

European Commission
against Racism and Intolerance

ECRI
Commission européenne
contre le racisme et l'intolérance

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**ECRI CONCLUSIONS
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC
SUBJECT TO INTERIM FOLLOW-UP**

Adopted on 21 March 2018¹

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¹ Any developments which occurred after 8 September 2017, the date on which the response of the Czech Republic authorities to ECRI's request for information on measures taken to implement the recommendation chosen for interim follow-up was received, have not been taken into account in this analysis.

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FOREWORD

As part of its fifth round of monitoring work, ECRI has renewed its process of interim follow-up with respect to two specific recommendations made in each of its country reports.

In line with the Information Document on ECRI's fifth monitoring cycle brought to the attention of the Ministers' Deputies on 14 November 2012¹, not later than two years following the publication of each report, ECRI addresses a communication to the Government concerned asking what has been done in respect of the specific recommendations for which priority follow-up was requested.

At the same time, ECRI gathers relevant information itself. On the basis of this information and the response from the Government, ECRI draws up its conclusions on the way in which its recommendations have been followed up.

It should be noted that these conclusions concern only the specific interim recommendations and do not aim at providing a comprehensive analysis of all developments in the fight against racism and intolerance in the State concerned.

¹ CM/Del/Dec(2012)1154/4.2.

In its report on the Czech Republic (fifth monitoring cycle) published on 13 October 2015, ECRI strongly recommended that the authorities carry out their plans to introduce at least one year of compulsory and free of charge preschool for all children before entry to mainstream primary education.

ECRI notes that amendments to the Schools Act in January 2017 introduced a compulsory and free of charge final year of preschool education for all children who have reached the age of 5 years. Its aim is to involve socially disadvantaged children in particular in preschool education, in order for them to be better prepared to enter the first year of primary school.

Furthermore, the act provides for the progressive introduction of compulsory preschool for children aged 4 years from 1 September 2017, then for children aged 3 years from 1 January 2018, and finally for children aged 2 years from 1 January 2020. Alternative ways to implement compulsory pre-primary education are also set out, including home schooling.

The Public Defender of Rights has described this development as a big step in the exercise of the right to education, especially for Roma children. However, it is too soon to evaluate the impact of the change. ECRI encourages the authorities to monitor the effects of compulsory preschool education, and in particular whether it helps to close the gap between Roma and non-Roma children and prepares Roma pupils to be able to follow an ordinary mainstream curriculum in primary school.

ECRI is pleased to report that its recommendation has been fully implemented.¹

¹ In its report (fifth monitoring cycle), ECRI indicated that it had made a second specific interim recommendation strongly recommending that the authorities remove from the amendment to Article 16 of the Schools Act all references to social and cultural environment for the assessment of mental disability in children, so that no Roma child could be wrongly assigned to a practical school. However, in the time between the drafting of the report and its adoption, the authorities removed the disputed provisions from the amendment. ECRI considered, therefore, that its recommendation had been implemented.

