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This document was discussed by the Working Group for International Cooperation of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs.

1. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR ROMA INCLUSION

- *Please describe (if any) changes in 2014 in the participation of Roma in decision-making processes/arrangements and public administration structures*

The National Coordinator for the Decade in the Czech Republic is Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation Jiří Dienstbier. The Minister is the chairman of **The Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs** (the Council). The Council is a permanent advisory and initiative body of the Government of the Czech Republic on issues related to Roma integration. It is the highest authority enabling the participation of the Roma in preparation and implementation of the Roma integration policies. It is composed on the basis of parity of ministers or their deputies and civic members who represent Roma civil society and communities. The civil part of the Council comprises 18 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.

In 2014, the Council whose civic members had not been appointed from 17th June 2013 because of the resignation of Prime Minister Petr Nečas resumed its activities. On 12th May 2014 the government adopted Resolution no. 352 of the new Statute of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs and appointed the civil part of the Council. The new statute primarily anchored four year term of office for the civic Council members. Until then their membership in the Council was linked to the governmental term, thereby with the end of the term of the governmental term also their membership ended. Furthermore, the new statute explicitly states that after the end of the term of their office the members of the Council perform their duties until new members are appointed.

In 2014, the Council met twice – in May and October. At the first meeting of 27th May 2014, the Council set up the Committee for cooperation with local authorities, the Committee for monitoring the Agency for Social Inclusion, Media Committee, Working Group on Education, Working Group for International Cooperation and Working Group for Compensation of the Roma.

Activities of the Council including activities of its committees and working groups are supported by **the Office of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs** (the Office), which is a structural unit of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. The Office is also National Roma Contact Point which is responsible for implementation and monitoring of the national Roma integration strategy.



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At the Office of the Government there also acts the **Agency for Social Inclusion** (the Agency), whose focus are not Roma but generally socially excluded localities – in which the vast majority of the population are Roma people. The Council, through its Committee monitors the work of the Agency, mainly approves key documents of the Agency and selects the localities for cooperation with the Agency.

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.

- *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 main theme of 2014 was the preparation of a key document for Roma integration touching all areas of Roma life. On 23rd February 2015 the Czech government has adopted the **Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020** (the Strategy). It had been a long but very open process of preparation before the strategy was adopted. The Working Group for the preparation of the concept of the Strategy was established by the Committee for Cooperation with Regional and Local Authorities of the Office on 7th February 2013. Since that time a dialogue about the Strategy has proceeded. The draft of the Strategy has been published on the website of the Czech government since 14th May 2014. Hundreds of suggestions and comments from a variety of actors were incorporated in the Strategy.

One of the most important principles of the Strategy is the involvement of the Roma. The Roma are considered partners whose needs and opinions should be respected and taken into account. The Strategy is compatible with the process of emancipation of the Roma and supports it. The Roma were involved in developing the Strategy and will be involved in putting it into practice on national, regional and local levels and also during the subsequent monitoring.

On 29th May 2014 the Office, together with the NGOs “**Slovo 21**” (**Decade Focal Point in the Czech Republic**) and “Úřad pro demokratické instituce a lidská práva” (ODIHR) organized seminars called “Equal access to quality education for Roma children”. The seminar was aimed at access of Roma children to quality education. Among the 50 participants were government representatives and Roma parents as well as representatives of the civil society and international community.

On 25th June 2014 a round table on the Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020 whose draft version was published on 14th May 2014 on the website of the Office took place for the purpose of enabling the public to be involved in the creation of the document. The comments



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were collected until 28th May 2014, and then evaluated. At the roundtable the comments were dealt with and an updated version of the document was presented.

On 20th August 2014 a seminar was held on the Roma Integration Strategy in the context of the European Structural Funds and investment funds. There were introduced the planned operational programmes, namely OP Employment, OP Research, Development and Innovation, and Integrated OP. At the seminar there was presented a proposal for a coordinated approach to socially excluded localities. The seminar was organized by the the Office.

On 1st October 2014 a seminar on community-led local development and local action groups was held. Seminar for the representatives of the NGO sector was prepared by the Office in cooperation with the NGOs “Slovo 21” and “Otevřená společnost”. The aim of the seminar was to bring Roma NGOs information and contacts with local action groups which play a key role in community politics and in obtaining financial support from the EU and national programmes. Local action groups are communities of citizens, NGOs, private business sector, and public administration which are independent on political decisions and which cooperate on development of regions.

On 16th October 2014 the Office organized a workshop on community work. Due to a change in the focus of the grant programme of the Office in the field of human rights – Prevention of social exclusion and community work – a workshop was organized for potential applicants for subsidies on the topic of community work. The aim of the seminar was to inform about management of community work, share good practice with implementers of successful projects and to raise awareness about funding opportunities not only through the subsidy programme of the Office of the Government but also ESI funds, which will focus on community work in the period 2014-2020. The seminar was attended by representatives of the Roma society, and representatives of non-profit organizations which successfully implement community work across the country.

From 19th to 21st October 2014 there was a thematic visit of the Council of Europe experts aimed at early childhood education in the country. During the visit there was arranged a meeting with representatives of NGOs on the topic of preschool education for Roma children. The meeting was attended by representatives of the National focal points of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and other representatives of organizations who are actively involved in implementing programmes in the field of preschool education of Roma children.

On 20th November 2014 there was held the third meeting of the Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation Jiri Dienstbier, employees of the Agency for Social Inclusion, and the Office of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs with Roma personalities and representatives of Roma organizations. The meeting was attended by fifty Roma personalities, field workers, activists and workers of Roma NGOs from across the country. The meeting discussed the form of operational programmes of the EU funds in 2015-2020. Participants of the meeting were informed about how social inclusion will be supported from the individual operational programmes, and about the way how some funds will be



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distributed as part of a coordinated approach to tackle the situation in socially excluded localities, supported by the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs, Local Development, and Education, Youth and Sports.

- *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 Council with all of its working bodies, especially the Committee for cooperation with local authorities, the Committee for monitoring the Agency for Social Inclusion, and Working Group for International Cooperation. These working bodies comment on the progress of fulfilment of government policies towards Roma 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. Intensive everyday cooperation of the Office with the regional coordinators for Roma issues and the Roma advisors is a key information channel and a tool for immediate feedback from regions and localities.

Furthermore the Office carries out public administrative control of subsidy programmes of the Office of the Government such as **Prevention of Social Exclusion and Support of Community Work** or **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.

With the adoption of the Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020 the mechanisms for its monitoring have been set.

The tasks which are being fulfilled by the individual actors of the monitoring and evaluation process of the Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020 are given mainly by the Statute of the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs. Apart from a system of monitoring the Strategy as a whole, which is based on best practice, for the period until 2020 there will also be created a complementary system for monitoring of fulfilling the Strategy through ESI Funds. This system is inevitably more complex which is given, among other things, by the existence of separate and highly developed structures for management of both ESI Funds as a whole and the individual operational programmes.

Basic monitoring and evaluation cycle lasts one year and is always completed when the Government discusses the Report on the Implementation of the Roma Integration Strategy up



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to 2020 which will also provide information about the situation of the Roma minority in the past year.

The processes of monitoring and evaluation are based on the already established and proven procedures; however, at the same time collection and analysis of the data will be expanded and improved.

At the beginning of a calendar year the Office will collect the data on implementation of the Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020 in the past year from all the ministries, regions and other actors, including NGOs and Roma representatives. The system of monitoring the interventions will focus both on evaluation of ESI Funds and on interventions that are financed from the state budget, as has been the case so far in the Report on the Situation of the Roma Minority in the past year. To strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system working groups for the individual thematic areas will be established which will annually evaluate the implementation of the tasks arising from the Strategy.

The outputs of the working groups will form the basis for the preparation of the Report on the Implementation of the Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020.

In addition to evaluating the implementation of the given measures, the Report will also focus on monitoring a set of indicators related to Roma integration which is currently being created in cooperation with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

- *What is the total amount and percentage of the 2014 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 65,809,145** for Roma integration in 2014.

The total Czech national budget expenditure in 2014 was CZK 1,211,608,153,000. The expenditure allocated specifically for Roma integration was therefore 0.0054 % of the total state budget expenditure.

Of this amount the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports allocated CZK 18,714,800, Ministry of Culture CZK 18,915,510 and Office of the Government CZK 28,178,835. The total expenditure of the Government Office for the needs of the Decade was CZK 61,994 in 2014.

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.



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- *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 2015?*

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 2020. The strategy outlines funding for Roma integration between 2014 and 2020 on the national/central level and from EU funds, especially ESIF.

Ten Operational Programmes were established for the period 2014–2020 in the Czech Republic. Implementation of the Strategy is the ex-ante conditionality for drawing money from ESIF, namely from the OP Research, Development and Education and the Integrated Regional Operational Programme. Another OP which has a great significance for supporting Roma integration is OP Employment. These three Operational Programmes are crucial for financing the measures of the Strategy.



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2. EDUCATION

The government department responsible for the education policy and its fulfilment is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The ministry cooperates with administrative bodies and specialized agencies, especially Czech School Inspectorate, the National Institute for Education or National Institute for Further Education.

The key documents related to the Roma minority in the field of education in 2014 were these documents:

The 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 was revised in 2015, introduces measures preventing any possible discrimination routes and allows stricter control and methodical leadership at all levels of advisory, decision-making and executive processes. The measures in the Action Plan are related to the effort to ensure that all children have equal access to education as it is guaranteed in the Constitution and the Education Act. It includes individual steps to remove indirect discrimination of Roma pupils, which has been found by the European Court of Human Rights. Performance measures are presented twice a year to the Committee of Ministers in Strasbourg.

In relation to the Action Plan of measures for implementation of the judgment in the D. H. and Others v. the Czech Republic case, in November 2014 the Czech School Inspectorate conducted an electronic survey to inspect the number of Roma pupils educated according to the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education with the Annex Specifying the Education of Children with Light Mental Disabilities (FEP - LMD). According to the results of the survey, Roma pupils represent 9.5 % of the total number of pupils educated under the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education, but **32.4 % of the total number of pupils educated under FEP – LMD**. In comparison with the previous year, there is a **decrease of 11 %** of Roma pupils educated according to the FEP – LMD.

On 9th July 2014 government adopted **the Strategy of Educational Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020** which stipulates reduction of inequality in education as one of its priorities (chapter 3.1) including indicators for measuring its progress.

The amendment to the Education Act was submitted to the Government in 30th June 2014 and after long legislative process entered force on 17th April 2015. The amendment inter alia deals with education of people with special educational needs, as well as with admission to primary school preparatory classes for all children. Czech government aims to promote inclusive education and equal access to education for all children, so that education took place in mainstream education. In the event that a child needs special support, it should remain in the mainstream using supportive measures.

The Amendment introduces a new classification system that divides children, rather than by type of diagnosis, by the degree of necessary supportive measures in grades 1-5, which



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depends on the degree of children needs. According to these levels will be released funds for the implementation of supportive measures. But there is still necessary to solve the funding system so that schools received funding to provide supportive measures when there special educational needs of a child are identified. For the implementation of the Amendment it will also be very important how the amendment of the public notice to the Education Act, which will for example regulate the way children are placed in special education.

The preparatory classes are currently allowed only for socially disadvantaged children. The amendment introduces the possibility of education in preparatory classes for all students. One of the expected effects of this measure is also eliminating the risk of segregation of Roma children in pre-school education.

In 23rd October 2014 was signed **the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and legislation and the Czech School Inspectorate**. The memorandum focuses on the involvement of experts versed in the problems of inspection activities on position of “invited persons”. The original goal which focused mainly on participation of Roma in inspection and control activities CSI in relation to monitoring education of Roma children has been extended to a group of children, pupils and students with special educational needs. The importance of this initiative is not only in the actual participation of Roma and their point of view within the control activities of the inspection, but lies mainly in the empowerment and taking responsibility of Roma minority.

Since 2014 the Ministry of Education in cooperation with Czech School Inspectorate realizes regular annual survey of school counselling facilities, always in the spring. The aim of the survey is to monitor the implementation of systemic measures in the field of diagnostics and practice of issuing recommendations for the inclusion of pupils in appropriate educational programs by educational counselling institutions so that the data can be compared with the actual situation in the schools subsequently.

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 2014 are listed below.

The Programme Supporting Education in the Languages of National Minorities and Multicultural Education 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. This programme consists of two modules: A) Education in the languages of national minorities and B) Multicultural education. In 2014 a total of 57 projects were supported (19 in Module A and 38 in Module B) in total amount of CZK 15 million. Projects aimed at the Roma minority were supported alongside projects aimed at other national minorities in the Czech Republic.



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The Programme Funding of Assistant Teachers for Socially Disadvantaged Children, Pupils and Students aims to create conditions for creation of new assistant positions, and to help regions and municipalities to bear the costs related to their work. In 2014 531 assistants were supported by total amount of CZK 105 million.

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 2014 56 projects were supported in a total amount of CZK 13,997,700.

The Support of Socially Disadvantaged Roma Students at Secondary Schools programme offers compensation of costs related to secondary or higher education to Roma families. The support is provided via secondary schools providing secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate or leaving examination, vocational education, and conservatory education. In 2014 a total of CZK 4,717,100 was allocated to 1,048 socially disadvantaged Roma students.

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. Also in 2014 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 “Člověk v tísni”. 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. The effect of this programme since 2013 till the end 2014 is that every Special Education Centre disposes of at least one diagnostic tool together with a trained person.

National Institute for Further Education provides the possibility of training of teaching staff in accredited programs. The program, which is specifically devoted to the issue of national and ethnic minorities called **Ethnic minorities, history, contemporary, multicultural education and human rights**.



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3. EMPLOYMENT

The government department responsible for the employment policy and its fulfilment is the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). At the regional level, the Labour Office is pursuing a policy of employment including specific regional projects financed from structural funds (especially ESF) and regional targeted programs.

Implementation of active employment policy is ethnically neutral because the active employment policy is deliberate to support the inclusion of disadvantaged people in the labour market regardless of their ethnic or cultural origin. Due to the prevailing characteristics of the Roma minority in the labour market, however they are usually the target group of active employment policy because they are mostly people with low or inadequate qualifications and the long-term unemployed. However people from different socio-cultural backgrounds than the majority society also fall into the category of job seekers, who receive special attention in the labour market, including spooling on active employment policy instruments, from another unspecified reason. Programmes and active employment policy measures are implemented also for members of the Roma minority, if they have handicaps in the labour market which objectively prevent them find jobs.

Jobseekers from disadvantaged socio-cultural environment receive special care in the mediation of employment. This care based on an individual approach to each individual, the assignment to active employment policy according to the interests and needs, the use of advisory activities in promoting of socially beneficial jobs for these vulnerable clients in regional efforts to gain support for the performance of community service.

Special provisions, paragraph 33 of the Employment Act determines which candidates receive special care. Explicitly listed are candidates who are disadvantaged by health, age, childcare, or other serious reasons. The Roma minority is not explicitly mentioned in the provision, but it is implicitly assumed that they belong to a group of other reasons.

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**.

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. 19 and follow-up call no. A8 aim 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. In the call no. 19 totally 76 projects were allocated a total amount of CZK 458 million and in the call no. A8 4 projects were allocated a total amount of CZK 13 million. Within the same area of support cities and towns were eligible to apply in call no. 15 and call no. 55, regions were eligible to apply in call no. B4. Totally 35 projects were supported in the amount of CZK 600 million.



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In 2014 in the priority 3. 3 24 projects with the target group Ethnic minorities and persons from another socio-cultural environment were implemented. Projects were focused largely on the Roma minority, but some are also targeted to other groups (totally 11 beneficent groups are defined in the priority 3. 3). Participants from the Roma minority are also represented in the projects explicitly aimed at different target groups, e.g. people over 50, people under 25 and youngsters under 18 without qualifications or with low qualifications and persons with disabilities. These are usually two-year grant projects with an average grant amount of CZK 5 million primarily implemented by non-profit organizations, municipalities and educational societies. These projects aim to tackle social exclusion on the labour market and their impact has local character – they are focused on working directly with the target group. The main project activities consist in consultancy work, diagnostics, motivating and activating activities, education (especially retraining), job search and job creation, with wage support.

The Labour Office implements within its regional division, two regional individual projects aimed at socially excluded localities in the Ústí Region and the Moravian-Silesian Region. The main objective of these projects is to help people who often face multiple disabilities generally formed by their own debt, which prevents them from taking legal employment for fear of execution, lack of qualifications, often not exceeding level of basic education, unpreparedness for the formal labour market rules and the level of material poverty, while where even the cost of commuting is a significant barrier to getting a job. Through its activities, projects are designed to provide people from the target group helping to overcome these difficulties, in the form of individual and group counselling, motivation and activation, retraining, job assistance including escorts for job interviews and mediation of supported employment using labour assistance even after the first few weeks at the new workplace participants. Till the end of 2014 1270 individuals entered into these projects in 1270 and 495 participants managed to arrange employment.

The regional division of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem implemented the project Socially excluded localities in the Ústí Region. The project arose as a response to the situation in the Ústí nad Labem Region, in which a total of 63 socially excluded communities in which they live more than 20 thousand inhabitants, of whom the greater part of Roma origin. In this project, the Labour Office cooperates with the Working Group on Social Localities in the Ústí nad Labem Region and the Agency for Social Inclusion. Together with these organizations has been processed analysis and selecting locations that will be supported through the project. The project is designed to provide assistance to the target group through individual and group counselling, motivation and activation, retraining, job assistance including accompaniments to job interviews and mediation of supported employment using work assistance even after the first few weeks at the new workplace participants. The project also aims to create positive role models in various locations, not just inside the locality but also beyond it. The project also tries to enhance cooperation between the actors in each locality so that assistance will be targeted and results will be sustainable.

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



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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.

4. HOUSING

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.

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). It is an overarching document that requires the elaboration additional documents particularly **the Social Housing Concept**. The Social Housing Concept which should help people living for a long time in substandard housing such as residential housing was to be submitted initially in 2013, then in 2014, has been postponed again.

As a measure to support integration of socially excluded people, including Roma, the MoRD annually provides funding for construction of new social housing within **the Support for building subsidized 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 disadvantaged. Roma living in socially excluded localities or in localities endangered by social exclusion can benefit from **the Initial Accommodation grant programme**. This programme focuses 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. Compared to the previous year, the number of supported flats has increased significantly from 347 in 2013 to 430 in 2014.

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The table shows the number of flats subsidized from the Support for building subsidized housing programme in 2014

Year	Areas of support	Number of flats under construction in the given year	Financial subsidy for flats under construction (in CZK)	
2014	Subsidized flats	Total	430	237,577,205
		Nursing flats	223	128,978,500
		Initial flats	207	108,598,705

The number of socially excluded localities increased from 310 in 2006 to 606 in 2014 according to the Analysis of socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic. It is a locality where there is a concentration of 20-25 people living in substandard conditions that occupy area which is spatially and symbolically bounded. In 2014 there were identified from 95,000 to 115,000 inhabitants living there. The vast majority (around 87 %) of them belongs to the Roma minority, but the trend is that the ratio of non-Roma residents is growing, particularly seniors.

Socially excluded locality loses its predominantly urban character. Locations are breaking down into smaller units. Traditional localities cease to exist. People migrate to more remote municipalities with low functional infrastructure. While people from the major society are leaving the countryside and moved to the cities to for work, socially excluded people are moving to the countryside for financially very affordable housing due to the migration of original inhabitants to the cities. Socially excluded localities are most situated in the Karlovy Vary Region, the Ústí Region, the Olomouc Region, Moravian-Silesian Region and on the periphery of regions.

The issue of residential hostels has been resonating in the Czech Republic for several years. Usually these hostels charge socially needy people overpriced rents for accommodation in often unsuitable conditions. They are not adapted or suitable for permanent housing, in spite of families with children living there. In 2014 there were 700 residential hostels in which 27,000 socially excluded people lived. It is the highest number in the history that implies heyday of this form of substandard housing while Czech Republic lacks Social Housing Concept.



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5. HEALTH

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.

In 2013 there was a project of the MoH called **Conception of health promotion and disease prevention in the Roma population**. Its aim was to prepare a targeted strategy for promotion of health of the Roma. It was divided into two parts: specialist and marketing/communicative. The worse state of health of the Roma is not caused by their ethnicity but by poverty and other socio-economical factors. Usually, they represent living conditions which the Roma cannot change themselves because they lack resources, both financial and intellectual. The key element for effective support in this area is mainly active work in socially excluded areas done by workers of primary prevention of diseases and health promotion. The communication strategy was based on the principles of social marketing, taking into account cultural differences of the Roma and using the existing structures, including the health and social assistants. Dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect were the building blocks for creating an effective relationship between the mainstream society and the Roma minority. It showed that the Roma are very sensitive to any traces of unintentional discrimination which leads to rejection of all other information. Therefore it would be useful if intervention and services for health promotion could be provided by persons who the Roma trust, preferably Roma persons. This conception was created by 13 experts who cooperated with the representatives of Roma NGOs in Usti Region and Moravskoslezsky Region.

In 2014 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 focusing 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.

Regarding the removal of barriers in access to health care, in terms of the applicable law such barriers do not exist. If a situation arises that a general practitioner refuses to register a person, there is a statutory procedure how to obtain a registration with a GP. The obligation of



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health insurance funds to provide its clients with accessible health care is set by law no. 48/1997 Coll.

DROM, Romany Centre (DROM), a charitable organization founded by the City of Brno is the most prominent provider of Medical and Social Aid, covering the South Moravian, Olomouc and Moravian-Silesian regions. Since 2007 an outreach programme **Health and Social Care Assistance** has been implemented as a registered social service, supported by grants from the state budget for provision of social services. In 2014 DROM provided this service in a similar extent and in areas as in 2013; the service was provided through a total of seven health and social assistants in three regions of the Czech Republic in seven localities.

The service focuses on two main objectives. On one side there is the motivation of the target group for the connection to public services related to health care, motivation to prevention and emphasis on the fulfilment of obligations and commitments (health insurance and debts on it, mandatory vaccination of children, etc.). Equally important is the implementation of the second objective, which is to protect and enforce the rights and legitimate interests of people from the target group. Assessment of its necessity stems from the recognition that (attributed) ethnicity is a major source of unequal and prejudiced behaviour in the public services related to health and that the mere strengthening of the users' motivation does not provide a standard possibility of using these services. Workers of the service, in the form of assistance, conduct in the interest of the client or escorts help service users with registering with a doctor, with enforcing claims for compensation aids or disability benefits, protection of their interests at health insurance companies, etc.

On the side of the users of the service there are great reserves of preventive care which basically did not exist before health and social assistants, except for preventive examinations and vaccinations for children, which are overseen by Authority for Social and Legal Protection of Children (although some change in compliance with vaccination schedules can be attributed to the work of health and social assistants). The inhabitants of socially excluded localities underestimate the importance of preventive examinations, simple thoughts prevail (“Why to go to the doctor when I am OK, I will go when I am ill.”), a strong role is played by panic fear of pain, or the possibly fatal consequences of examinations and procedures (which are further escalated in connection with the experience of negative, hostile, and discriminatory behaviour of medical personnel).

Health and social assistants (through its clients) are confronted with cases of conduct on the part of doctors and medical staff which raises suspicions of discrimination on ethnic grounds, which can be identified as illegal. The most common is the refusal to register clients as patients on the grounds of full capacity, coupled with reluctance or rejection to issue confirmation of this refusal, which is an obligation imposed on doctors by the public health insurance law. Similar behaviour appears not only in medical facilities but unfortunately also in social system, which is manifested by providing misleading information or immediate rejection to release a form, even an application form for benefits for persons with disabilities.



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6. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

On 1st 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.

Ombudsman in 2014 highlighted the issue of discrimination against Roma in the housing market. One social worker of one NGO complained to Ombudsman that when looking for housing for her clients often encounters that real estate brokers refuse to convey rental housing to Roma. Given that the complainant's claim could be verified only with difficulty, Ombudsman asked the Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights for cooperation in the form of **situational testing**. Employee of the counselling centre conducted three test calls during which impersonated a person interested in rental housing. In two cases, testing employees introduced as Horváthová (typical Roma surname), in one case, the Roma employee introduced her own name. Brokers are then asked employees whether they are Roma. After the worker answering this question positively, brokers told them that the required tour of the apartment cannot be provided because it is against the will of flat owner. The Ombudsman concluded that real estate brokers are guilty of direct discrimination, because in terms of antidiscrimination law is legally significant objective behaviour of the service provider, not the inner motive. In the event that the allegations regarding brokers instruction owners of dwellings were true, the owners committed discrimination in the form of guidance. The method of situational testing of real estate brokers provoked the indignation of the public and media and has become a scandal which has continued in 2015.

In December 2014 the Government approved the proposal of the Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation to extend the powers of the Ombudsman whereby the Ombudsman should have the possibility of recourse to the Constitutional Court concerning the repeal of laws or their parts and also should have the option to make a public action against discrimination. These are extraordinary privileges that would Ombudsman used only in essential cases in which all other legal options were exhausted.

The Roma Integration Strategy up to 2020 which was prepared and discussed through the year 2014 was finally adopted on 23rd February 2015 by the Czech government. All its strategic objectives are in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination and the principle of equal treatment. They do not apply only to the four key areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing, but all areas. In addition to being part of general principles, anti-discriminatory measures are embodied in a separate strategic objective: Ensuring equal treatment of Roma and their protection against discrimination. It contains



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specific sub-objectives: 1) Consistency of legislation and its implementation with prohibition of discrimination; 2) Assistance to and protection of victims of discrimination; 3) Tolerant society that respects its diversity and enables development to all its constituents.

During 2014, the Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation has been preparing draft of an act that would provide compensation for illegally sterilized women. Compensation applies particularly to women who were illegally sterilized in 1971-1991. Another important legislative proposal by the Minister in 2014 prepared draft abolition Framework Educational Programme for basic education with the annex specifying the education of children with light mental disabilities (FEP – LMD).

Roma women are represented in The Government Council for Roma Community Affairs, and in all their committees and working groups, except that in addition they have an important position. There are 6 women out of 18 members of the civil part of the Council. Council members, as well as the Office of the Council of the situation of Roma women continuously engaged. The theme of the situation of Roma women appears regularly in the Report on the status of the Roma minority and the Report on the Implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. The theme is also mentioned in the Strategy for Roma Integration in 2020. If necessary, the subject is under discussion in the Council.

In 2014, the organization “Slovo 21” published a unique study, "The situation of Roma women in the Czech Republic." The project aimed to find out what the real position of Roma women occupy, and what daily challenges and obstacles they face. The research was conducted from September 2013 to May 2014, the questionnaires were completed by 600 Roma women. The questionnaire survey was carried out by 20 trained Roma women and included topics suggested by members of the Roma women's groups Manushe.

The research showed that Roma women have mostly primary school or secondary school education without school-leaving examination. In the family, mostly Roma women decide together with the partner. Women devote to childcare; the same is true in the case of raising children. Roma women mostly gave birth when they were 19, 18 and 20 years. In the family it is almost exclusively the woman who decides about contraception and starting a family. A vast majority of Roma women use contraception, mostly hormonal.

Although the roles attributed to the sons and daughters in the family are mostly nearly identical, they differ in greater emphasis on housekeeping for the daughters and a greater emphasis on success in school for the son.

It can be concluded that Roma girls should be aided by the education system to erase the deficit of time for education, which may arise due to obligations at home. The vast majority of women consider their children's education important or very important. As their priorities in life Roma women see children, health, housing and finance. Education, wider family and security are less important, while career, religion and neighborly relations are almost irrelevant.



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Most women are unemployed. Employed Roma women mostly reported exercising professions of cleaners, shop assistants, workers and cooks. Very rarely they engage in local politics (petitions, participating in council meetings, demonstrations, public debates, etc.), and almost none of them is a member of a political party or NGO. Roma women in most cases use information technology, mostly from home, are active on social networks and search for information online, communicate, look for work, leisure and make friends. It can be said that this has a great potential for work and informing of Roma women's community.



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7. THE DECADE IN A REVIEW

Approaching the end of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 initiative, we would appreciate your reflection on its overall implementation in your country. Therefore, please kindly consider to list up to five principal achievements and five shortcomings in the design and implementation of the Decade National Action Plans/National Roma Integration Strategies.

Such achievements and shortcomings might include policy design, policy implementation, budgeting, specific institutionalized practices, monitoring and evaluation processes, cooperation with key stakeholders. Please be as specific as possible.

Principal Achievements:

- Better international cooperation in the fields of Roma integration – learning best practices from other countries that lead into e.g. establishment of the Agency for Social Inclusion;
- The process of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion” has created a long term pressure on the fulfillment of goals from the National Decade Action Plan, thereby supported the government strategy/plans in the field of Roma integration. In this way it facilitated the process that preceded the National Roma Integration Strategy;
- It facilitated and strengthened cooperation with the NGOs in the Czech Republic, especially with the creation of the Decade National Focal Points;
- Strengthened the implementation and monitoring of national policies – it monitored the implementation of the major policies in the field of education (various governmental funding), partially employment (with specific ethnic data estimations until 2012), health (a so called “Roma mediators” – Health and Social Care Assistance);
- Development of the position of the Regional Roma Coordinator (strengthening their position).



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Shortcomings:

- Lack of ethnic data to support targeted measures and data collection;
- Lack of micro financing and support for Roma NGOs;
- Persistence of school which are attended by Roma students mainly in socially excluded localities;
- Absence of the social housing legislation;
- Failure to tackle indebtedness as a new challenge.