



# **SINGLE MOTHERS FACING POVERTY**

## **Czech Republic**

**Peer review on Single mothers facing poverty**  
**Genk, 5. – 6. 10. 2017**

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# Situation of single parents

## SINGLE PARENTS

- Every 7th household with children, over 165 thousand families (2013).
- 90 % of single parents are women.
- 404 000 children grew up in single parent households, vs. 1 390 000 (2011 – census data, 10 400 000 the whole adult population).
- The divorce rate is 45–50 %, and share of divorces where children are involved is over 50 %.
- Single mothers have usually less children than would they prefer.

## POVERTY

- Risk of poverty rate is 34,4 % for single parents
  - only 6,2 % for families with two parents and one child and 9,1 % for families with two children.
- Main explanatory factors: income and employment status (of all household members), household structure.

## CHALLENGES

- Work-life balance, risk of poverty, isolation, recoverability of alimony

# Policy framework

## Family Policy Strategy (18. 9. 2017)

- The key principle is the **free choice of people** – there is no statement on the preferred type of family.
- The measures are designed according the needs and with knowledge of the trends, not to support certain specific type of families (e.g. married couples).
- Single parents need special support – **the advance alimony, precautions**
- **Taxes, benefits and services** – the Strategy suggests the higher support of services
  - ❑ Housing, childcare services, other services for families
  - ❑ Problem with the spouse tax credit – single mothers can't use this

# Assesment of the policy measures

## Financial, material and social support available to single parents

- Social system in Czech Republic does not provide categorical benefits to single parents.
- Single parents are entitled to, as other families are, family benefits (non insurance), pensions and social insurance benefits.
- Single parents have better chance of qualifying for some means-tested benefits (due to their lower incomes).
- Longer period of sickness insurance benefit in case of caring for a family member.

# Family and social benefits

- Benefits provided to families in *socially disadvantaged situation*
- Universal benefit:
  - **Parental allowance** – total amount of EUR 8 462 is to be distributed up to 4 years of childrens age
- Means-tested benefits:
  - **Child allowance** – from EUR 19 to EUR 27 according to child's age (dependent child up to 26 years)
  - **Housing allowance**
  - **Birth grant** – for low-income families, EUR 500 for the first child and EUR 385 for the second child
  
  - better chance of qualifying and receiving higher amount for single parents (due to missing income of partner or alimony).

# Family and social benefits

## **ASSISTANCE IN MATERIAL NEED (specific benefit)**

- Eligible: families and individuals who do not have sufficient income to satisfy the basic needs.
- Income-tested benefit.
- Alimony is part of the total household income used for the income test.
- Single parents receive a higher amount of benefit if alimony is not payed by the partner.

## **STATISTICS**

- Half of single parents receive *Child allowance*,
- Nearly half of them *Housing allowance* and
- Under 20 % is qualified to *Assistance in material need*.

# Advance alimony– legislative proposal

- *Advance payment of alimony by the state.*
- *An advance alimony paid by the state to lone parents who do not get alimony from their partner **still does not exist in Czech Republic.***
  - **Legislative proposal** has been submitted to the Parliament four times since 2001 (most recently this year).
  - Uncertain due to coming election this year.





Thank you for your attention.

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