

# The Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) – Czech Republic



## Brief profile

### Contact details

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### Overview

The institution of the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) was founded in 2001. Its main task is to defend the **good governance principles**. In 2006 new competence was added: the **NPM mechanism**. Since 2009 the Public Defender of Rights is a **universal Czech Equality Body**. The Office of the Public Defender of Rights deals annually with approx. 7500 files, approx. 300 of them contain a discriminatory element. The Office has 100 employees.

### Type of equality body

The *Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman)* is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body<sup>1</sup>.

## Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields					
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services	Other * *
Gender	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Race and ethnic origin	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Age	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Disability	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Sexual orientation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Religion and belief	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Other *	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

\* Nationality and parental status;

\*\* Health service, membership in political parties and associations, insurance (with restrictions), state governance.

<sup>1</sup> According to a [European Commission study on Equality Bodies](#), predominantly promotion-type equality bodies “spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination” (page 44).

## Detailed profile

### Brief history

Since December 2009 the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) is a universal Czech Equality Body. The Office of the Defender deals annually with approximately 7500 files of which about 300 contain a discriminatory element, but the number is still rising. The Office has 100 employees. The Department of Equal Treatment, which is at the heart of the anti-discrimination agenda, has 7 employees (6 lawyers, 1 researcher/PR manager). The vision of the organisation is based on 3 pillars: “to inform, to educate and to help”.

The ombudsman provides a complex legal support and assistance to victims of discrimination. The Defender cooperates with an NGO providing pro bono help ([www.probonoaliance.cz](http://www.probonoaliance.cz)) and the Czech Bar Association. The Defender also cooperates and provides educational activities to the HR management of the biggest Czech companies (Educational B2B activities of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar). The Defender also publishes “Recommendations on non-discrimination”. The recommendations are focused on the public and are statements of the Defender to different phenomena related with discrimination. The Defender is also responsible for research activities.

### Mandate

- **Powers:** the *Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman)* is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body;
- **Litigation powers:**
  - Intervening before the court (in the public interest issues bound with state governance);
  - Amicus curiae;
  - Formally deciding on complaints (decision or recommendation) – *not legally binding*.

### Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields					
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services	Other **
Gender	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Age	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Disability	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Sexual orientation	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Religion and belief	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Other *	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

\* Nationality and parental status;

\*\* Health service, membership in political parties and associations, insurance (with restrictions), state governance.

## Activities

- Promotional activities aimed at duty bearers (by way of trainings, guidance material, etc.);
- Promotional activities aimed at potential victims (trainings, awareness raising, etc.);
- Communication activities;
- Publications and research projects;
- Number of inquiries / complaints lodged and cases handled per year: approx. **7500**, out of which about **300** contain a discriminatory element.

## Structure

### 1. Management structure

- Type: single headed equality body (led by director or ombudsman/commissioner);
- Details: the Office of the Public Defender of Rights is a service organization: 5 departments of the Office deal with good governance principles, 1 with NPM mechanism and one Department deals with the anti-discrimination issues.

### 2. Institutional structure

- Type: equality body consists of offices of ombudsmen;

3. **Nomination of senior staff and board**: the Ombudsman is voted in by the Czech Parliament.

4. **Number of staff**: 7.

## Operating budget (for the parts of the organization dealing with equality issues)

The annual overall budget is approximately 400.000 €.

## Accountability (reporting to)

[TBC]

## Contact details (address, key contact person, website)

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### Main contact person:

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