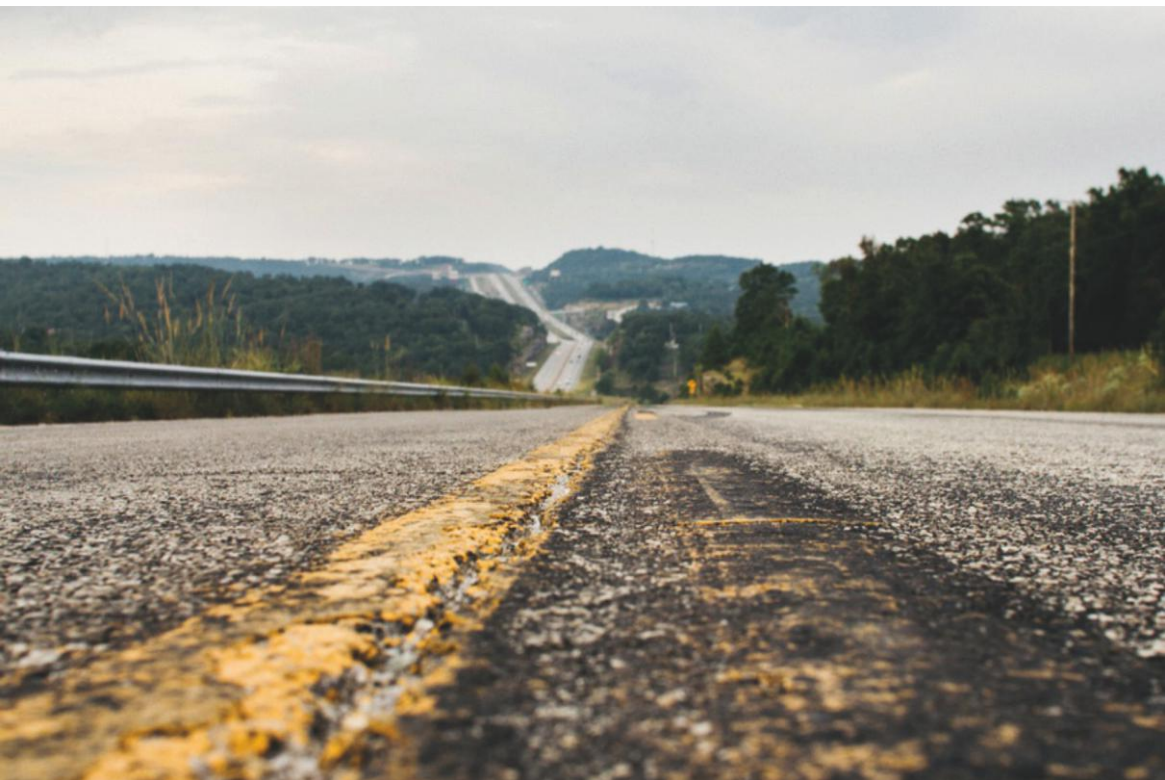




CENTER FOR CIVIL  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS



BI - ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

Citizen Assembly  
Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva  
(Center for Civil and Human Rights)  
Krivá 23  
040 01 Košice  
Slovak Republic

cell: +421 – 908 – 69 55 31

+421 – 949 – 33 83 96

e-mail: [poradna@poradna-prava.sk](mailto:poradna@poradna-prava.sk)

web: <https://www.poradna-prava.sk/en/>

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/poradna.kosice>

Identification number (IČO): 37 86 72 70

Bank: OTP Banka Slovensko, a.s.

IBAN: SK98 52000000000005519629

SWIFT: OTPVSKBXXX

© Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva, 2018

English translation of the annual report has not been edited.



## About us

---

- *“Our vision is a society where minorities do not face discrimination, a society with respect for human rights of vulnerable groups, a society where legal tool on protection of human rights are effectively implemented and human rights violations are sanctioned and compensated.”*
- We are Slovak non-governmental, non-profit organization founded in 2001. Our work aims at the protection of human rights with a special emphasis on the rights of minorities. We focus on issues of discrimination, police violence, protection of reproductive rights and specifically a topic of forced sterilizations of Roma women. We also support human rights activism and provide human rights education.
- Within our work:
  - We provide legal advice, free of charge.
  - We provide legal representation free of charge in court proceedings and other legal procedures with regard to their broader social impact, co called “strategic litigation”.
  - We conduct monitoring and research.
  - We carry out educational and publishing activities.
  - We advocate for systematic changes on the political level.
  - We provide information to international human rights organizations.

## Our values

---

- We promote:
  - Equality for all persons in their dignity and rights.
  - Inclusion and participation of each person in the society.
  - Effective implementation of the international treaties on human rights that Slovakia has ratified.
  - Effective application of legal instruments for human rights protection.
  - Effective investigation of each case of human rights violation and adequate remedies for people who faced human rights violations.
- Our work is based on providing support to individual - the individual is behind our work and he/she always takes first place.
- While working with cases of human rights violations, we respect the principles of impartiality, confidentiality, accuracy of documented information, gender – sensitivity and security of all the individuals.
- Our work is impartial and independent.

## Protection against discrimination

---

- We monitored cases of discrimination against Roma minority in various areas of public life in Slovakia and provided legal advice for discriminated people, free of charge.
- We provided legal representation, free of charge, in strategic court proceedings to 22 discriminated people, including legal representation before Slovak Constitutional court and European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.
- We achieved positive court decisions of Slovak courts in favour of discriminated persons, which can improve access to justice in similar cases in the future.
- In 2016 we achieved [an important decision](#) of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in favour of woman, who sought redress for discrimination from her employer. The Committee ruled that Slovak courts failed to provide the discriminated woman with effective protection against discrimination and recommended that government to compensate her financially. It is the first ever decision of this international body against Slovakia.
- We monitored an implementation of domestic Antidiscrimination act in practice and [we provided](#) information to UN treaty monitoring bodies and other international human rights institutions about persisting shortcomings in this area.
- Based on our actio popularis court claims we litigated six strategic court proceedings relating to segregation of Roma children in education, segregation of Roma women in maternity wards and discriminatory legal provisions.

- 
- We advocated for taking measures on elimination of segregation of Roma children in Slovak education and provided information for the European Commission in relation to its infringement proceedings against Slovakia in this area.
  - We advocated that Slovak government should fully respect UN Committee decisions in cases, when they decide about violations of human rights of certain persons claiming justice.

”

*The decision of Regional court in Košice really pleased me. I believe that my success will encourage other people to fight for their rights and face discrimination. Every human being has a right to apply for a work and be successful. We cannot let discrimination happen when applying for the job. I believe that my case will improve decision making of courts for other people in the future.*

“

Viera P., Roma woman discriminated in access to employment

## Protection against police violence

---

- We monitored cases of police violence in our society.
- We provided legal advice for individuals who faced police violence, free of charge.
- We provided legal representation free of charge, in strategic criminal proceedings for 15 affected people, including cases reported in media – police raid in Moldava nad Bodvou from 2013, [Vrbnica](#) from 2015 and [a case of ill-treatment of Roma boys from Lunik IX](#), at a police station in Košice from 2009.
- On behalf of affected people, we filed two complaints to the European Court of Human Rights alleging that Slovakia did not provide them with effective protection against police violence and that their cases were not effectively investigated.
- In 2016 we achieved [an important decision](#) of the European court of Human Rights in case of Adam v. Slovakia, where the court found shortcomings in investigating police violence against Roma boy that occurred in 2010.
- We monitored cases of police violence in Roma communities and their occurrence; [we informed](#) the international human rights institutions including the UN Human Rights Committee or OSCE.
- We informed international institutions also about deficiencies in the investigation of cases of police violence by the Inspection of the Ministry of Interior.



---

”

*My boy didn't come home in the evening and I was looking for him all night. In the morning I found out, that he was kept at the police station and that he was beaten up there. I decided to do something about it and protect my son and to uncover the truth and justice. What helped me was a contact on Poradňa, so I could ask for help. I would like to let Roma people know: don't be afraid to fight for your truth; we are the same people as others. Police should do their job correctly and respect human rights.*

“

D. A., mother of affected Roma boy, whom we successfully represented at European Court of Human Rights



## Protection of reproductive rights

---

- We provided legal representation, free of charge, to forcibly sterilized Roma women in two strategic court proceedings in Slovak courts.
- We achieved [positive decisions](#) in favour of Roma women in which Slovak courts decided on violation of their rights by performing sterilization without their informed consent. Forcibly sterilized Roma women were awarded financial compensation of 17 000 EUR paid by the hospital.
- [We provided on regular basis information](#) concerning a practice of forced sterilizations of Roma women to the international human rights institutions of the UN and the Council of Europe, including our personal participation in the session of the UN Human Rights Committee in 2016.
- Towards the Slovak government we advocated for establishing independent non-judicial commission that would investigate a full extent of a practice of forced sterilizations of Roma women in Slovakia and adopt mechanism of their compensation. The UN Human Rights Committee took this information into account and in its [concluding observations in 2016](#) called on the Slovak Government to establish such body.
- In 2017 we published a report: [Vakeras Zorales – Speaking out: Roma women’s experiences in reproductive health care in Slovakia](#) in cooperation with Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR). This report contains personal stories of 38 Roma women from marginalised communities in Eastern Slovakia. Women in their testimonies described segregation in maternity wards, racially motivated harassment and humiliation, neglect of care, physical restraint and gross treatment during the labour. They also described shortcomings in informed consent and decision making on health care. We also included recommendations in the report that should be taken by responsible state institutions to prevent such a practice from happening in the future.

---

”

*I was so pleased that after 10 years I finally got satisfaction. Even though no money in the world will give me my health back, I am convinced it is very important that women as myself seek the justice. That way I would like to encourage other Roma women not to be scared and protect themselves when their rights were violated.*

“

M.V., forcibly sterilized Roma woman



## Human rights education and activism

---

- We continued to organise regular meetings of Roma women activists from 4 local communities in Eastern Slovakia to develop their skills and support them in promoting respect of their human rights and rights of other Roma women and their children in their communities. During this period we organised 16 meetings.
- Roma women with our support also visited many events, for example:
  - Talkshow with *Gipsy Nicol* – interview with famous Roma singer
  - Beneficial theatre performance – *The Vagina Monologues*
  - *Angrusori band* concert – line-up of Roma and Norwegian musicians who played improvisational traditional Roma music.
  - *Soup festival* - where national minorities who live in Eastern Slovakia cooked their traditional soup that visitors had a chance to taste.
  - Networking meeting of Roma women in Slovakia organised by *Slovak - Czech Women's Fund and NDI*.
  - *Memorial of Roma uprising event* in Brno.
- We supported Roma women activists from Hermanovce who initiated online petition against segregation of Roma children in a local primary school. 155 people signed this petition online and at the same time women personally collected 146 signatures, signing on petition postcards in their localities. The postcards together with petition were [sent to Ministry of Education](#).
- Three of Roma women activists decided with our legal support to stand up against the segregation of their children in education and they filed a lawsuit to a district court arguing that their children have been wrongly placed to special classes for mentally disabled children in their local primary school.

- 
- Roma women activists from Jarovnice with our support also initiated online petition and a collection of the signatures on postcards in their localities. The petition addressed violations of Roma women rights and segregation at the maternity ward in Prešov hospital. 160 people signed this petition online and 138 signed on postcards. The petition was sent to the [Ministry of Health](#), that assessed it as a complaint and requested the responsible Office of Self-governing Region to make an inspection in the hospital.. The Office of Self-governing Region subsequently informed us it did not identify any inadequate treatment or ill-treatment of medical personnel against Roma women, nor segregation at the maternity ward in Prešov hospital. We continue to address the case.
  - We organised 2 meetings with Slovak and Czech Roma women. During one of the meetings, the women decided to initiate online campaign to compensate illegally sterilised Roma women in both countries.
  - We organised one seminar for Roma activists from different communities in Slovakia with an aim to increase their involvement in protection of human rights as well as involvement of other Roma in their communities.
  - We organised 3 meetings with Roma mothers from a village Hermanovce who strived for better education of their children in a local primary school.

---

”

*We learnt a lot – speak in public, protect ourselves by law especially in areas such as segregation in kindergartens and elementary schools.*

“

Anička Č., participant of Roma women activists meetings

”

*We want the end of the discrimination, and we fight for our rights.*

“

Veronika D., participant of Roma women activists meeting



## People

---

- Board

*Barbora Bukovská* – attorney, chair of the Board (till 09/2016)

*Michal Čermák* – lawyer

*Ingrid Giňová* – Roma activist

*Ruben Pellar* – researcher and translator

*Ján Polák* – Roma activist

*David Zábranský* – writer (till 09/2016)

- Our team

*Denisa Barry* – chairwoman

*Agáta Duchoňová* – fieldworker

*Vanda Durbáková* – collaborating attorney

*Štefan Ivanco* – programme coordinator

*Stanislava Liptáková* – collaborating attorney

*Róbert Pompa* – external field worker

*Marcel Míka* – external field worker (till 03/2016)

*Štefan Dreveňák* – external field worker (till 03/2016)

*Roma activists cooperating on field monitoring*

*Ingrid Kopčová* – external consultant (do 03/2016)

*Natália Príhodová* – external facilitator

*Volunteers*

## What other said about us

---

”

*I am very proud of Poradňa, that somebody is here for Roma, that they are here to advice, otherwise we would be forgotten.*

“

Veronika C., Roma activist

”

*It is very good that Poradňa helps Roma and that they fight against discrimination. They meet with us in person and give us support to stand up for ourselves and our rights.*

“

Anička Č., Roma activist

”

*It is the only organisation, which tries to tackle violation of human rights in Slovakia.*

“

J.M., Roma activist

”

*I really like what you do and how you do it. But if donors could support you a bit more, because you have not enough finances I think you could do your job even better and help more people.*

“

Ingrid G., Roma activist

”

*Thanks to Poradňa I succeeded in court proceedings with my discriminatory case. Without their support and legal help I would never do it.*

“

Viera P., discriminated Roma woman in access to employment



## Donors

---

- In 2016 – 2017 our activities were financially supported by:
  - Open Society Foundations
  - Filia Women's Foundation
  - US Embassy in Slovakia
  - Center for Reproductive Rights
  - Financial Mechanism EEA / Norwegian Financial Mechanism
  - Individual donors

*We would like to thank you to all those who financial and/or personally supported our work in 2016 – 2017. Thank you.*

## How can you support us

---

- [By regular or one time financial contribution.](#)

*For more information about other possibilities to support please visit our [website](#).*



## Financial report

- Incomes

	year 2016	year 2017
Grants	69 580,24 €	65 670,34 €
Income from other organizations/gifts	5 240,24 €	9 245,15 €
2% tax assignation	666,29 €	930,32 €
Interests	276,59 €	327,91 €
<b>In total</b>	<b>75 763,36 €</b>	<b>76 173,72 €</b>

- Costs

	year 2016	year 2017
Office overheads and equipment	1 347,85 €	816,59 €
Telephone, internet and postal services	830,37 €	873,03 €
Rent and insurance	3 014,67 €	3 199,95 €
Salaries	32 464,79 €	31 994,08 €
Taxes and fees	218,22 €	225,18 €
Legal services – strategic litigation	19 313,64 €	14 254,41 €
Accountancy	3 600,00 €	2 370,00 €
Travel expenses	3 092,39 €	2 145,88 €
Educational activities (seminars, meetings, supervisions)	15 873,23 €	4 549,72 €
Publications (printing, graphic, translation, authors fees)	2 459,17 €	1 468,57 €
Interpreting and translations	932,28 €	1 572,00 €
<b>In total</b>	<b>83 146,61 €</b>	<b>63 469,41 €</b>



