

## ***Multiculturalism, Migration, Mathematics Education and Language***

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### **EDUCATIONAL POLICY TOWARDS MINORITIES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

#### ***Government Council for National Minorities***

The Council is an advisory, initiative-taking and co-ordinating body of the Czech Government for matters of policy towards national minorities and their members. The current Council has been established in a sense of § 6 of the Act No. 273/2001 Coll., on rights of members of national minorities and amendment of some acts, as amended.

The currently valid Statute of the Council was adopted by a Government resolution No. 746 dated June 15, 2005. The Council is chaired by a Government member, appointed by the Government upon the proposal of the Prime Minister. The Council has two Chairpersons, the first one represents the public administration, the second one represents the national minorities. The Council as a whole has 31 members, who have been appointed by a Government resolution. They represent following organizations and institutions:

- ministries, on the level of deputy ministers (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of International Affairs);
- the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, the Office of Public Protector of Rights and the Government Commissioner for Human Rights.

#### ***Language policy***

Nowadays, Czech language is the language of instruction in all types of schools. Minorities are guaranteed the right to education in their mother tongue by the Education Act.

Each year, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports invites applications for programmes supporting the education in languages of national minorities and multicultural education. This programme has several thematic areas:

- Support of education in languages of national minorities
  - Language education of children and youths, members of national minorities, in languages of national minorities, examples of good practices of children from national minorities' integration in the Czech educational system.

- Educational activities for children and youth, members of national minorities, including publication of texts for education of children and youth in minority languages, as a part of a broader project focusing on education.
- Support of multicultural education
  - Educational activities for children and youth, members of national minorities, as a part of a broader project focusing on education.
  - Creation and realization of educational programmes and teaching materials for children and youth and for pedagogical staff, oriented to eliminating racial and national intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism, including integrating and multicultural projects.
  - Quantitative and qualitative researches and analyses focusing on education of children and youth from national minorities and ethnics living in the Czech Republic and on the multicultural education of children and youth.

***Example: Programme for the of the integration of Roma Community***

In accordance with Czech Government Directive No. 98/2002 Coll., defining the conditions and ways of providing state-budget subsidies for activities of members of national minorities and in support of the integration of Roma-community members, as subsequently amended, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has announced 'Programme for the Support of the Integration of the Members of the Roma Community'. Every year, 15 million CZK are appropriated by the ministry for this programme.

Legal entities (with the exception of foundations and endowments) demonstrably performing an activity benefiting the members of the Roma community can apply to be included in the programme.

This programme has several thematic areas:

- Pre-school preparation of Roma children: The objective of announcing this thematic area is to create the prerequisites for fulfilling the Conception of Timely Care for Children from Socio-Culturally Disadvantaged Backgrounds and to raise the chances of integrating children from Roma communities into the main educational stream.
- Education of pupils from Roma communities at elementary and secondary schools: The objective of announcing this thematic area is to contribute to the integration of Roma pupils into the main educational stream.
- Methodological support of pedagogical staff: The objective of announcing this thematic area are: to support the further education of the pedagogical staff working with Roma children in preschool and elementary education in utilising effective methods for the education of Roma children; to support further education of pedagogical staff in the area of creating an inclusive environment at school and in class; to support the education of teacher assistants for socially disadvantaged children, pupils and students.

- Creation of didactic materials and specialized studies for the needs of preparing educational programmes, methods and strategies:The objective of announcing this thematic area is to support the creation of materials for working with children in integrated groups and the preparation of specialised studies dealing with the integration of children from Roma communities in the area of education.
- Extracurricular and leisure-time activities for Roma children and youth in connection with their educational needs: The objective of announcing this thematic area is to support the creation of an offer of leisure-time activities for the given target group and the integration of children and youth from Roma communities in this area.

### ***The integration of aliens***

Within the Conception of integrating aliens on the territory of the CR, the issues of the situation and position of aliens on the territory of the Czech Republic in the area of their education fall under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS).

The MEYS has systematically dealt with the problems of educating foreigners within the Conception of integrating aliens on the territory of the CR in an ongoing way since 2000. The main prerequisites for successful integration are the preparedness of the school system and its ability to react to changing conditions. The education of aliens proceeds in compliance with Act No. 561/2004 Coll., on Preschool, Elementary, Secondary, Higher Vocational and Other Education (Education Act), as subsequently amended.

The MEYS ensures courses free of charge for refugees, for the implementation of which financial means are appropriated through relevant resolutions of the Government of the CR from the General Treasury Administration budget chapter.

The MEYS guarantees the *compulsory school attendance* of the children of refugees and asylum-seekers, as a component of the fulfillment of commitments arising from the international conventions by which the CR is bound.

On the basis of cooperation with the Institute for Information in Education and Czech Statistical Office, the *statistical data* in connection with the education of aliens *are monitored*.

Important information contributing to knowledge ability with respect to the requirements and problems connected with the education of the children of aliens is continuously provided *by the monitoring of the situation in the education of aliens in elementary and secondary schools* by means of the Czech School Inspectorate.

Every year, the MEYS charges the DM of Group 6 with the appointment of a working group consisting of the deputies of all the groups of the ministry, the Czech School Inspectorate, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Interior. This commission selects projects from the announced projects for the support of the activities in the area of the integration of aliens on the territory of the CR, for the implementation of which financial means are appropriated through

relevant resolutions of the Government of the CR from the General Treasury Administration budget chapter.

The implementation of the projects contributes to the removal of the language barrier and facilitates the integration of children-aliens into normal life while respecting the differences of individual ethnic groups, their cultures, religions, customs, etc. Another objective of the projects is to assist teachers in acquiring skills in work with children-aliens during the instruction, namely of the Czech language, in integrating these children into extracurricular activities, in resolving possible conflicts arising from mutual misunderstandings.

Within the fulfillment of the Conception of integrating aliens on the territory of the CR, the MEYS provides instruction in the Czech language, instruction of the social-legal minima and instruction in geographical realia to refugees and persons using subsidiary protection free of charge.

## **Resources**

[http://www.czech-in-prague.cz/index/nationalities\\_in\\_the\\_czech\\_republic/0-28](http://www.czech-in-prague.cz/index/nationalities_in_the_czech_republic/0-28)

<http://osobnostnirozvojpedagoga.cz/moduly/m1/2-1-narodnostni-mensiny-v-ceske-republice.html>

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

<http://osobnostnirozvojpedagoga.cz/moduly/m1/2-1-narodnostni-mensiny-v-ceske-republice.html>

<http://www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/subsidy-programme-support-of-roma-secondary-school-pupils?highlightWords=Subsidy+programme+Support+Roma+Secondary+School+Pupils>

<http://www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/the-integration-of-aliens>