



Bulletin on Social Exclusion in the European Level

Together and Across

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CONCEPT OF THE ETHNIC FRIENDLY BRAND

INTRODUCTION

Ethnic Friendly Employer is a brand that allows to award those employers who declare their support to equal treatment on the labor market to ethnically different population and fulfil this principle on a long-term basis in their personal practice.



The logo of Ethnic Friendly Brand

The thought of certifying employers for purposes of supporting equal treatment of people of minority ethnic origin and increasing their employment rate originated in IQ Roma service Civic Association (IQRS) in 2006.

The project Ethnic Friendly Employer (EFE) is a reaction to persistent employment discrimination against ethnic minorities in the Czech Republic, especially (but not only) against the Roma. The EU regulations regarding racial discrimination (Racial Equality Directive EU 2000/43/ES) had not been applied in the Czech Republic when the project was launched in 2006. The existing law was not addressing the problem adequately (see the [page 2](#)).

The situation did not lead to any improvement of life conditions of the Czech Roma; on the contrary it was reinforcing the stereotypes and prejudice of the majority and inhibiting change of behaviour of both, ethnic minorities and majority as well. The Roma employment seekers (e.i. the Roma who are looking for a job, who want to work and can set a good example to others) are facing difficulties which are persistent regardless of the economic situation of the country. Recruitment strategies of majority of employers on the Czech labour market still reflect the common attitudes of majority to the minority groups job applicants. In addition, lots of them are rejected without any specific reason.

The Ethnic Friendly Employer brand tries to break the vicious cycle and to address the employers, their customers and the demotivated job seekers.



Why to certificate Ethnic Friendly Employers?

- it is an award for the pro-ethnic companies, quite the opposite to the legal prosecution of the employers who discriminate,
- it corresponds to the principles of active civil society and social responsibility of the companies,
- it is an adequate PR tool for the companies,
- it is a specific and visible symbol which is comprehensible to the majority and to ethnically disadvantaged groups,
- it interconnects the non-profit sector, businesses and the government.

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What is the background of the EFE concept?

The vicious cycle of discrimination - statistic findings

The majority of the Czech Roma (64 %) were the most likely (among other EU Member states) to confirm that had been discriminated on the basis of ethnicity at least once in the past 12 month (based on the [EU-MIDIS Discrimination survey](#), 2009, 505 respondents). This high number should be explained by three specific features of Roma situation in Czech republic. **First**, the Roma population in the Czech Republic is not so much spatially segregated. The most of Roma live in urban settings and are in everyday contact with mainstream society. **Second**, there is also relatively high awareness of anti-discrimination laws among the Czech Roma; 57 % of them confirm that laws are in place to prevent workplace discrimination (although hardly nobody use this protection in case they face obvious discrimination). **Third**, according to the findings of the longitude survey about attitudes of the majority to the Roma, the negative approach persists in Czech society in 67% of population in 2010.

Nevertheless, the alarming numbers correspond to the experience of IQRS's workers and their Roma clients and remain a challenge.

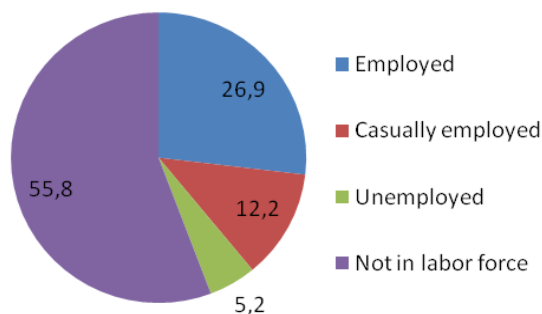
The findings listed in the chart illustrate the consequences in the labour market: a high number of demotivated unemployed Roma, which results in resignation on the labour market participation, and unequal treatment from employers.

Roma experience of discrimination in Czech republic

Mean discrimination rate (% discriminated against in the past 12 month)	64
Roma opinion: Is discrimination on the basis of ethnic or immigrant origin widespread? (yes, %)	83
Labour market: % discriminated of those who were looking for work (in last five year, %)	69
Reporting rate: % who not reported the most recent incident in the pas 12 month (when looking for work)	96

Source: EU-MIDIS, 2009 (505 respondents)

Roma population in working age (15 - 64) by labour force status, 2008



Roma employment: Reasons for not working by gender, 2008



Source: worldbank.org

Legislative Context of the EFE concept

European level - The Racial Equality Directive [EU 2000/43/ES](#) of 29 June 2000 preventing people in the European Union from being discriminated on grounds of race or ethnic origin and [Council Directive EU 2000/78/EC](#) of 27th November 2000 establish a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

Czech Republic - The Racial Equality Directive [2000/43/EC](#) under examination was finally only implemented in the CR on June 17, 2009. The Racial Equality Directive, however, was supposed to have been implemented before May 1st, 2004 when the CR joined the EU.

Finally, In June 2009, the [Act on Equal Treatment and Legal Means of Protection against Discrimination](#) (the Antidiscrimination Act) was approved after almost two years of consultations.

For more information see the [Report on the impact of the Racial Equality Directive in Czech Republic](#).

The Procedure of Awarding the Ethnic Friendly Employer Brand

The promotion of the concept of the Ethnic Friendly Employer brand mainly consists of 5 consecutive steps: contacting employers, performing investigations to define the level of equal treatment in their company, supporting the employer to ensure equal treatment, certifying the employer ceremonially, presenting and promoting in the media the issue of equal treatment on the employment market, Ethnic Friendly Employers and good practice examples. Undergoing objective investigation to verify non-discriminatory approaches is a basic step for awarding the mark to the employer.

On this page, you can find a brief account of investigating the compliance with the Rules for EF Brand awarding. The Rules for EF Brand awarding and use is available on www.ethnic-friendly.eu. If you are interested in receiving the detailed EFE methodology manual, please write to us.

Procedure of investigation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Interview with the Employer's Representative (management) <p>An interview with the employer's representative is made on the subject of measures adopted by the employer to ensure non-discriminatory environment.</p>	<p>In the first part of the investigation we mainly examine:</p> <p>In what way the question of anti-discrimination/equality is treated formally, i.e. by internal regulations.</p> <p>In what way does the management distribute information on anti-discriminatory measures among the employees?</p> <p>In what way compliance with appropriate regulations is controlled?</p> <p>Is the procedure for submitting and handling complaints or any suggestions incorporated in the regulations and are the employees (or clients) sufficiently acquainted with this procedure?</p> <p>If discrimination occurs, how such a case would be dealt with?</p> <p>Were complaints ever submitted in the past or were there problems in connection with the question of the ethnicity of an employer on client, business partner, job applicant etc.?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study of relevant written in-house regulation <p>The first part of the investigation focuses on getting acquainted with relevant written in-house regulations - i.e. with regulations concerning the personnel issue in general.</p>	<p>Relevant written in-house regulations are analyzed in terms of:</p> <p>Equality of treatment of the employer's employees of various ethnicities both in the phase of selecting and employing new employees.</p> <p>The employees' access of further education, development and possibilities of promotion.</p> <p>Regarding employee wages and other areas.</p> <p>Clauses imposing obligations on the employees or on the managers to observe the principle of equal treatment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with Ordinary Employees of the Applicant <p>The second part is interviews with ordinary employees of the applicant which are to define the level of their acquaintance with these measures. It is possible to talk both with several employees of minority ethnicities and with the members of the majority.</p>	<p>In the employee interview we mainly ask:</p> <p>Whether the employee is aware of the existence of internal regulations which we evaluated in the first part as pivotal in terms of anti-discrimination.</p> <p>Whether the employee has commonly access of these regulations (where specifically s/he can check them).</p> <p>What the employee would do if s/he happened to be a victim of (ethnic) discrimination at work, or what would s/he advise to a colleague complaining of unequal treatment at work (by which we identify both how widespread the awareness of the process of complaining is, and how and whether individual management levels communicate with their subordinates - coexistence of both formal and informal procedures is an ideal).</p> <p>Whether the employer experienced, personally or indirectly, ethnic discrimination in the company in the past (whether on the part of his/her colleagues of superiors), and if so, in what way the situation was handled and what the result was.</p>

- Certification of the Applicant for the Brand**

For purposes of the promotion of the certification event in the media, it is useful to cooperate with appropriate governmental institutions which can provide official patronage, premises for the certification ceremony, contacts with the media and opportunity to combine the event with some of its own promoted projects.

- Presenting and promoting in the media**

Promotion in the media is also one of the most essential factors which may encourage the employer to struggle for the EFE Brand, and to cultivate the environment both in his/her own company and in the surrounding society.

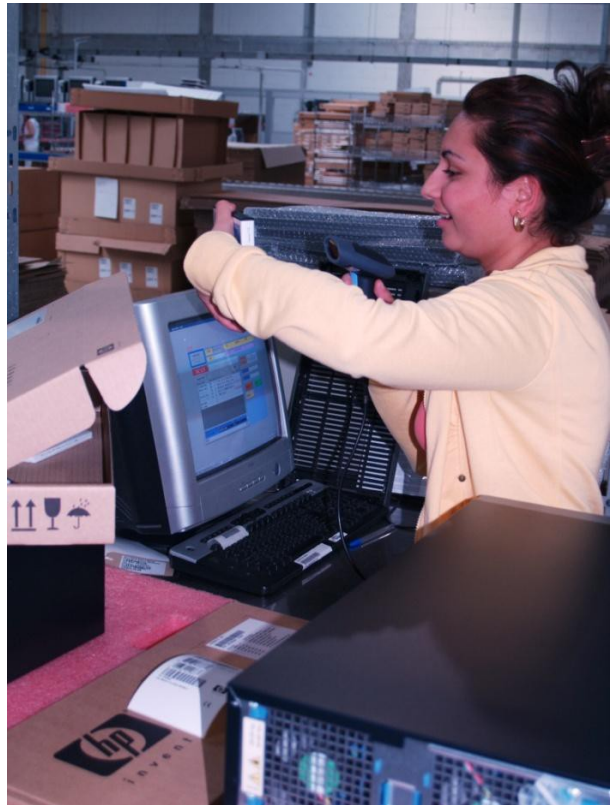
The Good Praxis Example

Beneficial Effects of an Investigation

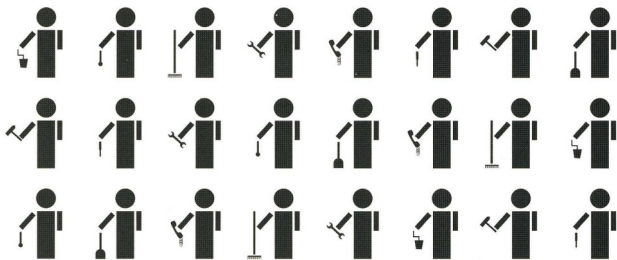
ZETOR TRACTORS a.s. with more than 1000 employees is one of the most important employers of the South Moravia region. Considering the size of the company, it is natural that the individual processes including the equal treatment are dealt with by the internal guidelines. Additional formal adjustment of the guidelines, their accessibility to the employees and their successful application are some of the conditions necessary to earn the EFE certificate.

The lasting necessity to employ new people made the employer formalize the hiring process which eliminates the risk of discrimination from the part of the human resources personnel. The ban of discrimination is mentioned explicitly in the basic regulations of the company.

However, the survey showed that the regulations are not easily accessible to all employees and that their knowledge is very limited. Following the recommendations of the survey team, the employer put the excerpts of regulations on the information panels inside the factory. The proceeding for tackling discrimination was made public as well. To make the communication between the employees and the person responsible for equal



Ethnic Friendly Workplace



GIVE OPPORTUNITY – GAIN POTENTIAL

ETHNIC FRIENDLY EMPLOYER



treatment smooth, several suggestion boxes were placed in the factory where the employees who wish to remain anonymous can put their complaints or suggestions for investigation.

When these additional measures were applied, another survey was carried out and it was found that the measures were functional and helped to ensure equal treatment. The employer was awarded the Ethnic Friendly Employer certificate.

The open approach of the employer and the previous contact with the company give a big advantage to the social workers of the certifying organization IQ Roma service who supply their clients with job offers.

The Ethnic Friendly Employer Brand holders comments

“AUDACIO is a successful company which operates in the field of precise mechanical engineering. Thanks to its orientation on foreign markets where multiracialism is common, since the beginning it was natural to apply the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination with their employees.”

Ing. Pavla Breckova
AUDACIO s.r.o.



“We cannot afford to discriminate. We employ the Slovaks, the Ukrainians, the Roma and now we are about to hire a number of Vietnamese. There are not enough people and we cannot and do not want to reject anyone because of their nationality or skin color.

The EFE award can help us in communication with potential employees. We demonstrate that we are not going to reject anybody based on their race or skin color.”

Mgr. Richard Kruksa
HR manager, Zetor Tractors, a. s.



Ethnic Friendly Brand at Present

IQ Roma service (IQRS) has been awarding the Ethnic Friendly certificate since June 2007. At the beginning, the conception was actively spread only in the region of South Moravia; nevertheless, there were also employers from other Czech regions asking for the EFE Brand. During the first three years of existence of the project **three ceremonious certifications** took place where **twenty three employers** from the whole Czech Republic were certified.

In September 2010, the Ethnic Friendly Brand was presented by the representatives of IQ Roma service in the **International Engineering Fair in Brno**. A press conference was held on this occasion in which the municipal council members and the holders of the certificate participated.

At present, the new one year project (Ethnic Friendly Society) promoting the EFE Brand all across the Czech Republic is taking place. Its goal is to contact at least one thousand employers. In addition, IQ Roma service is going to spread the certification know-how to another partner organisations in the Czech Republic.



Ms Seitlova, deputy ombudsman at the EFE press conference

Ethnic Friendly Society Project 2011

In the course of the project several activities will take place:

- * broadening of the concept of cooperation with the employers **from the regional to the national level**,
- * **media coverage of the equal treatment examples** (in the form of presentations of the experience of the present and new employers) which will be directed towards the general public,
- * innovation and broadening of the concept towards new target groups - local government and public administration - and **creation of a new product** aimed at examination of the institutions - **Ethnic Friendly Institution**.

The main obstacles in the spread of the EFE concept we face

The biggest obstacle in the spread of the EFE concept is definitely the lack of interest among employers in helping the minorities with their participation in the Czech labour market. Many companies are not willing to state publicly their openness to the ethnic minorities, while they claim to stick to the existing law and regulations and therefore they do not need any special certificate. However, there is a huge difference between a public declaration about equal treatment and observation of the law just for the sake of appearances. Knowledge of anti-discrimination attitudes of the employer can be encouraging for many persons



Work at EFE - Possibility to show one's own Qualities

of minority ethnic origin and can motivate them to apply for the job. When addressing new employers it is important to choose socially responsible companies which will identify with the idea equal treatment. To keep trying to persuade the rest of the companies is not of less importance.

Together and Across | Project News

Meeting of transnational partnership in Bulgaria

In September 2010 the project partners from IQRS and Sweden spent three intensive days dedicated to discussion and to information exchange with Bulgarian partners **Indi Roma 97 Social Foundation** in the **Plovdiv region**, where the host organization is striving for improvement of life conditions of the local Roma population.

A significant concentration of the Roma inhabitants and huge Roma excluded localities are specific to the region. The Bulgarian Roma population is specific by a great diversity (a significant minority of the Roma are Muslims) and the highest spatial segregation among EU Member States.

Indi Roma 97 supports its clients mostly in the area of education (with an emphasis on offer of leisure-time activities) and employment (providing retraining courses, helping to find the job, support in setting up small business, social economy project etc.). The situation is also complicated by ineffective communication and collaboration between the non-profit sector and legislative authorities in Bulgaria.

The meeting was held for better participants' comprehension of the Bulgarian context and of the problems which Bulgarian non-profit organizations and their clients are facing. In accordance with the goals of the project Together and Across the partners exchanged experience and suggestions; which was of great benefit to all. Other Czech partners and Czech bulletin receivers should read about the outputs of the meeting in the project bulletin from January 2011. Next meeting will take place in **Romania in spring 2011**.



Pazardzhik, Bulgaria

The transnational cooperation project "Together and Across" is focused on the support of experience and good practice exchange among the project partners in order to promote social inclusion of the socially excluded people, especially the Roma. For more information on the project implementation and its results click [here](#).

The Partner Organizations

Asociatia "Organizatia Caritas Satu Mare" - Romania

ASSOCIACIÓ VALENCIANA D' AJUDA AL REFUGIAT - Spain

Indi Roma 97 Social Foundation - Bulgaria

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm - Sweden

The South Moravian Regional Authority - Czech Republic

European Anti Poverty Network - Czech Republic

IQ Roma service - Czech Republic

Fundación Secretariado Gitano - Spain

The City of Brno - Czech Republic



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Your comments are more than welcome. Do not hesitate to contact us via email: togetherandacross@igrs.cz.

Seat of organization:

Cejl 49, 602 00 Brno

Tel.:/fax: +420 549 241 250

Bank account information:

189104187/0300 (ČSOB)

IČO: 65341511

Branch/Postal Address:

Hybešova 41, 602 00 Brno, Czech Rep.

Tel.: +420 543 214 805 (Director's office). Fax: +420 543 214 809.

Our branch in the town of Břeclav:

Tř. 1. máje 39, 691 41

Břeclav - Poštorná, Czech Rep.

Webpages: www.igrs.cz www.ethnic-friendly.eu www.jaktovidimja.cz

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