
AGENCY FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION IN SOCIALLY EXCLUDED ROMA LOCALITIES

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USED ACRONYMS:

MPSV – Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

MMR – Ministry for Regional Development

MŠMT – Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

MPO - Ministry of Industry and Trade

OP LZZ – Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment

OP VK – Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness

IOP – Integrated Operational Programme

OPPI – Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation

TSP – Field social work

OSI – Open Society Institute

Preamble

In its programme declaration, the Government of the Czech Republic committed to creating an agency, which will provide complex services in prevention of social exclusion and its removal in socially excluded Roma localities, and to streamline the drawing of funds from the EU in the area of activities aimed at integrating socially excluded Roma into mainstream society. The aim of the planned agency is to take advantage of unique opportunities offered by the new programme period for drawing from the EU Structural Funds in 2007-2013, and to create essential human and institutional resources for realizing programmes and projects, which will fundamentally improve the socioeconomic conditions of Roma people, increase their standard of living and improve their access to the labour market and to mainstream education.

The Government decided to create a complex instrument of social integration on the local level, because it believes that by aiding integration of Roma people in the area of education, employment and housing, it will be possible to stop the process of creating socially excluded Roma localities, and their population will be able to fully integrate into the life of mainstream society.

The deepening social exclusion of members of the Roma communities evokes the urgent need for complex solutions tailor made to local conditions. The pilot testing and consequent creation of an Agency for removal of social exclusion and its prevention appears to be a realistic model, which will support “networking” and creation of partnership of local institutions. These institutions have or may have an immediate influence on the living strategy and motivation of the population of socially excluded Roma localities (municipalities, schools, NGO/NPOs, private subjects and other institutions).

1.) Introduction

Many municipalities, NGO/NPOs, providers of social services and schools, whose work brings them in contact with inhabitants of socially excluded localities, have a low capacity of using financial aid from Structural Funds (“SF”) and Czech endowment funds. Also indicating this trend is the *Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and Absorption Capacity of Subjects Working in This Area* (Gabal, MPSV, 2006). At the same time, improvement of socioeconomic conditions of socially excluded Roma, and their access to mainstream education, and therefore also their future fulfilment on the labour market, depends directly on the direct intervention of these organizations on the local level.

The Report on the Status of the Roma Communities accepted each year by the Government of the CR has pointed out for a number of years the frighteningly deepening social exclusion of members of Roma communities, and on their managed or spontaneous removal to socially and geographically excluded localities. It calls for a complex resolution of this situation, tailor made for each location. The Government of the Czech Republic considers resolution of social exclusion of Roma as a priority. In its programme declaration, it committed to “preparation of a complex programme enabling integration of the Roma and preventing the tendency towards their social exclusion” and to “creation of an instrument for providing complex services when preventing social exclusion on a local level”¹

A realistic model appears to be **pilot testing and consequent creation of an Agency for removing social exclusion in Roma localities and its prevention**. This agency will fulfil its fundamental aim through assistance when creating local partnerships, assistance in creating local complex strategies aimed at eliminating socially excluded Roma localities, assistance when implementing such strategies, through the exchange of good practice and with the help of national and European endowment programmes. Employees of the agency will also provide a method of support and aid to all local partners when creating and realizing projects fulfilling local strategies. Not least of which, the agency will bring information gathered from the local level to the national level. The information gained will become a basis for systematic resolution in this area.

Thus the agency will in fact strengthen, methodically cover and coordinate activity of partners in excluded localities in the area of providing social services and programmes for support of employment, education and development of social housing, etc., when individual local institutions will specifically profile the area of their activity on the basis of defined needs of citizens of the socially excluded locality.

The submitted draft proposal was consulted upon with representatives of ministries, regional and local government, and NGO/NPOs during the course of two technical seminars with workshops held 25-26 July and 27 August, 2007. Around 140 people attended both seminars. The seminars confirmed that the concept of the Agency for removing social exclusion was justified and showed strong demand on the part of local government and NGO/NPOs.

¹ Government Programme Declaration, chapter Law-Abiding State, Security, Public Control, Anticorruption Measures and Human Rights , <http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=20840>

2.) Description of the situation in socially excluded Roma localities

A description of the situation of the Czech Roma population is taken up on more detail in the *Report on the Status of Roma Communities*², and complexly then mainly in the *Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in the Area*³. A brief overview of the basic aspects of social exclusion of Roma in the CR, relevant to this material, is listed below.

2.1) Unemployment

Starting in the beginning of the 1990s, the vast majority of today's inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities gradually lost their jobs. This was the result of economic transformation, during which the number of employees decreased in many industrial branches. This was the start of a continuing trend in shrinking work opportunities for the unqualified and less-qualified work force. Also, the required level of qualification expectations has continued to rise. This in turn decreases the chances of socially excluded Roma from re-entering the labour market. And so for a long period, the Roma minority in the Czech Republic has been affected by high unemployment. It is often the case where all adults in one household are unemployed.

Unemployment has a number of serious impacts on the inhabitants of socially excluded localities. Aside from material poverty, there are also social and mental-health consequences (exclusion from participating in economic and social life of Czech society, giving up on and further job searches, loss of working habits, succumbing to dependencies). If the Roma population of socially excluded localities do work, their position on the labour market is mostly marginal. They mainly perform **seasonal and occasional jobs, unsupported by employment contracts**. This form of work relates to lower wages, and the constant uncertainty of keeping one's job. Permanent employment conditions in the case of socially excluded localities form an exception to the rule⁴.

Roma who have even remained unemployed for several years (5-10 years do not represent any exception), have often lost the social competence necessary for re-entering employment. In a number of cases, Roma youth growing up no longer acquire such competencies (mainly because these weren't instilled by their parents). This mostly concerns the capability of regularly performing work, punctuality, capacity for subordinating to a managing employee, communication skills, sense of teamwork and upholding rules. Also their different lifestyle plays an important role for Roma when entering the labour market. Roma often prefer seasonal work to holding a regular job. It is also worth considering whether in the future, it would be worth it in specific cases to pay wages on a weekly basis, or offer "shared jobs".

Estimates provided by labour offices, field workers and also derived from nationwide research studies⁵ speak at the very least of **a majority of over half (most often 90-100%) of**

² The Report on the State of Roma Communities has been accepted each year by the Government since 2004, the last time by Government Decree no. 679 of 18 June 2007

³ GAC, s.r.o., issued by MPSV, 2006, <http://www.esfcr.cz/files/clanky/3732/brozura.pdf>

⁴ Page 42, Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities, GAC, s.r.o., requested by MPSV, 2006

⁵ Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities, GAC, s.r.o., requested by the MPSV, 2006

unemployed adults in socially excluded Roma localities). A significant part of Roma has also been unemployed over a long period, i.e. for over six months. Also difficult to measure is the level of unemployment of women, which are “in the household”, or on maternity leave. A large percentage of Roma work “under the table”, and are led to this by a number of reasons. In part they may combine social benefits with an illegal income, and also because many Roma in socially excluded localities are in debt. If they work on the basis of valid work contracts, their wage would be taxed, which decreases their motivation to find legal work. A certain percentage of Roma do not have permanent employment and make money from temporary jobs or make money on their own. In Roma communities today, a permanent job is the exception and not the rule. High registered unemployment in socially excluded Roma localities has a number of causes:

- objectively difficult employment – low qualification, often altered working capacity;
- personal decision of individuals, mainly arising from the demotivating ratio between the provided wage and social benefits (including the possibility to illegally add to social benefits by working);
- displacement from the labour market by better-qualified foreign workers willing to work for low wages, or even illegally;
- indebtedness and related potential wage execution during legal employment;
- discrimination of Roma on the basis of racial or cultural prejudices and stereotypes on the part of employers, sometimes leaning on past bad experiences with the working morale of other Roma employees, elsewhere purely categorical stereotypes

2.2) Dependency on social assistance benefits and state social support benefits

In the Czech Republic, the benefit system is constructed for average families with two children. If the family has four and more children, these benefits often act as demotivation towards work. The wage potential for a many members of Roma communities, due to their low qualification, is often lower than the possibility of income from the benefit system, or exceeds it only minimally because of how much costs increase for travel to work, meals at work, etc. Moreover, it is very difficult to keep a citizen who is receiving social benefits from making extra money “under the table” (even abroad), by renting part of their apartment or by other illegal enterprise.

Dependence of members of the Roma community on the benefit system results in increased frustration amongst the members of majority society, who often refer to this method as “parasitic”. At the same time, attention escapes the fact that those who really need social assistance benefits and state social support benefits often don’t receive them. These are people who do not have their personal documents in order, or people who do not know their rights or are not capable of handling their matters at social agencies.

2.3) Worsening of the housing situation

Although statistical data isn’t available, it is unquestionable based on experience from the field that the housing situation of members of Roma communities in the course of the 1990s continued to worsen. In the past, Roma mainly received state apartments, most in a lesser category and in dilapidated old houses, which, in consequence of natural addition to the family or

moving in of relatives, were subject to quick wear and tear. After 1990 though, homes in the historic parts of cities and municipalities became commercially attractive. New owners or those receiving property back after restitution moved Roma out of their homes into substitute apartments (usually of lesser quality), or, in lieu of the existence of lease agreements or incapacity of proving the existence thereof, even without replacement. Mainly of course, members of Roma communities are moved out of apartments due to debt over rent and other fees relating to housing. The procedure of municipalities that evict chronic debtors is in most cases legal, despite the fact that many such communities contributed themselves to the scope of the debts by not exhausting all available possibilities of timely intervention (ex. institution of alternate recipient). Some municipalities accept services of entrepreneurs (including Roma), offering to buy out a house with a burden of renters; they are then moved to substitute housing, mostly unsatisfactory. Other times, municipalities themselves build so-called “holobyty” [a specific term denoting “bare apartments” with concrete floors and no social facilities] for the debtors, in which however rent is often higher than in other apartments. The consequence of such procedures led and still leads to creation of “Roma ghettos” on the edge of cities. Based on the Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in this Area, there are over 310 spatially and socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic, in which around 80.000 Roma live. These enclaves are characterized by an accumulation of problems (poor quality housing, debts in paying rent, unemployment, truancy of children, hygienic and culture level around the home, gambling, drugs, prostitution, criminality, usury, etc.). Members of Roma communities from these localities are often entirely socially excluded⁶. Sporadically – as individuals – socially excluded members of majority society also join them. The existence of socially excluded Roma localities is then becoming one of the hottest social issues in all of Czech society.

Of today’s 310 socially excluded Roma localities in the Czech Republic, the vast majority weren’t created until the 1990s as a consequence of post-communist transformation. 65% of examined localities have existed for over 10 years. More Roma gradually move or are moved to the majority of them. 35% of the localities then have been created only in the past 10 years. Since before 1989, the majority of Roma lived in former state-owned apartments, which were passed into the ownership of municipalities, or in enterprise apartments and rather seldom into cooperative apartments, the changes listed, along with the loss of employment, had a major influence on the worsening housing conditions of a relatively large part of the Roma population. Concentration of Roma population occurred in certain localities, mainly by:

- spontaneous forcing of poor Roma families to live in localities with more affordably priced housing
- forcing Roma families out of apartments in lucrative locations and allocating them alternative housing in cheap locations, with often also a high proportion of Roma population
- controlled movement (mainly by municipalities) into lodging houses or “holobyty”⁷ of people defaulting on rent payment and those considered as “inadaptable” or “trouble-

⁶ See study *Romové, bydlení, soužití* [Roma, housing, cohabitation], Socioklub, Prague 2000, and *Romové ve městě* [Roma in the city], Socioklub Prague 2002.

⁷ Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities, GAC, s.r.o., assigned by MPSV, 2006

makers”.

The situation in individual socially excluded localities differs greatly in many ways. Aside from the various periods and mechanisms of their origin, the localities differ mainly in:

- size
- geographic position within the municipality or city and the level of spatial exclusion
- level of access to basic civic facilities (including transportation service)
- level of ethnic and social homogeneity of the population
- the form of house and apartment ownership
- condition and furnishing of houses and apartments

2.4) Distance barrier

In the area of education, Roma meet with the problem of low qualification, which includes education, technical experience and technical skills. The absolute majority of Roma have just primary education. Some estimates put this number at 80%. Insufficient qualification of the majority of members of Roma communities is the consequence of insufficient school education. A number of factors contribute to the fact that these children aren't usually successful in primary school: differentiating upbringing in Roma families and a priori resignation of parents in gaining reasonable education for their own children, language handicap, unpreparedness caused by the fact that these children mostly didn't go to preschool/kindergarten, and last but not least, also the incapacity and unwillingness of certain teachers to approach such children in a different manner. From the quoted Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities, it is seen that “the Czech education system tends towards reproduction of educational and social origin”, which in the case of children from socially excluded Roma localities results in the fact that the educational system itself becomes an instrument in the process of social exclusion.

One of the main causes of the high number of Roma children in special schools and classes is the fact that these children often don't attend kindergarten. In consequence, they are not sufficiently socialized into the environment of their peers. They then lack certain basic social competencies, which are expected of children entering first grade in primary school.⁸

The increasing difficulty of primary school leads to the fact that the children must already be well prepared when they start attending (handle the language in which school is taught, have developed volitional qualities). Higher demands are placed on family surroundings that are conducive to learning; children need space to learn and someone who helps them learn and prepare homework. If the child lacks these foundations at home, and if nobody spends time at home helping with its studies, there is the threat that the child will not succeed in primary school, and will be placed in special education classes (basically with a Special Needs School curriculum). Possibilities of returning to the regular primary school curriculum, just like the chance of continuing education at a high school after graduating these classes are probably theoretical.

⁸ cases are known when they are not capable of recognizing colours, they're hyperactive, or have problems communicating with others

From the Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities it is seen that Roma students form the majority, i.e. more than 50% of all students, in 65 schools. These are former special schools that teach today according to the educational programme “Special, Auxiliary or Practical School”, or a regular primary school with the educational programme “Primary School”, which are often locally assigned schools for socially excluded Roma localities. The ratio of Roma students at these schools continues to rise, while students representing the majority ethnicity as a rule are gradually leaving. The highest number of excluded students is in the Moravian-Silesian Region, followed by the Ustí nad Labem, South Moravian and Central Bohemian Regions, respectively.

Reasons why Roma students from socially excluded Roma localities have limited access to mainstream education, and consequently to social and professional opportunities, **may generally be divided into:**

Internal factors:

- low motivation towards education and consequent successful entering the labour market
- unpreparedness of Roma children from socially excluded localities for compulsory school attendance
- lack of success of Roma students in primary schools and their consequent reclassification into special schools
- high absenteeism of Roma students, which consequently results in their poor performance

External factors:

- low level of cooperation and coordination of activities of involved subjects at the local level
- low level of information on instruments social inclusion, or of suitable endowment titles and projects financed by the ESF
- insufficient competence and willingness to resolve Roma integration; non-existence of the conception of resolving Roma integration on the level of self-regulatory bodies, insufficient cooperation with kindergartens upon securing preschool education
- inadequate communication between schools and parents

2.5) Unsatisfactory state of health

From the fragmentary available sources, it is clear that the state of health of members of the Roma community is on average much worse than the rest of the population.⁹ This fact is caused by the poor socioeconomic position of Roma (dietary habits, low level of education, lower quality of housing), which in itself contributes to this vicious circle. That is, the worsened health situation of the Roma population and high frequency of illness cause stagnation of children in school, and also frequent incapacity of employed adults to work. This is looked upon as negative by the employer, and often leads to establishing an altered working capacity, which further

⁹ See report Zdravotní stav romské populace v ČR [Health state of Roma population in the CR], Internal Grant agency of the Ministry of Health of the CR 3621/3 1998 and the report *Determinanty zdraví romské populace v ČR* [Determinants to health of the Roma population in the CR], No-5516/3-IGA Czech Ministry of Health, Prague 2000.

disadvantages these persons on the labour market.

In the area of health risks, what's mainly alarming is the high level of drug dependence of certain inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities. It is expected that the level of drug dependence of these groups is higher across the board than the nationwide average. Already from babyhood there is the very widespread problem of "sniffing" toluene, one of the cheap and freely available drugs. Another widely abused drug amongst Roma is pervitin [methamphetamine]. Also alarming is the fact that despite the complex offer of preventative and treatment programmes, only rarely is it possible to reach drug-dependent Roma. The complete absence of analyses, which would describe the level and character of drug dependence amongst Roma, makes it impossible to realistically resolve this issue. In the future, it would be desirable to monitor drug dependence in socially excluded Roma localities, and on the basis of gathered experience, to create specific programmes for primary, secondary and tertiary drug prevention.

3.) Existing Government programmes in the area of integration of Roma and fundamental barriers for improving the situation

On the basis of the concentrated effort of the Government and individual applicable government agencies, a number of support programmes and activities have been developed in past years. Amongst the main special programmes:

- creation of the function of assistant teacher and its embedding into a new education act
- support for creating job positions for Roma field social assistants in the most problematic Roma localities
- Support for activities of NGO/NPOs engaged in socially excluded Roma localities
- Complex programmes of a local character with support of the government (Village of Cohabitation in Ostrava, Community Living Project in Brno).
- Crime prevention programmes

Introduction of such programmes though has not brought **complex** change to the situation of socially excluded members of the Roma community. Amongst the most frequently mentioned barriers to complex improvement of the situation of Roma communities are:

Lack of cohesion of individual procedures and departmental bureaucracy

The marginal success of existing measures leading towards removal and prevention of social exclusion, or towards integration of socially excluded Roma communities, is mainly caused by the fact that entities realizing measures – i.e. ministries, regions, municipalities – only resolve, and are only capable of resolving, partial problems. Ministries realize the Roma Integration Policy Concept to its fullest only in narrow sectors defined by the Act on Competencies. This also concerns using funds designated for such purpose. Problems relating to social exclusion however are complex, complicated and internally interrelated.

Unfocused grant policy of the state in the area of Roma integration

Each year, the Government provides significant funds for the area of integration of socially excluded Roma from the state budget and from EU funds¹⁰. Funds aren't always adequately aimed, and do not resolve the problem of integration of socially excluded Roma communities systematically. Reasons may be found in particular in weak interdepartmental communication and coordination of endowment programmes, and partially in inaccurate definition of certain priority areas of support. Individual governmental departments moreover do not attempt to allocate funds into localities, where they are objectively most needed.

Insufficient application of political integration of Roma communities on a local level

Another fundamental problem is the absence of local complex and long-term strategies for resolving the problem of socially excluded Roma localities. Based on the Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities, only 1% of the examined municipalities had a long-term strategy or plan for resolving socially excluded Roma localities. The absence of these strategic documents leads to supporting projects and activities, which do not contribute to social integration of Roma, or rather it isn't clear to what measure the Roma form the target group of these projects.

Implementation the Government Concept of Roma Integration on the Local Level is inadequate, amongst other reasons, due to the weak institutional, financial and personal security. In consequence of public administration reform, the state today is lacking an instrument, by which it may require resolution of a problem directly where social exclusion is happening. The situation is also complicated by the attitudes of the public at the local and regional level, as well as the attitudes of local government itself. But unfortunately, the social climate is satisfied with short-term and uncomplicated solutions. These however do not resolve the heart of the problem itself, since they just pass it along, which can end up being counterproductive.

Scepticism in society also dominates towards Roma integration, which is often related to perfectionist demands on success of projects oriented towards integration.

Stagnation of development of system projects

Support of the state in many areas of integration of Roma has **stagnated** for the mid-term. For example, in the area of teaching assistants for socially disadvantaged children (330 teaching assistants in 2006), the number of preparatory classes for children from socially and culturally disadvantaged environments (146 in 2006, 123 in 2005), or the number of field social assistants (94 terrain social assistants in 56 municipalities in 2006; for comparison, 89 TSP in 57 municipalities in 2005) leans either to slight growth or to constant fluctuation of the condition. At the same time, the objective need of the aforementioned instruments does exist. For example, the results of the Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities conclude that of the overall number of 65 primary schools with higher than 50% Roma children, no teaching assistants are employed at all at 25 of these schools. Similarly, the Field Social Work Program, despite an annual increase

¹⁰ See Report on the Condition of Roma Communities for 2006 ,
http://www.vlada.cz/assets/cs/rvk/rzrk/dokumenty/FINALE_ZPRVA.doc

in funds, does not correspond to the objective need evoked by the level of social exclusion in socially Roma localities. In the future, it requires significant increase in funds and systematic resolution.¹¹

While in the area of education and prevention of social exclusion, stagnation is more likely occurring, in the area of employment and assistance services for locating long-term unemployed on the labour market, **the specific instruments of active employment policy have yet to be created**, which would enable the increasing of employment capacity of long-term unemployed Roma and their integration to an open labour market.

4.) Proposal for creating an Agency for removing social exclusion and its prevention

4.1.) Aims of the Agency

The Agency appears to be an effective instrument for complex solutions to social exclusion on the municipal level, or individual socially excluded Roma localities, whose **basic aim is to decrease and eliminate social exclusion in socially excluded Roma localities by the creation and realization of complex local strategies.**

Other Agency aims:

a) in cooperation with local partnership, to initiate and secure realization of qualitative and quantitative sociological research studies aimed at **mapping the socioeconomic situation of Roma;**

b) in relation to the analysis and in cooperation with local partners, **to define the needs of the population of socially Roma localities** in the area of providing social services, employment, support for education, housing, support of social economics and small enterprises, health care and reduction of health risks and other areas based on current need;¹²

c) to support the creation of local partnership of municipalities, NGO/NPOs, schools, corporations and entrepreneurs and other institutions on the local level;

d) to help (by means of know-how and funds) local partners when creating **complex strategies, tailor-made to local conditions, aimed at eliminating social exclusion in Roma localities.** The local strategies will be derived from the aforementioned quantitative and qualitative analysis of the situation and definition of needs of socially excluded inhabitants of the locality. An integral component thereof will be a draft proposal for a strategy for change, including a realization and action plan for fulfilling the strategy in practice;

¹¹ In 2006, CZK 10.3 million was provided, and CZK 13 million has been approved for 2007

¹² Inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities will take part directly in the definitions of need (by method of public discussions and “focus groups”).

e) **to provide local partnerships with counselling and specialized leadership in the form of mentoring¹³ upon realization of complex local strategies**, with the aim of motivating **them to submit projects** aimed at support of employment, development of social economics, education, construction and development of social housing, provision of social services and for further activities realized in socially excluded Roma localities, derived from the local strategy and specific needs of the locality. This will mainly concern **strengthening the capacity of local partners in the area of fundraising¹⁴, project management and specialized work with clients;**

f) **to regularly assess the impact of its activity on:**

- a. primary target group (institution of local partnerships),
- b. secondary target group (inhabitants of socially excluded localities, and inhabitants of cities/towns)
- c. public budgets¹⁵;

g) **to analyze needs, capacity and limits of the entire community**, together with partial assistance when creating a development strategy of the entire community;

h) **to present results** of the assessment and experience gained from working in the field **on the national level;**

i) **to help when changing public opinion and creating public support** for fulfilling strategies for eliminating social exclusion.

4.2) Principles of activity of the Agency

- thoroughly anti-discriminatory character of all activity,
- outputs of activity have a sustainable character and lead to system changes,
- complex approach to resolving problems,
- activation of local resources (human, organizational, financial, institutional) by means of partnerships between local government, NPO and commercial sector, and the Agency,
- cooperation of subjects on a local level, which together will create a local partnership for realizing projects,
- active engagement of target groups,
- creation of strategies tailor-made for individual localities and their local specificity,

¹³ Mentoring: See ANNEX I – Explanation of basic terms; Specialized leadership in the form of “mentoring”.

¹⁴ Fundraising is a standardized term for systematic activity resulting in gaining financial or other means for generally beneficial activity of organizations or individuals. Organizations as a rule are NGO/NPOs, budgetary or allowance organization, municipalities, micro-regions, regions, churches, commercial subjects providing publicly beneficial service, and others.

¹⁵ Upon a positive impact of projects, savings may be anticipated in expenditures determined for social benefits and support in unemployment, and also income tax earnings; other savings may be anticipated in prevention of institutional care, prevention of loss of housing and others. The agency will also assess the economic effectiveness of its activities, i.e. it will compare costs essential for its activity with savings from public budgets and the volume of allocated funds into localities where it operates.

- implementation of tried-and-true practices, which have proven to be viable in certain localities,
- an equal approach towards socially excluded groups of inhabitants, i.e. not just towards Roma,
- work with the entire socially excluded family
- close cooperation with universities and research institutes during mapping of localities and in development of capacities of local partnerships,
- conveyance of findings from the field to regions and central state administration authorities.

4.3) Tasks of the Agency

The Agency mainly:

- contributes to fulfilment of tasks set forth in The Roma Integration Policy Concept¹⁶ on the level of municipalities and regions,
- provides counselling, conceptual, methodical, mentoring and control activity in the area of social integration of inhabitants of excluded Roma localities,
- supports and also takes part in the creation of local partnerships for creating local strategies,
- provides know-how and funding for realizing projects aimed at social inclusion of Roma,
- positively motivates local government to search for systemic and long-term solutions,
- initiates and arranges social intervention in excluded Roma localities,
- compiles offers for services for local governments, other local partners and their target groups, which relate to the current integration programmes and compensatory procedures, and augment them according to local needs,
- provides counselling and aid to local partners when creating projects and their submittal within the framework of EU structural funds, national endowment programs and other sources,
- cooperates with universities, professional schools and other educational institutions in networking with local partners, and engage masters or post-graduate students (as an internship), as well as graduates from universities and professional schools, in the Agency's activities and the subjects it supports. This will mainly concern strengthening of personnel, professional, managing and fundraising capacities of local partner subjects. The Agency also contributes to their internship and personal costs.
- cooperates with high schools in social and economic areas and attempts to engage their students in the activity in localities,
- cooperates with development and consultation agencies, and uses their services based on need,
- provides feedback and information from the field for the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs and for ministries,
- performs an analysis of the impact of its activity in specific localities, in part for the primary target group, represented by local partners, in part for inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities and other inhabitants operating within the community,

¹⁶ accepted by Government Decree no. 532 of 4 May, 2005

- provides compilation of a cost analysis of the economic effectiveness of realized measures on the local level,
- creates an educational programme for local politicians, local government officials, school representatives, etc. in the offer of programmes aimed at integration of socially excluded communities
- based on demand, provides basic information consultation service for municipalities and cities, in which the Agency is not primarily active,
- affects public opinion by means of local and state-wide news media

4.4) Main areas of Agency's activities

Upon creation of local complex strategies, aside from strengthening institutional and administrative capacity, the Agency will provide information on examples of good practice proven to work in other locations of the Czech Republic or the European Union, and to work together in the search for innovative procedures when resolving individual problems. The primary aim of the local strategy is the creation and implementation of complex projects. These projects are derived from a local analysis, they are tailor-made to fit the engaged communities, and they react to local needs. The following listing of possible activities and projects, which the agenda will offer in localities, serves only as an example. Local partnerships may realize projects at their own discretion that will reach into other areas as well.

a) Education

(i) Basic areas

- preschool nurturing/preparation, or timely care (socialization of preschool children, their inclusion in nursery schools and kindergartens, preparatory classes, or at least preschool clubs operated by NGO/NPO organizations, with the aim of preparing children for entering primary school),
- primary education (transportation to school, individual tutoring within families, individual and group tutoring in community centres, “pre-learning” – covering the particular subject matter ahead of time, correction of learning flaws with the help of a specialized teacher, counselling upon selection of further education, free-time activity and low-threshold centres, tutoring in community centres),
- secondary education (maintaining vocational/technical students in their study fields, keeping them from quitting school in the first year),
- Programmes for bolstering primary education, programmes for bolstering secondary education (including high school exam certificate) in the form of distance education

(ii) Types of projects the Agency will offer in the area of educating Roma children:

In the area of timely care:

- projects aimed at inclusion of socially disadvantaged children in nursery schools/kindergartens,
- providing accompaniment and organization of transportation of children from socially excluded localities to nursery schools/kindergartens,
- measures aimed at support of socially disadvantaged children in nursery schools/kindergartens, in primary schools, in community centres, in low-threshold centres or in families of socially disadvantaged children,
- projects aimed at enlightenment and provision of methodical support to schools and their founders in the effort to prevent further exclusion of socially disadvantaged, mainly Roma, children, and incorporate them into mainstream education,
- projects aimed at children with delay of compulsory school attendance,
- programmes and measures aimed at increasing socially disadvantaged children's participation in preschool education in nursery schools/kindergartens or in specialized classes in primary school,
- to support activity aimed at creating methodical materials for working with parents of socially disadvantaged children and pupils in the area of education,
- support and development of cooperation of schoolteachers and administrators with parents of socially disadvantaged children and pupils.

Other activities

- activities aimed at increasing the competence of parents of socially disadvantaged children and pupils in the form of gaining and strengthening the child-rearing competence of parents towards developing the child's potential (ex. through individual work, group work, clubs for parents in community centres, seminars, conferences, courses, etc.),
- activities aimed at cooperation with families of socially disadvantaged children and pupils when preparing for school,
- activities aimed at creation of methodical materials for work with parents of socially disadvantaged children and pupils in the area of education,
- combined events of children and socially disadvantaged pupils and their parents (ex. courses taught away from home, excursions, long-term courses, gatherings, discussions, etc.),
- programmes and measures aimed at pilot testing projects for timely care of socially disadvantaged children by means of children's centres at schools, whose aim will be to prepare these children successfully for their enrolment in school,
- activity aimed at increasing the competencies of parents towards development of potential of the child (by means of individual work, group work, seminars, conferences, courses, etc.),
- activity aimed at enlightenment of the importance of preschool and primary education
- activities aimed at cooperation with parents of socially disadvantaged children and pupils when preparing for school,
- offer of programmes for families with children, for mothers or expecting mothers from socially disadvantaged environments (creative, educational, sports, one-time events, etc.).

In the area of primary education:

- increasing chances of socially disadvantaged children and those with special education needs to enter and maintain attendance of primary school,
- projects to provide assistance to students displaying problems during attendance at primary schools with the aim of assuring that they finish at least primary school (tutoring, mentoring, aid in preparing for school, etc.).
- projects aimed at working with students at the second level of primary school, or aimed at improving their scholastic results, the continuing of these pupils on to secondary school and eventual completion of studies,
- projects aimed at care for children with a postponement of compulsory school attendance
- projects aimed at individual and group tutoring and “pre-learning” (individual covering of study materials ahead of time) for socially disadvantaged children and pupils, and children and students with special education needs, with the aim of evening their opportunities in education (realized at schools, in community centres, in low-threshold centres or in children’s families),
- projects supporting creation of the function of a teaching assistant, and introduction of prepared classes for socially disadvantaged children, or with proposal of a systemic project, where the subject realizing this will be the region or an association of schools,
- projects aimed at preparing socially disadvantaged children for high school entrance exams
- projects preventing exclusion of socially disadvantaged pupils, including Roma pupils in ethnically homogenous, so-called “community schools”, and currently striving for their inclusion into schools in mainstream education, with consequent prevention of further segregation of such students (including ex. organizing and providing transport of pupils to and from school).
- projects aimed at supporting mentoring socially disadvantaged children on the second level of primary school (tutoring, preparation for school, organization of free-time activities),
- projects aimed at enlightening and providing methodical support to schools and their promoters in the effort to prevent further exclusion of Roma children and pupils, and integrate them into mainstream education.

b) Employment

- introduction and support of agencies of supported employment of persons from socially excluded localities that are difficult to place, education of HR specialists in agencies, creation of a working method; close cooperation with labour offices and the Employment Services Administration. The aim is to support key social competencies and motivation of the client, and such client’s placement on the open labour market. The model is easy transmittable mainly in the city environment,
- support of employment of socially excluded Roma in technical services of municipalities (using wage cost grants), or in the form of subcontractor activity for technical services,
- support of social companies/social economics (NPOs that enterprise, operate a protected workshop, production, etc.; the organization does not divide up profits, but rather reinvest them or use them for social profits),

- programmes of fulfilment of education and re-qualification corresponding to the needs of the local labour market,
- regaining working habits and key social competencies, support of protected workshops and work rehabilitation for persons with health afflictions and testing various types of work directly in operation,
- assistance of a psychologist and social worker, job clubs, motivational courses, working diagnostics,
- introduction of a programme of small business support; in current use of the OP PPI (MPO), assistance upon compiling a business aim and provision of a loan; courses in the basics of entrepreneurship and accounting, aid in realizing and compiling accounting (business incubators), development of micro-financing programmes,
- support upon introduction of social companies while using the Areas Intervention 3.1 – Services in the Area of social integration of IOP, specifically supported activity c) investment support to providers of social services, to employers and other subjects when implementing and realizing instruments of social economics. Upon introduction of support models of social economics and small business in the socially excluded Roma localities in the CR, the Agency wants to take advantage of OSI's experience and that of other institutions from the small business micro-financing programmes in Roma communities in Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia.

c) Housing

- motivation, consultation and support when submitting applications for grants of the MMR and the State Housing Development Fund (Subsidised Housing Construction Programmes and Rental Housing Construction Programmes). Currently, these programmes are used in negligible measure for socially excluded Roma families, who do not have access to housing,
- consultation and support when compiling IPRM¹⁷ and drawing resources from the area of intervention 5.2 – Improvement of the environment in problem settlements of IOP,

d) Social services

- origin, material and personnel strengthening and function of community centres, which would serve all age categories (enlightenment, tutoring, social-legal counselling, job counselling, services of a psychologist, low-threshold centres, organized after-school programmes),
- counselling and support for taking advantage of financial support from the Area of Intervention 3.1. – Services in the Area of Social Integration of IOP, specifically supported activities b) investment support upon ascertaining the availability of such services, which enable the return of members of the most threatened socially excluded Roma localities back to the labour market and into society,
- prevention of the loss of housing,
- prevention and resolution of cases of indebtedness,

¹⁷ Integrated plans of development of cities are one of the criteria for using support in the area of housing from IOP.

- introduction of field social assistants (for municipalities or NNO), possibly others (police assistants, etc.),
- prevention from having children taken away into institutional (foster) care,
- drug prevention field programmes.

e) Health care

- primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of drug dependence – creation of specific programmes for addicts, or inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities threatened by drug dependence
- health enlightenment in socially excluded Roma localities. Systemizing the function of health and social assistants.¹⁸

5.) Realization phase

Operation of the Agency for removing social exclusion and its prevention will take place in two phases:

(i) pilot phase, realized from January 2008 to December 2010 in 10 selected localities. It is anticipated that in this phase, the Agency will be gradually expanding its operations into other municipalities with socially excluded localities, and then gradually grow into broad realization.

(ii) broad phase, when after verifying its function and effectiveness, the Agency will expand operations into other socially excluded localities. The broad phase employs the methods and know-how gained in the pilot phase.

5.1) Pilot phase

The Office of the Government or the office of the Council of the Government of the CR for Roma Community Affairs will perform pilot testing of the function of the Agency from January 2008 to December 2010. The primary aim of the pilot phase will be verification of the functionality of the proposed method, and creation of conditions for its consequent broad application across the territory of the entire Czech Republic based on demand. The pilot phase will in part take place in 10 selected locations, where the Agency will provide complex consultation services during removing social exclusion, and in part at other locations that did not move onto narrower selection, but where the Agency will provide basic counselling and specialized supervision.

¹⁸ When the function of a health and social assistant was introduced, it is possible to take advantage of the system of management and method of the project “Social assistants in Excluded Localities (SASTIPEN ČR [Health and social assistants in excluded localities])”, realized by the organization Drom, Romany Center.

Two branches of the pilot phase

a) **in 10 selected localities differing in type**, where the Agency will provide financing and personnel for all activities relating to the aim of their intervention (realization of analyses, definition of needs, co-creation and supervision over realization of strategies, strengthening fundraising and project management in the form of specialized leadership – mentoring), assessment of the effectiveness of its activities and the bearing of the projects realized within the framework of local strategies on institutions of local partnership and the municipality.

b) **in other localities**, which address the Agency with a request for cooperation and consultation, the Agency will perform a basic mass screening, will provide necessary consultation services for orient themselves in grant sources from the EU, the state budget and from other sources, and offer transfer of good practice. The Agency will locally provide methodology for performing analyses of the social and economic situation, definition of the needs of the target group, strategic planning and development of institutions of local partnership and assessment of the progress when realizing local strategies. The Agency will perform, based on needs and at the wishes of the municipality, a revision of the local strategy. Based on available capacities, the Agency will offer participation in educational events aimed at strengthening administrative and institutional capacities of local partnership in the 10 selected locations, and also for applicants from other localities.

The ratio between activities in the branches I and II is set at a percentage ratio of 70% and 30%. During the course of realizing a project in the event of urgent need, this ratio may change. Four Agency permanent employees will provide realization of branch II.

Selection of localities

Selection of localities has been underway since August 2007. When selecting localities, emphasis is placed on the previous efforts of the city to integrate socially excluded Roma, on the so-far compiled and realized strategies, and not the least of which, on the willingness of local government to cooperate with the Agency upon implementing integration strategies. Specifically judged aspects include whether the city has compiled or is compiling a community plan for social services where one of the target groups is formed of members of Roma communities, whether it employs field social assistants, how actively it cooperates with local NPO organizations and social services providers when resolving specific problems, and how the city has been successful within the framework of integration strategies in creating a network of local social partners.

Basic criteria for narrower selection of localities

1. willingness of local government to cooperate – clearly proven over repeated negotiations prior to commencement of the project; not just generally declared,
2. previous integration efforts of the municipality (existence of local concepts of integration, community plans, their fulfilment, further integration programmes – ex. field social work),
3. willingness to co-finance projects, which the Agency initiates.

These criteria were brought into consideration in the questionnaire, which was sent to all 189 municipalities within whose territory 310 socially excluded Roma localities. Replies found in the questionnaires will be evaluated at the beginning of October, 2007, and the selection committee will select 20 localities, in which further negotiations will commence with elected representatives of the municipalities.

Also indispensable is the entry of regional governments, which were addressed with a request for recommending localities for the Agency's pilot activity. Upon selection of localities, regions will be invited to delegate competent persons, who will provide communication between the given regional government and local actors.

Through negotiations with local governments prior to the project itself, both on the level of political leadership (mayor, board, council), and of specialized workers entrusted by a specific agenda (dept. of education, social affairs, housing dept., crime prevention dept., investments, etc.), through targeted enlightenment and informing, it should be clear whether or not the local government has a true interest in striking up close and utterly specific cooperation with the Agency. For ascertaining co-financing from the municipality, negotiations will begin on approval of a reserve fund from their budgets by such municipality councils. Through clear definition of roles, partial goals, tasks and mutual expectations from the part of all engaged actors, situations are avoided, where the local government refuses active cooperation when realizing projects, where it doesn't identify with realized procedures, and would not secure maintainability of integration efforts into the future.

Criteria for final selection of 10 localities

In the course of negotiations, certain local government procedures performed so far, which have relevance to socially excluded localities, will be discussed with elected officials and those of municipalities. These procedures also serve as criteria for the final selection of 10 locations of the pilot phase. This mainly concerns the following criteria:

1. previous responsibility and stance of the municipality when resolving problems relating to unpaid rent (using the institute of special recipient and payment calendars),
2. offer or construction of social housing for low-income groups of the population,
3. criteria for allocating apartments to young and socially needy families,
4. previous handling of the municipal housing fund (character of privatization etc.),
5. current care of the apartment fund,
6. employment of long-term unemployed Roma by the local government within the framework
 - a. of publicly beneficial work
 - b. of technical services of the town or city
 - c. of public job tenders declared by the city,
7. realization or support or programmes for support of Roma employment,
8. support and previous cooperation with NGO/NPOs,
9. level of mutual information sharing between municipalities and NGO/NPOs
10. support of creating a low-threshold and community centre for inhabitants of a socially excluded locality,

11. willingness to engage employees of the Agency into negotiations of selected town/city committees (housing, social committee, committee for national minorities),
12. willingness to entrust key municipality representatives with a council mandate towards active representation of the municipality or city within the framework of local partnership,
13. the level of expected level of involvement and partnership within the framework of local partnership.

Typology of localities

During final selection, the selection committee will also see to typological diversity of selected localities. To create an effective method that would be broadly applicable in practice, it's necessary to select localities of various types – i.e. city, rural, small, large, with motivated and unmotivated local government, localities where there is a developed network of social services providers and NGOs, and on the contrary also localities where these services are lacking, localities with high and others with low overall registered unemployment, etc.

Basic typologies applied upon selection will be as follows:

1. operation of NGO/NPOs comprehensively resolving the issue of social excluded Roma or conversely, the absence of such organizations,
2. rural localities
3. urban localities
4. size of socially excluded locality (estimate of the number of inhabitants on the basis of a Gabal Analysis) – alternative a) locality with less than 300 inhabitants; alternative b) locality with more than 300 inhabitants,
5. level of spatial segregation, or isolation away from other city constructions (locality integrated into the city and/or on the contrary an isolated locality, found outside the city and out of the range of public transportation).

Relationship between the municipality and the Agency

A **contract on partnership or partnership agreement** will be concluded with communities engaged in any agency project, defining the responsibilities and expectations of both parties, with a certain general definition of tasks and a timetable for realization.

Alternatives for partnership of local institutions and the Agency

- declaratory contract or agreement with a vision of what the Agency wants to achieve,
- contract on partnership with a vision of what the partnership wants to achieve, clearly defined tasks, roles and expected outputs of the partnership,
- association of legal entities (with legal subjectivity), where a contract of partnership will be a component of the statutes of the association.

All listed forms should fulfil certain basic principles:

- contracting parties are local actors, who are defined on the basis of the local strategy (as a rule, the municipality, NGO/NPOs, church entities, Agency for removal of social exclusion, other social services providers, representatives of socially excluded localities, representatives of the general public, local employers, labour offices, OSPOD [Dept. of

Social and Legal Protection of Children and Youth], schools and education facilities, universities, representatives of regional authorities, institutes aimed at prevention and treatment of drug dependency and employment agencies; based on current need, other institutions, such as a regional development agency, property owners, state administration in transposed operation – ex. social security administration, health insurance agencies, media outlets, representatives, etc.),

- common strategy and direction towards accord in its realization,
- consensus regarding priorities and aims,
- political will and support across the local political spectrum,
- transparency of all procedures,
- mutual trust and information awareness of all actors,
- understanding and knowledge of political and social realities of the municipality (capability of understanding the decisions of local actors),
- respect to the central institution of the negotiator,
- co-activity and openness towards “networking” of social actors,
- respecting local conditions and specifics,
- equal approach and high-quality of offer of consultation and specialized assistance,
- concordance of all involved in the values of the concept of the local strategy,
- concordance regarding priorities on the basis of needs of the target group,
- benefit of activities for the entire municipality, not just the socially excluded locality,
- involvement of representatives of Roma and majority society in decision-making processes

Administrative and personnel provision of the Agency pilot phase

Within the framework of the pilot project of the Agency, expansion will occur of the activities of the office of the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs. 20 employees will secure Agency activity.

A team of five employees will provide administration and management of the project, whose function will be divided into:

- Agency manager (responsible for running the Agency, for negotiating with state administrative authorities and other institutions, for handing over information to the government, for outwardly representing the Agency; will also take part in work in localities and on selection of external consultants)
- assistant (administrative work, HR, aid (administrative) to financial manager)
- financial manager (managing project financing, issuing public tenders)
- analyst (writing and creation of reports, monitoring reports, reports for the Government, supervision over collection of data and statistics in localities and performance of evaluations in localities)
- PR specialist (Project PR and PR in localities)

Two five-member mobile teams will secure realization of the project in the field.

The team that secures activity in localities in Bohemia will be headquartered in Prague, and its employees will perform long-term service living in individual localities. Similarly, the other

team will provide secure in localities in Moravia, and will be headquartered in an independent locality.

- common profile of the mobile team worker - capable negotiator, good facilitator, organizationally and logistically capable, with knowledge of grant projects, European funds and state policy in the areas of social exclusion and Roma integration
- in each team, there should be a person aimed at specific topics, namely:
 - o employment
 - o social policy
 - o housing / zoning
 - o education
 - o fundraising, project management, strategic planning
- prior to commencing activities, employees of mobile teams must undergo training in mediation, anti-prejudice training and training in the area of community/cooperative planning, strategic planning of organizations, fundraising, project management, assessment of projects, programmes and activities of organizations. Employees must be familiarized with available financial resources from grants from the state budget and the EU Structural Funds, which exist in the CR and may be used by the Agency and local partnership,.
- the Moravian team will also have one administrative employee responsible for administration of the work of the team.

Mobile teams in the first phase will visit all five locations in parallel. They will become acquainted with the main actors and learn the aims and plan of activity of the Agency. Then will follow performance of a detailed analysis of the locality, including definition of needs of its citizens and a seminar, where results of the analysis will be shared, and work will begin on creation of local strategies. Consequently, each team member should be primarily responsible for one locality, and cooperate on a technical level with the members of other teams and with external consultants and mentors.

A four-member team will provide basic consultation of the Agency in relation to other localities.

The team will operate based on need in Pilsen and Ostrava. Its job description will include accepting, assessing and resolving the requests of local administration agencies, within whose territory the Agency does not primarily operate, but to whom it is required to provide basic consultation and technical supervision over the work method. The task of such employees will be to provide consultation and methodical aid. The employee profile will be the same as that of the mobile teams, which will operate in ten selected locations. Upon selection of candidates for these positions, prerequisites include excellent communication skills, analytical and conceptual capabilities and displayed resilience in stressful situations.

Outsourcing

The Agency will realize certain activities under its own powers, while others will have to be contracted out to various specialized subjects, because it is not possible to expect that it could be staffed to handle the full scope of the issue (ex. develop all professional skills of partnership

institutions, realize educational activities in localities or employ tens of field social assistants). Certain socioeconomic analyses and impact assessments of Agency activity on the target group, from the very perspective of upholding objectivity of reported data, require realization by an independent scientific, research or academic institute. This requires a search for the rational and most economic proportion in using internal capacity and in using external collaborators or consultants, who will realize specific partial work tasks in localities.

Indicators of Agency activity at localities

(this always concerns input and output information and data, i.e. at the beginning and at the end of the pilot phase of Agency activity)

Primary target group

(institutions of local partnership – municipalities, cities, NPOs, schools and others)

Quantitative indicators

- Effectiveness of Agency costs in comparison with the volume of projects obtained by the Agency into localities and possible savings in disbursements on assistance to persons in material distress
- Number of initiated partnerships, supported by a contract on partnership approved by municipal/city councils,
- Number of trained persons in project management,
- Number of trained persons in the area of orientation in endowment programs,
- Number of submitted projects,
- Number of supported projects,
- Obtained registrations of social services providers,
- Fulfilment of standards for providing social services
- Number of newly founded NPOs, or number of created NPO branches operating so far in these localities.

Qualitative topics

- capability of local partners to achieve sustained development,
- number of employees of local partners and their work results – number of gained projects, new areas of intervention,
- Newly built capacities amongst local partners, their strategic development,
- Newly introduced services and areas of intervention in areas of education, social services (with particular specification of the type of social service), employment, housing, health care, support for small business and independent gainful activity and development of social economics.

Secondary target group (citizens of socially excluded Roma localities)

Unemployment and social benefits

Quantitative indicators

- unemployment level,
- level of long-term unemployment,

- total amount of disbursed assistance to persons in material distress and the number of persons receiving such assistance in the locality,¹⁹
- number of persons involved in individual employment plans and consequent, motivational courses; from this, number of persons functioning in the labour market,
- number of re-qualified and consequently employed persons,
- number of families/households, where as a consequence of programmes in the area of employment, their income rose over the jointly determined subsistence minimum,
- number of persons employed without a valid employment contract,
- standard of living expressed by household income and expenditures,
- level of indebtedness of the household.

Qualitative topics

- change in livelihood strategies,
- change in motivation for searching for work,
- change in life and personality motivations.

Education

Quantitative indicators

- number of children enrolled in preschool education,
- number of teaching assistants,
- percentage level of inclusion of children from the locality in schools with modified educational programmes, number of teaching assistants
- number of students studying at high school, vocational-technical schools,
- number of students studying trade schools and universities,
- percentage level and number of children of the locality integrated in preschool/kindergarten
- percentage level and number of children of the locality attending a preparatory class for socially disadvantaged children,
- percentage level and number of children of the locality attending “pre-school clubs” realized by NGO/NPOs
- number of children integrated into mainstream education and into schools with modified educational programmes,
- number of pupils in the locality who have finished primary school,
- number of absences in schools
- number of children from the localities in after-school programmes.

Qualitative topics

- advancement in educational success of Roma children,
- advancement in key social competencies of children at basic schools,
- advancement in the method by which schools even the chances of children while respecting their individual educational needs,

¹⁹ It is possible to report statistics based on individual streets; expecting the precise geographical demarcation of the socially excluded locality.

- change in the attitude towards the value of education,
- change in conditions for preparation at home,
- change in interest in tutoring,
- change in the offering of tutoring,
- change in attitude of parents towards preschool education,
- change in attitude of parents towards education,
- involvement of children in after-school programmes,
- involvement of parents in the running of the school attended by their children.

Housing public area

Quantitative indicators

- number of interventions that prevented eviction,
- number of built apartment units for low-income groups of citizens of the locality,
- number of negotiated payment calendars,
- percentage of success in payments based on negotiated payment calendars,
- number of newly created residential self-management entities,
- growth in the number of homes, apartments, which have hot running water and electricity,
- volume of funds going towards localities for construction and reconstruction of social housing,
- for low-income groups,
- level of involvement of inhabitants of a locality in maintenance and administration of the homes in which they live,
- decreasing the number of persons default on paying rent and housing-related services,
- decreasing other debts of families (quick loans, usury, etc.).

Qualitative topics

- change in the upholding of the house rules and public peace,
- decrease in health risks – mould, cold, moisture,
- improving the standard of living – social facilities, sewerage, hot water, electricity,
- expanded spectrum of free-time activities for children,
- involvement of socially excluded members of Roma localities into the life and public area of the municipality,
- participation of Roma in the municipality or city's political process.

Health care

Quantitative indicators

- number of inoculated children
- drug-abuse prevention programmes – number of participants in prevention events, number of addicts who have undergone treatment
- in about a 2-3 year time frame, the change in the number of drug users

Financing the Agency pilot phase

a.) Agency activity

The Agency's activity during the pilot phase will be financed from two sources. These are the state budget and the European Social Fund, or the Human Resources and Education Operational Programme and Employment of the MPSV, possible from the Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness of the MŠMT.

State budget

Due to the increase in the scope of tasks to be provided by the office of the Czech Republic Government Council for Roma Community Affairs (and therefore an increase of the expenditure side of the budget category), the Office of the Government has requested an increase in its budget for these activities. Part of this item is determined for administration of part of the project of the Agency, and part for financing local projects fulfilling local strategies.

Operational Programme Employment and Human Resources

Part of the costs related to activities of the Agency will be financed by means of Measure 3.2 Support of Social Integration of Roma Communities of the MPSV by means of an individual project. The Office of the Government will submit this project through the office of the Czech Republic Government Council for Roma Community Affairs in autumn, 2007.

Operation Programme Education for Competitiveness

The third source of financing the Agency's activities will probably be the OP Education for Competitiveness. The Office of the Government will submit the project through the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs in autumn, 2007.

b) Sources for financing projects in localities

Expected sources for financing projects of local partnerships:

1. EU operational programmes
2. Endowment programmes from the state budget
3. Local government grant programmes
4. Foundation resources
5. Private resources

1. EU Operational Programmes

- Operational Programme Human Resources Development (HRD OP) – non-investment (ESF),
- Integrated Operational Programme (IOP) – investment (ERDF),
- Regional Operational Programmes (ROP) – investment (ERDF),
- Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation (EIOP), – investment (ERDF),
- Praha – Adaptability (P-A) – non-investment (ESF),
- Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovations (RDI OP) – investment (ERDF).

Starting in 2008 certain alternative are expected for financing projects in the area of Roma integration, in priority areas of employment, education, housing and providing social services.

The Agency will provide consultation to local partners with the aim of facilitating their access to using the following financial sources from the ESF and ERDF:

(i) HRD OP (Operational Programme Human Resources Development Employment, MPSV)

- Area of support **3.2 Support for social integration of Roma communities**
- Possibly also Area of support **3.3. Integration of socially excluded groups on the labour market**

(ii) OP VzK (Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness, MŠMT)

In this case, two alternatives of *individual projects* come into consideration

- Partially within the area of support **1.2 – Equal opportunities for children, pupils, including pupils with special educational needs;**
- Or within the framework of **technical assistance**

(iii) IOP (Integrated Operational Programme, MMR)

- **Area of intervention 2.1 – Services in the field of social integration**, or supported activities of the group
 - a) investment support upon providing access to such services, which enables returning members of the most threatened socially excluded Roma localities back onto the labour market and into society; to a certain extent even to the group,
 - b) investment support to providers of social services, employers and other subjects while implementing and realizing instruments of social economics.
- **Area of intervention 3.3 – Improvement of the environment of problematic housing estates**

Investment projects aimed at regeneration of homes in selected problem housing estates inhabited in part for socially excluded Roma households, in relation to non-investment activity in the area of social integration, human resources and employment.

(iv) EIOP (Operational Programme Enterprising and Innovation) – supported by MPO

- Area of support - **1.1. Support for beginning entrepreneurs** (programme Start for Beginning Entrepreneurs, possibly related programme Progress)

2. Endowment programmes from the state budget

- Support for providing special social services in socially excluded Roma localities (MPSV),
- Programme for support of integration of the Roma community (MŠMT),
- Programme of field work (office of the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs),
- Programme of support of construction of subsidized and rental housing (MMR and SFRB),
- Programme Panel (MMR),
- Endowment programme of the Agency in socially excluded localities (Office of the Government),

- Programme of crime prevention (MV),
- Programme for support of national minorities (MK).

2.1 Endowment programme of the Agency in socially excluded localities

From 2008 to 2010, an Endowment programme of the Agency in socially excluded localities will be realized in pilot localities of the Agency and in a number of other further unspecified localities, which within the framework of wider partnership will be provided with basic counselling and methodical aid (so-called II branch of the Agency. The financial means determined for the programme will be brought into an independent budget article of the Office of the Government with the title Agency Endowment Programme in Socially Excluded Localities. The Department of Agency Management and Monitoring, whose director will be the budget chapter administrator, will be the programme administrator. The mandator of the operation will be the director of the Department for Roma Affairs. The programme will be managed by a separate directive, signed by the Head of the Office of the Government. The Head of the Office of the Government will sign the resolution on awarding an endowment.

The Agency endowment programme will be realized in the form of an open appeal, organization will therefore be able to submit requests for donations throughout the entire year. Territorially, the programme will be divided into two types of localities, which relates to two main directions of activity of the Agency:

1. Into 10 locations selected within the framework of the pilot project. The aim of the endowment programme in these localities will mainly be to bridge the period until Agency activity will start, but still will not draw finances from EU Structural Funds.
2. Into a so-far undetermined number of localities, which express interest in working together with the Agency, and thereby gain the status of so-called *cooperative municipalities*. Aside from the chance to use the Agency's methodology²⁰, the main advantage of cooperation of *cooperating municipalities* with the Agency will mainly be found in the possibility of using funding from an individual agency endowment program. The fact that certain investment of an endowment from the EU (Measure 3.1 b) IOP) in the years 2008-2010 will be specifically bound to 10 selected agency locations²¹ speaks to the benefit of realization of the endowment program. Therefore, in localities with the title of *cooperative municipality*, it appears useful during the pilot period to finance these activities from another source with the stipulation that in the consequent phase of realization of the broad phase, starting in 2010 the localities in the *cooperative municipalities* regime will fully join the Agency program, and will therefore be able to use investments from Measures 3.1 b) IOP.

²⁰ For example, when mapping the field, upon defining social needs of the population, or upon creation and realization of strategies, or providing agency for technical consultation.

²¹ Area of intervention 3.1 b) Integrated operational programme. The area is mainly geared towards support of the creation of family facilities for children and youth, community centres, facilities for field services and consultation and other facilities for social and community services.

Types of supported projects

Projects aimed in the following areas will receive support within the framework of the Agency endowment programme:

Non-investment endowment

- community work in socially excluded Roma localities
- projects aimed at support and help to persons living in excluded Roma localities upon gaining or refreshing skills, which by their own strengths enable them to better their social situation, mainly enhance their position in the open labour market, increasing the quality of life, and their engagement in mainstream education.
- prevention of social exclusion – mainly field and assistance programmes, preventative programmes for children and youth, educational and enlightenment activity for children, youth and adults.
- Support of social economics and management of a social company

Investment endowment (from 2009)

- Repairs and reconstructions of homes in a state of devastation. It is possible to consider devastation as a situation where the condition of the residence threatens the health and safety of its occupants, or residents in the immediate vicinity. This mainly regards improvements, maintenance and in cases of special regard, the obtaining of housing. This situation of devastation must be supported by an expert opinion by a qualified person pursuant to Section 44 Para. 3 of Act no. 50/1976 Coll., on Zone Planning and the Building Code,
- Support and development of social economics.

In all cases, only complex projects will be supported, which are created within the framework of *local partnerships* and implemented within the framework of *local strategies*. This will lead towards the cohesion of provided services on the basis of cooperation between relevant subjects and at the local level.

Endowment recipients

- Non-governmental, Non-profit organizations (NGO/NPOs) – public benefit corporations (pursuant to Act no. 248/1995 Coll., on Public Benefit Corporations), civic associations (pursuant to Act no. 83/1990 Coll., on Civic Associations), church entities (pursuant to Act no. 3/2002 Coll., on Churches and Religious Societies)
- Municipalities and the organizations they control (Act no. 128/2000 Coll., on Municipalities, Act no. 250/2000 Coll. on the Municipal Budgetary Rules)

Expected allocation and character of transfers of the Agency Endowment Programme 2008 - 2010

(based on type classification of budgetary composition)

Year 2008

Costs	Request from the state budget
522 Non-investment transfers to NPOs and similar organizations (5221, 5222, 5223, 5229)	5 200 000
532 Non-investment transfers public budgets of the local level (5321)	4 160 000
533 Non-investment transfers contributing and similar organizations (5333, 5331)	3 640 000
<i>Non-investment transfers total</i>	<i>13 000 000</i>

Total	13 000 000
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Year 2009

Costs	Request from the state budget
522 Non-investment transfers to NPOs and similar organizations (5221, 5222, 5223, 5229)	10 000 000
532 Non-investment transfers public budgets of the local level (5321)	8 000 000
533 Non-investment transfers contributing and similar organizations (5333, 5331)	7 000 000
<i>Non-investment transfers total</i>	<i>25 000 000</i>
632 Investment transfers to NPOs and similar organizations (6321, 6322, 6323, 6329)	14 000 000
634 Investment transfers public budgets of the local level (6341)	8 000 000
635 Investment transfers to contributory organizations (6351, 6353)	3 000 000
<i>Investment transfers total</i>	<i>25 000 000</i>

Total	50 000 000
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Year 2010

Costs	Request from the state budget
522 Non-investment transfers to NPOs and similar organizations (5221, 5222, 5223, 5229)	12 000 000
532 Non-investment transfers public budgets of the local level (5321)	9 600 000
533 Non-investment transfers contributing and similar organizations (5333, 5331)	8 400 000
<i>Non-investment transfers total</i>	<i>30 000 000</i>
632 Investment transfers to NPOs and similar organizations (6321, 6322, 6323, 6329)	16 800 000
634 Investment transfers public budgets of the local level (6341)	9 600 000

635 Investment transfers to contributory organizations (6351, 6353)	3 600 000
Investment transfers total	30 000 000

Total	60 000 000
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TOTAL 2008 - 2010	123 000 000
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Annual report and financial audit

The Agency will regularly submit to the Government an annual report including a financial audit, in which it will assess the success of fulfilment of its goals in selected localities on the basis of an analysis of the influence of its activities on socially excluded Roma localities.

Advantages, disadvantages and risks of the activity of the Agency of the Office of the Government :

Advantages:

- maintaining government influence as a whole on the activity of the Agency,
- possibility of multiple-source financing (from the state budget and the EU); after termination of support from the EU, possibility to attain financing from the state budget,
- possibility of using operational and technical resources of the Office of the Government,
- possibility of projecting experience from Agency activity into the conceptual activity of the Office of the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs, and vice-versa,
- interdepartmental character of the Office of the Government enabling overcoming a departmental approach,
- possibility of taking advantage of already gained know-how, experience and contacts on the local, regional and state level; use of ties to representatives of Roma communities,
- assembly of information on the effective examples of good practice,
- existing coordination activity led by the office of the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs on a national level,
- interconnection with prepared monitoring of the situation in socially excluded Roma localities.

Disadvantages:

- certain bureaucratic burden and risk of inflexible behaviour (possible to mitigate by partial outsourcing of external co-workers and consultants, who will realize specific tasks in localities. Within the framework of financial administration of a project, it is possible to avoid complications by negotiating through specific exceptions with the framework of the Office of the Government).

Possible risks to activity

- insufficient funding,
- insufficient number of personnel,
- too great of a bureaucratic burden preventing the subject from acting flexibly.

5.2) Broad realization

During the course of the Agency pilot phase, on the basis of the created work methodology and testing of the Agency's functionality in practice, conditions will be formed in parallel for systematic realization. In this, it will be necessary to secure provision of complex services of the Agency in all localities expressing interest in Agency services. Realization of the broad phase is expected to be from June 2010. In the case of large interest of other municipalities and positive development, the broad phase may even begin sooner.

Possibilities of institutional arrangement of the Agency

- creation of a state agency by a special law,
- outsourcing of activities with technical supervision of workers from the pilot phase,
- creation of a contributing organization created by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs or the Ministry for Local Development with interdepartmental reach,
- creation of a public benefit corporation. Key representatives of MPSV, MŠMT, MMR, MPO, the Office of the Government, the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the CR, representatives of the Association of Regions of the CR, of the civil and the business sector, and of academia.

6.) Conclusion

The main aim of the Agency is to decrease and eliminate social exclusion in socially excluded Roma localities through creating and realizing complex local strategies.

Partial aims of the Agency:

- to support the creation of local partnership of municipalities, NGO/NPOs, schools, company and entrepreneurial subjects and other institutions at the local level,
- to map the socioeconomic situation of Roma
- to define the need of inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities in the area of providing social services, employment services, housing, support for education, support of social economics and small enterprise, reduction of health risks and other areas,
- to help (through know-how and funding) local partners upon creating complex strategies tailor-made to local conditions that are aimed at the origin of elimination of social exclusion in Roma localities.
- to provide consultation and technical leadership in the form of monitoring by local partnership when realizing complex strategies, mainly to strengthen their capacity in the area of fundraising, project management and technical work with clients.

- to regularly evaluate the impact of its activities on: a) the primary target group (local partnership institutions), b) the secondary target group (inhabitants of socially excluded Roma localities, and inhabitants of cities/municipalities, c) public budgets,
- to bring the results of assessments and work experience in the field to the national level,
- to help in changing public opinion, and creation of public support upon fulfilling the strategies of elimination of social exclusion.

Due to the magnitude of socially excluded localities and the difficulty in resolving them, it is necessary to divide the Agency's activity into two phases: *pilot and broad*. The introductory pilot phase will take place from January 2008 to December 2010. The Office of the Government will create the Agency. Financing the operations and activities of the Agency will be partially covered from the state budget and partially from the European Social Fund. Depending on how the demand for agency services grows, the number of localities in which the Agency operates will grow. The pilot phase will gradually grow into the phase of broad realization. After completion of the pilot phase, its evaluation will be submitted to the Government, together with a proposal of a systematic solution, including institutional and financial securing, applied across the territory of the CR in correlation to the arising demand from municipalities.

On the basis of a realistic demand of municipalities during the pilot phase, the broad phase will **probably be realized starting in January, 2010.**²² This demand will be supported by an independent analysis, which will form a component of the Agency activity assessment in 2009. In the broad phase, return on investment will occur, and experience, work methods and expert capacities will be utilised, which will be formed in the pilot phase. A discussion on all levels of public administration will precede the broad phase, whose goal will be to select the most advantageous form of institutional anchoring for fulfilling the broad concept of the Agency, with the aim of attaining a general social consensus on broad operation of the Agency, its financing and institutional security.

The Agency's activity will achieve sustainable systemic changes, which in socially excluded localities will enable social integration of its members with majority society.

By decreasing social pathology in localities and engaging their inhabitants into the lives of municipalities, a significant decrease in tensions will occur between the majority and members of excluded communities.

Ending ghettoisation contributes to the development of Czech municipalities and cities, increasing the quality of life of its citizens, and increasing their investment rating.

The listed procedures will lead to savings mainly in the area of social benefits, health insurance and to increasing public budgets from incomes in the taxation area.

²² In 2010, the pilot phase will end and will be assessed; on the contrary, the broad phase will begin. This will lead to functional interconnection of both phases, where one gradually grows into the other.

ANNEX I

Explanation of basic terms

Social exclusion

For the purposes of this material, social exclusion is understood as the state where an individual or social group is/are excluded from economic and social life (from the labour market, from civic institutions and mainstream education), and thereby is denied the possibility enjoying one's rights (mainly social rights), surroundings and sources of well-being shared by the rest of the population. In the area of social rights, this mainly concerns rights to access to education, the possibility of securing housing, health care and the right to social protection. In the process of social exclusion, access is made extremely difficult of the individual or group to resources, positions and opportunities, which enable connection to social, economic and political activities in mainstream society.

(source: Gabal, MPSV, 2006.: Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities)

Socially excluded Roma locality

A socially excluded Roma locality is determined to be an area inhabited by a group, whose members themselves consider themselves to be Roma and/or are labelled as Roma by their surroundings, and are socially excluded. This may either concern a single house, in which several individuals or families dwell, or an entire city quarter numbering in the several hundreds or even thousands of inhabitants. It may be either a locality integrated into regular structures, often near the city centre, regarded as a "bad address", or a territorially excluded locality, separated from other housing structures (ex. industrial zone, frequented roads, etc.). Socially excluded Roma communities are mainly created as a result of:

1. natural movement of poor Roma families into localities with housing affordable to them;
2. Roma families forced out of expensive apartments and provided alternative housing in "cheap" locations with a frequently high portion of Roma population;
3. controlled removal (mainly by municipalities) of people defaulting on rent payment and people considered as "inadaptable" or "problematic" into lodging facilities and "holobyty" [bare apartments with concrete floors and no social facilities]

(source: Gabal, MPSV, 2006: Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities)

Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in this Area

Analysis defining socially excluded Roma localities. The analysis is the output of the project of the same name of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR and the office of the Czech Government Council for Roma Community Affairs, financed by the European Social Fund and the Czech state budget. The company GAC spol s.r.o. performed realization of the project for the MPSV. The output of the analysis is an interactive map containing descriptive information on the living conditions in examined socially excluded Roma localities. Quotations from the analysis are indicated further in the text as *Gabal, MPSV, 2006*.

Technical leadership in the form of "mentoring"

Mentoring is a way of leading employees. It represents the relationship between the mentor and the worker. It enables sharing of experience and counselling to employees in a proper manner.

Mentoring in the wider meaning means partnership and support, which the experienced person – the “mentor” - provides a person with less experience for the purpose of this person’s professional growth. This concerns the creation of a mutual relationship and bilateral inspiration. Aside from the role of teacher, the mentor also plays the role of consultant, and is usually engaged in assessing the employee’s performance.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a standardized term for systematic activity resulting in gaining financial or other means for generally beneficial activity of organizations or individuals. Organizations as a rule are NGO/NPOs, budgetary or allowance organization, municipalities, micro-regions, regions, churches, commercial subjects providing publicly beneficial service, and others.

Qualitative research/analysis

This is a method of research aimed at how individuals and groups view, understand and interpret their world. This method does not employ statistical methods and techniques, and in this concept, it is the opposite of quantitative research. During research, a detailed description of everyday situations is used. This concerns understanding events and meanings in their social context. Upon qualitative research, the numbers of monitored variables or indicators or their interrelations do not come down, as the tested subjects themselves decide on their reduction. They therefore define for them the fundamental areas of social realities. Open and unstructured research plans (open or semi-standardized interview) are preferred. The analysis arises from a large amount of information on a small number of individuals. This is dominated by the interest in realistic wholes, interaction between actors and individual fates.

Local partnerships

For the purposes of this material, this concerns partnerships on the local level, with the participation of municipal and regional governments and the organisations they run (mainly schools), NGO/NPOs, private enterprising subjects, labour offices and others. The Agency will support their “networking” and cooperate with them in creating local concepts of integration and strategies of their fulfilment. In the framework of such strategies, projects will be submitted within purpose-driven partnerships for specific project priorities (ex. employment, housing) or local partnership as a whole.

Focus groups

Focus groups are one of the main methods of **qualitative research**. They are most often used in sociology. They are comprised of discussions, created as a rule by trained professionals (often by a psychologist), which aim at examining attitudes, opinions and views of the public towards a certain issue. Because this concerns a qualitative method, the output from “focus groups” isn’t numerical data, but rather information. It is possible to ascertain how people think about a certain problem, and what opinions appear amongst people. A session of one group takes place with around 8-12 persons, who in the ideal case do not know each other. In the case of the Agency’s research, this could concern for example several representatives of wider families, of various ages and genders and in 2-3 sessions.

Within the framework of defining the needs of socially excluded Roma communities, the method may help when defining basic circles of intervention at the local level. After defining certain topics, a quantitative probe may verify in what quantity a certain attitude or opinion is spread (ex.

how many people from the target group feel that a priority is the creation of a low-threshold centre). Within the framework of the Agency conception, this method facilitates direct engagement of target groups into planning project activities of local partnerships.

Quantitative research

Quantitative research is a method of standardized social research, which describes phenomena with the help of changing (signs), which are designed in such a way, so that they measure a certain quality. Results of such measurement are then compiled and interpreted, e.g. by using statistics. Quantitative research as opposed to qualitative research aims at wider social questions, and therefore examines a wider circle of information.

Social economics

Social economics began developing in Europe and America in the 1990s, and since that time it continues to grow in importance. In social entrepreneurship, this concerns performance of publicly beneficial activities with the help of economic instruments. The definition of a social company slightly differs. For example, based on the British model, a social enterprise is a market-oriented enterprise founded for the purpose of creating high-quality job positions for people disadvantaged on the labour market. A social company often uses various endowments for its activities. In such case, it is possible to define a social company as a competitive entrepreneurial subject doing business on a normal market, whose aim is to create work opportunities for persons disadvantaged on the labour market, and to this end, to provide them with reasonable support.

Protected workshops

Protected workshops are working locations of an employer defined on the basis of an agreement with a labour office and adjusted towards employing persons with health disabilities, where in the average calculated number, 60% of its employees come from this group. Protected workshops must operate for at least two years from the date negotiated in the agreement. The labour office may provide a contribution to the creation of a protected workshop.

Shared job position

Rotation and sharing work is among the modern flexible forms of work organization, which is comprised of the operation of several workers for one job position. None of these forms are explicitly amended by the Labour Code, and so it depends on the employer how the given system of labour hours is realized.