



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Case Study on Intercultural Policies and Intergroup Relations Prague



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Foreword

In the spring of 2006, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the City of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (hereafter 'the Foundation') came together to form a 'European network of *Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants*' (CLIP). They were subsequently joined by the City of Vienna. The CLIP network, which was officially launched in Dublin in September 2006, brings together 25 large European cities in a joint learning process over several years; the network seeks to support the social and economic integration of migrants, combat social inequalities and discrimination, and to help migrants to preserve their cultural identity. With this joint initiative, the partners involved continue their longstanding work in the field of social inclusion.

European cities and in particular the larger cities with strong economies attract migrants from all over the world. These cities already have considerable experience in integrating a highly diverse and culturally rich immigrant population into the local community. They can use this experience to develop and implement strategies on how best to integrate migrants and ethnic minority groups and encourage their participation in society. However, simultaneously, cities and municipalities often have to pay the price for failed integration processes, although they are not in control of migration flows and have to depend on national legislation in all immigration-related issues. For this reason, cities and municipalities have a genuine interest in following successful local integration practices.

The report aims to present and analyze innovative policies and their successful implementation at the local level. It also provides an exchange of experience between cities to help encourage a learning process within the network. Moreover, the analysis assesses the role of companies, social partners, religious organizations, nongovernmental organizations and voluntary organizations at local level in supporting and developing more successful migrant integration policies.

The report also provides an objective assessment of current practices and initiatives in the cities participating in the CLIP network and discusses their transferability. It looks at measures of good practice in the various cities participating in the network, while at the same time it investigates the development of guidelines for good practice to help cities to cope more effectively with the challenge of integrating migrants into the local community.

We are in particular thankful to Mrs. Zuzana Kalna from the City of Prague and in particular to Professor Dusan Drbohlav and his assistants from the Charles University for the plenty of information we could gather with their help. We trust that the analyses drawn in this module of the research will support the emerging European policy debate with innovative concepts of integration policy on the local level.

1 Introduction

The topic of this module of CLIP has to do with the phenomena of urban life that are related to the multi-national, multi-ethnic and multi-religious structures of urban populations which challenge the ability of municipalities to establish or keep peaceful relations among the different segments of the population. In present day political discourse, relations between different ethnic and religious groups, immigrants and natives predominantly are discussed in terms of “intercultural dialogue” and/or “interreligious dialogue”. The idea is to conceptualize these phenomena as cases of intergroup relations. This conceptualization stands for an abstraction working with the assumption that there are similarities in the relations between quite different “groups”.

Intergroup relations are about ways in which “people in groups perceive, think about, feel about, and act towards people in other groups”. An intergroup relation in this sense means relations between categories and what and how one communicates about these. The images and stereotypes of the categories typically hide the socio-structural and cultural heterogeneity that exists in these groups.

Stereotypes and images in public communication are important, because they influence daily interaction in the city’s life and the relations between real groups. Many people in the urban area do not have direct and regular relations to people of a migration background or to ethnic minorities, but carry images and stereotypes of what these groups would be like in their minds. Newspapers, radio and television stations, communication in organizations or via cultural events are examples of media in which this communication takes place in the urban public.

The concept of “group” on which intergroup relations research is based is rather broad. In the CLIP project it includes the city administration, the city council, political parties, churches, labor unions, welfare organizations foundations, local media and anti-immigrant movements among others in the majority society.

On the part of the minorities it includes religious groups and national minorities. Some of the CLIP cities do not yet have much immigration, but have national minorities within their population that originate from the multi-ethnic structure of their country’s population.

This structure is mostly the result of drawing borders when nation states formed and people different from the majority population were included in the state territory. The drawing of new borders as a result of conflict and wars between states has also produced such national minorities. The identification of conditions, under which relations between groups take on different qualities, makes it possible to arrive at recommendations for the improvement of relations between groups that are based on research. This is what qualifies the intergroup relations approach as an appropriate conceptual foundation for the third CLIP module.

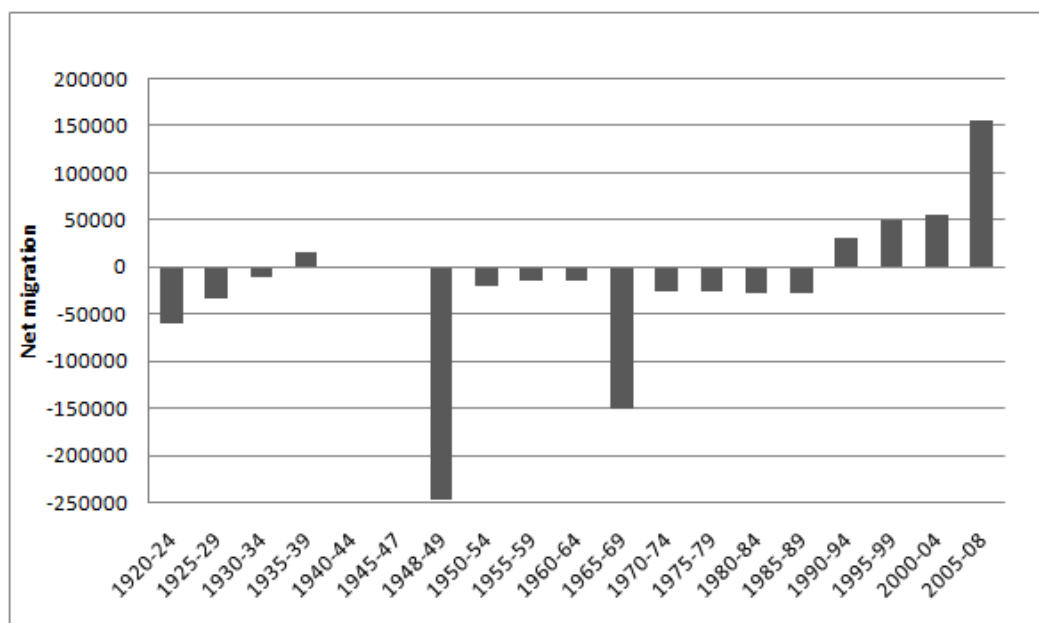
2 Background information on the country

2.1 History of migration and composition of the migrant populations

From the mid-19th century until the Velvet Revolution of 1989, the territory of the current Czech Republic underwent a very specific migratory experience. During the communist era with an extremely restrictive migration policy emigration dominated by far over immigration. Furthermore, emigration was – according to the legislation of that time – for the most part illegal. The following periods of international migration can be distinguished:

- (a) *Aftermath of World War II: expulsion of Germans*
- (b) *Political crisis of 1948 and 1968: the emigration of Czechs and Slovaks*
- (c) *The 1970s and 1980s: era of the recruitment of foreign workers*
- (d) *Migration after the fall of the “Iron Curtain” (1989-2007)*

Figure 1: Net migration of the Czech Republic, 1920-2008

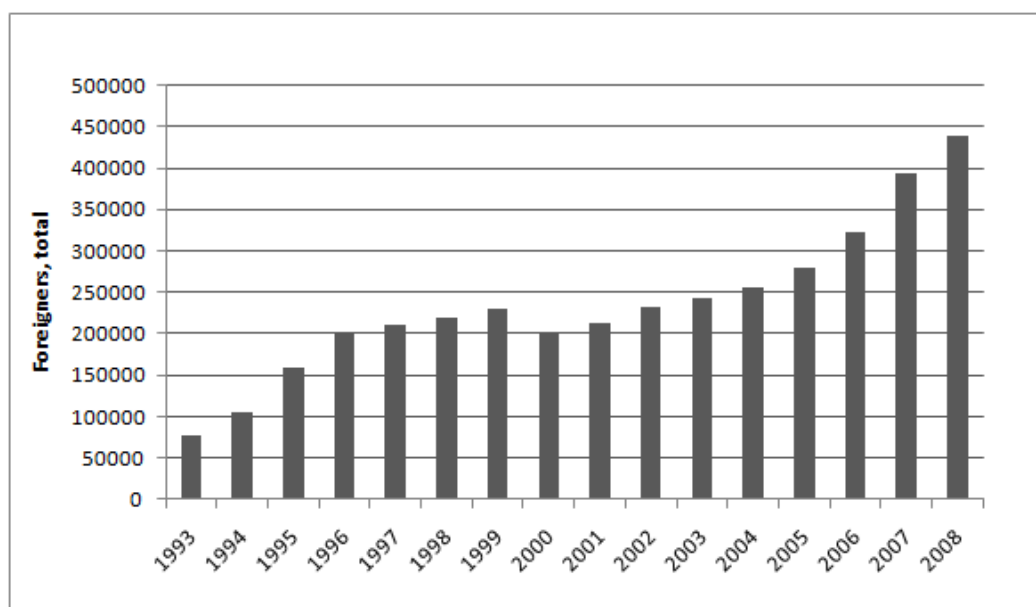


Source: Drbohlav. 2009 (IDEA Working paper). Notice: The World War Period was not included. Moreover, the late 1940s were separated into two periods due to large population movements following the World War (movements of German population after the WWII are included in the figure). Illegal emigration during the communist era was included. Until 2000, migration data covers only Czech nationals and foreigners changing permanent residence. Since 2001 foreigners were counted as immigrants not only when entering with a permanent residence permit, but also after 1 year of residence (with other permit/visa).

The Czech Republic represents one of the most important target countries of immigration in Central and Eastern Europe. This situation is relatively new since Czechia has traditionally been an area of emigration. The political, social and economic transformation was one of the most important factors in the development of the international migration in the Czech Republic. Other significant milestones of this period were the separation of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the independent Czech Republic on the 1st of January, 1993 as well the accession to the European Union (EU) on the 1st of May, 2004. All these events led to an increased number of international migrations (Drbohlav et al. 2008).

According to the so called “migration cycle concept” all European countries will go through a migration transition process from an emigration to an immigration country. This will happen in the course of time along with an overall modernization process. Throughout this transition countries experience specific migration stages. The most important drivers for this general development can be seen in the demographic development of both sending and receiving countries and in the paradigms of migration and control policies. The transition from a country of emigration to a country of immigration pass some typical stages. These stages differ by the features of the migration flow itself, by the socioeconomic circumstances in the sending and receiving countries and by the transformation of the dominant migration regime (Fassmann & Reeger 2008).

Figure 2: Number of legally registered foreigners staying in Czechia (stocks), 1993-2008



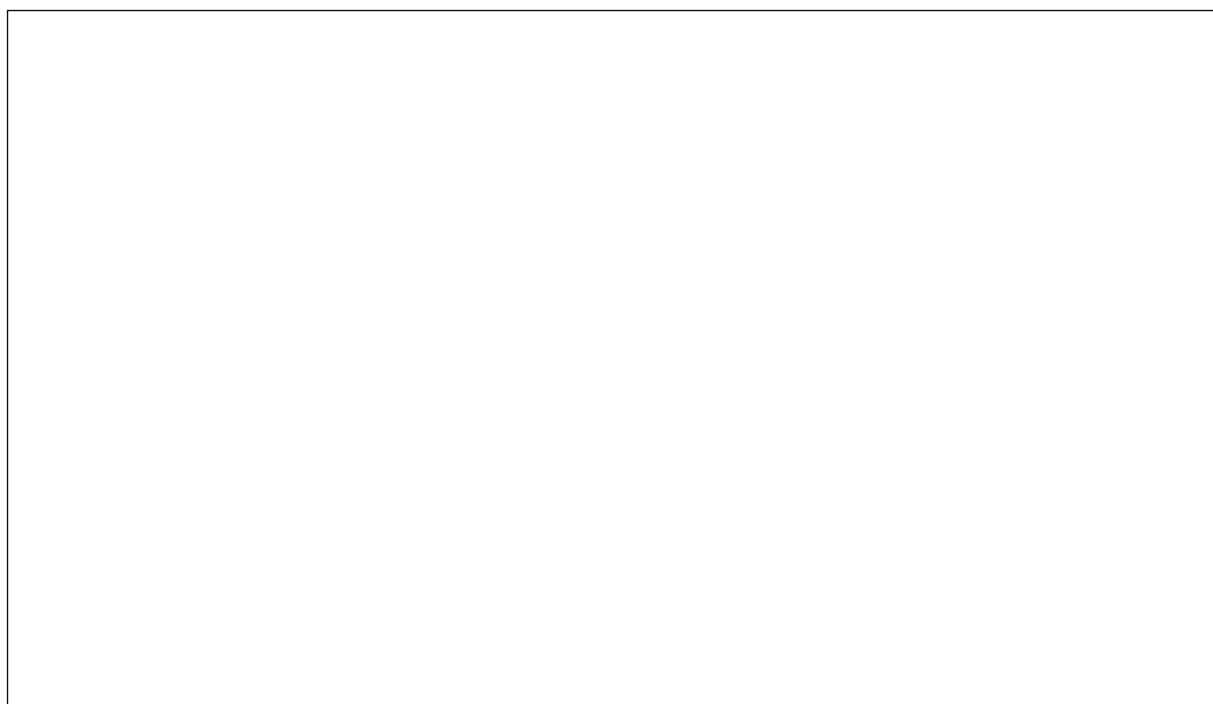
Source: Drbohlav et al. 2009. Notice: Short-term foreigners (less than 90 days) are not included in the stock figures.

On 31st March 2004, 249,464 foreign nationals were officially living in the Czech Republic, of whom 82,415 were permanent residents and 167,049 held a visa for over 90 days.

Permanent and long-term residents made up 2.3% of the country's total population. Most of them came from Slovakia (66,109) and the Ukraine (65,647). Big communities also were of Vietnamese (30,365), Polish (less than 17,000) and Russian (less than 13,000) origin (Fassmann & Kohlbacher 2007). The numbers of stocks of registered foreigners (staying for more than three months) have grown steadily from about 78,000 in 1993 to 438,000 in 2008 (Drbohlav et al. 2009; see figure 2).

The most important migratory connections of the Czech Republic were those with Slovakia and are based on the historical background within one country until 1992. This relation was reflected after 1993. Slovak citizens were until 1999 the largest group of immigrants. In the last decade they were replaced by Ukrainians, who have dominated the immigration flows. Other large immigration groups consist of citizens of Vietnam, Russia, and Poland and in recent years they have been joined by Moldovan and Mongolian citizens (Drbohlav et al. 2008).

Table 1: International migration in the Czech Republic by most important citizenship (2005-2007; in each year December 31st)

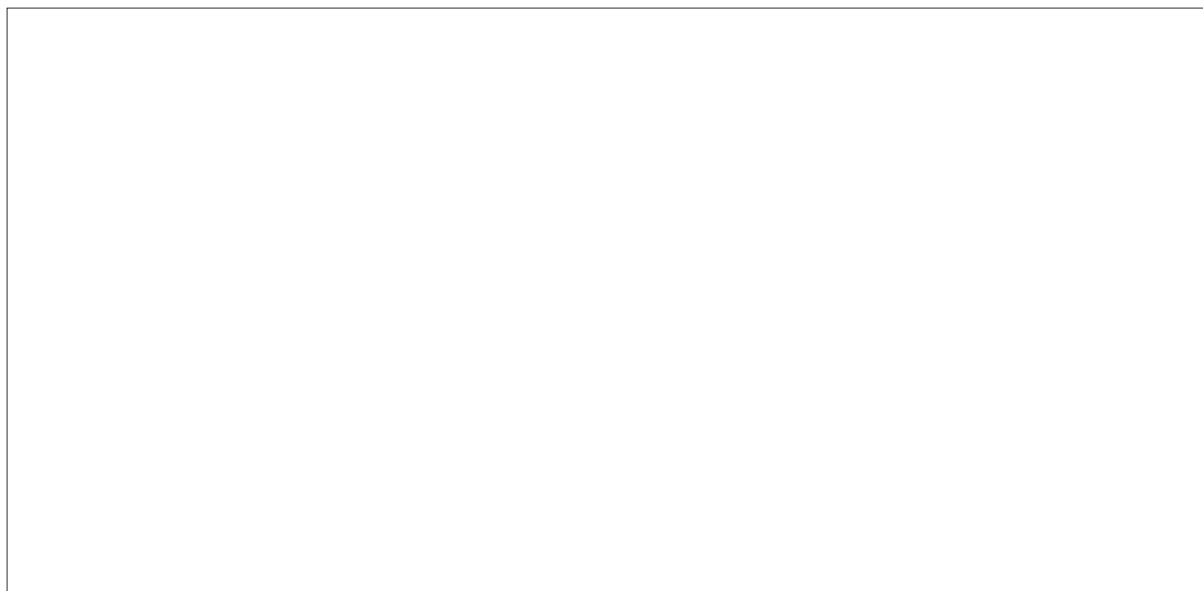


Source: Drbohlav et al. 2008.

The number of irregular migrants can only be estimated and stood between 295,000 and 335,000 at the end of 2000. Of these numbers, 165,000 were estimated to be active on the Czech labor market, 30,000 being their dependants and 100,000 to 140,000 were transit migrants, whose number were declining during recent years (Fassmann & Kohlbacher 2007). Official police data designate only about some 7,500 migrants

apprehended for “illegal migration” in 2007 which means those apprehended because of illegal border crossing or irregular stay (Drbohlav 2009).

Table 2: Trends in illegal migration of foreigners in the CR (1993-2007)



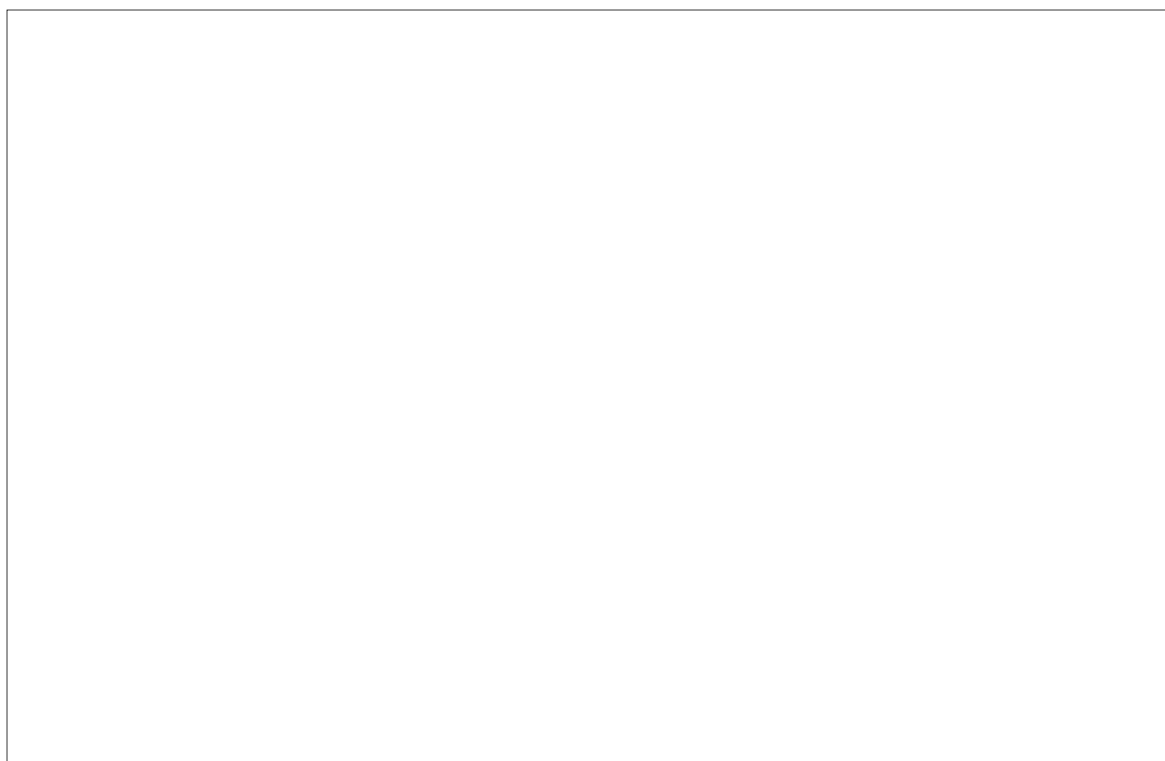
Source: Drbohlav et al. 2008.

Since 1993 the number of foreigners seized for illegal migration decreased by 82% (see table 2). It wouldn't be accurate to affirm that illegal migration has decreased, because there is no evidence if the reduction has been caused by an actual general decrease of illegal movements, or by enhanced methods and strategies of illegal migrants which make their capture less likely. Furthermore, there is no information available on the quality of controls of the foreign police. Consequently it is impossible to connect the figures mentioned directly with the real development of the phenomenon. The fact that the Czech Republic acceded to the Schengen area in December 2007 and has consequently no outside EU border, further reduced the numbers of irregular border crossing.

The most important sending country of undocumented migrants is Ukraine, followed by Russia, Belarus, Vietnam, Moldavia and China. Illegal migrants come for short or long-term stay and take mainly the labour intensive and badly paid-up jobs which are unattractive to most Czechs. They work in home cleaning, agriculture, construction, hotels, restaurants and industrial branches. Ukrainians are an auxiliary labour force in construction, however, due to their large number they are spread throughout other sectors too. Vietnamese are mostly holders of a trade licence for retail trade (with cheap goods as clothes, electronics, or food). Chinese can be typically found as wholesale businessmen or in Chinese restaurants. Recently, Mongolians have specialized in manufacturing, especially the leather industry. The role of immigrant vis-à-vis Czech labour force is rather complementary than competitive (Drbohlav et al. 2009).

In comparison to the 1990s, when the gender proportion of migrants was relatively balanced, in the statistics of 2001 the gender structure of both immigrants and emigrants changed in the favour of men (about 65%). The highest percentage of males can be found among Polish migrants (75-80%). In contrast there were low percentages of men among Russians and Mongolians (only about 28%) between 2001 and 2007. The age structure of the period 2003-2007 mirrored a substantial concentration in the categories of 20-29 (about 38%) and 30-39 years of age (approximately 25%). The average age of immigrants was 28.7 and thus lower than the average age of emigrants (30.7 years) (see Drbohlav et al. 2008).

Map 1: Share of foreigners in the population of the Czech Republic (31st Dec 2007)



Source: Czech Statistical Office 2008
([http://www.czso.cz/csu/2008edicniplan.nsf/engt/1C00308163/\\$File/141408_kt01.pdf](http://www.czso.cz/csu/2008edicniplan.nsf/engt/1C00308163/$File/141408_kt01.pdf)).

The present spatial distribution of foreigners shows a predilection for urban districts like Prague, Brno, Ostrava, and their neighbouring areas. In Prague (in absolute numbers and the relative proportion to Czech population) together with its neighbouring districts (Prague East and the Prague West) the highest concentration of foreigners can be found. An obvious difference exists between Bohemia and Moravia. In Moravia (apart from the abovementioned urban districts) low numbers of foreigners are counted. There is a so-called East-West gradient with the intensity of the immigration which increases from the Eastern parts of the country to the West. Moreover, there is an obvious difference in the

Czech Republic between the northern and southern Bohemian regions because the northern part is much more attractive for immigration (see map 1).

Border districts receive higher numbers of immigrants from the neighbouring countries. This is true of Poles and Germans, but less of Slovaks who because of historical connections be found also in other districts of the Czech Republic. It is evident that the distribution of long-term immigrants mirrors the areas with a high labour force demand. A specific group represents the Vietnamese, who are involved mostly in retail trade and distributed over the whole country. In contrast, the Russians are highly concentrated in Prague and its surrounding areas and also in Karlovy.

2.2 National policy context

Czech migration policy has been created “on a greenfield site”, so to say, as before 1989 the policy makers had little experience with international migration issues and their management. Consequently, migration “policy”, or more adequately migration regulations of 1990s were very liberal and quite passive in managing immigration flows. Simultaneously, a tolerance of irregularity (by the public and in fact, by institutional structures as well) contributed to a rapid increase of irregular migrants. As Drbohlav (forthcoming) describes it, these sorts of “non-policy policies” enabled immigrants to come easily to the CR and to operate there (Drbohlav 2009).

Definition of foreigner’s residence in the CR

The residence of foreigners in the CR is governed by the Act No. 326/1999 Sb., on the Residence of Foreigners, and partially also by the Act No. 325/1999 Sb., on Asylum, as amended. Pursuant to the law, such a person is deemed to be a foreigner, who does not have Czech citizenship (or none of his/her citizenships is Czech). The issue of the foreigner’s entry, residence and exit from the CR belongs to competences of the Police, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A foreigner may reside in the CR temporarily or permanently. On the reasons determined by law, the Police can refuse to grant the foreigner a residence visa (temporary or permanent). Reasons for not granting visa or other residence permits are stipulated by law (Czech Statistical Office 2008).

On 31st December 2006 the two most frequent types of permanent residence permit holders with regard to residence purposes were expected settlement (38%) and family reunion (60%). Concerning long-term permits (exceeding 90 days), the main aims of residence were employment (70%) and different economic activities (see table 3).

Table 3: Foreigners by purpose of residence (31st December 2006)



Source: Drbohlav, et al. 2008.

The target groups for integration policy can't be restricted only to one group of migrants like e.g. to third country nationals. The categories of foreign nationals residing in the CR are as follows: EU citizens and their family members, third country nationals, foreigners who gained asylum/international protection, registered refugees and asylum seekers, foreigners staying in the CR illegally.

Table 4: Foreigners in the CR by type of residence, 1993-2007 (in each year December 31st)

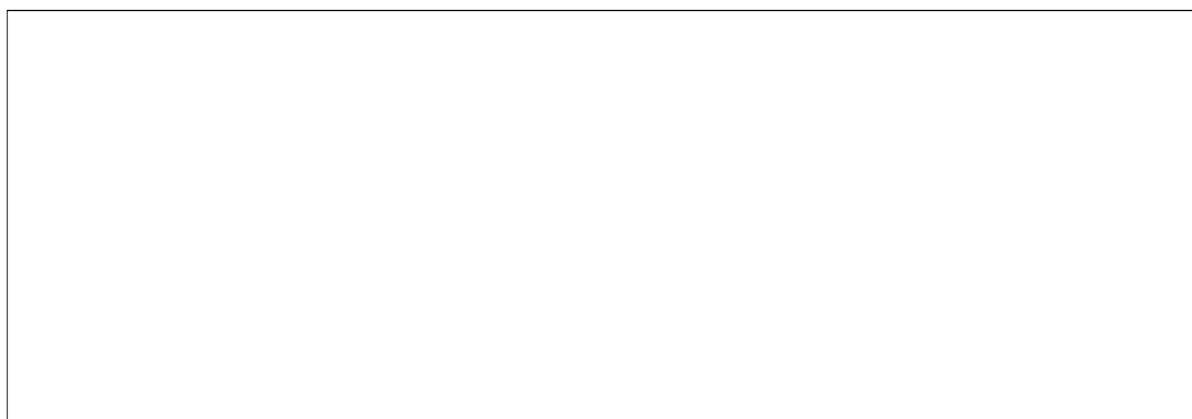
Source: Drbohlav et al. 2008.

Alien and Asylum Legacy Framework

The legal status of foreigners in the Czech Republic is primarily covered by the Act on Residence of Aliens (in particular as regards residence regimes), the Asylum Act and the Citizenship Act (for details compare Fassmann & Kohlbacher 2007). In 1989, the Czech Republic's legal framework was not ready to cope with migration that resulted from the opening of the borders. On 16th November 1990, the **Act on Refugees** (No. 498/1990) was passed in order to transpose the provisions of the Geneva Convention into the Czech legal system. The Act on Refugees did not include provisions for the swift rejection of unjustified applications, and finally did not cover the issue of employment of asylum applicants. The Act on Residence of Aliens (No. 123/1992) introduced the now-classic typology of residency. Legislation paved the way for the Czech Republic's rather liberal but chaotic migration policy during the 1990s. A major turnaround took place in the beginning of 2000, when two new acts came into force: the **Act on Asylum** (325/1999) and the **Act on Residency of Aliens** (326/1999). The Czech Republic followed the example of Western Europe and tried to regulate migration by stricter laws. Foreign nationals are required to have visas to enter the country.

The amendments to the above acts after 2000 reflected the requirements of the Schengen system to prepare the Czech Republic for the EU accession on 1st May 2004. For the period between 1994 and 2007 only 1,969 (2.5%) out of 79,363 asylum seekers were successful in getting the approval. In 2001 18,094 asylum-seekers asked for asylum, which was granted to 83 persons. The majority of asylum seekers move from the Ukraine.(see table 5; Drbohlav et al. 2008).

Table 5: Numbers of asylum procedures in the Czech Republic, 1993-2007



Source: Drbohlav, et al. 2008.

The integration of migrants: a new responsibility for local policy in the Czech Republic

General Remarks

The first Governmental Conception of the Integration of Foreigners was approved in 2000. Since then, this conception has been updated several times. The main goal is the convergence of the law status of the immigrants to the law status of Czech citizens depending on the length of their stay in the Czech Republic. Legal immigration is viewed by Czech authorities as a big potential for enrichment of the whole population as well as a demographic measure¹. The Czech Republic is involved in multilateral structures dealing with migration problems, evaluation of migratory movement trends, regulations for the management of migratory flows and prevention of uncontrolled migration, such as for example with committees of the Council of Europe, or the International Organization for Migration. The Czech Republic participates in the “Berlin-Budapest Group” and provides information on illegal migration through the International Centre for Migration Policies Development. In order to secure the border and to facilitate border clearance, agreements have been concluded with the neighbouring countries of Germany, Austria and the Slovak Republic.

The strategy of integrating migrants

The coordinative subject of integration is the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs (*Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí*) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Health. The main target group of integrative measures is the legal immigrant with long-term status. The cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in integration matters is essential and absolutely necessary. One of the most important results of cooperation between the state authorities on the one hand and the NGOs on the other is a special web page for foreigners (www.cizinci.cz²).

Worth mentioning is the Pilot project “*Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers*”, run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic as the main regulator of immigration to the Czech Republic. Since January 2003, authorities have been running this programme with the purpose to ease the access of skilled foreign workers interested in legal work in the Czech Republic as the country's population ages and many highly-qualified Czechs go abroad to work.

The Czech Republic was the very first ex-communist country which offered the official possibility to apply for permanent residence already after 5 years of work and stay in the Czech Republic. The project is open for citizens of Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia and

¹ The Czech Republic is one of the countries with the most serious problems concerning ageing and population decrease in the EU.

² “*Cizinci*” means “foreigners” in Czech.

Montenegro, Ukraine and other countries as well as for graduates of Czech universities coming from all states worldwide, who graduated in 1995 or later and graduates of Czech secondary schools from all states worldwide, who finished their studies in 2000 or later.

Participants who in the first year of the project lose their job through no fault of their own are entitled to a 45 day grace period during which they do not lose their visa and their residence permit is not revoked. The above mentioned grace period should serve as time during which participants search for another job in the CR. In the course of following years of the project the participants are given the grace period also if they lose their job for other reasons.³

Since 1992 there has been a sharp decline in total fertility rates down to 1,171 newborns per 1,000 women in Prague (2002). Thus, the Czech Republic has one of the lowest fertility rates all over Europe. Then there is the fact of prolongation of life expectancy of the Czech population. Specialists have calculated that in the year 2030 there will be a lack of more than 420,000 workers on the Czech labour market. So the project "Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers" hopes to attract professional workers. The problem is that the project tries to attract immigrants but cannot offer to its applicant's adequate salaries, guarantee a job or offer a tight social net. This means that the immigration risk must be completely bewared by the migrant.

3 Background Information on the City

3.1 Brief description of the city

Prague is the capital and the largest city of the Czech Republic. It is a natural centre of politics, international relations, education, culture and economy. On the 31st December 2007 Prague had according to the Information System of Registration of Inhabitants (ISEO) 1,258,062 inhabitants of which 10.2% were foreign nationals. Prague covers an area of 496 square kilometers and represents about 11% of the country's population. On 1st May 2004, the Accession Treaty of the Czech Republic with the European Union started to be valid. In 1992 its historical centre was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List.

As a region, it accounts for a disproportionately high share of the country's gross domestic product, with above-average incomes and a very high rating and interest on the part of entrepreneurs. The region generates more than a quarter of the nationwide GDP (in 2002 it was 25.7%). In GDP per capita, the CR actually reaches about 60% of the EU Member States average, but in the case of Prague the regional GDP per capita since several years already exceeds the EU average by more than a fifth.

Since 1979, any increases in Prague's population have been related solely to net migration. In 1994, Prague recorded for the first time a total annual decrement of

³ See <http://www.imigracecz.org/?lang=en>.

population; since that year, Prague's population has been decreasing every year. A new migration tendency comes on top of that consisting in an outflow of Prague inhabitants by suburbanization. According to the 2001 Population and Housing Census, the number of inhabitants was even lower than the number in 1980, namely 1,169,106 persons. During the last three years, Prague's population has been yearly slightly increasing again.

3.2 The city's migrant population and its characteristics/main groups

More than 1/3 of all foreigners who stay legally in the Czech Republic are living in Prague. At the beginning of 1993, the year when the Czech Republic was established, about 50,000 foreign nationals lived in the country, of whom about 30,000 possessed permanent residence permits and 20,000 long-term residence permits. There are no reliable estimations concerning the numbers of irregular migrants.

The capital City of Prague is composed of 57 self administrative districts which are highly variable in population, size and urban structure (see map 2). Several of them consist of a number of previous town districts and have usually several ten thousand of inhabitants (e.g., Prague 10, Prague 8, Prague 4, and Prague 6). Others, situated mainly on the borders of Prague, are consisting of only one or few former small town districts by her population size only up to quite a few thousand inhabitants (Drbohlav et al. 2008).

Map 2: Prague's municipal districts

Source: Drbohlav et al. 2008

The districts differ in the level of urbanization, population density, quality of technical infrastructure and socio-economic conditions of life of their inhabitants. As for the number of inhabitants these city districts are also very different. While the population of two districts account for more than 100,000 each, 18 districts comprise less than 2,000 inhabitants each, of which four have even less than 500 inhabitants each.

The number of foreign nationals having a Czech permanent residence permit was continuously growing since the establishment of the independent Czech Republic. After the accession to the European Union it was this category which reported a substantial year-to-year growth, which made the year 2004 quite different from previous ones. According to Population Census 2001 93.4 % of the population of Prague were ethnic Czechs. The second important nationality was Slovak (1.6%). Other national minorities constituted only small percentages of all inhabitants. However, since there was no obligation to fill in ones "nationality" in the Census questionnaire, it is likely that many people did not declare their national identity. Statistical data concerning structure of inhabitants according to nationality, as well as other demographical information data sets are thus seen only as a subordinate tool in the national minorities' issue. To illustrate this one can take the case of the number of Roma that is underestimated. According to Census 2001 only 653 inhabitants of Prague stated that they were Roma. According to scientific estimations, however, it is thought that there were between 20,000 to 25,000 Roma people living in Prague. Representatives of all other national minorities also point out to the underestimated results of the Census 2001 concerning the number of members of national minorities.

In 2005 the total number of foreigners in Prague was 90,209 of whom 7,530 were in the age between 0 and 14 years, 80,445 from 15 to 64 years and 2,234 were 65 years or older. Thus, the age structure of the immigrant population is dominated by young and middle-aged people.

The foreign population consisted of 25,631 permanent residents and asylum seekers and 64,578 temporary residents. There was also a lot of smaller national communities existent in the capital. On the local labour market there were 72,317 foreigners working in 2003. 70.4% or 50,912 persons (of whom 16,275 women) were registered at labour offices and 29.6% or 21,405 persons (6,633 women) had a trade licence. In addition there were 28,092 foreign workers from the EU countries. The demographic development of the Czech Republic is still more and more influenced by persons of foreign origin.

Vietnamese migrants are not only the third largest group of immigrants in CR (in 2008 there were 60,258 Vietnamese staying legally in CR) but also they represent a highly specific group. They are ethnically visible, coming from a farewell non-European country and have many specific features (such as business dominated type of migration) that differ them from other immigrant groups in CR.

The immigration history of Vietnamese into the territory of CR can be divided into two distinct phases. The first phase started already in the 1950s and dated until 1989. Pre-1989 Vietnamese immigration to Czechoslovakia was regulated by inter-state agreements. Czechoslovakia, like other countries of the Soviet block, signed many agreements with Vietnam on temporary immigration of Vietnamese: in the 1950s in relation to studying, in the 1970s in relation to vocational training and in the 1980s concerning the compensation of missing domestic labour force mostly in manufacturing.

The post-1989 immigration phase (lasting until today) has been connected mainly to the transformation of Czech economy, the positive economic development and already developed social networks (Drbohlav et al. 2009).

As compared to other ethnic groups (mainly Chinese, Russians), Vietnamese are spread throughout the whole country, though Prague represents the most important Vietnamese concentration (in Prague on district level too) (Drbohlav et al. 2009). However, such concentration does not mean a typical segregated area comparable to Western European cities.

Because of the high numbers of Vietnamese together with their cultural distinctiveness, Vietnamese business is also oriented towards serving the own "ethnic" group (selling Vietnamese food, providing counseling or translation services, as well as establishing agencies to import workers from Vietnam, etc.). Vietnamese entrepreneurs use their human capital, "ethnic" networks and family/community solidarity to develop trading activities in response to a particular market gap. Vietnamese economic activities in CR have many features of an ethnic economy. Namely, it concerns employment of family members and other immigrants from the same "ethnic" group, and use of services provided by co-ethnic companies. Also "ethnic" solidarity comes into play within Vietnamese immigrants in CR.

In the last two years there was a tremendous increase of Vietnamese in employees' positions from 5,425 (December 2007) to 16,254 (December 2008). This increase has been fueled by a generally high demand for low skilled workers in CR which has not been fulfilled enough from traditional sending countries as Ukraine or Poland (Drbohlav et al. 2009). Such a demand existed (before the economic crisis occurred) particularly in the manufacturing sector. Most Vietnamese workers have come to large companies operating in automobile and information technology industries by labour recruitment agencies (probably with a quiet support of Vietnamese government). Origin, development and functioning of these agencies are in many cases problematic and similar to the agency system of Ukrainians.

According to unofficial data sources the Vietnamese population increased from 40.000 to approx. 60.000 persons between 2006 and 2008, which mirrored a considerable influx of this community. The majority came through arrangements and agencies which in many cases promised very precarious labour contracts. Even for these contracts the immigrants had to pay enormous sums of between USD 10.000 and 14.000. Most of them must have sold their houses in order to pay these amounts. One of the main aspects of the Vietnamese labour immigration is that this group is really very eager to work in the CR even under very bad conditions.

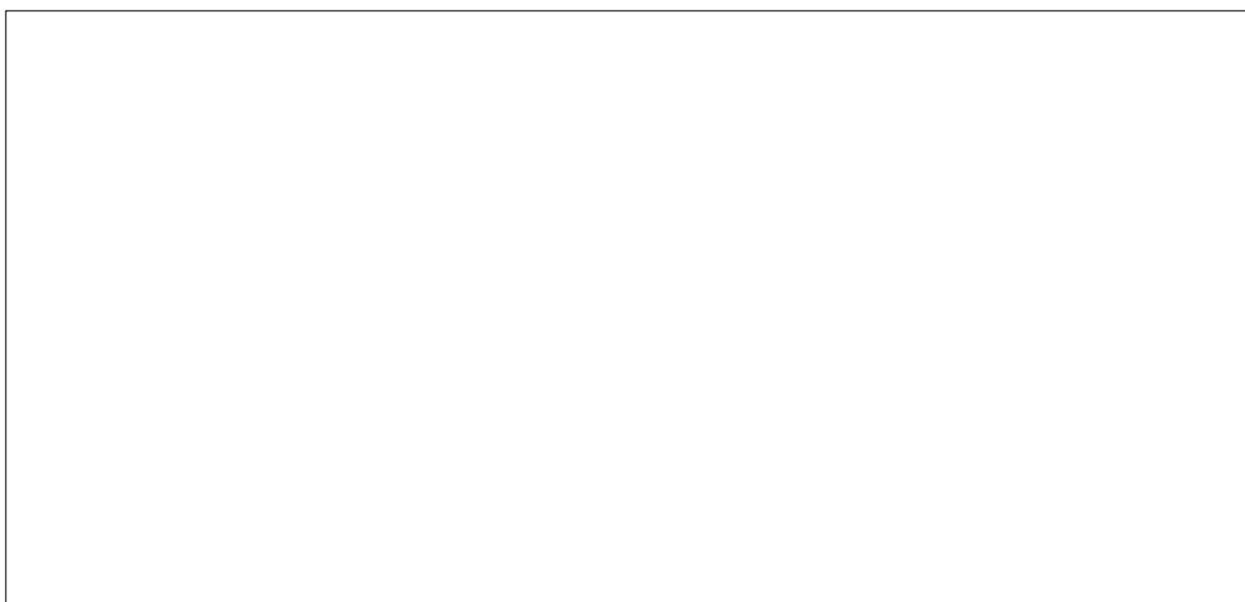
The actual main issue due the international financial crisis is that the migrants who already lost their jobs don't want to go back in their home countries. This can in particular be observed in the Vietnamese community, who spent a fortune on different recruitment agencies to get a contract in Czechia. Starting in November 2008 only 20 people

accepted the offer to go back home with the proposal of the repatriation program of the Government “Back to Vietnam”, which includes a flight ticket and 500 Euro cash (Nguyen Duy 2009).

Finally, what the future of Vietnamese migrants in CR is remains unclear. Vietnamese migrants have already proved that they are very flexible and able to create new economic strategies. They can even switch to other segments of the market, the second generation of Vietnamese in Czechia has very good results in schools and is overall pretty well integrated into Czech society, therefore, their future labour market integration may significantly differ from the jobs of their parents (Drbohlav 2009).

The increasing share of immigrants influences not only the labor market but brings within diverse lifestyles as well as different types of education. The biggest groups represent citizens of Ukraine (46,832), Slovakia (17,637), Russia (12,444), Vietnam (7,785) and China (3,474).

Table 6: Numbers of foreigners in Prague (31st December 2007)



Source: Drbohlav et al. 2008.

Immigrants from “developed” countries like USA, Germany or Great Britain represent a considerable group of Prague’s foreign population. Apart from the Germans nationals of these Western states are identified to be vastly concentrated in the capital – for example 61% of legal long-term immigrants from USA or 63% of Britons live in Prague. Also Russians have a high concentration in Prague (more than a half of them resided in the capital) (see table 6). Regarding the gender composition, the proportion of men is about 59% which is comparable to the proportion of men within the whole immigrant population of the Czech Republic. There are slight differences among the most numerous citizenship groups but men clearly represent a majority in all of them (with the exception of Russians) (Drbohlav et al. 2008).

All the time an increasing share of population in productive age and a traditionally high share of the older age cohorts result also in the fact that the average age was increasing in Prague and was the very highest among all regions of the CR. Also some shifts in distribution of inhabitants of the three main age groups (0–14, 15–59, and 60+) are to a certain extent related to the situation on Prague's labour market. Permanently increasing is the share of inhabitants in the age of 15–59. On the contrary, share of children under 15 is decreasing as well as number of inhabitants over 65.

The period 1993–2000 was characterized by a decline in the number of permanent residents. The negative population growth was further aggravated by declining migration, which in the years following 1998 turned into a net migration outflow – the region of Central Bohemia has itself become the target, instead the source of migration. It was as late as 2002 that the inflow of migrants moderately surpassed the outflow, with the major reason being the inclusion of long term-staying foreigners in the statistics. Between the last two censuses the number of foreigners with long-term or permanent residents' status rose pointing to more ethnic diversity.

The economic activity rate of foreigners has recently reached more than 80%, compared to about 60% of the total population of the Czech Republic. Paralelly, the unemployment rate of foreigners is thought to be much lower⁴ than the overall registered unemployment rate in CR, also due to strict legal regulations which almost do not allow long-term migrants to stay in the country when made redundant. Taking into account that the majority of districts where migrants have been importantly represented among economically active population have rather low unemployment rates, it can be argued that foreign labour force in CR plays a complementary rather than a substitutive role vis-à-vis domestic workers.

3.3 The city's Muslim population and its characteristics

The basic information which should have been collected by the City Administration through the Common Reporting Scheme (CRS) hasn't been delivered to our institute. Thus, the relevant data was collected during the field visit. No exact statistical and demographic information about the Muslim population is available. From our interviews we learned that Muslims constitute a small group. The estimated number of Muslims (almost all of them Sunni) in the Czech Republic is about 10,000. The number rose sharply during the 1990s and has remained stable since. Many of them came as asylum seekers to the Czech Republic. Most of the Muslims are refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina (early 1990s) and the former Soviet Union (mostly from Caucasus region, from the late 1990s until the present). A remarkable group is the middle-class people of Egyptian, Syrian and other Middle Eastern ancestries (typically those who studied in Czechoslovakia and decided to stay). A few hundred Muslims are Czech converts. Regarding numbers the Turkish community is relatively small compared to neighbouring

⁴ There is no exact data available.

countries as Austria or Germany. The numbers of Turkish citizens rose from 334 in 2001 to 635 in 2005 (Ministry of the Interior of the CR).

The law from 1912 recognized Islam as an official religion in the whole Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and officially allowed its presence in the region. The first Muslim community (Moslimské náboženské obce pro Československo) was established in 1934. In 1949 previous registration was abolished. An attempt to set up a new Muslim community in 1968 failed. In 1991 the "Center of Muslim communities" (Ústředí muslimských náboženských obcí) was established. In 1998 a mosque was opened in Brno and a year later in Prague. The latter was founded by the Islamic Foundation in Prague (Islámská nadace v Praze). Attempts to open mosques in a couple of other cities were stopped by local citizens. In 2004 Islam was officially registered: the community is thus eligible to obtain funds from the state (see also Mendel & Bečka 1998; Mendel et al. 2008).

4 Local intercultural policies in general

Based on the necessity to formulate principles on which Prague would build up its policy for developing relationships with national minorities, the city created and approved through the Prague Resolution No. 47/11 of 17th October 2002 its "Concept of Policy of the City of Prague in Relation to National Minorities".

According to Ms Hana Halová, Councillor for Healthcare, Social Care and National Minorities, the national minorities whose members live and work in the city of Prague for several generations, are an important and inseparable part of Prague's civic life. This is why the City creates in its communal policy optimal conditions and means of communicating and co-operating with national minorities. The "Concept of Policy of the City of Prague in Relation to National Minorities" guarantees continuity in communicating with national minorities and also illustrates important values that develop the identity of national minorities; this way, they integrate in Prague's social life as "full-fledged" citizens who have the right to realize their specific national interests (Balvin 2003).

Prague defines further orientations of support and cooperation with representatives of ethnic groups and their organizations. These are guaranteed by the following documents:

the Act on the Capital City of Prague, the Policy statement of the Council of the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague for the term 1998-2002, the Strategic Plan of the City of Prague, and the Act on the Rights of Members of National Minorities and Amendments to certain Acts

The Act of 13th April 2000 on the Capital City of Prague refers to a possibility of establishing a committee of the City Council of Prague for national minorities. The City considers the organisational framework of communication with national minorities to be very important and therefore the initial Advisory Board for National Minorities created in 1997 was transformed into the Commission of the Council of the City Council of Prague.

The implementation of the 1999 Policy statement of the Council of the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague focused on initiating all-city programmes of support for activities of national minorities, support for extending preparatory primary school classes for the needs of Roma communities as well as other children from disadvantaged social and cultural environment.

The strategic plan of the City of Prague comprises two programmes focusing on communication and cooperation with national minorities: the “Support for out-of-school education of children and adults in the native language of national minorities” and the programme “Cultural, social and educational activities of national minorities in Prague”. The first programme was launched in 1999 by financial support for leisure-time activities of unincorporated associations of national minorities and their “Sunday educational schools”. In the other programme national minorities were given a possibility of asserting themselves with an emphasis laid on preserving and developing their culture and the development of heightened awareness of their culture through publication activities (Balvin 2003).

As annexed in the Strategic plan of the City of Prague, Division of Development of the City of Prague, 2000, p. 101: *“Prague will continue to support cultural, social and educational activities of unincorporated associations and organizations of national minorities focusing on different groups of population, members of ethnic communities and citizens of Prague, in the effort to keep up and develop traditions of individual ethnic groups, the dialogue between them as well as the enrichment of the cultural life in the capital city of Prague”*.

The Act on the Rights of Members of National Minorities anticipates a number of amendments to other laws requiring a flexible and effective response from Prague, direct communication of national minorities with City Council and the Municipal Assembly of Prague as well as deepening communication with the Council of the Government for ethnic minorities.

Prescribed in the Act of 10th July 2001 on the Rights of Members of National Minorities and amendments to certain Acts (Act No. 273/2001, Collection of Laws, chapter 104 distributed on 2nd August 2001, p. 1): *“A national minority is a community of citizens of the Czech Republic living in the territory what is now the Czech Republic, generally differing from other citizens by their common ethnic origin, language, culture and traditions, forming a minority in order to make a concerted effort to preserve and develop their common characteristics, language and culture as well as to express and protect the interest of their historically formed community”* (Balvin 2003).

The policy of the City of Prague in relation to national minorities is based on facts rooted in history, which are subject to reconsiderations in the present time.

4.1 General approach and responsibility for relations to ethnic and religious organizations in the city

In order to communicate in the best possible way with ethnic minorities living in Prague, the City of Prague has created its own organizational structure. The significant bodies for setting the principles and methods of communication with national minorities as well as for other areas of migrants' integration are the City Council of Prague and the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague. Both institutions form an integral part of the whole communication and cooperation strategy with national minorities and immigrants.

The city of Prague has always considered organizational matters in the sphere of communication with national minorities and of the integration of migrants to be important and, thus, a Committee of City Council of Prague for national minorities issues, replaced in 2000 the former Advisory Board for National Minorities that had been founded in 1997. Later (in 2001) the Committee of City Council of Prague for the issue of integration of foreigners was established. This Committee ensured cooperation and information sharing among different departments of Prague City Hall and even among other institutions dealing with the integration of foreigners. Both committees were in the year 2007 united under the name of the "Committee of Prague City Council for National Minorities and Foreigners' Integration Issues and for Grant Schemes in This Sphere".

A member of the City Council of Prague, the City Councillor for Social Care and Housing Policy is responsible for national minorities and foreigners' integration issues. He is the head of several subordinate workers who communicate with national minorities' and foreigners' civic associations on a regular basis. The special position of a Coordinator for Roma Community Matters was also established. He/she is responsible for the communication with the Roma advisory boards of various Prague districts as well as with other institutions dealing with Roma community issues. The responsibility incorporates the issue of national relations but as well social, employment and housing affairs.

The City Council of Prague established the "Commission of the City Council of Prague for National Minorities and Foreigners' Integration Issues and for Grant Schemes in this Sphere", as a communication tool between Prague and its nationalities and as an advisory body for Prague's City Council. The head of the committee is the City Councillor for social care and housing policy.

Since 1999, the City Council of Prague and the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague annually negotiate over projects of national minorities within the grant scheme called "All-City Programs Support for Activities of National Minorities in the Prague Area". Acting on suggestions of the Grant Commission for National Minorities, this system provides financial subsidies to unincorporated associations for projects regarding preservation and development of national cultures and languages, as well as publication and learning programs (Balvin 2003).

Part of the funds have been allocated by the Council and Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague in the city budget for analytical and presentations activities of Prague including seminars on topics related to national minorities and publications mapping the relation between Prague and national minorities in different fields (education, culture, social affairs etc.). Since 2006 projects dealing with immigrants' integration are supported as well.

Cooperation with Prague's districts as well as with the departments of social care, housing, education, culture etc forms an integral part of the whole communication and cooperation strategy with national minorities and migrants. This strategy results from a long-term communication with different nationalities. The city of Prague considers cooperation and information sharing with other cities abroad as an important tool in dealing with national minorities' and immigrants' integration issues.

The policy of the City of Prague in the sphere of integration results from the Government Resolution from the 7th July 1999 No. 689 "Zásady integrace cizinců na území České republiky" ("Principles of Integration of Foreigners in the Czech Republic") and from the "Zpráva o realizaci Koncepce integrace cizinců v roce 2006 a návrh dalšího postupu" ("Report on the Realization of the Conception of Integration of Foreigners in 2006 and a Proposal of Future Steps"). The policy in the sphere of national minorities results from the Law on Rights of Members of National Minorities. In data collection it is based on the Law No. 101/2000 Sb. about personal data protection.

Prague formulates and promotes a policy conception in relation to national minorities and foreigners. This conception is based not only on experience but as well on trends in European policy concerning local government (e.g. respect to rights of national minorities and foreigners). Thus, Prague has, for the first time after the 1989 turnout, created its own "Conception of the Policy of the Capital City of Prague in Relation to National Minorities in the Years 2002–2006" that was in accordance with the Statement of Policy of the City Council of Prague from 23-02-1999 and with the Strategic Plan of the Capital City of Prague (approved by Prague Assembly on 25-05-2000). Since 1999 Prague City Council and Prague Assembly annually negotiate over projects of national minorities within the grant scheme called "City support programs for activities of national minorities in the Prague area" and since 2006 projects dealing with migrants' integration are supported as well.

There are 1,780 city employees and there is no working position where persons with an immigrant or nation minority background could not be employed. Employment rules ensure equal treatment to all job applicants. All job applicants must comply with the same conditions such as the good knowledge of Czech or Slovak language. Foreign nationals must have a permanent residence permit in the Czech Republic.

For the promotion of the awareness of staff for minorities' rights there is yearly a one-day informative seminar on the issue of integration of immigrants and intercultural matters that is organized by the Office of the Director of Prague City Hall. This seminar is intended for employees of Prague City Hall and for employees of Prague districts offices who get into

contact with foreign citizens or who prepare policy conceptions that influence the life of foreigners and/or immigrants. The seminar is guided by NGO workers.

In 2007 the city of Prague has opened the “**House of National Minorities**” which is an institution where the 11 officially approved national minorities (Polish, Bulgarian, Slovak, Roma, Hungarian, German, Ruthenian, Greek, Russian, Croatian and Ukrainian) have office-space for their civic associations. Administratively this institution is subordinated to the Center of Social Services which is a municipal department. It is a place of cooperation and meeting of national minorities with one another, within their own community and with the major society. Furthermore, it is a place where civic associations of foreigners can promote their work. It is co-financed by the national minorities, the Advisory Board on National Minorities and the Czech Government. Each minority is represented by two honorary officials. Within this framework the House of National Minorities plays a central role as a contact point for everyone who is interested in National Minority issues. Even if no concrete diversity concept forms the bottom of this measure, the House of National Minorities can be seen as an important step towards a society being more sensitized to diversity issues.⁵

Photo 4: The House of National Minorities, front side



Source: Mihály Szabó.

It is also a location for minority-related events. Also the Jewish community of Prague has the opportunity of using common areas (not permanent office space) in order to become involved in the life of the House through its activities. In the same way, other ethnic minorities and multicultural associations can present their activities upon an agreement with the management.

Most importantly, the activities of national minorities in the House of National Minorities focus on children and youth of respective minorities and the spread of information about

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http://www.eukn.org/eukn/themes/Urban_Policy/Social_inclusion_and_integration/Integration_of_social_groups/Prague-Diversity_1250.html).

individual national minorities among Prague children and young people. The House provides room to expand activities of Prague based organizations of national minorities. The minority organizations have their organizational background, room for club activities as well as editorial offices of their periodicals and non-periodical publications there. It is the location of social and educational events, promotes the progress of amateur artists activities (fine arts, literature, drama etc), presents the activities of minorities through exhibitions and creates conditions for the development of folklore and activities of minority ensembles (Balvin 2003).

4.2 Issues, demands and interests

The problems which national minorities and immigrants face are completely different. The main issue for the ethnic and religious organizations which don't belong to the national minorities or stay illegally on the territory of the Czech Republic is the access to information and learning the Czech language. The majority of them usually spend most of their energy to gain a visa and a work permit, which is the most important issue. There are some NGOs counseling in English and other languages than Czech, but many migrants don't know about their existence and irregular migrants do not trust them.

4.3 Forms of relations and dialogue

Concerning the interreligious dialogue most of the immigrants from Eastern Europe belong to the Orthodox Church (e.g. Bulgarians, Russians, and Romanians) and have their own church and organizations in Prague. The newcomers among the immigrants usually want to be quickly integrated in the church community and in the social life. Their children are attending church activities and also religious courses, helping them also to learn the Czech language. *"Under the jurisdiction of the main Orthodox Church the immigrants define the places of worship as an important connection with their countries of origin. Most religious groups even have their own priests sent from their home countries. An official interreligious dialogue between the different Christian Churches will take more time to be successfully developed"*, said Jaroslav Suvarsky during our interview. The same can be said about the dialogue with the Islam (see Christnet.cz).

In 1996 the City of Prague provided unincorporated associations with funds as a special sum of money amounting to approximately 1 million CZK. Between 1997 and 1998 there were no special grants available to national minorities or to other ethnic groups. However, individual unincorporated associations based on the ethnic principle were able to apply for allowances for their units based in Prague with different departments of the Prague City Hall provided they observed the rules of the grants available.

On the basis of a new policy statement in 1999 the Council of the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague gave its agreement to a significant change in the policy to allocate funds to national minorities. In the years 1999, 2000 and 2001 unincorporated

associations of the national minorities benefited from a share of approximately 3 millions CZK a year.

Table 9: Funding for ethnic organisations in Prague

Financial support for national minorities and immigrants					Total	Annual budget
2004	1,695,000 Kč	1,105,000 Kč	-	-	2,800,000 Kč	no information
2005	1,570,000 Kč	975,000 Kč	455,000 Kč	-	3,000,000 Kč	3,450,000 Kč
2006	1,677,000 Kč	580,000 Kč	335,000 Kč	489,000 Kč	3,081,000 Kč	4,490,000 Kč
2007	2,710,670 Kč	429,500 Kč	485,000 Kč	180,000 Kč	3,805,170 Kč	5,000,000 Kč
2008	2,795,000 Kč	260,000 Kč	505,000 Kč	170,000 Kč	3,730,000 Kč	5,000,000 Kč
2009	3,373,740 Kč	230,000 Kč	570,000 Kč	200,000 Kč	4,373,740 Kč	5,000,000 Kč

Source: Zuzana Kalná, House of National Minorities.

These funds are designed for educational, cultural and publications programs in which ethnic groups can take part with their projects. The evaluation of projects, of which the Council of the Municipal Assembly of the City of Prague was informed by a report on inspections and financial statements of the grants, has shown that projects of individual ethnic groups have come up to expectations creating good conditions for further activities of national minorities as well as their communication with the City of Prague. Therefore, in its concept, Prague will continue to create within its budget an optimal financial base for the activities of national minorities

The city doesn't have any formal or informal regular and institutionalized contact with all ethnic and religious organizations but through the House of National Minorities it provides a platform and an institutionalized structure for the relations with the national minorities.

The Multicultural Center Prague

The Multicultural Center Prague is a very active non-profit organization interested in issues related to the coexistence of different cultures in the Czech Republic and abroad. The mission of this Center is to prove that multicultural coexistence is possible and universally enriching. Since its foundation in 1999, the Center has been attaining its goals through public debates, a variety of educational, cultural and public informational activities, research, publications and the establishment of links between individuals and organizations with similar aims in the Czech Republic and abroad.

Specifically, the Center

- informs specialists as well as the wider public about interethnic coexistence in the Czech Republic and other parts of the world;

- creates a forum where communication, learning and research can take place regarding the great variety of European and non-European cultures and identities;
- works on developing the intercultural skills of individuals and institutions in the Czech Republic;
- strives to influence individuals as well as institutions to lay the conditions for a working plural society in the Czech Republic;
- initiates public discussion on trends in migration; the formation of cultural and ethnic identities; cultural plurality, education and state policy; attitudes towards difference; nationhood and nationalism (see Jelinkova 2009 and <http://www.mkc.cz/en/annual-reports.html>).

Most of the interviewed representatives of NGOs are affirmed that there is definitely a high level of social exclusion concerning these ethnic groups. Nearly all associations are dealing with cultural events, education, teaching and sharing of information. The main interest of the ethnic groups is the presentation of their culture, organizing festivals, special evenings, exhibitions and sport events.

The two largest ethnic communities, the Ukrainian and Vietnamese are also the most active. “Klub Hanoi” is a NGO which was founded actually by Czech students with the aim to spread the Vietnamese culture and has now more than 150 members, of whom the half are Vietnamese. Among the Ukrainian community the “Forum of Ukrainians in the Czech Republic and Ukrainian Initiative in the Czech Republic” are well known. They organize trips in the Ukraine not only for Ukrainians but also for Czech students to show other facets of the Ukraine, than those which are often presented in the media. As a national minority of numerical importance the Ukrainians could also establish their own basic and secondary school.

The city administration is organizing every year the International Ethnic Festival “Prague – Heart of the Nations”. This is the most important cultural event of national minorities and ethnic groups. This festival was for the first time organized in 1999 through an initiative supported by “Limbora”, the oldest Slovak folklore group in Bohemia. Other minority groups and associations have also contributed toward the organization of the festival. Since its beginning multiethnic events present folklore of diverse origins, including African, Arab, Australian, Bulgarian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Moravian, Mexican, German, Polish, Peruvian, Roman, Ruthenian, Russian, Greek, Slovak, Ukrainian, Romanian or Jewish.

The festival presents the cultures as an integral part of the Czech society. It seeks to contribute toward multicultural understanding.⁶

SLOVO 21

⁶ See <http://czech.titio.cz/en>.

Another important Non-governmental organization is SLOVO 21. It was founded in 1999 by a woman with a migration background. The founder knew very well that immigrants face many problems in their everyday life in Prague. The main task is to help the foreigners in the process of integration and to distribute relevant information not only to them but also to the majority population. Many educational, cultural, media, public awareness and other projects, especially Roma projects and projects aiming on the integration of immigrants are organized. They also cooperate with other similar NGOs and governmental organizations from the Czech Republic and abroad.⁷

The leading goals are to combat racism and xenophobia, to help to protect and respect human rights, to teach tolerance towards ethnic minorities, in particular the Roma minority, to support integration of foreign nationals living in the Czech Republic and to provide media support to minorities in the Czech Republic.

Photo 5: The office of Slovo 21



Source: Mihály Szabó

At present Czechia's migration and integration policies in different fields are not enough interlinked with each other. In addition those policies are more or less independent of other state policies, although being logically in a close relationship. On the municipal level the basic institutions for a successful dialogue have recently been created, but will need some more time to establish sustainable communication structures with the immigrant associations. Our interview partners emphasized that there is currently no involvement of social partners like trade unions, the chamber of labour and the, chamber of commerce in the existing faint-hearted intercultural dialogue. The responsible players on the side of the

⁷ See Otgonsuren 2009 and <http://www.slovo21.cz/en/index.php?id=kdojsme>.

employers as well as the trade unions would have to undergo a process of ideational realization that in a more and more mature urban immigration society intercultural dialogue is also of some economic value. At the time of our city visit it seemed that it will still be a long way until the Czech social partners will be involved in intercultural matters.

4.4 Relationships between different ethnic groups in the city

The Vietnamese NGOs came together several times and tried to organize something together, e.g. to cooperate on certain issues, but these efforts didn't bring considerable results. They didn't try to incorporate other ethnic organizations; their activities were focused only on the Vietnamese groups and their specific goals and interests.

The Vietnamese are nevertheless comparably good organized and very united. "Klub Hanoi" could be a good model of orientation for other ethnic groups and the formation of new associations in the future. The community is influenced by the interests of the different generations and there are some conflict lines in between themselves. The second and third generations, who attended the Czech education system and speak the language, are more open to the Czech society than the older one, which would prefer to return to their country of origin. Many of them actually intended to stay only for a few years for labour migration and assume that they basically do not even have to learn the language.

A very similar situation can be observed amongst the Ukrainians. There are some tensions as well between those immigrants who are for a long time settled in the CR and the newcomers who are interested only in finding temporary work and thus are self-excluded from the very beginning. Sometimes there are conflicts between the Ukrainians and Vietnamese regarding the selling of falsificated documents. The only formal cooperation between these immigrant organizations takes place in the House of National Minorities. Until our field visit there was no regular dialogue between these associations organized.

According to some informants there are certain relationships between the Chinese and the Vietnamese community but these contacts take place in particular on business reasons and sometimes even in a criminal context. Most of the NGOs believe that there can't be any cooperation between some ethnic groups and the City administration as long as the local authorities are not informed enough about these groups, their issues, interests and activities.

Social scientific research about the relations of immigrant communities and their associations between each other and the major society is almost completely absent. The available sources are mostly centered about statistics (Czech Statistical Office 2008).

4.5 Public communication

Almost every more numerous ethnic group has its own media, mostly a newspaper which is also online available. The Vietnamese community for example has 5 newspapers, while the Russians are informed by a commercial and a financial newspaper published by the Russian Embassy in CR. Some of the newspapers are financed by the Czech State. The immigrant groups don't have their own television or radio station, except the Slovak community which is actually with no doubt fully integrated in the Czech society. On the national state radio station there is a channel for foreigners where programs in 7 languages are regularly broadcasted.

Some of the NGOs are in contact with many journalists and maintain a good cooperation. They organize workshops for journalists about migrants and migration matters. Generally speaking, there are only a few journalists with a migration background involved in the local Czech media. There is only one Vietnamese and one Ukrainian journalist represented in the local Czech media. It is a fact that the Czech language is by far not an easy language to learn, especially for non-Slavic languages speaking immigrants. This is one of the main reasons why immigrants from the first generation are so rarely involved in media work.

At the beginning of the year 2009 the attitude in the press towards Ukrainians was extremely negative because of the gas crisis. Every day it could be read about this problem in the media and the Ukrainian associations were not able to communicate plausible arguments. In Czech media critical and even negative articles about Ukrainian immigrants but also about the Vietnamese group relating about criminal acts can frequently be found. Due to the general economic crisis foreign nationals are usually also among the first who loose their jobs and the number of articles about immigrants and immigration matters increased in general. The Foreign Police Department also started with a campaign of massive controls of immigrants not only in Prague but in the whole country. The media is announced about these actions and writes about illegal migrants being caught in these raids.

The main media are in contact with the ethnic organizations but unfortunately in most of the cases they ask only for negative facts, like information about illegal migrants.

From the point of view of Mr. Oleksa Livinsky, the editor of the Ukrainian "Porohy - Magazine for Ukrainians in the Czech Republic", the major problem in the media is that there is no objectivity in reporting. This is also an outcome of the fact that there are just a few journalists with migration background involved in the local Czech media.

Ms. Miholová from the NGO "People in Need", working with migrants, tries to improve the medialization of the migrants in a constructive way and to offer the media topics regarding positive facts concerning migrants.⁸

⁸ See <http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/indexen.php>.

The representative of the Multicultural Center said that before the economic crisis the Center tried to get the media more involved with the topic of immigrants in the Czech Republic but have made quite negative experiences because although they were able to find some journalists to write on this topic, many issues were not accepted by their directors because none of the media wanted to be the one who advocated the immigrants. Thus, media report a lot of critical articles about immigrants, but nothing for example about their poorly labour conditions. A positive exception is an open media called "Respect" which appears once a week. It is not "censured" by anybody and therefore it reports freely about discrimination, cases of racism and other specific problems of immigrants.

However, one must not neglect that almost all interview partners agreed that if they take a look in the recent past there is a big improvement if one compares how the media informed about migrants just a few years ago and how the articles of nowadays report. There is much more sensitivity and objectivity now.

4.6 Summary and lessons learnt

There is definitely an urgent need for a new and clear structured migration policy in the Czech Republic as a member state of the EU. A major problem in the process of intercultural dialogue between the city and other migrant/religious groups is that the ethnic communities have quite different demands and interests. In addition, the Czech language is for many migrant representatives a huge barrier in initiating a communication process. The fact that the migrant communities' interests are very different makes the idealistic wish to fight together for common issues not realistic, at least at the moment. From the perspective of the migrant communities it would be really important to find a way to get as much as possible relevant general information concerning how the society works in the Czech Republic. This would be a great relief in the integration process of the first generation. Usually there is no integration problems reported with the second and third generation which mostly grew up in the Czech Republic.

One of the main reasons why there is no strong and regularly cooperation between the City administration and immigrant associations can be found in the fact that the City has actually not really many instruments in solving the real issues of the migrant and minority groups. The House of National Minorities is focused only on the national minorities, but unfortunately in reality that doesn't bring that much as it was expected before for the immigrant groups. Most NGOs conceive challenging projects and would urgently need more financial funding to bring these ambitious projects to a successful end (Jelinkova 2009).

Most of the NGOs have the main mission to fight for the rights of immigrants and their acceptance in the Czech society. The general position of the NGOs is to provide social and legal assistance to migrants and make them more trusted towards the different ethnic groups. This means that if there should be a type of organization in Prague dealing with

foreigners, these associations should fulfill these demands. Comparing the budget which is spent it can be realized that about 70% or even more goes to the national minorities and there is only modest funding for the immigrants. Of course, national minorities also need supportive measures but they don't really have the same problems as the immigrants, especially those without an official legal status. The whole grant budget is only around 6 Mio CZK per year which is really modest.

Czechia has been confronted with significant immigration only for less than twenty years, moreover, mostly with labour migration. It needs to be emphasised that foreign labour largely assists the growth of the Czech economy. The cultural aspects were largely neglected in the past and a slow process of ideational realization that intercultural dialogue is worth to be initiated in a more heterogeneous society.

5 Local intercultural policies towards Muslim communities

The basic information which should have been collected by the City Administration through the Common Reporting Scheme (CRS) hasn't been delivered to our institute. Thus, there is only very few information about this topic available. Neither among the official approved national minorities of the CR nor in the immigrant communities Muslims are playing an important or influential role. Of course there are asylum seekers from Muslim countries and labour immigrants too but according to our informants the number of the Muslim community is very small (10,000 only in the whole Czech Republic) and Islam is not very relevant in the City of Prague. In 1999 a mosque was opened in Prague which was founded by the Islamic Foundation in Prague (Islámská nadace v Praze). According to our interview partners there are no special political measures or strategies which would specifically refer to Muslim immigrants. Up to now there was also no scientific research done about this topic in the whole Czech Republic.

6 Intergroup relations and radicalisation

Once again, we have to emphasize that the basic information which should have been collected by the City Administration in the Common Reporting Scheme (CRS) hasn't been delivered to our institute. Also during the city visit no information about these topics from the city's side was available.

Concerning the majority population certain trends of rising Czech nationalism can be observed in some political groups. This trend is comparable to similar developments in Poland, Hungary and other Eastern European states but is significantly weaker. Thus, none of the interview partners could mention any relevant forms of radicalization in the local population or among the approved ethnic minorities. Also in Czech media radicalization among the native population is not a topic of reporting.

One has to admit that not the Muslims or other immigrant communities but the Roma population is still the most discriminated ethnic group, but this phenomenon can be more sharply observed in smaller towns and the countryside than in Prague itself. Until now the level of Roma discrimination in the Czech Republic remained lower than in Hungary where recently some extremely blatant cases were reported.

Islamic terrorists reportedly conspired in 2006 to hold Jews hostage in a Prague synagogue and then blow up the building. The 2006 Prague terror plot was foiled by Czech security services. Beside this terror act neither Czech media nor our informants reported anything about possible tendencies of political radicalization among the immigrant communities or ethnic minorities.

7 Conclusion: Key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP

During the last sixteen years, Czechia has been transformed from a country sending migrants abroad to a transit and consequently immigration country. This migration change went hand in hand with deep political changes, followed by socioeconomic and demographic transformation. These processes have reflected a more general shift from an industrial to a post-industrial service society. It can be assumed that the Czech Republic fits the take-off stage of the transition concept which can be characterized as follows: rising demand for additional labour, not enough internal domestic labour force supply, formally regulated demand and recruitment agreements accompanied by an unregulated immigration of irregular workers. In addition, there are other qualitative features (such as ethnic diversification of migrant population and its economic specialization, institutionalization of migration issues within the government as well as civil society, or incorporation of migration topics into public discourse) of the migration process that signalize that Czechia is on its track towards a “mature” immigration regime.

Nevertheless, the main conclusion is that the significant existence of migrants in Prague doesn't appear as sufficiently reflected in local intercultural policies. There is an urgent requirement for a clear integration policy with a long-term perspective, which is acknowledged by all the NGOs and some institutions dealing with this issue. Most of the activities which support “socially” all types of migrants are not fulfilled by municipal or governmental institutions but taken over by NGOs and organizations of the different ethnic groups.

Current Czech migration and integration policies are not enough interlinked with each other, actually they are in addition independent of other state policies, although being logically in close relation it shouldn't be at all that way. This problem concerns mainly economic, housing, social, foreign, education and health policies. Therefore this is one of the main reasons why social partners like trade unions, chamber of labour, chamber of commerce are currently not and involved in the intercultural dialogue.

There are still vivid debates between the Commission for the Integration of Foreigners and the Commission for National Minorities of the City Council regarding the different agendas of the protection and support of national minorities on the one hand, and the immigrant “newcomers” on the other. These debates on resemblances and differences between these two types of “aliens” have still not been solved at the local level and the dispute on the integration of immigrants in Prague look as if to be controlled by cultural aspects, whereas the important legal, social, financial and political matters appear to be regarded as less significant. Another impediment which blocks the development of a consistent local integration policy including an institutionalized intercultural dialogue seems to be the allocation of responsibilities between different departments of the city administration.

There are many insufficiencies not only on the side of the local authorities but also among the ethnic groups and their associations. What is still clearly missing in Prague is that there are not enough associations organized by immigrants themselves which formally represent their own interests within a well organized interethnic dialogue.

Following Professor Drbohlav, the most well-informed expert of the local immigration scene, even though it has been affirmed to promote the local participation of foreigners as one of the aims of the official state policy, the realization of voting rights at the local level in fact has regularly failed. He assumes that an absence of political will on the part of the Czech representatives to promote the civic rights of foreign citizens is an important hurdle to migrants’ civic involvement. Migration policy is also a central internal aspect exerting immigration flows. The Czech migration policy is not only lacking an obviously predetermined strong and constant “scheme”, but also interest and support from governmental bodies and political parties. Regarding to the relation of migration policy to the labour force demand, migration policy should be an instrument positively responding to the labour force requirements of the economy. Compared with the labour force demand of the Czech labour market the Migration policy effects are quite ambiguous. This means that the planned goals are often very different from the real final results.

Drbohlav states, that within the last 18 years the Czech Republic has gone through a transformation process from a pure emigration country to a so-called “immature immigration country”. As a main result, we can consider the Czech Republic to be a country of immature integration of immigrants as the large and increasing numbers of immigrants “have not yet been transposed” to other spheres of society, except the economic one, e.g. the labour market. This is according to the authors’ opinion also the main reason why the current intercultural dialogue must also be characterized as “immature”. It is difficult to predict how much time it will need until a sustainable intercultural dialogue is developed. Concerning the interreligious dialogue the situation is quite similar. After decades of communist rule religion is not savouring a high appreciation among the urban population and Christian churches are relatively weak voices in the public opinion dialogue. Thus, interreligious dialogue is still in an embryonic stadium,

though we are convinced that it will be established in the future. Currently the Czech society is more interested in economic, social and educational matters than in an interconfessional dialogue.

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