

CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS

CZECH REPUBLIC

Prepared by:

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Analytic study for the international project
“The Effects of Common Values on European Peace”.
Created by EDUcentrum o.s., Czech project partner

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RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

*Analytic study for the international project
“The Effects of Common Values on European Peace”.*

Created by EDUcentrum o.s.,
Czech project partner

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This analysis has been created as a part of the Erasmus+ funded project CoReWax: *The Effects of Common Values on European Peace*.¹

The first chapter presents the fundamental legal documents related to the issue of racism and xenophobia. These include, first and foremost, the Constitution of the Czech Republic, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Liberties, Rights of National Minorities Act, penal code, contravention act and anti-discrimination act. The chapter is based on both primary sources (the legislative documents) and academic literature devoted to the topic.

Chapter two concentrates on selected significant non-governmental and non-profit organisations whose work is connected with the problems of racism and xenophobia. The activities these NGOs carry out include monitoring of racist and xenophobic activities, prevention of potentially high-risk behaviour, educational activities, social integration of immigrants and legal help to victims of criminal offences and hatred. This chapter is based primarily on the information available on the web sites of the organisations in question.

The following chapter introduces selected public and governmental institutions working in the field of prevention and fight against racism and xenophobia. These comprise particular ministries, the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic with its advisory bodies and the ombudsman office. The data on which this chapter is based were taken primarily from the web sites of the selected institutions.

Chapter four (Statistics regarding issues of racism and xenophobia in the Czech Republic) is divided into for major sections.

The first of them outlines the national and religious composition of the population of the Czech Republic as it emerges from the statistics of the Czech Statistics Office.

The second and third sections are based on the reports of the Public Opinion Research Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

These two sections outline the attitudes of the Czech public towards the foreigners and minorities living in the Czech Republic. The last section summarises the data from the reports of the European network against racism, which analyse the state of racism and discrimination in the Czech Republic.



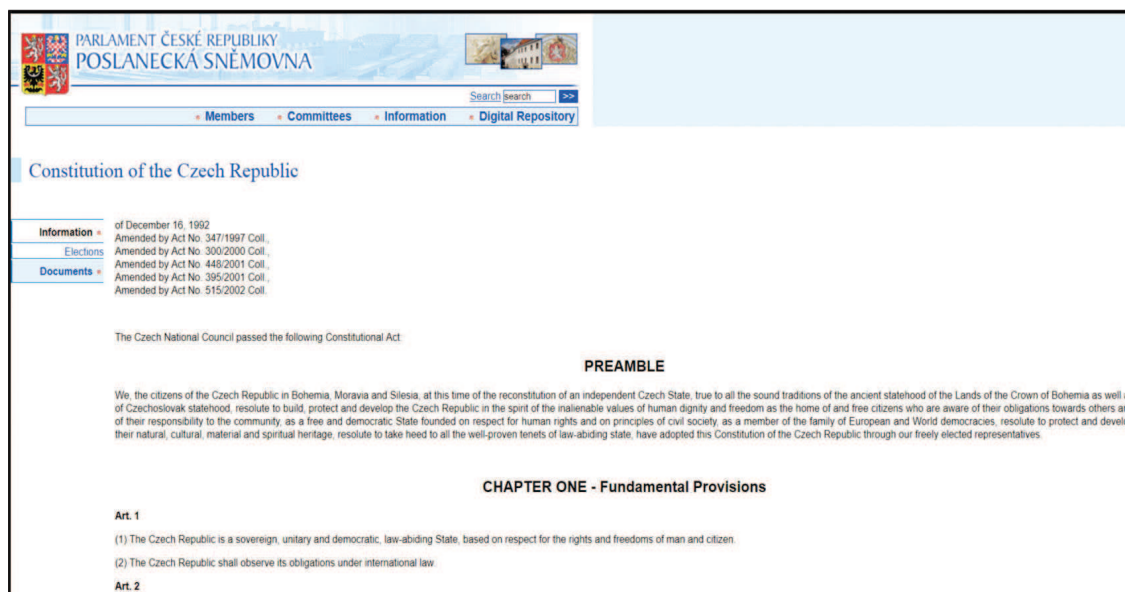
1 <http://core-wax.com/>

2. Czech legislation relating to addressing issues of racism and xenophobia

Czech legislation relating to issues of racism and xenophobia derives from the obligations and requirements imposed by the international community, while the legal system is most influenced by the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe (CoE), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). All these organizations seek to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without exception.

Various international conventions², covenants and declarations are transmitted into Czech law so that the Czech Republic fulfils its obligations. Legislation is also bound by EU law in the form of directives and regulations. Article 10 of the Constitution of the Czech Republic illustrates the fundamental importance of ratified international agreements for Czech legislation: ***“Ratified and promulgated international agreements on human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are binding on the Czech Republic, shall be directly applicable and have precedence over the law”***.³

The Constitution, in its preamble, states that the Czech Republic is founded on ***“respect for human rights and on principles of civil society”***.⁴ Article 2 states: ***“An integral component of the constitutional system of the Czech Republic is the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms”***.⁵ The Charter is primarily based on conventions issued by the UN after the end of the Second World War (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, etc.). Article 1 of the Charter declares that “All people are free and equal in their dignity and rights. Their fundamental rights and freedoms are inherent, inalienable, non-prescriptible, and irrevocable”.⁶ For issues of racism and xenophobia Article 3 is key and it states that fundamental rights and freedoms are guaranteed “to everyone without regard to gender, race, colour of skin, language, faith and religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, membership in a national or ethnic minority, property, birth, or other status”.⁷



<http://www.psp.cz/cgi-bin/eng/docs/laws/1993/1.html>

2 For example the following conventions: the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Convention on the Suppression of the Crime of Apartheid.

3 Czech Republic. Constitution of the Czech Republic. In Collection of Laws, Czech Republic. 1992, year 1993, part 1, constitutional law no. 1, pp. 2–16. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/sbirka-zakonu/ViewFile.aspx?type=z&id=22427>>.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Czech Republic. Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. In Collection of Laws, Czech Republic. 1992, year 1993, part 1, resolution of the Presidium of the Czech National Council no. 2, pp. 17–23. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/sbirka-zakonu/ViewFile.aspx?type=z&id=22426>>.

7 Ibid.

Chapter Three discusses the rights of national and ethnic minorities. It states that: *“Membership in a national or ethnic minority may not be to anyone’s detriment”*.⁸

Furthermore, Citizens who constitute national or ethnic minorities are guaranteed all-round development, in particular the right to develop their own culture, the right to disseminate and receive information in their native language, the right to associate in national associations, the right to education in their own language, the right to use their own language in their relations with officials, and the right to participate in the resolution of affairs that concern national and ethnic minorities.⁹

Issues regarding national minorities are also dealt with in Act No. 273/2001 Coll., on rights of members of national minorities and the amendment of certain acts. A national minority is defined in the Act as “a community of citizens of the Czech Republic who live on the territory of the present Czech Republic and as a rule differ from other citizens by their common ethnic origin, language, culture and traditions; they represent a minority of citizens and at the same time they show their will to be considered a national minority for the purpose of common efforts to preserve and develop their own identity, language and culture and at the same time express and preserve interests of their community which has been formed during history”.¹⁰

According to legislation fourteen national minorities are currently granted the status of national minority. They are as follows: Belorussian, Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Roma, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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EXTREMISM Home Page / Useful Information / Documents and Reports / Extremism

Documents on the Fight against Extremism

- [Strategy for Combating Extremism - Year 2009](#) (pdf, 550 kB)
 - **I. The Issue of Extremism in the Czech Republic in 2008**
The Report on the Issue of Extremism in the Czech Republic in 2008 is submitted under Government Resolution No. 1506 of 24 November 2008 as an integral part of the Strategy for Combating Extremism, as well as under Government Resolution No. 549 of 14 May 2008 concerning the Report on Public Order and Internal Security in the Czech Republic in 2007. The Report was compiled by the Ministry of the Interior, however, representatives of the intelligence services, the police of the Czech Republic and other governmental authorities have also contributed to it. The concept of extremism, crimes having an extremist context, and other terms used in the information are identical with the definitions of such terms as formulated in previous Reports dealing with the issue of extremism.
 - **II. Policy for Combating Extremism**
Extremism will be always a part of society. The objective of the Policy is not the total eradication of extremism from the political map but rather the setting of limits to bind its existence, within democratic mechanisms of the Czech Republic. The ambition of this document is to provide guidelines which result in marginalising extremists to such an extent that they cease to represent a security risk.
 - **Annex**
The Most Important Activities Carried Out by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2008

Police

Fire Service

Information for Foreigners

Extremism

For Schengen without Border Checks

<http://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/documents-on-the-fight-against-extremism.aspx>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See *ibid.*

¹⁰ Act No. 273/2001 Coll., on rights of members of national minorities and the amendment of certain acts, § 2 Definition of basic terms. Available 17. 6. 2015 at: < <http://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2001-273>>.

Minorities must fulfil certain characteristics to obtain official status (for example, it concerns a group of Czech citizens; the minority has a historical connection to the Czech Republic).¹¹

The fundamental legal regulation concerning the issue of racism is the Penal Code (40/2009 Coll.) containing criminal offences, the basic facts of which concern racially motivated crimes. These are offences under § 352 Violence against a group of inhabitants and against individuals, 355 Defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons, § 356 Incitement to hatred against a group of persons or to restrict their rights and freedoms, § 400 Genocide, 401 An attack against humanity, § 402 Apartheid and discrimination against a group of persons, § 403 Establishment, support and promotion of movements aimed at the suppression of human rights and freedoms, § 404 Sympathy for movements aimed at the suppression of human rights and freedoms, § 413 Persecution of population.¹²

For offences such as murder, grievous bodily harm, restriction of personal freedom, extortion, criminal damage or abuse of official power, a harsher penalty and a higher criminal rate is imposed on an offender that commits these acts “due to the victim or the injured party’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, nationality, political belief or religion or because the victim or the injured party is actually of no religion or perceived to be of no religion”. Crimes that have been committed because of the perpetrator’s hatred for any alleged or actual characteristics of the victim are called “hate crimes”.¹³

<p>Extremism</p> <p>Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic Prague, March 1998</p> <p>Report on State Strategy in Punishing Criminal Offences Motivated by Racism and Xenophobia or Committed by Supporters of Extremist Groups</p> <p>CONTENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. The term specification 3. Trends and characteristics of the extremist scene <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Current trends of extremist activities abroad <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1 Right-wing extremist spectrum 3.1.2 Left-wing extremist spectrum 3.1.3 Nationalistic extremist spectrum 3.1.4 Religious fundamentalism 3.1.5 Dangerous religious and pseudo-religious sects and organizations 3.1.6 Equipment's modernization of the extremist scene 3.2 A brief characterization of the current extremist scene in the Czech Republic. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.2.1 The most significant new phenomena 3.2.2 The right-wing extremist scene 3.2.3 Left-wing extremist scene 3.2.4 Registered anti-system organizations 3.2.5 Dangerous sects and religious organizations 4. Criminal activity motivated by racial and national intolerance or committed by the supporters of extremist groups <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Basic characteristics 4.2 Activities with extremist subtext recorded in the Czech Republic 4.3 The characteristic of the criminal activity done by the supporters of the skinhead movement 4.4 Racial conflicts and activities of the skinhead movement supporters in the Czech republic 5. The measures adopted so far for the elimination of criminal activity with extremist subtext <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 International commitments of the Czech Republic, problems on international forum 5.2. The activities of the Government of the Czech Republic
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file:///C:/Users/Student/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_extremismus_1998-1.zip/report.html

11 Compare TOMÁŠKOVÁ, Petra. Legal framework for the issue of migrants and minorities. In TOMÁŠKOVÁ, Tatjana (ed.). Minorities and migrants in the Czech Republic. 1st ed. Prague: Portál, 2001. pp. 31–38.

12 See Xenophobia and racism – legislation. National Youth Information Centre. [online]. 25. 3. 2014. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://www.icm.cz/xenofobie-a-rasismus-legislativa>>.

13 See Hate crimes. Police of the Czech Republic. [online]. © 2015. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://www.policie.cz/clanek/trestne-ciny-z-nenavisti.aspx>>.

It is also worth mentioning the Offences Act (200/1990 Coll.), specifically § 49 Offences against Peaceful Coexistence, which penalizes less serious racist and discriminatory behaviour than the Penal Code. In this section the Offences Act works with the following criteria: “membership of a national minority or because of their ethnic origin, race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, faith or religion, because of their political or other opinion, membership or activity in political parties or political movements, trade unions or other associations, because of their social origin, property, ancestry, state of health or their marital or family status”.¹⁴

The Anti-Discrimination Act, i.e. the Act on equal treatment and on the legal means of protection against discrimination and the amendment of certain acts (198/2000 Coll.), is also important with regard to issues of racism and xenophobia. This Act transposes the relevant regulations of the European Community and, in relation to the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and the Czech Republic’s international commitments, defines more precisely the right to equal treatment and prohibition of discrimination with respect to the right to employment, access to and provision of education, access to and provision of goods and services, including housing and the provision of social benefits and social security, access to and provision of healthcare, etc. The criteria, on the basis of which the Anti-Discriminatory Act considers acts to be discriminatory are: “race, ethnic origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, belief or opinion.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the Act differentiates between direct and indirect discrimination, specifies admissible forms of different treatment, and describes legal means of protection against discrimination. The Act also contains an amendment to the Ombudsman Act and other related amendments to the law.¹⁶

Among the other laws relating to issues of racism and xenophobia are, for example:

Act No. 81/1996 Coll., on the periodical press and other mass media;

Act No. 21/1971 Coll., on the unified system of socio-economic information, as amended; Act No. 84/1990 Coll., on right of assembly, as amended;

Act No. 85/1990 Coll., on right of petition;

Act No. 83/1990 Coll., on freedom of association, as amended;

Act No. 424/1991 Coll., on political parties and political movements, as amended; Act No. 455/1991 Coll., on business, as amended;

Act No. 256/1992 Coll., on the protection of personal data in information systems;

Act No. 634/1992 Coll., on consumer protection, as amended, etc.

14 Czech National Council Offences Act, regulation no. 200/1990 Sb., § 49 Offences against Peaceful Co-existence. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/1990-200>>.

See Prosecution of racism in criminal and offence law. Epravo.cz. [online]. 6. 11. 2002. Available 14. 6. 2015 at: <<http://www.epravo.cz/top/clanky/postih-rasismu-v-trestnim-a-prestupkovem-zakone-19572.html>>.

15 Act on equal treatment and on the legal means of protection against discrimination and the amendment of certain acts (Anti-Discrimination Act), regulation no. 198/2009 Coll., § 2 Basic Terms. Available 16. 6. 2015 at: <www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2009-198>.

16 See Jaroslav Jakubka. The new Anti-discrimination Act and its application in labour-law relations. Wage practice. [online].

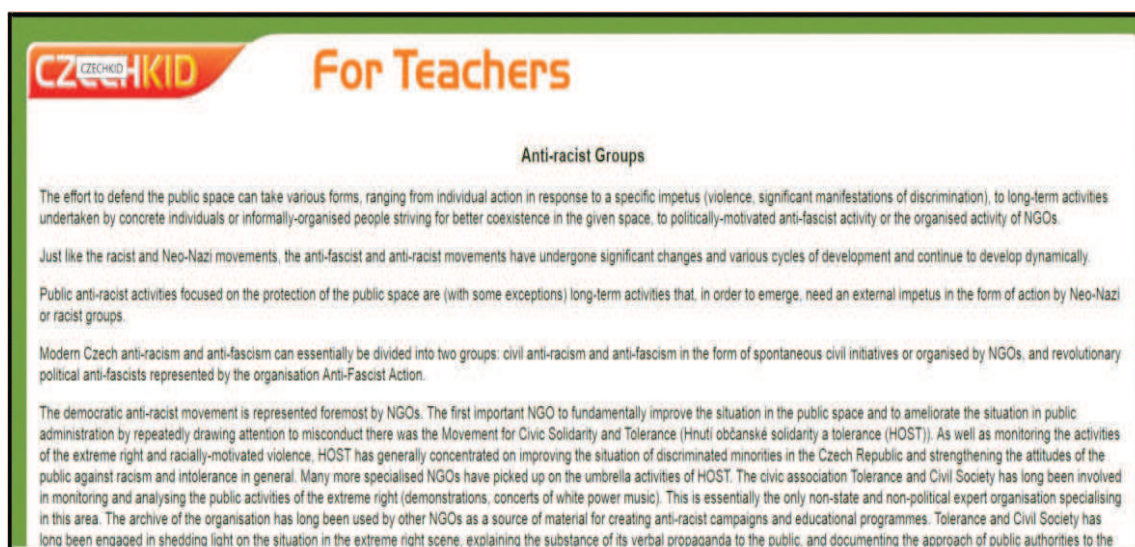
14. 8. 2009. Available 16. 6. 2015 at: <<http://www.mzdovapraxe.cz/archiv/dokument/doc-d5585v7714-novy-antidiskriminacni-zakon-a-jeho-aplikace-v-pracovnepravnich/>>.

3. Non-governmental organizations dealing with the issues of racism and xenophobia in the Czech Republic

The activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that deal with the issues of racism and xenophobia in the Czech Republic mainly focus on the prevention of racism and xenophobia, education, information and cultural activities, monitoring, aftercare and mutual assistance.

The first significant NGO that began to be involved in the fight against racism was Hnutí občanské solidarity a tolerance (HOST) (the Movement for Civic Solidarity and Tolerance). The organization was formed in 1993 as a response to violence by neo-Nazis. HOST focused primarily on monitoring the activities of the extreme right and racially motivated violence. It also concentrated on improving the situation of minorities in the Czech Republic and on strengthening anti-racist attitudes of the public.¹⁷ Many specialist NGOs followed up on HOST's activities.

The organization Tolerance a občanská společnost (Tolerance and Civic Society) has been involved for a long time in monitoring and analysing the public activities of the extreme right. Its archive is used by other NGOs as a basis for creating anti-racist campaigns and educational programmes. Tolerance and Civic Society analyses the situation on the far right scene, informs the public about the principles of neo-Nazi rhetoric and documents the methods used by the official authorities against the far right's activities. The organization also focuses on educating young people and teaching staff.¹⁸



<http://czechkid.eu/si1470.html>

The Czech NGO Člověk v tísni (People in Need) is involved in promoting and protecting human rights and preventing xenophobia through various educational and public awareness projects. One of the organization's projects is One World in Schools¹⁹, which has been running since 2001. It is an audio-visual project which provides schools with documentary films and accompanying teaching aids to teach children about current issues of the contemporary world (human rights, global development education, social issues, community involvement, media education) and modern history.

¹⁷ See The fight against racism, xenophobia and extremism in Central Europe. Organization for Aid to Refugees. Available 21. 6. 2015 at: <http://docs.opu.cz/Brozura_extremismus_final_CZE_web.pdf>.

¹⁸ See Anti-racist groups. CzechKid. [online]. 11. 1. 2010. Available 21: 6. 2015 at: <www.czechkid.cz/si1470.html>.

¹⁹ <https://www.jsns.cz/>

Homo Homini Award

What we do | **Our work in the Czech Rep** | **Our work internationally** | **Get involved** | **Jobs** | **About us**

Humanitarian Aid and Development | **Human Rights** | Social Integration | Education | One World Film Festival | Langhans Centre

People in Need » Human Rights

Human Rights

Active citizens are the foundation of a democratic society, therefore they pose such a great threat to repressive regimes. People with their own opinions that act independently of the state power and respond to what is going on around them tend to be bullied, silenced, imprisoned and in extreme cases, even physically eliminated by such regimes.

The primary goal of People in Need's **Centre for Human Rights and Democracy** is to support these people and groups whether their lives are endangered by authoritarian regimes or they need aid and support in developing and strengthening civil society in the countries that are going through democratic transformation.

People in Need (PIN) works in several hard case countries still suffering under dictatorships or where the transition to democracy shares certain aspects that are similar to the Czech experience. PIN is currently running programmes with its partners in **Eastern Europe** ([Azerbaijan](#), [Belarus](#), [Moldova](#) ([Transnistria](#)), [Russia](#) and [Ukraine](#)), **Latin America** ([Cuba](#), Venezuela and Nicaragua), Egypt, [Libya](#) and [Myanmar](#).

People in Need also gives the annual Homo Homini Award and organizes the One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival.

How we help

- [Direct Aid to the Politically Persecuted](#)
- [Support for Civil Society](#)
- [International Support](#)

Homo Homini Award

Publications for download

Prague Civil Society Centre

What is happening in Cuba

CUBALOG.EU
BREAKING INFORMATION FROM CUBA

Independent news from Cuba

<http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/en/human-rights>

Another educational programme is Varianty²⁰, which launched its activities with the Be Kind to Your Local Nazi media campaign²¹, which was followed up by introducing principles of intercultural education into all levels of the education system. The impulse for setting up the Varianty programme was to improve relations between minorities and the majority population. Varianty is currently involved in intercultural education, global development education, migration and inclusive education.

Varianty creates and tests educational programmes and materials for teachers and pupils, and supports the professional development of teachers through seminars and individual consultations. It offers teachers additional training, the opportunity to exchange experiences and the chance to discuss practice.²²

Throughout the year, in cooperation with other partners, People in Need collects and hands over information concerning manifestations of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination in the Czech Republic to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in a regular bulletin, an annual National Report and a Special Study.²³

The Czech Helsinki Committee²⁴ is also involved in monitoring racism and xenophobia. Each year the Committee publishes a Report on the state of human rights in the Czech Republic which assesses respect for human rights in various areas of social life. It also publishes media monitoring, which deals with manifestations of racism and discrimination.

²⁰ <http://www.varianty.cz/>

²¹ The video campaign is available 21. 6. 2015 at: <http://varianty.cz/video/8-be-kind-to-your-local-nazi>.

²² See About Varianty. Varianty. [online]. Available 21. 6. 2015 at: <http://www.varianty.cz/o-variantach>.

²³ See RAXEN. Člověk v tísni. [online]. Available 21. 6. 2015 at: <http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/cs/socialni-prace/highlight/27>.

It gives its opinion on serious issues of political and social life in the form of statements, comments, open letters and appeals. The Committee has carried out awareness-raising campaigns against intolerance. One of these activities was the campaign Don't look in black and white – racism harms you and your surroundings, which focused on reducing prejudices primarily against members of Roma communities.²⁵



Romea²⁶ is an organization that has been trying to improve the media image of the Roma community in the Czech Republic since 2002. Its aim is to develop tolerance and respect for human rights in society. It sees its mission as being to bring together young people of Roma and Czech nationality who want to help Roma and Czech people improve their mutual coexistence.²⁷ Romea systematically monitors the image of the Roma community in the Czech media and tries to disprove the myths that circulate about the Roma minority.²⁸ It also publishes magazines, newspapers, and publications about the Roma, supports their education and cultural events and, last but not least, runs the news server Romea.cz²⁹. A number of activities to support the Roma and to integrate foreigners into Czech society are also carried out by the organization Slovo 21³⁰.

25 Annual Report 2009. Czech Helsinki Committee, pp. 7–8. Available 21. 6. 2015 at: http://www.helcom.cz/dokumenty/vyrocní-zpravy/CHV_VZ_2009_CZ.pdf.

26 <http://www.romea.cz/sdruzeniromea/>

27 See About us. Romea. [online]. Available 21. 6. 2015 at:

www.romea.cz/sdruzeniromea/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&id=4&Itemid=95&lang=cs.

28 For more see here: Reducing discrimination and racism by correcting the media image of the Roma. Romea. [online]. Available 21. 6. 2015 at:

http://www.romea.cz/sdruzeniromea/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=206%3Asniení-diskriminace-a-rasismu-napravou-medialního-zobrazování-rom&catid=31%3Amedialní&Itemid=205&lang=cs.

29 <http://www.romea.cz/en/> (English)

30 <http://www.slovo21.cz/>

Among the organizations that help with the integration of foreigners into Czech society are:

- ✓ Sdružení pro integraci a migraci (Association for Integration and Migration)³¹,
- ✓ Centrum pro integraci cizinců (Centre for the Integration of Foreigners)³²,
- ✓ META – společnost pro příležitosti mladých migrantů (META – Association for Opportunities of Young Migrants)³³,
- ✓ Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům (Organization for Aid to Refugees)³⁴
- ✓ and Organizace na podporu integrace menšin (Organization Supporting the Integration of Minorities)³⁵. These organizations organize education and information activities for various target groups.

In the school environment, as part of the primary prevention of risk behaviour, as well as prevention programmes focusing on substance abuse, bullying, or dangerous sexual behaviour, there are also programmes for the prevention of racism and xenophobia among pupils and students.

A large number of organizations are dedicated to primary prevention of risk behaviour in the Czech Republic. We can randomly mention a few of them: Do světa³⁶, Elio³⁷, Jules a Jim³⁸, Prev-Centrum³⁹, Portimo⁴⁰.

The organizations Multikulturní centrum Praha (Prague Multicultural Center)⁴¹, AFS – Mezikulturní programy (AFS – Intercultural Programmes)⁴² and INEX – Sdružení dobrovolných aktivit (INEX – Association for Voluntary Activities)⁴³ together implemented the Stereotype in us project⁴⁴, whose main objective was to prevent xenophobia and racism among pupils in secondary vocational schools and colleges through intercultural education using interactive and adventure methods. As part of the project there were also courses for multipliers, seminars for teachers, intercultural seminars and workshops for pupils, adventure courses and mini-workcamps.



31 [http://www.migrace.com/en/\(English\)](http://www.migrace.com/en/(English))

32 <http://www.cicpraha.org/>

33 <http://www.cicpraha.org/>

34 <http://www.opu.cz/>

35 <http://www.opim.cz/index.php?page=profil>

36 <http://www.dosveta.org/>

37 <http://elio.cz/>

38 <http://www.julesajim.cz/>

39 <http://www.prevcentrum.cz/>

40 <http://www.portimo.cz/>

41 <http://www.mkc.cz/cz/uvod.html>

42 <http://www.afs.cz/>

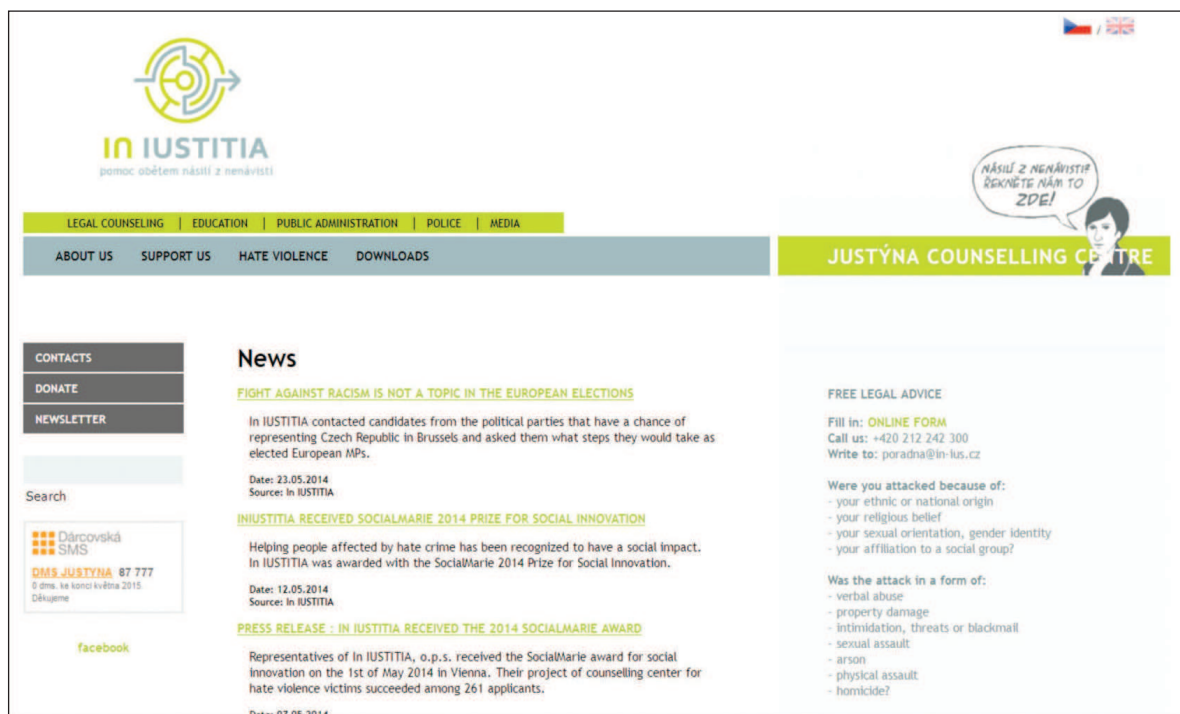
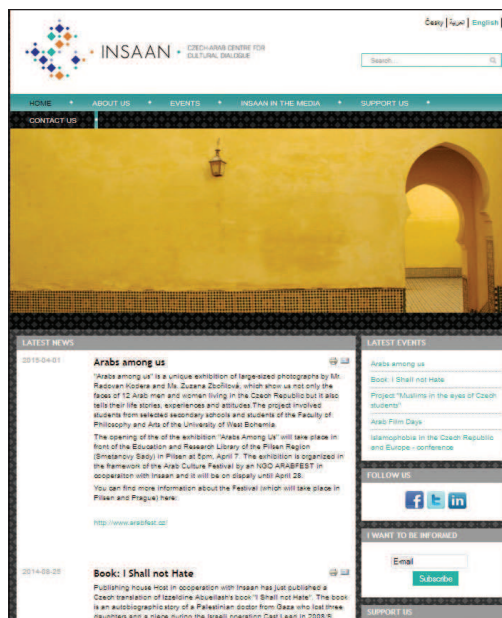
43 <http://www.inexsda.cz/>

44 <http://stereotypek.mkc.cz/o-projektu-32/>

A research and education project called Muslims through the eyes of Czech schoolchildren⁴⁵ is currently being conducted by the organisation Insaan – Česko-arabské centrum kulturního dialogu (Insaan – Czech-Arab Centre for Cultural Dialogue)⁴⁶. The project provides pupils, students and teachers with balanced and factually accurate information about Islam and Muslims in the Czech Republic.

It also offers interactive programmes to schools, in which pupils and students learn about critical reading of media texts, the issue of covering oneself up and the situation for Muslims living in the Czech Republic. As well as these programmes there have also been several educational seminars for teachers, social workers and municipal police officers.

Government education is provided by the organization In Iustitia – pomoc obětem násilí z nenávisťi (In Iustitia – Assistance for Victims of Hate Violence)⁴⁷, which is involved in providing legal assistance to victims of hate violence.



<http://en.in-ius.cz/>

It brings the subject of hate violence into the public awareness and generates professional and political debate. It also focuses on protecting communities at risk of violent racism and neo-Nazism.

⁴⁵ <http://muslimove.cz/>

⁴⁶ <http://www.insaan.cz/index.php/cs/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.in-ius.cz/>

It is certainly also worth mentioning the e-learning project CzechKid⁴⁸, which offers support to teachers in providing multicultural education. The project was set up as a collaboration between the Faculty of Humanities at Charles University, the non-profit sector and academic experts.

CZECHKID

For Teachers

Czechs and Jews

• What is the dialogue "A Visit to the Jewish Museum" about?

After visiting the Jewish Museum the children discuss some of the things that have stuck in their minds, and, by talking with other children who did not take part in the excursion, new perspectives emerge on themes like the Holocaust, the history of families, and how little they know about the Jewish community currently living in the Czech Republic.

• What is...?

Jew, Jewish: Definitions of 'Jewish' and the question of 'who is a Jew' are problematic and unclear. The main reason is that the religious and ethnic aspects of being Jewish are not sharply separated and many different conceptions of them exist. Being Jewish can be understood as belonging to a religious faith (Judaism) or as an ethnicity or a culture. It can also be understood as all of these things together. Less religious Jews understand it primarily in terms of ethnicity and culture. For religious Jews, religion and ethnicity merge into one, as, according to the Torah, these two categories are interchangeable.

Kosher: The adjective 'kosher' derives from 'kashrut', a ritual set of dietary laws. The rules of kashrut are very complex and almost constitute an entire discipline. In brief: what is not kosher are those foods indicated in the Bible as impure – pigs, camels, horses, asses, pachyderms, birds of prey, sharks, fish without scales such as stingrays and sturgeons (and caviar), reptiles, amphibians, seafood and various other animals. The use and consumption of animal blood is strictly forbidden, and there is a prescribed ritual method of slaughter (shechita). Eating meat and milk products together is not allowed (which is why the branches of McDonald's in Israel do not sell cheeseburgers) and so on. Special rules also apply to the holiday of Pesach, and there are various other special rules (e.g. kosher pareve, glatt kosher). The kitchen and even the home can be kosher, and the adjective is also used figuratively to apply to other things (e.g. there are even kosher products for cleaning the WC). Alongside the ideological aspects of kashrut its educational effects are also widely emphasised, and it is understood as a continuous reminder of Jewishness/Judaism. Even non-Jews use the word 'kosher' in a figurative way.

CZECHKID

For Teachers

Xenophobia

• What is the dialogue "My Mum would kill me!" about?

Magda's mum is angry with her. She disapproves of Jami, even though she has never met him. We encounter this kind of attitude very frequently in life. People are easily influenced by various simplistic explanations and half-truths regarding the members of a particular group (in the case of Jami, this involves the group "foreigners"). What is Magda's mother scared of? What reasons does she have for preventing Magda from going out with Jami? What does she have against Jami? Is it true that Jews are miserly, blacks are less intelligent, Roma people don't want to work, and Vietnamese are all stallholders who can't speak Czech??

• What is...?

Xenophobia means fear of foreigners. The word is usually used to indicate an intolerance of people from other countries and a lack of respect for their traditions and cultures. Xenophobia can also be understood as a prejudice which creates a negative opinion without any previous knowledge.

Racism is an opinion which claims that certain people are superior and others are inferior because of they are of a certain race. Racists define race as a group of people of the same origin. They distinguish various races according to physical character, such as colour of skin or quality of hair. The word "racism" is used to indicate aggressive or derogatory behaviour shown to people of other races.

Anti-Semitism is an expressions for hostility or prejudices against Jews, be this the hatred displayed by an individual or a group (i.e. institutionalised persecution) towards Jews. The most extreme example of anti-Semitism was the Nazi ideology of Adolf Hitler, which led to the genocide of 6 million European Jews during the second world war.

• Topic

When we don't know something we tend to be afraid of it and not to trust it. Nobody in the world likes situations which they are unfamiliar with and in which they feel insecure as to how to act. Insecurity is experienced as unpleasant, sometimes as dangerous. At the same time we relatively frequently find ourselves in situations in which we do not know what we can expect and what is expected of us. This might involve a visit to a high-class restaurant, where we hesitate over what cutlery we should use to eat what courses. It might involve an encounter with a group of friends who have known each other a long time and have their own sense of humour, their own slang, their own system of catchwords an innuendo, values and attitudes, which we do not know and to which we are not privy. Or perhaps we find ourselves amongst a family which has a different lifestyle, a different set of table manners, different rules of conduct between children and parents. These kinds of experiences usually evoke in us anxiety, suspicion, and a feeling of being threatened.

The simplest way of getting rid of this fear is to start proclaiming our dislike of different lifestyles, to join forces with "our" people so as to be able to claim that "they" (those who go to high-class restaurants, or have a different group of friends, or a different family) are strange and are doing things wrongly. This gives us the feeling that our own conduct is ok, and that the mistake must therefore be on the side of

4. A selection of state institutions dealing with the issue of racism and xenophobia in the Czech Republic

State institutions fulfil several functions regarding issues of racism and xenophobia. These include legislative activities, overseeing compliance with the law, ensuring cooperation between protagonists involved in the fight against racism, the integration of minorities, and education and awareness about racism and xenophobia.

Each year the Ministry of the Interior publishes documents concerning the issue of extremism. These are the Report on the Issue of Extremism in the Czech Republic, the Policy for Combating Extremism, and the Assessment of the Policy for Combating Extremism.⁴⁹ These documents contain plans and tasks in the fight against extremism.

The 2015 Policy for Combating Extremism maintains the structure of previous policy documents, i.e. division into five sections:

- 1) Communication against Demagogy (contains Open and Responsible Provision of Information and PR; the Internet without Hate Propaganda; Anti-extremist Campaign).
- 2) Using Knowledge to Fight against Totalitarians (Education of Children and Teachers).
- 3) Single Anti-extremist Platform (Prevention; Towns and Villages).

⁴⁸ <http://www.czechkid.cz/index.html>

⁴⁹ <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/extremismus-vyrocní-zpravy-o-extremismu-a-strategie-boje-proti-extremismu.aspx>

⁵⁰ 2015 Policy for Combating Extremism. Ministry of the Interior, Security Policy Department. Prague 2015.

- 4) Expertise and Immunity (Police Training; Organizational Measures within the Czech Police; Training of Judicial Officers and State Representatives; Systemic and General Prevention of Infiltration by Extremists).
- 5) To Proceed Effectively and Fairly against Violence (Security Measures to be taken during Extremist Events; Hate Crime Victims).

Individual areas set out in the Policy come under the remit of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance, the Czech Police and the Office of the Czech Government.⁵⁰

The Security Policy Department of the Ministry of the Interior also publishes quarterly Reports on the Issue of Extremism in the Czech Republic.⁵¹ These reports provide information about developments on the extreme right and extreme left scenes and provide statistics on extremist crime.

Some advisory bodies, whose activities are organized by the Office of the Government, deal with issues of racism and xenophobia.⁵² These bodies include the Government Council for Human Rights and the Government Council for Roma Community Affairs. Representatives from ministries, state authorities, the professional public and NGOs sit on the councils.

The Government Council for Human Rights monitors the level of fulfilment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Czech Republic. The Council sets up specialist committees and working groups, and issues of racism and xenophobia are dealt with by the Committee for Foreigners' Rights and the Committee against Discrimination. The Council is chaired by the commissioner for human rights who works with public authorities, NGOs and experts on human rights protection and the integration of Roma communities into society.⁵³

The commissioner for human rights runs the Agency for Social Inclusion which is an instrument of the Czech Government to provide support to municipalities in the process of social integration. Its purpose is to connect local entities so that they work together to ensure social inclusion.⁵⁴ The Agency is currently organising the HateFree Culture project as part of its campaign against hate violence⁵⁵, which aims to reduce social tensions and the radicalisation of young people by actively refuting disinformation and myths, provide tools for argumentation, offer alternatives to violent problem solving and gain more space in the media for victims and vulnerable groups.⁵⁶

The Government Council for National Minorities is an advisory and initiative body of the Government for issues concerning national minorities and their members. The Council has 30 members comprising representatives of state authorities, the professional public and 14 national minorities.⁵⁷

The Government Council for Roma Community Affairs systematically assists the integration of the Roma community into society. The Council coordinates ministries responsible for the implementation of partial measures and the fulfilment of tasks resulting from Government resolutions and international treaties to which the Czech Republic is a party. It collects, considers and submits to the Government information, groundwork documents and proposals for the creation and application of Government policy concerning the Roma community.⁵⁸ One of the committees of the Government Council for Roma Community Affairs assumes the task of monitoring events

51 <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/ctvrtletni-zpravy-o-extremismu-odboru-bezpecnostni-politiky-mv.aspx> 51 <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/ctvrtletni-zpravy-o-extremismu-odboru-bezpecnostni-politiky-mv.aspx>

52 <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/>

53 <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/zmocnenec-vlady-pro-lidska-prava/zmocnenecnenkyne-vlady-pro-lidska-prava-15656/>, <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/rpl/rpl-uvod-17537/>

54 <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/zmocnenec-vlady-pro-lidska-prava/socialni-zaclenovani/agentura-pro-socialni-zaclenovani-40435/>

55 <http://www.hatefree.cz/>

56 <http://www.socialni-zaclenovani.cz/kampan-proti-rasismu-a-nasili-z-nenavisti>

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

58 <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/pracovni-a-poradni-organy-vlady/zalezitosti-romske-komunity/uvod-5779/>

surrounding the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 international initiative which aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and discrimination of Roma communities at regional level.⁵⁹

The Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) contributes to the protection against racial discrimination by “protecting people against the conduct of authorities and other institutions if the conduct is against the law, does not correspond to the principles of a democratic legal state and the principles of good administration, or if the authorities are inactive. He/she also carries out preventive systematic visits to places where people are restricted in their freedom and seeks to ensure that their rights are respected. The Defender also contributes to promotion of the right to equal treatment and protection against discrimination.”⁶⁰



www.ochrance.cz/en/discrimination/

The Ombudsman is the national body for equal treatment and protection against discrimination. In order to promote the right to equal treatment the Ombudsman provides methodological assistance to victims of discrimination, performs legal evaluation, offers assistance in obtaining evidence, carries out research in the field of discrimination, provides for the exchange of information with European institutions and determines whether authorities penalise discriminatory conduct.⁶¹

The Committee on Education, Science, Culture, Human Rights and Petitions of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic and the Petition Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic are also involved in protecting against racism and discrimination.



⁵⁹ <http://www.romadecade.org/>, <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/zalezitosti-romske-komunity/vybory/dekada-romske-inkluzie/vybor-pro-dekadu-romske-inkluzie-75237/>

⁶⁰ <http://www.ochrance.cz/en/home/> (English)

⁶¹ <http://www.ochrance.cz/en/discrimination/assistance-to-victims-of-discrimination/> (English)

5. Statistics regarding issues of racism and xenophobia in the Czech Republic

5.1. Ethnic and religious composition of the population in the Czech Republic

According to data published in February 2014 by the Czech Statistical Office and the Czech Ministry of the Interior, the population of the Czech Republic was 10 512 400, with foreigners with permanent or long-term residence accounting for less than 5 % of the population. At that time 95.93 % of the people living in the Czech Republic were Czech citizens, 2.18 % were foreigners with permanent residence, 1.85 % foreigners with temporary residence, 0.02 % asylum seekers and 0.02 % new citizens, which means foreign nationals who had acquired Czech citizenship. Most frequently the Czech Ministry of the Interior granted Czech citizenship to Ukrainians, Slovaks, Russians and Vietnamese citizens. In 2013 there were 2 253 such people.

According to data, most immigrants come from Ukraine (1.03 %), Slovakia (0.78 %), Vietnam (0.52 %), Russia (0.30%), Poland (0.18 %), Germany (0.16 %), Bulgaria (0.08 %) and the United States (0.06 %). They are followed in terms of numbers by foreign nationals from Moldova, Romania, China, Mongolia, Great Britain, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Austria, Italy, France and the Netherlands.⁶²

Regarding the ethnic composition of the population of the Czech Republic the Czech Statistical Office states the following in a document entitled *Ethnic Structure of the Population*: “The highest proportion of the population were people with Czech nationality (64.3 %), a further 5 % of the population were of Moravian nationality and 1.4 % Slovak nationality. Other nationalities did not exceed the threshold of 1 % of the population.” This data comes from the most recent census, carried out in 2011. Regarding the low number of people who claim Czech nationality, the Czech Statistical Office writes the following: “The more than one-quarter decline in the number of people with Czech nationality when comparing 2011 with 2001 is due to the high level of non-response to the question of nationality (in 2011 it was 25.3 %, in 2001 only 1.7 %), partly also the more than one-third increase in the number of people with Moravian nationality and the introduction of the option to claim both Czech and Moravian nationality.”⁶³

During the 2011 census 5 135 people stated that they were of Roma nationality, whereas in 2001 it was 11 746 people. So the number has decreased by half. However, the category combining Czech and Roma nationality saw an increase, with nearly seven thousand more people claiming it than ten years ago. The professional public considers these data to be undervalued.⁶⁴ The usual estimates are 250 000 – 300 000 people.

The Czech Statistical Office document also looks at the religious persuasion of the Czech Republic’s population. In the 2011 census 20.8 % of the population said they were “religious worshippers”, 34.5 % had “no religious belief” and 44.7 % did not answer this question. The Czech Republic is therefore considered one of the most secular countries in the world. According to research, however, despite the reduction in the number of worshippers in Czech society, people are not rejecting religion. Rather, data shows a certain amount of reluctance and distrust among society of church-organised religious life. Religion in the Czech Republic often takes on a private form.⁶⁵

In the last census the largest number of people said they were Roman Catholic (1 082 463 people, 10.9 % of the population). The second-largest church was the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (51 858 people). This was followed by the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (39 229) and the Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands (20 533). Followers of the Jedi Knights (15 070) appeared in fifth place. These were followed by other Christian churches. 1 474 people said they were Jewish and 3 358 people said they were Muslims.⁶⁶

⁶²MAHDALOVÁ, Kateřina. Who’s at home here? Data journalism. [online]. 3. 1. 2015. Available 7. 7. 2015 at: <<http://www.datovazurnalistika.cz/kdo-je-v-ceske-republice-doma/>>.

⁶³ Ethnic Structure of the Population. Czech Statistical Office. [online] 30. 6. 2014. Available 7. 7. 2015 at: <<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20551765/170223-14.pdf/d0d27736-ef15-4f4f-bf26-e7cb3770e187?version=1.0>>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Tab. 614c Population by age, religious belief and sex. Population and Housing Census 2011. Czech Statistical Office. [online] 26. 3. 2011. Available 8. 7. 2015 at: <<https://www.czso.cz/csu/sldb>>.

However, according to estimates by the Federation of Jewish Communities there are 15 000

– 20 000 Jews living in the Czech Republic.⁶⁷ Similar estimates about the number of Muslims in the Czech Republic talk about 20 000 – 30 000 people of various ethnicities.⁶⁸

5.2. The Czech public's relationship towards ethnic groups

To determine the relationship that the Czech public has towards ethnic groups living in the Czech Republic we can look at the reports by the Public Opinion Research Centre, which annually carries out research in this area. The most recent survey was carried out in February 2015. Seventeen nationalities living in the Czech Republic were included in the survey. Respondents expressed their like or dislike using a five point scale, where 1 meant “like very much” 2 “quite like”, 3 “neither like nor dislike”, 4 “quite dislike” and 5 “dislike very much”.

The survey shows that the most-liked nationalities were Czechs (88 % of respondents chose “like very much” or “quite like” and only 1 % “quite dislike”) and Slovaks (84 % like / 2 % dislike). There was then quite a gap back to Poles who were liked by a majority (54 %) of the public compared to just over a tenth (12 %) expressing a dislike, then Greeks (37 % / 15 %), Germans (38 % / 25 %), Jews (31 % / 17 %), Hungarians (30 % / 18 %) and Bulgarians (27 % / 21 %). In the case of the Vietnamese (26 % / 31 %), Serbian (19 % / 29 %) and Chinese (17 % / 34 %) ethnic groups dislike prevailed over like, although the largest share consisted of the neutral “neither like nor dislike”.

For Russians (19 % / 40 %), Ukrainians (15 % / 46 %), Romanians (10 % / 47 %), Albanians (6 % / 53 %) and Arabs (5 % / 70 %) the largest response was dislike and in the case of Albanians and Arabs it was actually an absolute majority. By far the worst result was for the Roma population, to whom more than four fifths (82 %) of those questioned expressed a dislike and half (51 %) chose the answer “dislike very much”, whereas only 4 % of those questioned said they like Roma.⁶⁹

The survey also showed that as people get older their attitude towards Germans, Greeks and Arabs gets worse. With increased education the attitude towards Germans, Greeks and the Chinese improves. Among university graduates there are less people who dislike Germans and the Vietnamese and more who say they like the Chinese and Arabs. People with basic education less frequently said they liked Jews.

In Moravia respondents viewed Slovaks, Poles, Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians more favourably, in Bohemia Vietnamese people were relatively better accepted. In terms of declared standard of living, the higher it is, the better the attitude towards Germans, Jews and Arabs. In terms of political orientation, as it moves from the left to the right the fondness for Russians goes down and, on the contrary, the attitudes towards Germans and Jews improves.⁷⁰

5.3. The Czech public's attitude towards foreigners

The Public Opinion Research Centre regularly assesses the Czech public's attitude towards foreigners. The last survey of this kind was carried out in February 2015. Respondents were asked whether foreigners living in the Czech Republic should adapt to our habits. Seven out of ten Czechs (70 %) were of the opinion that foreigners should adapt as much as possible to our habits, more than a quarter (27 %) believed that they should partially adapt and only 2 % of the Czech population thought that foreigners should have the opportunity to live entirely according to their own customs.

67 Statistics. Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic. [online] © 2010. Available 8. 7. 2015 at: <<http://www.fzo.cz/o-nas/statistika/>>.

68 POPOVOVÁ, Klára. Muslims in the Czech Republic. Muslims through the eyes of Czech schoolchildren: Research and educational project. [online] © 2015. Available 8. 7. 2015 at: <<http://muslimove.cz/muslimove-v-ceske-republice/>>.

69 The Czech public's relationship towards ethnic groups living in the Czech Republic – February 2015. CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., Our Society 2. – 9. 2. 2015, 1069 respondents over the age of 15, personal interviews. Available 30. 6. 2015 at: <http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7352/f3/ov150306.pdf>.

70 Ibid.

In questions focussing on how foreigners living long-term in the Czech Republic are perceived, negative opinions received the most affirmative answers. This applied to the assertion that foreigners are responsible for rising crime (66 % of respondents expressed agreement) and that they increase overall unemployment (65 %). Roughly only a tenth of those questioned disagreed with these statements. An absolute majority of Czech citizens believed that foreigners living long-term in the Czech Republic represent a health risk (57 %), 15% of respondents disagreed. Agreement also prevailed over disagreement regarding the statement that foreigners threaten our way of life – two fifths of those questioned (42 %) agreed, just under a quarter disagreed (23 %). On the other hand, in the case of positive statements about foreigners living long-term in the Czech Republic dissenting replies prevailed. The majority of the Czech public disagreed that foreigners enrich our own culture (22 % of respondents agreed, 46 % disagreed, which is the highest proportion of negative replies out of all the questions), they help to solve the problem of an aging population (23 % agree, 39 % disagree), and they contribute to the economy (16 % agree, 42 % disagree).

The conclusion to the report contains the following summary: “Differences of opinion on foreigners become evident in particular with regard to standard of living, political orientation and partly also age. People with a good standard of living, right-wing political supporters and also those people who have friends or acquaintances among foreigners living long-term in the Czech Republic have a more positive attitude towards foreigners. Also people in the 15-29 age group are more lenient towards foreigners. They are more frequently convinced that foreigners enrich our culture, contribute to the economy, are not responsible for rising crime and do not represent a threat to our way of life. Conversely, respondents with a poor standard of living, left-wing sympathisers and people who do not have friends or acquaintances among foreigners living long-term in the Czech Republic tend to be more negative towards foreigners.”⁷¹

5.4. The state of racism and discrimination in the Czech Republic

The state of racism and discrimination in the European Union is monitored by the non- governmental organisation ENAR⁷² (European Network Against Racism). It regularly issues shadow reports on the state of these phenomena in the European Union. Each year a national team of authors is approached, which then processes the topic of racism and discrimination from the perspective of the NGO sector into a national shadow report and ENAR uses these reports to compile a Shadow Report on the State of Racism and Discrimination in the EU.

Below we present the last two shadow reports that have been published mapping the situation in the Czech Republic. The first is the Racism and related discriminatory practices in the Czech Republic shadow report describing the situation in the Czech Republic in the period from March 2011 until March 2012. The second report is Racism and related discriminatory practices in employment in the Czech Republic covering the period from March 2012 until March 2013.

The earlier report in its “Summary” states that, in addition to a general analysis of racism and other forms of discrimination, the topic of Islamophobia will also be addressed in detail. It states that: “The Czech Republic, unlike many west European countries, does not register serious problems in relation to the Muslim minority. The lower urgency of this issue stems from the relatively small number of Muslims living in the Czech Republic and also from the fact that they are mostly people with higher education working in highly skilled positions. However, the degree of latent xenophobia and Islamophobia in Czech society is unfortunately relatively high. Knowledge about Islam is very limited and the news media is often misleading and/or uninformed.”⁷³

71 The Czech public's attitude towards foreigners - February 2015. CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., Our Society 2. – 9. 2. 2015, 1069 respondents over the age of 15, personal interviews. Available 8. 7. 2015 at: <http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7350/f3/ov150303b.pdf>.

72 On the organisation's website one can read: “ENAR is the only pan-European anti-racist network that combines advocacy for racial equality and facilitating cooperation among civil society anti-racist actors in Europe. The organisation was set up in 1998 by grassroots activists on a mission to achieve legal changes at European level and make decisive progress towards racial equality in all EU Member States. Since then, ENAR has grown and achieved a great deal.” Available 5. 7. 2015 at: <<http://www.enar-eu.org/About-us>>.

73 JANKŮ, L., KNOB, M., KRAJČANSKÝ, V. Racism and discrimination in the Czech Republic: ENAR Shadow Report 2011–2012. Centre for Human Rights and Democratization. Available 3. 7. 2015 at: <http://www.romea.cz/dokumenty/SR_CR-2012.pdf>. English version available at: <http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/czech_republic.pdf>.

Also in the “Summary” the report mentions the most serious problems, which it outlines in six points. The first point concerns the renewal and further strengthening of tension between the majority and the Roma minority. This tension has been evident in regions faced with high unemployment, with significant Roma populations. Far-right groups have organised public rallies in these regions. In several cases the police have had to intervene to prevent an escalation and violent clashes.

The second point refers to the fact that there have been several violent attacks in the Czech Republic both against Roma and by the Roma community. It states that false reports about attacks have also appeared which have provoked xenophobic tendencies in society. The situation has been made worse by the unprofessional reporting in the tabloid media which has simply repeated unsubstantiated rumours.

Another topic is the disproportionately frequent channelling of Roma children into primary schools with a limited curriculum, which limits their opportunities for further education and work. The report insists on the systematic reform of the Czech educational system and states that the segregation of the Roma population from mainstream society begins in childhood and over time deepens further. Instead of the current partial reforms there, therefore, need to be clear systematic changes which would include Roma children in the standard educational process. It also mentions the need to convince Roma parents about how important a quality education is for their children.

This is followed by a warning of the overall low level of educational attainment among members of the Roma minority which leads to their high unemployment and filling of less skilled positions. Also employers are reluctant to employ Roma and discrimination continues to occur when new workers are recruited. The report warns of the need to improve the availability of legal aid to victims of discrimination on the job market.

The penultimate point talks about the continuing unfavourable process of “ghettoization” in which Roma are moved to the outskirts of towns which then become areas with high unemployment, poor infrastructure and increased incidence of crime. The report urges the Czech Republic to develop an effective strategy for public housing and to provide protection against abuse by the owners of hostels. The last point talks about the need to allow migrants access to public health insurance.⁷⁴

In the “Introduction” we learn that compared to previous years there have been no significant changes regarding vulnerable groups, while the Roma minority remains the most vulnerable to racism and discrimination. Among other vulnerable groups are Romanians, Albanians, Ukrainians and Muslims. It states that the report will look specifically at issues of racism and discrimination against Muslims, saying that: “there is relatively widespread latent Islamophobia in the Czech Republic and members of the Muslim community face negative prejudices from mainstream society and the media. In general, however, Islamophobia is not such a serious social and political topic as the problem of discrimination and racism towards Roma.”⁷⁵

In the fifth section “Special topic – Islamophobia” the report provides information on the status of the Muslim community in the Czech Republic, analyses various forms of discrimination and manifestations of racism against Muslims and assesses the causes and consequences of hostility towards this group.

The following sections discuss racism and discrimination in employment, education, housing, healthcare, access to goods and services, political participation, the media and criminal justice. The report ends with its recommendations.

The most recent report, Racism and related discriminatory practices in employment in the Czech Republic covering the period from March 2012 until March 2013 criticises the Czech Republic, especially for its restrictive policy towards foreigners in employment, the long-term failure to address the issue of unemployment among the Roma minority and the non- functioning mechanism of legal protection for victims of employment discrimination.

Two groups are at the centre of the report’s interest – foreigners and the Roma community. Both groups face discrimination on the labour market, which can often be seen in the recruitment process when, for example,

74 JANKŮ, L., KNOB, M., KRAJČANSKÝ, V, Racism and discrimination in the Czech Republic: ENAR Shadow Report 2–2012, page 2.

75 Ibid, page 3.

an applicant is excluded because of his/her surname. The report claims that the most common manifestations of discrimination in employment are lower wages, the lack of opportunity to be promoted, precarious working conditions, harassment and unlawful dismissal.

The report recommends that the Czech Republic improves its mechanism for data collection, creates jobs for disadvantaged groups, passes a law on free legal aid and social housing, moves away from its restrictive policies towards foreigners and develops anti-discriminatory legislation, such as increasing the powers of the ombudsman in detecting discrimination.⁷⁶



6. Conclusion

The Czech Republic is, from the ethnicity point of view, a very homogenous country. The share of foreigners living in the Czech Republic does not exceed 5 % of the total population. Despite this fact – or rather because of it – share a large part of the majority population negative feelings and attitudes towards the foreigners. The conventional target group of racism and discrimination is the Roma minority.

The Czech Republic is continuously criticised by the EU and a number of NGOS for insufficient measures taken to improve the situation. The anti-Roma feelings is gradually being overshadowed by the fear of current wave of immigrants connected with the anti-Muslim sentiments which have been in the Czech society already present for a certain time.

The present attitudes towards foreigners are influenced by the current immigration crisis. There is rising tension in the Czech society related to this issue. The analysis does not focus on the impact of the immigration crisis as it still presents an ongoing process which will be possible to assess only with certain hindsight. However, we may encounter in the Czech society serious concerns related both to the incoming immigrants and to the hateful attitudes and proclamations of parts of Czech society against the immigrants.

This atmosphere is contributed to by some of the media who adopt the rhetoric of fear and even spread false information. In recent months, several public demonstrations against the immigrants took place. These are used by the populist politicians to gain electoral support. The society is getting polarised and the public debate is growing more intense. We perceive the presence of certain partial racist and xenophobic opinions in the main stream of the Czech society as very serious.

⁷⁶ ČIŽINSKÝ, P., DUBOVÁ, A., HURRLE, J. Racism and related discriminatory practices in employment in the Czech Republic: ENAR Shadow Report 2012–2013. Multicultural Centre Prague. Available 6. 7. 2015 at: <http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/czech_republic.pdf>.



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