



European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

Annex I

Please answer the following questions in English language.

1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project. (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up two other projects)

Czech Republic ECPA 2012 main entry

2. What is the title of the project?

Crime Prevention Assistant in the town of Decin – a fresh alternative to community policing

3. Please give a short general description of the project.

The project introduces a fresh alternative approach to already existing practices of community policing strategies. Its main objective is to help citizens in socially excluded communities with intense social and security problems to become actively involved with their immediate social environment. The project starts with a specifically designed selection process through which several individuals in each project location¹ are chosen to work as 2-member teams of *crime prevention assistants*. The selection committee consists of the representatives of the municipal and state police, respective city council and the Ministry of the Interior. These CP assistant teams work together with the municipal police officers to help maintaining public order and security in respective locations. The civic and moral authority of CP assistant teams proves to be a very effective help for state and municipal police, particularly when solving long-term

¹ Apart from the town of Decin, Crime Prevention Assistant project has been implemented in **10 other towns or cities across the country**. There are still more cities which are interested in implementing this project.

and enduring local issues. After completing an initial practical training, CP assistants may perform tasks belonging to patrol officers. If there is a low-risk and low-intensity violation of public order in the location assigned to them, CP assistants are allowed to settle the matter themselves or, if needed, to ask municipal police for assistance. CP assistants also collaborate with local NGOs therefore they are actively involved in coordination and implementation of leisure time activities designed for potentially problematic groups (particularly adolescents and youth up to 20 years of age). The primary purpose of the project is to reduce criminal activities and offences, strengthen feeling of security among citizens from socially excluded communities and diminish support of extremist groups by citizens living in surrounding areas. Its secondary objective is to stimulate and help those living in socially excluded communities to acquire new skills, to be more motivate when searching for job and to deal effectively with their (inter)personal and family affairs.

4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project?

The project is primarily aimed at reducing the number of committed crimes and other offences and at strengthening the feeling of security among citizens from the Decin district no. XXXII. According to statistics, this district belongs among those with the highest crime rate. The general public regarded this location as inherently socially excluded, non-attractive to live in, dangerous and as the one where there is a urgent need to increase the number of state and municipal police patrols. The ethnic group or minority which is continuously blamed for such situation is the Roma ethnic group which forms majority of this town district. That is why *Crime Prevention Assistant* project was launched there. First, few suitable candidates were selected from local Roma community who perform regular patrol services (on their own as two-member teams or accompanied by municipality police officers). Another important objective of the project is to change majority citizens' perception of the Rome minority as the principal cause of the problems in respective areas of the town. Moreover, the project also focuses on stimulating and helping those living in this problematic district to acquire new skills and practical experiences in the fields of law, security, crime prevention, and patrol services performance. This will enable individuals from the target group to acquire new types of qualification and to raise their chances on the job market. What is also important is the fact that the inhabitants of this problematic location can subsequently transfer the right or generally accepted patterns of social behaviour onto their closest ones or those they are in frequent contact with.

5. How was the project implemented?

The project is designed as a collaboration among citizens living in an socially excluded

community (the above-mentioned district in Decin in this case) in order to maintain the public order. It consists of an active involvement of selected citizens in the system of public security management, intensive work with potentially problematic individuals, (re)distribution of information about how to solve various life situations, how to deal effectively and independently with problems connected to (inter)personal relations, and how to actively contribute to the life of the community.

The project is divided into several phases and **its final output is the CP assistant** who is capable of solving problems within his/her own community independently, responsibly and legally.

The following are the respective phases of the project:

1. A **detailed analysis** of the socio-economic state of the location prior to the beginning of the project. It includes evaluation of current crime rate statistics and all other factors which influence the crime rate in that particular location, socio-demographic analysis, and analysis of citizens' financial situation (income level, social support dependency etc.)

2. **Survey** on the preliminary interest in the position of crime prevention assistant in a given location. This phase takes place prior to the actual CP assistants selection process. In general, during this phase an intensive search inside the location in question takes place. Results of this search or fieldwork shall shed more light on the attitude of local citizens toward the CP assistant concept and its introduction into their community. If some suitable candidates are found during this fieldwork, they are approached and (in case of their interest) invited to the official selection process for the position.

3. **Call for the position** of *Crime Prevention Assistant*. The municipal police officers directly approach suitable candidates (see previous phase). Anybody else can learn about the event through media campaigns in local press or in PR channels of local NGOs.

4. **Preliminary selection** process follows the state and municipal police assessment criteria. State police assesses the candidates according to various relevant data (criminal history, current engagement etc.) and municipal police pre-selects them according to a nature of their offenses (if relevant). Those who were considered as having a high potential to commit crime would be declined and cannot proceed to the next phase.

5. **Official selection process** for the CP assistant positions. There are no strict demands for the level of completed education although those who have some may have an advantage. The most important factors for the candidates are how well respected they are inside their community, how well they know the location and how well they know the local inhabitants. The actual selection process is divided into two

consecutive parts. During the first part, the selection committee interviews and assesses each candidate according to given selection criteria. The candidates with the highest assessment rank qualify for the second part of the selection process. The selection committee consists of representatives of the state and municipal police, municipal council and the Ministry of the Interior.

6. Introductory education and training of selected adepts. This is, in fact, the second part of the CP assistant selection process and, at the same time, the first part of a compulsory education and training process. It includes topics such as concept of social exclusion, nature of criminal and other offenses, extreme poverty, necessity defence, etc. At the end of this part, all candidates take the final written and oral exams. Each of them is also assessed by a psychologist and lecturer. Successful candidates are then accepted for a position of *Crime Prevention Assistant*.

7. Practical training at the workplace. Newly accepted CP assistants without any experience with patrolling start working under the supervision of a police officer who is assign to them as their mentor. This phase of the project primarily consists of directed training at the workplace, i.e. the mentor instructs the CP assistants about multiple nature of their job and gives them feedback. Mentor continuously monitors and evaluates individual progress of each CP assistant.

8. Continuous education. The aim of this important and inseparable phase of the project is to provide CP assistants with new types of knowledge, abilities and experiences required by the job market. Apart from the above-mentioned training and education, a continuous education includes topics such as social fieldwork, money owing, motivation to search for job and educate oneself, communication abilities etc. The role of the mentor in this case is to monitor continuously the CP assistants' work, to assess them and to manage their training and education needs.

9. Becoming part of the municipal police patrol unit system. At the beginning of this phase the CP assistants must be ready to start working independently in respective socially excluded communities. They are equipped with communication technology in order to be able to report about their work and give information to the municipal police operation unit if needed. CP assistants work either independently as 2-member teams or as a joint patrol a the municipal police officer.

10. Independent work of CP assistant. This phase is a continuation of the previous one. The number of joint patrols is being gradually reduced and CP assistants start working more independently.

11. Permanent employment in the state or private sector. This is and ideal finalisation of the *Crime Prevention Assistant* project. The main objective of the project, as stated before, is to enable individuals from the target group to acquire new types of qualification and to raise their chances on the job market. The projects

authors and managers expect that the minimum of 20% of CP assistants would find permanent employment after completing the CP assistant job. Their previous engagements inside the municipal police structure will give them necessary training, education, experiences and references.

It shall be added that, so far, the percentage of those who found permanent employment after completing CP assistant job (2-year period) exceeds the 20% minimum limit.

6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

In 2011 the **Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic** was the main guarantor of the project and the subject responsible for its financing. Since 2012 the project has been co-financed by the **European Social Fund (ESF)**, while the main guarantor remains the same. The Ministry of the Interior in collaboration with **the respective municipality** (Decin) provides a methodical guidance during the project implementation, monitors the allocation of financial resources etc. The Ministry of Interior also play an important role in supervising basic education, training and continuous education of CP assistants.

From its very beginning the project has been designed as **open to collaboration** with other subjects. CP assistants thus participate in activities and management of the **local community centre** which was launched by Indigo Decin civic association (leisure-time activities for the target group). **Local elementary school** represents another important partner of the project which - after completing its own independent assessment of the project's merit - offered an office to CP assistants free of charge. Apart from other type of work, CP assistants patrol around the school where there used to be security problems in the past. Furthermore, while gaining more practical experiences CP assistants start collaborating with **various other local subjects**, such as associations delivering different types of social work to the respective location. A very positive output of the CP assistants' collaboration with the local community centre is a noticeably higher attendance of children and their parents who live in one of the socially excluded localities in Decin (Boletice district). This community centre offers and organizes various leisure-time and education activities for children, their parents and adults. In 2010 the community centre received the financial support from the Ministry of the Interior.

Last but not least, **Police of the Czech Republic and municipal police** must be

listed as an important partner as well. Police officers collaborate with, mentor and help CP assistants.

7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project? Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

The local citizens perceive CP assistants' work as positive and most of them claim to have very good experiences with them. Apart from their help to maintain public order, CP assistants also help negotiating with problematic Roma families, for which CP assistants have usually a higher authority than any police officer dressed in a uniform or any representative of the state authority. A significant success of CP assistants is that their work, in fact, helped eliminated bullying, violent attacks and stealing among children around the local elementary school building where CP assistants work every day. Thank to CP assistant's help the municipal police solved hundreds of cases which were for long regarded as unsolvable (illegal waste dumping in residential areas, violating public order by few problematic families etc.) During the summer periods the municipal police had to regularly deal with around 100 reports on various offences in the Decin district XXXII. After Crime Prevention Assistant project had begun, the number of reports or complains fell significantly (tens of percents). These facts or numbers can be found in municipal police information system statistics.

Other fact and figures are included the project's Annual Evaluation Report for the year of 2011, which was delivered to the Ministry of the Interior. The ministry of the Interior has been supervising the project since its very beginning. The reports on CP assistants' activities are archived in municipal police information system and are regularly evaluated. Their current tasks depend on an actual security situation in the respective location.

8. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

Apart from information already given or stated above, another verifiable success of the project is an annual decrease of the number of complains made by the local citizens about various issues connected to security, public order and mutual coexistence. There are official statistics proving that more and more CP assistants have been directly contributing to growing number of solved cases (criminal and other offences). One of the main project objectives has been to motivate people to seek jobs and to improve their (inter)personal lives. The fulfilment of this objective exceeded all expectations. For example, when the municipal council made its call for the positions of CP assistants for the year of 2012, the number of those interested in the job was ten times higher than the number of available positions. The high number of applicants from the Roma minority completely overruled the deep-rooted prejudice that it is

precisely them who do not want to work and prefer to live on social benefits. According to personal interviews made with local citizens, it is possible to conclude that CP assistants have become an important part of the local security system and they are generally perceived as such. There are more and more people who contact CP assistants to ask for help, instead of calling police.

9. Give a concrete description of the implementation of the project and the references.

A model day of CP assistants:

07:00 – 08:00

- Patrolling the pedestrian crossing near the school building in respective socially excluded location. (This was a particularly important task during the initial phases of the project as it was necessary for the local citizens to get used to CP assistants and to accept them as part of their everyday lives.)

08:00 – 10:00

- Patrolling the situation in the residential areas in the respective socially excluded location. (This task can be performed either by CP assistants alone or they can be accompanied by the municipal police patrol officers.). When encountering some problems or an odd situation, they report it to the municipal police operation unit or solve the situation themselves as those who have the civic authority to do so.

10:00 – 12:00

- Performing tasks which were assigned to them by their mentors or by the relevant municipal police officers (contacting problematic individuals, distributing information about social work, mapping situation in respective communities, assisting other subjects such as Department of Social Affairs, etc.)

12:00 – 15:00

- Patrolling the pedestrian crossing near the school building (particularly when the classes finish), inspecting gambling clubs and pubs to make sure no minors or those on social benefits are inside, etc.

15:00 – 19:00

- Inspecting various areas inside respective socially excluded locations performing regular as well as specific tasks assigned to them by municipal police officers.

The above described (rather unproblematic or routine) day of CP assistants is only an

illustrative example to explain the nature of their work. During the evening hours CP assistants solve mainly problems, such as making unreasonable noise during late night hours or various family disputes. CP assistants are often actively engaged with problematic individuals even after their working hours. For example, they started to organize various activities for children, such as a very successful recycling competition which helped to clean one big residential compound.

10. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web?
Please, give references to the most relevant ones.

Apart from above mentioned reports, assessments and evaluations, the project have been continuously and closely monitored by different types of local as well as national media (web pages of the town of Decin, state and municipal police web pages, local and national newspapers, local and national radio broadcasting service, local and national TV stations). The project became particularly examined by public media after the series of anti-Roma demonstrations in the north of the country (most locations where CP Assistant project is implemented can be found there) in 2011. The outcome of these protests was a general call to introduce this project in other towns and cities where there are problems connected to socially excluded communities.

The following is a selection of articles, reports and cover pieces connected specifically to CP Assistant project in the town of Decin. (The list therefore does not include those reports, documents or media coverage which concerns the project in general or its implementation in other 10 locations):

CP assistant - official selection process

<http://www.rozhlas.cz/sever/informacezeseveru/ zprava/decin-a-sluknov-budou-mit-nove-asistenty-prevence-kriminality--1072956>

<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/regiony/184554-asistenti-prevence-kriminality-vyjdou-do-ulic-dalsich-mest/>

<http://www.romea.cz/cz/zpravy/50-romu-se-hlasi-na-pozici-asidenta-prevence-kriminality>

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/decin-mestska-policie-shani-asistenty-prevence.html

<http://www.rozhlas.cz/sever/informacezeseveru/ zprava/decin-prijima-dalsich-10-asistentu-prevence-kriminality--1028582>

<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/regiony/167192-romove-maji-zajem-o-praci-asistentu-prevence-kriminality/>

Education and training

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/s-opilcem-se-nehadejte-nema-to-cenu-radi-asistentum-lektor-20120614.html

<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/regiony/181065-na-problemove-lokality-na-decinsku-dohlednou-i-romove/>

Recycling competition for children

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/soutez-v-uklidu-prilakala-desitky-deti-20120828.html

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/foto-deti-soutezily-v-uklidu-vycistily-boleticke-sidliste-20120816.html

CP Assistent project – various topics

<http://www.denik.cz/ustecky-kraj/decin-budou-hlidat-smisene-hlidky-strazniku-a-asistentu-20120820-mncb.html>

<http://decin.regiony24.cz/11-159471-s-uklidem-v-decinskych-boleticich-pomohli-asistenti-prevence-kriminality>

<http://www.mediafax.cz/krimi/4091657-Na-poradek-v-Decine-budou-od-zari-dohlizet-smisene-hlidky-strazniku-a-asistentu>

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/boletice-jako-chanov-odpadky-tu-letaji-z-okna-20120731.html

<http://ustecky.denik.cz/kratce/1115800-decin-asistenti-zachranili-nemocneho-muze.html>

<http://www.nasedecinsko.cz/decinsko-aktualne/bez-pravomoci-dohlizi-na-poradek-ve-meste/?aktualitaId=19461>

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/penezenka-se-vratila-majitelce-diky-vsivavosti-asidenta-20120822.html

http://decinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/dvanact-statecnych-romove-na-decinsku-budou-dohlizet-na-poradek-ve-sve-komunite.html

11. How is the project funded? Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out? If so, how? What were the findings? Please provide supporting information.

At the moment the project is financed by European Social Fund (ESF). Until now the ESF funding has covered 100% of labour costs which are maximum €675 per one project employee/month. The project can be implemented also because of the financial support of the Ministry of the Interior. In this case the maximum limit remains the same but there is a condition that the respective town or municipality must financially contribute as well (10%). In case of Decin, there is a following model: One CP assistant is employed and paid by Decin municipality and has an indefinite contract of employment. Financing of other CP assistants depends on alternative sources of funding (grants, donations, subsidies, etc.). One of the project's conditions is that the town of Decin will seek those alternative sources of funding once the ESF funding is over.

12. Please, write a *one page* description of the project:

The project is primarily aimed at reducing the number of committed crimes and other offences and at strengthening the feeling of security among citizens living in the Decin district no. XXXII. According to statistics, this district belongs among those with the highest crime rate. The general public regarded this location as inherently socially excluded, non-attractive and dangerous. The ethnic group or minority which is continuously blamed for such state is the Roma population which forms majority of this town district. On the other hand, it is important to add that it precisely the Roma ethnic minority which is greatly affected by unemployment and depends mostly on social benefits.

The first steps towards the cooperation with Roma community were already made in 2009, when seven Roma volunteers began to assist on everyday basis to the municipal police officers. Their primary motivation for volunteering was the wish to change the negative perception of the Roma people. The Roma who worked as volunteers were chosen from those who were respected as moral and civic authority by the rest of community members. This initiative had been gradually transformed in the *Crime Prevention Assistant* project which was, at first, financially supported by the Ministry of Interior. Since 2012 it has been funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

The successful CP assistant candidates must pass several phases before becoming "complete" CP assistants (see question no.4). CP assistants work together with the municipal police officers and actively help maintaining public order and security in respective locations. The civic and moral authority of CP assistant teams proves to be a very effective help for state and municipal police, particularly when solving long-term and enduring local issues. After completing an initial practical training, CP assistants may perform tasks belonging to patrol officers. If there is a low-risk and low-intensity violation of public order in the location assigned to them, CP assistants are allowed to settle the matter themselves or, if needed, to ask municipal police for assistance.

CP assistant duties depend on given specificities of particular socially excluded communities and the nature of their problems. In general, CP assistants perform the following duties, such as patrolling the pedestrian crossings near the school buildings (particularly when the classes start and finish); inspecting gambling clubs and pubs to make sure no minors or those on social benefits are inside; settling various family and (inter)personal disputes, collaborate with community centres which offer various leisure-time and education activities for children, their parents and adults, etc.

CP assistants' activities have gradually spread into other socially excluded locations in town where they are welcome and treated with the respect. By now CP assistants became an essential and irreplaceable communication channel between police officers and local citizens because they are able to solve local people's problems and to communicate these problems or other important information to the municipality council and police. CP Assistant project currently present **one of the few existing "tools" how to positively stimulate individuals** who have been repeatedly in conflict with law and for whom police did not have any effective methods before. According to all reports, statistics and other documents about the project (i.e. from all 11 towns or cities where the project is being implemented), it can be claimed that **Crime Prevention Assistant project represents the most effective way to deal with socially excluded communities in the Czech Republic.**

Crime Prevention Assistant project is one of the three projects representing Czech Republic in the Good Practices of Community Conflict Management in Central and East Europe project which is supported by the Prevention of and Fight Against Crime Program of the European Commission.