

# CZECH REPUBLIC

## COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 2000

Country Information and Policy Unit  
Home Office

### CONTENTS

<u>I Scope of Document</u>	1.1 - 1.5
<u>II Geography</u>	2.1 - 2.2
<u>III History</u> <u>Recent political history</u> <u>Economic matters</u>	3.1 - 3.12 3.13 - 3.15
<u>IV Instruments of the State</u> <u>Political affairs</u> <u>The Legislature</u> <u>The President of the Republic</u> <u>Council of Ministers</u> <u>Judicial System</u>	4.1 4.2 - 4.5 4.6 4.7 4.8
<u>V General Human Rights Situation</u> <u>Introduction</u> <u>Actual practice with regard to human rights</u> <u>Human rights monitoring</u> <u>The right of citizens to change their government</u> <u>Freedom of speech and the press</u> <u>Freedom of peaceful assembly and association</u> <u>Prisons</u> <u>Legal rights/ detention</u> <u>Freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration and repatriation</u> <u>Religious freedom</u>	5.1 - 5.4 5.5 - 5.11 5.12 - 5.17 5.18 5.19 - 5.25 5.26 - 5.28 5.29 - 5.30 5.31 - 5.34 5.35 - 5.38 5.39 - 5.41
<u>VI Specific Groups</u> <u>Women</u> <u>Children</u>	6.1 - 6.6 6.7 - 6.9

<a href="#">Homosexuals</a>	6.10 - 6.14
<a href="#">People with disabilities</a>	6.15 - 6.16
<a href="#">VII Roma</a>	
<a href="#">Roma in Europe</a>	7.1 - 7.4
<a href="#">History of Roma in the Czech Republic</a>	7.5 - 7.17
<a href="#">Current conditions facing the Roma community</a>	7.18 - 7.19
<a href="#">Employment</a>	7.20 - 7.32
<a href="#">Education</a>	7.33 - 7.49
<a href="#">Housing</a>	7.50 - 7.53
<a href="#">Citizenship laws</a>	7.54 - 7.63
<a href="#">Racial prejudice</a>	7.64 - 7.65
<a href="#">Racially motivated attacks</a>	7.66 - 7.76
<a href="#">Measures taken to improve the situation</a>	7.77 - 7.90
<a href="#">Roma organisations and parties</a>	7.91 - 7.92
<a href="#">Romany Civic Initiative</a>	7.93 - 7.95
<a href="#">The Democratic Alliance of Roma</a>	7.96 - 7.97
<a href="#">Other Roma organisations</a>	7.98
<a href="#">The International Romany Union</a>	7.99
<a href="#">Roma represented in State Administration and public bodies</a>	7.100 - 7.101
<a href="#">Roma and the media</a>	7.102 - 7.108
<a href="#">Roma culture</a>	7.109 - 7.110
<b>Annex A:</b> <a href="#">Chronology</a>	
<b>Annex B:</b> <a href="#">Prominent people</a>	
<b>Annex C:</b> <a href="#">Political organisations</a>	
<a href="#">Bibliography</a>	

## I SCOPE OF THE DOCUMENT

1.1 This assessment has been produced by the Country Information and Policy Unit, Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office, from information obtained from a variety of sources.

1.2 The assessment has been prepared for background purposes for those involved in the asylum determination process. The information it contains is not exhaustive, nor is it intended to catalogue all human rights violations. It concentrates on the issues most commonly raised in asylum claims made in the United Kingdom.

1.3 The assessment is sourced throughout. It is intended to be used by caseworkers as a signpost to the source material, which has been made available to them. The vast majority of the source material is readily available in the public domain.

1.4 It is intended to revise the assessment on a 6-monthly basis while the country remains within the top 35 asylum producing countries in the United Kingdom.

1.5 The assessment will be placed on the Internet ([http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/asylum/asylum\\_contents02.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/asylum/asylum_contents02.htm)). An electronic copy of the assessment has been made available to the following organisations:

Amnesty International UK  
Immigration Advisory Service  
Immigration Appellate Authority  
Immigration Law Practitioners' Association  
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants  
JUSTICE  
Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture  
Refugee Council  
Refugee Legal Centre  
UN High Commissioner for Refugees

## **II GEOGRAPHY**

2.1 The Czech Republic is a landlocked state located in Central Europe covering an area of 30,450 square miles (78,866 square kilometres). It comprises the lands of Bohemia, Moravia and parts of Silesia. The country is bordered by Poland in the north, Slovakia (which together with the Czech Republic, formed Czechoslovakia between 1918 and 1992) to the east, Germany to the west and Austria to the south. The capital city is Prague (Praha in Czech), situated in central Bohemia, with an estimated population on 1 January 1999 of approximately 1.2 million. Other important towns are Brno (population 384,727), which is the administrative capital of Moravia, and Ostrava (322,111), also situated in Moravia. **[1a] & [1b]**

2.2 At the end of December 1996 the population of the Czech Republic was estimated at 10,309,137. At the census in 1991, 81.2% of the population were Czechs (Bohemians) and 13.2% Moravians. **[1b]** 5.2% of the population claimed to have a national identity other than Czech. 3.1% belonged to the newly recognised Slovak minority, which is highly integrated in terms of culture and language. Other important minorities include the Polish minority (0.6%), German minority (0.5%), Hungarian minority (0.2%). There are also Ukrainian, Russian, Ruthenian, Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian minorities. **[16b]** Although the 1991 census indicated that there are about 30,000 (0.3% of the population) Roma in the country, there are probably between 200,000 and 300,000. **[2]**

## **III HISTORY**

### **Recent political history**

3.1 In November 1989 the Communists lost power. The continuing repressive power of the regime was evident in its generally harsh response to the public protests against its policies, which became a more common event from 1988 onwards. Changing attitudes among the public were increasingly evident, with a greater readiness of those

outside traditional dissident circles to demonstrate their support for radical changes. **[1a]**

3.2 The growing public assertiveness in Czechoslovakia was also influenced by what was happening in neighbouring countries. The appointment of a non-communist prime minister in Poland in August 1989 and the opening of the Berlin Wall were signals to the Czechs and Slovaks that the Soviet administration would no longer oppose change in the countries of the Eastern Bloc. **[1a]**

3.3 The event that would finally stimulate the displacement of the Communists came on 17 November 1989, when student participants in an officially sanctioned march in Prague to mark the anniversary of the Nazis' execution of Czech students 50 years earlier were brutally attacked by special police units. Following week-long demonstrations which spread from Prague to the rest of the country, the entire Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz) leadership resigned on 24 November. The attempt of Ladislav Adamec, the Prime Minister to negotiate with the opposition failed and he resigned. On 10 December 1989 the "Government of National Understanding" took office with the former deputy, Marian Calfa, as prime minister. The Communists were allocated a minority of places. The clearest indication that Communist rule had come to an end in Czechoslovakia came on 29 December 1989 when Vaclav Havel was elected president. **[1a]**

3.4 The first genuinely free general election since World War II was held in June 1990. The results indicated overwhelming support for parliamentary democracy, with a 96.4% turnout and the CPCz winning just 13% of the votes cast. In the Czech Republic, Civic Forum attracted one half of the votes cast, gaining a majority in the Czech legislature (127 of the 200 seats) and a majority of Czech seats in both houses of the Federal Assembly. **[1a]**

3.5 Before the next elections in mid 1992 it became clear that sharp differences had emerged over a range of fundamental policies. Two issues in particular were to demonstrate divergence between the two federal partners: economic policy and character of the state. **[1a]**

3.6 Well before the 1992 election it became clear that it would be difficult to reconcile the Slovak desire for greater autonomy, albeit within a common state, and for greater state intervention in the economy, with the Czech insistence on a strong federal government and a radical shift to a market economy. By the time of the 1992 elections, Civic Forum and Public against Violence (PAV) in Slovakia had disappeared. In the Czech Republic the more right wing of the successor parties, the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) led by Vaclav Klaus emerged as the strongest party. The victory in Slovakia of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, which favoured much greater devolution of power than was acceptable to the victorious Czech parties, created an impasse in the Federal assembly, where the balance of forces provided little prospect of a viable government. In the next six months agreement was reached to bring the common state to an end and, on 1 January 1993 independent Czech and Slovak Republics came into being. In the Czech Republic a centre-right coalition led by Klaus remained in office for a full 4 year term. **[1a]**

3.7 The coalition comprised Klaus' ODS, the much smaller Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) and the Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak Peoples party (KDU-CSL). There were minor disagreements, which did not undermine the cohesion. In the June 1996 elections, the coalition lost its majority. The Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party (CSSD) quadrupled its share of the vote to 26%, winning 61 seats as it consolidated support from the democratic left. **[1a]**

3.8 The CSSD agreed to give tacit support to a minority government with Klaus continuing as Prime Minister. In return the governing coalition elected the CSSD leader, Milos Zeman, as Chairman (speaker) of the Chamber of Deputies. Tensions within the coalition and accusations of financial irregularities were made against the ODS. On 30 November 1997 Klaus and his government resigned, following the withdrawal of the ODA and KDU-CSL from the coalition. The re-election of Klaus as chairman of the ODS in December led important figures within the party, including the former interior minister, Jan Ruml, to defect and form a new centre-right party called the Freedom Union [Ruml resigned as leader]. **[1a]**

3.9 In mid December 1997 Jozef Tosovsky was appointed independent prime minister and formed an interim government which did much to restore stability. In the early parliamentary elections of 19-20 June 1998 the three centre-right parties, the ODS, the KDU-CSL and the FU won 102 of the 200 seats but the bitter disputes between them made agreement on forming a coalition impossible. Since the CSSD emerged as the largest party with 74 seats (32.3% of the votes), President Havel, who had been re-elected earlier in the year, invited their leader, Zeman, to try to form a government. Unwilling to attempt a coalition with the communists (who won 24 seats) and unable to reach an agreement with the KDU-CSL and the FU, Zeman arranged with Klaus that a minority CSSD administration would not be voted out of office by the ODS. In return Klaus was elected Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies and a number of other ODS deputies gained other important parliamentary posts. **[1a]**

3.10 No progress had been achieved by the end of 1999 regarding attempts to form a majority coalition government. The KDU-CSL and the FU had refused to enter talks with the ODS until it withdrew from its agreement with the ruling CSSD. In late January 2000, the CSSD and the ODS extended their agreement on bilateral co-operation. The CSSD promised to reshuffle the Council of Ministers and to propose electoral reform measures in return for the ODS's continued tolerance of the CSSD minority government and its budgetary proposals for 2000. **[1b]**

3.11 The Czech Republic joined NATO in March 1999 and has been a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) since 1995. It opened accession negotiations with the European Union in 1998. Early progress in achieving the criteria for membership has not been followed through; the European Commission's reports of 1998 and 1999 on the country's progress towards accession noted slippage in structural and administrative reforms. A much improved report in 2000 is expected. **[2]**

3.12 The challenge of transforming public administration is compounded by the creation of a new middle tier of regional government, which will come into being in 2000 and for which legislative and logistic planning is not completed. However, regional administration could potentially relieve much of the workload of central

administration and provide a focus for efficient service delivery to individuals. A further problem is the poor functioning of the court system, which acts as a brake to economic and social development. [2]

### **Economic matters**

3.13 The Czech Republic initially appeared to make good progress in its transition to a market economy, achieving rising GDP, low unemployment and single digit inflation. However, major institutional weaknesses, including inadequate financial discipline and absence of adequate regulation in financial markets and the process of privatisation led to rapid increases in real wages, surging domestic demand and an unsustainably large current account deficit. In May 1997 pressure on the currency forced the central bank to allow the koruna to float; it subsequently depreciated by around 20% against sterling. [2]

3.14 The country's present economic difficulties can be attributed to the fact that early progress in its economic transition was not maintained. Many factors have combined to reverse the progress that the Czech economy had enjoyed. In 1998 GDP fell by over 2%. Unemployment has grown nationally to over 9% with the figure approaching 20% in some regions, due to the structural unemployment of those who used to work in now defunct heavy industry. These predominantly older workers are now effectively excluded from the labour market. Youth unemployment is also growing, including for those with secondary and tertiary education. The social security system is unlikely to be able to cope with the increased demand that will occur as unemployment rises. [2]

3.15 The Czech Republic is 39th in the UN's human development index, well inside the "high human development" category. Poverty is not widespread. In terms of absolute poverty, defined as income less than \$4 per day, 1% of the Czech population is poor. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs maintains an adequate minimum level of income for those in need of a safety net, although this will come under pressure as unemployment increases and budgets are constrained. The distribution of income in the Czech Republic shows significant regional variation. The GDP per capita in Prague is 86% of the EU average, but in northern Bohemia and northern Moravia it is half of this. [2]

## **IV INSTRUMENTS OF THE STATE**

### **Political Affairs**

4.1 The Czech Republic is a constitutional parliamentary democracy, with a bicameral parliament. Following early elections in June 1998 Milos Zeman formed a minority government comprising almost exclusively members of his left-of-centre Social Democratic Party (CSSD). President Vaclav Havel was re-elected as Head of State in January 1998 and remains an internationally recognised advocate of human rights and social justice. Although the country essentially has completed the reform of political

and economic structures initiated after the 1989 "velvet revolution" some institutions are still in a state of modification and transformation. [3]

## **The Legislature**

4.2 Legislative power in the Czech Republic is vested in two chambers, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies has 200 members, elected by proportional representation for a term of 4 years. The Senate has 81 members, elected for a term of 6 years. Every 2 years one third of the Senators are elected in two rounds of first past the post voting. [1b]

4.3 The legislature enacts the Constitution and laws, approves the state budget and the state final account and approves the electoral law and international agreements. It elects the President of the Republic (at a joint session of both chambers), supervises the activities of government and decides upon the declaration of war. [1b]

4.4 Members of both chambers of the legislature are elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. All citizens over 18 years old are eligible to vote. [1b]

4.5 Result of general election, 19-20 June 1998 [1b]

<b>Parties and Groups</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Czech Social Democratic Party	32.3	74
Civic Democratic Party	27.7	63
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	11.0	24
Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People’s Party	9.0	20
Freedom Union	8.6	19
Others	11.4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

## **The President of the Republic**

4.6 The President of the Republic is the Head of State. He is elected for a term of 5 years by both chambers of the legislature and may not be elected for more than two consecutive terms. He is also Commander of the Armed Forces, he appoints the Prime Minister, and on the latter's recommendation, the other members of the Council of Ministers. [1b]

## **Council of Ministers**

4.7 The Council of Ministers is the highest organ of executive power. It is composed of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers and Ministers. It is answerable to the Chamber of Deputies. The President of the Republic appoints the Prime Minister, on whose recommendation he appoints the remaining members of the Council of Ministers. [1b]

## **Judicial system**

4.8 Judges are independent in the exercise of their function. The judiciary consists of the Supreme Court, the Supreme Administrative Court, high, regional and district courts. The Constitutional Court is a judicial body protecting constitutionality. It consists of 15 judges appointed for a 10 year term by the President of the Republic with the consent of the Senate. **[1b]** The law stipulates that persons charged with criminal offences are entitled to fair and open public trials. They have the right to be informed of their legal rights and of the charges against them, to consult with counsel and to present a defence. The state provides lawyers for indigent defendants in criminal and some civil cases through the Bar Association. All defendants enjoy a presumption of innocence and have the right to refuse to testify against themselves. They may appeal any judgements decided against them. The authorities observe these rights in practice. **[3]**

## **V GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION**

### **Introduction**

5.1 Since 1991 the Czech Republic has had a Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, Article 1 of which sets out the principle of the equality of individuals in their dignity and their rights. Article 3 of the Charter states that "fundamental human rights and freedoms are guaranteed to everybody irrespective of sex, race, skin colour, language, faith, religion, political or other conviction, ethnic or social origin, membership in a national or ethnic minority, property, birth or other status". **[16b]**

5.2 The Czech Republic is the successor of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, which ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1966, and became a Party to the Convention, which it directly incorporated into its legislation. Despite the ratification, the Czech Republic has not yet adopted legislation prohibiting all forms of racial discrimination. **[16a]**

5.3 The Czech Republic is also a Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as other international human rights instruments. The Czech Republic ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1992 and the framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 1997. **[16a]**

5.4 Despite the democratic reforms the Roma minority remains exposed to racial discrimination, which is manifested particularly in access to employment, housing and education. Roma are often excluded from restaurants, swimming pools and discos and kept at a distance by the majority of the population, who are prejudiced against them. Violent racist acts by skinheads against members of the minority are common. **[16a]**

### **Actual Practice with regard to Human Rights**



5.5 According to the United States State Department report for 1999 the Government generally respects the human rights of its citizens; however, problems remain in several areas. Discrimination and sporadic skinhead violence against Roma and other minorities remained a problem. [3]

5.6 There were no reports in 1999 of political or other extra-judicial killings and there were no reports of politically motivated disappearances. The Constitution prohibits torture and there were no reports of such practices. The police however, occasionally use excessive force and abuse their authority. A report in April 1999 by the Czech Helsinki Committee documented widespread police violence. [3]

5.7 The law prohibits exile and the Government observes this right in practice. Since 1993 local courts and foreign police have expelled to Slovakia "Slovaks" without proper citizenship or residency papers. Some of these expulsions involve "Slovak" Roma who have never been to Slovakia. By the first half of 1997, a total of 851 Slovaks had been expelled administratively or judicially by the authorities. A February 1998 presidential amnesty (which was expected to affect three quarters of all expulsion sentences issued between 1 January 1993 and 2 February 1998) granted an amnesty to those receiving expulsion sentences for crimes in which the punishment is less than 5 years' imprisonment. According to one unnamed NGO some courts have not implemented this amnesty. Courts have not imposed expulsion sentences since the implementation of new citizenship law, which allows "Slovaks" and others to legalise their status. [3]

5.8 The law provides for the equality of citizens and prohibits discrimination. Health care, education, retirement and other social services generally are provided without regard to race, sex, religion, disability or social status. In practice Roma face discrimination in such areas as education, employment and housing. [3]

5.9 EU accession remains a priority of the government. The Commission reports regularly to the European Council on progress made by each of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe in preparation for membership. This includes an analysis of the situation in respect of the political conditions set by the European Council (democracy, rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities). [4]

5.10 In the 1998 Regular Report on the Czech Republic's progress towards accession, the Commission concluded that the Czech Republic has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law. The Czech Republic continues to respect human rights and freedoms and has acceded to most of the major human rights conventions. [4]

5.11 In the 1999 Report the Commission found that the Czech Republic fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria. However the report states that further efforts should be made to reform the judiciary and improve the situation of the Roma through the implementation of an adequately funded programme and efforts to combat discriminatory attitudes in society. Attention should also be paid to developing an effective policy to combat economic crime and corruption. [4]

## **Human Rights Monitoring**

5.12 Human rights groups operate without government restriction and government officials generally are co-operative and responsive to their views. The best known human rights groups are the Czech Helsinki Committee and the Tolerance Foundation (an umbrella organisation) and there are many single issue groups. [3]

5.13 On 8 July 1999 Parliament passed the final legislation needed to create a \$14 million (500 million Czech crowns) endowment to be used by 39 NGOs that work on issues of social welfare, health, culture, education, human rights protection and the environment. [3]

5.14 In September 1998 the UN Human Rights Commission expert, Petr Uhl, was appointed to a newly created position as Commissioner for Human Rights. The Human Rights Commissioner serves as head of the government Council for Nationalities and of the Interministerial Commission for Romany Community Affairs, established in 1997. This latter commission analyses government measures proposed by individual ministries, to collect information and to inform the Romany community about government activities, to allocate grants to supplementary programmes for the Romany community and to deal with issues covering housing, education and discrimination. In December 1998 the Commission was expanded to include 12 government representatives and 12 Romany representatives, as well as the Commissioner for Human Rights and his deputy. The revamped Commission has taken an increasingly active role in resolving disputes between Romany communities and their non-Romany neighbours in towns such as Usti nad Labem and Rokycany. [3]

5.15 In each House of Parliament there is a petition committee for human rights and nationalities, which includes a subcommittee for nationalities. The government-sponsored Council for Nationalities advises the Cabinet on Minority affairs. In this body, Slovaks and Roma have three representatives each, Poles and Germans, two each and Hungarians and Ukrainians, one each. There is also a government commission staffed by members of the NGO and journalistic communities that monitors interethnic violence. In December 1998 a Council for Human Rights was established with 10 representatives of government ministries and 10 human rights activists. This body was created to advise the Government on human rights issues and propose legislation to improve the observation of human rights in the Country. Commissioner Uhl was appointed chairman of the Council. [3]

5.16 The Government announced its intention to establish an independent state institution, the Office for Ethnic Equality, which will observe breaches of the laws on discrimination and impose sanctions. It will be answerable to parliament in its work. The Office will be responsible for observing the elimination of all forms of discrimination. [6]

5.17 In December 1999 the Parliament passed legislation mandating the establishment of the office of Public Rights Protector (Ombudsman), which is to be created in 2000. The legislation provides for Parliament to select an Ombudsman for a 6 year term from a pool of candidates nominated by the President and the Senate. This new institution is expected to enhance the protection of citizens against any inappropriate treatment by State administration offices and institutions ie any acts which might involve signs of racial discrimination. [3] & [16b]

## **The Right of Citizens to change their Government**

5.18 The Constitution provides citizens with the right to change their government by democratic means, and citizens exercise this right in practice through periodic, free, and fair elections held on the basis of universal suffrage. Citizens above the age of 18 are eligible to vote by secret ballot in nationwide and local elections. Opposition groups, including political parties, function openly and participate without hindrance in the political process. Citizens may join political organisations or vote for the political party of their choice without government interference. Some persons, predominantly Roma, who were enfranchised citizens under the former Czechoslovakia, were unable to obtain Czech citizenship at the time of the split with Slovakia, despite birth or long residency in the Czech Republic. They lacked voting and other rights due to restrictions under the existing citizenship laws. However, the new citizenship law passed in September 1999 is expected to remedy the situation for thousands of such persons. [3]

## **Freedom of Speech and the Press**

5.19 The law provides for freedom of speech and of the press, and the Government respects this right in practice. Individuals can and do speak out on political issues and freely criticise the Government and public figures. A wide variety of newspapers, magazines, and journals, owned by a variety of Czech and foreign investors, are published without government interference. The press and broadcast media continue to operate under outdated and insufficient laws, which are now in the process of being replaced by legislation conforming to European Union norms. A Communist-era law against "defamation of the Republic" was revoked in 1997. [3]

5.20 The electronic media are independent. There are 3 national television stations, 1 public and 2 private, and more than 60 private radio stations in addition to Czech Public Radio. The leading television channel, Nova, is privately owned, although a widely publicised dispute about the channel's ownership and alleged fraud and serious commercial misconduct by the license holder is now the subject of international arbitration. Citizens also have access to foreign broadcasts via satellite, cable, and the Internet. [3]

5.21 A nine-member Television and Radio Council has limited regulatory responsibility for policymaking and answers to the parliamentary media committee, which exercises broad oversight of the Council and must approve its members. The Council can issue and revoke radio and television licenses and monitors programming. [3]

5.22 In April 1999 Amnesty International placed the country on its blacklist of countries that violate freedom of speech and expression because of the criminal arrest of reporter Zdenek Zupal in 1998. Zupal faces three charges of criminal libel for reporting that police had provided false information in their investigation of high-level corruption in Olomouc. Zupal had been charged originally with slander for publishing documents he knew, or should have known, to be forgeries. Local authorities later changed the charge to false accusation the day before a planned presidential pardon; the new charges still were pending at the end of 1999. [3]

5.23 In June 1999, a Prague court prohibited Tomas Kebza, deputy chairman of the rightwing Republican Youth Party and editor of the weekly *Republika*, from publishing for 10 years for his two articles which contained anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi views and which were aimed at suppressing the rights of other citizens. [3]

5.24 In May 1999 the Government approved a press bill, which was criticised strongly by media experts. The most controversial provision, which would require the press to present responses from persons or parties who believe that their reputations have been sullied by media reports, even if the information was correct, was later removed. Opponents of the measure maintained that this provision would create an unfair burden on the press and represented an unwise regulation of free expression. In December 1999 the amended version of the bill was approved by the lower house of Parliament but returned to the Senate for further changes. Those modifications are still pending. International NGO's and the Council of Europe, which criticised the legislation, are to continue monitoring this process closely. [3]

5.25 In May 1999 Parliament passed a freedom of information act which was to take effect on 1 January 2000. The law provides for freedom of access to information under the control of state and local authorities as well as other institutions affecting the rights of citizens. The law provides for academic freedom but forbids activities by established political parties at universities. [3]

### **Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association**

5.26 The Constitution provides for the right of persons to assemble peacefully, and the Government respects this right in practice, although it may restrict assemblies that promote hatred and intolerance, advocate suppression of individual or political rights, or otherwise would jeopardise the safety of the participants. Police generally do not interfere with spontaneous, peaceful demonstrations for which organisers lack a permit. Police arrested some skinheads at a May Day rally in 1999. [3]

5.27 The law forbids political party activity at universities. The Constitution provides for the right of persons to associate freely and to form political parties, and the Government respects this right in practice. Either the Government or the President may submit a proposal to the Supreme Court calling for a political party to be disbanded; during 1999 the Supreme Court cancelled the registrations of six parties that existed only on paper. The cancellations, part of a policy begun by the 1998 interim government to maintain an active registry, were mere formalities, as the organisations in question had ceased to exist in practice. Organisations, associations, foundations, and political parties are required to register with local officials or at the Interior Ministry, but there is no evidence that this registration is either coercive or withheld arbitrarily. Prime Minister Zeman has called periodically for the Interior Ministry to re-examine or cancel the official registrations of skinhead organisations and others propagating racial hatred or fascism. The main such organisation, the National Alliance, was refused permission to register as a political party in April 2000. [3]

5.28 Associations whose purpose is to deny or restrict the personal, political or any other rights of citizens for their ethnicity, sex, race, origin, political or other conviction, religion and social status; to incite hatred and intolerance for such reasons; to support violence or otherwise infringe on the Constitution and laws are prohibited. [16b] The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern that some organisations promoting racial hatred and superiority are hidden behind legally registered civic associations whose members are promoting xenophobia and racism. The Committee also referred to ineffective implementation of existing legislation to prosecute the perpetrators of incitement to racial hatred and support to racist movements. [16c]

## **Prisons**

5.29 Prison conditions meet minimum international standards. There is overcrowding in some prisons - as at August 1999 the prison system was at 118% of capacity. Prison overcrowding in August 1999 led to a series of riots. There is a ratio of 1 guard for every 4 prisoners. Visits by families and lawyers are permitted and the authorities follow these guidelines in practice. The government also permits visits by human rights monitors. [3]

5.30 The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights in its report for 2000 mentioned a number of concerns about prison conditions. The prison system was described as expensive, obsolete and ineffective. Prisons were overcrowded, because courts placed too many people in custody, ignorance of alternative sentences, inefficient prison system, and insufficient post-prison care. The care of prisoners was insufficient, which was partly due to a shortage of funds. Therefore imprisonment did not contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders, and prisoners had few opportunities to work. [5]

## **Legal Rights/Detention**

5.31 The law forbids arbitrary arrest and detention and the government observes this prohibition in practice. Police may hold persons without charge for up to 48 hours, during which time they have the right to counsel. The lack of experienced police investigators and qualified judges, together with a still evolving legal environment have contributed to a backlog of court cases. Pre-trial detention may last legally as long as 4 years for cases considered “exceptionally grave” under the Criminal Code. Pre-trial detention for most crimes may last as long as 2 or 3 years, with mandatory judicial review intervals beginning at the end of the first 6 months of detention. If the court does not approve continued detention during a judicial review, the suspect must be released. In practice few pre-trial detainees are held for longer than 2 years. The law does not allow bail for certain serious crimes. A suspect may petition the appropriate investigating authorities at any time for release from detention. The average length of pre-trial detention is now 5 months and 21 days. At the end of 1999, the number of pre-trial detainees was about one third of the total prison population. There were no reports of political prisoners. [3]

5.32 The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) highlighted a number of concerns about the judicial system in the Czech Republic. There were often incidents of failures and unsubstantiated delays in judicial proceedings, leading to miscarriages of justice because of the incompetent and inconsistent work of the police and prosecutors. The courts have tolerated the poor preparation of cases and rarely used alternative methods of proceedings and alternative sentences to imprisonment for minor offences. The IHF noted that the modification of the criminal procedure code which was underway is expected to make the work of the authorities more efficient. [5]

5.33 The IHF stated that the non-observance of the right to a fair trial was the main human rights problem in the field of civil law. Cases dragged on for several years and in many instances, the delays could not be justified. Prolonged proceedings have deterred people from pursuing cases through the courts. A new civil procedure code will come into effect in January 2001. [5]

5.34 It was reported in May 2000 that the European Union was going to provide almost 22 million Czech crowns (£380,000) to support a project aimed at improving the work of the Czech judicial system and strengthening its independence. The money will go to the Czech Judges' Association and the Czech State Attorneys' Association. The goal of the project is to improve the co-operation between the Justice Ministry and the professional associations and strengthen the two organisations so that they are able to be efficient partners to state bodies. [18a]

### **Freedom of Movement within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation**

5.35 The law provides for freedom of movement to travel domestically and abroad, as well as for emigration and repatriation, and the Government respects these provisions in practice. Czechs who emigrated during the period of Communist rule frequently return to visit or live. A law passed in September permits such persons to regain Czech citizenship without having to relinquish a foreign citizenship that they acquired during that time. Citizenship is not revoked for political reasons. [3]

5.36 The law includes provisions for granting refugee and asylum status in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. A legal and institutional framework is in place for the processing of refugees, although the current law is under revision to close a few gaps. The Government provides first asylum and co-operates with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organisations in assisting refugees. The Czech Republic is both a transit and destination country for migrants. The Government fully funds an integration programme to assist those granted refugee status in locating housing and receiving other social assistance. A reception centre, three camps, and six integration centres are provided for recognised refugees.

5.37 As of August 1999, the Government granted citizenship to 3,200 former citizens of Slovakia and 564 former citizens of other countries; however, the new citizenship law passed in September 1999 was expected to enable thousands more "Slovaks" to become citizens. In April 1999 the Government established temporary protection

status for Kosovar Albanian refugees and opened 7 humanitarian centres to house 825 refugees relocated from overcrowded camps in Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. According to estimates by the UNHCR, there were between 2,000 and 3,000 more unregistered Kosovar Albanians in the country who were staying in hotels along the border with Germany and were waiting to be smuggled into that country. By the autumn most of these refugees returned to Kosovo at their own request. [3]

5.38 A growing concern is the smuggling of large groups of refugees and economic migrants into and across the country, which lacks specific laws criminalising alien smuggling. Organised rings promoting illegal employment abroad operate with impunity, freely advertising their services in dozens of local papers and on the internet. In spite of existing legislative gaps, the police are taking action against large-scale trafficking rings under organised crime statutes. The authorities are working with neighbouring countries to tighten border controls. [3]

### **Religious Freedom**

5.39 The principal religion in the Czech Republic is Christianity. The largest denomination is the Roman Catholic Church. [1b] The Constitution provides for religious freedom and the government respects this right in practice. The state subsidises all religions that are officially registered with the Ministry of Culture. There are 21 state recognised religions. To register a church must have at least 10,000 adult members permanently residing in the country (but see paragraph 5.41 below). For any churches that the World Council of Churches has already recognised, only 500 adult permanent residents are required. Churches registered prior to 1991 are not required to meet these conditions. The Jewish community, which numbers only a few thousand, constitutes one such exception. Unregistered religious groups such as the small Muslim minority may not own community property legally although they are otherwise free to assemble and worship in the manner of their choice. Their members can and do issue publications without interference. [3]

5.40 Missionaries for various religious groups, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Jehovah's Witnesses, are present in the country and proselytise without hindrance. In March and May 1999 respectively, the government established two church state commissions to improve church state relations. [3]

5.41 In July 2000 a bill was introduced which would provide for a two-tier system of registration of churches and religious societies. On the first level of registration, a church or religious society would acquire the status of an association, and on the second level they would be given special rights such as the rights of exercising their activities in schools or in the army, or the right to conclude marriages. The second level would only be achieved if the organisation has been active for 10 years since they were first registered, and if they have as members at least 2% of permanent residents of the Czech Republic. The bill also provides for the lowering of the number of members necessary for a religious society to be registered with the Interior Ministry from 10,000 to 300. [18e]

## VI SPECIFIC GROUPS

### Women

6.1 In late 1998 the government introduced a comprehensive awareness and prevention programme designed to address issues of trafficking, abuse and violence against women. ROSA, an NGO which helps women in trouble, estimates that 1 in 10 women in domestic situations suffer from emotional or physical abuse and that 30% of the abusers are university educated. The press occasionally reported on the problem of violence against women and trafficking in prostitutes. According to police statistics there were 675 rapes reported countrywide in 1998 although some researchers estimate that only 3.3% of rape victims report the crime to the police. Approximately 80% of criminal rape cases are solved. Gender studies experts reported that women were ashamed to report rape or speak about it and that the police were not equipped to help either by attitude or training. However, to improve police responsiveness and prosecution efforts, the Ministry of Interior started training officers in protocols for investigating family violence and sexual crime cases in 1998. There are many NGOs and crisis centres, which provide shelter and psychiatric and legal help to crime victims including victims of rape. [3]

6.2 Legislation does not address spousal abuse specifically, however, the Criminal Code covers other forms of domestic violence. An attack is considered criminal if the victim's condition warrants medical treatment (incapacity to work) for 7 or more days. If medical treatment lasts less than 7 days the attack is classified as a misdemeanour and punished by a fine. Repeated misdemeanour attacks do not impose stricter sanctions on the abuser. The police are training specialist personnel to deal with domestic violence, but they do not yet engage in regular contact with welfare and medical services. However, in 1998 the Police Academy and secondary police schools introduced, into both the introductory and continuing education curriculums, instructional material to improve the identification and investigation of domestic violence and sexual abuse cases and to sensitise police to the treatment of victims. [3]

6.3 Forced prostitution is illegal; prostitution is not, although local communities have the right to regulate it and enforce restrictions. Trafficking in prostitutes is forbidden by law and trafficking in women is a problem. [3]

6.4 Up until 2000, there were no legal definitions or laws prohibiting sexual harassment. However, during 1999 a university student became the first woman in the country to win a sexual harassment suit. A new sexual harassment law will come into effect in January 2001, as part of the programme to bring Czech law into line with European Union labour laws. The new law will make sexual harassment in the workplace illegal. [18b]

6.5 Women are equal under the law and in principle receive the same pay for the same job. A 1991 employment law bans discrimination on the basis of sex. Women represent roughly half of the labour force although they are employed disproportionately in professions where the average salary is relatively low. Women's average wages lag behind those of men by roughly 25% although the gap is narrowing. Women enjoy equal property, inheritance and other rights with men. The



unemployment rate for women now exceeds that for men by more than one third and a disproportionately small number of women hold senior positions. In April 1999 the Czech Helsinki Committee released a report documenting police discrimination against women during recruitment of officers. [3]

6.6 There are no restrictions, in law or in practice, on women's participation in politics; however, they are under-represented, and relatively few women hold high public office. None of the 16 cabinet ministers in the Government at the end of 1999 were women. The 200 member Chamber of Deputies has only 29 female deputies, including 1 deputy speaker. There are 9 female senators in the 81 member Senate. The President of the Senate, elected in December 1998, is a woman. [3]

## **Children**

6.7 The government demonstrates its commitment to children's welfare through its programmes for health care, compulsory education (age 15 in state schools and 14 in special schools) and basic nutrition. Girls and boys enjoy equal access to health care and education at all levels. [3]

6.8 Child abuse and trafficking in children continued to receive press attention during 1999. A press report in March indicated that central Europe is becoming more popular as a destination for paedophiles due to its convenient location and low risk of sexually transmitted disease. Some experts estimate that the number of visits to the country, primarily by western Europeans, for the purpose of abusing children has increased 20% since 1997. Dissemination of child pornography is a criminal act. These laws are enforced. Court convictions against persons guilty of child sex abuse are reported routinely in the media. [3]

6.9 Since 1990 the number of reported cases of child abuse has roughly doubled. This increase appears to be the result of increased awareness of the problem and more effective police training and action. Laws criminalise family violence, physical restraint, sexual activity and other abuse of a minor. A children's crisis centre was established in 1995 and is 70% state supported. [3]

## **Homosexuals**

6.10 Consensual homosexual behaviour between adults was decriminalised in 1961. However some homosexual acts could still be punished under Article 244 of the Penal Code - sex with a person of the same gender under 18 years of age, exploitation of a dependant person (eg relationship between a teacher and student), or sex for money. The punishments were higher than for similar heterosexual offences. [19]

6.11 This was amended in 1990, when Article 244 was excluded from the Penal Code, and the age of consent became 15 years for both homosexual and heterosexual behaviour, and homosexual prostitution was no longer regulated by the criminal law. [19]

6.12 There are no anti-discrimination laws to protect homosexuals. The inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the Constitutional list of human rights and freedoms was rejected by Parliament in 1991. The legal status of persons living in the common household is recognised. This can be applied to gay and lesbian couples, who have the right to inherit and continue to live in the shared accommodation, even if one partner dies intestate. However it may be necessary to prove that the couple really lived together. [19]

6.13 There have been attempts in recent years to enact legislation to provide for registered partnerships, but these have been rejected by parliament. [11] & [19]

6.14 There are 21 gay and lesbian organisations in the Czech Republic, which are covered by the umbrella organisation SOHO. Lambda, a campaigning organisation founded in 1989, was officially registered by the authorities in 1990. [19]

### **People with Disabilities**

6.15 The disabled suffer disproportionately from unemployment and the physically disabled experience difficulty in obtaining access to buildings and public transport. Access to education can be a problem due to the lack of barrier free access to public schools although there is at least one barrier free school in each district. A 1994 Economic Ministry regulation requires architects to ensure adequate access for the disabled in all new building projects as well as in older buildings undergoing restoration. This regulation is applied in practice. Businesses in which 60% or more of the employees are disabled qualify for special tax rates. Numerous NGOs support social assistance programmes to diminish the disadvantages faced by the disabled. They also report that, although problems persist, the situation of the disabled is receiving more attention and is vastly improved from only a few years ago. [3]

6.16 The Czech Helsinki Committee Report refers to the fact that exclusion is the basic characteristic of the life of the handicapped, that handicap is not generally seen as a human rights issue, and many handicapped individuals are denied the opportunity to participate fully in society. [11]

## **VII ROMA**

### **Roma in Europe**

7.1 The term Roma is used as a generally accepted generic name for the group of people who speak a Romany tongue and/or share a common ethnic identity, culture and history. The term "Gypsy" is considered by many to be pejorative. It is estimated that over 12 million Roma live in the world today. Roma generally came from India after the 10th century AD and have been living in various parts of Europe ever since. The number in Europe is estimated to be at least 8 million, with the majority, almost 6 million living in central and eastern Europe. [7]

7.2 There are Roma communities in seven of the ten countries of central and eastern Europe who have applied to join the European Union.

Country	Estimated number of Roma
Bulgaria	700,000 – 800,000
Czech Republic	200,000 - 300,000
Hungary	550,000 - 600,000
Poland	50,000 - 60,000
Romania	1,800,000 - 2,500,000
Slovakia	480,000 - 520,000
Slovenia	8,000 - 10,000

7.3 Despite many common traditions, the Roma communities today are made up of diverse branches, with many different cultures, dialects and languages between them. Due to their nomadic way of life, they have had difficulties in establishing and defending their basic human rights. As a minority group Roma communities suffer from social and cultural exclusion in most European countries. [7]

7.4 The problems of marginalisation are particularly severe in the central and eastern parts of Europe where Roma have suffered in the transition of the countries towards market economies. The problems most commonly faced by Roma populations are racism and discrimination, low levels of education, high unemployment (50-90%), health standards well below those of the mainstream population and very poor housing conditions. [7]

### **History of Roma in the Czech Republic**

7.5 The Roma population in the Czech Republic is constantly dispersing, according to information from 1989, with around 43,000 in northern Bohemia, 30,700 in northern Moravia, 15,500 in western Bohemia, 14,300 in central Bohemia, 13,250 in eastern Bohemia, 12,000 in Prague and 12,000 in southern Moravia. According to the Czech Helsinki Committee, in Prague, the Roma are concentrated in the old industrial districts, that is to say, Prague 3, 4, 5 and 8. According to the Committee, in the last demographic study, registration according to ethnic origin was no longer permitted. [9]

7.6 The Roma living in the Czech Republic belong to several sub-ethnic groups. 80% of them are referred to as the Slovak Roma. Most of them speak dialects related to the East Slovakian Roma language, while a small proportion speak dialects related to the Central and West Slovakian Roma languages. The second largest group of Roma (about 20,000) are the Vlax (Vlaxiko) Roma, who speak their own dialect. They lived nomadically until 1959 when various restraints began to be applied to prevent them from travelling. [16b]

7.7 The third group are the Hungarian Roma who speak Hungarian, and who in censuses usually claim to be Hungarian. There are an estimated 15,000 of them. The fourth group of Roma are the original Czech and Moravian Roma, of whom only about 600 survived the Nazi genocide. This population is integrated. The Sinti

(German Roma) who had lived in the Czech territory before the Second World War, were also practically exterminated. [16b]

7.8 According to representatives in Prostějov's Social Services Department, there is also a small group of Olah Roma who do not want to accept the authorities. According to the director of SOZE, there is also a small group of Ukrainian Roma, which has a very bad relationship with other Roma groups. Several sources, including the Czech Helsinki Committee, stress that the original Roma who were exterminated during the Second World War were well educated and well integrated. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the Roma are very family orientated and traditionally have many children. At the beginning of the 1980s, 51% of the Roma population were under 18 years old and 38% were under 15 years old. [9]

7.9 A decree issued by the Ministry of the Interior in 1939 forced all Roma to settle or be sent to labour camps. Other restrictive laws that followed resulted in 6,500 Roma being taken to Lety and Hodonin labour camps in 1942. In both camps a regime in line with the Nazi model was introduced. The camps were closed in 1943 after the outbreak of a number of contagious epidemics. The Roma were then sent on to the special Roma camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and of these Roma, the able bodied were sent to other labour camps, including Dachau. Only 583 Roma survived and were able to return home after the war. [9]

7.10 It is estimated that about half a million European Roma were exterminated in the Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War. Several decades later the Roma tried to obtain compensation for the survivors and the descendants of those killed. According to Karel Holomek, leader of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly Roma Section, who is himself one of the few surviving Roma from Auschwitz, a German-Czech fund has paid out a total of DM 40,000 to the survivors, and a Swiss fund has paid out between US\$400 and \$1,000 to descendants of those killed. According to Holomek, this is satisfactory. [9]

7.11 The question of setting up a memorial on the site of Lety camp, where an industrial pig farm was established after the war, has been the subject of discussion, both among the Roma and the Czech public. In governmental decree number 686 of October 1997 the local authorities were ordered to preserve the site at once and to erect a monument by 31 December 1997. The government granted 400,000 Czech koruna for this purpose. [9]

7.12 The monument has still not been erected (as of early 1999). In the meantime some Roma leaders think that the money could be used for other more useful purposes, eg training. However, Karel Holomek is of the opinion that it is important to erect a monument for the victims, as 90% of the population has no knowledge of the holocaust against the Roma during the Second World War. Petr Uhl, the Czech Government Commissioner for human rights and commissioner for Roma affairs, also supports the government's initiative. [9]

7.13 After the war and subsequent deportation from Czech Sudetenland to Germany of thousands of Czechs of German ethnicity, thousands of Roma were settled, often forcibly from Slovakia to western Bohemia to fill newly vacant flats and factory jobs.

Communist Czechoslovakia's policy toward Roma ranged from forced settlement and employment, to assimilation and forced integration as a cultural and ethnic group. [8]

7.14 The Roma later spread to the industrialised areas where some obtained work in industry. However, a large proportion remained unemployed and continued their nomadic existence. Under Communist rule in 1958 laws were passed regarding the permanent settlement of Roma. These laws made it possible for the police to saw up the wheels of Roma carts and to confiscate their horses. As a result, the Roma were forcibly settled on the spot without regard for the rest of their family. In 1965 a law was passed which was intended to prevent the formation of Roma ghettos. The Roma were moved to Bohemia, where after having lived in homes on wheels they were now allocated ordinary houses. [9]

7.15 Under Communism, the Roma were treated as a socially disadvantaged group, which therefore needed various forms of social support. This resulted in a large proportion of the Roma relying on State support. According to Petr Tulia, leader of the Democratic Alliance of Roma party in Valasske Mezirici, under Communism there were special Roma commissioners and the Communist authorities' aim was to assimilate the Roma population. [9]

7.16 Following the fall of Communism in the then Czechoslovakia in November 1989 the situation of the Roma improved in some respects and deteriorated in others. According to UNHCR, on the one hand, Roma continue to be recognised as a national minority, have formed political and cultural organisations and like other Czech citizens have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of political and economic freedom. On the other hand however, with the transition to a market economy, the Roma have become increasingly marginalised relative to the majority Czech ethnic population, both socially and economically. Moreover, dormant anti-Roma attitudes, suppressed under the Communist system emerged in the forms of societal discrimination and less frequently violent attacks. This increased marginalisation and feeling of vulnerability has led some members of the Roma community to seek a better future through migration. [8]

7.17 In addition to the dire economic situation faced by Roma, the preferred social distance maintained by many Roma further contributes to the placement of Roma on the fringes of Czech society. While it is understandable given the history of Roma vis-à-vis dominant cultures it may be viewed as an added obstacle to successful integration. The resulting rift in community relations is often expressed as a conflict in social values. This phenomenon is perhaps the most difficult and intriguing aspect for an outsider to understand, yet it is an important factor when discussing the relations between Roma and non-Roma communities. [8]

### **Current conditions facing the Roma community**

7.18 The Czech authorities and the representatives of non-governmental organisations and Roma community associations admit that Roma continue to be the victims of intolerance and discrimination in various forms, particularly in employment, education, housing and access to public places. They are also exposed to the violence

perpetrated by members of extreme right-wing organisations, or skinheads. [16a]  
Roma also suffer disproportionately from poverty, illiteracy and disease. [3]

7.19 Often the problems of little or no education, high unemployment, and poor housing conditions occur in conjunction so that they determine and compound each other and increase in proportion to the density of the Roma. According to the Czech Helsinki Committee it is a vicious circle. Several sources, including UNHCR in Prague, stress that the government is aware of the Roma's social problems but that the solutions require both time and money. The Czech Helsinki Committee expresses uncertainty about the extent to which serious work is being done to find solutions to problems with regard to the change of government and the country's economic problems. The director of the Ministry of the Interior's crime prevention department states that the Czech government is serious about the Roma's social problems. [9]

## **Employment**

7.20 Under the Communist regime, the majority of Roma had received rudimentary training allowing them access to manual jobs. In the countryside they worked on State farms. With the introduction of the market economy and the restoration of private property, the restructuring of industry and the disappearance of public work sites, large numbers of Roma found themselves out of work for lack of the necessary skills to meet market needs but also because of prejudices against them and discrimination on the part of employers. This means that even those with the necessary qualifications are not hired. [16a]

7.21 In its 1997 report the Council of Nationalities states that 70% of Roma are unemployed and that this figure is as high as 90% in some areas, while the general unemployment rate is 5%. [16a] Many unemployed Roma subsist on government support or earnings from illegal activities. Many Roma are qualified only for low-paying jobs as manual labourers, since very few complete secondary education. A higher than average share of the Romany population applies for partial or full disability pensions due to the occurrence of advanced stage malignant diseases resulting from the neglect of preventative health practices or the lack of available medical care in areas with above average Romany populations. In April 1999 the Human Rights Commissioner unveiled a 12 point proposal to combat discrimination and "give advantage to Romany firms in placing public orders". The proposal was being considered by the Government at the end of 1999. [3]

7.22 Moreover, unemployment is rising partly due to the country's economic recession and the government's new economic policy. [9]

7.23 According to the fact finding report by Denmark, several sources reported that unemployment is the result of the Roma having little or no education, being unable to adapt and not being socially integrated as regards the employment market, as well as low work morale. In addition, between 70,000 and 90,000 Ukrainian immigrants moonlight and often take work previously done by the Roma. [9]

7.24 According to Commissioner Uhl, unemployment is caused by general discrimination against the Roma in the employment market. The Roma are often rejected by employers on the grounds of their ethnic origin alone. [9]

7.25 Discrimination in the employment market is particularly problematic both socially and psychologically for those Roma who have received an education. They are symbols that it does not pay to obtain an education. A number of sources, including the ROI Roma party and the lawyer Klara Vesela-Samkova also stress that it is the well educated Roma who have left the country because they do not see any future for themselves in the Czech Republic. [9]

7.26 The Roma town councillor and building contractor Petr Tulia emphasises that Roma who want to work cannot find any. In association with the local employment service, he has taken unskilled Roma in his business and has trained them in various building trades after which they have got work with other employers. He has received a bonus for this. The model, he thinks, can be used by other employers, but implementation depends on local authorities' will to collaborate and to solve problems. In general Tulia thinks that it should be legally binding on large companies to employ a certain number of Roma. He does not think that a revival of the Roma traditional crafts will lead to results because the products will be cheaper to manufacture in factories. He is also of the opinion that money is a good incentive for the Roma to work. It will therefore not do to give the Roma poor wages. [9]

7.27 The Commissioner of Police in Prostějov also thinks that in terms of work, the Roma should be motivated by cash that they would be paid in daily wages for daily work. He also states that many Roma cannot take in the time until monthly wages are paid. He also states that it has been shown to be the case that tasks for unskilled Roma should be simple and intelligible. Where these conditions have been met, the performance of the Roma has been irreproachable. [9]

7.28 The lawyer, Klara Vesela-Samkova has also employed Roma in her legal practice. They have been trained on the job and transferred to other employers. She thinks that what is important is the socialisation of the Roma for the job market and the employment situation. However, she also thinks that education does not provide results for the Roma because of discrimination in the job market. [9]

7.29 The Czech Helsinki Committee report for 1999, issued in May 2000 states that the reasons for low employment of Roma include their low education, lack of qualifications and de-motivating system of social allowances. [11]

7.30 According to UNHCR, with only a basic education and no professional qualifications Roma have increasingly meagre job opportunities. Those that are working are generally performing manual labour or are in the industrial or agricultural sectors. Roma women who are working are most frequently employed as cleaners. As the market transition results in the closure of non-profitable enterprises, Roma having few skills and sometimes facing discrimination, have fewer opportunities to find or maintain employment. Moreover many of the low skilled jobs such as construction are now performed by Ukrainians and other migrants who are hired for lower than the official minimum wage and are not provided benefits. Many Roma therefore rely on state benefits and live at or below the poverty line. [8]

7.31 Government initiatives announced in April 1999 related to improving the Roma access to employment are to include the following:

- legislative initiatives to prohibit discrimination (the 1999 Employment Act prohibits discrimination [16b]),
- the establishment of an independent government institution with the mandate to monitor and sanction discriminatory practices, and
- preference to Roma firms in the award of government contracts. [8]

7.32 Furthermore in view of the fact that social benefits are currently quite comparable to and sometimes higher than, the wages that workers would earn in low skill professions a new welfare policy of gradual minimum wage increases is proposed. This is intended to eliminate the present disincentive to find employment by ensuring that working is always more financially rewarding than unemployment benefits. Again it is premature to evaluate the implementation or effect of these proposals. [8]

## **Education**

7.33 The education of Roma children is said by the Czech Government to be a serious problem. Roma children are often transferred to schools for children with special educational needs (SEN schools), subject to their parents' consent, and on the basis of psychological tests, which do not take into account social and cultural differences. These schools are officially intended for children with learning difficulties which make it impossible for them to study at primary school or special primary school. Those who have attended SEN schools are not accepted in secondary schools, nor can they go on to vocational training. [16b]

7.34 Estimates say that 75% of Roma children are transferred or directly enrolled in SEN schools. Among the reasons for this is the language barrier, and Roma families' different hierarchy of values affecting their attitude to education. Nevertheless the Roma community believe that the cause is racial discrimination. [16b]

7.35 According to UNHCR, the level of education among Roma is particularly low, most finishing their schooling prior to completion of the 9th grade (nine years of school is compulsory in the Czech Republic). According to the 1991 census, less than 2% of those Roma over the age of 15 have attended or completed secondary school or university. [8]

7.36 In its report of April 1999, the Czech government estimated that as a result of the education system which exists at the present time in the Czech Republic, the majority of Romany children (around 70-80%) complete their school attendance without acquiring an elementary education. A completed education at special school is not considered the completion of elementary education, nor is completing school attendance in any year lower than Class 8 (age 14/15). An incomplete elementary education makes further study at secondary schools and the taking of qualifications during a regular apprenticeship impossible. The lack of qualifications among adult Roma is then one of the main reasons for their difficulty in succeeding in the labour



market together with their dependency on social security payments and their general marginalisation of the whole Romany community. [6]

7.37 The integration of Romany children into mainstream schools is frequently impeded by language and cultural barriers. Some Romany parents do not send their children to school regularly due to fear of violence, expense of books and supplies or the lack of a strong cultural emphasis on education among some Roma. [3]

7.38 According to UNHCR, perhaps most significantly the education that is most frequently received by Romany students does not lead to job related skills or vocations. Roma children, especially those who do not learn standard Czech at home or who come from impoverished families, are significantly over represented in “special schools”. The decision to send a pupil to a special school is often made by a school psychologist who tests the child in kindergarten or first grade. The de facto segregation is often so great that in some cases the parents request their child’s transfer to a special school in response to abuse from non-Roma children or to avoid isolating the child from other neighbourhood Roma children. While these schools receive more funds per student and have a better teacher to child ratio than basic schools, graduates do not obtain qualification in any regular apprenticeship and, in practice, further education is precluded. “Tracking” students based on linguistic or social reasons rather than learning potential is a primary obstacle to Roma’s future success in finding employment in an increasingly sophisticated economy and is the first step towards continued impoverishment and marginalisation. [8]

7.39 Roma parents have to give their written permission for their children to attend special schools, and Roma parents are generally satisfied with this arrangement as in this way the children are not exposed to racism from the majority population. Petr Uhl considers this a scandal as they stigmatise and marginalise the children and that these schools should be done away with. [9]

7.40 Romany parents do not usually attribute the same importance to education as ethnic Czechs, especially those who are more educated. They agree with the assignment or transfer of their child to a special school in part often because they studied there themselves, because their other children or relatives go there and mainly in consequence because their children are protected in these schools from racist verbal or even physical attacks. [6]

7.41 In June 1999 12 Romany families filed a case in the Constitutional court to protest the “de facto segregation” of Romany children into special schools. The lawsuit requested the establishment of a compensatory educational fund, an end to racial segregation within 3 years, and the development of an educational reform plan. However, the Constitutional Court rejected the complaint in November 1999 and stated that it did not have the power to order the Ministry of Education to create programmes to end racial discrimination. The Ministry of Education later took steps independently to implement some of the recommended changes. [3]

7.42 In 1993 the government created the framework for a number of year long programmes (called zero grades) to prepare disadvantaged youths for their first year in school. Many districts with high concentrations of Roma participate in the programme, which is funded by local authorities. Nearly 90 zero grades were open

during 1999, and another educational initiative introduced Roma “assistant teachers” into the primary and special school system. Their function is to help teachers communicate with Roma pupils and encourage co-operation between schools and Romany parents. [3] There are now 170 Romany assistant teachers in the school system. [11] Some districts tracking local Romany students report that up to 70% of the children who attend zero grade training successfully enter and remain in mainstream schools. During 1999 the Education Ministry began using joint Romany-Czech language textbooks in 60 elementary schools to help overcome the barrier in the early school years between Romany children and non-Romany speaking teachers. Local NGOs support additional studies and private initiatives prepare Romany children for mainstream schools [3]

7.43 The intention is for Roma children to be 'socialised' so that they are able to adapt to the conditions in the normal schools. Zero classes are also intended to compensate for Roma parents in general not sending their children to nursery and being prepared for school there. [9]

7.44 Uhl reports that teaching in the schools is in the Roma language. According to the Czech Helsinki Committee Roma teachers are employed in many schools but not in all. Uhl reports that there are a number of textbooks in the Roma language. For example, the commission has just finished a new textbook, which is in both Czech and two different Roma languages, for the youngest classes. [9]

7.45 The Czech government’s recent policy initiatives in education for Roma include:

- more emphasis on preparatory classes,
- Romany assistants in schools and remedial classes,
- measures to eliminate the language barrier,
- Romany as an auxiliary teaching language,
- an individual approach based on smaller classes and specialised teacher training.

7.46 Moreover, the curriculum of primary and secondary schools is to be changed to include Roma history, culture and tradition. In addition the teaching will be multicultural. In October 1999 the government reported that 140 Roma assistants were working in primary and secondary schools. At the time of writing it is too early to evaluate whether these ideas will receive the necessary funding as well as support at the local level to be implemented and have an effect on attendance and academic success of Roma students. [8] & [6]

7.47 The Government noted that because the great majority of Romany children complete only special school in the current system, they are confined for the rest of their lives to the least skilled jobs. The aim is to replace this with a system of flexible, repeatable remedial classes at elementary school with a smaller number of students than in ordinary classes. The state will provide adult Roma with the opportunity to complete elementary education and, if need be, other training. [6]

7.48 In December 1999 Parliament approved legislation allowing qualified Romany students, previously relegated to the special schools to return to attend mainstream secondary education or upper level public schools. The legislation was drafted by Parliament’s sole Romany representative (Monika Horakova) and constituted a significant step in opening access to higher education to the Romany community. [3]

7.49 Some Roma refused to co-operate with programmes for the compulsory vaccination of children or are refused treatment by general practitioners who have full quotas of subsidised patients. [3]

## **Housing**

7.50 Housing has become an acute problem for the Czech population in general, especially in areas where employment is more readily available. For many Roma, the situation is markedly worse. There are large concentrations of Roma on the outskirts of cities, some communities lacking easily accessible water, electricity and sanitation facilities. These ghettos, distant from educational and employment opportunities as well as the rest of society, serve to increase the tendency of inhabitants to live on the margins of society. In addition to a lack of resources to enter the private housing market, Roma sometimes face discrimination in obtaining flats. According to several polls asking the question over the last few years, Roma are the least preferred neighbours compared to all other nationalities or ethnic groups. [8]

7.51 Part of the Roma assimilation campaign in the 1950s and 60s was the forced movement of Roma into urban flats in disregard of their preferences, clan relations life-style and social hierarchy. This resulted in some cases in the damaging or disrepair of flats, incidents which were generalised to the Roma community at large and thus reinforced the resentment and negative stereotypes held by large segments of the majority population towards Roma. Since the restitution process launched after the 1989 revolution, Roma have been frequently moved to "substitute flats" of a substantially lower standard, sometimes in exchange for financial compensation and in some cases not receiving any compensation due to the absence of a lease or vague lease provisions. [8]

7.52 The erection of a barrier in Usti nad Labem to separate Roma and non-Roma is one of the most severe expressions of the attitudes which characterise some relations between the Roma and majority population. The proposal to erect the wall was condemned nationally and internationally, President Havel visited the town and the government made clear its opposition to the plan and took every step to demolish the wall. Its human rights commissioner, Petr Uhl, and latterly Deputy Interior Minister, Pavel Zarecky, were involved in negotiations with the local authorities. The wall was finally demolished on 24 November 1999, six weeks after it had been built. [3]

7.53 A Government resolution of September 1999 requires the Minister for Regional Development to "support projects of housing programmes and involve Roma organisations and firms in the implementation of the projects and in deciding on the allocation of the flats so built." There are difficulties as municipalities do not have sufficient funds to finance the building of new blocks of flats for rent, to be built with the participation of Roma. But at a local level, several projects have been implemented. [16b]

## **Citizenship laws**

7.54 According to UNHCR, in 1969 Czechoslovakia became a federation and, while maintaining the internationally recognised Czechoslovak citizenship, for internal purposes created subsidiary Czech and Slovak citizenship. Those aged 15 and over and born in the Czech lands were conferred Czech citizenship (*jus soli*). Those aged younger than 15 years or born after January 1969 were given the same citizenship as their parents (*jus sanguinis*). When the federation split in 1993 this internal citizenship, of no practical importance until then, was used to determine the initial body of citizens in the newly established Czech and Slovak republics. [8] Those citizens who were resident in the Czech lands received automatic citizenship of the Czech Republic [12] but those former Czechoslovaks with Slovak internal citizenship had to apply for Czech citizenship. They could do so if they met three conditions:

- release from Slovak citizenship
- permanent residence in the Czech republic for at least 2 years and
- a clean criminal record over the last 5 years. [8]

7.55 The Roma had been designated as “Slovaks” in 1969, because many of them or their parents had moved from Slovakia to the Czech lands to occupy the lands vacated by the expelled Sudeten Germans. Slovakia in 1993 did not want to consider the Roma in the Czech lands as its citizens either, so this group of Roma was stateless. [12]

7.56 Thousands of Roma either did not apply for Czech citizenship, could not pay the required administrative fees, or could not meet the criteria and were thus considered Slovak citizens and aliens in the Czech Republic, despite having no genuine links to Slovakia. Roma, often having strained relations with local authorities and having a low level of education, had difficulty with the complicated option procedure. As most rights and benefits, such as employment, social welfare and education are tied to permanent residency, obtaining Czech citizenship is also not seen as the highest priority in a community often struggling to meet their daily needs. Finally, the high incidence of petty crime and the difficulty in proving official rather than factual residence also excluded many from obtaining Czech citizenship. [8]

7.57 After much criticism from international organisations such as UNHCR, and the Council of Europe and from local NGOs, an amendment was passed in April 1996 providing the Minister of the Interior the discretion to waive the clean criminal record requirement. By the end of October 1997 the requirement was waived in 98% of the 1,800 applications lodged. In early November 1997 the government announced that such waivers would be provided to all those who applied, including those previously denied. [8]

7.58 In September 1999 the Czech Republic approved an amendment to Czech citizenship law, facilitating access to Czech citizenship for citizens of the former Czechoslovakia and other residents in its territory. This amendment acknowledged the unlimited right of option for citizenship for former Czechoslovaks who had been residing in the Czech territory at least from the date of the disintegration of Czechoslovakia. Such persons can, without a set deadline, obtain Czech citizenship by making a declaration to that end. [5]

7.59 The amendment provided for dual citizenship on a relatively large scale because most prospective new citizens under this amendment would also be Slovak citizens. The law did not require them to give up their Slovak citizenship. [5]

7.60 Some people, mostly Roma, experienced difficulties with the implementation of the new law because although they claimed to have lived permanently in the Czech Republic at least since the split in the federation, they were not officially registered as residents. [5]

7.61 An amendment to the citizenship law was passed in September 1999 which with proper implementation should allow the thousands of de facto stateless, most but not all thought to be Roma, to opt for Czech citizenship. The amendment removes the “clean criminal record” requirement, allows for continuing Slovak citizenship and recognises factual permanent residence rather than the more difficult to obtain official permanent residence. It is important to note that on this issue UNHCR and local NGOs were accepted as legitimate partners in this process and had a significant positive impact on reaching these results. [8]

7.62 The citizenship problem continues to be a sore point: thousands remain stateless, without any rights or benefits of citizenship. Those convicted of criminal acts are often expelled from the country – sent to Slovakia, a country that does not want them either and where they have no ties. [12]

7.63 Those persons who receive citizenship but do not have a domicile which they can register as their place of permanent residence are not eligible for a host of rights and benefits which, as elsewhere in the regions, are often tied to residence rather than citizenship. As of November 1999 new legislation regarding permanent residence with respect to Czech citizens was still under consideration, the current draft of which rectifies this gap in assistance and rights. [8]

### **Racial prejudice**

7.64 Over and above economic and social factors, the situation of the Roma is the result of age-old prejudices, which are widespread among the population and of certain practices by State officials. The media contribute to propagating an image that is damaging to the integration of the Roma minority. [16a]

7.65 For most Czechs it is impossible to reconcile aspects of the Roma way of life and culture with the majority culture. Differences in appearance may also lie at the root of the psychological and physical distance between the Roma and the majority of the population. [16a]

### **Racially Motivated Attacks**

7.66 Anti-Roma violence comes primarily from extreme right-wing movements, several of which have been active in the Czech Republic since 1990. The Communist regime in power until 1989 did not allow significant manifestations of racism to take place. There are estimated to be 5-6,000 skinheads. [16a] The groups currently in

existence are similar to each other in their outward manifestations but their ideologies vary: some profess Czech nationalism, while others belong to supranational neo-Nazi associations operating all over Europe. All of them demonstrate hatred for groups differing from the majority population, especially the Roma, through street gatherings, concerts, publication of recordings and periodicals, and also verbal and physical attacks. [16b]

7.67 During the first 6 months of 1999, 238 people were charged with racially motivated crimes. The Documentation Centre for Human Rights recorded 1,500 racially motivated attacks over the past 8 years in which nearly 30 people died. In 1998 police recorded a total of 138 racially motivated crimes nearly half of which were committed by juveniles. [3] In 1998 official statistics indicated that 133 racially motivated crimes had taken place and that 184 persons had been sentenced. These crimes included both physical and verbal attacks and incitement to racial hatred. [16a]

7.68 Following the murder of a Roma by skinheads in May 1995 the penal code was changed to include stiffer penalties for crimes determined to be racially motivated. [8] The amendment became effective on 1 September 1995, and states that if certain criminal acts such as murder, bodily harm, or damage to a third party's effects are committed on anybody for his or her race, ethnicity, political conviction, religion or absence of religion, then such circumstances must be treated as justifying a stricter punishment. [16b]

7.69 Racist motivation has been included in the definition of several offences, such as murder, violence causing death, mutilation or incapacity for work, blackmail or damage to property, leading to such offences being more severely sanctioned. Similarly, harsher penalties apply to offences involving racism and xenophobia, including defamation of the nation or race and incitement to racial hatred. [16a] State Prosecutors were directed to seek the highest sentences in crimes where race was a factor and police were instructed to diligently investigate such acts. A special unit in the criminal police was formed to combat extremist groups and since 1 January 1996 each District Police Department has an expert to combat racial violence. [8]

7.70 On 4 August 1999 3 skinheads attacked Jana Chalupova and Jakub Polak in a restaurant near the district court of Karvina where Polak was representing the family of a Rom who was killed by skinheads in 1998. Chalupova is the head of public relations for the President's administration. [3]

7.71 On 27 August some 30 skinheads attacked several Romany homes in a village near Jaromerice nad Rokytinou which resulted in injuries to 2 Roma and damage to several cars and houses. The raid lasted approximately 1 hour. The police launched an investigation into the attack and charged 12 people with rioting, property damage and violence although they were not charged with racially motivated crimes. [3]

7.72 On 20 November 1999 some 30 skinheads attacked between 60 and 70 Roma in a restaurant in Ceske Budejovice; 6 people were injured. Police subsequently charged 23 skinheads with racially motivated violence; they now face sentences of up to 3 years in prison. [3]

7.73 In February the Justice Minister filed a complaint against the High Court for annulling the convictions, on technical grounds, of 3 skinheads found guilty in a retrial in 1998 of murdering Tibor Danihel in 1995. [3] In May 1999 the Supreme Court overruled the annulment and the case will now return to the High Court for a retrial. [8]

7.74 There were also occasional Roma instigated assaults on local law enforcement personnel during 1999. In January 1999, 2 Romany men from Bilina were sentenced to 10 months imprisonment with a 2 year probation and 12 months imprisonment with a 5 year probation for physical assault on police officers. Local Romany organisations generally criticised these attacks and offered their assistance in the investigations. In November 1999, 3 Roma who assaulted policemen in Usti nad Labem in 1998 were sentenced to 16 months in jail for a racially motivated crime. [3]

7.75 Racial and ethnic tensions and discrimination in society were the subject of increased media attention during the year. Even when federal authorities have spoken out on these issues local attitudes often have proven impervious to change. In June 1999 the local city council in Usti nad Labem voted to proceed with its long delayed decision to construct a 6 foot high 195 foot long wall between a primarily Romani apartment complex and its neighbours across the street. Authorities modified the plan to include a children's playground and repave the street but the Government again criticised the construction of the wall as a symbol of segregation and approved a plan to refer the matter to Parliament should the city council proceed with its plan.

7.76 In August 1999 the city announced that it was proceeding immediately with construction but the district government ordered the construction stopped, citing discrepancies in the building permit. In October the city ignored this and proceeded with construction. The wall was built overnight on 13 October with about 80 police officers present to prevent any violence. Mayor Ladislav Hruska described the wall as a symbol of law and order. On 18 October the government appointed Deputy Minister of Interior Pavel Zarecky as its special mediator to resolve the issue of the wall. In November the government negotiated the removal of the wall after it agreed to give the city government \$85,000 (3 million Czech crowns) to improve social conditions in the town. However, the city council announced that it would use a portion of the money to buy up the houses of Czech residents who refused to live next to the Roma. [3]

### **Measures taken to improve the situation**

7.77 The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance stated that the Czech Government's readiness to recognise the facts already constitutes vital progress towards solving the problems confronting the Roma. [16a]

7.78 The Czech Government adopted a plan of action in 1999 entitled *Ground concepts of Government policy towards members of the Roma community with a view to facilitating their integration into society*. This had been submitted by the Chairman of the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the Affairs of the Roma Community. This document proposes a series of legal and institutional measures intended to eliminate

discrimination against Roma in all spheres and to promote their culture with a view to better integration. There are measures to improve the Roma's position in the labour market changes in the educational system, democratic development of Roma representation, and support of the co-operation between Roma organisations and local and regional authorities. The Czech Government's basic position is that the integration of the Roma as a national minority is absolutely necessary and that Roma ethnicity is an asset which enriches the country. **[16a] & [16b]**

7.79 The measures include submitting a bill to Parliament on the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin and colour. **[16a]** An independent Office of Racial Equality to observe and impose sanctions for breaches of this law will be established. **[6]**

7.80 The Czech Government has undertaken to implement a series of measures to achieve equality by 2020. All persons in need will benefit, regardless of nationality, race or ethnic origin. Action will cover access to education and higher qualifications for members of the Roma community, and other similarly affected groups. There will be special classes, preparatory classes and courses, scholarships for Roma students and certain preferential treatment of Roma companies in placing orders. **[16a]**

7.81 There will be changes in the education system to include the dismantling of the language barrier, preparatory classes, using Romany as a supplementary teaching language, employing Roma assistants in schools, and an individual approach to students. **[16a]**

7.82 The Czech Government recognises the Romany language and culture as incontestable cultural values of Czech society. The Romany dialects will enjoy State protection and State support. Knowledge of Roma culture and history, as well as the culture and history of other minorities, will be incorporated into the general education of all children. Education and training at all schools will be multicultural. **[16a]**

7.83 The Government will ensure the involvement of Roma in the decision making process in the affairs of the Roma community. **[16a]**

7.84 In terms of the security of the Roma community, judges and officials involved in criminal procedures will be provided with training on racism and Roma. **[16a]** The Ministry of the Interior has three new Roma officials who have the opportunity to influence security policy. Preparatory training courses were organised for Roma wishing to serve in the police force: 5 out of 17 passed the course. The Ministry of the Interior has included the issue of extremism in the teaching programmes of police schools and academies at all levels. Special workshops and lectures are also organised. **[16b]**

7.85 An inter-departmental Commission on Community Affairs was established in 1997. It is chaired by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Czech Republic and includes representatives of various ministries and 12 representatives of the Roma community. The Commission supervises the implementation of the Government's plan of action for the Roma **[16a]**, to collect information and to inform the Romany community about government activities, to allocate grants to supplementary programmes for the Romany community and to deal with issues covering housing,



education and discrimination. The Commission has taken an increasingly active role in resolving disputes between Romany communities and their non-Romany neighbours in towns such as Usti nad Labem and Rokycany as well as promoting positive initiatives. [3]

7.86 Several non-governmental organisations and community associations provide legal or social support to Roma. The Roma Movement concerns itself with education. The Prague Human Rights Documentation Centre monitors the activities of extreme right wing organisations, while the European Roma Centre gives legal aid to victims of racism and discrimination. [16a]

7.87 Measures to improve the employment prospects for Roma are part of the National Employment Plan of May 1999, as well as in a subsequent package of additional measures adopted in June 1999. An amendment to the Employment Act includes an anti-discrimination provision. In order to improve the situation of those with placement difficulties in the labour market the government has approved provisions, which will create favourable conditions in schools and special schools for the transition of pupils to secondary and apprentice training establishments. They will establish a network of offices to co-ordinate labour market demands with the abilities of job applicants by 31 December 2000. They will implement and extend re-socialisation and re-training programmes and create conditions allowing the increase in the employment of job applicants in the labour market by 31 December 2000. [10]

7.88 Other government initiatives have included the organisation of a team of specialised Romany inspectors who are authorised to penalise shop and restaurant owners who refuse service to Roma and increased training and seminar activity to promote understanding and tolerance. There was also an active effort underway during 1999 to identify, train and recruit qualified Roma to serve in law enforcement. The national police academy introduced a course in Romany language and culture, which was designed to facilitate police officers' improved communication and response to the Romany communities in their precincts. [3]

7.89 On 14 June 2000 the Government approved a second version of its concept for the integration of Roma. The plan covers the following points:

- measures to increase the security of Roma
- elimination of all forms of discrimination in education and by social class
- improvement in the Roma's social position
- emancipation, including the creation of democratic Romany representation
- support of the Romany culture and language, and
- the creation of a tolerable environment without prejudice. [18c]

7.90 The plan establishes an advisory body, but this lacks legislative power. Nevertheless the spirit behind the plan was welcomed by Roma activists. [18d]

### **Roma organisations and parties**

7.91 In order to be represented in the Chamber of Deputies an individual party must receive at least 5% of the votes in an election. In a coalition of two parties, 7% is

required and in a coalition of 3 parties, 9% etc. Such a system presents difficulties for ethnic minorities in the Czech Republic when the minority itself does not constitute 5% of the adult population who are entitled to vote. This applies to Roma who only have a slim chance of being represented by their own party in the Chamber. They must therefore seek to enter coalitions with other parties or get a Roma candidate on another party's list of candidates. [9]

7.92 Pure Roma parties are the Roma Civic Initiative (ROI) and the Democratic Alliance of Roma . Of the two parties, the ROI is larger. [9] There is one Romany MP in the Chamber of Deputies - Monika Horakova.

### **Romany Civic Initiative**

7.93 The ROI was reportedly founded in 1989 and is structured like other political parties and has 160 local divisions. It is the only Czech Roma party which is a member of the International Romany Union. [9]

7.94 The party took part in the country's first elections in June 1990 in a coalition with Borgerforum, an umbrella organisation for a series of parties and movements. In this election the coalition won a total of 127 of 200 seats and of these the ROI won 9. However, after the election in 1992 the ROI was not represented in the Chamber of Deputies for long, but has been politically active as a party in other connections and regularly publishes political manifestos. The vice-president of the party thinks that other large parties are not interested in becoming involved with Roma issues or putting them in their manifestos. At the last elections, the party tried its hand at collaboration with the Freedom Union (US), which won 19 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The party did not however, want to use the ROI manifesto in the elections and instead put forward its own proposals for the solution of the Roma problems and the ROI ceased collaborations. [9]

7.95 At the local level the problems are similar. In order to gain influence, Roma parties must collaborate with larger parties, but the larger parties have no immediate interest to do this. It is said that the Roma have been too politically passive and quarrel among themselves. [9]

### **The Democratic Alliance of Roma**

7.96 Unlike the ROI, this party has a member in the local town council – the party president, Petr Tulia. The party head office is in Valasske Mezirici. The president reports that the party is entering into a coalition with the Democratic Party, and that it has local offices throughout the country. Unlike the ROI, the president has no qualms about entering into alliances with other parties and in this way, the party has had a total of seven members elected via various alliances in various town councils. However, the president does not want to collaborate with the ROI because he cannot accept the ROI manifesto. [9]

7.97 In local elections in the autumn of 1998 Tulia came ninth in a list of independents. However, he received so many personal votes not only from Roma (of

which there are only 260 in the town) but also from Czech citizens that he was elected. The president reports that he has no intention of standing for elections at national level as he is mainly involved in local politics and in solving the local Roma problems. He has for example, carried out a renovation project on a run down block of houses mainly inhabited by Roma through his building firm and by employing local Roma. [9]

### **Other Roma organisations**

7.98 The vice-president of the ROI states that there are around 35 Roma NGOs in the Czech Republic, which are active in many different areas. On the Radio Prague homepage of its internet site there is mention of 24 NGOs alone which are involved in human rights, culture and education. Some of them work together with international Roma organisations or Eastern European Roma organisations and with international humanitarian aid organisations. This applies for example, to the Open Society Fund, which in various ways actively supports the establishment and existence of Roma NGOs. Of the NGOs there are some which work for the co-existence with the majority of the population, for example, the Bridges Foundation and the Civil Rights and Tolerance Movement. [9]

### **The International Romany Union (IRU)**

7.99 The IRU held its first session for 10 years in Prague in July 2000, attended by some 250 Roma delegates from around the world. The venue was chosen because the Czech Republic has been criticised over its treatment of its Roma minority. [17] The congress accepted a document which calls for the recognition of Roma as a nation. President Havel sent a letter of welcome to the congress [18g] and the chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, Vaclav Klaus, addressed the meeting. [18f]

### **Roma represented in State administration and public bodies**

7.100 Regarding the employment of Roma in state administrations, the vice-president reports that in 1997 the ROI pushed through the employment of one Roma in each of the Ministries. At present, Roma are employed in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Culture Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign affairs. [9]

7.101 In 1998 the Labour Ministry created and filled 58 district-level positions (out of 81 districts nationwide) with “Roma advisers” or “Roma assistants” to advise local authorities on Romany issues. Eventually 20 Roma were placed in the 58 available positions. Some Romany leaders, while conceding the difficulties in finding educationally qualified or trained Romany applicants to fill these positions, expressed regret that only a third were filled by Roma. [3]

### **Roma and the media**

7.102 The law provides for freedom of speech and the press and the government respects this right in practice. A wide variety of newspapers, magazines and journals owned by a variety of Czech and foreign investors are published without government interference. [3]

7.103 The State funds television and radio programmes for Roma on public stations and also supports Romany press publications. During 1999 more and better information on Romany issues was available in the mainstream press and other sources. [3]

7.104 The Democratic Alliance Party in Valasske Mezirici publishes a monthly youth magazine by the name of *Kereka*. It is available nationally and is sold at 5 Czech Koruna. The revenue from sales far from covers the production costs and so the magazine has received a one off State grant of 500,000 Czech koruna. When this money has been used up, the magazine will probably be discontinued. A similar magazine, *Amaro Gendalos*, for adult Roma is published with support from the Culture Ministry. The magazine costs 10 Czech koruna. Among the members of the editorial team is Emil Scuka, who is president of the ROI party. A weekly newspaper, *Romano Kurko*, is printed in Brno at a unit price of 3 Czech koruna. All three publications are in Czech. [9]

7.105 Radio Prague has regular broadcasts for and about the Roma population. Recently a Roma was appointed as a newsreader on Czech Television's main evening news programme. At the end of February 1999 the first group of Roma completed a special training course in journalism with the focus on the reporting of Roma conditions. [9]

7.106 A new biweekly newspaper for Roma was launched in February 1999, published by the Society of Romanies in Moravia, with the support of the government. Editor in chief of *Romano hangos* (The Romany Voice) is the society's chairman Karel Holomek. One of the main aims of the publication is to contribute to mutual communications between the Roma and majority society as well as understanding amongst the Roma themselves. [13]

7.107 In September 1999 there was the first national conference to help Romany advisers deal effectively with the media. [14] An article in the Czech daily *Lidove noviny* about the Czech media and minority groups said that although relatively great attention was paid to racism, minority members remain the object of the media reporting not its authors. The Roma for example did not take an active part in the creation of the image of the Czech Republic in the media or indeed in advertising, except in campaigns against racism. There was a recent improvement with the first Romany presenter on public Czech television and when another 16 Roma finished a special journalist course earlier in the year. Ethnic minorities cannot however, simply rely on their gradual involvement in the traditional media and they must create their own independent media aimed a narrow group of readers, which enable them to openly express their opinion, much like prestigious US magazine *Ebony*. [15]

7.108 One of the Romany magazines which is most popular in the Czech Republic is *Amaro Gendalo* (Our Mirror), a monthly magazine subsidised by the Culture Ministry, which started to appear in 1997. Romany lawyer Klara Vesela-Samkova

suggests that any effort to make Romany publications self supporting is thwarted by the fact that in terms of marketing it is disastrous to link a product's name to the Romany community. News stands in Prague for example are unlikely to carry Roma publications and the majority population are unlikely to ask for them. [15]

## **Roma culture**

7.109 There is a Roma museum in Brno, which is reportedly the only one of its kind in Europe. It was founded in 1991 on the initiative of a series of individuals. It receives a subsidy from the Culture Ministry for daily operation, but must supplement it with money from funds. The museum has concentrated on research into Roma history and culture, and it has collaborated with Canada among others. It has thus set up a collection of research literature and a special library, and the director of the museum has said that more and more Czech students, including ethnology students, are studying Roma conditions. The aim of the Roma museum is to make Roma and their culture more visible and to strengthen the Roma identity. The museum would like to have more contacts with museums and ethnological institute in Europe. [9]

7.110 The city of Brno has drawn up a strategic plan to improve inter-ethnic relations and to integrate the 16,000 Roma in the city. The plan includes educational and vocational training projects, cultural projects (theatre, publication of Romany language periodicals, production of a CD of Roma music), and projects for improving Roma living conditions, as well as the museum of Roma culture. [16a]

## **ANNEX A: CHRONOLOGY**

### **July 1960**

New constitution was enacted: Czechoslovakia was renamed the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

### **1963**

Prime Minister Siroky was replaced by Jozef Lenart, who launched mildly reformist New Economic Model. Communists purged in the 1950s were rehabilitated.

### **5 January 1968**

Alexander Dubcek, leader of the Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), became First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz).

### **March 1968**

Press censorship was ended.

### **April 1968**

Central Committee of the CPCz adopted an Action Programme, which proposed constitutional and economic reforms.

### **3 August 1968**

Representatives of the Communist parties of member countries of the Warsaw pact (except Romania) met in Bratislava (Slovakia) to discuss Czechoslovakia's "Prague Spring" reforms.

**20-21 August 1968**

Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia. Dubcek and other government and Party leaders were abducted to Moscow.

**1 January 1969**

Federal system of government introduced.

**17 April 1969**

Gustav Husak replaced Dubcek as First Secretary of the CPCz.

**11 December 1973**

A treaty signed between the Federal Republic of Germany and Czechoslovakia normalised relations between the 2 countries and formally annulled the 1938 Munich Agreement (permitted the cession of the Czechoslovak territories known as Sudetenland to Germany).

**1 January 1977**

A group of dissidents, including Vaclav Havel, the playwright, published the "Charter 77" manifesto which demanded an end to the abuse of civil and political rights.

**December 1987**

Milos Jakes replaced Husak as General Secretary of the CPCz.

**21 August 1988**

Large anti-government demonstrations took place in Prague, on the 20th anniversary of the 1968 Soviet invasion.

**16 January 1989**

A large demonstration took place to mark the 20th anniversary of Jan Palach's suicide. Vaclav Havel and 13 dissidents were arrested (international protests later secured Havel's release).

**1 May 1989**

The traditional May Day rally was disrupted when police dispersed demonstrators protesting against human rights violations.

**21 August 1989**

Several thousand people took part in demonstrations in Prague on the 21st anniversary of the Soviet invasion.

**28 October 1989**

Anti-government demonstrations took place on the 71st anniversary of the establishment of a Czechoslovak state.

**17 November 1989**

Students participating in an officially sanctioned demonstration were attacked by riot

police. 140 people were injured. Later some 300 opposition activists from various non-Communist organisations united to form Civic Forum, a broad anti-government coalition (in Slovakia its counterpart was known as Public against Violence – PAV).

#### **24 November 1989**

With protests and strikes continuing to take place, the general secretary of the CPCz and all other members of the Presidium of the Central Committee and the Secretariat of the CPCz resigned. Dubcek returned to Prague and spoke to a large crowd in Wenceslas Square.

#### **28 November 1989**

Civic Forum officially registered as a legal organisation.

#### **29 November 1989**

Federal Assembly abolished the CPCz's constitutional monopoly on power.

#### **10 December 1989**

New federal government with a majority of non-Communist members. Husak resigned as President.

#### **28 December 1989**

Dubcek was elected Chairman of the Federal Assembly. The following day, it elected Vaclav Havel as President of Czechoslovakia.

#### **1 February 1990**

Abolition of the StB (Statni bezpecnost - secret police) was announced.

#### **6 February 1990**

Petr Pithart appointed Prime Minister of the Czech Republic.

#### **7 February 1990**

The National Front, the Communists' political organisation was disbanded.

#### **27-28 March 1990**

Federal assembly approved new laws guaranteeing freedom of association and freedom of the press and allowing exiles to reclaim their citizenship

#### **29 March 1990**

Name of the country was changed to the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic

#### **27 May 1990**

Vaclav Klaus, federal minister of Finance, announced a reform-orientated budget

#### **June 1990**

Elections to the Federal assembly took place. Civic Forum (in Bohemia and Moravia) and PAV (in Slovakia) won an overall majority. A coalition government was formed with participation from all major parties, except the CPCz.

#### **5 July 1990**

Havel re-elected president for a transitional 2 year period.

**12 December 1990**

Federal Assembly approved constitutional legislation delimiting the powers of the federal, Czech and Slovak governments.

**23 February 1991**

Civic Forum formally disbanded; its members formed two new political parties – the conservative Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the liberal Civic Movement.

**2 March 1991**

Thousands of people took part in demonstrations in Moravia demanding autonomous status for their region.

**10-14 March 1991**

Large demonstrations in Slovakia in favour of independence for the Republic. President Havel was attacked by the crowds when he visited Bratislava.

**27 April 1991**

The Civic Movement officially constituted itself as an independent political party.

**21 June 1991**

Withdrawal of Soviet forces which had been stationed in Czechoslovakia since 1968 was completed.

**1 July 1991**

Leaders of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact met in Prague to complete the dissolution of the organisation by formally ending the work of its Political Consultative Committee.

**5-6 June 1992**

At federal and republican legislative elections there were strong performances by the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (MDS) and other parties favouring separation between the Czech lands and Slovakia. However, the pro-federal ODS became the single largest party, the successors to the Communists (Left Bloc in the Czech Lands, Party of the Democratic Left in Slovakia) came third and fourth. Negotiations commenced between the ODS and the MDS to form a federal government. Meanwhile Meciar was appointed Slovak Prime Minister.

**July 1992**

A transitional federal government was appointed, dominated by members of the ODS and MDS, with Jan Strasky of the ODS as Prime Minister. Czech politicians accepted that total separation of Czech lands and Slovakia was preferable to the compromise measures proposed. Vaclav Klaus was appointed Prime Minister of the new Czech Government. Three rounds of voting in the Federal Assembly failed to elect a new president, with the MDS and Slovak National Party blocking re election of Havel, who duly resigned.

**26 October 1992**

A Customs Union Treaty and other accords were agreed between the Czech and Slovak Governments.



**25 November 1992**

The Federal Assembly adopted legislation enabling the constitutional disbanding of the federation, with the assets divided 2:1 in the Czech Republic's favour, in accordance with the balance of population.

**December 1992**

A treaty of good neighbourliness, friendly relations and co-operation was signed between the two Republics, followed by the exchange of diplomatic relations. A new Constitution of the Czech Republic was adopted, the Czech National Council became the Chamber of Deputies (lower house) retaining the existing 200 members. Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland signed an agreement with the European Community granting them associate member status.

**1 January 1993**

Separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia took effect.

**26 January 1993**

Havel elected President of the Czech Republic.

**June 1993**

At the Congress of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (CPBM), neo-Stalinists were expelled and reformists left to form a new party, the Party of the Democratic Left.

**July 1993**

Former Czechoslovak Communist regime was declared illegitimate and criminal. Border controls were introduced on Czech-Slovak frontier to stem flow of "third party" refugees, mainly heading for Germany; Slovak citizens however, were to be unaffected.

**March 1994**

The Czech Republic joined NATO's Partnership for Peace programme of military co-operation.

**September 1994**

A law introduced new qualifications of 2 years established residence and 5 years without any criminal record for nationality and associated rights and benefits.

**August 1995**

Former Czechoslovak Communists who had co-operated with the USSR in suppressing the 1968 Prague Spring uprising were charged with treason.

**28 November 1995**

The Czech Republic became the first former Communist country to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

**January 1996**

The Ministers of the Interior of the Czech Republic and Slovakia approved a treaty to finalise the Czech-Slovak border (following opposition among citizens to be transferred to Slovak jurisdiction, the Chamber of Deputies rejected the treaty in

April). The Prime Minister Klaus submitted the Czech Republic's application to join the EU.

**31 May–1 June 1996**

In the Czech Republic's first general election as an independent state the ODS-led government alliance won 99 seats – ODS 68, Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL) 19, Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) 13 – 2 seats short of the overall majority; the opposition Czech Social Democratic party (CSSD) won 61 seats, the CPDM 22 and the Association for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (AFR-RPC) 18. Negotiations on the formation of a new government involved the ODS, KDU-CSL, ODA and CSSD, but not the CPBM and AFR-RPC.

**27 June 1996**

Klaus was re-appointed Prime Minister of a minority coalition government which included the ODS, KDU-CSL and ODA. Milos Zeman the leader of the CSSD was appointed Chairman (speaker) of the Chamber of Deputies.

**15-16 November 1996**

Only 30% of the electorate voted in the delayed Senate elections; after a second round on 22-23 November the ODS had 32 of the 81 seats and CSSD 25.

**August 1997**

Hundreds of Roma sought asylum in Canada and the UK, claiming persecution and drawing international attention to allegations of institutional racism in the Czech Republic.

**30 November 1997**

Premier Klaus and the government resigned, after the withdrawal of the KDU-CSL and ODA from the coalition, following allegations of corruption against the ODS.

**13 December 1997**

Klaus was convincingly re-elected Chairman of the ODS at a special congress defeating Ruml by 227 to 72.

**17 December 1997**

Jozef Tosovsky, hitherto central bank governor, was appointed Prime Minister to head a "caretaker", largely non-political administration supported by the old coalition in advance of an early general election.

**18 January 1998**

A new party, the Freedom Union (FU) was established by 30 of the 69 CDP deputies. Ruml was elected leader.

**20 January 1998**

Havel was re-elected president for a second 5 year term.

**15 April 1998**

The Chamber of Deputies approved Czech membership of the NATO.

### **19-20 June 1998**

In the general election the CSDP gained 32.3% of the votes cast and 74 seats in the 200 seat Chamber of Deputies, the CDP gained 27.7% of the poll and 63 seats, the other parties to gain representation in parliament were the CPBM (24 seats) the CDU-CPP (20) and the FU (19).

### **17 July 1998**

Zeman was appointed Prime Minister of a minority CSDP government supported by the CDP which had failed to negotiate a coalition with the CDU-CPP and the FU.

### **March 1999**

The Czech Republic joins NATO.

Source [1a] & [1b]

## **ANNEX B: PROMINENT PEOPLE**

President	Vaclav Havel
Prime Minister	Milos Zeman
Deputy Prime Ministers	Vladimir Spidla; Pavel Mertlik; Pavel Rychetsky; Jan Kavan
Foreign Affairs	Jan Kavan
Interior	Vaclav Grulich
Defence	Vladimir Vetchy
Justice	Otakar Motejl ( <i>resigned October 2000</i> )
Trade	Miroslav Gregr
Transport	Antonin Peltram
Environment	Milos Kuzvart
Agriculture	Jan Fencel
Regional Development	Jaromir Cisar
Health	Bohumil Fiser
Education	Eduard Zeman
Culture	Pavel Dostal
Minister without Portfolio	Jaroslav Basta

[1b]

## **ANNEX C: POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS**

**Association for the Republic-Republican Party of Czechoslovakia** (*Sdruzeni pro republiku-Republikanska strana Ceskoslovenska*) Founded 1989. Extreme right wing.  
Chair: Miroslav Sladek

**Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party** (*Krestanska a*

*demokraticka uni - Ceskoslovenska strana lidova*) Founded 1992. Chair: Jan Kasal.

**Civic Democratic Alliance** (*Obcanska demokraticka alianca*) Founded 1991 following a split in Civic Forum. Chair: Daniel Kroupa.

**Civic Democratic Party** (*Obcanska demokraticka strana*) Founded 1991 following a split in Civic Forum; merged with Christian Democratic Party in 1996. Chair: Vaclav Klaus.

**Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia** (*Komunisticka strana Cech a Moravy*) Founded 1991 as a result of the reorganisation of the former Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Leader: Miroslav Grebenicek.

**Czech Social Democratic Party** (*Ceska strana socialne demokraticka*) Founded 1878, re-established 1989. Chair: Milos Zeman.

**Free Democrats-Liberal National Social Party** (*Svobodni demokrate - Liberalni strana narodne socialni*) Formed in 1995 with the merger of the Free Democrats (formerly Civic Movement) and the Liberal National Social Party (formerly Czechoslovak Socialist Party). Chair: Jiri Dienstbier.

**Freedom Union** (*Unie svobodny*) Formed 1998 following a split in the Civic Democratic Party. Chair: Karel Kuhl.

Source [1b]

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Europa Publications
  - (a) Regional Surveys of the World, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, 1999
  - (b) World Year Book 2000, Volume 1
- [2] Czech Report Country Strategy Paper 1999-2002 published by the Department for International Development
- [3] 1999 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in the Czech Republic. Released by the Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor, US Department of State, 25 February 2000
- [4] Regular Report from the Commission on Progress towards Accession 13 October 1999
- [5] Human Rights in the OSCE Region, Report 2000; International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF); Report on the Czech Republic

- [6] Implementation of the Czech Government Policy Document adopted in April 1999
- [7] Enlargement Briefing EU: support for Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe
- [8] Guidelines relating to the eligibility of Czech Roma asylum seekers (update December 1999)
- [9] Fact Finding Mission to the Czech and Slovak Republics by Denmark. March 1999
- [10] Czech Employment Plan dated 15 June 1999
- [11] Report on the State of Human Rights in the Czech Republic 1999. Czech Helsinki Committee Prague, May 2000
- [12] Central Europe Review 13 September 1999 Czech Republic Blood & Land, Us & Them
- [13] New Romany periodical launched, CTK News Agency, 18 February 1999
- [14] First seminar to help Romany advisers deal with the media held in the Czech Republic, Czech Radio - Radiozurnal Prague, 24 September 1999
- [15] Minorities not reflected by Czech media, CTK News Agency, 3 May 1999
- [16] United Nations documents
- (a) United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights. Report by the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Mission to Hungary, Czech Republic and Romania (19-30 September 1999); E/CN.4/2000/16/Add.1; issued 7 February 2000
- (b) United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Reports submitted by States Parties under Article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination: Czech Republic, CERD/C/372/Add.1, 14 April 2000
- (c) United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: Czech Republic, CERD/C/57/CRP.3/Add.5, 14 August 2000
- [17] Gypsies mull their plight, 25 July 2000, BBC News website accessed 26 July 2000  
([http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid\\_849000/849986.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_849000/849986.stm))
- [18] Reuters Business Briefing:
- (a) EU to support Czech Justice system with 22 million crowns, 18 May 2000, CTK Business News

- (b) Havel signs ground breaking sexual harassment law, 14 June 2000, Prague Post
- (c) Government approves concept of Romany integration, 14 June 2000, CTK Daily News
- (d) Romany integration backed, 28 June 2000, Prague Post
- (e) Three hundred members enough for church to get registration, 20 July 2000, CTK Daily News
- (f) Education of Romany minority important - Klaus, 26 July 2000, CTK Daily News
- (g) Romanies want to be recognised as nation, says adviser, 28 July 2000, BBC Monitoring European - Political

[19] International Lesbian and Gay Association, World Legal Survey: Czech Republic  
([http://www.ilga.org/Information/legal\\_survey/europe/czech\\_republic.htm](http://www.ilga.org/Information/legal_survey/europe/czech_republic.htm)  
accessed 14 September 2000)