



Project description

„Improvement of access to justice for vulnerable groups“

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The right of access to justice is a fundamental human right that is guaranteed to everyone. However, the available data show that many groups of people (children, people with health, sensory or mental disabilities, foreigners, Roma, etc.) face specific obstacles that discourage them from exercising this right. The project will focus on identifying those obstacles that exist directly on the part of the courts or are related to the work of judges, and will propose a procedure for their removal.

The second pillar of the project is the effort to create a comprehensive system of training judges, prosecutors and other persons in the judicial system in the field of human rights protection. Over the course of 4 years, the project will enable JA to focus on this area and increase and update the educational activities it offers.

Project activities (teaching, e-learning courses, videos, study trips abroad) will be offered to participants across the judiciary. The activities of the children's focus group for the quality of justice and pilot testing of forensic social workers will then focus on improving the functioning of the family law sections of the courts.

- 1) Implementation of face-to-face training** - this is the most important project activity, in which two types of seminars will be held: regular seminars, i.e. classic seminars for participants from the judiciary, and seminars for interdisciplinary teams of district courts. These seminars are specific in that, in addition to participants from the judiciary, other professions such as social workers, child protection service officials, forensic experts, advocates, mediators, psychologists and other helping professions also take part. Thematically, the seminars will address the entire cross-section of topics from anti-discrimination law, the issue of the rights of people with disabilities, issues of child-friendly justice, etc. The seminars will be focused both on knowledge and skills. 160 classic seminars and seminars for interdisciplinary teams will be organised. The plan is to train a total of at least 4,800 participants.
- 2) Creation of e-learning texts** - part of the project will be the creation of 10 e-learning texts as supporting educational materials. Individual topics of the texts and their

authors will be selected according to the reactions of the participants to the seminars and according to the needs of the participants.

- 3) Implementation of HELP e-learning courses** - The Judicial Academy will use existing and high quality materials created by the Council of Europe HELP program (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals). During the project, 5 different e-learning courses from the HELP program will be translated and adapted to the needs of the Czech audience. At the same time, we will launch these texts as tutored courses for Czech participants.

- 4)** Another activity will be the creation of **5 videos**. These videos will explain topics such as participation in court proceedings from the child's point of view, the establishment and functioning of an interdisciplinary team or the course of court proceedings in Romani.

- 5) Establishment of the Children's Focus Group for the Quality of Justice** - this activity is included in the project following the example of the UK Family Justice Young People Board. It is one of the forms of children's participation in identifying and removing barriers that may be discriminatory or discourage children from seeking judicial protection. At the same time, it is valuable feedback for the courts. Gradually, several teams will be formed, consisting of children and young people who have undergone some type of court proceedings (family law, criminal, asylum), while the groups will always include disadvantaged children. Based on interviews with members of these groups with participation experts (child psychologist or social worker), recommendations will be made on how to better adapt the course of court proceedings to the needs of children and specifically vulnerable groups of children.

- 6) Pilot testing of employees in the position of forensic social worker** - in ten district courts (Chrudim, Jeseník, Kladno, Kroměříž, Most, Nový Jičín, Praha 8, Šumperk, Vsetín, Tachov) During the project, the position of the so-called forensic social worker was tested at the current position of court secretary (soudní tajemník). Staff in this new position should be able to help courts meet the increasing demands on communication with children and people with mental disorders or other disabilities in the various proceedings that concern them.

The scope of work of this employee will be primarily to provide court-recommended or imposed professional assistance, to assist parents in drawing up a parental plan, in appropriate cases to execute or participate in the enforcement of court decisions and ensure children's participation, to assist judges in implementing the participation rights of minors, the right of the public to take actions in justified and urgent cases within the decision-making on preliminary measures and court supervision over upbringing and with the consent of parents (other participants) to supervise

compliance with court recommendations, to decide on discretions to be involved in viewing .

The output of this activity will be a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot testing and the elaboration of recommendations for the Ministry of Justice whether to establish this position in the future or not.

- 7) During the project, there will be **5 short-term foreign study trips**, during which participants will visit courts and other institutions and facilities according to the thematic focus of the trip. Participants in study tours from among judges and prosecutors will be selected in an open competition according to motivation letters and language skills.