral criteria and from each other based on the understanding of motherhood. Mothers tend to describe maternity leave as a happy period and do not think of it as of a loss of freedom or a sacrifice. However, they admit that long-term maternity leave is stereotypical and can induce feelings of isolation. For that reason, a part of women try to break free, at least partially, from the childcare and return into the realm of adults.