

The Roma Minority and Substance Abuse in the Czech and Slovak Republics



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SUMMARY: *This review presents a summary of current knowledge about drug use among the Roma minority in the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic. The Scopus and PubMed databases were searched for relevant articles using the following key words: Romany, drugs, and addictions. We focused on the period 2000-2012. We also made use of printed professional literature and monographs. While reporting mainly on the situation in excluded areas and segregated settlements in Slovakia, the available research rarely focuses on the Roma population as a whole. The high incidence of smoking and inhalant abuse in some settlements in eastern Slovakia has frequently been pointed out as an issue of concern. The (socially excluded) Roma people also start using drugs at an earlier age than the majority of the population and they show some specific characteristics during their drug careers (a lower level of engagement with drug services, riskier behaviour, etc.). In view of the importance of the topic, a nationwide research study on this topic should be carried out, with a focus on different Romany groups, not only the socially excluded ones.*

KEY WORDS: ROMA MINORITY – SUBSTANCE ABUSE – SOCIAL EXCLUSION

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