

Impact Chain Analysis: Desegregation Activity 2024 (NPI/AP D.H.)

Subject. Introducing desegregation measures in selected Czech cities under the Action Plan for the D.H. judgment and in the context of the European Commission's infringement proceedings.

DIRECT IMPACT

Institutional awareness and engagement increase.

Evidence level: High — Institutional awareness and engagement increase.

The desegregation activity stood up a clear **institutional framework** in 2024: after years of oversight tied to the *D.H. and Others* judgment and the Commission's infringement case (INFR(2014)2174, broadened in Oct 2024 to monitor segregation in mainstream schools), the Ministry of Education (MŠMT), the National Pedagogical Institute (NPI) and PAQ Research signed a **Memorandum on Ending Ethnic Segregation** on **15 April 2024**, with the Ministry for Regional Development (MMR) joining on **29 October 2024**. The Memorandum commits the parties to co-creating and disseminating a national methodology, data and analysis, training, and a public platform (**Desegregace.cz**), aligned with the 2030+ education strategy to reduce inequalities. In June 2024, MŠMT mandated NPI to form a **project team** and cover organisational/financial operations—an immediate signal of high-level buy-in.

Engagement quickly reached **operational depth** across systems and territories. MŠMT selected an initial wave of six municipalities (Cheb, Kladno, Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz, Olomouc, Teplice, Valašské Meziříčí) where NPI methodologists entered the field in **09/2024**; by December, the team had delivered **75 city-level meetings** and **11 trainings** for NPI/MMR staff, while presenting the agenda at **Lepší škola** (11/2024) and regional ORP forums (Ústecký kraj, Tachov, Ostrava, Plzeň). The network now routinely involves **municipal leaders, school heads, ČŠI, regional NPI offices, the Ministry's "Střední článek", county Roma coordinators, NGOs**, and the Government Commissioner for Roma Affairs; Awen Amenca is recognised as a national civil-society partner drawing on prior Ostrava desegregation practice. These concrete touchpoints demonstrate that awareness is not only rhetorical but embedded in **regular multi-actor coordination** and capacity-building.

At the same time, engagement levels **vary by locality**. Kladno has so far **refused cooperation**, illustrating the political-economy limits of desegregation and the risk of municipal pushback—even as the term *desegregation* itself has been **stabilised in public debate** in participating cities. The programme has therefore paired method development with **targeted communications** planned for 2025, and, where feasible

(e.g., **Cheb, Teplice**), is convening **working groups** to institutionalise cross-department collaboration. Overall, given the formal mandates, inter-ministerial coalition (MŠMT–NPI–PAQ–MMR), breadth of stakeholders, and documented activity volume, the **evidence level for “institutional awareness & engagement increase” is high**; we estimate **Probability: 85% ± 5%**, while noting ethical alignment with human-rights commitments and the need to manage local resistance through law, financing, and sustained dialogue.

SECONDARY IMPACT

System change starts (catchment rules, financing instruments, MoE tools).

Design work has moved from concept to **early operational pilots**: MŠMT selected an initial cohort of cities (Cheb, Kladno, Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz, Olomouc, Teplice, Valašské Meziříčí; + from 01/2025: Kadaň, Ostrava-jih, Plzeň, Přerov). NPI methodologists were trained, produced **entry situation reports**, and began structured consultations with municipal leaders, school heads, ČŠI, regional NPI offices and NGOs. This fieldwork surfaces the **system levers** the reforms must target—most visibly **spádové (catchment) settings** and school-choice dynamics (e.g., Cheb has six catchment zones with concentration around the centre; in Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz, a whole-obvod catchment plus reputational “flight” and a non-catchment church school lock in separation). These diagnostics are now feeding the national methodology on **Desegregace.cz** and local **working groups** (e.g., Cheb 1×/2 months from 2025) to codify concrete measures.

On the **financing** side, the activity is embedded in NPI’s **PROP** (Národní plán obnovy), while the 2024 conclusions and annexed recommendations outline targeted **desegregation incentives** for zřizovatelé (municipal/county school founders) and a pathway to align MoE tools (e.g., staffing lines for school psychologists, special/social pedagogues; routine data reports flagging segregation risk). The 2025 plan prioritises continued consultations with cities, **finalising and deploying the methodology** (by actor: founder/school/parents), and transferring Desegregace.cz under NPI for regular updates—preconditions for scaling any later regulatory or funding instrument.

Evidence level: Medium; Probability: 65% ± 10%. The **dependency chain** is explicit in the report: without (i) **legal anchoring** of the ban on school segregation and (ii) **durable incentive financing** beyond 12/2025, system change risks stalling; discontinuity of funding and municipal pushback are among the top-scored risks. Where political will exists (e.g., Teplice preparing a cross-department **education working group**; Cheb scheduling a standing group), process infrastructure is forming—yet replication depends on law, money, and sustained cross-sector coordination.

SIDE EFFECT

Municipal/parental resistance.

Resistance is clearest where political leadership deprioritises desegregation or declines cooperation. **Kladno** revised its catchment by-law in **03/2024**, yet practice still funnels pupils with registry-office addresses to a single school (Pařížská), and city leadership **refuses**

cooperation. Two schools concentrate high Roma enrolment—**ZŠ Školská (49%)** and **ZŠ Pařížská (36%)**—showing how administrative settings plus politics reproduce separation rather than unwind it.

Beyond formal rules, parental behaviour reinforces patterns. In **Valašské Meziříčí**, segregation stems “above all” from **non-compliance with catchment** (documented **white flight** away from the stigmatised school). In **Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz**, a **whole-district catchment** interacts with geography (Jílová excluded locality) and a mixed founder landscape (municipal/state/**church school without a catchment**) to channel Roma pupils: **ZŠ P. Pittra 100%**, **ZŠ Gebauerova 98%**, **ZŠ Nádražní 58%**, **ZŠ Gajdošova 40%**. These mechanisms confirm that resistance is structural (rules + reputation + flight), not only attitudinal.

Risk & mitigation. If unmanaged, **political blockage** and **white flight** can **deepen segregation** and stall system change. The report points to three levers already in motion: (1) **law**—a statutory ban on school segregation to set clear duties beyond local politics; (2) **incentives & capacity**—targeted funding and staffing plus **city working groups** (e.g., Teplice plan) to coordinate founders, schools, ČŠI and NGOs; and (3) **communication & engagement**—framing desegregation as **quality and safety for all children**, which has helped **stabilise the term “desegregace”** in public debate. For founders, **financial motivation** is decisive; for parents, **safety/well-being** and **learning quality** are the most effective messages. **Evidence level: High; Probability: 70% ± 10%.**

THIRD-LEVEL IMPACT

Public polarisation and stigma around desegregation.

In 2024 the programme actively tested whether the very term *desegregation* would trigger backlash; the finding is cautiously positive: the term was **stabilised in the public education debate** in participating cities and the feared stigmatizing connotations largely **did not materialise**. That containment owes much to consistent framing (equal quality for **all** pupils) and to visible, practical work with founders and schools rather than abstract slogans. **Evidence level: Medium; Probability: 50% ± 15%.**

Where polarisation does arise, it clusters around **contentious local changes** (e.g., catchment adjustments) and narratives about “who benefits,” which can be amplified by wider political dynamics or parental flight. The report identifies **message frames that de-escalate**: for founders, highlight **financial and capacity benefits**; for parents, emphasise **safety, wellbeing, and learning quality**; and for mixed audiences, lead with **outcomes** rather than labels. This is paired with a **2025 communication push** led by MoE to showcase the need for the activity and early positive results—an explicit hedge against renewed controversy as pilot measures move toward implementation.

Sustained stigma-proofing also requires treating desegregation as the **cross-sector issue** it is (education, **housing**, social services, health, internal migration, and culture/identity) and investing in **open dialogue with Roma communities**, including encouraging families to choose **non-segregated schools**. Methodologist training has already incorporated **communication and emotions** modules, and the guidance stresses transparent engagement and human-rights-centred language—“quality for all,” not “for Roma only.” These ingredients, if maintained alongside legal and financing reforms, keep polarisation **manageable** while the system changes take hold.

HIDDEN IMPACT

Municipal/parental resistance.

Resistance is **most visible where political leadership signals low priority or outright refusal to cooperate**. Kladno is the clearest case: despite revising its catchment by-law in **03/2024**, segregation remains structurally reproduced (e.g., children with registry-office addresses are still channelled to one school), and the city leadership **declines cooperation** on desegregation. Two schools concentrate high Roma enrolment—**ZŠ Školská (49%)** and **ZŠ Pařížská (36%)**—illustrating how administrative settings and local politics can entrench patterns rather than unwind them.

In other localities the **mechanism is parental behaviour interacting with local rules**. In **Valašské Meziříčí**, the report notes **non-compliance with catchment rules** and explicit **“white flight”**—majority families avoid the “segregated” school even when it is their assigned school. In **Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz**, a whole-district catchment combined with proximity to a socially excluded area (Jílová) concentrates disadvantage in particular schools, while multi-actor governance (municipal, state, and church founders) complicates negotiated solutions. These dynamics confirm the **“High” evidence level** for resistance, with **Probability: 70% ±10%**.

Risks and mitigation. If unmanaged, political blockage and **white flight** can **deepen segregation**, amplify stigma, and stall system change. The report points to three levers that reduce this risk: (1) **law**—a statutory ban on school segregation to create clear duties beyond local politics; (2) **incentives & capacity**—targeted financing, staffing lines, working groups, and methodical support for founders and schools; and (3) **communication & community engagement**—framing desegregation as **quality and safety for all children**, stabilising the term in public debate, and actively involving Roma parents and organisations. These are already being deployed (e.g., planned municipal working groups, 2025 communication push), but scaling them—and sustaining them beyond 12/2025—will be decisive for countering resistance.

LONG-TERM RESULT

Educational outcomes for Roma pupils improve; ethnic gaps narrow.

The 2024 work mainly built the *infrastructure* for later learning gains: a functioning inter-ministerial coalition, trained methodologists, 75 municipal consultations, first city diagnostics, and a public methodology pipeline on **Desegrace.cz**. These steps create the preconditions to shift class composition and practice, but measurable outcome change (attendance, attainment, transitions) requires multi-year implementation. The report also documents the **baseline disproportionality** that must move—Roma pupils make up **10%** of pupils in special schools and **29%** of pupils educated under reduced-expectation curricula (§16(9) RVP upravené výstupy)—underscoring the scale of the gap to close.

Real improvement depends on three enabling conditions the report makes explicit: (1) **legal anchoring** of an enforceable ban on school segregation; (2) **durable financing and continuity after 31/12/2025** (the top-rated risk), including staffing lines and incentive instruments for founders; and (3) **cross-sector coordination** with social services and housing where school patterns are tied to locality. Parallel national efforts (ASZ/OP JAK IDZ) run on

36–52-month cycles aimed at raising school success, which aligns with the longer horizon needed for outcome shifts. **Evidence level: Low–Medium; Probability: 40% ±15%.**

What gets measured should improve: the 2025 plan prioritises **finalising and deploying the methodology, updating city data reports and creating a series of legislative/financial/communication recommendations**—all necessary to track and drive learning outcomes. Practically, this means monitoring **attendance, retention, grade progression, transfers out of segregated settings, and the share of Roma pupils in §16(9) and in individual schools/classes** while founders apply targeted measures (catchments, placement practices, support staff). Communication frames that worked in 2024—**quality of learning for all, safety/well-being for parents, and clear financial logic for founders**—should continue to mitigate backlash as structural changes scale.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- **Municipal political will sets the tempo of local steps.** Where city leadership engages, structured **working groups** form and coordination advances (e.g., Teplice); where leadership refuses, cooperation stalls (**Kladno**). The risk register explicitly lists “**blocked by city political leadership**” as high-probability/high-impact.
- **Continuity of financing beyond 2025 is decisive.** Without bridging funds after **31/12/2025**, teams, training, and data/reporting cycles would halt—the report’s **top-scored risk (5×5=25)**. The 2025 plan (methodology rollout, updated city data, and a package of legislative/financial/communication recommendations) presupposes **stable funding lines**.
- **A legal prohibition of segregation will be introduced.** Statutory anchoring would set **clear duties** for the state, founders and schools, empower **MŠMT/ČŠI** to enforce change (incl. powers around catchment by-laws and oversight), and ensure progress doesn’t depend on local politics; this is among the report’s **core recommendations**.

Implication: These assumptions interact—**law** reduces discretion risk, **money** sustains capacity, and **local political will** determines pace. Where housing/social factors shape school patterns, cross-sector cooperation is also assumed.

POSSIBLE TENSIONS & ALTERNATIVE VIEWS

- **Local change is possible even without new national law.** Cities like **Teplice** and **Cheb** are already setting up cross-department **working groups** (meeting ~every two months) that bring founders, schools, ČŠI, NPI and NGOs to the same table to draft concrete education/convergence plans. That shows municipal leadership can start fixing catchments, support staffing, and coordination **now**, even while national rules are pending.
- **But without legal tools the Memorandum risks being symbolic.** The report names two top risks: **(i) no enforceable legal ban** on school segregation (weak powers to change/by-pass segregating by-laws, limited leverage of MŠMT/ČŠI), and **(ii) a funding cliff after 31/12/2025**. Both would stall scaling and enforcement, leaving cooperation to local politics.

- **Parents on both sides may fear “mixing”; communication is pivotal.** What calms the space: for founders, **financial and capacity** logic; for parents, **safety & wellbeing**; for broad audiences, **quality of learning for all**. The term *desegregace* has been **stabilised** in local debates, but the risk register still flags possible rejection by **non-Roma** and **Roma** communities—hence the 2025 plan to intensify targeted communication and community engagement.

Net take: proactive cities can move first; sustained progress still hinges on **law + money + messaging** working together.

SUMMARY

In 2024 the programme moved from intent to execution. A **Memorandum** between the Ministry of Education, NPI and PAQ Research—joined by **MMR on 29 Oct 2024**—set a shared mandate to create and spread a national desegregation methodology and to develop the **Desegregace.cz** platform. NPI stood up a project team in **06/2024**. By year-end, the team had delivered **75 city consultations** and **11 trainings**, while the term *desegregace* was **stabilised in public debate** across participating cities—evidence that awareness and cooperation are no longer merely rhetorical.

System change is **plausible but conditional**. Two risks dominate: a potential **funding cliff after 31/12/2025** and the need for a **statutory ban on school segregation** to give MŠMT/ČŠI enforceable tools; both are flagged at the top of the project’s risk register. At the same time, baseline disproportionalities (Roma pupils = **10%** in special schools; **29%** in reduced-expectation curricula) underline why legal anchoring, durable financing and **cross-sector cooperation** (education–housing–social services) are required to narrow gaps. A 2025 plan focuses on rolling out the methodology, city data updates and targeted communication to sustain momentum.

Field practice points to a **practical path**: organise parents and schools, document barriers, track **class-level change**, and convert local wins into policy. The **HELP** case shows how community organising improves problem-solving capacity (e.g., owner–tenant meetings in Ostrava-Přívoz; municipal engagement in Prague 14) and builds the skills and confidence families need to assert rights—assets that make desegregation measures stick.