Background. Security as a socio-cultural phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach and integrates a multitude of aspects of social reality, each of which is important both for an individual and society as a whole. It has been shown that there are certain universal desires and needs which are valued by all cultures and peoples as essential to providing a high quality of life; one of such universals is the need for security. Consequently, the status of people’s security in a society directly depends on the processes taking place in the society as a whole, and a craving for security and the need for international security, also called global security, is a term which refers to the measures taken by states and international organizations, such as the United Nations, European Union, and others, to ensure mutual survival and safety. These measures include military action and diplomatic agreements such as treaties and conventions. International and national security are invariably linked. International security is national security or state security in the global arena. II Social security: Issues, challenges and prospects. ISBN 92-2-111961-0 ISSN 0074-6681 First published 2001. During the last two decades specific aspects of social security have been discussed at the International Labour Conference on various occasions. Most recently, in 2000, the Conference looked closely at the subject of maternity benefits when it revised the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), and Recommendation (No. 95). Other observers claim that reductions in income security and social protection arise from the attempts of governments to promote competitiveness and attract foreign direct investment. So, home ownership has both positive as well as negative aspects for individuals and society. The research, on which this book is based, was done as part of the OSIS-project (Origins of Security and Insecurity, the interplay of housing systems with jobs, household structures, finance and social security) and funded by the EU under the 6th framework programme. This book stems from the quantitative analysis undertaken as part of the OSIS project; and as such its ambitions are more limited. The quantitative analysis has examined the security and insecurity aspects of housing from both a macro and micro point of view.