

Critically Indebted Small Municipalities in the Czech Republic

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ABSTRACT

During the course of the past few years, several small municipalities can be found, where the existence of the local self-government is endangered due to critical indebtedness. The origins of municipal indebtedness are due to political circumstances, which very often unfold accordingly to the approach of local representatives. The existential issues of small municipalities are many times caused by poor investments. Such unsatisfactory investments are closely connected to insufficiently qualified leadership, megalomaniacal projects or corrupted representatives. The critical state of indebtedness is negatively affecting the functioning of the municipality. Accordingly to the extent of debts, the basic public services are limited, e.g. streetlights are halted. As a result, municipalities often abandon the perspective of further development. Indebtedness also influences the existence and structure of local democracy, e.g. organization of communal elections, the construction of ballots, the number of candidates and even voter turnout. The above-described situation is not reconditioned by the Czech legislation and individual cases have to be settled separately. The aim of the contribution is to present the situation of indebted small municipalities in the Czech Republic. The conclusions of my research conducted in three indebted small municipalities in the Czech Republic, in Bublava, Nebanice, and Prameny will be presented, considering the situation in the municipalities, how indebtedness influenced municipal elections and the standpoint of inhabitants to resolve the critical situation in the municipalities.