

# Rights and identity of children in alternative care system in the Czech Republic

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# Introduction

- Residential care: 8428 children (Ministry of Education, 2013)
- Types of institutions:
  - Children homes (ME)
  - Children homes with school (ME)
  - Juvenile correction facilities (ME)
  - Infant homes (Ministry of Health)
  - Diagnostic institutions (ME)
  - Educational care facilities (ME)
  - Facilities for children requiring immediate assistance (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs)

## Committee on the Rights of the Child identified these issues:

- Fragmentation of child care system
- No national plan for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) „Independent mechanism for monitoring implementation of the CRC (the so called Child Ombudsman) was not set up in 2013. The Czech Republic is one of the very last EU member countries without it.“ – The Office of the Government, 2014
- Insufficient respect for the principle of the ‘best interests of the child’ in the legislation and also in practice.
- Lack of support for families in need → overinstitutionalization.
- Problems with discrimination and prejudice towards Roma

# Examples of child rights violations

- ✘ Insufficient respect for family life. Protection of child rights is not understood as a part of right for life in a family.
- ✘ Institutionalization for „social reasons“ (poverty)
  - ✘ second most cited reason used for institutionalization – 201 out of 543 verdicts (Defendor of Public Rights, 2012)
- ✘ Institutions do not try to make the institutional care a temporary solution
  - ✘ paradox – one child lives in residential care, his/her siblings live with their family

- Absence of social housing for careleavers
  - 48% of clients of Naděje, the biggest provider of shelter and social services for homeless, have some experience with IC (Naděje, 2014)
- Residential care facilities do not prepare children for after-care life in a sufficient way
  - 61% of respondents were informed about their last day in care more than 4 months in advance (while in foster care the percentile was 81).
  - More than 34% of respondents had no information about job market opportunities (SOS Villages, 2013).
  - Less than 1% of children living in residential care enter tertiary education (Ministry of Education, 2013/2014)
- Bad “climate” in some residential care facilities increases likelihood of risky behaviors
  - After leaving care, 8866 (51%) children have committed a criminal act. 1681 children (~10 % out of all children) have committed a criminal act within one year (Ministry of Interior, 2006)

- No compulsory legal representation for adolescents in court in proceedings on residential care
- Notably high percentage of **Roma children** in institutional care
  - offic. 27-32%, unoffic. 30-60% institutionalized(ERRC, 2011)
  - Roma people form ~3% of the total population
- **Housing policy** not understood as a part of social policy for protection of children and their families

- **FUN FACT:** these are examples of rights violations from **5-year old presentation\***

\* „Následné péče o mladé lidi odcházející z náhradní péče v České republice: Situační analýza“

Jan Folda (editor), Oldřich Matoušek, Hana Pazlarová, Anna Šabatová, Věduna Bubleová, Alena Vávrová, Martina Vančáková, Jana Frantíková, Renata Janíčková

# Identity of children

Short and sad story of one Romani-Czech dictionary...



**So pes ačhija?**

**What has happened?**





# Thank you!

