

## **9. SUMMARY AJ**

### **Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and Communities and the Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in the Field**

#### **Overall information on the project and on the contents of this publication**

##### **Submitter:**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic  
HRD OP Management and Implementation Unit

##### **Partners of the submitter:**

Department of Social Services at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic  
Government Council for Romany Community Issues

##### **Implementation:**

GAC spol. s r. o. ([www.gac.cz](http://www.gac.cz))  
Nová škola o. p. s. ([www.novaskola.org](http://www.novaskola.org))

##### **Financing:**

The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and from the state budget of the Czech Republic

##### **Implementation period:**

November 1, 2005 – August 15, 2006

##### **Main aims** (according to the submitter's specifications):

- acquisition of elementary information on the situation of socially excluded Roma localities aiming at the appropriate setup of drawing from financial resources in the program period from 2007 to 2013.
- elicitation of information on possibilities and extent of the absorption capacity of subjects operating and providing services in the field

##### **Specific aims** (according to the submitter's specifications)

- identification and explanation of elementary concepts applied in the implementation of analysis
- mapping of socially excluded Roma localities and communities and those endangered by the social exclusion
- mapping of relevant subjects operating in the field
- elaboration of an overview of localities in which the help from the ESF is possible and necessary and of an overview of subjects that may be potential applicants in the next program period, or subjects that have already applied for the resources from the ESF

##### **Outputs** (according to the research performer's specifications):

- electronic interactive map providing descriptive information on life conditions in the studied socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic and contact information on the subjects operating in the field (i.e. potential applicants for the resources from the ESF) – 100 pcs of CD

- comprehensive brochure as a supplement to the CD containing accompanying information regarding mainly the present state analysis, future strategic development directions, possible project types supported from the ESF – 100 pcs
- concluding report addressed to the submitter

This publication summarizes **the progress of general work carried out within the project**. This includes above all:

- summary of basic information on the project, primarily on its methodology
- presentation of a comprehensive description of life conditions in the socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic under study
- presentation of typology of socially excluded Roma localities
- analysis of the main problem issues of social exclusion and their present state
- description and analysis of existing devices/projects contributing to the social integration of socially excluded Roma people in the Czech Republic
- summary of device types/projects not currently in use in the social integration and thus conceivable in relation to the ESF support extension
- change strategy design and initiation of inclusion of the socially excluded inhabitants of the localities under study
- design of the system changes necessary for the change in approach to the issues being solved

## **Key Concepts Summary**

### **A) Social exclusion**

By social exclusion we understand **the process whereby individuals, a group of individuals or a community are hindered or completely denied the access to resources, positions and opportunities that allow participation on social, economic and political activities of the majority society.**

Some groups of citizens are more endangered by the social exclusion than others. They include e.g.:

- insufficiently educated persons,
- persons unemployed for a long period of time or repeatedly,
- mentally or physically handicapped people,
- persons suffering from some addiction,
- senior citizens living alone,
- immigrants,
- members of variously (ethnically, religiously, concerning their sexual orientation etc.) defined minorities,
- people who have found themselves in a difficult life situation and are not able to cope with it themselves, etc.

The risk of social exclusion increases in the case of individuals and groups in which the factors listed above (or some others) are accumulated.

Social exclusion is often connected to and manifested *particularly* (but not only) by:

- spatial exclusion (Individuals and groups affected by social exclusion *often* live in enclosed and/or isolated localities with low standard of living and insufficient civil facilities.),
- symbolic exclusion connected with stigmatization (generalizing attribution of negative qualities) of individuals and groups,
- low education level and hindered possibility to overcome the disadvantage,
- hindered access to legal forms of gainful activities, dependency on welfare and related material poverty,
- hazardous life-style, poor hygienic conditions and worsened state of health related to them,
- present-oriented life strategies,
- isolated economic system characterized by frequent pawning and money borrowings at high interest (usury and the so-called “fast borrowings”),
- potentially higher incidence of socially pathological phenomena (e. g. alcoholism, drug-addiction, gambling) and delinquency (higher risk of both becoming a law-offender and a victim of a law-offence),
- lowered socio-cultural competence (e. g. language barrier, inexperience in or ignorance of one’s own rights and duties).

Above listed (and some other possible) manifestations of social exclusion occur in various situations and to various extent. It is possible to speak of a social exclusion even if only one of the manifestations emerges.

## **B) A Roma**

Among the groups endangered by the social exclusion are ethnic minorities. In the Czech Republic this mainly applies to the Roma people. As the term “Roma” is used and understood differently in different contexts, it is necessary to clarify the use of the term in this research project.

By a Roma we understand **an individual who considers himself or herself to be a Roma**, even if he or she does not claim so in all circumstances (e. g. in a population census), **and/or is considered to be a Roma by a significant part of his or her neighborhood according to real or alleged (anthropological, cultural or social) indicators.**

This delineation of the term “Roma” may be perceived as politically incorrect, yet it emphasizes the fact that **attributed “Roma identity” is one of the primary causes of the social exclusion** of many inhabitants of the localities under study.

## **C) Socially excluded Roma locality**

As a socially excluded Roma locality we understand **a space inhabited by a group whose members consider themselves to be Roma and/or are considered Roma by their neighborhood and are socially excluded.**

On one side of the spectrum, this may apply to a single house in which several individuals or families live, or a whole town district encompassing several hundred or even thousand inhabitants on the other side of the spectrum. Such a space is both the place to which “the excluded” are directed to and the place which contributes to their exclusion. Frontiers of such a locality may be both symbolic (when the locality is perceived as the so-called “bad address”, it is referred to as “the horror house”, “Gypsy street”, “ghetto”, “Bronx” etc.) and physical (when the locality is

separated from the rest of the residential area by an industry zone, frequented street, water course, garbage dump, etc.). In both cases the frontier is recognized by both the inhabitants of the locality and by those who live outside.

Socially excluded Roma localities originate primarily as a consequence of

- “natural” migration of poor Roma families to localities with more affordable housing
- forcing Roma families out of lucrative flats and allocating them alternative housing in localities frequently inhabited by high percentage of Roma inhabitants
- controlled movement (predominantly from the part of municipalities) of those who do not pay the rent and generally of people considered “inadaptable” or “trouble-causers” to lodging houses or to “holobyty” (a specific term denoting “bare apartments”).

For a locality to be perceived as Roma **it is not at all necessary that the Roma inhabitants form the statistical majority in the specific locality**. There are, of course, also socially excluded localities where the proportion of Roma inhabitants is low, or where Roma people do not live at all. (With regard to the project assignment, however, these localities are not included in the map forming the appendix of this report.) At the same time, it is necessary to realize that by far not all socially excluded Roma live in socially excluded localities (and thus these were not the object of our study). Last but not least, considering the fact that many Roma people are fully socially integrated in the society, it should be stressed that **it is not possible** to equal the term “a Roma” with the term “socially excluded”.

In connection with inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities the term “Roma community” is often used. However, according to the findings of several field researchers it turns out that **the usage of the term community to denote the groups of socially excluded Roma is inadequate**. Mostly it is not possible to speak of shared group identity consciousness related to the existence of formalized social bonds and of sharing common patterns of behaviour, values and attitudes. Mostly such groups are heterogenous configurations of nuclear families moved to one place from different parts of towns or even from different towns. When it is possible to speak of a community, it is mostly only so when the individuals of the group given are mutually connected by family bonds related to the traditional structure of the Roma large-scale family.

**It appears utterly incorrect to us to label the socially excluded (Roma) localities and the (Roma) localities endangered by the social exclusion by the term “ghetto”**. The increasing usage of the popular label, clearly bearing negative connotations, in texts written by journalists, employees in the non-profit sector and by members of the academe (regardless of contents of the texts) reproduces and strengthens further the negative perception of such localities and motivates related practical behavior. Few people from the majority society want to live in a ghetto or in its immediate proximity and few people want to run a company there. Thus labeling a locality by the term ghetto contributes to the intensification of the social exclusion of its inhabitants.

## **Research phases and data collection**

### **Phase 1: November, 2005 – January, 2006**

#### **Aims:**

1. elaboration of a working list of potential socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic – estimation of the maximum number of potential socially excluded Roma localities in the CR
2. elaboration of a list of operationalized indicators of social exclusion and its transformation to a compulsory “record sheet” designed for data collection in Phase 2.

## Outputs:

1. broad list of 333 municipalities with potentially socially excluded Roma localities designated for further study
2. narrowed list of 173 municipalities with potentially socially excluded Roma localities selected by us together with the submitter for the field research<sup>129</sup>
3. “record sheet”
4. suggestion of definitions of key concepts necessary for operationalized handling of the issues under study in field

## **Phase 2: January, 2006 – April, 2006**

**Aim:** descriptions of socially excluded localities or localities endangered by social exclusion based on the list of operationalized indicators of social exclusion (“record sheet”)

## Outputs:

1. 330 filled record sheets describing life conditions in the localities under study
2. working list of the NGOs that at least partially help preventing social exclusion and eliminate its consequences in Roma localities by their activities

## Statistical data analysis

Component part of the Phase 2 of the project was also a rendition of statistical data analysis aiming at **generation of an analytic groundwork for the typology design and at the statistical processing of a set of localities based upon selected life condition characteristics in socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic.** The statistical analysis provides basic notion of scale structure, population and life conditions in the whole set of localities in the context of the Czech Republic.

The data for analysis were produced by **coding of the data recorded in the field research** (individual values of individual variables were assigned numeric symbols) following the information provided by the “record sheet” and variable classification. **Data record** included approx. **80 variables.**

In conclusion to the second phase, following the results of the statistical data analysis, we generated a working **typology** of socially excluded Roma localities which we considered in the selection of localities subjected to further research in the following field phase. The working typology was modified following the definitive results of the Phase 3 of the project.

## **Phase 3: May, 2006**

**Aim:** implementation of several-day probes into 20 typologically differing and contrasting localities stressing the search for the possibilities of social exclusion reduction and initiation of the integration process

**Output:** 20 filled in “Output schemata P3”<sup>130</sup>, which served as a base for the analysis in the following phase

## **Phase 4: June, 2006 – August, 2006**

**Aim:** processing of the electronic map of the socially excluded Roman localities in the Czech Republic and those endangered by the social exclusion, analysis and change strategy design, elaboration of concluding report and of the brochure, organization of the concluding conference

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<sup>129</sup> Municipalities for field research were not chosen at random. The aim was to record those localities that bore the signs of social exclusion. The aim **was not** to record all places where Romany live and thus to supply perhaps a census.

<sup>130</sup> These were qualitative records of the phenomena studied in the locality given in the course of P3.

## Outputs:

1. electronic map burned on a CD containing descriptive information on 310 socially excluded Roma localities in 167 municipalities<sup>131</sup>
2. research project concluding report – analysis and change strategy design
3. brochure accompanying the electronic map and summarizing information on the project
4. concluding conference

## Summary of main conclusions (A – C)

### **A) The project provides analytical results concerning life conditions in socially excluded Roma localities, their origination and development.**

It provides three points of view on socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic:

- electronic map – 310 case studies of socially excluded Roma localities and graphic processing of the issues under study within various maps
- summary information on the localities under study provided by statistical analysis
- summary of the main constitutive elements influencing conditions and development of socially excluded Roma localities – i.e. housing, employment, education, risk phenomena/behaviour and the domain of health

Owing to the present extent of our knowledge we may summarize the issue of social exclusion by the four **following theses**:

- the extent of the problem in the CR is under no doubt anymore, the problem is described and quantified
- the phenomenon is internally differentiated – it is therefore necessary to use highly differentiated devices/projects to allow the integration process to begin
- it is not an accidental phenomenon, on the contrary, it is influenced by the socio-economic development of the Czech Republic, to a large extent it derives predominantly from the problem of employment, market dynamics and from the state of elementary education system (which at the moment contributes to the exclusion by transferring the social exclusion to new generations)
- the phenomenon has a certain ethnic ground

### **B) The project provides information on institutions participating on the solution of social exclusion, on possibilities and barriers of social inclusion.** With respect to this, it may be stated that:

- there are many places in the Czech Republic in which we may observe numbers of active subjects trying to contribute to the reduction of social exclusion, yet globally the situation is very differentiated (E. g. in small municipalities active subjects are usually missing completely on the one hand, and on the other there are numbers of experienced social service providers operating in large towns. Elementary/basic schools and municipalities are active very seldom.)
- however, individuals are those who are active, or more precisely organizations represented by individuals (usually NGOs, very rarely elementary schools, special elementary schools, and only extremely rarely municipalities)
- we can not speak of a system, it is rather individual accidental activities that are implemented in the field and these do not pursue a common goal

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<sup>131</sup> The number has lowered in comparison to the Phase 2 and this was due to our decision not to include some of the localities in the map. The reason for this was that either the locality not included was too small or it did not meet the criteria for the definition of a socially excluded Romany locality.

- there is neither a concept nor strategy of inclusion, or more precisely, there is no solution to the social exclusion being applied
- in many municipalities it is clear at present that the process of social exclusion is applied consciously or unconsciously as a device of stabilization of existing problems of the socially excluded localities – such a solution, however, leads to deepening of the exclusion and even to segregation
- we see a strong system discord between the declared interest of **central institutions** to reduce the exclusion and to eliminate the socially excluded localities and the **interest of municipalities** to stabilize the socially excluded localities, or more precisely to use them as a means of solving wide spectrum of problems
- considering the number of NGOs and the quality of services they provide as well as activities run by elementary schools or municipalities and considering the attitude of regional representatives to the issues of social exclusion we state that **the present absorption capacity is insufficient**, particularly if we consider the extent of the problem in the Czech Republic. The present system is unable to overcome factors deepening the social exclusion.

**C) Concerning the search for a solution we propose a strategy that must reflect 4 elementary components of activities:**

- reinforcement of support for all activities existing in the field which proved and are proving useful
- intensification of activities and their improvement in quality, their spreading to those parts of the Czech Republic where they are unavailable (primarily regarding field social work), emphasizing service quality, exchange of information, spread of knowledge, education on all levels (NGOs representatives, school representatives, political representatives of municipalities, relevant clerks etc.)
- definition of intensive systematic integration programs which will be applied on a relatively small group of several municipalities with socially excluded localities, this would include those localities that will actively apply for the program and express willingness to engage in the issue in the long run (in a period exceeding one or two electoral terms)
- the solution is, however, generally conditioned by **the acceptance of a set of system measures/changes** on the central level, or more precisely by considerable increase in the activity of regions

Among the main domains of **system measures** we identify particularly:

- clarification of the role of municipalities in the housing domain
- clarification of the term “social housing” and initiation of building of “social housing”
- consistent assertion of the restriction of discrimination in the domain of housing
- design of differentiated employment programs (particularly focusing on women and young unemployed – elementary school graduates)
- change of the rate between minimum salary and social welfare, modeling of impacts of various forms of the change
- change in frontiers of “school districts” of elementary schools
- modification of enrollment process for special elementary schools and preparatory classes established by special elementary schools
- general reinforcement of communication and cooperation among various subjects encountering the issue of social exclusion

- cooperation of school founders and clear separation of their competencies
- decrease in the number of pupils required to establish preparatory classes at schools in small municipalities
- modification in the system of school financing with regard to higher costs related to the teaching of socially disadvantaged pupils
- modifications related to the possibilities of registration of elementary school or special elementary school graduates at employment offices
- possibility of identification of a Roma person or Roma pupils regarding primarily the results of various integration programs
- creation of a platform for experience exchange among representatives of elementary schools and secondary schools attended by pupils from socially excluded Roma localities
- complementation of quantitative and qualitative data with successfulness of Roma pupils in order to provide more profound knowledge and possibilities of defining suitable projects of social inclusion in the domain of schooling
- ensuring the availability of field social work for all persons that are socially excluded or endangered by the social exclusion