

**Czech Republic**

# *Ethnicity in Czech Republic*

## *Power relations*

Ethnicity is not politicized in the Czech Republic, a largely homogeneous country with only few and small ethnic minorities.

The **Roma** are discriminated against in many facets of life. According to the US Department of State, Roma face widespread discrimination in education, employment, and housing (<sup>1586</sup>). Also, violence perpetrated by Czech nationalists against Roma has been a recurrent issue. In November 2008, neo-Nazis have tried to attack housing estates populated mostly by Roma. While these attacks have been stopped by the police (<sup>1587</sup>, 190), Roma continue to face widespread prejudices (<sup>1588</sup>). Yet, one would be hard-pressed to say that the documented societal discrimination is "with the intent of excluding the Roma from power." That is rather a side-effect of the overall discrimination. According to the US Department of State there is evidence for limited Roma participation in politics: "[Roma] were members of mainstream as well as Romani-specific political parties, although few of the country's estimated 300,000 socially excluded Romani were integrated into political life" (<sup>1589</sup>). Roma are not holding any seats in the Czech parliament and do not count members in cabinet ministers or Supreme Court justices (<sup>1590</sup>). One of the Romani-specific political party is the Roma Democratic Party (RDS), which gained recognition in 2013. The RDS attempted to run candidacies in most of the country's 14 regions (<sup>1591</sup>). In 2016, 23 candidates of the RDS were running on several candidate lists for regional councillors in three Czech regions (Central Bohemia, Liberec and Moravia-Silesia) (<sup>1592</sup>). However, the Roma remain primarily active on the local level. The RDS did not participate in the 2017 national parliamentary elections (<sup>1593</sup>, <sup>1594</sup>) and the OSCE notes that there were only seven Roma candidates out of a total of 7'524 candidates in the election (<sup>1595</sup>). Another OSCE report estimated that Roma tend to be less politically active and found a lack of outreach to them and other political minorities by the established parties (<sup>1596</sup>). Overall, the Roma are considered politically irrelevant. The next national parliamentary elections are held in 2021.

There is no political party or any political movement representing the **Slovak** minority. They are only organized in some sort of a cultural association (OS), which does not seem to be politically relevant. "The aim of OS activity in the CR is maintaining and growing

<sup>1586</sup> [United States State Department, 2009]

<sup>1587</sup> [Freedom House, 2009]

<sup>1588</sup> [United States State Department, 2016]

<sup>1589</sup> [United States State Department, 2016]

<sup>1590</sup> [United States State Department, 2016]

<sup>1591</sup> [The Economist, 2013]

<sup>1592</sup> [Romea, 2016]

<sup>1593</sup> [Czech Statistical Office, 2017]

<sup>1594</sup> [OSCE 2018]

<sup>1595</sup> [OSCE 2018]

<sup>1596</sup> [OSCE 2017]

national awareness of its members and create conditions for fulfillment of their cultural and societal needs. The main activities of the association is a growing Slovakness, reciprocity between Slovaks and Czechs, participation in public life in the CR, mutual cooperation and support." <sup>(1597)</sup>. Thus, the Slovaks are politically irrelevant.

<sup>1597</sup> [Obec Slovenskej republiky,2014]

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## *Political status of ethnic groups in C*

*From 1993 until 2021*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Czechs	0.972	IRRELEVANT



Figure 301: Political status of ethnic groups in Czech Republic during 1993-2021.