

PROGRESS REPORT 2013

▣ BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY

Please provide any updated data, including where possible disaggregated data (by age, sex, etc.), collected in 2013, concerning:

- *Estimated total number and proportion of the Roma population in the country;*

In 2013 no official census was made on the number of Roma living in the Czech Republic. According to estimates by regional coordinators for Roma affairs in individual regions, around 230,000 Roma were living in the Czech Republic in 2013.

According to the 2011 census, the total population in the Czech Republic was 10,562,214. Out of this number, the total number of people who claimed Roma ethnicity was 12,953. 5,135 of them claimed solely Romani ethnicity (0.05% of the total population), and 7,818 people claimed Romani ethnicity in combination with another ethnicity (0.07% of the total population). A total of 40,370 people claimed Romani as their mother tongue (or one of their mother tongues). Estimates of the number of Roma in the Czech Republic differ. According to the data provided by the Council of Europe, around 200,000 Roma live in the Czech Republic, constituting about 1.9% of the Czech population.

No further current quantitative data on the number of Roma sorted by gender, age, etc. are available.

Number of Roma living under the poverty line and the proportion to the overall population living under the poverty line.

The ratio of the danger of poverty, according to the Czech Statistical Office, is defined as the proportion of people whose income is lower than the poverty line. The poverty line is, in most cases, defined as 60% of the median equalized disposable income, which in 2013 corresponded to CZK 116,196. The number of people living under this threshold dropped in the Czech Republic in 2013 to 871,800, which is 8.5% of the population (this is only preliminary data; finalized data will be available in June 2014. Source: Czech Statistical Office).

According to most estimates, around 80,000 – 100,000 Roma are socially excluded, which constitutes around half of all Roma living in the Czech Republic.

1. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR ROMA INCLUSION

- *Please describe (if any) changes in 2013 in the participation of Roma in decision-making processes/arrangements and public administration structures.*

In 2013, there have been only few changes to participation in decision-making processes/arrangements and public administration structures; these related to the change of government.

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The **Government Council for Roma Community Affairs** remained the highest authority enabling the participation of the Roma in preparation and implementation of the Roma integration policies. The civil part of the Council comprised 15 Roma representatives as coordinators, representatives of the Civil Society, who actively work to improve the standing of the Roma or significantly contribute to their integration.

The Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs met only twice because membership in the Council was linked to the governmental term, thereby with the end of the governmental term in summer 2013 their membership also ended. The following temporary government did not appoint new Government Council Members.

Another opportunity to promote the rightful interests of the Roma minority lies with the Roma at the regional and local level and their participation in the **Committees for Minorities**, the creation of which depends on the number of persons who declared that they belong to a minority during the census. The Roma had the opportunity to influence their right to participate in solving issues that concern them. These rights are defined in the Act on the Rights of Minorities. The Committee serves as a platform for solving current issues of the minorities (e.g. integration of children from minorities at Czech schools, labour market status, cultural and religious specifics of minorities). In 2013 the Committees for Minorities continued their activities from the previous year, when they were re-established according to the results of the 2011 census.

At the regional level the Committees were established in five of 14 regions. The other regions did not establish these committees due to an insufficient number of persons belonging to minorities, or due to the minorities' lack of interest in solving their affairs in committees.

Moreover, on the regional level, the regional coordinators for Roma issues were functioning as in previous years. Each of the 14 regions of the Czech Republic has one such regional coordinator. On the local level, the Roma advisors can be employed by municipalities with extended powers.

The Romani Civic Initiative plays an important role. A network of civic associations has been created over time in the Czech Republic, which were established and further run by the Roma. The NGOs have an important participation role and are involved in the preparation and implementation of measures and evaluation of their efficiency. They can develop their activities with the help of grants from the state, regional or local budgets or other foundation funds, or thanks to the support of their projects from the European Structural Funds.

- *Please describe how and to what extent you have been cooperating with Roma civil society organizations, including the Decade Focal Point in your country, regarding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of your Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy.*

The Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs is an advisory body of the Czech government in the field of Roma integration. Apart from the representatives of Ministries responsible for Roma integration, 15 Roma members had the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the Action Plan of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 and the Concept of Roma Integration 2010-2013 within this Council. The Council has three committees, one of which is the Committee on the European Platform for Roma Inclusion and the Decade of

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Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. This committee functions as the platform to exchange information with the Decade Focal Point. The *Committee's* members are representatives of the Roma Civil Society and key NGOs dealing with Roma integration. Its activities include preparation and currently monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, which they discuss with the representatives of the departments responsible for fulfilment of this Plan.

However, further cooperation with the National Decade point goes beyond the committee. The Roma Civil Society is involved in the work of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs as described above. The members of the Government Council and their committees, Roma regional Coordinators, comment on *monitoring and evaluation of your Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy*.

The Office of the Government Council continuously organizes meetings with Roma minority and NGO representatives, where the government's measures concerning the Roma are discussed. Such a meeting was held, for example, on 12 December 2013 in the Liechtenstein Palace, where the Roma integration policies were discussed at national level, including the role of the Agency for Social Inclusion. Important representatives of the Roma minority, Roma activists, Roma from localities where the Agency for Social Inclusion operates, members of the Council for Roma Community Affairs and experts on Roma integration were present (totalling approximately 60 participants).

- *Please describe briefly the process of monitoring and evaluation of policies targeted towards Roma. How do you measure the impact of these policies (through field visits, surveys, independent evaluations etc.)?*

The main body monitoring and evaluating implementation of policies towards Roma is the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs. The Council's working bodies focus more thoroughly on both the Concept and the Action Plan. The Committee on Cooperation with Local Governments and the Concept of Roma Integration creates the concept of Roma integration, monitors the progress of its implementation, particularly at the regional and local level, monitors the development in the situation of the Roma and checks whether the Concept's measurements reflect their needs.

The second body is the Committee on the European Platform for Roma Inclusion and the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2013, whose members are representatives of the Roma Civil Society and key NGOs dealing with Roma integration. Its activities include preparation and currently monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, which they discuss with the representatives of the departments responsible for fulfilment of this Plan.

The third body is the Monitoring Committee of the Agency for Social Inclusion, which deals with the implementation of the Strategy to Combat Social Exclusion. It includes representatives of the regional coordinators, departments and Roma Civil Society, who evaluate the progress of fulfilment of the Strategy. Members of the Council for Roma Community Affairs are continuously informed about the progress at its meetings.

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These working bodies also comment on the progress of fulfilment of all three strategies via documents, which are presented to the Government for discussion. These are the Report on the State of the Roma Minority in the Czech Republic and the Information about the Fulfilment of Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

Generally, the process of monitoring and evaluation of policies targeted towards Roma is based on reports from the relevant ministries, then studies of independent researches and evaluation or analysis of specific localities.

For example, every year the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs evaluates the subsidy programmes Prevention of Social Exclusion and Support of Community Work and Support of Field Work. Finances from these programmes are used to fund soft programmes – social services provided to Roma households, whose housing need is endangered. Social work focuses on support while searching for and maintaining housing. The Support of Field Work programme is aimed at municipalities that have excluded Roma localities or communities in their territory.

- *What is the total amount and percentage of the 2013 national budget dedicated to the implementation of the Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy in your country?*

The Czech Government allocated a total of CZK 63,069,731 for Roma integration in 2013. The table below shows a comparison of the state budget expenditures on Roma integration in 2012 and 2013.

Overview of expenditures on Roma integration 2012 and 2013

Department	2012 (in CZK)	2013 (in CZK)
MEYS	20,360,672	16,957,392 ¹
MC	16,102,750	17,311,498
MoLSA	0	0
MoRD	869,000	0
Government Office	37,330,920	28,800,841 ²
Total	74,663,342	63,069,731

¹ This amount includes grants provided within the grant programmes *The Programme for Support of Roma Integration* and *Support of Socially Disadvantaged Roma Students at Secondary Schools*. Additional funding for projects aiming at Roma, alongside other national minorities in the Czech Republic, was provided within the *Programme supporting education in the languages of national minorities and multicultural education*.

² Additionally, one project aimed at Romani language was supported (CZK 300,000) within the *Support of the implementation of the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages* grant programme.

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The total expenditure of the Government Office for the needs of the Decade was CZK 51,865 in 2013.

Financial resources allocated to Roma integration as part of general employment, housing or crime prevention policies are considerably higher. It is, however, extremely difficult to estimate the percentage used directly for the benefit of the Roma minority.

The total Czech National Budget expenditure in 2013 was CZK 1,176,367,603,000. The expenditure allocated specifically for Roma integration was therefore 0.0054% of the total state budget expenditure.

- *What kinds of funding sources (local, national and international) are considered for the implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy in 2014?*

Roma integration is a complex process running on several levels (international, EU, central, regional, local). Apart from public institutions, private organizations (such as churches, NGOs) contribute to integration, as well as EU and international organizations. This complexity corresponds to a multi-level system of funding, which is considered for Roma integration in the *Roma integration strategy up to the year 2020* that is currently being drafted. The strategy outlines funding for Roma integration between 2014 and 2020 on the national/central level and from EU funds, especially ESIF. It also reflects the need to map other sources of funding by 2015.

The annual government *Report on the state of the Roma minority in the Czech Republic* observes the amount of funds allocated to Roma integration in the form of grants in support of measures aimed at Roma and positive measures. The amounts allocated for this purpose have been around CZK 100 million per year. The drafted Roma integration strategy presupposes around a 50% increase in the funds allocated over the 2014-2020 period. The increase should enable more support of human resources, grant programmes and introduce several new grant programmes (e.g. supporting the university study programme in Romani studies, supporting Roma university students).

A significant source of funding in the 2007-2013 period was European Social Fund (ESF) projects, in particular the *Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme*, Area of Support 3.2 - *Support of Social Integration of Members of Romany Localities*, and other sources, especially IROP. The *Roma integration strategy up to the year 2020* considers – apart from national funding sources – that the ESF, which is the main EU financial tool for investments into Roma integration in the area of employment, education and social inclusion, will be a significant source. As a funding source complementary to other European structural and investment funds for the 2014-2020 investment period, the *Regulation (EU) no. 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council* includes an investment priority of the ESF aimed at socio-economic integration of marginalized groups such as Roma. Every EU country will allocate at least 20% of ESF funds for this priority.

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Apart from funding on the international and national/central level, additional sources will be available from regional and local budgets.

- *What has been done to ensure that EU Funds will be allocated for Roma inclusion in the 2014-2020 period? Please estimate the budget of planned measures in the context of the Decade Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy for 2014-2020 (please indicate which of the 4 key areas, or which other area, is planned to benefit from the referred funding) from EU funds, national funds, and other sources.*

In the 2007-2013 programme period, steering bodies of operational programmes cooperated with the Office of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs and the government Agency for Social Inclusion in order to secure access to, and ensure effective implementation of, funds from operational programmes (especially IOP and Human Resources and Employment OP).

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2013 re-established a Working Group for Roma Affairs, comprising Roma representatives, members of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs as well as representatives of NGOs. The working group was involved in preparing the Analysis of Socially Excluded Localities as well as commenting on preparation of the Operational Programs on Employment. The Analysis was commissioned to investigate current numbers of socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic, which shall be a baseline for a territorial approach in identifying localities for the new programming period (for combating social exclusion, poverty and discrimination as one of the priorities).

Moreover the Agency provided local project consultations for applicants and motivated applicants towards simultaneous and coordinated organization of both investment and non-investment projects. Additionally, the Agency helped steering bodies to coordinate projects which had originally not been planned in synergy with each other. This practice will be further formalized between 2014 and 2020: steering bodies will coordinate projects so that they complement each other locally and temporally and so that they respond to the actual needs of the target groups. When solving issues identified with target groups/localities, a combination of relevant integrated tools and a combination of activities within relevant programmes funded by the ESF, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and marginally from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) will be used. Examples of such activities are strategic plans for social inclusion, which are developed by the Agency and aim to coordinate intervention with the support from all relevant EU operational programmes.

Additionally, the Agency for Social Inclusion has, or will, agree on memoranda of cooperation for the 2014-2020 period. Through these memoranda the Agency guarantees methodological and implementation support for effective use of ESIF funds to support social inclusion on a local level. For the purpose of social inclusion, mainly the Employment and Research, Development and Education operational programmes, as well as the Integrated Regional Operation Programme will be used. EU funds will also be used for the education and housing priority areas; especially for supporting inclusive education and social housing. More detailed information will be available in the coming months.

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2. EDUCATION

- *Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented at national or local level to support Roma education in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: improving early childhood education and care, reducing early school leaving, encouraging Roma participation in secondary and tertiary education, desegregation measures, inclusive education, teacher training etc.*

The government department responsible for the education policy and its fulfilment is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The ministry cooperates with specialized agencies, such as the National Institute for Education (NUV).

The Ministry aims to ensure that the preference for integrating children with special educational needs into mainstream schools is stipulated by law. This provision has been included in the draft amendment to Section 16 of the Education Act, which is currently being considered within the Ministry. The process was delayed due to the political instability in the country in 2013 (the government fell in June and elections were held in October).

In the second half of 2012 the Ministry created and presented to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe the *Consolidated Action Plan of Measures to Execute the Judgement of the European Court of Human Rights in the Case D.H. and others vs. the Czech Republic*, which includes individual steps to remove indirect discrimination of Roma pupils, which has been found by the European Court of Human Rights. As part of the Action plan, the Ministry defined seven key measures to be adopted:

1. **Employ a mechanism that will enable collection of data on the number of children educated according to the Framework Educational Programme for basic education with the annex specifying the education of children with light mental disabilities (FEP – LMD) (2013).**

Decree No. 131/2013 amending Decree No. 364/2005, on documentation of schools and school establishments, was adopted in 2013. This amendment stipulates that schools are obliged to record the number of children educated in programmes designed according to FEP – LMD, including data on integration of these children. These data will be passed on to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

2. **Obtain data on the number of Roma children educated according to FEP – LMD.**

The Czech School Inspectorate will conduct annual surveys to establish the number of Roma children educated according to FEP – LMD. According to the survey conducted, around 28.2% of all children educated according to the FEP – LMD in 2013 were Roma.

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The number of children with light mental disabilities educated in mainstream classes through individual integration has been gradually rising: since 2009 there has been a 66% growth. The number of children in special schools has dropped by more than 25%.

3. Create an audit body in the field of diagnostics and counselling facilities

The issue of creating an audit body is dealt with in an amendment to the Education Act which was planned to be submitted to the Government Legislative Council after the formation of the new government.

The Ministry decided that the NUV, a judicial entity established and administered by the Education Ministry, will be responsible for supervision. The role of the Czech School Inspectorate will be to review whether recommendations of counselling facilities are in line with the Education Act, whereas the NUV will ensure the conceptual administration and development in the area of counselling.

The proposed amendment to the Education Act also specifies in more detail the role of counselling facilities and the audit body. Reports and recommendations issued by the school advisory bodies will be reviewed. If needed, the review may include a fresh evaluation of the child's learning needs, subject to the consent of the child/parents.

4. Revise diagnostic tools for light mental disability

In connection with the findings that the diagnostic tool WISC III, which is currently used, is not sufficiently reliable for testing socio-culturally disadvantaged children, the Education Ministry has adopted new diagnostic tools to ensure objectivity of the test results. The aim is not only to evaluate children's skills better, but also to define more precisely how they can be supported to be successful in mainstream schools. The Ministry provides financial means through its grant programmes to support purchase of new diagnostic tools and training for diagnostic centre staff regarding an internationally recognized test for measuring intellectual and executive functions. The grant programme was first opened in 2013 with a budget of CZK 2 million; at the moment the 2014 round of the programme is opened with a budget of CZK 5 million.

5. Amend the decree on the education of children, pupils and students with special educational needs and exceptionally gifted children, pupils and students

The draft amendments to Decree Nos. 72/2005 and 73/2005, which are currently under preparation, envisage complete elimination of the possibility to educate socially disadvantaged pupils at schools and in classes and groups established for pupils with health disabilities. This possibility will remain only for pupils with health disadvantages (this category includes e.g. pupils suffering from cancer, psychiatric diseases, etc.), who will still have the possibility, in exceptional cases and for the period necessary to compensate their disadvantage, to be educated at a basic school or

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in a class at a basic school for pupils with health disabilities; however, not in classes or study groups for pupils with mild mental disabilities.

The Decree will be worded in such a way as to prevent unjustified placements of pupils into educational programmes or special schools and classes that do not reflect their educational needs. At the same time, pupils with health disadvantages still need to have access to auxiliary and compensatory measures in their best interests. Thus, even though it has been decided following a debate with all concerned that a certain possibility to place pupils without health disabilities into classes for pupils with health disabilities will remain, this measure will be accompanied by the following safeguards so as to prevent misuse of this option, for instance, also in relation to Roma pupils:

- 1) The possibility of placing a pupil into a class or a group for pupils with health disabilities shall apply only to pupils with health disadvantages and not to pupils with social disadvantages.
- 2) Placement of pupils with health disadvantages may take place only under the terms and conditions mentioned above (in exceptional cases, for the necessary period of time, in the pupil's interest, not into a class for pupils with mild mental disabilities) and upon confirmation by a medical specialist.
- 3) A system of inspections with a specific focus shall be set up by the Czech School Inspectorate to ensure compliance with the new legislation.

The amendments are expected to come into force and effect as of 1 September 2014.

This time frame will allow schools to adopt the necessary measures for their due implementation. With respect to the assumed force and effect, no transitional provisions are envisaged.

6. Revise the annex to the FEP – LMD

The Ministry has drafted the revision including several alternative solutions. Most alternatives include transforming the annex into an independent educational programme. An individual approach to the definition of the outcomes of education is also highlighted.

7. Organize regular meetings of the NGO forum to discuss equal opportunities in education

In 2013 four meetings were organized.

The progress of the above measures was discussed at the June meeting of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs, where a representative of the Ministry of Education presented what the ministry had done to adhere to the Action Plan.

The 2013 amendment to the Education Act amended Section 47 on preparatory classes at basic schools. Preparatory classes will now be established for children with granted postponement of compulsory school attendance instead of aiming at children with diagnosed social disadvantages. The consent of the school advisory facility will not be

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required, but it is assumed that they will have been consulted before the postponement was granted. No other changes in the legislation regulating preparatory classes have been made.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports financially supports education of Roma and other minorities in the Czech Republic through grant programmes. Some of those target minorities have a specific scope, whereas the scope of others is more general. Programmes effective in 2013 are listed below:

Programme supporting education in the languages of national minorities and multicultural education

This programme follows Government Decree No. 98/2002, which amends the conditions and way of providing grants from the State Budget for the activities of members of national minorities, preservation and development of culture, traditions and languages of members of national minorities, dissemination and acceptance of information in languages of members of national minorities that have been living in the Czech Republic as well as their education and the support of integration of members of the Roma community. In 2013 it comprised two modules:

- **Module A – *Education in the languages of national minorities***
Enhancing the language skills of children and young people belonging to national minorities; educational activities for children and young people belonging to national minorities, including publication of educational texts in minority languages; educational materials for teachers focussed on culture and traditions of national and ethnic minorities living in the Czech Republic
- **Module B – *Multicultural education***
Using supportive methods such as biographies, multicultural calendars or stories; designing educational programmes and materials for children and teachers aimed at preventing prejudice and racism; presenting outputs of school projects with multicultural themes (exhibitions, theatre performances, multicultural centres and community centres, etc.)

In 2013 a total of 52 projects were supported (16 projects in Module A and 36 projects in Module B) in a total amount of CZK 15,024,000. Projects aimed at the Roma minority were supported alongside projects aimed at other national minorities in the Czech Republic.

The Programme for Support of Roma Integration aims to create conditions allowing early care for Roma children from socially disadvantaged environments and for their education within the mainstream education system. It also supports professional development of teachers and spare-time activities for children. In 2013, projects were supported in a total amount of CZK 14 million.

The ***Support of Socially Disadvantaged Roma Students at Secondary Schools*** programme offers compensation of costs related to secondary or higher education to Roma families. Stipends are granted to socially disadvantaged Roma pupils who are educated within the daily education system and are under 27 years of age. The support is provided via secondary schools providing secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate or leaving

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examination, vocational education, and conservatory education. In 2013 a total of CZK 5,607,000 was allocated to 1,280 socially disadvantaged Roma students.

Another important programme is the *Funding of Assistant Teachers for Socially Disadvantaged Children, Pupils and Students*. Its aim is to create conditions for creation of new assistant positions, and to help regions and municipalities to bear the costs related to their work. In the 2012/2013 school year there have been a total of 534 assistant teachers, which is an increase compared to 450 assistant teachers in the previous school year. The Ministry of Education allocated CZK 94,250,199 for the support of assistant teachers in 2013.

Funds for projects aimed at equal opportunities in education are also drawn from the ESF, the Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness (OPEC), which is directed by the Ministry of Education. In 2013 the Ministry supported the **Systematic Support of Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic** project, administered by the Palacký University in Olomouc in cooperation with the NGO People in Need. The aim of the project is to design and test a catalogue of measures to support children with health or social disabilities, to design the working standards of assistant teachers and their professional development, and to design and organize new educational courses for teaching staff. The project started on 1 July 2013 and is planned to run until 2015.

In 2013 the Ministry of Education announced a new programme called **Equipping school advisory facilities with diagnostic tools**. New diagnostic tools (such as IDS, CFT 20R, MATERS) will be used in Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres, Special Education Centres or can be used by school psychologists. The aim of the programme is to enable target groups to purchase accredited educational programmes and diagnostic tools for assessing the cognitive skills of children, and thus improve the quality of the way in which the most suitable educational programme for each child is selected. In 2013 the Ministry supported 93 psychologists in 71 school advisory facilities across the country in respect of training in the Woodcock-Johnson method.

- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of the measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

It is too early to evaluate the effect of measures which were proposed or became effective in 2013. In the area of inclusive education, the Czech Republic has introduced annual collection of ethnically disaggregated data on children educated according to the FEP – LMD annex. The goal is to gradually decrease the percentage of Romani children educated within FEP – LMD until it is comparable with that of non-Romani children.

In the long-term perspective, all children – including those with light mental disabilities – should be educated in regular Framework Educational Programmes. Surveys show that the number of children with light mental disabilities educated in mainstream classes through individual integration has been gradually rising: since 2009 there has been a 66% growth. The number of children in special schools has dropped by more than 25%.

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The amendments to, and application of, Decree Nos. 72/2005 and 73/2005 have had a direct impact on the increase in the number of transferred pupils. The above amendments to the Decrees made in 2011 have brought about major changes to the education of pupils according to their individual needs, preventing unjustified placement of pupils into an educational programme that is not adequate for their cognitive capacity. Since 2011 the Czech School Inspectorate has been focusing its efforts on the area of education of pupils with special educational needs. We believe that the introduction of new diagnostic instruments has also played its part. It will be possible to substantiate this statement following evaluation of the data.

This positive trend goes hand in hand with the increasing involvement of assistant teachers. In the 2012/2013 school year there were a total of 534 assistant teachers, which is an increase compared to 450 assistant teachers active in the previous school year. The role of assistant teachers, their working standards and professional development will be the focus of the *Systematic Support of Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic* project mentioned above. This should lead to a more effective involvement of assistant teachers in the education system, thus enabling more children requiring special attention to be educated in mainstream schools.

Since the new instruments used to assess pupils' intellectual capacity are currently being introduced, a proper evaluation of data would be premature. At this stage it can only be stated that introduction of the WJ-IE instrument, which was implemented in summer 2013 for 93 psychologists, has had a positive impact on making more precise recommendations for the education of pupils including pupils integrated on an individual basis. By the end of 2014 the participants will provide evaluation data which will be analysed. The conclusions of the analysis will serve as a basis for defining subsequent measures. Also, other data evaluation systems will be introduced for evaluation on an ongoing basis in 2014.

3. EMPLOYMENT

- *Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support Roma employment in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan or the National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: tailored job search assistance, first work experience programs, targeted activation measures, measures supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship, measures promoting employment of qualified Roma civil servants, eliminating barriers, including discrimination, to entering the labor market, etc.*

The government department responsible for the employment policy and its fulfilment is the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA).

In 2013 no new policy measures targeting Roma minority were implemented. NGOs implemented a number of employment support programmes directly related to Roma, with the majority of these programmes being funded from the ESF, usually from the Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment, within which the priority 3.2 – *Support of Social Integration of Members of the Roma Localities* has been established specifically in relation to Roma.

As part of this programme, **call no. A8** was open from February to October 2013, aiming to fund social integration projects for Roma living in socially excluded localities. Projects should focus on ensuring availability, quality and inspection of services and eliminating existing barriers in access to education, jobs and investment support. Although consultations of project proposals were provided, only four projects were funded in a total amount of CZK 13 million. According to the ESF website, only one project was actually supported, in an amount of CZK 2,929,055.

This could have been partly caused by the fact that supported projects had to be linked to investment support from the IOP programme.

Within the same area of support, **call no. 55** was open from 2009 to October 2013. Cities and towns were eligible to apply and priority was given to localities cooperating with the Agency for Social Inclusion (department of the Office of the Government). In 2013, 11 projects were allocated a total amount of CZK 109 million. The call for applications builds on the intervention area 3.1 of the Integrated Operational Programme - *Support of Social Integration and Social Services*. Within this programme, 24 projects providing social services to people living in socially excluded localities were supported in a total amount of CZK 306,880,000 in 2013.

As a general measure, job centres implemented the activity known as DONEZ (reporting of unemployed people), as part of the **Effective system of employment support, complex inspection and combating illegal work** project. Unemployed people suspected

of working illegally were obliged to report at public administration contact points (“Czech point”) on a frequent and irregular basis in order to make it more difficult for them to work illegally. This programme was modified in 2013 so that such people would report at local job centres. In effect, the programme was dropped in September 2013. The DONEZ programme was severely criticized by the Public Defender of Rights, as well as a number of other human rights initiatives. The programme affected around 170,000 unemployed people, including Roma.

To enhance employment of school graduates, the MoLSA supported the *Work experience for people under 30 years of age* project. This framework contains 14 individual projects (one in each region) and will be realized between July 2013 and August 2015. It aims to support people who have reached various levels of education and have been registered as unemployed for at least four months, and whose total work experience after graduating does not exceed two years. The work experience is realized in the form of subsidized socially beneficial jobs created by the employer. Job centres can allocate up to CZK 24,000 per month to contribute to salary and insurance costs for each socially beneficial job. Job centres can also contribute to the salary of a mentor who will provide guidance and training to the new employee. As at 31 December 2013, there were 1,065 graduates involved in the project.

- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

It is extremely difficult to evaluate the impact of the above-mentioned measures on the Roma minority, as the employment situation of Roma is not systematically monitored.

In 2013 the MoLSA announced a tender for a supplier of comprehensive documentation and an analysis of socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic. One of the goals of this project is to evaluate the impact of projects funded by the Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme (ESF) focused on the integration of socially excluded Roma. At the moment, the survey is under way and the analysis is due to be ready in the first half of 2015.

4. HOUSING

- *Please list any mainstream or targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support housing for Roma (or housing of marginalized people, including Roma) in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan and the National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: eliminating spatial segregation and promoting desegregation, promoting non-discriminatory access to social housing, etc.*

The key department for the field of housing policy in the Czech Republic is the Ministry of Regional Development (MoRD), which creates the national concepts for the housing policy, spatial development and construction affairs. It also manages the finances for the housing policy and coordinates the activities of ministries and other central authorities related to the housing policy, including the coordination of funding in this area. It also fulfils the tasks of the Action Plan of the Decade related to housing, in cooperation with the MoLSA and the Office of the Government.

Currently the basic document for the housing policy is the Concept of Housing Policy 2020, which sets several tasks directly related to the increased availability of housing to persons endangered by social exclusion (responsibility for these tasks is shared by the MoRD and MoLSA). In 2013, two concepts following from the Concept of Housing Policy 2020 were drafted. In the summer, the government adopted the **Concept of the Prevention and Solution of the Homelessness Issue in the Czech Republic 2020**. Its definition of the target group includes not only people living on the streets or in shelter accommodation, but also those living in residential hostels (often Roma).

The issue of residential hostels has been resonating in the Czech Republic for several years. Critics point out that these hostels charge socially needy people overpriced rents for accommodation in often unsuitable conditions. This issue is, among other topics, targeted by the **Social Housing Concept** drafted by the MoRD. The creation of a complex proposal of social housing with the use of the “housing shortage” institute was one of the tasks delegated to the ministry in Government Decree No. 590/2013. The original deadline for submitting this document was 31 December 2013 but due to the unstable political situation, the deadline was postponed to 31 August 2014. The draft document also received harsh criticism by representatives of the academia and civil society. An organization called *Platform for Social Housing*, an informal group of NGOs, specialists in the area of housing and social housing providers, was established as a reaction to MoRD plans. This topic was also thoroughly discussed during the June meeting of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs. A representative of the Platform for Social Housing spoke at the meeting and explained the main issues of the proposed document and the impact it is likely to have. The main point of criticism towards the *Social Housing Concept* was that the document suggested establishing, as a form of social housing, new residential hostels operated by the state, rather than measures which would motivate owners to rent empty flats³.

As a measure to support integration of socially excluded people, including Roma, the MoRD provides funding for construction of new social housing within the **Support for building subsidised housing** programme. The goal of this programme is to create flats that can be rented, in terms of social housing, by people whose access to housing is

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□ It is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of empty flats in the Czech Republic.

disadvantaged. Roma living in socially excluded localities or in localities endangered by social exclusion can benefit from the *Initial Accommodation* grant programme. This programme focusses on providing social accommodation to individuals with a low income who are in a difficult social situation and who – despite making use of other available state social and housing policy measures – do not have access to housing.

The following table shows the number of flats subsidised from the *Support for building subsidised housing* programme:

Year	Areas of support		Number of flats under construction in the given year	Financial subsidy for flats under construction (in CZK)
2013	Subsidised flats	Total	347	196 234 898
		Nursing flats	215	123 834 898
		Initial flats	132	72 400 000

- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

It is too early to evaluate the impact of the adopted new policy documents. The new *Social Housing Concept* was not adopted and it remains to be seen to what extent a new draft will reflect the critical points mentioned. The government plans to introduce a new Social Housing Act in 2014 which will comprehensively address the issue of social housing in the Czech Republic.

As for the impact of the Support for building subsidised housing grant programme, it is not possible to evaluate the impact on Roma because the MoRD does not collect data on the percentage of Roma users of subsidised housing.

6. HEALTH

- Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support the improvement of health care services for the Roma population in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: ensuring equal access to quality healthcare, ensuring basic social security coverage and comprehensive health services to Roma, preventive measures such as medical check-ups, prenatal and postnatal care and family planning, targeted health awareness campaigns, etc.

The key resort for the field of healthcare policies is the Ministry of Health (MoH), which also oversees fulfilment of the tasks listed in the Action Plan of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

The Czech Republic is aware of the practical problems of the Roma in their access to healthcare. The support of the Roma in this field is provided via Roma counsellors operating at the level of municipalities with extended competences, through field workers or social workers of the NGOs.

The National Institute of Public Health was allocated a project in 2013 called *Concept of enhancing health and prevention of diseases in the Roma population*. The aim of this project was to design a national strategy for the enhancement of health focussing on the main risks of the Roma population's lifestyle. The outcomes of the project are now being discussed within the ministry. As part of the above programme, the National Institution of Public Health also organized a workshop for health and medical staff called *Supporting Health of the Romani Population* in December 2013. The workshop was divided into two parts: the first block dealt with the health of the Roma population in general, whereas the second block focussed in particular on making contact, cooperating and communicating with Roma in the area of health.

The *Medical and Social Aid* programme has been running in the Czech Republic since 2006. It was launched within the *SASTIPEN CZ – Health and Social Assistants in Excluded Localities* pilot project. The focus of this service has shifted since the time of the pilot project, from altering attitudes towards health and related public services to supporting users in overcoming the barriers and systemic disadvantages that they have to face when using these services. This change has been caused by the discovery that ethnicity is a strong source of unequal and prejudicial action within public health-related services and that strengthening motivation alone does not ensure standard opportunities to use these services.

In 2013 the number of health and social assistants continued to be very low: there were nine assistants in total, working in four out of the fourteen regions of the Czech Republic. More specifically, there were three health and social assistants in the Moravian-Silesian and Olomouc regions, two in the South Moravian region and one in the South Bohemian region. Even in regions where this programme is conducted, the number of health and social assistants is insufficient.

The Czech Republic has been criticized for **unlawful sterilization of Romani women**. The Government Council for Human Rights, which is an advisory body to the government, looked into the possibility of establishing a mechanism for compensation of the illegally sterilised women and in 2012 approved the motion to provide compensation. However, the government did not discuss this issue in 2013. After a new government was appointed in January 2014, the

new Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation brought this topic up again and claimed his intention to draft an act that would provide for compensation for illegally sterilized women.

The MoH also continued to focus on the health condition of inhabitants in socially excluded localities in terms of prevention of hepatitis A and dysentery epidemics. If such cases are detected, specialist officers visit families in affected localities to provide health education and information.

There are also **educational programmes** being provided in the Czech Republic focussing on medical staff; these programmes aim to prepare them for work with patients from a different socio-cultural background. These courses are offered to medical staff by accredited medical facilities, which focus on ensuring the professional and specialized capability to practise as a doctor, and the Institute of Postgraduate Education in Medicine. An example of this is the *Basics of Medical Ethics, Communication, Management and Legislature* course, which includes these topics. In 2013 this course was re-established as a compulsory element of all medical and health study programmes. Accredited providers of this course were informed by letter on 25 September 2013 about the possibility of using data and documents provided by the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs for the purpose of the course.

- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

The involvement of health and social assistants in socially excluded Roma localities has proved relatively efficient in overcoming barriers on both the individual and the systematic level. It is, however, clear that the scope of this project is insufficient and many localities that would have benefited from this kind of service are not catered for. The lack of a systematic approach to identifying where the needs for this service arise has also been criticized. Despite these issues there are proven results in terms of a change of approach and behaviour of people from the target group, which was motivated by the activity of medical and social aid workers. The most valuable impact is, of course, a long-term change in approach.

Drom, the most prominent provider of Medical and Social Aid, covering the South Moravian, Olomouc and Moravian-Silesian regions, published an overview of the service in 2013 and the results of a quality survey performed in 2013. The results are summarized below.

In 2013 *Drom*'s health and social assistants provided assistance to 450 clients in total, 70% of whom were women. They worked on 776 long-term cases, specified in the table below:

Number and percentage of cases in individual areas			
Type of case	Number of cases		Percentage of successfully solved cases
	number	percentage	
Entering the social care system	211	27%	57%

Registration with a doctor	175	23%	58%
Disease treatment	80	10%	70%
Procedure for diagnosis	72	9%	67%
Health insurance card	71	9%	80%
Other	63	8%	71%
Health insurance debts	41	5%	71%
Health prevention	31	4%	65%
Change in health insurance provider	11	1,4%	82%
Improvement in hygienic conditions	6	0,8%	83%
Vaccination	6	0,8%	100%
Healthier lifestyle	5	0,6%	100%
Planned parenthood	4	0,5%	75%
Total	776	100%	73%

When working on the above cases, health and social assistants provided 7,031 interventions in total. A summary of these interventions is provided below:

Outline of interventions according to type		
Type of intervention	Number of interventions	
	number	percentage
Counselling	1 880	27%
Discussion	1 396	20%
Acting on behalf of the client	911	13%
Assistance	818	12%
Assisting with documents	600	9%
Evaluating cooperation	407	6%
Escorting clients	301	4%
Finding out information	267	4%
Basic counselling	189	3%

Providing contact information	173	2%
Practice	83	1,2%
Other	6	0,1%
Total	7 031	100%

Long-term cases were successfully solved in 73% of cases (i.e. the goals set by the client and the health and social assistant at the beginning of the cooperation were reached).

In 2013 *Drom* initiated a survey to evaluate the quality of the Medical and Social Aid based on feedback from clients and participating organizations. The survey comprised feedback from 147 randomly selected clients and 17 representatives of participating organizations (doctors, medical staff, local authorities, job centres and NGOs).

The results of the survey have proved that the service is perceived by the clients as having a positive impact on their situation: 76% of clients reported at least a partial improvement. These improvements concerned, for example, improved health as a result of registering with a doctor and attending regular check-ups. 61% of clients claimed that they learned something useful for their life from their health and social assistant, in terms of dealing with doctors and authorities; 37% claim that they will be able to solve similar situations independently in future. 78% of clients expressed interest in further continuation of the service and 56% mentioned a specific case in which they would like to receive assistance.

Feedback provided by representatives of participating organizations was also positive: doctors value its impact on health education and prevention of diseases; and municipal authority officers welcome the contribution of health and social assistants during meetings with clients concerning social benefits. They claim that health and social assistants ensure that the clients fully understand the information provided and they can also serve as a contact person for the authorities if needed.

Please note that the overview and quality survey above does not relate to the Medical and Social Aid service provided in the South Bohemian region.

7. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

- *Please list any measures that were designed to support the fight against anti-Roma discrimination and racism. Please describe to the extent possible the impact of these measures (including quantitative and descriptive data).*

On 1 September 2009 Act No. 198/2009 Coll., on Equal Treatment and Legal Forms of Protection against Discrimination (the Anti-discrimination Act) came into force. **The ombudsman plays a crucial role in the field of monitoring and fulfilment of the Anti-Discrimination Act.** The ombudsman annually provides the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs with information regarding his activities in relation to the Roma. This information is part of the *Information about the Fulfilment of Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015* document, which is annually presented to the government. However, no precise

data on the number of Roma-related cases he solved is available, as the ombudsman's office does not register the ethnicity of the complainants.

The data provided for 2013 show that the most frequent case of Roma-related discrimination dealt with by the ombudsman's office pertained to access to housing. The cases included properties owned by municipal authorities. The ombudsman often criticized lack of transparency in the rules for allocating municipal flats, and issued individual recommendations for affected towns.

One of the most prominent issues of 2013 in the Czech Republic was a series of **anti-Roma protests**. There were in total 26 protests in the Ústí nad Labem, South Bohemian, Olomouc and Plzeň regions and in Prague; the biggest protests in terms of the number of participants took place in the towns/cities of Duchcov, České Budějovice and Ostrava. The series of protests highlighted the risk of progressively escalating waves of protests ignited by an isolated incident. Some of the localities where anti-Roma protests were organized had not experienced any notable social tensions previously, nor had they been considered as more risky in terms of criminality.

The quarterly Report on Extremism in the Czech Republic issued by the Security Information Service (BIS) for the second quarter of 2013 noted that the majority of protesters who took part in the anti-Roma events were common citizens with no links to extremist groups. The report warned that the frustrations of this part of population resulting from – in their opinion – lack of effective solutions to problems with the Romani minority, combined with latent anti-gipsyism, might pose a greater problem than the activity of more radical, yet better monitored extremist groups.

The series of anti-Roma protests began in spring 2013 in the town of Duchcov and followed in České Budějovice. They were triggered by a series of small-scale incidents between Roma and non-Roma individuals: in Duchcov it was an attack on a married couple, whereas in České Budějovice it was an argument between parents at a children's playground. The majority of protesters were locals who found a scapegoat towards whom they could air their frustrations from the overall situation in the region.

As a reaction to anti-Roma protests the Czech government created a working group led by the Government Commissioner for Human Rights to plan measures to prevent and respond to social unrest. The working group submitted a plan aiming mainly to appeal to ministries to speed up implementation of measures that would, in the longer term, help solve issues which lead to escalation of social unrest. Based on this plan, the government issued Decree No. 935/2013 containing an action plan for the relevant ministries to adopt measures in the areas of employment, social security, insolvency and education. The decree also stated that the relevant ministries are to react in a coordinated and effective manner to incorrect information being spread about Roma and to inform about activities and measures to prevent escalation of social tensions.

In January 2013 the government agreed on a state administration savings plan, which included the **intention to merge the Museum of Romani Culture with the Moravian Museum in Brno**. The Government Commissioner for Human Rights expressed her disagreement in a letter to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Culture and negotiated with the ministry. This issue was also discussed by the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs at its meeting on 25 March 2013. Eventually, the plan to merge the two institutions was dropped.

Efforts continue to **build a Memorial of the Roma Holocaust** on the location of the former Gypsy concentration camp in Hodonín u Kunštátu (following from Government Decree

No. 158 issued on 2 March 2011). In 2013 the mass cemetery where the victims of the camp were buried was officially pronounced a historic landmark. The National Pedagogical Museum and Library of J. A. Komenský, which is the administrator of the Hodonín Memorial, organized a contest for architecture students for the design of the memorial site. A committee of architects and other relevant experts selected the three best designs out of 30 submissions. The memorial site is due to be opened in 2016.

- *Please list any measures that were designed to support gender equality between Roma women and men. Please describe to the extent possible the impact of these measures (including quantitative and descriptive data).*

Most measures focusing on Roma do not specifically target Romani women. On the other hand, the *Roma Inclusion Strategy up to the year 2020*, which is currently being drafted, will acknowledge the specific issues that Romani women face (e.g. multiple discrimination on the job market), and promote measures to overcome them (e.g. supporting self-employed Romani women).

In 2012 the Government Commissioner for Human Rights organized a workshop called *Romani women* which tackled common issues Romani women share in the Czech Republic and offered insights into their lives and the significance of their role in the community.

As for organizations focussing on Romani women, there is an informal group of Romani women called **Manushe**, which has been active within the NGO Slovo 21 since 2000. More than 170 Romani women and men from all around the Czech Republic are active members of the group. *Manushe* is a member of the *Czech Women's Lobby* and *European Women's Lobby* organizations. *Manushe* has organized several major projects so far, including a hip-hop video spot advising parents against routinely registering their children in schools for children with mental disabilities. Another project, a politics course for Romani women, resulted in three participants running in the 2006 local elections, and one participant being the leader of the Green Party in the Pardubický region in the 2010 local elections. In 2013 *Manushe* took part in the International Conference of Romani Women in Helsinki and presented their activities during the Women's Congress in Prague.