

(Un)equal access to education

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Content

- Cross-country overview
- The case of the Czech Republic

Introduction

- Equal access to education - currently one of the key challenges of educational policy on the wider international level.
- Pupils enter the education system with certain inborn dispositions and with assumptions resulting from the social background of the family in which they grow up.
- Equal access/opportunities \neq full equality (that everyone should reach the same level)
- Equal access = ***fair distribution*** of education.

Theoretical background

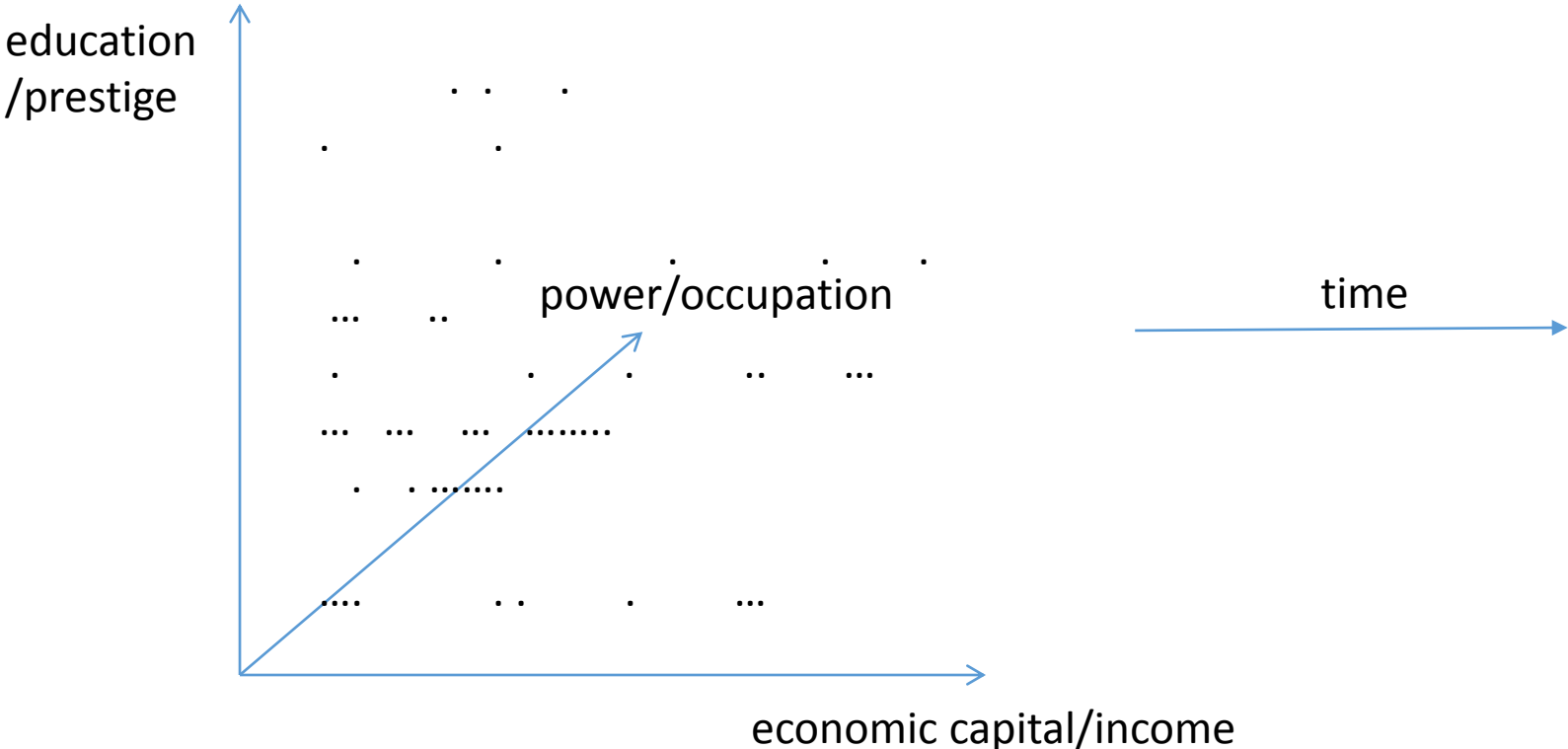
- concept of unequal chances -

- Macro-sociological concept:
How members of certain social group are favoured /disfavoured compared to the members of other social group?
- Empirically measured as differences between the attainments of people belonging to different social groups.
- We focus on educational inequalities conditioned by social origin/background.

Social stratification

- Contemporary European societies are socially stratified societies
- What is social stratification?
 - *Systematic inequality between groups of people*
- Why social?
 - SS concerns the *groups of people*
 - Systems of inequality are organized around groups with a shared characteristic.
- **Criteria delimiting the inequality**
 - wealth, income, prestige, power, gender, education, age
 - social origin vs. social destination (*O vs. D*: ascription vs. achievement)
- Rankings of groups change only very slowly

Basic Social Stratification Cube: 3 dimensions



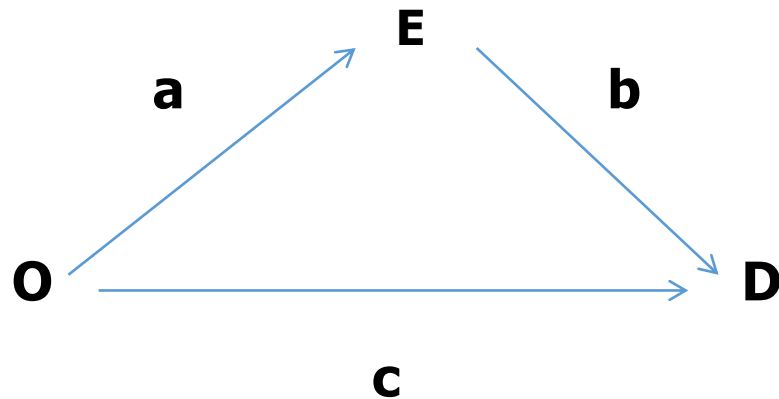
Why is social class important?

- social classes are part of modern labour markets.
- they explain human behaviour in modern society
- social class position is an important determinant of human behaviour
- social class constraints human behaviour as well as makes conditions for it

Results of social class divisions

- *Inequality of conditions*
 - unequal distribution of income according to class positions
 - result: differences in wealth and material conditions
 - different incomes means different chances to get different goods
- *Inequality of opportunity*
 - unequal start positions
 - different start positions means different chances to get different levels of education, jobs and incomes
- Inequality of conditions and inequality of opportunity are connected in empirical reality
- Analytically they are two concepts that describe social class differences among people

OED triangle as a core of social mobility process



OD connection via E, indirect

OD connection, direct (via ownership, property, aspirations, access to occupations)

What can we expect in European states? Links a? b? c?

a) transition to school from family →

b) transition to labour market from educational system

Reproduction of social classes

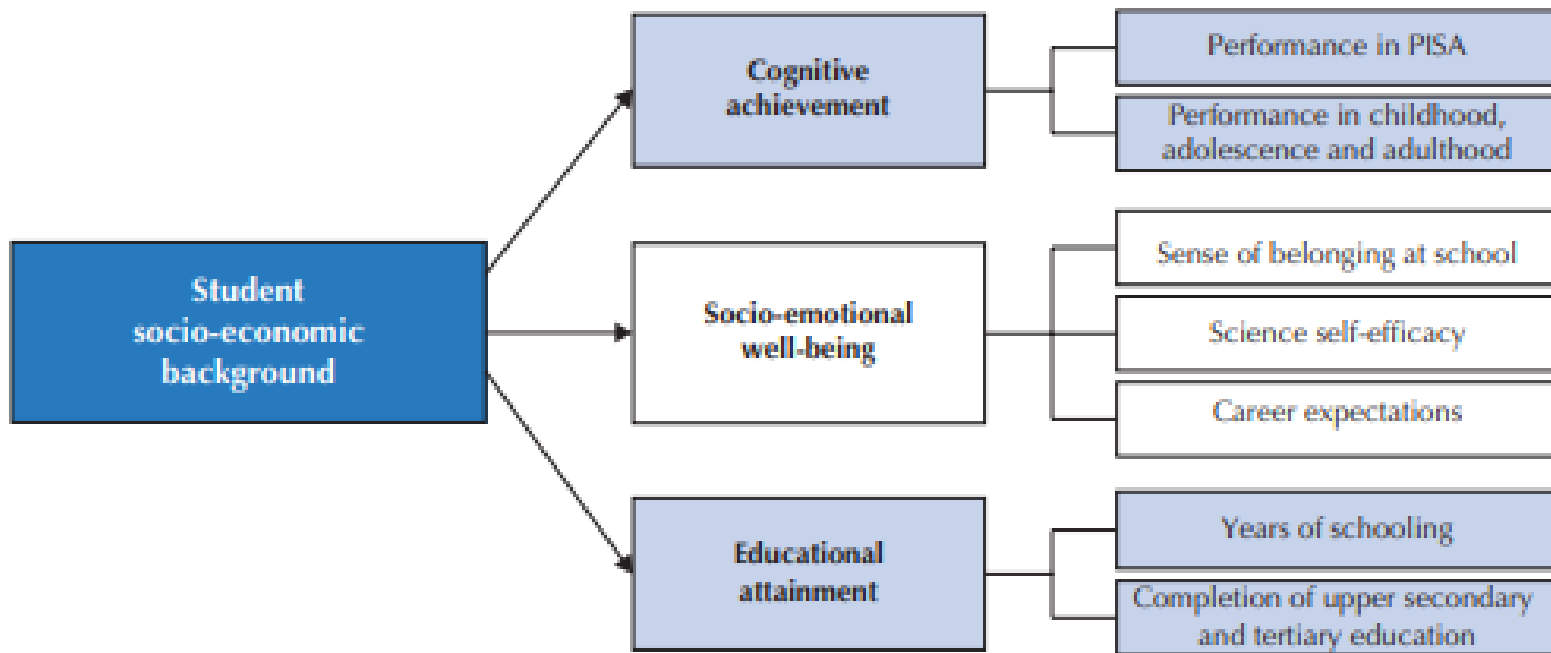
- reproduction of social classes means their stability in time
- social classes are maintained intergenerationally, between parents and their children
- *social or cultural reproduction* of class divisions
- opposite to social reproduction is *social mobility*
 - change of social class position in time between parents and children
- ***educational systems*** play important role in reproduction/mobility of social classes

Equity in educational attainment

- Equity means when the person's educational D can not be predicted by the educational O.
- By contrast inequity (less equity) – when educational O and D are strongly related.
- The school performance of children and chances for further education in the Czech Republic are/is determined by early school choice to a greater extent than in OECD countries (OECD, 2018).
- The school choice is based on socio-economic background.



Equity in education outcome



Discussion:

To reduce socially conditioned
educational inequalities

or

To exclude the elit/unprivileged
pupils in a special educational
stream?



Do you know examples of policies for improving equity in education?

Basic features of Czech public educational system (basic level)

- Decentralization of education - majority of standard basic schools are maintained by local municipalities
- Free syllabus and output regulation
- From 2020 there has been a change: funding based on the number of hours taught/number of pupils (previously normative funding – based only on the number of pupils).
- Free school choice
- Diversified school structure – especially in larger cities
- The Czech educational system continues in maintaining segregational tendencies. See the report (2019) of the *Office of the Government of the CR*:
http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/czech-government-agency-for-social-inclusion-publishes-analysis-of-segregation-in-primary-schools?fbclid=IwAR2CXIjF4s0ilgxLKoISBv4tnro_DOEW8ALHWrR9SG2BuFogJeV0ADD7QeQ#.XeIH8o-0Nbg.facebook

Equal access to education

- Czech educational system makes reference to disadvantaged children (Education Act, 2004):
 - with disabilities, physical handicap or socially disadvantaged.
- These categories of children have the right to adequate education, school counseling and school counseling facilities.

Measures to combat unequal chances – in the CR

- the abolishment of special schools (in 2005 in the CR)
- removing formal barriers to continuing education at high school of any type for pupils coming from any type of primary school institution
- the establishment of new positions of pedagogical teaching assistants;
- the establishment of preparatory classes and courses necessary to even up or complement education
- the policy of inclusion (in the CR from 2016)
- **compulsory preschool** for five-year-olds (in the CR 2017)

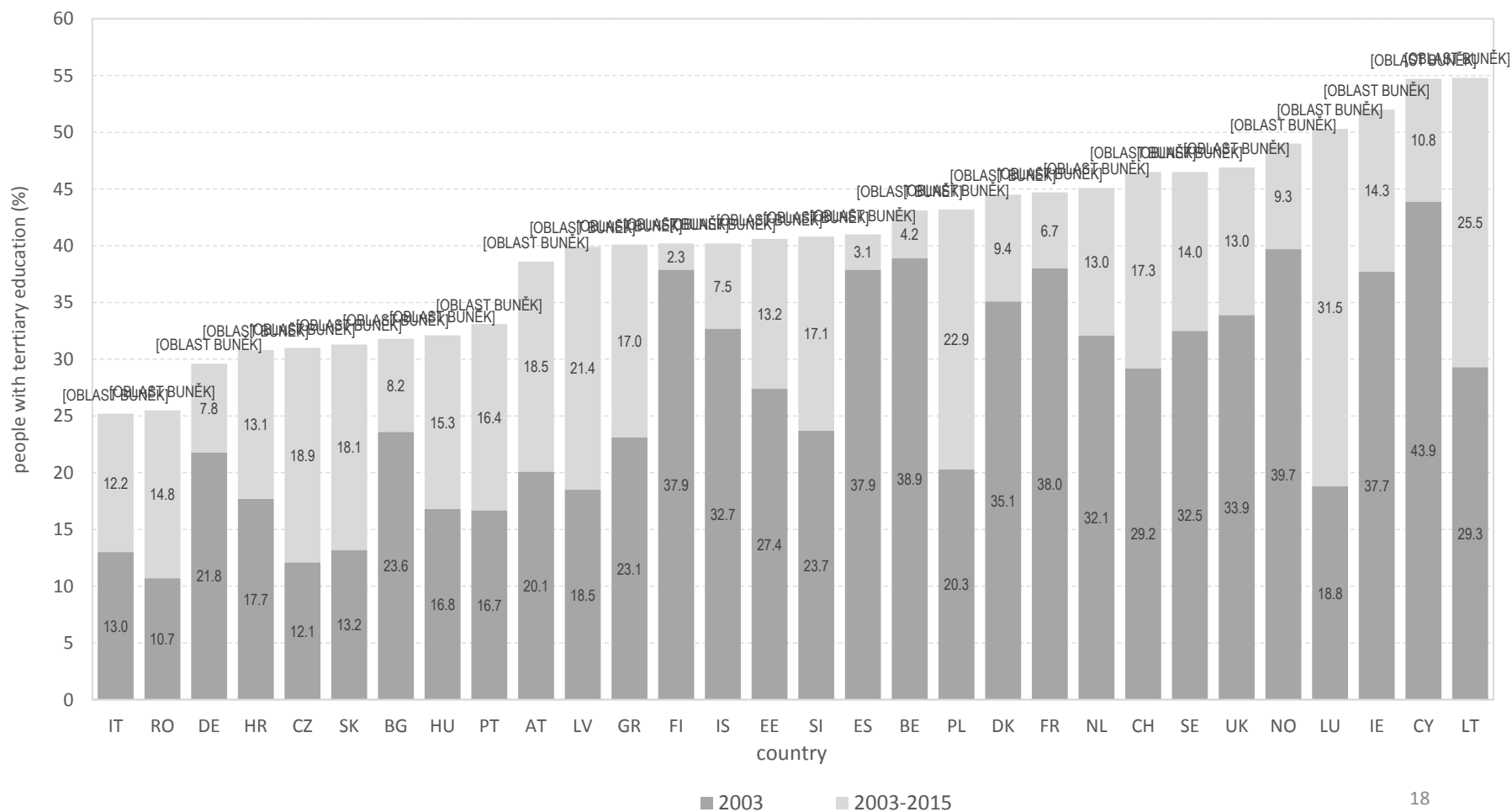
*Do you know other examples of policies for
improving equity in education?*

IEO and educational expansion

- IEO: chances to attain certain level of education by social origin (SO) - family background
- Educational expansion (EE) is seen as a social-political provision for change of IEO (*inequality of educational opportunity*)
- EE via IEO helps to increase social justice, equality and meritocracy
- The relationship between IEO and EE has higher relevance for academic research as well as for social policy and it is the source of legitimization of social systems.

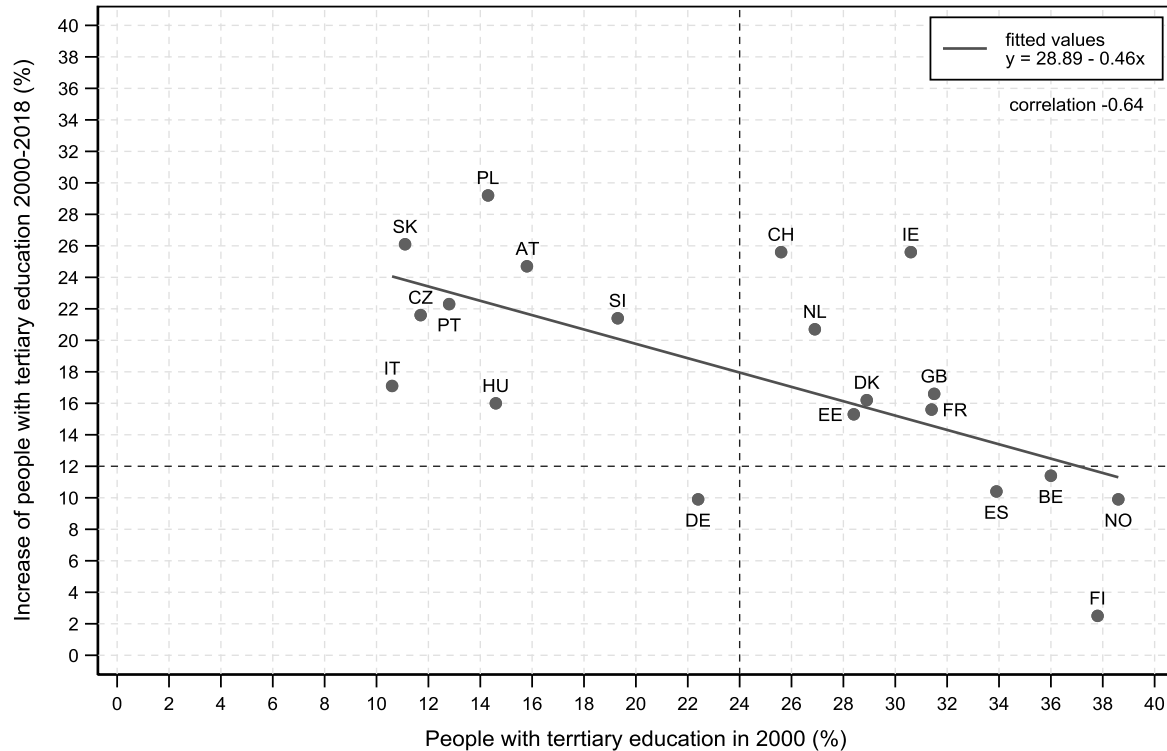
Expansion of tertiary education

Educational expansion in 30 European countries between 2003 and 2015 (%)



Educational expansion in European countries 2000+

Figure 1. Educational expansion in 20 European countries between 2000 and 2018



- Bologna process, declaration of European countries and the beginning of educational expansion in a year 2000
- EE is defined as: *the growth of the educational system. It means the increase of places in the educational system that is connected with increased rates of enrolment (Craig, 1981).*

Social chances of the Roma in the Czech Republic

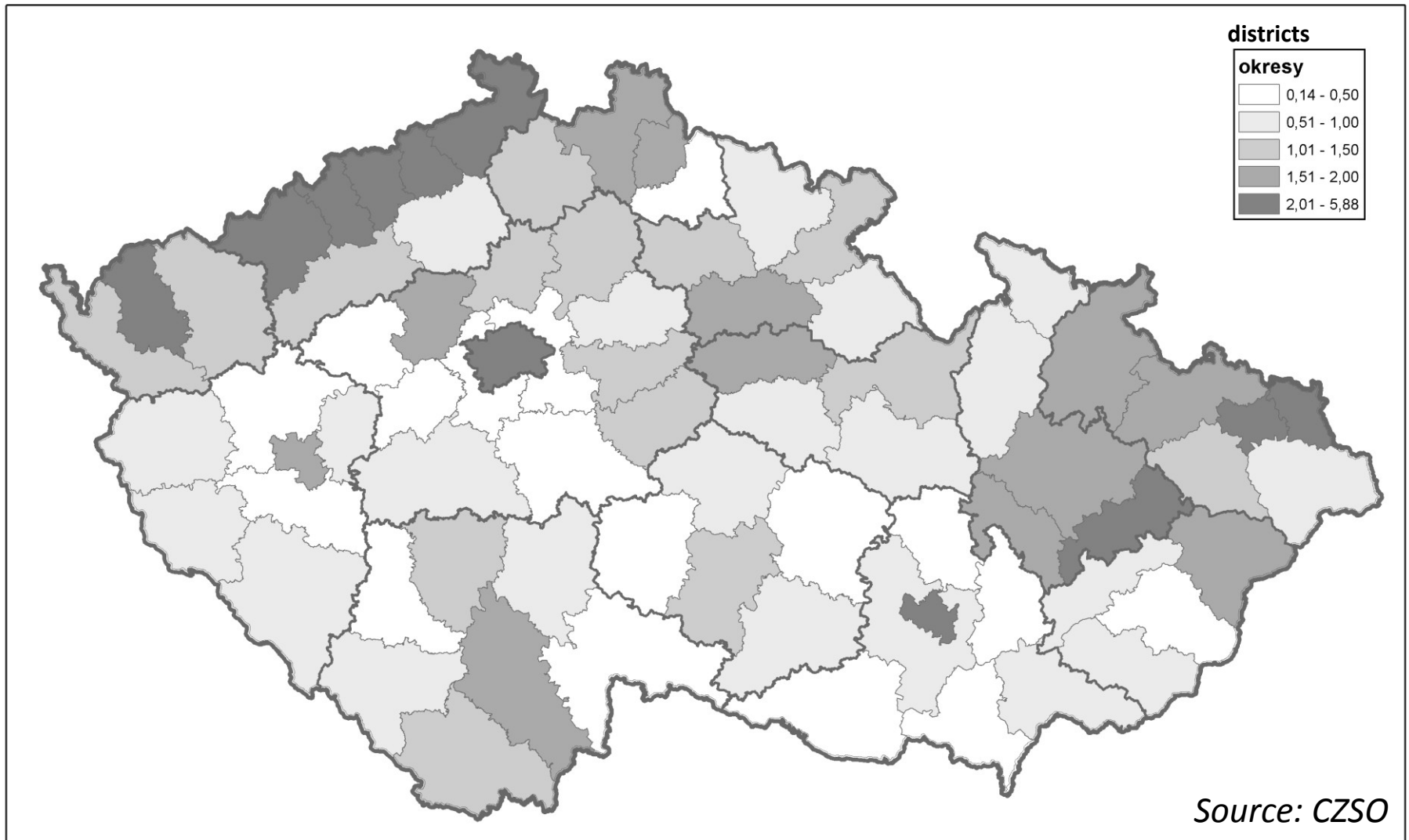
Number of the Roma in CR and SR

comparison between Cenzus and estimates

	Data from Cenzus	Share of population	Qualified estimates	Share of population
Czech Republic	33 000 (1991)	0.3 %	140 000	1.41 %
	11 746 (2001)		-	-
	5 135 (2011)	0.1 %	300 000	2.9 %
Slovakia	80 627 (1991)	1.7 %	480 000	9-10 %
	89 920 (2001)	-	-	
	105 700 (2011)	2%	520 000	

Who states two mother tongues in the last Czech census (2011):
 33 351 (Czech and Romani); 2100 (Slovak and Romani)

Distribution of the Roma population in the CR by districts – Cenzus 11





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The question of ethnic identification:

The discrepancy between:

- Those who consider themselves to be Roma
- Those who are considered as Roma by others.

The boundary of ethnicity is fuzzy,
the classification depends on who does it.

In the CR we clearly identify

- Lower economic activity rate of Roma population
- The Czech Roma often live concentrated – such areas labelled as ghettos
- Low socio-economic status of the Roma – extent of dependency on social allowances/benefits.
- The overall inferior social status of the Roma in Czech society.
- Significantly lower school success of the Roma (especially from socially excluded localities) than that of the whole Czech population.
 - In Czech society, the topic of ethnicity and educational inequality is relevant almost exclusively to the Roma. Other ethnic minorities, such as Slovaks, Ukrainians, Vietnamese, and Russians, show a much smaller ethnicity effect as a determinant of educational inequalities compared to the Roma.

Inequalities in public education

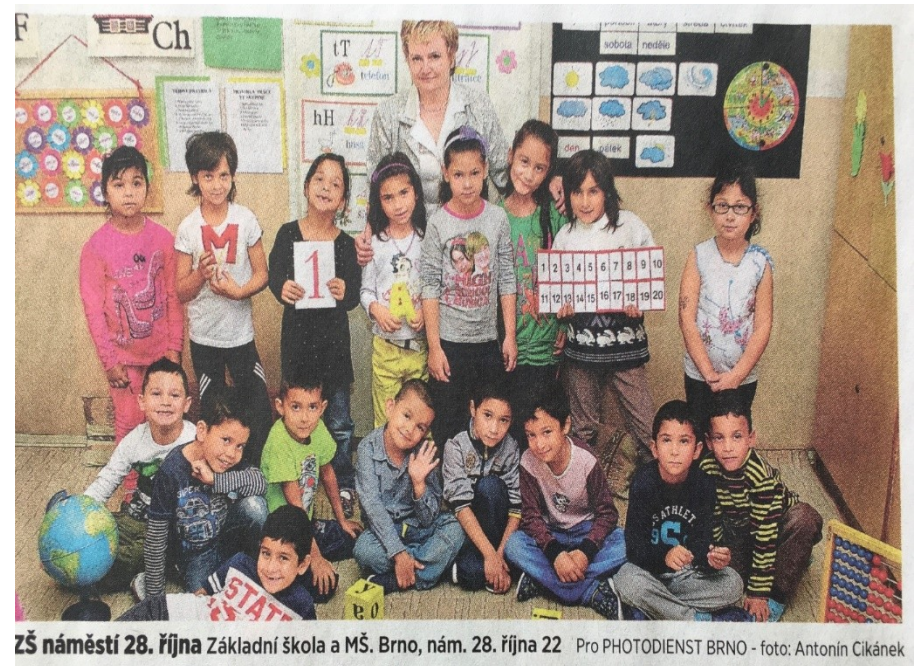
- Free choice of school – mutual choice of schools and parents - results in cases in ethnic segregation of classes or schools.

An example of „*The Nestlings*“ (Ptáčata) 2010, 2013.

<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10267754387-ptacata-aneb-nejsme-zadna-becka/4238-ptacata/>

- The school performance of children and chances for further education are/is determined by early school choice to a greater extent than in OECD countries – the effect is multiplied in the case of children from Roma family background.

Example of ethnic differentiation among primary schools (in Brno)



Conclusions

- Ethnic differentiation can be observed among Brno primary schools.
- This trend is especially strengthening in the ethnically mixed districts of Center and North of the city.
 - Double differentiation of Roma children at the city level:
- One is structurally conditioned (residential segregation)
- The other can be explained by social action (parental strategies).

Causes – institutional level

- The Czech Republic belongs in European milieu to those countries, where social origin of an individual strongly influences his/her educational attainment (OECD, 2018).
- Consequently, the issue of relationship between ethnicity and educational inequalities (chances) is almost exclusively relevant to Roma minority and it can be already found at the level of primary education.
- The segregation tendencies of the Czech educational system are pointed out even in some official (government-issued) documents ⇒ According to these official estimates in the school year 2016/17 a quarter of all Roma pupils were educated in primary schools with 50% or more enrolled Roma pupils, (*Report on the Status of the Roma Minority...*, 2017: 30).

The main problems on the side of actors

- the transition between the pre-primary and the 1st level of elementary (primary/basic) education;
- the transition between primary and lower secondary levels of education (the second stage is accompanied by a major outflow of Roma pupils); which influences
- limited chances of attainment upper secondary/tertiary education

Inequalities in public education

- The main factors influencing the educational path of Roma children:
 - poor pupils' adaptation to school,
 - the relationship to school,
 - lower career aspirations
 - the climate in the school

Questions at the end:

How to eliminate disadvantages in education?

How can be the results (success) of the implementation of inclusive measures reliably demonstrated?

How to stopping or reversing the negative trend of growing school segregation?

General conclusions

- The concept of equal opportunities/access to education is related to the issue of educational inequalities; those inequalities which we consider unfair = are not caused only by the ability or effort of the individual.
- One of the key challenges of current educational policies.

Main references:

OECD (2018). Equity in Education: Breaking Down Barriers to Social Mobility, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Thank you for your attention!
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