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FOREWORD

To the Reader,

In September 2000, the leaders of 189 member countries of the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration. They reaffirmed their resolution to pursue the construction of a secure and peaceful world for everyone, a world in which the elimination of poverty and the pursuit of sustainable development clearly become a top political priority.

Member states have until 2015 to achieve the eight key developmental goals as outlined by the Declaration. The Goals were created to address the most pressing needs of developing countries: access to drinking water and sewage disposal, provision of primary education to all children, eradication of extreme poverty, etc. Some of the goals, therefore are not a strong rallying cry for this country. On others, we may actually set a global example to emulate (e.g. low infant and perinatal mortality, maternal mortality, and gender equality in access to education). Yet now, on the initiative of the UN Development Programme, you can read a report that adapts those eight goals to the conditions of the Czech Republic. With all the circumstances weighed, it does show that all these goals may be of relevance for this country, too, provided they are adjusted to its current level of development.

This report, compiled with the help of many experts and officials of various central authorities and organizations, by the Center for Social and Economic Strategies at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University in Prague, presents an analysis of the past and current development situation of the Czech Republic. It proposes modified goals in a way that makes it possible to accept the political challenge, react to it, and join the effort to secure elementary conditions for the dignified and decent life of billions of people all over the planet.

I hope this report will be a good basis and inspiration for the development of sensible public policies in various walks of life of the Czech society, and a good foundation of the Czech Republic’s active share in building a global partnership for development.

Prague, February 2004

Ing. Zdeněk Škromach
Czech Minister of Labour and Social Affairs
FOREWORD

At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, the member states of the United Nations reaffirmed their commitment to work toward a world in which sustaining development and eliminating poverty would have the highest priorities. The Millennium Development Goals are based on the agreements and resolutions of UN-organized and sponsored world conferences during the previous decade. The MDGs have been agreed upon by UN member governments as the commonly accepted framework for measuring development progress.

The goals focus the world community’s attention on achieving significant, measurable improvements in people’s lives. They establish benchmarks for measuring results, not just for developing countries, but also for rich countries — to help them fund development programmes — and for the multilateral institutions that help countries implement them. The first seven goals are mutually reinforcing and are directed at reducing poverty in all its forms. The last goal — global partnerships for development — is about the means to achieve the first seven.

This baseline report is part of a first attempt to assess the progress of four countries — the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia — in achieving the Millennium Development Goals at the national level. It does so by focusing on the linkages between global targets and national priorities — in this case, in the Czech Republic. The report seeks to raise public awareness about the Millennium initiative, renew political commitment to poverty reduction, and to focus attention on specific development issues.

As new member states in the European Union (EU), these countries enjoy unique opportunities to adapt the targets to their national contexts. Through this process of adaptation, this report provides a nuanced picture of poverty in these countries on the eve of EU accession, and stresses the need for social inclusion policies that are consistent with the EU’s Social Charter. The report also emphasises the countries’ obligations as members of the developed world to provide development assistance to poorer countries. Wherever possible, the MDG targets in this report have drawn on the reporting framework for EU member states pertaining to issues of access and inequality (particularly the EU’s Social Inclusion Agenda), as well as other national policies and frameworks. The depth and length of the report reflect the development level of the countries and the need for thorough analysis of their complex development issues.

This report was prepared by a team of independent authors with substantial support from experts representing statistical and research institutes. The production of the report is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and coordinated by Prof. PhDr. Potůček. It is the result of several rounds of national consultation and inputs. Similar reports are being produced in all member states.

As the country’s accession to the European Union shows, the Czech Republic has made significant progress in putting in place policies and institutions for poverty eradication and sustainable development. UNDP hopes that this report will help policy makers in the Czech Republic to finish the task.

Ben Slay
Director of the UNDP Regional Centre, Bratislava
FOREWORD

This report constitutes our proposal for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Czech Republic. This formulation aims to adapt the general outline of goals, as proposed and passed by the UN, to the specific situation in a country that is striving, after decades under a totalitarian regime, to become integrated into the main stream of international development. The Czech Republic also has to modernize its institutions and transform its values to be able to meet the requirements of the upcoming accession to the European Union.

We have opted for an approach corresponding to this historic situation. Where possible, we have restructured and modified the individual targets to lead the country to accomplish effectively the most pressing tasks in the oncoming decade.

The working versions of this report have been discussed at several meetings of specialists, officials, politicians and representatives of commissioning institutions. We also consulted the contents of reports that were being simultaneously prepared in the neighbouring countries. The report would not have been compiled in such a short time if it had not been for the extraordinary efforts of dozens of cooperating individuals and several institutions.

We believe that the specific formulations of the individual goals will be welcomed by all those able and willing to contribute to the Czech Republic’s efforts to assume a leading position in the worldwide endeavour to implement the MDGs by the year 2015.

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Head of CESES, Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, http://ceses.cuni.cz
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The publication of the report could not have been possible without the contribution of many experts and representatives of central institutions, who have participated in data collection, in adaptation of the Millennium Development Goals to the context of the Czech Republic and in setting the specific targets and indicators. The team of authors expresses its special gratitude to the following contributors:

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We further thank to the team of representatives of UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava, headed by Lisa Smirl, project coordinator, and regional coordinator András Blahó (Department of World Economy, Budapest University of Economics and Public Administration (BUESPA)), who have initiated and coordinated the work on the MDG Report for the Czech Republic, as well as have been concerned with finalizing the report both in Czech and English versions. They were greatly supported in this regard by Zuzana Hlavičková (UNDP Prague) and Susanne Milcher.

We also evaluate the cooperation of our young assistants Markéta Zichová, Pavla Homolková and Richard Smejkal.
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>APEL</td>
<td>Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEE</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>IALS</td>
<td>International Adult Literacy Survey</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISCED</td>
<td>International Standard Classification of Education</td>
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<td>JIM</td>
<td>Joint Inclusion Memorandum</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NHDR</td>
<td>National Human Development Report</td>
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<td>NSI</td>
<td>National Statistical Institute</td>
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<td>NUTS</td>
<td>Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Program for International Student Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP$</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity (expressed in US dollars)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBEC</td>
<td>Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS of the United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIMSS</td>
<td>Third International Mathematics and Science Survey</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>The World Bank</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the Millennium Declaration of September 2000, member states of the United Nations reaffirmed their commitment to a secure and peaceful world for all, a world in which the elimination of poverty and the pursuit of sustainable development would be top political priorities. To this effect, they adopted eight key developmental goals, 18 targets, and 48 indicators to direct countries towards measurable and manageable improvements in the living conditions of their inhabitants. These goals are to be implemented by 2015.

This report suggests a way of interpreting and applying the UN Millennium Development Goals in the context of the Czech Republic. At first glance, the Czech Republic appears to have fulfilled the majority of the goals, and to belong among the top performers in many areas. However, a deeper analysis of development trends by the expert team at the Centre for Social and Economic Strategies in Prague has concluded that there are two reasons why the goals are still a challenge for the Czech Republic. First, in a rapidly changing world, simply meeting the goals is not sufficient to guard against future stagnation or even decline. Second, by adapting the 48 proposed global indicators to the Czech context, we may gather important information on this phase of cultural and social development.

Goal 1 calls for a reduction of poverty and social exclusion. Poverty in the Czech Republic is markedly less widespread than in most other transition countries with some indicators suggesting that it is actually lower than the current European Union (EU) average. There exist, nonetheless, social groups whose relative situation continues to worsen and where the threat of poverty looms. As it looks toward the year 2015, the report proposes that the country focus above all on reducing the percentage of low-income single mothers (to 20 %), on fighting social exclusion mainly by lowering long-term unemployment rate (to 3 %) and cutting the number of social benefit recipients (to 400,000). These objectives will be presented in the 'National Action Plan of Social Inclusion', to be released in 2004.

Goal 2 aims at attaining universal primary education. The report shows that although the Czech education system has met this target, secondary and higher education cannot keep pace with the emerging need for a knowledge-based society. With continuing reforms, the authors suggest, three quarters of young people will be able to complete general or specialized secondary education and half of the population will be able to enrol in some form of tertiary education by 2015. The average duration of education in 2015 should reach current EU levels, (16.7 years as compared to 16 years in 2002).

Goal 3 aims at promoting gender equality and extending women’s participation in the economy and society. Although equal access to education is now guaranteed, gender-based inequalities remain in other fields. The report points out the following:

- wages should be determined solely on the basis of performance, not gender (the ratio of women’s to men’s wages is to increase from the current 73 percent to 80 percent in 2015);
- women’s input in decision-making processes needs to be strengthened (the share of women members of parliament is to grow from the present 15 percent to 25 percent by 2015);
- conditions should be created for harmonizing family and working life through legislative changes and increased public services; and
- women should be better protected against domestic violence.

Goal 4 aims at reducing child mortality. Here, the Czech Republic leads in comparison with other nations; the values for infant (4.0) and perinatal (4.5) mortality are well ahead of the WHO goals for the European Region in the early 21st century. It is critical to maintain this standard while also focusing on reducing the share of children with congenital malformations (from 338 per 10,000 live births in 2001 to 200 per 10,000 in 2015).
Goal 5 is devoted to improving maternal health. In particular, the Czech Republic should aim to strengthen women’s reproductive health and simultaneously address the issues concerning a rapid decline in birth rates since 1989. By 2015, robust family, population and health policies should result in: a total fertility rate of at least 1.5 (up from 1.17 in 2002); a slight decrease in maternal mortality (from today’s 3.2 deaths per 100,000 live births to 3 deaths per 100,000); as well as a slight increase in deliveries attended by qualified medical personnel (from the current 98.5 percent to 99 percent in 2015).

Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases is the focus of Goal 6. In the Czech Republic, the specific aim is to keep the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection and tuberculosis at their relatively low, current levels. For the Czech Republic, the report has extended this goal to include other important disease groups. Specifically, reductions are sought in mortality due to:

- circulatory diseases (from 561 to 350 for men and from 379 to 210 for women per 100,000 inhabitants by 2015);
- malignant tumours (from 323 to 280—300 for men and from 175 to 160—170 for women per 100,000 inhabitants by 2015); and
- external causes (from 91 to 58 for men and from 33 to 23 for women per 100,000 inhabitants by 2015).

Goal 7 seeks to ensure environmental sustainability. The Czech Republic’s primary goal, as an industrialized country, is the integration of sustainable development principles into policies and programmes to reverse the trend of decreasing natural resources. The share of forests and protected areas is to be stabilized while the energy use per $1 GDP, carbon dioxide emissions and material intensity are to decline. In addition a specific need to further increase the share of population supplied by water from public sources (89.8 percent in 2002) and those having access to public sewage systems, (77.4 percent in 2002) is identified.

Goal 8 deals with global partnership for development. Given its new political and economic status, the Czech Republic began to provide aid to developing countries in 1995. In 2002, this assistance amounted to approximately 50 million USD (0.065 percent of GNI). At that time, the Czech Government adopted a new concept of developmental cooperation to take it through 2007. This concept envisages the establishment of a specialized Czech Development Agency, long-term funding of programmes, further growth in total aid volumes and increasing overall aid efficiency and transparency. Harmonization of Czech development aid with EU and OECD Member States is also part of the agenda. Ensuring an active role for the Czech Republic among the donors of development aid requires more attention on the part of all actors through 2010.

This report should act as a guide for the Czech Republic in the global effort to implement the goals of the UN Millennium Declaration. It will inspire other actors to join the permanent debate on the country’s desired developmental goals and on the state of its progress on the threshold of the third millennium.
INTRODUCTION

The state of the world is worrisome. This situation, however, is not caused by local monetary crises, armed conflicts or regional ecological catastrophes. Despite the unprecedented economic development during recent decades, we are still unable to guarantee billions of people the basic requirements of a decent life: access to potable water, freedom from hunger and shelter over their heads. If children do not have access to education, their life opportunities will be irrecoverably limited far into the middle of the 21st century. Moreover, disparities in life conditions and economic opportunity of people tend to deepen even further, both in individual countries and in various regions of the world.

These were the main reasons motivating the heads of 147 member states of the United Nations to adopt the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. A total of 189 member states reaffirmed their intent to build a secure and peaceful world for everyone, a world in which elimination of poverty and sustainable development are given the highest political priority. At the same time, they adopted eight key developmental goals, 18 subordinate targets and 48 indicators to help countries work towards concrete and measurable improvements in the life conditions of their inhabitants. This set of instruments was being formulated as early as the 1990s and the overwhelming majority of the goals are to be implemented by 2015. The validity and relevance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was again confirmed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002.

At the beginning of summer 2003, representatives of the United Nations Development Programme invited the Center for Social and Economic Strategies (CESES) at Charles University’s Faculty of Social Sciences to participate in the adaptation of these goals for the Czech Republic (CR). The results of this cooperation, undertaken both by employees of the abovementioned centre and members of other research centres and state administration organizations, are presented in this study. The study is part of a group of four MDG reports for Central European countries — Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. All four national reports are also included in a summary report covering the whole region.

The most demanding task for us was to elaborate a fitting interpretation and application of the goals contained in the UN Millennium Declaration for the situation in the Czech Republic. At first glance, it appeared that these were mostly goals in which the Czech Republic did not rank among the pupils who are falling behind. On the contrary, in some cases it was even at the top of the class. However, a more detailed analysis of developmental trends brought us to a more balanced viewpoint and the conclusion that all the goals were relevant for the Czech Republic as well. Our assumption was grounded in two main reasons. First, in a quickly-transforming world, even the favourable present situation cannot prevent potential deterioration in the future. Therefore, we must constantly monitor development to prevent possible future threats. Second, by adapting the 48 general indicators to national circumstances, we can have an appropriate and useful tool even in a country at this level of social and economic development.

It is up to readers now to assess how we have coped with the given assignment. We will be happy to receive comments and suggestions. We promise to try to make use of them in our future work on this subject, which we, along with UN representatives, consider to be among those whose solution can significantly contribute to the advancement of the human lot and the quality of governance both on a national and global scale.
Developmental trends in the Czech Republic during the 1990s

The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century represent a remarkable phase of development for the Czech Republic. In the introductory part of our study we would like to briefly describe the most significant aspects of this development as they were — and still are — reflected in the living conditions of the population. The political collapse of the socialist regime in 1989 induced changes that have been continuing ever since. This collapse, however, was also caused by a stagnating and inefficient economy and increasing discontentment of the population with the authoritarian political system.

The subsequent development in the Czech Republic was not very different from that in the neighbouring post-communist countries. Although democratic political institutions were promptly established, they were limited by the considerable inexperience with democracy of both citizens and political representatives. The fate of Czechoslovakia was sealed after the elections of June 1992 and at the end of that year it was divided into two new states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The subsequent massive transfer of state property into private hands did not exclude large-scale material and moral losses caused by an insufficient institutional framework governing the privatization process. The structure of the economy began adjusting to the demands of the world economy, undergoing a massive reorientation from east to west. Unemployment, previously unknown, noticeably affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Another significant process was initiated by the decision of political representatives — and eventually confirmed by a national referendum — to accede to the European Union (EU). The influence of pre-accession preparations and EU requirements is now visible in all the spheres of life. The legal environment is being transformed with regulators adjusting the activities of individuals and institutions. Furthermore, since 2000, the 1993 Copenhagen accession criteria emphasizing the advancement of political democracy and a market economy have been complemented by the requirements of the Lisbon strategy to build a knowledge-based and competitive economy while increasing employability and reducing skill gaps. Finally, since June 2001, the strategy of sustainable development has also been adopted.

There are certain specific aspects of the Czech Republic’s development that distinguish it from its neighbours. The threat of unemployment and poverty closely associated with the post-communist transformation, was not only anticipated in the Czech Republic well in advance, but also promptly countered by institutional mechanisms aimed at combatting these phenomena. In the early 1990s, a dense network of labour offices came into existence, as a vehicle of the state employment policy. The concepts of subsistence minimum and social need were introduced, preventing endangered population groups from falling into poverty. Despite numerous failures and incongruities in capacity, the relatively well-functioning networks of public schools and health institutions ensuring universally accessible health care were preserved and further improved. Civil society actors energetically entered the spheres of social care and health care as well as education. With respect to the pressing ecological situation caused by the previous regime, the newborn Czech state decided to make huge investments in the restoration of the environment. As a consequence of all these efforts, the Czech Republic has made a good start in the right direction. With sufficient political will and administrative competence, by 2010 the country could be safely on the path towards an economically prosperous and, at the same time, socially and globally responsible society.
Goal 1: Reduce poverty among single mothers
The access to the labour market for single mothers became more difficult and the share of single mothers who are relatively poor increased almost three times in the Czech Republic during the 1990s.

Target 2: Reduce long-term unemployment
Active labour market policy needs to focus on decreasing long-term unemployment, which increased up to 9 percent. Specific population groups and specific regions within the country experience long-term unemployment disproportionately.

Target 3: Reduce the number of recipients of social benefits
Along with long-term unemployment, during the 1990s, the gradual increase in the number of households registered by social offices as households in social need became alarming.


**DESCRIPTION**

Based on the UNDP human development index, the Czech Republic is currently 32nd among the monitored 175 countries and, therefore, belongs to the group of industrialized countries. Nonetheless, it is necessary to monitor and alleviate poverty and social exclusion of vulnerable groups in the population. The extent of poverty in the Czech Republic is not very great. The absolute poverty line applied in Czech social practice (i.e. the subsistence minimum regularly derived according to consumer prices) is USD 9.70 per day. Below the absolute poverty line one tends to find those who do not receive sufficient social care. However, more and more people find themselves in the position of social exclusion as a consequence of increasing unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment.

The targets for reduction of poverty and social exclusion are:

- Reduce poverty among single mothers;
- Support employment by stopping the decrease in employment and the increase in unemployment; and
- Reduce dependence on social benefits.

**STATUS AND TRENDS**

**Situation in general**

The fight against poverty and social exclusion is beginning to acquire importance in the Czech Republic, particularly in the context of the Czech Republic’s growing engagement in the European strategy on this topic. The meeting of candidate countries and the European Commission on 13 February, 2002 set out specific measures to be taken to prepare the integration of the Czech Republic into this European strategy. In July 2002, a seminar on social inclusion was held in Prague, attended by representatives of the Commission, all the involved ministries, local and regional authorities, social partners, non-governmental organizations and the university. The document on the national strategy of social inclusion will be the Common Memorandum on Social Inclusion, whose objective is to set out the basic priorities of the social inclusion policy. It is to be ratified by the end of 2003 and will serve as the cornerstone for the National Action Plan of Social Inclusion to be submitted by the Czech Republic in 2004.

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¹ Based on an analysis of the results of the ‘Social Situation of Households’ enquiry, implemented by the Czech Statistical Office in 2001 in compliance with the Eurostat regulations, incomes of 3.4 percent of households (134,500) and 4.3 percent of the population (432,600) were below the subsistence minimum.
The objectives of social and economic inclusion are also included in the Programme Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic issued in 2002. This declaration contains a strategic goal in the field of employment calling for full employment, “The priority objective of the active employment policy will be primarily the most intense reduction of unemployment, focused on the regions of northern, central and southern Moravia and north-western Bohemia. The Government shall support those projects whose implementation will significantly contribute to the creation of new vacancies, preferably in the endangered regions, and to the further development of small-scale and medium-scale enterprises. It will strive to make people find motivation to seek and keep their jobs.”

In 1999, the Czech Republic ratified the Social Charter of the Council of Europe, thus pledging to provide assistance to all those who find themselves in a situation of material need. In the second half of the 1990s, the Social Doctrine of the Czech Republic was elaborated and the implementation of this document represents a part of the coalition agreement of political parties.

Absolute poverty

When examining poverty, it generally holds true that there are more households with children at the lower-income level than childless households. If low income households are classified as households whose income does not exceed 1.6 times the subsistence minimum, then this category comprises 15 percent of the total number of two-parent families and over 20 percent of the total number of single parent families. With minor exceptions, single-parent households with children are headed by single women, either divorced or unmarried. By contrast, two-parent households without dependent children almost never fall into this zone and single-person households are represented by a mere 5 percent.

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2 Regulations for the provision of social benefits are set down in Law No 463/1991 on the subsistence minimum, and Law No 482/1991 on social need. Law No 463/1991 on the subsistence minimum, does not substantiate the claim to social benefits, but provides a criterion for the comparison of real household income and subsistence minimum, that the state pledges to guarantee to its citizens. Social benefits are paid as a difference between the amount of the subsistence minimum in a given household and its real income.

3 The household income was calculated according to the OECD 2 equivalence scale. See explanatory notes.


5 In Czech social practice, the 1.6 multiple of the subsistence minimum represents a significant limit for the provision of social benefits to a family with children.

Relative poverty according to the EU indicators of social inclusion

According to Eurostat methods of measuring relative poverty, the extent of poverty in the Czech Republic is low — less than 50 percent of the average poverty rate in the European Union. In 1996, only 7.6 percent of individuals were living in households below the defined relative poverty line compared to 17 percent in the European Union. However, substantial differences exist according to the economic status of people, both in the Czech Republic and in the EU. Within unemployed people, the proportion of those living in poverty is the highest (see Figure 1.1).

The risk for single mothers of falling below the poverty line increased in the first half of the 1990s. The share of those who are relatively poor in this group increased almost three times in the Czech Republic, i.e. much more quickly than in the other European countries. One third of single mothers were living in poverty in the mid 1990s (see Figure 1.2).

Measured by the EU social inclusion indicators, there are lower income differences in the Czech society compared to the European Union.° The low level of income inequality in the Czech society and the derived low poverty rate can be, to a certain extent, influenced by that part of income that is not returned since it comes from the unofficial economy. The extent of unofficial economy can be only estimated: the share of illegal economy in GDP is estimated to be 15—20 percent.

Employment and unemployment

The labour participation of the population prior to 1989 was relatively high and unemployment virtually did not exist. During the 1990s, employment levels decreased continuously, as evidenced by the drop in the percentage of the population employed from 69 percent in 1993 to 65.7 percent in 2002. The total employment rate is nevertheless still higher than the average rate in the EU where it was 64.2 percent in 2001.

However, the trend in unemployment during the 1990s was very alarming. Until the mid 1990s, unemployment stagnated with the rate ranging from 3 to 4 percent. In 1997, unemployment began rapidly increasing and

° In 1996, the indicator of distribution of income (NO 2) reached 3.3 in the CR while 5.6 in the EU and the value of the Gini coefficient (NO 14) was 24.3 in the CR compared to 32.0 in the EU. (For definitions of indicators — see explanatory notes).
in 1999, the unemployment rate stabilized at the level of 8—9 percent. The increase in the long-term unemployment was particularly fast (see Table 1.1).

Unemployment is now characterized not only by a high share of long-term unemployment, but also by regional differentiation and by the appearance of population groups whose access to the labour market is restricted and who live on social benefits for long periods of time. These groups are excluded not only from the labour market, but also from other parts of life in the society. In this context, it is necessary to mention the Roma population that has been gradually excluded from the labour market (unemployment in this population is estimated at 80—90 percent) and pulled into the trap of poverty and dependence on social benefits.

The unfavourable development of unemployment is also one of the main reasons for extreme social exclusion, or homelessness. The phenomenon has been aggravated by insufficient capacity in community services.⁸

Specific issues

Dependence on social benefits

Along with long-term unemployment, during the 1990s, the gradual increase in the number of households registered by social offices as households in social need became alarming. Furthermore, the structure of these households underwent certain

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Table 1.1:

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<tr>
<td>Economic activity rate¹</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment rate¹</td>
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<td>69.2</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>65.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate¹</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term unemployment rate¹</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered unemployment rate⁴</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Source: Administration of Employment Services, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

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transformations at that time since the share of single-person households was on rise. In 2001, the latter accounted for 66 percent and households with children constituted the remaining 33 percent, whereas in 1995, the share of single-person households represented 55 percent and households with children comprised 45 percent. This is shown in more detail in Figure 1.3.

**POLICIES FOR GOAL ACHIEVEMENT**

Over the course of the 1990s, the access of women with children to the labour market became more difficult. Single mothers depending solely on their income and social benefits suffered from this situation and entered the poverty zone. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on facilitating their access to the labour market and on increasing social benefits. The aim is to reduce poverty among single mothers in 2015 to 20 percent.

The decrease in long-term unemployment will have to be aided by an active employment policy. In 1998, expenditure on active employment policy represented merely 0.05 percent of GDP and, despite the increase to 0.19 percent of GDP in 2001, this level of expenditure is low compared to the average in the EU (0.33 percent of GDP in the EU). The aim is to reduce long-term unemployment in 2015 to 3 percent.

The creation of the social rescue network in the early 1990s, during the economic transformation process, prevented population groups in danger of unemployment from falling into poverty. However, during the 1990s, a certain part of the population simultaneously developed dependency on social benefits, thus moving from life in “mainstream” society to the position of social exclusion.

The elimination of social exclusion is countered by the goal-oriented distribution of social benefits. The level of social benefits is set to motivate the unemployed to search for, accept and keep jobs and to force out of the circle of recipients those who do not belong or do not have to belong there. This end is achieved by the system of bonuses awarded to those who are interested in finding a job and by sanctions on those who abuse the social scheme. In other words, the aim is pursued by means of differentiated levels of social benefits provided to people in material need. In Czech social practice these are social care benefits provided according to law and social need. At present, the issue of the differentiated level of social need benefits is open to discussion. Recipients of benefits will be motivated by a reduction in their social need benefits from the level of subsistence minimum to the level of existence minimum with the aim to more intensely activate the long-term unemployed people. In this scenario, benefits will represent stepping stones rather than an obstacle on the way towards employment. The aim is to reduce the number of recipients of benefits in 2015 to 400,000.

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Achieve Universal Primary Education

Goal 2

**Target 1: Enable three quarters of young people to pass secondary education at grammar or technical schools**

On the whole, the Czech Republic shows one of the highest shares of secondary school students in the OECD countries. However, a shift from vocational schools to grammar or technical schools within secondary education is needed.

**Target 2: Ensure one half of the related age group the opportunity to enter one of the forms of tertiary education**

The knowledge society requires qualified people with more than a secondary education. In the Czech Republic, the capacity of tertiary education is insufficient and the contents of education with respect to functional literacy as well as to demands and needs of the labour market have to be aligned with EU standards.

**Target 3: Prolong the average duration of the education process and thus match the current average in the countries of the European Union**

New European trends in lifelong and professional education need to be applied, particularly in acknowledging informal qualifications and in formalizing labour experience.
**DESCRIPTION**

Over two thirds of the population of the Czech Republic is still satisfied with their education. The Czech educational system can indeed boast of several assets: it provides education for a large share of children of pre-school age; the network of primary and secondary schools is exceptionally dense; schools are vested with extensive authority; and pupils usually show good results in international comparisons.

Although the school system, unlike the health care system or industry, avoided an extensive, internal, transformational crisis, it has shown several disturbing trends over a longer period. The Czech school system as such has not changed for the worse. However, what has changed — and is still changing — is the environment in which the school system operates and with which it can no longer keep pace. We find ourselves on the threshold of the “knowledge society” whereas the Czech school system still demonstrates the attributes of the industrial era, i.e. the mass and short-term preparation of an inexpensive labour force.

**STATUS AND TRENDS**

**Situation in general**

Almost all people in the Czech Republic receive schooling in the early stages of their lives. Over 85 percent of children of related age frequent nursery schools. Attendance at such schools is voluntary and paid.

Mandatory school attendance begins at the age of six and lasts for nine years, corresponding to the duration of primary school education. Less than 2 percent of children do not complete primary school. In the coming five-year period the number of children entering primary schools will decrease by approximately 15 percent, while in the ensuing five years (in 2010) it will slightly increase, but not return to 2000 levels. It will be a consequence of fertility decline during the 1990s.

Ninety-eight percent of graduates of primary schools enrol at one of three types of secondary schools. Of these (in the 1999/2000 academic year), less than one fifth enrolled at general secondary schools (grammar schools), less than two fifths entered technical secondary schools and more than two fifths entered vocational secondary schools. On the whole, the Czech Republic shows one of the highest shares of secondary school students in the OECD.
countries. If the criteria for learning were the completion of a higher secondary education (ISCED 3), the Czech Republic would hold second place on OECD education levels. In five years, the number of 15-year-olds in the population will decrease by 4 percent compared with this year, and in ten years it will decrease by 28 percent. The current surplus capacity of secondary schools will thus worsen.

The knowledge society requires qualified people with more than a secondary education and it is exactly here that the Czech Republic shows a huge deficit. The capacity of tertiary education is insufficient and many applicants are not admitted for capacity reasons. Even though the number of students at the tertiary education level doubled over the last decade owing to the more numerous generations of respective age and to the so-called “postponed demand” (from those who were not admitted in the previous years), every year the demand for university studies markedly exceeds the supply. Even if we take into account the possibility of studying at newly established higher professional schools (post-secondary type of schools), aspirations to continue studying are still much higher than actual available opportunities.

The prejudice that only selected individuals in society can enjoy a higher education has taken deep root in the Czech Republic. However, if the aim is to catch up with the EU, where 22 percent of the economically active population has more than a secondary education (whereas in the Czech Republic it is 11 percent), 500,000 adult Czech citizens would have to complete their tertiary education!

While in industrialized countries the number of adults educated outside the school system has exceeded the number of young people educated within it, in the Czech Republic lifelong learning is still underdeveloped. For instance, the expenditures made on education by Czech companies are approximately one half of the EU average.

Specific issues

A constant source of criticism remains the unsatisfactory conditions of education among members of the Roma community, the latter comprising the majority of students from socially and culturally disadvantaged environments. Particularly controversial is the fact that a large portion of these students frequent special schools, which virtually — although not officially — reduce their chances of achieving higher education levels and impede social integration. In vocational training these students are more often directed towards blue-collar occupations. The percentage of Roma students attending special schools cannot be determined precisely and no qualified estimates are available. The problem is being addressed through special preparatory classes, Roma assistants, etc., but there is still much to be improved.

POLICIES FOR GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

- Modernize the contents of education with respect to the broad development of the individual (with a particular emphasis on functional literacy) as well as to demands and needs of the labour market (with a special concern to restructuring the tertiary education system so that it better complies with the Bologna Declaration);
- Emphasize the optimal relationship between the structure and number of graduates and requirements of employers considering the possibilities offered by the labour market;
- Introduce a system of framing educational programmes that specifies the required qualification of graduates and respective contents of education on the level of each of the subject fields;

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¹⁰ Educational level 3 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) covers completion of all types of upper secondary schools, i.e. grammar and technical schools as well as vocational schools. See explanatory notes.
Apply new, European trends in lifelong and professional education, particularly in acknowledging informal qualifications and in formalizing labour experience;

Introduce a system for forecasting educational needs;

Systematize and increase efficiency of the education of teachers.

Figure 2.2

Average duration of education in the Czech Republic and OECD countries

Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Goal 3

Target 1: Reduce differences in the earnings of men and women
Since 1990, the gap between earnings of men and women has been gradually widening. In 1996, women’s earnings represented 77.21 percent of men’s earnings, two years later it was merely 72.03 percent, and in 2001 it was 74.4 percent.

Target 2: Improve the position of women in decision-making processes
Although the education levels of Czech women are very high, this fact is not reflected in their participation in decision-making processes. Here, their participation is much lower than that of men, and there is no sphere in which women outnumber men in management positions.
DESCRIPTION

Goal 3 aims to promote gender equality. It covers these three important spheres: the access of men and women to education, the unequal position of men and women in the labour market and the unequal participation of men and women in decision-making processes.

In addition to economic and political gender equality in Czech society, it will be necessary to promote the equal gender position on the labour market and to provide women with more opportunities to assert themselves in decision-making processes. The specific tasks comprised in Goal 3 can be supplemented with the requirements of more favourable conditions for harmonization of family life and work as well as for better protection for women against domestic violence.

STATUS AND TRENDS

Situation in general

Education of women and men

One path towards gender equality is a balanced structure of education and the elimination of discrimination in access to education. In the Czech Republic, traditionally, women are educated on a very high level. Nevertheless, differences in the ratio of boys and girls at individual types of schools do exist. As for secondary studies, there are more girls at secondary grammar schools, whereas boys outnumber girls at secondary vocational schools. The representation of girls and boys at university (master’s level) is equal, while girls outnumber boys both at higher professional schools and in bachelor’s programmes. It is interesting to note that there are more boys at special types of schools, particularly those specializing in the education of juvenile delinquents, etc. (see Figure 3.1).

Trends over time show that the education of women has significantly increased. In the group of 70 year-olds and over 57 percent of women (only 24 percent of men) have reached only a basic education (incl. those who did not
finish it), 22 percent of women (30 percent of men) have completed a secondary school with A-level examinations and 2 percent of women (11 percent of men) are university graduates. The group aged 25 to 39, however, includes only 7 percent of women (8 percent of men) either with no education or with only a basic school education, 64 percent of women (and only 59 percent of men in comparison to women) who are educated at a higher secondary level and 12 percent of women who are university graduates, just one per cent less than men. Although gender equality in access to education is currently guaranteed, the ratio of educated boys to girls should continue to be monitored in the future.

**Employment of women and the situation in the labour market**

The overall educational levels of women may be slightly higher than that of men, however, the distribution of women in individual fields of study does not correspond well to the needs of the economy, which subsequently becomes manifest in their positions on the labour market. From the perspective of fields of study, women tend to study social sciences and subjects related to services, such as health care, pedagogy etc. A smaller number of women study at schools specialized in applied and natural sciences. Men are equally represented in individual fields of study except for technical specializations, in which they outnumber women.

For more than 50 years, women’s employment and participation in the labour market has been consistent, showing only minor changes in recent years. The Czech Republic (as well as the other former socialist countries) is characterized by a high employment rate of women of all age groups. The economic activity rate of women has been in slight excess of 50 percent for a long time, (51.3 percent in 2001, whereas the activity rate of men was 69.0 percent).¹¹ The Czech Republic rates high in the number of hours spent by women at work — 91 percent of women (97 percent of men) work full time. This fact is closely related to another typical feature, the insignificant number of women who stay home (the maximum is 1 percent of women of working age).

In examining the unemployment of women, it is necessary to note, that after 1997 and the economic crisis, the unemployment rate indicator increased throughout the Czech Republic. In the late 1990s, the unemployment rate of women reached 10 percent. In 2001, the unemployment rate of women was 9.9 percent, whereas the unemployment rate of men was 6.8 percent.¹²

Since 1990, the gap between earnings of men and women has been gradually widening. In 1996, women’s earnings represented 77.21 percent of men’s earnings, two years later it was merely 72.03 percent, and in 2001 it was 74.4 percent. The inequalities in the reward system result partly from the feminization of certain sectors in which salaries are consistently lower, (e.g. the public sector, especially health services and the education system, and, for instance, the textile industry), and partly from the fact that women tend to be employed in positions paying less or requiring lower qualifications. However, even women working in the same positions as men sometimes receive unequal wages, e.g. in 2000, the average earnings of female managers and directors reached a mere 54 percent of the earnings of their male counterparts.¹³

Viewed from the perspective of age, the earnings of men and women show the smallest gap up to 24 years of age (in 2000 the ratio of women’s to men’s salaries was 87 percent), followed by a wider gap frequently caused by the interruption in women’s professional careers to take care of children. In 2000, the

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¹¹ The economic activity rate represents — according to the ILO method — the share of the total labour force in the population over 15 years of age.


ratio of women’s to men’s earnings in the 25 to 34 age group was 76 percent and in the 35 to 54 age group it was 72 percent. The situation improves in the pre-retirement age group with the ratio of the 55 to 64 age group reaching 82 percent in 2000.

**Participation of women in decision-making processes**

Although the education levels of Czech women are very high, this fact is not reflected in their participation in decision-making processes. Here, their participation is much lower than that of men, and there is no sphere in which women outnumber men in management positions. The participation of women in the Senate is only 12 percent, and in the Parliament 17 percent. In the Government, there are only two women out of a total of 17 members. Women head some prominent institutions, such as the State Office for Nuclear Safety, four universities (chancellors), the national Academy of Sciences, the Prison Service, the position of Attorney General and others. Nonetheless, there is not a single woman among regional executives, and only 13 percent of regional and 23 percent of local administrators are women. The position of women is better in justice with 63 percent of judges being female, although these work mostly on the district level and are less represented on the regional level.

In private companies the incidence of women in top decision-making positions is also very low. On the whole, the participation of women in decision-making processes should be actively encouraged.

**Domestic violence, forced prostitution and trafficking**

After 1989, the issues of domestic violence, forced prostitution and trafficking of women and girls remained unaddressed by legislative changes and received little attention. On the contrary, some legislative amendments resulted indirectly in the deterioration of the position of women afflicted by domestic violence. The authority of police in solving family disputes is considerably limited and medical practitioners are not obliged to report on damage to women’s health when domestic violence is the suspected cause. With the exception of grievous bodily harm and attempted murder, the woman herself has to give explicit consent for a judicial inquiry into domestic violence. Assistance provided to victims of domestic violence is also limited. The capacity of shelters mostly run by NGOs is insufficient and there are few specialized institutions dealing with this specific issue. NGOs have been fighting not only against domestic violence, but also against forced prostitution and trafficking of women and girls.¹⁴ The legal framework supporting the prosecution and resolution of domestic violence cases remains very limited.

**Specific issues**

**Legislative framework governing the position of women in society**


Many new provisions related to the protection of women’s rights and discrimination against women have been incorporated into the Czech

¹⁴ Some NGOs are involved in international programme networks such as Daphne, Coatnet, Cat, etc.
Labour Code in the context of harmonization with the European Union, including the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace. While the Labour Code guarantees the equality for the sexes and prohibits discrimination, the legislation still contains certain questionable restrictions imposed upon women in terms of their work performance and even lists some professions where access is denied to women. This does not apply to men in any productive or non-productive sector.

At present, there is a concerted endeavour to improve the position of women in society, as evidenced by the document passed by the Government in 1998 called ‘Priorities and Methods of the Government for Promoting the Equality of Men and Women’. The document comprises approximately 40 provisions and achievement is annually evaluated and updated. These provisions are focused, inter alia, on the advancement of women to leading positions in the state administration, including promotion of women in the selection of leading positions at ministries.

In addition, in 2002 Law № 312/2002 on officials in self-governing regions and on the amendment of some laws, was adopted, effective 1 January 2003. This law created a framework for the implementation of so-called “positive measures”. Pursuant to this law, self-governing regions must adopt certain measures ensuring that equal participation of men and women is achieved and sustained both in the recruitment and employment of officials as well as the appointment of head officials at all levels of management.

Institutional mechanisms for promoting gender equality and empowering women have been established. These mechanisms include the Department for gender equality established at the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, the Government Council for gender equality, the Parliamentary commission for family and equal opportunities and others. Gender equality is also monitored by non-state organizations, some of which concentrate exclusively on the equal position of women. One of the most prominent among them is the non-state Gender Studies organization.

**POLICIES FOR GOAL ACHIEVEMENT**

The Czech Republic has travelled quite a long way in improving the conditions and equality of women in the Czech society. Despite this progress, the following areas still require attention:

- Creation of a situation where salaries will depend solely on work performance and not on gender, i.e. a situation in which compensation for work will be fair;
- Empowerment of women in decision-making processes, both in public and private sectors; and
- Protection of women from domestic violence, forced prostitution and trafficking and — by means of legislation and grants — contribution to the advancement of the non-profit sector in protecting and caring for women who find themselves in situations of domestic violence or economic hardship.
Goal 4

Reduce Child Mortality

Target 1: Maintain the attained low level of infant and perinatal mortality
Thanks to its current low figures of infant and perinatal mortality, the Czech Republic finds itself below the EU averages, and, along with the Scandinavian countries, is among the top European countries.

Target 2: Reduce the number of children with congenital malformations
At present, over 300 children out of 10,000 live births are born with congenital malformations. Congenital malformations represent 37 percent (in 2000) of the causes of child mortality in the first week of life.
DESCRIPTION

The health and mortality indicators for children in early childhood reflect the level of medical care as well as the overall social and cultural level of a country. Goal 4 aims to reduce the mortality of children under five. This is a particular problem in developing countries where, despite a downward trend, a relatively high number of children die before the age of five due to insufficient nutrition, medical care and other problems.

Monitoring child mortality and health in early childhood represents a standard method even in industrialized countries. A healthy start in life influences the development of an individual’s physical and mental health in the subsequent phases of his or her life. In terms of lowering infant mortality, the Czech Republic has already surpassed the goals set by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the European region in the early 21st century. Its current positive trend is on the leading edge, thanks to very expensive technologies in the country’s neonatology departments. This situation could only be endangered by such transformations of the health care system that threaten primary care programmes, such as care for mothers and children. There is some concern among experts that under these conditions the existing mortality rates might change for the worse.

STATUS AND TRENDS

Situation in general

Levels of child mortality in the first year of life have been steadily decreasing in the Czech Republic. Over the last eleven years, levels have dropped by almost two thirds. In the early 1990s, of 1,000 live births, almost 11 infants died, but by 2001, when the lowest level was attained, this figure had dropped to four. Thanks to its current low figures, the Czech Republic finds itself below the EU average (4.7 per thousand in 2000), and, along with the Scandinavian countries, is among the top European countries. Among the Central and Eastern European countries, it was high above the average in 2000 (10.7 per thousand). At 4.25 per thousand in 2001, only Slovenia is reaching the level of infant mortality comparable to the Czech Republic’s.

Infant mortality has decreased in every phase of early life. The rates in the first month of life (the so-called neonatal mortality from day 0—27) and at post-neonatal age (28—364 days) have decreased. This means that mortality has not simply been deferred to the post-neonatal period as a consequence of neonatal sickness.

Also, perinatal mortality, including the number of still-born children and deaths of children during the first week of life (0—6 days), has also decreased. This indicator continuously

Targets and Indicators for Goal 4:

Reduce Child Mortality (M. Mašková)

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<td>1. Infant mortality (per thousand live births)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Live-born children with congenital malformations per 10,000 live births</td>
<td>172.4</td>
<td>324.5</td>
<td>338.2 (2001)</td>
<td>200.0</td>
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</table>

¹⁵ In 1990, 60 selected congenital malformations were monitored. Since 1994, all congenital malformations in Chapter XVII of the 10th International Classification of Diseases have been monitored, and since 1997, all congenital malformations from the other chapters as well.
decreased during the 1990s as well. The current level of perinatal mortality, 4.5 out of 1,000 births (live and still) in 2002, is more than 50 percent lower than the rates in the 1990s. At the same time, it is 30 percent lower than the average EU figures (6.3 per 1,000 births).

To a considerable extent, the trends in child mortality in the first year of life have influenced the trends in child mortality under five. The proportion of children who died during years 0—4 per the total number of all live births showed more than a 50 percent decrease as compared with 1990. The current rate of 5.2 per thousand is also below the EU average (6.4 per thousand).

The Czech Republic implements an immunization programme based on the vaccination calendar. The share of children vaccinated against measles, German measles, pertussis and tuberculosis is consistently high. Throughout the 1990s it never dropped below 95 percent.

The Czech Republic has a 40-year tradition of monitoring congenital malformations (see note above). At present, over 300 children out of 10,000 live births are born with congenital malformations. The frequency of congenital malformations is closely connected with accurate and complete reporting. The increase of the relative numbers in the 1990s is a consequence of higher quality diagnostics and better statistical evidence as well.¹⁶ The most frequent defects are cardiac malformations (40 percent). Congenital malformations represent 37 percent (in 2000) of the causes of child mortality in the first week of life.

There is still no sufficient information on the occurrence of the CAN syndrome (the syndrome of the maltreated, abused and neglected child). Reports by paediatricians on suspected violence against children remain deficient and sharing of information and coordination of approaches by specialists and non-state organizations are still lacking.

Specific issues

The increasing number of women without perinatal care, related particularly to increasing immigration from regions not providing this care, can represent a potential problem for the maintenance of low mortality rates. The provision of adequate prenatal and postnatal care to immigrants has medical and

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financial implications, as these are frequently women who do not pay health insurance. In the case of legal immigrants (foreigners holding residence permits), this issue is simultaneously being addressed through the Foreigners Integration programme.¹⁷

**POLICIES FOR GOAL ACHIEVEMENT**

The Czech Republic’s level of perinatal mortality is among the best in the world. There are perinatal centres caring for women whose babies are expected to have low birth weight and women with pregnancy complications. An integral part of these institutions is specialized neonatal centres that care for premature and low birth weight newborns. To maintain the current, positive status of child health and mortality, the country should:

- Continue to develop primary care systems with integrated programmes focused on the care for mothers and children; and
- Further develop: methods of prenatal diagnostics in the second trimester of pregnancy, genetic consultancy, and termination of pregnancy in cases where the embryo exhibits severe congenital malformations.

In addition to the quality of health care, nutrition consultations, prevention of smoking during pregnancy and, particularly in the case of younger generations, drug-use prevention should be given greater importance.

A number of specific tasks and activities aimed at achieving this goal are contained in the document entitled ‘Long-term Programme of Improving the Health Conditions of the Population in the Czech Republic — Health for Everyone in the 21ˢᵗ century’, approved by the Government of the Czech Republic in October 2002. This document represents a national scenario of the programme WHO Health 21 elaborated for the European region.¹⁸

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