



Country report 2024 on anti-discrimination: highlights



Czechia



Historical and Demographic Background:

Czechia, with a population of 10.5 million, has become increasingly homogenous post-WWII. This was due to the expatriation of most Germans and Hungarians, and the devastation of the Roma and Jewish populations during the Holocaust.



Impact of Communist Regime:

The communist era had a lasting negative effect on the justice system and rule of law, formalising a narrow perception of equal treatment. Discriminatory measures against the Roma community during this period have continued to affect them negatively.



Challenges for Roma Community:

Despite legislative measures, Roma people face significant discrimination, especially in education. Segregation in schools remains a major issue, highlighted by various international bodies and ongoing EU infringement proceedings against Czechia.



National Legal Framework:

Czechia has transposed EU equality directives into national law through the Anti-Discrimination Act of 2009, which also includes provisions for nationality, which in Czech law refers to both national and ethnic origin.



Enforcement Mechanisms and Challenges:

Despite a comprehensive legal framework, the number of discrimination lawsuits remains low, and there are issues with the burden of proof in certain cases. Legal assistance is limited, and sanctions are often not dissuasive enough.



Role of the Czech Ombudsman:

The protection against discrimination applies broadly to both private and public sectors, with specific conditions for non-nationals and legal residents.



Issues with Educational Integration:

Amendments to the Schools Act in 2015 aimed to better integrate pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, including Roma children. However, challenges remain in ensuring these measures effectively prevent discrimination in education.



Lack of Effective Government Policy:

Structural discrimination issues are attributed to a lack of systematic government policy and societal mindset rather than the implementation of legislation. Recent governments have not prioritised human rights or developed effective policies to combat discrimination.



Need for Improved Access to Justice:

Better cooperation between NGOs, state institutions, and more robust legal frameworks are needed to improve access to justice for discrimination victims. Situation testing and adequate compensation for discrimination remain areas needing attention.