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NEWS REPORT

Country:	Slovakia
Title:	The Public Defender of Rights published a report assessing the implementation of her previously proposed measures against discrimination of Roma children in education by the Ministry of Education
Date:	13 July 2018
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<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	Implementation of policies and measures on the prevention of discrimination of Roma children in education
Ground of discrimination:	Race/ethnic origin
Source:	Policy development - The Public Defender of Rights published a report assessing the implementation of her previously proposed measures against discrimination of Roma children in education by the Ministry of Education
Field:	Education
Applicable law:	Act no. 365/2004 Coll. on Equal Treatment in Certain Areas and Protection against Discrimination, amending and supplementing certain other laws (Antidiscrimination Act); Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education, amending and supplementing certain other laws (the School Act), § 3d

Content

Policy development: In May 2018 the Public Defender of Rights published a report reviewing the progress in the implementation of the measures proposed by her office between 2013-2015 in order to improve the protection and observance of individuals' basic rights and freedoms in education. The report specifically assesses the implementation of measures concerning the prevention of discrimination of Roma children by the Ministry of Education in recent years.

Key points of analysis: The report provides an overview of measures addressing systemic discrimination and segregation of Roma children in education that have been proposed by the Public Defender of Rights in the previous years and assesses to what extent these measures have been implemented by the Ministry of Education. It particularly focuses on the assessment of most important measures having been taken by the responsible government authorities in response to pending infringement proceedings of the European Commission concerning discrimination of Roma children in education, which was initiated in April 2015.¹

¹ Infringement proceedings of the European Commission against Slovakia on non-conformity with Directive 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality - Discrimination of Roma children in education initiated on 29 April 2015, Infringement number: 20152025.

The main purpose of the measures proposed by The Public Defender of Rights was to ensure that the prohibition of discrimination in education, and segregation in particular, is enforced in practice, and to specify particular entities responsible for this illegal conduct, along with applicable sanctions.

The report also includes an overview of investigations or fact findings conducted by the Office of Public Defender of Rights itself concerning the given problem in the previous years.

The report generally states that since the initiation of the EC infringement proceedings, the Ministry of Education has been continuously working on introducing steps to improve fulfilment of the rights of all children and pupils to education, with a special focus on children and pupils with a certain type of disadvantage, irrespective of whether that disadvantage is due to health, social or other reasons. Some of the steps have translated into arrangements adopted in the form of generally binding regulations, the Ministry's instructions or guidelines, while others have the form of short or long-term projects to support inclusive education in practice. However, the Public Defender of Rights concludes that these steps did not lead to obvious progress and calls on the government authorities to introduce and implement desegregation measures that should be as specific and sustainable as possible.

The report further stresses that legal prohibition of discrimination and segregation in education itself cannot prevent and remove these practices from everyday schools practice and relevant legislative amendments addressing these issues from recent years must be duly implemented in practice in order to bring desirable changes.

Internet link source:

The report is available in English translation:

http://www.vop.gov.sk/files/EN_SPRAVA_VOP_vn%C3%BAtorny_audit_skolstvo.pdf.