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**THIRD REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 25, PARAGRAPH 1
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR
THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

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**THIRD REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES
IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

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| The situation regarding the creation of the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them, namely through participation of national minorities representatives in the National Minorities Council and in advisory committees and commissions at the municipal, regional and national levels, is described in Part I and II..... | 53 |
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**THIRD PERIODIC REPORT ON MEASURES TAKEN TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE
PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE
25, PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE CONVENTION**

Introduction

The Czech Republic submits its Third Periodic Report (hereinafter referred to as the "Periodic Report") on measures taken to give effect to the principles set out in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the "Convention") in accordance with Resolution ResCMN (2006)2 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Czech Republic, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 March 2006, and the document of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the "Advisory Committee") ACFC/III(2008)001 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 June 2008, setting out an outline for state reports to be submitted under the third monitoring cycle. Additional issues for inclusion in the Periodic Report were raised in two Advisory Committee Commentaries - Commentary No. 1 (commentary on education under the Convention; ACFC/25DOC(2006)002) and Commentary No. 2 (commentary on the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs; ACFC/31DOC(2008)001). To facilitate their use in the drafting process, the three documents were translated into Czech, distributed to members of the Government Council for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the "National Minorities Council") and posted on the National Minorities Council website.¹

The Periodic Report covers the period between 2004 and 2008. In this period, the most important development in the legislative field was the entry into force of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter") on 1 March 2007. The Initial Periodical Report on the Implementation of the Undertakings Arising from the Charter was presented to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 1 March 2007. A workshop was organized to increase awareness of the Charter.

Another important development was the adoption of Act No. 561/2004 concerning pre-school, elementary, secondary, higher professional and other education (Education Act) as amended, which took effect on 1 January 2005.

A workshop concluding the second monitoring cycle of the Convention took place on 15 October 2007. It was jointly organized by the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council and the Convention Secretariat, and brought together members of the National Minorities Council and of the Government Council for Roma Community Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the "Roma Affairs Council"), i.e. representatives of national minorities, with representatives of the competent public administration authorities and non-governmental non-profit organizations.

¹ <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/rnm/dokumenty/mezinarodni-dokumenty/ramcova-umluva-o-ochrane-narodnostnich-mensin-6912/>

Part I

I.1. Practical arrangements made at the national level for following up the results of the second monitoring cycle

The civil society participates in the implementation of the Convention mainly through the active efforts of national minority representatives in advisory committees and commissions at the municipal and regional levels. At the central level, the platform for active participation is provided by the National Minorities Council (the Government's advisory body on national minority affairs), as well as the Culture Ministry's advisory body on minority cultures and the Education Ministry's advisory body on minority schools. Each of these bodies includes minority representatives appointed at the suggestion of national minority organizations. Participation of the civil society – national minority representatives – in the conduct of affairs affecting national minorities is required by Article 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and by Section 6 of Act No. 273/2001 concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and amending certain acts (hereinafter referred to as the "National Minorities Act"). The range of opportunities for active engagement includes also civic associations concerned with national minority issues - at present, there are over 500 of them registered with the Interior Ministry. Although only about one third of them are actually working, civic associations are treated as legitimate partners to the public administration. In addition, each national minority develops its own internal structures, regional and countrywide. Some minorities have consolidated these internal structures under the umbrella of a more or less formal organization which helps build consensus and formulate the minority's common positions concerning its rights (e.g. the Bulgarian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Greek and Slovak minorities).

There are also efforts to create a functioning common organization for all national minorities. The existing Association of National Minority Organizations ("Asociace národnostních sdružení") set up in 2000 has not undertaken any major activities so far.

All documents concerning the first and second monitoring cycles of the Convention are posted on the National Minorities Council website.² The most important documents are available in Czech and in English and the National Minorities Act is available in the languages of all the national minorities represented on the National Minorities Council. The National Minorities Council has been using the Czech Government website (www.vlada.cz) to raise public awareness of national minority policies already since 1998.³

Comprehensive annual, monitoring and assessment reports on the situation of national minorities in the Czech Republic, considered and adopted by the Government, have been published since 2001. The Prime Minister regularly forwards these reports to the chairpersons of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate of the Czech Parliament for distribution to the competent parliamentary committees. Information about reports considered and relevant resolutions adopted by the Government is published in the Government Gazette for Regional and Municipal Authorities ("Vestník vlády pro orgány kraje a orgány obcí"). Reports in printed format are distributed to public administration authorities, public libraries, non-governmental organizations and interested experts and members of the general public.

² <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/rnm/dokumenty/mezinarodni-dokumenty/ramcova-umluva-o-ochrane-narodnostnich-mensin-6912/>

³ <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/rnm/historie-a-soucasnost-rady-15074/>

Following ratification of the Charter on 15 November 2006, the Czech Republic deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and made the required declarations concerning the application of the provisions of the Charter. In accordance with Article 19 (2) of the Charter, the Charter entered into force in respect of the Czech Republic on 1 March 2007. Its full text, including the Explanatory Report, is available on the National Minorities Council website and on the website of the Council of Europe.⁴ The Charter is published in the International Treaties Gazette ("Sbírka mezinárodních smluv ") as notice No. 15/2007.⁵

To raise awareness of the Charter among public administration authorities, the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council created a booklet entitled *"The Charter – What Should We Know? ("Charta – co bychom meli vedet?"*). The booklet was published by the Government Office in 2006 and distributed to the competent government and local government authorities, especially in the Moravian-Silesian Region (municipal and regional governments, national minority organizations, schools, media, cultural institutions, etc.).

A useful channel for publishing information on the situation and life of national minorities and measures relevant to their rights in the context of the Convention are national minority periodicals, which annually receive subsidies from the state budget (see comments on Article 9 of the Convention). Among the mass media, an important role is played by the Czech Radio with its current affairs programmes produced by editors belonging to national minorities. The Czech Radio has programmes in German, Polish, Romani, Slovak and other national minority languages.

The National Minority Committees (hereinafter referred to as the "Committees") are advisory bodies of local and regional governments. At the local level, they are established by local governments in municipalities where persons belonging to national minorities account for more than 10% share of the population. Act No. 128/2000 concerning municipalities (status of municipalities, hereinafter referred to as the "Municipalities Act"), Section 117 (3) requires a Committee to be set up in every municipality where in the latest census at least 10% of inhabitants reported a nationality other than Czech. The Committee is consulted on issues affecting national minorities, e.g. on the use of signs and inscriptions in minority languages. Similarly, Act No. 129/2000 concerning regions (status of regions), Section 78 (2), requires a Committee to be set up in every region where in the latest census at least 5% of inhabitants reported a nationality other than Czech.

In 2006, the year of the ratification of the Charter, the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council held many meetings with representatives of local governments in the Moravian-Silesian Region to discuss the arrangements necessary for the implementation of the Charter. However, the Moravian-Silesian Regional Council waited until 7 February 2007 to accept the CZK 5,000,000 earmarked in the state budget to cover the expenses of municipalities implementing the Charter (Regional Council Resolution No. 110/3988). At the same time, the Moravian-Silesian Regional Office agreed to distribute of the allocation to municipalities applying for money to cover their expenses.

⁴ <http://conventions.coe.int>; <http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=21031>

⁵ <http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2007/sb011-07m.pdf>. The Charter monitoring mechanism requires that the Czech Republic's initial periodic report be presented by 1 March 2008, and the subsequent reports every three years.

In 2007, the Czech Republic completed the second monitoring cycle of the Convention. The cycle was concluded with a *Follow-up workshop on the implementation of the Framework Convention* in Prague on 15 October 2007⁶, organized by the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council in cooperation with the Convention Secretariat. The Council of Europe, which administers the monitoring mechanisms of all its Member States, was represented by Prof. Lidija Basta-Fleiner, former member and Vice-President of the Advisory Committee, and Mr. Krzysztof Zyman from the Convention Secretariat. The Czech participants included 28 representatives of the public administration and public services⁷ and 13 representatives of national minorities.⁸

The topics of the workshop were chosen by the Convention Secretariat. For each topic, there were separate speaking times for the presentation of the views of the Advisory Committee, for the presentation of the views of the public administration and for comments by minority representatives:

- Main points of the Second Opinion of the Advisory Committee and the resolution of the Committee of Ministers regarding the Czech Republic adopted in 2006;
- Discussion on the activities to counter discrimination against and intolerance towards persons belonging to national minorities;
- Assessment of the efficiency of Roma participation in the social, economic and cultural life and in public affairs;
- New developments regarding the use of minority languages in public life (especially in the media, education, communication with local governments, topographic indications).

In conclusion, the workshop noted that the dialogue was well under way and that the Czech Republic demonstrated a genuine strategic commitment and resolute approach to the implementation of the Convention. The main problem identified at the workshop was insufficient communication between the central government and local governments (a common side-effect of decentralization). The workshop appreciated that the Czech government policy on national minorities had remained stable over many years, throughout a succession of governments formed by different parties.

Of special interest was the important initiative started by the European Centre for Minority Issues in 2005. At the suggestion of the Centre, the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) distributed to the Member States a questionnaire on consultative arrangements relating to national minorities. The replies served as a basis for an analytical report on *Consultation Arrangements Concerning National Minorities* prepared by the Committee in 2006.⁹ The aim of the survey was to show the diversity of approaches in different countries and to identify possible good practices. The document was

⁶ For details see <http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=26274>.

⁷ Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Government Office, Office of the President of the Republic, Southern Moravia Regional Office, Liberec Regional Office, Prague City Hall, several towns and municipalities (Karviná, Trinec, Jablunkov, Horní Suchá) and the Czech Radio.

⁸ Representatives of the Bulgarian, Croat, Hungarian, Polish, Ruthenian, Russian, Greek and Slovak minorities and the Jewish community.

⁹ For Czech translation, see

http://www.vlada.cz/assets/cs/rvk/rnm/dokumenty/mezinarodni/200611_preklad_cz_1.pdf.

translated into Czech and its Czech and English versions are posted on the National Minorities Council website.¹⁰

II. Measures taken to improve the implementation of the Framework Convention

II.1. European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The ratification of the Charter on 15 November 2006 marked a major step forward in facilitating the use of minority languages in public life. Upon ratification, the Czech Republic made a declaration specifying the minority languages spoken in its territory in respect of which it intended to apply the provisions of Part II of the Charter, and a declaration specifying the minority languages to which it intended to apply selected provisions of Part III of the Charter pursuant to Article 2 (2) and Article 3 (1) of the Charter. In accordance with Article 19 (2) of the Charter, the Charter entered into force in respect of the Czech Republic on 1 March 2007. The Charter not only prohibits discrimination as regards the use of regional or minority languages, but also provides for their active promotion through a range of specific measures. The aim is to ensure, as far as reasonably possible, the use of regional or minority languages in education and the media and to facilitate their use in judicial and administrative settings, in economic and social life and in cultural activities.

Protection under Part II of the Charter is extended to the following minority languages:

- Polish (in Frýdek-Místek and Karviná districts of the Moravian-Silesian Region),
- German, Romani, Slovak (all over the territory of the Czech Republic, where justified by the number of speakers)

Other minority languages spoken in the Czech Republic, i.e. Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Ruthenian, Russian, Greek, Serbian and Ukrainian, enjoy protection under the Convention but do not fully meet the criteria for protection under the Charter. Croatian is a traditional minority language, but it no longer has enough speakers (it was spoken in three southern Moravian municipalities from the 16th century until 1948 when the local Croat community was forcibly resettled across central and northern Moravia). Croats have no programme of education in their language and lack other necessary infrastructure. The other minority languages were brought to the present Czech Republic by the 20th century migration waves: Bulgarian, Hungarian, Ruthenian, Russian, Serbian and Ukrainian appeared in the country in the 1920s, Greek in the late 1940s. The emergence and consolidation of minority communities is an ongoing process; however, Article 3 (2) of the Charter enables the Czech Republic to extend the protection of the Charter to additional languages at any subsequent time, depending on the situation of each language and the number of its speakers.

With regard to the historical context, demographic composition and the existence of distinct geographical areas in which the undertakings would apply, the protection under Part III of the Charter was extended to the following languages:

- Polish, the mother language of about 50,000 Czech citizens mainly in Tešín Silesia, in Frýdek-Místek and Karviná districts (Moravian-Silesian Region). The undertakings are incorporated in the applicable laws and implemented in municipalities with the required number of Polish-speaking inhabitants.

¹⁰ http://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rnm/dokumenty/mezinarodni-dokumenty/200611_preklad_cz_1.pdf

- Slovak, the mother language of about 200,000 Czech citizens across the whole territory of the Czech Republic. The undertakings do not pose any problems, since Czech and Slovak are closely related languages and there already exists legislation permitting the use of Slovak in communication with the administrative authorities.

II.2. Culture

In the area of radio and television broadcasting, the basic rules concerning national minorities are set by Act No. 235/2006 amending Act No. 231/2001 concerning radio and television broadcasting and amending other acts as amended. Section 17 (2) provides that in granting digital broadcasting licences, the Radio and Television Broadcasting Council must "assess the applicant's contribution to the development of the culture of national, ethnic and other minorities in the Czech Republic"; Section 32 (1) forbids the broadcasting of any programmes that might reinforce stereotyped prejudices against ethnic, religious or racial minorities.

In the area of museums and galleries, the legislation guaranteeing equal access to the knowledge and use of movable cultural heritage remains in force (Act No. 483/2004 amending Act No. 122/2000 concerning the protection of collections of museum nature and amending certain other acts as amended by Act No. 186/2004).

o Roma Culture Museum in Brno

Opened on 1 January 2005, the museum is partly subsidized from the state budget and supervised by the Culture Ministry. For the time being it remains a unique institution of its kind in Europe. The Roma Culture Museum documents the material and spiritual culture of the Roma and their coexistence with the majority society. The annual *Roma Culture Museum Bulletin* ("*Bulletin Muzea romské kultury* ") contains an overview of the museum's work in the given year, as well as articles, reports, reviews and annotations on Roma studies and Roma literature, in particular on works by Roma authors.¹¹ In 2007 the museum took part in the events marking the World Roma Day (8 April), as well as in the Brno Museums Night event; it organized lecture series, ran a children's leisure time club, etc. Its curators and librarians provided services to 72 researchers who made 100 visits to the museum for research purposes. The museum's success is evident from the increasing number of visitors: in 2007, its exhibitions and events drew 11,000 people, a rise by one thousand against 2006.

In 2008, the Roma Culture Museum in Brno received an allocation of CZK 8,133,000, which is CZK 55,000 more than in 2007.

Government Resolution No. 797 of 28 July 1999 instructed the Culture Minister to make arrangements in support of Holocaust study and education. The Roma Holocaust is mentioned side by side with the Shoah in all materials, studies and presentations on the Holocaust. Study of the Roma Holocaust is part of the mission of the Terezín Memorial (an institution partly subsidized from the state budget, supervised by the Culture Ministry in cooperation with the Roma Culture Museum in Brno). The Roma Holocaust is commemorated in the exhibitions managed by the Terezín Memorial in the Terezín, Auschwitz and Ravensbrück concentration camps. The Terezín Memorial organizes seminars and workshops on this topic for experts and, in cooperation with the Education Ministry, also for teachers, pupils and students.

¹¹ For a relatively detailed overview of the museum's work, see also <http://www.rommuz.cz>.

In 2008, the Terežín Memorial, an organization partly subsidized from the state budget and supervised by the Culture Ministry, received an allocation of CZK 25,776,000, which is CZK 1,150,000 more than in 2007.

II.3. Code of Administrative Procedure

The Code of Administrative Procedure (Act No. 500/2004) took effect on 1 January 2006. It improves or completely changes some of the previous rules safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of parties to administrative proceedings. The most relevant change is in Section 16 which concerns the language in which the proceedings are conducted and the right to the assistance of an interpreter. According to Section 16 (3), any party to administrative proceedings, irrespective of citizenship, who claims not to speak and understand the language in which the proceedings are conducted, has the right to the assistance of an interpreter. . However, Section 16 (4) provides that Czech citizens who belong to national minorities traditionally settled in the territory of the Czech Republic have the right to communicate with the administrative authorities in their minority languages. If none of the administrative authority's officials speak and understand the minority language, the citizen has the right to the assistance of an interpreter; the interpreter's fee is paid by the administrative authority. This rule, based on Article 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, puts into practice the provisions of Section 9 of the National Minorities Act. To unify the interpretation and application of Section 16 of the Code of Administrative Procedure, the Interior Minister's advisory team adopted Conclusion No. 5 to interpret Section 16 (4) of the Code of Administrative Procedure and is currently working on a Conclusion concerning the right to the assistance of an interpreter in sanction proceedings in terms of Section 6 (3) of the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.¹²

II.4. Act on equal treatment and protection against discrimination (Anti-discrimination Act)

After the passage in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, the draft Anti-discrimination Act was vetoed by the President of the Republic in May 2008 and returned to the Chamber of Deputies for a new debate. The Act was finally adopted by the Chamber of Deputies on 17 June 2009 and entered into force on 1 September 2009.

II.5. Agency for Social Inclusion in Roma Locations

In its policy statement (January 2007),¹³ the Government undertook to create an agency to provide comprehensive services aimed at preventing and eliminating social exclusion in Roma locations. The aim was to streamline the use of EU funds for activities promoting the integration of socially excluded Roma population. The Government sought to use the unique opportunity to benefit from the EU structural funds at the start of the new 2007-2013 programming period in order to establish and staff an institution providing support to programmes and projects designed to bring about radical improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Roma, including their standard of living and their access to the job market and mainstream education.

¹² For the Conclusions, see www.mvcr.cz/ministerstvo/poradnisbor.

¹³ <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/jednani-vlady/programove-prohlaseni/programove-prohlaseni-vlady-20840/>

The Government's decision to create a comprehensive tool assisting social inclusion at the local level because it was based on the conviction that Roma integration in the areas of education, employment and housing would put an end to the emergence of socially excluded Roma locations and enable their inhabitants to take a full part in the life of the society. The growing social exclusion of persons belonging to Roma communities added urgency to the need for comprehensive solutions tailored to the local conditions. A solution accepted as realistic was to set up, at first on a pilot basis, an agency to eliminate and prevent social exclusion. Its mission would be to encourage networking and partnerships among the local institutions that can or might directly influence the living strategies and motivations of people living in socially excluded Roma locations (municipalities, schools, non-governmental non-profit organizations, private entities and other institutions).

The Agency's structure and mission was finalized in close cooperation between the central government, regional and local governments, the Roma community, business community, experts on Roma issues, ministries, non-profit sector, the Roma Affairs Council, the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic and the Association of Regions of the Czech Republic. The advisory monitoring committee brings together representatives of all these organizations, institutions and groups.

Since January 2008, the Agency has been gradually starting to work in twelve selected towns and municipalities where it is to implement, in cooperation with local governments, a programme addressing the situation in excluded locations on a comprehensive basis. The municipalities will work with their partners (non-governmental non-profit organizations, schools, Employment Centres, local employers, Roma community) on projects to encourage employment and education and to improve housing conditions for people in socially excluded Roma locations.

The selection of locations took place between August and October 2007. The main consideration was whether the municipality had previously tried to integrate its socially excluded Roma inhabitants, what integration strategies it had developed and implemented and, last but not least, whether the local government was willing to cooperate with the Agency. In the first stage, 32 towns and municipalities were identified and classified by type. To get a representative sample of locations (urban and rural, small and large, locations with a developed network of social service providers and non-profit organizations and locations where such services are not available, locations with high and low registered unemployment rates, locations with high and low degrees of spatial segregation), the Agency's monitoring committee unanimously selected twelve towns, municipalities and microregions where the work was to start at the beginning of 2008.

The following table shows the twelve selected towns and municipalities (six from Moravia and six from Bohemia):¹⁴

| <i>Type (population)</i> | <i>Bohemia</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Regional centre | Ústí nad Labem |
| Large town (50,000 and over) | Most |
| Medium-sized town (20,000 – | Cheb |

¹⁴ <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/clenove-vlady/ministri-pri-uradu-vlady/michaelkocab/socialni-zaclenovani/prace-agentury-v-oblasti-promeny-romskych-ghett-zacala-vlednu-2008-ve-12-vybranych-lokalitach-40435/>

| | |
|--|---|
| 50,000) | |
| Small town (5,000 – 20,000) | Roudnice nad Labem Broumov |
| Municipality/microregion (under 5,000) | Sluknov Hook (Krásná Lípa, Varnsdorf, Česká Kamenice and neighbouring municipalities) |

| <i>Type (population)</i> | <i>Moravia</i> |
|--|---|
| Regional centre | Brno |
| Large town (50,000 and over) | Prerov |
| Medium-sized town (20,000 – 50,000) | Breclav |
| Small town (5,000 – 20,000) | Holešov |
| Town district | Slezská Ostrava |
| Municipality/microregion (under 5,000) | Jeseník district (Zlaté Hory, Žulová, Kobylá nad Vidnavou, Velká Kraš, Vlčice, Vidnava, Velké Kunetice, Javorník, Uhelná, Bílá Voda, Jeseník) |

II.6. Education of Roma children

As regards the "continuing isolation of Roma children within the education system" mentioned in the resolution of the Committee of Ministers, it is to be noted that in September 2008 the Education Minister placed inclusive education (a project to establish regional Inclusive Education Centres) on the list of seven priorities of the Education Ministry for the 2008/2009 academic year.

In 2007 the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as the "Grand Chamber") found that the placement of eighteen applicants in special schools constituted discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin (Article 14 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms read in conjunction with Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 thereto). The Grand Chamber considered this a case of indirect discrimination, i.e. a case where an apparently neutral practice (an opportunity to place a child in a special school designed for children with slight mental handicaps) disadvantaged a substantially higher proportion of members of one group, in this case Roma pupils, and this effect could not be explained by results of the obligatory intellectual capacity tests or justified by parental consent. The Grand Chamber noted that the Roma were a disadvantaged and vulnerable group requiring special protection. According to the Grand Chamber, schooling arrangements for Roma children were not accompanied by safeguards ensuring that their needs as members of a disadvantaged class would be taken into account.

The Government regards the education of Roma children as one of the core elements of the social inclusion process, which cannot be addressed in isolation. Measures in the area of education are taken in the context of steps in the area of social work, housing and health care. The current situation in the education of Roma children in the Czech Republic is the result of long-term development during which the problems became deeply ingrained. There are no statistics on the ethnicity of pupils; however, estimates of non-profit organizations and case studies on children and young people who completed elementary education have shown that many Roma children do fail in their school careers. The same sources suggest that academic failure is more common in children living in socially excluded or vulnerable locations.

The Government and Education Ministry are committed to addressing the situation; the commitment is a long-term one and is not specifically related to the ECHR ruling on D.H. and others v. the Czech Republic.

Since 1999, a number of measures have been put into place to increase the openness of the Czech school system and to create support mechanisms with a view to improving the academic performance of Roma children.

The most important system-wide measure has been the curriculum reform launched in 2005, which enables each school to create its own education programme tailored to the needs and background of its pupils. Other measures are more or less of an affirmative nature, designed to benefit the Roma population or socially disadvantaged children. Their efficiency cannot yet be assessed since there are no statistics on the school achievements of Roma children in the past periods. Additional details on the measures and programmes implemented in 2005-2008 are presented below.

In 2008, the Education Ministry considerably broadened the range of available measures under a new policy designed to respond i.a. to the comparatively high degree of selectivity in education. One of the Education Ministry's priorities is to make the education system more inclusive and open i.a. to children with a socially and culturally different background.

To develop measures that can improve the education of Roma children, it is necessary to have hard data that reflect the situation more accurately than the available estimates on non-profit organizations. To this end, two surveys were launched on 2008 under the ESF operational programme "*Education for Competitiveness*":

A sociological survey analyzing the forms and causes of segregation of children and young people with a socio-culturally disadvantaged background. The survey was carried out by a non-governmental organization under an Education Ministry tender. It covered 99 elementary schools in the neighbourhood of socially excluded or vulnerable locations with a predominant share of Roma inhabitants. The results are to be presented in February 2009. The aim of the survey was to obtain documented information and statistical data on the school careers of these pupils, above all their elementary school achievements, to compare them with the careers of pupils belonging to the majority society and to identify the factors causing the differences in school achievements.

An analysis of the teachers' individualized approach to pupils with special educational needs, including the collection of data on the numbers of Roma pupils enrolled in "standard" education programmes and in programmes for pupils with special educational needs. This survey is also carried out by a non-governmental organization under an Education Ministry tender. It covers 90 elementary and secondary schools. The collected data will help to assess how much support these pupils need to integrate into mainstream education and to assess the pupils' capacity to integrate. They will also serve as a basis for future assessment of the efficiency of the measures adopted on the basis of the survey. Another aim of the survey (analysis) will be to map the real situation at elementary and secondary schools, i.e. how the teachers actually cope with the need for an individualized approach to pupils with special education needs. The analysis is to be completed and assessed before the end of the first quarter of 2009.

II.6.1. Major activities launched in 2008 to support inclusive education and to improve the situation of Roma pupils and students

The basic strategy to increase inclusiveness in education and to improve the situation of Roma pupils was developed in 2008 taking into account i.a. the ECHR Grand Chamber ruling.

The *National Plan of Action for Inclusive Education* will focus on the education of Roma children from socially excluded locations and to the development of inclusion mechanisms for children with special educational needs. Many measures are to be implemented in cooperation with other ministries, local governments and the non-profit sector. The Plan of Action is drafted by a new group set up at the Education Ministry, in cooperation with a broader team of experts from the non-profit sector, Roma organizations, government authorities, the academic community, representatives of schools and local governments. The work on the Plan of Action started in November 2008 and is to be completed in December 2009

Transformation of the Czech Republic's educational counselling and guidance system: The aim is to establish the appropriate processes for socio-culturally sensitive counselling, diagnostics and intervention care, including, in particular, the processes for identifying special educational needs and supporting teachers in the application of suitable equalizing measures, tools and methods. To this end, it will be necessary to change the working methods of counselling centres in order to make them more mobile, flexible and multidisciplinary. It will also be necessary to redefine the standards of counselling services, to set up a workable autonomous system for reviewing assessment reports, and to create a standard procedure to be followed by counselling centres when explaining to the parents all aspects of the child's assessment and the consequences of the recommended treatment in order to obtain their genuinely informed consent.

The *Early Care Concept* for children vulnerable to social exclusion aged from birth to three years, especially Roma children and their families. The aim is to provide comprehensive early care enabling the child to reach its full potential, both in terms of personality development and in terms of cognitive and behavioural functions. In the context of the work on the *Early Care Concept*, the Education Ministry is discussing possibilities for cooperation with other competent authorities, in particular the Health Ministry, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry for Regional Development. Timely and close coordination of pedagogical and social intervention is one of the necessary preconditions for academic success of children vulnerable to social exclusion. The specific measures will be included in the *National Plan of Action for Inclusive Education*. The *Early Care Concept* will be developed on an ongoing basis, with focus on improving the conditions for pre-school preparation of vulnerable children from three years of age until entering elementary school. Special attention will be paid to pre-school preparation of Roma children. The aim is to reverse the educational disadvantages of vulnerable children before they enter elementary school. The measures should increase the number Roma pupils in mainstream education and improve their academic achievements at schools of all levels. In 2009, the Education Ministry will present to the Government a Plan of Action for the implementation of the Concept. At each step of the implementation process, great care will be taken to work with the pupils' families, so as to ensure that the parents are able to support the children's school progress and achievements (social services, services of teachers-didacticians, tutors).

Preparation of a national project to establish a Centre to Support Inclusive Education, following up on the project to establish Minorities Integration Centres that was implemented in the previous period. The project will set up an expert team in every region of the Czech Republic to provide

teachers at schools of all levels with guidance on the specific aspects of work with children with special educational needs. It will enhance the regional sources of information and advice, create a network of experts and establish multidisciplinary teams providing support to teachers, pupils and their families. Roma children are an important target group of the project. The project will be launched in July 2009.

Undergraduate and postgraduate training of teachers in all spheres of the education system to improve their capability to create an inclusive school environment.

The creation and development of equalizing measures to compensate for the disadvantaged situation of children vulnerable to social exclusion, including in particular: the involvement of qualified assistant teachers in the education process at schools of all levels and types, the development of specific mentoring and tutoring programmes for children and programmes providing support to teachers, the establishment of job standards and a guidance system for assistant teachers.

The requirement that framework and school education programmes must emphasize respect for diversity, namely in the context of the cross-curricular subject of Multicultural Education, and that new teaching materials and textbooks must promote social inclusiveness. One of the required steps is the incorporation of chapters on Roma culture and history in school education programmes. The aim is to create the conditions for strengthening the cultural identity of Roma pupils and to increase public awareness in this area.

Support of inclusive education is one of the major objectives of the Education Ministry's subsidy programmes; the use of the ESF operational programme "*Education for Competitiveness*" (2007-2013) to support activities promoting equal opportunities in education.

II.6.2. Measures and programmes implemented in 2005 – 2008

In 2005 – 2008, the existing measures remained in place - head-start classes for children with a socio-culturally disadvantaged background, support of assistant teachers working with socially disadvantaged children, undergraduate and postgraduate teacher training, and subsidy programmes promoting Roma integration in the area of education (see list of programmes below). The effects of these measures will be gradually assessed, and their further implementation brought into line with the above strategic goals.

o Undergraduate teacher training

The issue is being gradually included in undergraduate teacher training programmes. The faculties of education of Czech universities offer accredited study programmes (bachelor, master, doctoral) and lifelong learning programmes, including study modules designed to prepare future teachers for work with children, pupils, students and other people with a socially disadvantaged background, including work with Roma university students. The programmes are available at eight faculties of education across the Czech Republic. They include e.g. bachelor and master degree courses on special education as well as the following lifelong learning courses: courses for assistant teachers, social education courses with focus on prevention and resocialization, leisure education courses, educational counselling courses, post-elementary, post-secondary and postgraduate courses on special education, postgraduate courses on special education for teachers

certified for the first level of elementary school, courses on social education, courses on social policy and social and charity work, etc.

o Head-start classes

After the pilot phase of the project, the existence of head-start classes for socially disadvantaged children was regularized by Act No. 561/2004 concerning pre-school, elementary, secondary, higher professional and other education (Education Act) as amended, with effect from 1 January 2005.

According to Section 47 of the Education Act, a municipality, an association of municipalities or a region may establish head-start classes for socially disadvantaged preschoolers (one year before entering elementary school), in order to close the school preparation gap. The prescribed class size is seven to fifteen children. The children are enrolled at the request of parents, subject to the consent of the headmaster, upon a written recommendation from an educational counselling centre. The head-start class must be taught according to the Framework Pre-school Education Programme. It is considered an integral part of the school, which means that the content of head-start education must be defined in the school's overall education programme. The teaching methods and forms of work used in the head start class must be tailored to the age, needs, experience and interests of the pupils and to their stage of physiological, cognitive, social and emotional development. In terms of social climate and psychological well-being, the head-start class must be comparable with a kindergarten; however, in all other respects it is part of an elementary school setting and as a rule does not have at its disposal the space and equipment available in kindergartens.

Head-start classes are established at elementary schools using the standard curriculum, as well as at elementary schools using the appendix to the standard curriculum (the appendix sets the standards for education of children with slight mental handicaps). After one or two years in the head-start class, the children as a rule go on to an elementary school with a standard curriculum. However, some parents visibly prefer to have their children stay in the same school, which is why some of the children end up enrolled in elementary schools for pupils with slight mental handicaps.

The table below shows the numbers of children in head-start classes in the past academic years:

| <i>Academic year</i> | <i>Number of head-start classes</i> | <i>Number of children in head-start classes</i> | <i>Number of head-start classes at elementary schools for children with slight mental handicaps</i> | <i>Number of head-start classes at standard elementary schools</i> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 2005/2006 | 123 | 1,441 | 44 ¹⁵ | 79 |
| 2006/2007 | 146 | 1,713 | 44 | 102 |
| 2007/2008 | 164 | 1,929 | 48 | 101 |
| 2008/2009 | 166 | 2,028 | 45 | 121 |

o Conditions for the education of Roma children in kindergartens

The curriculum reform enables kindergartens to create education programmes flexibly responding to the needs of the children in accordance with the Framework Pre-school Education Programme. Respect for the child's individual needs and capabilities is the basic principle. In this

¹⁵Including 41 at practical schools, 2 at schools for handicapped children and 1 at a special school.

spirit, the Framework Programme enables the creation of education programmes for children with special educational needs, in standard kindergartens as well as in kindergartens with an adjusted education programme. The general rule for teachers (in standard kindergartens as well as in kindergartens for children with special needs) is to create optimum conditions for personality development, learning and communication, and to encourage the greatest possible independence. However, education of children with special educational needs places greater demands on the staff and resources.¹⁶ The teachers should have qualifications in special education. They should be able to cope with the child's natural developmental as well as special needs. The personality of the child and the stage of its development should be taken into account. The Framework Pre-school Education Programme includes the standards for the education of children with a socio-culturally disadvantaged background, children with an adverse family background and children with a different linguistic background who do not speak the language of instruction. The content and conditions of education must be adjusted to allow for the children's low social adaptability or increased educational needs. Kindergartens use special methods for diagnostics and developmental stimulation.

A survey completed in early 2009 shows that Roma children who attended standard kindergartens were more successful at elementary school than children who attended head-start classes (the latter had better results only at the first level of elementary school). However, both groups were doing much better than children without any pre-school preparation.

- Support of Roma secondary school students in 2005 - 2008

The aim of the support programme for Roma secondary school students is to assist students whose families find it too hard to support them until graduation. In 2005-2008, about CZK 10 million were annually distributed to about 13,000 students. The programme covers all schools that are entered in the Schools Register and provide secondary education, secondary education leading to a certificate of apprenticeship, secondary education leading to a secondary education certificate ("*maturita*"), higher professional education and higher professional education at art schools. The programme is open to Roma students with a good school attendance record (no unexcused absences) and without major disciplinary problems.

- Financing assistant teachers for socially disadvantaged children, pupils and students

Assistant teachers are paid by regions from the subsidies allocated to the regional budget for the purposes of education. In addition to this systematic funding arrangement, the Education Ministry has since 2006 annually invited applications for subsidies under the development programme *Financing assistant teachers for socially disadvantaged children, pupils and students*. About CZK 70 million is annually earmarked for this purpose. The aim of the programme is to assist regions in funding the service of assistant teachers.

The service of assistant teachers is a system-wide *equalizing measure*. Its purpose is to efficiently assist (where necessary) children, pupils and students with a socially disadvantaged or socio-culturally different background in improving their performance in the mainstream education system.

¹⁶ E.g. in terms of premises, daily routine, psychosocial climate, organization of education, staffing and qualifications, teacher-parent cooperation, etc.

In 2008, the Education Ministry provided about CZK 70 million to subsidize 400 assistant teachers. The subsidy programme covered about 80-85% of the requirements submitted by schools. The results of the survey completed in early 2009 show that cooperation with assistant teachers increases the chances of Roma children to complete elementary education in accordance with the common standards defined in the *Framework Elementary Education Programme*.

- Education Ministry programme to support the integration of the Roma community

Applications for subsidies under this programme are invited annually on the basis of a government directive. The programme is administered jointly by the Education Ministry, the Culture Ministry and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In 2008, subsidies totalling CZK 14.5 million were distributed to 87 projects promoting the integration of the Roma community. The aims of the projects implemented in 2008 were to improve the school performance of socially disadvantaged children and young people, to establish low-threshold centres for children and young people, etc. In 2009, the subsidy programme was announced under its new name - *Programme to support the education of socially disadvantaged children, pupils and students*.

- Support of Roma university students

The support available to Roma university students and university students belonging to other national minorities is regulated by the National Minorities Act as amended by Act No. 320/2002 and Government Directive No. 98/2008 concerning the conditions and procedures for allocation of state budget subsidies to support the activities of persons belonging to national minorities and to promote the integration of persons belonging to the Roma community. The support is indirect, i.e. the subsidies are allocated to the universities where students belonging to the Roma community or to other national minorities are enrolled in accredited study programmes. The amount of the subsidy is determined according to Section 18 (3) of Act No. 111/1998 concerning higher education institutions and amending certain other acts (Higher Education Act) as amended.

The purpose is to encourage universities to help Roma students and students belonging to other national minorities overcome the obstacles that typically hinder their academic progress.

II.7. Multicultural education

In 2007, the Education Ministry approved the *Framework Grammar School Education Programme* and the *Framework Education Programme for Grammar Schools with Sports School Status*. The programmes are designed for four-grade grammar schools and for the second level of eight-grade grammar schools. The grammar schools are given two years time (running from 1 September 2007) to create their school education programmes, and must start teaching according to the programmes not later than on 1 September 2009. A compulsory element of the education is the cross-curricular subject *A Citizen in a Democratic Society*, which enhances education for democracy and multiculturalism and helps eliminate extremism. It covers issues such as political radicalism and extremism, current Czech extremist movements and their symbols, young people and extremism. As guidance to grammar schools, the Education Ministry prepared a *Manual on*

Creating Grammar School Education Programmes. The manual is posted on the Education Ministry website.¹⁷

The *Framework Elementary School Education Programme* has been successfully implemented since 2007. It is an open-ended document defining all necessary common elements of education at elementary schools and the first level of eight-grade grammar schools.

The cross-curricular subject *Multicultural Education* (part of the Framework Elementary School Education Programme – one of the six cross-curricular subjects, together with Environmental Education, Media Education, etc.) gives the pupils an introduction into the diversity of cultures, tradition and values. Against the background of cultural diversity, the pupils become more aware of their own cultural identity, traditions and values.

Multicultural Education thus promotes the pupils' own cultural awareness as well as their understanding of other cultures. It develops their sense of justice, solidarity and tolerance, and guides them to understand and respect the ever-increasing social and cultural diversity. Pupils belonging to national minorities become aware of the specific aspects of their own culture and get to know the culture of the majority society, while pupils belonging to the majority society learn to appreciate the culture of the national minorities living in their country. Both groups are encouraged to find common ground for mutual respect, joint activities and cooperation. The subject cuts across all areas of education, in particular those that concern relationships between different nations and ethnic groups: *Language and Language Communication, Man and Society, Information and Communication Technologies, Arts and Culture, Man and Health, and Man and Nature* (in particular geography).

The curricular reform (which included the introduction of the above-mentioned Framework Education Programmes) has brought major changes into multicultural (intercultural) education. It changed the overall approach to education (increasing the focus on the acquisition of key competences) and gave the school greater autonomy. As a result, multicultural education e.g. gives the pupils a basic overview of the ethnic and cultural minorities living in the Czech Republic and in Europe. It develops certain capabilities, such as the capability to live and work in a pluralist society, to use intercultural contacts in ways enriching themselves and others, to distinguish and tolerate the different characteristics of national, ethnic, religious and social groups, to cooperate with people belonging to different social and cultural groups and to distinguish manifestations of racial intolerance. It helps prevent xenophobia and makes the pupils familiar with multicultural notions such as culture, ethnicity, identity, discrimination, xenophobia, racism, nationality, intolerance, etc.

The Education Ministry consistently recommends that school education programmes should include a sufficient range of multicultural education elements, including Holocaust education (according to the local needs and capacities). Emphasis should be on Czech-German relations (including impartial information on the transfer of the Sudeten Germans), and on the culture, languages and everyday life of different national and ethnic minorities living in the Czech Republic. Pupils should get information about the existing youth extremist groups (anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, neo-Nazism, extreme right and left movements). In case extremism, xenophobia and racism are found to be on the rise in particular area, the Education Ministry gives

¹⁷ <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/ramcove-vzdelavaci-programy-zaslani-do-vnejsiho-pripominkoveho-rizeni> and the Methodology Portal www.rvp.cz

the local teachers an up-to-date expert briefing on the problem groups and on the minorities or ethnic groups targeted by them.

Framework education programmes for secondary professional schools require that graduates should be able to distinguish manifestations of extremism and to explain why it is unacceptable to promote movements seeking to curtail the rights and freedoms of others (e.g. neo-Nazi or other anti-democratic movements).

The curriculum reform is supported by a broad range of services, including guidance and advice on multicultural education. One example is the *Pedagogical Research Institute* (an institution managed by the Education Ministry) with its www.rvp.cz methodology portal, financed jointly from the state budget and from the European Social Fund. Its aim is to provide schools with support in creating and putting into practice their school education programmes, to share the experience gained in the pilot stage of creating and applying school education programmes, to create and update a database of contributions, to inspire teachers and facilitate their exchange of experience, to promptly respond to current practical needs, and to create a good, rich and comprehensive offer of methodological guidance materials for teachers. The contributions posted in 2008 concerned education of persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities, education of children of foreigners and methodological guidance on multicultural education and integration of pupils with a socio-culturally disadvantaged background, including ways to incorporate Roma issues in history lessons (e.g. Roma Holocaust), etc. The Pedagogical Research Institute analyzed the education plans of several pilot grammar schools. A comprehensive report based on the analysis, including examples of good practice and recommendations how to integrate this cross-curricular subject in school education plans, will be available in 2009.

The Education Ministry has set up a new group on social programmes in education (programmes for disabled or disadvantaged children, pupils and students, foreigners, asylum status holders, persons belonging to minorities, programmes preventing socio-pathological phenomena, etc.). This administrative step improved the coordination of work on these issues at the Education Ministry. The group also administers the subsidy programmes in this area (see below).

Consistent attention is given to the quality of textbooks. A textbook that meets the required standards is endorsed by the Education Ministry and included in the register of endorsed textbooks. To qualify for the endorsement, the textbook must respect the Constitution of the Czech Republic and the laws and regulations in force in the Czech Republic; in particular, it must respect the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed to all people irrespective of race, colour, language, faith and religion, identification with a national or ethnic group, and it must promote equal opportunities for men and women. Every textbook is reviewed by two independent experts who are selected and paid by the Education Ministry to ensure their impartiality. In case a textbook refers to spiritual and cultural values or to different national or cultural traditions, the reviewer must examine and comment on the author's treatment of these issues.

In addition, publishers of textbooks of this type (in particular, in educational fields such as Czech Language and Literature, Man and his World, History, Civic Education, Geography, Health Education) must first obtain an expert opinion from a specialized institution (such as the Roma Culture Museum or the Jewish Community).

In 2008, the Education Ministry commissioned a publication entitled *In-depth studies and analyses of cultural identity and difference, history textbooks* ("*Sondy a analýzy ke kulturní identite a rozdílnosti, ucebnice dejepisu*"). The aim is to help improve the quality of textbooks, to

give the teachers the information they need to select the best and most suitable textbook, and to provide guidance to publishers, reviewers and authors of textbooks (on its own part, the Education Ministry will get the feedback necessary to improve the efficiency of the textbook endorsement procedure). This should contribute to the quality of education i.a. in the area of multiculturalism and gender. One part of the publication examines the treatment of Roma and Jewish issues in history textbooks and points out the aspects of Roma and Jewish history and culture that should be discussed at greater length. The publication will be posted on the Education Ministry website¹⁸ and distributed to teachers at workshops.

In 2008, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, multiculturalism was highlighted in a number of awareness-raising events targeting the general public. Some of the activities are described in the Report on the Situation of National Minorities in the Czech Republic for 2008 or published on the above website.

- o Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena

The Education Ministry addresses the problems related to socio-pathological phenomena (including xenophobia, racism, intolerance and anti-Semitism) in its documents *Strategy of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and young people within the competence of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2005-2008* and *Guidance on the primary prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and young people at schools and educational facilities*. Socio-pathological phenomena will also be discussed in the new *Strategy of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and young people within the competence of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2009-2021*.

The *Minimum Preventive Programme* implemented at schools and educational facilities includes the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena. The programme is implemented by the school's prevention counsellor in cooperation with other teachers and educators (educational counsellor, class teachers, prevention counsellor from an educational and psychological counselling centre) or with the non-governmental non-profit sector (civic associations etc.). The implementation of Minimum Preventive Programmes has been compulsory since 1 January 2001 and is supervised by the Czech Schools Inspection.

The Terežín Memorial and the Educational and Cultural Centre of the Jewish Museum in Prague have been granted an Education Ministry accreditation as unique educational institutions authorized to organize seminars for elementary and secondary school teachers on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. The seminars have been running since 2001. The Education Ministry funds a special seminar for elementary and secondary school teachers on *How to Teach about the Holocaust*, and co-funds international conferences. By 31 December 2006, about 2,000 teachers had attended seminars on how to teach about the Holocaust at elementary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic.

On 24 – 25 April 2006, the Education Ministry in cooperation with the Council of Europe organized the Third Seminar of European Ministers of Education *Teaching Remembrance: Cultural Heritage - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. The event was attended by fifty delegations headed by the Education Ministers of Council of Europe member countries and of countries that have signed the

¹⁸ www.msmt.cz

European Cultural Convention, or their deputies, and representatives of countries with an observer status in the Council of Europe, i.e. Israel, Canada, Mexico, Japan and the United States. The programme of the seminar was drafted by an international working party appointed by the Council of Europe, which included representatives of the Czech Education Ministry and Czech experts. A major contribution to the content of the seminar was made by Terežín Memorial, which prepared and hosted a programme on the Holocaust-Shoah. On the second day of the seminar, the Education Ministers met at a plenary session to discuss the problems Holocaust education and prevention of crimes against humanity in the light of the current risks posed by racism and xenophobia. The participants appreciated the system and quality of the training available to Czech teachers in this area, as well as the Holocaust education activities supported by the Czech Education Ministry.

In 2006, the Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling Institute organized a seminar for Czech teachers on *Extremism as an Educational Risk – Prevention and Help*. The Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc hosted an eleventh summer school on *Citizenship education in the framework of school education programmes with a focus on combating racial and ethnic intolerance*. The summer school was attended by about 120 elementary and secondary school teachers.

In 2007, the *Silesian University in Opava* and its *Extramural Centre in Krnov* organized a seminar on *Efficiency*, examining ways to make the education of Roma children more efficient. The aim was to improve the educational and communication skills of teachers and educators working with Roma children in pre-school facilities and at elementary schools.

On 29 and 30 November 2007, the Education Ministry hosted a *Workshop on the education of pupils belonging to the Roma community*, organized in cooperation with the Roma Affairs Council. The aim was to present examples of good practice in the education of children and pupils belonging to the Roma community (kindergartens and elementary schools, civic associations, church institutions, faculties of education, Human Rights League, Deputy Chairperson of the competent Council of Europe commission, Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague).

The *Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling Institute* offers the following seminars for teachers and educators:

- Long-term self-experience training in managing a problematic class,
- Behaviour disorders – a course for elementary school headmasters and teachers, educational counsellors and assistant teachers,
- Diagnostics and intervention to foster the school maturity of Roma children,
- Specialized study for prevention counsellors,
- *Tandems* - community principles and effective team management in educational institutions and children's homes,
- Educational and supervisory programme for the Boletice centre (a facility for children with extreme behaviour disorders).

- o Information materials for schools

In 2007, the Education Ministry's *Pedagogical Research Institute* published manuals for elementary school teachers: *Key Competences in Elementary Education*, *Examples of Good Practice*, *School Self-assessment Manual*.

The Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling Institute published a *Manual of Good Practice in Education Programmes* to educate teachers on the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena.

- Training offered by faculties of education

The *Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc* organized a summer school on the *Multicultural Dimension of Framework Education Programmes and Civic Education*, focusing on the current problems of national minorities living in the Czech Republic. The summer school was attended by about 120 elementary and secondary school teachers.

II.8. Minority languages

National minority activities receive support from the state budget on a co-funding basis, in the form of subsidies that are awarded to individual projects of civic associations of persons belonging to national minorities, or directly to municipalities. The co-funding share of the author of the project must be at least 30%. The state budget funding is distributed through the subsidy programmes of the Culture Ministry (subsidy programmes to support the cultural activities of persons belonging to national minorities living in the Czech Republic and to support the receiving and imparting of information in national minority languages) and the Education Ministry (subsidy programme to support education in minority languages and multicultural education). General rules for the allocation of subsidies to persons belonging to national minorities are laid down in Government Directive No. 98/2002 concerning the conditions and procedures for the allocation of state budget subsidies to support activities of persons belonging to national minorities and to encourage the integration of the Roma community. The subsidies are allocated through a public competition; as a rule, persons belonging to national minorities have a majority in the selection boards.

The right to use minority languages in public is safeguarded especially in the context of judicial proceedings – criminal, civil as well as administrative. The necessary services are provided and paid by the State. The use of minority languages in oral communication with the administrative authorities is facilitated as well; in addition, the authorities accept documents written in Slovak. As regards the public service media, the Czech Radio's national minority programmes, their types and regional coverage, reflect the specific needs and regional distribution of each minority. Programmes for the Roma and Slovak minorities, which live across the whole territory of the Czech Republic, are broadcast by the nationwide station Czech Radio 1 – Radiožurnál and most Czech Radio regional stations. The Ostrava regional station has programmes for the Polish minority, which is concentrated in Northern Moravia. German programmes are broadcast twice a week by the Pilsen regional station (Thursdays and Saturdays, 15 minutes), once a week by the North regional station (Tuesdays, 15 minutes) and once a month by the Brno regional station (20 minutes). The Culture Ministry subsidizes the German periodicals *Landes Zeitung a Eghalånd Bladl* (about CZK 2,000,000 per year), and Roma periodicals, including periodicals in electronic format: *Romano hangos newspaper*,¹⁹ *Romea portal*, *Romano vodi magazine*,²⁰ *Kereka*

¹⁹ <http://www.romanohangos.cekit.cz/>

²⁰ <http://www.romea.cz/index.php?id=rv/rv&rubrika=RV 7-8/2008>

magazine, previously also the internet Radio Rota²¹ and Romano kurko newspaper; the subsidies are between CZK 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 per year.

II.8.1. Bilingual signs and inscriptions

The costs incurred by municipalities installing bilingual Czech-Polish signs and inscriptions are paid from the state budget. In 2007, a total of CZK 5,000,000 was earmarked in the state budget appropriation of the Government Office for subsidies to selected municipalities incurring costs in connection with the Charter (on the understanding that the subsidies would be provided also in the coming years). The funds were transferred from the Government Office budget to the budget of the Moravian-Silesian Region, which administers the payments to municipalities. In some municipalities, bilingual signs have been the subject of complicated debates between the local National Minority Committee and the municipal government. The majority society is rather reserved, and not unanimously positive, about this new phenomenon in the life of the local or regional communities.

The legal requirements for the installation of Czech-Polish signs and inscriptions are met by 31 municipalities in the Frýdek-Místek a Karviná districts. Since the ratification of the Charter in 2007, the signs and inscriptions have actually been installed in thirteen of them. The required funds were provided to applicant municipalities in the form of non-investment subsidies under Resolution of the Moravian-Silesian Regional Council No. 21/1803 of 20 December 2007. The subsidies went to the following municipalities:

| <i>Applicant</i> | <i>Contact details</i> | <i>Subsidy (CZK)</i> |
|---|---|----------------------|
| Albrechtice (municipality) | Obecní 186, 735 43 Albrechtice | 80, 845.80 |
| Bocanovice (municipality) | Bocanovice 21, 739 91 Jablunkov | 14, 113.00 |
| Bukovec (municipality) | Bukovec 270, 739 85 Bukovec | 59, 331.00 |
| Ceský Tešín (town) | Náměstí CSA 1, 737 01 Český Tešín | 212, 227.50 |
| Dolní Lomná (municipality) | Dolní Lomná 164, 739 91 Dolní Lomná | 35, 000.00 |
| Horní Suchá (municipality) | Sportovní 3/2, 735 35 Horní Suchá | 127, 098.20 |
| Hrádek (municipality) | Hrádek 352, 739 97 Hrádek | 21, 455.70 |
| Nýdek (municipality) | Nýdek 281, 739 96 Nýdek | 16, 779.00 |
| Smilovice (municipality) | Smilovice 13, 739 55 Smilovice u Trince | 4, 545.80 |
| Stonava (municipality) | Stonava 730, 735 34 Stonava | 10, 805.90 |
| Tranovice (municipality) | Tranovice 250, 739 53 Hnojník | 11, 662.00 |
| Vendryne (municipality) | Vendryne 500, 739 94 Vendryne | 57, 528.10 |
| Wage costs incurred by the Moravian-Silesian Region (administration of subsidies) | | 28, 835.00 |
| Total | | 680, 227.00 |

All the above municipalities received the money by the end of 2007. The installation of bilingual signs and inscriptions is an ongoing process. Each municipality decides, upon the recommendation of the local National Minority Committee, which inscriptions should be bilingual. The range is broad, including bilingual name boards on public buildings and/or other

²¹ http://www.dzeno.cz/?r_id=33

public facilities (bus stops etc.), street markers and town limit signs. The uniform design of the town limit signs remains the subject of consultations with the competent authorities.

II.8.2. Education in national minority languages

The Education Ministry has a long-term policy of support for education in minority languages. At present, this type of education is represented mainly by Polish minority schools. The applicable legislation (mainly Act No. 561/2004 concerning pre-school, elementary, secondary, higher professional and other education (Education Act) as amended) has not changed since the presentation of the previous Report.

Czech legislation permits the opening of minority language schools and classes in the municipalities that have set up a National Minority Committee under special legislation (Section 2 (2) of the National Minorities Act) and meet the conditions of the Education Act.

The minimum class size prescribed for kindergarten, elementary and secondary school classes with instruction in a minority language is considerably lower than the standard class size prescribed for schools with instruction in Czech. Where the number of children does not even meet this lower class size, the headmaster may decide that certain subjects or lessons will be taught bilingually (in Czech and in the minority language), subject to the consent of the school's founding authority.

The school reports, certificates of apprenticeship and school-leaving certificates issued by minority language schools are bilingual (in Czech and in the minority language). The school may also get a permission to teach certain subjects in a foreign language, provided that it meets the standard conditions. All problems concerning education in minority languages are being addressed as they arise. One example is the requirement that the Polish version of school report form used in Polish language schools should be revised and brought up to date. This requirement will be reflected in an amendment to the Education Act or the implementing regulations.

o Polish minority schools

Polish minority schools are one of the priorities of the Moravian-Silesian Region traditionally mentioned in the region's long-term plans for the education sector.

In the 2008/2009 academic year, elementary schools with instruction in Polish had 1,661 pupils in a total of 119 classes. All Polish-language schools in the Moravian-Silesian Region are located in the Frýdek-Místek and Karviná districts, where the concentration of the Polish-speaking population is highest. All Polish-language schools are entered in the Schools Register. Their task is to educate Czech citizens of Polish nationality in accordance with education programmes used in the Czech Republic; however, on the understanding that the pupils receive instruction in their mother language and are taught some additional specific subjects. Polish-language schools are no exception to the general trend of merging schools in response to the overall decline in the numbers of kindergarten and elementary school-aged children.

The only grammar school with instruction in Polish had 408 students, and there were 154 students enrolled in two Polish language secondary professional schools. All three secondary schools are located in the Moravian-Silesian region.

The *Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Schools in Český Tešín* is directly controlled and funded by the Czech Education Ministry. The Centre serves the needs of Polish-language schools

in the Czech Republic, including the professional development of their teachers, in accordance with the Education Ministry's tasks. In addition to the assistance offered to schools, it provides continuing education and lifelong learning opportunities for teachers, organizes competitions and supports European and cross-border cooperation projects.

- o German language

German is a compulsory optional subject at most elementary and secondary schools (at most schools the optional languages are English, German and French, sometimes also Spanish, Italian or Russian). Instruction in German is provided at several schools. In 1996, the Education Ministry included in the licensed schools network the Private Elementary School of German-Czech Understanding and the First Thomas Mann Grammar School in Prague. The two schools receive Education Ministry subsidies covering 100% and 90% of their respective costs. Another German school in the licensed schools network is the Bernhard Bolzano Elementary School opened in Tábor in 1997, with 60% of costs subsidized by the Education Ministry. In addition, the Education Ministry has supported the founding of bilingual Czech-German grammar schools in Prague and Liberec. A private eight-year Austrian Grammar School has been open in Prague since 1991 (all these educational institutions have the status of public benefit organizations).

- o Romani language

Romani language/Roma studies courses are taught at the following schools: Higher Professional School of Social Law, Secondary School of Pedagogy and Business Academy in Most (<http://www.vos-oamost.cz/>; study programme Social Care – Social Work for Ethnic Groups), Roma Secondary School of Social Work in Kolín (<http://www.osf.cz/djuric/KOLINCZ.htm>; private school with branches in other parts of the Czech Republic), Professor Zdenek Matejcek Secondary School in Ostrava (<http://www.skolspec.cz/>), Secondary School of Nursing and Secondary Vocational School in Český Krumlov (study programme: Social Care – Social Work for Ethnic Groups; <http://www.zdravkack.cz/>), Evangelical Academy - Higher Professional School of Social Work and Secondary Professional School in Prague (study programme: Social Work with Ethnic Minorities, <http://www.eapraha.cz/joomla/>).

For additional information on minority schools, see comments on Article 14 of the Convention.

II.9. Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public affairs – National Minority Committees

At present, there are 51 National Minority Committees in municipalities (including committees in individual districts of statutory towns), and their number is slowly but steadily increasing. In the period under review, four statutory towns have set up a National Minority Committee, and four a National Minority Commission (since they did not meet the statutory criteria for setting up a National Minority Committee). Three regions have set up a National Minority Committee, and three a National Minority Commission or a similar body. However, the process is accompanied by some problems especially in municipalities due to inconsistencies in the applicable legislation. In particular, the Municipalities Act requires that a National Minority Committee should be set up in municipalities where at least 10% of inhabitants have classified themselves as "belonging to a national minority" in the latest census. On the other hand, the National Minorities Act provides that, in addition to simple self-classification for census purposes, people who wish to be

recognized as "persons belonging to a national minority" must also actively demonstrate their will to be regarded as such. In the opinion of many local governments, this active demonstration of will is rare, and the local inhabitants are seldom interested in establishing and serving on National Minority Committees (see Annex 13). This opinion is confirmed by the audit conducted by the Interior Ministry on the basis of Government Resolution No. 689 of 7 June 2006.

Many National Minority Committees at all levels are broadening their focus to include the problems of foreigners, which is a laudable initiative, given the non-existence of a specialized body. Some of them (mainly in statutory towns) have taken it upon themselves to deal with the problems of socially excluded Roma communities, including problems caused by other than strictly ethnic factors, which gives their role a wider dimension. A less positive aspect of this approach is that the Committees may tend to ascribe purely social problems to ethnic factors and avoid solutions of a strictly social nature. On the other hand, they provide another useful platform for discussing these problems and play a very active role in efforts to address them, taking on a fair share of the work normally done by social services departments of city halls. With this in mind, many municipal governments, acting on their own initiative, create national/ethnic minority commissions or advisory boards, or appoint national/ethnic minority coordinators whose duties are often combined with those of a Roma advisor. At the regional level, it is a common practice to assign the duties of the National Minority Committee to a Roma coordinator, since most regions do not have the share of minority population that would oblige them to set up a National Minority Committee. As a result, a frequent practice is to add to the Roma coordinator's main mission, which is to work with socially excluded Roma communities, extra tasks concerning national minorities (and in some cases also foreigners). At the municipal level, the National Minority Committees have been most active on tasks related to the implementation of the Charter, above all bilingual signs and inscriptions (street names, signs and name boards on public buildings, at railway stations, traffic signs).

Many municipalities and towns already have their community plans, some of which cover also the problems of national minorities. The focus is logically on the real and immediate problems mainly in the social sphere, such as housing for the Roma population. However, again this is not primarily an ethnic problem and should not be seen as such. As noted above, there is a risk that the National Minority Committee might end up doing the work of the local social services department without proper expertise.

Like in the previous years, cooperation with national minority representatives was good. Many local governments at all levels actively contributed to minority activities (e.g. assisting with their organization and funding, providing equipment and premises). Especially valuable was the cooperation with the Sudeten Germans who were removed from the country after World War II. Some municipalities offer practical assistance to persons belonging to national minorities (communication with the authorities). Many town halls have fruitful cooperation with associations assisting the Roma population, especially with charities (*Salvation Army, Caritas, Czech Red Cross*). Some towns and municipalities are currently preparing to cooperate with the new *Agency for Social Inclusion in Roma Locations*. An example of the good practice is the cooperation between town halls and local Employment Centres (e.g. in Hradec Králové), where fieldwork is outsourced. At the regional level, a good example is assistance in organizing large events such as minority culture festivals. Another remarkable example is *MENTOR*, a project of the Association for Probation and Mediation in Justice, which cooperates with the Czech Probation and Mediation Service. The project has improved the situation of offenders belonging

to the Roma minority who are serving alternative sentences. "Mentors" encourage their clients to meet the conditions ordered by the court, support them in returning to ordinary life and work with their families.

In 2007 one of the greatest problems were the cases of damaged Czech-Polish signboards recently installed in municipalities with Polish minority population in the Tešín area. These cases, though hardly motivated by purely national factors, have had a rather unfortunate impact on the not always calm atmosphere surrounding the implementation of the Charter. Other problems related to bilingual signs have emerged during the debates on their installation.²² Other problems frequently reported from all levels of local government include social problems of the Roma community, in particular housing, usury and juvenile crime; however, these are not directly attributable to national minority factors. There have been some complications following the introduction of Act No. 108/2006 concerning social services, which had a negative impact on Roma civic associations. Some of the associations had their registration applications turned down because the qualifications of their workers fell short of what was required under the Social Services Act; the associations found the statutory requirements unduly burdensome. A major wave of discontent was caused by the reorganization of the Prague City Hall's Advisory Board, which today does not include any representatives of national minorities.²³

II.10. National minorities and internal security

The following is an overview of activities undertaken in the period under review by the Czech Republic Police under its strategy of work with national minorities:

- Minority liaison officers and their working groups at Regional Headquarters of the Czech Republic Police continued to develop their activities.
- The project of Czech Republic Police Assistants working in socially excluded locations was further broadened. The aim is to provide support to crime victims in socially excluded locations and to more efficiently detect latent crime in such locations. At present, the project is under way in Ostrava, Cheb, Brno, Karviná and Pilsen.
- The Czech Republic Police City Headquarters in Brno has completed a one-year pilot project testing the uses of supervision as a personnel management tool in the Czech Republic Police.
- The work on surveys mapping crime in socially excluded locations continued.

The Interministerial Commission on the fight against extremism, racism and xenophobia, an advisory body of the Interior Minister set up by Government Resolutions No. 903/2001 and No. 238/2002, currently provides expert support to the Czech Republic's liaison officer for the *EU Fundamental Rights Agency* (successor to the *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia*) and serves as the national contact point of the OSCE ODIHR. Members of the Interministerial Commission contributed, within their respective areas of competence, to the

²² A survey conducted by the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council found that there were certain problems resulting from lack of agreement on the composition of the National Minority Committees, in particular that too little weight was given to the actual share of national minorities in the municipality's total population. Disproportionate representation of national minorities caused problems whenever the committee had to decide on a major issue (e.g. in the case of Trinec).

²³ The purpose of this measure is to rule out the possibility of conflict of interest. The new arrangement prevents national minority representatives from reviewing subsidy applications and deciding on the allocation of subsidies to their own projects.

Information on Extremism in 2007 and assisted as necessary in gathering information on extremism, racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and measures taken to counter these phenomena in the Czech Republic for the Czech ODIHR Contact Point.

The aim of the Working Group on extreme right-wing music events is to ensure uniform interpretation and application of Section 198a, Section 260 and Section 261 of Act No. 140/1961 concerning criminal procedure (Criminal Code) as amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Criminal Code") in cases of support, promotion and instigation of extremist acts in the context of extremist music events. The Working Group comprises representatives of security and intelligence services and its work is organized by the Interior Ministry's Security Policy Department.

Also taking part in the consultations within the above working groups are members of the Supreme Court, Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, non-profit organizations and also forensic experts on extremism, since expert opinions often have a major role to play in investigations of cases of support and promotion of movements seeking to suppress human rights and freedoms (Section 260, 261 and 261a of the Criminal Code) and other extremist crimes. In this context, it is worth noting that the Justice Ministry, at the request of the Interior Ministry, has created in the Forensic Experts Register a separate category for experts on extremism ("Social Sciences - Politology"). Previously, the experts were difficult to find as they did not exactly fit in any of the categories of the Register.

Another problem to be addressed in connection with extremism was the application of the Right of Assembly Act, in particular of the term "notified purpose of the assembly", in the case of extremist assemblies. In the Interior Ministry's opinion, it is necessary to consider the real purpose of the assembly in its historical and social context, the location, the participants and their past record, and the overall conclusions that can be drawn as regards the aim of the assembly. This interpretation was upheld by the Supreme Court in its ruling of 5 November 2007

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency's Report on Racism and Xenophobia in the Member States of the EU in 2006 describes i.a. the situation of persons belonging to national minorities (mainly the Roma communities) in the Czech republic in the field of education, employment, housing, racial violence and crime. The report notes that the Czech Republic is one of the three EU countries that registered a slight decline in racial crime in 2006.

II.11. Sterilization of Roma women without prior consent

The Final Opinion of the Public Defender of Rights on unlawful sterilizations proposes measures in the areas of legislation, methodological guidance and reparation.²⁴ The Health Minister has repeatedly commented on the Final Opinion, informed the Public Defender about the steps taken to redress the situation, including awareness-raising measures as well as steps in the legislative area. Outside the legislative area, the Health Ministry sought mainly to raise awareness among health workers. A new model form for informed consent to sterilization was published in Health Ministry Journal No. 8/2007; the Health Ministry's opinion on sterilizations, together with an instruction to strictly observe the applicable legislation and patients' rights, was sent to all the health care facilities that had been included in the inquiry; a letter concerning the continuing

²⁴ <http://www.ochrance.cz/dokumenty/dokument.php?doc=329>

education of physicians was sent to the head of the Institute for Postgraduate Education in Health Care; the Czech Medical Chamber was informed about the results of the inquiry. Measures in the legislative area include Decree No. 385/2006 concerning medical records, which provides detailed rules on informed consent, and an amendment to the National Health Act, which enhances patients' rights. An outline of new legislation on specific health services, including sterilization and castration, was drafted and presented to the Public Defender for comments.

III. Comments on the individual articles of the Convention

The article-by-article comments concern Section III of the Convention, in particular the articles on which the Advisory Committee has made suggestions or remarks in its Second Opinion on the Czech Republic's second periodic report of 24 February 2005.

Article 3

As mentioned in the Advisory Committee's Opinion, although the definition of national minorities in Czech laws includes a reference to Czech citizenship, non-citizens living in the Czech Republic on a long-term basis are free to participate in the activities of the national minority with which they share ethnic origins. They have full access to some of the programmes established under the government policy of support for the preservation and development of minority cultures, and may benefit from other activities of organizations of national minorities traditionally settled in the Czech Republic.

The draft 2011 Public Census Act was presented to the Government on the basis of Government Resolution No. 1032 of 12 September 2007 approving the outline of the 2011 Public Census Act and instructing the President of the Czech Statistical Office to submit the draft legislation to the Government by 30 June 2008. The 2011 Public Census Act was included in the Government's Legislative Work Plan for 2008. In drafting the legislation, the authors consulted with a broad range of experts.

Issues such as the scope of the census and the basic methodological principles for obtaining information from respondents were the subject of consultations with many governmental and non-governmental organizations, research centres and universities. Special attention was paid to questions based on self-identification, such as nationality and religion. In this respect, the consultations focused on the content of census questions, the manner of obtaining responses, and the processing of such data.

The rules for obtaining data on the nationality of respondents were the subject of consultations with the National Minorities Council, the Roma Affairs Council, the Government Council for Human Rights, and with national minority representatives – requests for consultations were addressed to many organizations, civic associations and clubs whose work concerns national minorities and their activities. A strong advocate of the inclusion of the nationality question in the 2011 census was the Interior Ministry, arguing that statistical data on the national composition of population are necessary for the implementation of some laws and regulations (e.g. the National Minorities Act, Municipalities Act, Act No. 247/1995 concerning elections to the Parliament of the Czech Republic and amending certain other acts as amended, Act No. 129/2000 concerning

regions (status of regions) as amended, Act No. 131/2000 concerning the capital city of Prague as amended, etc.).

Article 4

o Legal and institutional protection against discrimination

The situation regarding the passage of the Antidiscrimination Act is described in Part II. Efforts to raise public awareness and ensure the efficient implementation of anti-discrimination regulations are supported by activities of the non-profit sector, partly funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Action against discrimination (employment, racial, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and citizenship) is the main mission of the civic association Counselling Centre for Citizenship/Civil and Human Rights ("Poradna pro obcanství/Obcanská a lidská práva"). This counselling centre operates a public awareness website project in cooperation with the Interaktiv civic association.²⁵ The IQ Roma Service ("IQ Roma servis") civic association works in Brno, Breclav and other towns and municipalities in the Southern Moravia region. It provides free social and legal counselling, organizes training and leisure time activities for people vulnerable to social exclusion, in particular the Roma community, and maps and analyses the needs and resources of the target group in order to provide a coherent information service and to develop comprehensive approaches. IQ Roma Service includes an Antidiscrimination Centre, created to fight prejudice, discrimination and generalized perception of the Roma mainly through disseminating information on discrimination, organizing exhibitions and public presentations of equal treatment measures.

The Public Defender of Rights regularly reports on his activities to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic in accordance with the requirements of Section 24 (1) (a) of the Public Defender of Rights Act (Act No. 349/1999).

The Public Defender of Rights Act²⁶ provides that after each inspection visit to a facility or a series of inspection visits to several facilities of the same type, the Public Defender must report on his findings. His report must include recommendations or suggestions on how to improve the situation. Within thirty days from receiving the report, the facility or the responsible authority must inform the Public Defender about the measures taken to deal with the shortcomings. If it fails to do so, or if the Public Defender considers the measures insufficient, the Public Defender

- a) notifies a superior authority or, if there is no superior authority, notifies the government,
- b) may publish his findings, including the names of the person authorized to act on behalf of the responsible authority.

Failure to cooperate with the Public Defender constitutes a breach of the law. The general rule is that "all government authorities and persons performing public administration functions have the duty to provide the Public Defender with any assistance he may require within their respective areas of competence".²⁷

²⁵ www.diskriminace.cz

²⁶ <http://www.ochrance.cz/ombudsman/zakon.php>

²⁷ Section 16 of Act No. 349/1999 concerning the Public Defender of Rights.

Data on the situation of national minorities are annually presented by the Secretariat of the National Minorities Council in the Report on the Situation of National Minorities.²⁸ Input for the report is provided by the competent ministries, local and regional governments and national minority representatives on the National Minorities Council.

The report provides an overview of national minority policies at the central government level, including access to subsidies, description of the situation at the local and regional levels and the minorities' own assessment. Cases of discrimination are registered by each ministry or covered by the Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Czech Republic.²⁹ Since the census data on national minorities are self-reported and subjective and do not constitute part of the personal data registered for official use, there are no statistics on people discriminated on the grounds of belonging to a national minority.

- Application of the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination in respect of the Roma

For information on the Agency for Social Inclusion, see Part II. We believe that the authorities do no question its usefulness; however, what has been lacking so far is the necessary degree of political will.

Sectoral measures improving the situation of the Roma, including in the area of employment, fall primarily within the competence of the Roma Affairs Council. This Council includes representatives of the Roma minority.

In the light of the assessment of the situation of the Roma minority in the 2006 Report³⁰, the Government instructed the Education Minister to conduct a survey of the use of the Romani language and Romani ethnolects of Czech. A project for the *Development and pilot testing of methods of sociolinguistic survey of the situation of the Romani language in the territory of the Czech Republic* received a subsidy under the Education Ministry subsidy programme supporting education in national minority languages and multicultural education. The project was submitted by the Institute of East and Central Asia Studies of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, and should be completed in two years (2007-2008). The preliminary findings for 2007, including costs, were published in the Report on the Situation of National Minorities in 2007.

The Public Defender of Rights notes that the housing needs of persons belonging to Roma communities remain high on the list of problems brought to his attention. Increasingly often, the Public Defender is contacted by people in economic hardship asking for his assistance in finding housing. A closely related category of complaints addressed to the Public Defender are those criticizing the emergence of "socially excluded locations" (often with hardly tenable houses) to which socially disadvantaged families from the whole area are moved. Throughout his term of office, the Public Defender has repeatedly dealt with such cases and inquired namely into the practices of municipal authorities as regards hardship benefit payments, social and legal protection of children, as well as the practices of municipal building authorities as regards structural assessment of buildings, and the practices of public health authorities and Employment

²⁸ <http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?pgid=125>

²⁹ <http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?pgid=302>

³⁰ Item II. 1. of Government Resolution No. 637 of 11 June 2007.

Centres.³¹ Another related category were complaints concerning sterilization of Roma women without their prior free and informed consent (see Part II).

Article 5

- Support for the cultural activities of persons belonging to national minorities

An example of the initiative of local authorities in the past monitoring cycle is the opening of the National Minorities House in Prague on 21 June 2007. The House is run by the Prague City Hall and serves the Bulgarian, German, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak and Ukrainian minorities. It includes a multi-purpose hall, library and conference rooms. The Statute of the House defines its mission as follows:

- To coordinate and bring together under one roof the activities of national minorities in Prague
- To promote understanding between national groups and to overcome prejudice
- To concentrate on the activities of children and young people belonging to national minorities
- To raise public awareness of national minorities in Prague
- To foster communication and cooperation between national minorities
- To foster communication and cooperation between national minorities and the majority society
- To cooperate with other multicultural organizations
- To organize exhibitions, concerts, poetry and literature programmes, screenings of films, theatre performances
- To organize conferences and seminars on multicultural as well as other issues

For additional particulars, see comments on Article 9.

Many municipalities and towns already have their community plans, some of which cover also the problems of national minorities. The focus is logically on the real and immediate problems mainly in the social sphere, such as housing for the Roma population. However, again this is not primarily an ethnic problem and should not be seen as such. As noted above, there is a risk that the National Minority Committee might end up doing the work of the local social services department without proper expertise.

The government authorities are fully open to dialogue with representatives of the Slovak minority. The sole reason why some projects of the Slovak minority were refused in the past was their poor quality or lack of transparency. The subsidy programmes of the Education and Culture Ministries are open to all minorities on equal terms.

- Integration of the Roma and affirmation of their identity

Government resolutions concerning the Report on the Situation of National Minorities call upon local and regional governments to continue their efforts promoting the preservation and development of Roma identity, to cooperate with the Roma community in choosing measures best suited for its needs, and to seek to incorporate the measures in the overall government integration strategy (for additional particulars, see Part II). In addition to the subsidy programme supporting the cultural activities of national minorities, the Culture Ministry administers a special

³¹ See Report on the Situation of National Minorities in 2007

subsidy programme supporting the integration of persons belonging to the Roma community, which benefits Roma and pro-Roma non-governmental non-profit organizations.

o Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the decision-making process

The Culture Ministry annually calls for applications for subsidies under the programme supporting the cultural activities of persons belonging to national minorities in the Czech Republic and under the programme for integration of persons belonging to the Roma community. The applications submitted under both programmes are considered by the Culture Ministry's Regional and National Cultures Department.

The projects submitted under the programme of support for the cultural activities of persons belonging to national minorities in the Czech Republic cover areas such as art, cultural education, educational activities, study and analysis of minority cultures and folk traditions, documentation of minority cultures, publishing activities (non-periodical publications) and multiethnic events (intended i.a. to fight extremism, racial and national intolerance and xenophobia).

Overview of allocated subsidies:

| National minority | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Bulgarian | 225,538 | 247,635 | 280,000 | 349,670 | 403,000 |
| Croat | 55,000 | - | 59,979 | - | 70,000 |
| Hungarian | 568,000 | 620,000 | 650,000 | 680,000 | 720,000 |
| German | 575,704 | 584,433 | 455,130 | 494,000 | 582,000 |
| Polish | 2,151,985 | 2,478,000 | 2,402,125 | 1,928,000 | 1,421,000 |
| Roma | 2,147,330 | 1,979,000 | 1,813,000 | 2,020,000 | 2,350,000 |
| Ruthenian | 23,592 | 9,000 | 28,000 | 50,000 | 29,000 |
| Russian | 100,000 | 150,000 | 170,000 | 200,000 | 253,000 |
| Greek | 225,000 | 475,936 | 500,000 | 650,000 | 1,130,000 |
| Slovak | 2,095,000 | 2,088,000 | 2,248,297 | 1,923,000 | 1,885,000 |
| Serbian | - | 225,000 | 160,000 | - | 180,000 |
| Ukrainian | 540,000 | 570,000 | 525,000 | 593,000 | 605,000 |
| Other civic associations + multiethnic events | 165,000 | 470,000 | 120,000 | 557,000 | 272,000 |
| Other entities (except for civic associations) | 1,290,000 | 200,000 | 62,000 | 30,000 | 60,000 |
| Total | 10,162,149 | 10,097,000 | 9,473,531 | 9,534,670 | 9,960,000 |

Projects subsidized under the programme of *Integration of persons belonging to the Roma community* cover areas such as art, cultural education and educational activities, study of the Roma culture and traditions, documentation and publishing, creation and distribution of films of positive worth contributing to the integration of the Roma community, and multiethnic cultural events.

Overview of allocated subsidies:

| Year | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| CZK | 2,244,127 | 2,000,000 | 2,000,000 | 2,000,000 | 2,000,000 |

Subsidies for cultural projects can also be obtained from the Culture Ministry's Art Department. However, these funds are allocated not on a national basis, but according to the prescribed common criteria. Subsidies from this source have been provided to national minority activities as

well as to activities supporting the integration of the Roma community. In addition, subsidies are annually allocated to multiethnic cultural events with professional artists promoting cultural dialogue and understanding between different cultures. As regards Article 15 of the Framework Convention which requires the Parties to "create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life", it can be said that the conditions for national minorities are the same as for any other social group.

Another source of subsidies for activities promoting intercultural dialogue and participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural life is the Culture Ministry subsidy programme for the 21st Century Library, open to public libraries registered in terms of the Libraries Act (Act No. 257/2001). Their applications are considered by the Culture Ministry's Literature and Libraries Subdepartment. Libraries may submit i.a. projects for national minorities and projects promoting the integration of foreigners, such as discussion meetings and exhibitions presenting different cultures to the general public, or purchases of books for national minorities. The subsidies are allocated in accordance with Section 10 (d) of Government Directive No. 288/2002 introducing the rules for subsidies allocated in support of libraries.

The commitment to widening the range of library services to national minorities is included in the Culture Ministry's fundamental policy paper on libraries, the Czech Republic's Libraries Development Policy Concept for 2004-2010, adopted by Government Resolution No. 679 of 7 July 2004 (Item 13 – to improve the accessibility of libraries and of their services, to remove the barriers impeding the use of libraries, to expand the range of library services to disabled people as well as to national minorities, unemployed people and other disadvantaged social groups).

Overview of subsidies allocated in 2008:

Art Department

| <i>Organizer</i> | <i>Project name, place</i> | <i>Subsidy (CZK)</i> |
|--|---|----------------------|
| R.E.C. Agency | Reggae Ethnic Session 2008 festival, Hermanicky u České Lípy | 30,000 |
| Colour Production, s.r.o. Ostrava | Colours of Ostrava, Ostrava | 500,000 |
| | Caravan of Voices, Ostrava, Prague | 100,000 |
| Dušan Svíba | COLOUR MEETING international multicultural festival, Policka | 60,000 |
| Pulnebí | Hlasohled, Prague | 200,000 |
| Jaromír Hanzlík Prague | Eurodialogue Mikulov 2007 | 350,000 |
| Cultural Centre in Valašské Mezírčí | "Valašský špalíček" multigenre festival, Valašské Mezírčí | 420,000 |
| Municipal Cultural Centre in Námešt nad Oslavou | "Folk Holidays" Folkworld Music Festival 2008, Námešt n. Oslavou | 340,000 |
| | Colloquium "Hledání korenu: nepřerušená cesta" ("Searching for Roots: An Unbroken Journey"), Námešt nad Oslavou | 160,000 |
| Michal Hanzl-Modrý z nebe | "Litomerický koren" music festival 2008, Litomerice | 100,000 |
| P J Music, s.r.o. | Jazz Meets the World 2008, Prague | 400,000 |
| RACHOT Production, s.r.o. | RESPECT World Music Festival 2008, Prague | 430,000 |
| | RESPECT Plus 2008-world music festival in Prague 3 district | 130,000 |
| | OTHER MUSIC 2008, Prague | 140,000 |
| Ing. Jirí Švéda | ETHNO Brno 2008 | 80,000 |
| Rozkrok, o.s. Cultural Centre | 22nd "Čtverec" music festival, Dolní Poustevna | 30,000 |

Literature and Libraries Subdepartment

| <i>Applicant</i> | <i>Project name, place</i> | <i>Subsidy (CZK)</i> |
|---|--|----------------------|
| Mosty u Jablunkova municipality | Purchases of books for the Polish national minority | 5,000 |
| Regional Library in Karviná | Gems of contemporary Polish literature in original – meeting the literary needs of the Polish population living in Tešín Silesia in the Czech Republic | 10,000 |
| Petr Bezruc Library in Opava | We have a common border, common history, only our languages slightly differ | 5,000 |
| Karlovy Vary Regional Library | 14th "Friends of Wisdom" competition, topic: We all live in Karlovy Vary (minorities) | 10,000 |
| Prague Municipal Library | Purchases of books in Russian | 20,000 |
| Prachatice Municipal Library | Project encouraging the development of good reading habits and creative writing among Roma children | 6,000 |
| Vincenz Priessnitz Library in Jeseník | Purchases of books in Polish | 5,000 |
| Ceská Lípa Municipal Library | Purchases of books for national minorities, especially books in Russian | 5,000 |
| Ladislav z Boskovic Municipal Library in Moravská Třebová | "Getting to Know Each Other" 2008 – lectures on the life of different communities in the Czech Republic | 7,000 |
| Vendryne | "Something to Choose from!" – purchases of books for the Polish minority | 5,000 |
| Varnsdorf Municipal Library | Purchases of Lusatian literature | 6,000 |
| Elementary school and kindergarten in Stonava | Purchases of books for the Polish minority to replace outdated library holdings with a view to activating and increasing the minority readership | 15,000 |
| Olomouc Municipal Library | Roma fairy tales | 8,000 |
| Trinec Municipal Library | Together in Diversity (presentation of cultures of different nations) | 15,000 |
| Milovice municipality | The Book and the Polish Minority | 5,000 |
| Jablunkov Library | Purchases of books for national minorities | 10,000 |
| Karviná Regional Library | "Let's Get to Know Each Other" | 5,000 |

Article 6

o Tolerance and intercultural dialogue

The National Minorities Council's Working Group on national minority broadcasting prepared background materials for a workshop on national minority broadcasting, organized by the Czech Television Council on 15 February 2006. Members of the Working Group used the workshop to present their suggestions. Among other issues, they emphasized that the Czech Television needed a clear policy on service to national minorities, in particular on broadcasting in minority languages, which is part of its mission as defined in the Czech Television Act. The workshop was attended by representatives of almost all national minorities holding seats on the National Minorities Council. It met with a favourable response, both from the management of the Czech Television and from representatives of national minorities.

German minority representatives rate the cooperation between government authorities and

German minority organizations as good. The number of National Minority Committees in municipalities with German minority population is rising (currently nine municipalities), and the existing committees are increasingly active. Inhabitants of German nationality are actively involved in the work of the existing National Minority Committees. At the regional level, most German unions and associations cooperate with local governments (cross-border cooperation, repairs and maintenance of historical monuments, graves, etc.). The German minority is represented on the National Minority Committees of the Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem regions. At the local level, German organizations cooperate with local governments, or are invited to take part in local events, in particular social and cultural events organized by museums and schools under various programmes of cooperation with German towns and regions (e.g. in Chomutov, Kovárská, Kraslice, Skalná, Varnsdorf, Ústí nad Labem and Vratislavice). In Ústí nad Labem, German organizations have a well-established cooperation with the Ústí nad Labem Town Museum (including its associated public benefit organization Collegium Bohemicum) and with Jan Evangelista Purkyně University. Many municipalities provide subsidies (in the range of several thousand CZK) or make their premises available for national minority events free of charge. A welcome addition is the recently opened National Minorities House, where the German minority has established its focal point for communication and meetings of its members and representatives.

- o Fight against discrimination, hostility or violence on ethnic or racial grounds

As mentioned above, since the census data on national minorities are self-reported and subjective and do not constitute part of the personal data registered for official use, there are no formal statistics on people discriminated on the grounds of belonging to a national minority.

Article 9

- o Access of persons belonging to national minorities to the media

The Act concerning the rights and obligations of publishers of periodicals enables persons belonging to national minorities to exercise their right to receive and impart information in their minority language without any limitations. There is a broad range of publications, periodical and non-periodical, published by national minority organizations in minority languages. As a matter of fact, national minorities regard publication of their own periodicals as one of their priorities. This activity is strongly subsidized by the Culture Ministry under a subsidy programme which supports the receiving and imparting of information wholly or predominantly in minority languages. The funds distributed under the programme total CZK 30,000,000.

| <i>Minority periodicals</i> | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Bulgarian | 140,000 | 600,000 | 860,000 | 880,000 | 1,180,000 |
| Croat | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hungarian | 1,150,000 | 997,000 | 700,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 |
| German | 4,017,500 | 3,830,000 | 3,450,000 | 2,193,000 | 1,915,000 |
| Polish | 7,420,000 | 6,924,000 | 6,937,000 | 7,610,000 | 7,958,000 |
| Roma | 6,409,000 | 6,412,000 | 5,852,000 | 4,765,000 | 4,330,000 |
| Ruthenian | 70,000 | 113,000 | 90,000 | 87,750 | 86,000 |
| Russian | 1,000,000 | 1,350,000 | 1,200,000 | 1,200,000 | 2,520,000 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Greek | 400,000 | 400,000 | 380,000 | 314,000 | 339,000 |
| Slovak | 8,000,000 | 7,220,000 | 7,675,000 | 6,134,500 | 7,075,000 |
| Serbian | - | 300,000 | 510,000 | 815,000 | 875,000 |
| Ukrainian | 850,000 | 1,054,000 | 1,350,000 | 2,371,000 | 2,256,000 |
| Jewish community | 300,000 | 300,000 | 465,000 | 465,000 | 466,000 |
| Multicultural | 243,500 | 500,000 | 800,000 | 150,000 | 0 |
| Total | 30,000,000 | 30,000,000 | 30,269,000 | 27,985,250 | 30,000,000 |

The following is a list of the subsidized periodicals:

- Bulgarian minority
Roden glas bimonthly (five issues in 2007), *Balgari* magazine (published since 2006, five issues per year)

- Hungarian minority
Prágai Tükör quarterly (five issues per year since 2005)

- German minority
Landes Zeitung and *Prager Volkzeitung* biweeklies (until 2006, when both newspapers ceased publication)
Kleiner Brünnner Gassenbote monthly (in 2004 and 2005) and *Eghalånd Bladl* monthly (since 2007)

- Polish minority:
Glos Ludu– Gazeta Polaków w Republice Czeskiej daily (three issues per week),
Nasza Gazetka biweekly
Zwrot and *Kurier Praski* monthlies (*Kurier Praski* was subsidized until 2004 and ceased publication in 2005)
The *Polish language television programmes* of the Czech TV studio in Ostrava received subsidies in 2004.

- Roma minority
Romano hangos biweekly (sometimes appearing once a month)
Kereka and *Romano vodi* monthlies
Rota internet radio (subsidized in 2004 – 2006)
Romano dzhaniben bi-yearly review (since 2005),
One issue of *Amaro gendalos*, a monthly that had received subsidies in the past, was subsidized in 2005.

- Ruthenian minority
Podkarpatská Rus ("Carpathian Ruthenia") quarterly

- Russian minority
Russkoye slovo, formerly a bimonthly, a monthly since 2008; its regular supplement *Slovo dyetyam* is subsidized by the Education Ministry and thus not included in this overview.
Afisha magazine and *Artek* magazine since 2008.

- Greek minority

Kalimera bimonthly

- Slovak minority

Korene, Slovenské dotyky, Listy monthlies

Zrkadlenie quarterly (only two issues in 2004)

The *Slovak internet radio* received subsidies in 2005.

- Serbian minority

Srpska rec bimonthly since 2005

- Ukrainian minority

Porohy bimonthly, since 2005 also *Ukrajinský žurnál ("Ukrainian Journal")* magazine – 4 issues in 2005, monthly since 2006

- Jewish community

Maskil monthly

- Multicultural projects

Babylon (TV review), a project of the Czech TV studio in Ostrava in 2004, 2005 and 2006

XENY radio programme, a project of the internet radio Student, in 2006

Cultural Weekly supplement of the A2 magazine in 2007

o Czech Television

The Czech Television is a public service television required by law to create and broadcast programmes for all groups of the population of the Czech Republic, with due regard to their freedom of religion and opinion, culture, ethnic or national origin, national identity, social origin, age or sex. The programmes should reflect the diversity of opinions and political, religious, philosophical and art trends, so as to enhance mutual understanding and tolerance, foster the cohesion of a pluralist society, and develop the cultural identity of the population of the Czech Republic, including people belonging to national or ethnic minorities.

Programmes for and about national minorities fall into two groups, one specifically designed for people belonging to national minorities, and the other for a broader spectrum of viewers interested in national minority affairs.

The following table shows the number of programmes and broadcast hours in 2005-2008. It includes all programmes devoted to or featuring nationality and ethnicity issues:

| Year | Number of programmes | | | Broadcast hours | | |
|------|----------------------|-----|------------|-----------------|-------|--------------|
| | CT1 | CT2 | Total | CT1 | CT2 | Total |
| 2004 | 165 | 280 | 445 | 56.1 | 107.9 | 164.1 |
| 2005 | 170 | 581 | 751 | 102.5 | 227.7 | 330.2 |
| 2006 | 126 | 326 | 452 | 64.1 | 144.9 | 209.0 |
| 2007 | 150 | 526 | 676 | 104.3 | 167.5 | 271.8 |
| 2008 | 119 | 488 | 607 | 65.2 | 178.6 | 243.8 |

In 2004, the largest share was taken by *Babylon*, *Cizinci u nás ("Foreigners with Us")*, *Deti okamžiku ("Children of the Moment")*, *Velký vuz ("Great Dipper")* and some episodes of the *LeGaTo* series. Drama programmes included the bedtime story series *Mire Bala Kale Hin* –

Romské pohádky ("Mire Bala Kale Hin - Roma Fairy Tales"), the family series *Josef a Ly* ("Josef and Ly") about the friendship of Czech and Vietnamese children in the present-day Czech Republic, and several episodes of the series *Nemocnice na kraji města po dvaceti letech* ("Hospital at the End of the City Twenty Years On"). Other programmes showed the life of different nations in Europe and beyond - *Doma chutná nejlépe* ("Home Cooking Tastes Best") and *Príbehy z jižních morí* ("Tales from the South Seas"). The remainder were music, documentary and drama programmes - *A vy jste kdo* ("And Who Are You?"), *Khamoro 2004*, *Malý indián ve meste* (orig. "Un Indien Dans La Ville"), *Ó ty černý ptáčku* ("Oh, You Black Bird"), *Před bouří* ("Before the Storm"), *Príbehy moravských Židu* ("Stories of Moravian Jews"), *Ptáci* ("Birds"), *Sousedé na úteku* ("Runaway Neighbours"), *Takové normální manželství* ("Such a Normal Marriage"), *To jsou těžké vzpomínky* ("Tough Memories"), *Uprostřed nekonečna* ("In the Middle of Infinity") and *Vzpomínky, které neshorely* ("Memories That Have not Burned").

In 2005, the Czech TV continued the cycles *Babylon* and *Children of the Moment* and launched the new cycle *Kosmopolis* ("Cosmopolis") and a cookery series *Pod pokličkou* ("Under the Lid") presenting the cuisines of national minorities living in the Czech Republic. Cycles presenting nationality and ethnicity issues were presented in a broader European and global context included *City Folk*, *Evropa dnes* ("Europe Today"), *Evropské hudební kořeny* ("European Music Roots"), *Deti z Afriky* ("Children from Africa") and *Kubánská dobrodružství* ("Cuban Adventures"). Individual episodes devoted to the topic appeared in the cycle *Caj pro třetího* ("Tea for Three") - episodes *Ceši a Nemci v Evropě? To jsem zvedav* ("Czechs and Germans in Europe? I Wonder") and *Do Švýcarska máme hodne daleko* ("We Are a Very Far Cry from Switzerland"), the cycle *Folklorika* ("Folklorica") - episode *Lavutara aneb současná romská muzika* ("Lavutara or Contemporary Roma music"), and in the cycles *Intolerance*, *Ještě jsem tady* ("I am Still Here"), *Krásný ztráty* ("Fine Losses"), *LeGaTo, Na plovárně* ("By the Swimming Pool"), *Náš venkov* ("Our Countryside"), *Reportéři CT* ("Czech Television Reporters"), *Starty* ("Starts"), *Ta naše povaha česká* ("Our Czech Character"), *Uvolnete se, prosím* ("Relax, Please"), and *Ztracená duše národa* ("Lost Soul of the Nation"). Other programmes with national and ethnic elements included e.g. *Chaled, Givat chaim ichud, Iguo-Igua, Dohola* ("Shaved Head"), *100% bílý* ("100% White"), *Sen romského chlapce* ("A Roma Boy's Dream"), *Šamilova svatá válka* ("Shamil's Holy War"), *Zpráva o putování studentu Petra a Jakuba* ("The Pilgrimage of Students Peter and Jacob") and *Khamoro 2005*.

In 2006, the Czech TV continued its cycles *Babylon* and *Cosmopolis* and launched new cycles *Romské kmeny* ("Roma Tribes"), *Deti v Čechách* ("Children in Bohemia") and *Setkávání* ("Meetings"). Individual episodes on national or ethnic topics appeared in the cycles *13. komnata* ("Thirteenth Chamber"), *Clovek v tísní* ("People in Need") - e.g. episodes *Nádherný smutek – rumunští Češi* ("Magnificent Sorrow – Romanian Czechs"), *Vecery na téma* ("Theme Evenings") - episode *...kdo je jiný?* ("...Who Is Different?"). Cycles promoting the image of Europe as the shared home of nations included *Evropské hudební kořeny* ("European Music Roots") and *Euroturistika* ("Eurotourism"). Other programmes included *Khamoro 2006* and e.g. *Cerní bojovníci* ("Black Fighters"), *Deník Oty Wolfa* ("Ota Wolf Diary"), *Gipsy Celebration 2005*, *Iné svety* ("Other Worlds") and *Mostar-most křesťanu a muslimu* ("Mostar – the Bridge of Christians and Muslims").

In 2007, the Czech Television continued the cycles *Babylon*, *City Folk*, *Children of the Moment*, *European Music Roots* and *Cosmopolis*. Individual episodes on national and ethnic topics appeared in various cycles ranging from the *Thirteenth Chamber* and *Banana Fish* to *People in*

Need and Fine Losses. The new Czech Television series *Hraběnky* ("Countesses") showed relationships between people of different national mentalities. Numerous other programmes included *Khamoro 2007*, *Má zeme Sion* ("Sion My Country"), *Miluj bližného svojho* ("Love Your Neighbour"), *My zdes* ("We are Here") and *Shillerové, lékaři z Vlašimi* ("The Shillers, Doctors from Vlašim").

In 2008, the Czech Television continued the cycles *Babylon*, *City Folk* and *City Folk Best of*, *Children of the Moment* and *Children in Bohemia*, *Home Cooking Tastes Best*, *European Music Roots* and *Cosmopolis*. The Ostrava studio started a new cycle of 20-minute documentaries *Známe se?* ("Do We Know Each Other?"). National and ethnic topics appeared in the new talk show *Máte slovo* ("The Floor is Yours") – e.g. *O Romech s Romy* ("About the Roma with the Roma") and *Soužití Romu a neromské většiny* ("Coexistence of the Roma and non-Roma Majority"), in the cycles *By the Swimming Pool*, *Pošta pro tebe* ("Post Delivery for You"), *Thirteenth Chamber*, *Rodinné křižovatky* ("Family Crossroads") and in the entertainment programmes *Všechnopárty* and *Relax, Please*. Other programmes included e.g. *Die Siedler am Arsch der Welt*, *Do zeme (ne)zaslíbené* ("To the (Un)promised Land"), *Hrají a zpívají Gondolánové* ("The Gondolan Band Playing and Singing"), *Jdi, žij a někým se stan* ("Go, Live and Become Somebody"), *Vykorenení a presazení* ("Uprooted and Replanted") and *Khamoro 2008*.

The Czech Television offers a broad array of programmes for or about national minorities, ranging from documentaries and educational programmes, news and current affairs to feature films. The following table shows the genres and broadcasting languages in the past years:

| 2004 | Genre | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| | Documentary | Drama | Music | Religious | Current affairs | Educational | Entertainment | News | Total |
| English | 30.8 | 99.5 | 47.7 | | | | 1.2 | 337.4 | 516.5 |
| Arabic | | | | | | | | 1 | 1.0 |
| Chinese | | 3 | | | | | | | 3.0 |
| Finnish | | | | | 1.7 | | | | 1.7 |
| French | 1.1 | 10.1 | 3.8 | | | | | | 15.0 |
| Netherlands | | | | | 0.9 | | | | 0.9 |
| Italian | | 13.2 | 1.5 | | | | | | 14.7 |
| Japanese | | 1.4 | | | | | | | 1.4 |
| Hungarian | | 12 | | | 0.4 | | | | 12.4 |
| German | 5.6 | 3.9 | 5.1 | | 1.9 | | | | 16.5 |
| Norwegian | | | | | 1.4 | | | | 1.4 |
| Polish | | 3.7 | | | | | | | 3.7 |
| Portuguese | | | | | 1.9 | | | | 1.9 |
| Romanian | | | | | 1.2 | | | | 1.2 |
| Russian | 2.9 | | 3.2 | | | | | | 6.2 |
| Slovak | 2.1 | 21.1 | | | | 13.8 | 2.1 | 109.6 | 148.7 |
| Spanish | | 6.3 | | | | | | | 6.3 |
| Serbian/Croatian | | 9.3 | | | 1.8 | | | | 11.1 |
| Swedish | | 7.2 | | | 1.8 | | | | 9.0 |
| Ukrainian | 0.7 | | | | | | | | 0.7 |
| Vietnamese | | 3.6 | | | | | | | 3.6 |
| Total | 43.2 | 194.3 | 61.3 | 0 | 13 | 13.8 | 3.3 | 448 | 776.9 |

| Genre | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| 2006 | Documentary | Drama | Music | Religious | Current affairs | Educational | Entertainment | News | Total |
| English | 88.2 | 154.6 | 76.1 | | | | 12 | 394.4 | 725.4 |
| Arabic | 2 | | | | | | | | 2.0 |
| Danish | | 1.8 | | | | | | | 1.8 |
| Finnish | | 1.5 | | | | | | | 1.5 |
| French | 8.4 | 22.5 | 36.6 | | | | | | 67.4 |
| Hebrew | | 2 | | | | | | | 2.0 |
| Italian | 5.5 | 41.7 | 3.6 | | | | | | 50.8 |
| Japanese | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| Combination | 7.2 | | | | | | | | 7.2 |
| Hungarian | | 9.7 | | | | | | | 9.7 |
| German | 6.6 | 9.8 | 38.2 | | | | | | 54.5 |
| Norwegian | 3.4 | | | | | | | | 3.4 |
| Polish | 0.5 | 2 | | | | | | | 2.4 |
| Portuguese | | 1.5 | | | | | | | 1.5 |
| Russian | 2.5 | 2.4 | 3.2 | | | | | | 8.1 |
| Slovenian | | 1.8 | | | | | | | 1.8 |
| Slovak | 5.6 | 6.7 | | | 4.8 | | 4.1 | 128.4 | 149.6 |
| Spanish | | 8.3 | | | | | | | 8.3 |
| Serbian/Croatian | | 8.9 | | | | | | | 8.9 |
| Swedish | | 1.5 | | | | | | | 1.5 |
| Total | 131 | 276.7 | 158 | 0 | 4.8 | 0 | 16 | 522.8 | 1,109 |

| Genre | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| 2007 | Documentary | Drama | Music | Religious | Current affairs | Educational | Entertainment | News | Total |
| English | 97.1 | 166 | 84.1 | | 1.3 | | 29 | 28.2 | 406.1 |
| Chinese | 1 | 5.9 | | | | | | | 6.9 |
| Estonian | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| Finnish | 0.9 | 1.7 | | | 1.4 | | | | 4.0 |
| French | 18.6 | 59.5 | 26.8 | | | | | | 104.9 |
| Netherlands | | | | | 1.4 | | | | 1.4 |
| Italian | 5.6 | 15.1 | 2.8 | | | | | | 23.5 |
| Japanese | 2.7 | 7.1 | | | | | | | 9.8 |
| Combination | 2.8 | 4.7 | | | 0.9 | | | | 8.4 |
| Korean | | 1.5 | | | | | | | 1.5 |
| Lithuanian | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| Latvian | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| Hungarian | 2.2 | 1.6 | | | | | | | 3.8 |
| German | 3 | 1.7 | 9.7 | | | | | | 14.5 |
| Polish | 2.7 | 3.2 | | | | | | | 5.8 |
| Portuguese | 0.9 | 5.1 | | | 1.4 | | | | 7.4 |
| Greek | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| Russian | 1.7 | 19.7 | | | | | | | 21.4 |
| Slovenian | 1.8 | 1.4 | | | 0.5 | | | | 3.6 |
| Slovak | 6.4 | 6.9 | 2.9 | 1.8 | 4.9 | | 18 | 128.3 | 169.1 |
| Spanish | 6.5 | 6.6 | | | 0.9 | | | | 14.0 |
| Serbian/Croatian | 7 | 1.6 | | | 1.4 | | | | 10.0 |
| Swedish | 0.5 | 2.8 | | | 1.4 | | | | 4.6 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|----|---|----|-------|-------|
| Total | 165 | 312.1 | 126 | 1.8 | 16 | 0 | 47 | 156.5 | 824.3 |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|----|---|----|-------|-------|

| Genre | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| 2008 | Documentary | Drama | Music | Religious | Current affairs | Educational | Entertainment | News | Total |
| English | 84.4 | 221.3 | 114 | | | | 11 | | 430.5 |
| Chinese | | 4.7 | | | | | | | 4.7 |
| Danish | 1.8 | 3.3 | | | | | | | 5.1 |
| Finnish | 0.9 | | | | | | | | 0.9 |
| French | 21.8 | 55.6 | 5.6 | | | | | | 83.1 |
| Georgian | | 1.6 | | | | | | | 1.6 |
| Hebrew | | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| Netherlands | 5.3 | | | | | | | | 5.3 |
| Indian languages | | | | | | | 1.4 | | 1.4 |
| Italian | 7.6 | 27.7 | 3.4 | | | | | | 38.7 |
| Japanese | 0.7 | 13.9 | | | | | | | 14.6 |
| Hungarian | 0.9 | 6.1 | | | | | 0.7 | | 7.8 |
| German | 10.8 | 9.5 | 7.1 | | | | 0.7 | | 28.2 |
| Norwegian | 1.8 | | | | | | | | 1.8 |
| Polish | 1.6 | 10.4 | | | | | | 10.5 | 22.5 |
| Portuguese | 3.7 | | | | | | | | 3.7 |
| Greek | | | | | 0.9 | | | | 0.9 |
| Romanian | 0.8 | | | | | | | | 0.8 |
| Russian | 1.9 | 3.5 | | | | | 8.5 | | 13.9 |
| Slovenian | 0.9 | 1.4 | | | | | | | 2.3 |
| Slovak | 5.4 | 12.6 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 6 | | 21 | 128.1 | 176.2 |
| Spanish | 5.8 | 16.7 | | | | | | | 22.5 |
| Serbian/Croatian | 0.5 | 2.5 | | | 0.9 | | | | 3.8 |
| Swedish | 2.8 | 5.2 | | | | | | | 8 |
| Flemish | | | | | | | 0.7 | | 0.7 |
| Total | 159.4 | 398.0 | 131.8 | 1.6 | 7.8 | 0.0 | 43.7 | 138.6 | 881.0 |

The above broadcasting languages, except for Polish (*Do We Know Each Other?*) were not used in programmes *specifically targeting* national and ethnic minorities. *City Folk* and *City Folk Best of* show the life of minorities in major European cities and each episode is in a different language. Like all other programmes broadcast by the Czech Television in original languages, these programmes are subtitled in Czech.

Programmes for national and ethnic minorities have a permanent place in the range of Czech Television services. Since 2005 their share has been relatively stable (just under 1 % (0.93 % in 2004), 1.9 % in 2005, 1.2 % in 2006, 1.6 % in 2007 and 1.4 % in 2008).

o Czech Radio

The Czech Radio develops cultural identity by exploring and celebrating the achievements through which the country has contributed to world culture, as well as by creating new values. The emphasis is on an international perspective and a broader understanding of the world around

us. The Czech Radio's programming allows room neither for cultural particularism, separatism and nationalism, nor for purely commercial and culturally non-specific programmes.

An issue of primary concern to the Czech Radio is to make a clear distinction between a self-assured cultural identity and a nationalistic contempt for the cultures of neighbours, other nations and national and ethnic minorities. Since November 1989, the Czech Radio has never been susceptible to nationalistic bias in culture. It has provided room for German and Russian as well as Slovak, Polish and Hungarian cultures, and continued its traditional focus on French, British and American cultures, as well as on the cultures of Slavonic nations. The Czech Radio cooperates with Czech experts on Chinese, Japanese, Arab, African and Asian countries to give the listeners an occasional look at these geographically distant cultures, which are presented not as an exotic curiosity, but as a matter of general interest. In this respect, the broadest perspective is offered by Czech Radio 3 – Vltava with its regular ethnic music programmes.

A specific group are programmes dedicated to national and ethnic minorities. The Czech Radio broadcasts programmes on the life and culture of the Roma. The only problem is the relatively small audience.

In 2004 the Czech Radio broadcast 90,060 minutes of programmes for or about national minorities, including 14,820 minutes on nationwide and 75,240 on regional stations.

- Czech Radio 1 – Radiožurnál - 416 programmes, total time 101 hours (e.g. *O Roma vakeren*).
- Czech Radio 2 – Prague - 371 programmes, total time 93 hours. E.g. *Host do domu* ("Guest in the House") – a social counselling programme.
- Czech Radio 3 – Vltava – covers all national cultures, including the Roma culture in *Etnická hudba* ("Ethnic Music"), German culture in many music programmes, Polish culture in literary programmes, and an annual *Týden slovenské kultury* ("Slovak Culture Week"); its programmes are often broadcast in the original language.
- Czech Radio Brno - 428 programmes, total time 214 hours. E.g. *Vysílání pro menšiny* ("Broadcasting for Minorities").
- Czech Radio České Budejovice - 260 programmes, total time 78 hours (programmes for the Slovak, Roma and German minorities).
- Czech Radio Hradec Králové - 250 programmes, total time 63 hours. E.g. *Radio slucham* – a Polish review.
- Czech Radio Olomouc - 299 programmes, total time 299 hours. E.g. *Ci só hode*.
- Czech Radio Ostrava - 520 programmes, total time 222 hours. E.g. *Kwadrans* – Polish current affairs.
- Czech Radio Pardubice – 208 programmes, total time 52 hours (a long-established service for Asian minorities).
- Czech Radio Pilsen - 250 programmes, total time 130 hours (Slovak, Roma, German minorities).
- Czech Radio Regina, Czech Radio Central Bohemian Region - 489 programmes, total time 120 hours. E.g. *My a oni* ("Us and Them") about refugees living in the Czech Republic.
- Czech Radio North - 268 programmes, total time 76 hours. E.g. *Sousedé* ("Neighbours") – a Czech-German weekly.
- Czech Radio 6 - 106 programmes, total time 53 hours. E.g. *Cizinci v Česku* ("Foreigners in the Czech Republic").

In 2005 the Czech Radio broadcast 119,820 minutes of programmes for or about national minorities, including 30,720 minutes on nationwide and 89,100 on regional stations.

- Broadcasting for the Slovak minority – 156 programmes, 100 hours produced in the Slovak language; Czech Radio 1 Radiožurnál and regional stations. E.g. *Stretnutie*.
- Broadcasting for the Roma minority – 156 programmes, 100 hours, including 50 in Romani; Czech Radio 1 Radiožurnál and regional stations (*O Roma vakeren*).
- Broadcasting for the Polish minority – 312 programmes, 130 hours; Czech Radio Ostrava (*Kwadrans*).
- Broadcasting for the German minority – 104 programmes, 26 hours; Czech Radio Pilsen, Czech Radio České Budejovice.
- Broadcasting for the Ukrainian minority – 52 programmes, 4:30 hours (Ukrainian news in the Ukrainian language).
- Broadcasting for the English-speaking minority – 208 programmes, 52 hours in English; Czech Radio Regina, Radio Prague Calling.

In 2006, the Czech Radio broadcast 148,440 minutes of programmes with an ethnic, national or religious element, including 50,760 minutes on nationwide or special stations and 97,680 minutes on regional stations.

In 2006, dedicated programmes for minorities were produced by seven Czech Radio editors and nineteen external collaborators. The seven editors, and fourteen of the external collaborators, were persons belonging to national minorities (80.8%). Broadcasting in minority languages accounted for 12,390 minutes (50 %) of total time on air.

In 2007

- Czech Radio 1 – Radiožurnál - 468 programmes, 146 hours (*Stretnutie, Roma vakeren*)
- Czech Radio 2 – Prague - 150 programmes, 95 hours - *Evropské příběhy ("European Stories")* project
- Czech Radio 6 - 104 programmes, 35 hours - *Zaostreno na lidská práva ("Focus on Human Rights")*, *Zaostreno na cizince ("Focus on Foreigners")*
- Czech Radio Leonardo - 355 programmes, 617 hours (diversity of world cultures)
- Czech Radio Online ("*Roma website in four languages*")
- Czech Radio Brno - 425 programmes, 210 hours – *Spolu ("Together")* – a monthly for the German minority
- Czech Radio České Budejovice - 260 programmes, 78 hours (*Romano drom*)
- Czech Radio Hradec Králové - 250 programmes, 63 hours – (*Radio slucham* – a review not only for the Polish minority)
- Czech Radio Olomouc – 1,170 programmes, 556 hours (*Sme tu*)
- Czech Radio Ostrava - 542 programmes, 222 hours - *Polská pulhodinka ("Polish Half an Hour")* – a Sunday review
- Czech Radio Pardubice - 200 programmes, 50 hours (national minorities from Asia)
- Czech Radio Pilsen - 312 programmes, 130 hours - *Presahy ("Overlaps")* – a Czech-German review
- Czech Radio Regina - 519 programmes, 104 hours (*Radio Prague Calling*)
- Czech Radio 4 – Radio Wave - 104 programmes, 90 hours - *The Selector* (in cooperation with the British Council, an unconventional course of Romani, Slovak broadcasting)

In the Czech Radio's 2004 – 2007 annual reports, the Czech Radio Council noted that the Czech Radio fulfilled its obligations under Section 2 (2) (c) of Act No. 484/1991 concerning the Czech Radio.

Article 10

- The use of minority languages in dealing with administrative authorities

Due to the historical context and following consultations with national minorities, the administrative authorities have to rely solely on self-reported census data as the only source of information on national composition of the population. The Secretariat of the National Minorities Council believes that more intrusive data collection strategies would meet with a negative response. However, this should not prevent the local authorities from paying attention to the needs of local inhabitants belonging to national minorities, even where they account for less than 10% of the local population.

- The use of minority languages in criminal proceedings

In cases where it is necessary to translate a document, a statement or another act in the context of criminal proceedings, or where the accused invokes his right under Section 2 (14) of the Code of Criminal Procedure,³² an interpreter must be appointed. The same rule applies in situations where the person concerned is able to communicate only in sign language.

The rules concerning the appointment of interpreters, their qualifications and the circumstances that disqualify an interpreter, the right to refuse to interpret the proceedings, the interpreter's pledge and the requirement that the interpreter must be informed about his duties before commencing the interpretation, as well as the rules on the compensation for the expenses incurred by the interpreter and on the interpreter's fee, are contained in special legislation – Act No. 36/1967 concerning interpreters and forensic experts as amended, and Justice Ministry Regulation No. 37/1967 implementing the Interpreters and Forensic Experts Act. The central register of interpreters and forensic experts is kept by the Justice Ministry.

Section 151 of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides that the costs of proceedings paid by the State include the costs necessary for the conduct of criminal proceedings, including enforcement proceedings.

These rules were reviewed in the process of work on the new Criminal Code, its accompanying act that amended some of the existing acts to bring them into line with the new Criminal Code, and in the outline of the new Code of Criminal Procedure (the comments received from the competent authorities are currently being incorporated in the draft).

It is hoped that a sufficient number of qualified Romani interpreters will be recruited from among the graduates of Roma studies university programmes. A Romani course (bachelor and master) is taught as part of the *Philology* study programme at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague (Roma Studies Seminar at the South and Central Asia Institute).³³ The Faculty of Education of Masaryk

³² "The law enforcement authorities shall conduct proceedings and draw up their decisions in the Czech language. Any person who claims not to speak and understand the Czech language shall have the right to use before the law enforcement authorities his mother language or a language which he claims to speak and understand". Act No. 141/1961 concerning criminal procedure (Code of Criminal Procedure), as amended.

³³ <http://www.romistika.eu/>

University in Brno offers Romani courses open to all students (two teaching hours per week in the winter and summer semesters); the Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague (Special Education Department) teaches Roma studies and Romani as part of the *Special Education* study programme.

Article 11

o Surnames and first names in minority languages

According to Article 11 (1) of the Framework Convention, every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronymic) and first names in the minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in the legal system of the State concerned. Accordingly, Section 7 of the National Minorities Act provides that persons belonging to national minorities have the right to use their first names and surnames in the minority language, subject to the conditions set in special legislation - here, the National Minorities Act refers to the Registries Act (Act No. 301/2000 concerning registries, first names and surnames). On the basis of this reference, the practice of Czech registries is to allow a Czech citizen of other than Czech nationality whose name is entered in the register in the Czech transcription to make a statutory declaration that he chooses to use his name as spelled in a minority language. On behalf of minor children, this declaration is made by parents or guardians. Similarly, a Czech citizen of other than Czech nationality whose name is entered in the register in other than Czech transcription can make a statutory declaration that he chooses to use his name as spelled in the language of the national minority to which he claims to belong.

To reflect the new practice, an amendment to the Registries Act was introduced as part of the Act amending certain acts relevant to registered partnership. The amended Section 26 (3) of the Registries Act provides that at the request of a Czech citizen belonging to a national minority whose name is entered in the register in Czech or in other than Czech transcription, the name can be written in a registry document in a minority language, in characters writable in the information systems of the public administration. A note that the person has received a registry document with a name spelled in a minority language is then entered in the register. The same transcription of the name is to be used in any subsequent registry documents issued to the person. In this context, the Registries Act refers to Article 11 (1) of the Framework Convention and Section 7 of the National Minorities Act.

According to the Registries Act, e.g. a woman who is a Czech citizen of Polish or German nationality may have her surname written in her documents in the male form without the Czech female suffix, i.e. "Nowak" instead of "Nowaková". However, the legislation does not address the problem of Polish surnames ending in "ski", e.g. "Stonawski". In Polish practice, it is not common for women to use such names in the male form – the man is "Stonawski", the woman is "Stonawska", like in Czech, but without the Czech length mark (i.e. Polish "ska" vs. Czech "ská"). In such cases, the administrative authorities ask the woman to make the statutory declaration described above, but do not initiate the name change proceedings that would be required under a strict interpretation of the law. Inconsistencies are likely to occur, but on the other hand, the decisions already made by registries in consultation with the Interior Ministry will establish a common practice facilitating the exercise of the right to use first names and surnames in minority languages.

- Bilingual signs and place names

The National Minorities Council is currently working on an amendment to the Municipalities Act with a view to facilitating the exercise of the right to the use of bilingual signs and place names (Section 29 (2) of the Municipalities Act). Under the amendment, bilingual signs may be installed not only at the recommendation of the National Minority Committee, but also at the request of a civic association representing the interests of national minorities. The proposed change should considerably ease the situation in cases where the local government's negative attitude to bilingual signs adversely affects the composition and work of the National Minority Committee and hinders the exercise of this minority right.

According to the Municipalities Act (and the corresponding acts on regions and the capital city of Prague), the right to bilingual signs is directly tied to the latest census result; however, the European Charter for Regional & Minority Languages gives this right a broader scope. The protection of the Charter is provided explicitly to languages as a part of the cultural heritage, and not to individual speakers or groups of speakers. Therefore, it would be only logical not to restrict the right to bilingualism only to municipalities with a sufficient number of inhabitants belonging to a national minority. The spreading of bilingualism to a broader geographic area would be highly desirable; however, it meets with indifference or opposition of local governments.

Article 12

- Intercultural dimension of education

An example of measures which enhance the intercultural element in education in order to promote mutual understanding and dialogue between the majority population and minorities is the ESF pilot project for the establishment of *Minorities Integration Centres*, launched in June 2006. The aim is to establish, on a trial basis, a network of centres providing support to pupils with a socially disadvantaged or culturally different background, in order to facilitate their integration in the education system and in the society as a whole. The target group (children belonging to ethnic minorities, children of immigrants and of people with asylum status, and Roma children and their families) will receive services including counselling, education, information and awareness raising, and leisure time activities.

The system should improve the quality of early care and education tailored to the specific educational needs of each pupil, his cultural background and social situation. This individualized approach is expected to increase the chances of the target group at the job market.

The services provided under the project will include:

Services to pupils and their families – early care for the pupil and family, preparation for starting school, identification of the pupil's special educational needs in the context of his cultural background and social situation, services of tutors (recruited from among university students).

Services to teachers – methodological guidance and consultations, adjustments of education programmes, observations and class courses, specific elements of different teaching styles and strategies, development of self-reflection and intercultural competences, role of language teaching.

Services to assistant teachers – methodological guidance and consultations, counselling, regular meetings of assistants from each type of schools in the region, cooperation with tutors, meetings with regional Roma coordinators and other fieldworkers.

Continuing education of teachers – for the staff of Minorities Integration Centres, teachers and assistant teachers in the region and for interested teachers from the whole Czech Republic.

At present, the above services are provided by Minorities Integration Centres in the Central Bohemia Region (Prague), Ústí nad Labem Region (Most), Southern Moravia Region (Brno), Olomouc Region (Olomouc) and the Moravian-Silesian Region (Opava, Ostrava-Karviná).

The project has four basic components:

(1) Establishment of Minorities Integration Centres. The centres will provide counselling, information and awareness raising services and leisure time activities tailored to the needs of different cultures. Services to pupils and their families will range from early care to advice and counselling for pupils, teachers and assistant teachers throughout the pupil's school career. They will include, in particular, preparation for starting school, identification of educational needs, creation of school adjustment programmes, tutoring of less able pupils by tutors recruited from among university students.

(2) Work with vulnerable youth. The centres will identify vulnerable groups, provide timely intervention, create support programmes preventing and minimizing the impacts of risk behaviour, create programmes preventing truancy and pre-criminal behaviour, and work with the families of vulnerable young people and with representatives of the vulnerable community.

(3) Continuing education of teachers, including the staff of Minorities Integration Centres, teachers and assistant teachers in the region and interested teachers from the whole Czech Republic. The centres will offer class courses on the use of the trivium model of education, on teaching styles and strategies, disciplinary didactics, the role of language teaching, on working with culture as an effective acculturation tool, and on the possibilities of counselling care, including early care for pupils and their families. The courses will be designed for elementary and secondary school teachers, assistant teachers, counselling experts and other workers providing services to the target group in each region. The documents generated in the context of these courses will be posted on the website of the Minorities Integration Centres project.³⁴

(4) Mapping the specific cultural, social, psychological and other factors that affect the education of minorities. The results of this survey will be reflected in the work of the Minorities Integration Centres and in the education of teachers. The centres will test new diagnostic and intervention techniques and the techniques (including the techniques of writing of psychological assessment reports) used by psychologists and special educators working with the target minority group, in particular with the Roma and persons with asylum status. The centres will be well staffed with experts: a psychologist and expert on risk behaviour, a special educator, a social worker, teachers-experts on elementary and secondary school didactics, a teacher-expert on leisure education, a cultural anthropologist (a part-time job) and tutors recruited from among university students, especially from faculties of education.

³⁴ <http://www.strediskasim.cz/>

Part of the project is regular feedback on each activity, based on consultations, SWOT analysis, and normative and formative evaluation. The aim is to develop monitoring mechanisms as a source of qualitative and quantitative indicators for supervising the implementation of each stage of the project.

For additional information on measures enhancing the intercultural element in education in order to promote mutual understanding and dialogue between the majority population and minorities, see Part II.

- Equal access to education. The situation of the Roma.

The special situation of Roma children is reflected in Education Ministry programmes (for information on the programme supporting the integration of the Roma community and the programme supporting Roma secondary school students in 2008, see Part II; for information on head-start classes, see comments on Article 12).

Since 2006, the Education Ministry has annually invited applications for subsidies under the development programme *Financing assistant teachers for socially disadvantaged children, pupils and students*. About CZK 70 million is annually earmarked for this purpose. The aim of this development programme is to assist regions in funding the service of assistant teachers.

The service of assistant teachers is a system-wide *equalizing measure*. Its purpose is to efficiently assist (where necessary) children, pupils and students with a socially disadvantaged or socio-culturally different background in improving their performance in the mainstream education system.

In 2008, the Education Ministry provided about CZK 70 million to subsidize 400 assistant teachers. The subsidy programme covered about 80-85% of the requirements submitted by schools (through Regional Offices).

Article 13

- Private education for national minorities

A Russian grammar school (the First Czech-Russian Grammar School) does exist in Prague; however, its stated policy is to educate primarily the children of immigrants. According to information provided by the school, none of its students belong to the Russian national minority.

Two similar schools are currently being established by Russians together with Ukrainians, partly in cooperation with the Greek Catholic Apostolic Exarchate in the Czech Republic. Again, the target group are not children belonging to national minorities.

The only private national minority school is the Thomas Mann Grammar School in Prague (German minority).

Article 14

- Teaching of minority languages and instruction in these languages

The Czech Republic's legislation enables the teaching of Romani. In 2007, the Council of Europe invited the Education Ministry to implement the "Curriculum Framework for Romani" (CFR), developed by the Council of Europe *Language Policy Division* in cooperation with the European

Roma and Travellers Forum. The CFR is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which "provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe". In this spirit, the CFR provides a common basis for the teaching of the Romani language across Europe, in order to "strengthen the growth of Romani as a functioning mother tongue of Roma in our modern societies", as well as to "build a unified and balanced Roma and non-Roma cooperation and desegregation of the Roma children's education and provision of equal quality opportunities to learn, the right to Romani mother tongue tuition and functioning plurilingualism for the children of Roma and Travellers". The two European language Portfolio Models supplementing the CFR (for age groups 6-11 and 11-16) and the Handbook for Teachers will be translated into Czech in 2009. The Portfolio Models will also be translated into Romani (i.e. into the two codified Romani dialects used in the Czech Republic – Western Slovak and Hungarian) and prepared for pilot implementation at schools with a significant share of Roma pupils.

In 2008, the Education Ministry provided subsidies to a project for *Development and pilot implementation of methods of socio-linguistic survey of the situation of the Romani language in the territory of the Czech Republic* (under the subsidy programme of *Support of education in minority languages and multicultural education*), and organized workshops in preparation for the pilot stage of the Romani teaching scheme under the Curriculum Framework for Romani. The workshop was attended by Romani teachers from secondary schools and universities, from the Roma Culture Museum and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague.

The Education Ministry has set up a team of Roma studies experts to assist in the development of teaching materials for the pilot stage of the Romani teaching scheme. The team has selected several activities for use in the pilot stage and brought them into line with the Curriculum Framework for Romani. The report on the pilot stage was submitted to the Council of Europe, and is reflected in the Romani teaching curricula presented by the Council of Europe Language Policy Division for use in the Czech Republic.

In the 2008/2009 academic year, instruction in Polish was provided at 25 elementary schools with 119 classes and 1,661 pupils. All Polish-language schools are located in the Moravian Silesian Region (Frýdek-Místek and Karviná districts), where the concentration of the Polish-speaking population is highest. The schools are entered in the Education Ministry Schools Register. Their task is to educate Czech citizens of Polish nationality in accordance with education programmes used in the Czech Republic; however, on the understanding that the pupils receive instruction in their mother language and are taught some additional specific subjects. Polish-language schools are no exception to the general trend of merging schools in response to the overall decline in the numbers of kindergarten and elementary school-aged children.

The only grammar school with instruction in Polish had 408 students, and there were 154 students enrolled in two Polish language secondary professional schools. All three secondary schools are located in the Moravian-Silesian region.

The 2007/2008 annual report of the Czech School Inspectorate states that the Czech School Inspectorate, in consultation with representatives of the Polish minority and subject to the requirements of the Education Ministry, has reached an agreement on the procedures to be followed by schools when drawing up documents in languages other than Czech. The Polish minority education system is among the priorities of the Moravian-Silesian region, traditionally included on the list of the regional government's long-term objectives in the area of education.

A comprehensive report on the situation in the area of education in the Moravia-Silesian Region states that great attention is paid to kindergartens providing instruction in Polish according to their own education programmes. The kindergartens have qualified teaching staff and an above-average offer of activities for parents and the general public. Polish-language elementary schools have their own education programmes for the first to sixth grade, and then continue according to the standard Elementary School Education Programme. The schools have no problems with the qualifications and size of their teaching staff. They have some problems with purchases of textbooks from Poland; however, this does not adversely affect the quality of instruction. The offer of leisure time activities, especially sports and cultural activities, is well above the standard. Nevertheless, Polish-language education is now affected by declining enrolment. The schools, in cooperation with their founders, have yet to find an optimum solution – school mergers, which result in one school operating at several locations, have their risks: communication, diversification of pupils, etc.

The Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Schools in Český Tešín is directly controlled by the Czech Education Ministry. The Centre serves the needs of Polish-language schools in the Czech Republic, including the professional development of their teachers, in accordance with the Education Ministry's tasks. It provides information, methodological guidance, services to schools and other educational facilities including Polish-language versions of textbooks; it organizes continuing education for teachers, competitions for pupils and students (district and regional rounds of competitions and festivals) and lifelong learning (educational programmes for the non-teaching public).

In 2008 the Centre continued the following main activities:

- Support of minority schools
- Continued education of teachers
- Competitions for pupils and students
- Lifelong learning
- Cross-border cooperation
- European cooperation (mainly under the projects *Partnership for Prosperity* – Moravian-Silesian Region, Regional Operational Programme; and *An Interactive Triangle* – National Agency for European Education, Grundtvig programme).

Bilingual schools in the Czech Republic include one bilingual elementary school providing instruction in Czech and German (124 pupils) and seven bilingual secondary schools (875 students in total).

The development of cooperation between the Czech Republic and Germany in the area of education on Czech-German relations is the mission of the Joint Czech-German Working Group on History Textbooks. This advisory group provides opinions on relevant current issues and creates teaching materials. It has been established jointly by the Czech Education Ministry and by the Goethe-Eckert Institut in Braunschweig, Germany.

In several municipalities in the Tešín area, local governments in cooperation with national minority organizations have made successful attempts to improve the situation of Polish minority schools, affected by declining enrolment due to which the number of schools has dropped and some students are having problems with school accessibility. The answer to the problem was to

open schools and kindergartens providing instruction both in Czech and in Polish. This form of instruction in Polish seems to be a very successful solution for locations too distant from Polish language schools. It also fosters bilingualism and leads the children to develop contacts across national and linguistic barriers.

On their part, national minority organizations have shown very little interest in the new forms of instruction in their languages.

Article 15

The situation regarding the creation of the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them, namely through participation of national minorities representatives in the National Minorities Council and in advisory committees and commissions at the municipal, regional and national levels, is described in Part I and II.

Article 18

Persons belonging to national minorities, as well as the organizations formed by them, may freely establish contacts abroad and develop cross-border cultural cooperation. The Slovak and Polish minorities are particularly active in this regard.

As envisaged in bilateral agreements, representatives of the competent ministries meet regularly with their counterparts from the neighbouring countries to review the cooperation, including cross-border cooperation, and to plan joint projects for the coming period. Examples of such arrangements are the Czech-Bavarian Joint Commission or Czech-Saxon Joint Commission. The Czech-Polish Joint Commission for Cross-Border Cooperation regularly brings together representatives of ministries and local governments. The annual "*Czech-Slovak Cultural Cooperation Month*" includes dozens of cultural events drawing large audiences from the Slovak minority in the Czech Republic.