



**Viviane Reding**

Vice-President of the European  
Commission  
Commissioner for Justice,  
Fundamental Rights & Citizenship

Brussels, 22 April 2013

Our Ref: B1446

Dear Ms Reding,

**REQUEST TO TRIGGER INFRINGEMENT PROCEDURE AGAINST CZECH REPUBLIC FOR BREACHING  
RACE EQUALITY DIRECTIVE**

We should like to draw your attention to the continuing discrimination against Romani people in the Czech Republic which challenges their right to education. Discrimination and segregation in education constitute a serious breach of the EU's Race Equality Directive (2000/43/EC). We therefore urge you to launch an infringement procedure against the Czech Government.

Our submission catalogues continuing discrimination against Romani children in the Czech education system, which violates the country's obligations under the above Directive, namely Articles 2 and Article 3 (1) (g). We conclude that, contrary to the Czech Republic's obligations under the Directive:

- The Czech authorities continue to systematically segregate and discriminate against Romani children regarding education
- Romani children are disproportionately placed in "practical schools" (formerly "special schools") where they, along with children with disabilities, are segregated from their mainstream peers
- Discriminatory practices now also occur in schools identifying themselves as mainstream elementary schools. They result in the segregation of Roma in separate classes and schools
- The main obstacle to ending systemic discrimination against Romani pupils is the Czech Government's lack of political will, compounded by its failure to properly develop and implement adequate policies to promote inclusive education

In the light of findings based on research by ourselves and other national and international monitoring bodies and given the absence of an effective response by the Czech authorities, we ask the Commission to start infringement proceedings according to Art. 258 TFEU, by submitting formal notice to the Czech Republic for violating protections against direct and indirect discrimination in education as guaranteed under the Directive.

Yours sincerely,

Nicolas Beger  
Director  
Amnesty International  
European Institutions Office

Desideriu Gergely  
Executive Director  
European Roma Rights Center

James Goldston  
Executive Director  
Open Society Justice Initiative

*The Czech Republic's discriminatory treatment of Roma breaches the Race Equality Directive*,  
submission by Amnesty International, European Roma Rights Centre, Open Society Justice Initiative,  
April 2013

Cc:

László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth

Dana Trama-Zada, Cabinet Commissioner Reding

Aurel Ciobanu – Dordea, Director, Directorate for Equality, DG Justice, European Commission

Paul Nemitz, Director Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, DG Justice, European Commission

Andreas Stein, Head of Unit, Equal Treatment Legislation, DG Justice, European Commission

Lina Papamichalopoulou, Head of Unit, Non-discrimination policies and Roma coordination, DG  
Justice, European Commission