

Czech Romany children less successful at school than other-poll

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Czech Romany children living in "ghettos" are usually much less successful at school than other children, according to a survey made by the GAC agency for the Development of Civic Society Foundation (NROS) among 502 children in nine schools near ghettos that was presented in Prague today.

One-third of Romany children from the ghettos ended up in special classes and it was half in ten among Romany girls. However, only one in ten children from the majority society was placed in special classes, the survey found.

Its results were published on the foundation's website www.nros.cz.

Jan Snopek, one of the authors, said many factors influenced the situation and one of them the life in an excluded environment.

Snopek told CTK that Romany parents were unable to teach their children things necessary to start attending schools. Romany children from the ghettos mostly speak only Romany and they lack social and hygienic habits.

Karel Cada, another author, pointed out that the first grade represented the main problem for Romany children and another problem arises at the third grade.

The authors agreed that preparatory classes would certainly help Romany children.

A poll on what profession Romany children would like to have in the future was part of the survey. In it, most children mentioned the professions that do not need higher education.

One-fifth of the children said they had never talked about their future profession with anyone, including their parents.

"Though it is not surprising in the case of the children from the fifth grade it is puzzling when it concerns the children from the eighth grade," Snopek said.

The study was a continuation of an analysis made in 2006. According to it, there are more than 300 poor houses and localities mainly populated by Romanies. Up to 80,000 Romanies are estimated to live there.

On the basis of the survey results, the NROS has prepared grants for the projects aimed at the improvement of Romany children's education and an increase in their motivation for study. It wants to distribute 430,000 euros.

According to sociologist Ivan Gabal whose society prepared the study, the results have helped better distribute the finances.

"The money for the projects will not be a general antibiotics treatment but a targeted therapy," Gabal said.

