

This thesis is focused on the issue of children coming from socially and culturally disadvantaged environment before their entry to the compulsory education from a socially-pedagogical point of view. It describes the influence of the environment the child lives in, its family, the community, and the living conditions affecting its readiness for admission to an elementary school. The nature of work is theoretical work and research.

The theoretical part of the thesis inquires into such terms as socialization, family, social and cultural disadvantage, the Roma, preschool education, and their interdependence. It describes the current methods used for recognizing the school maturity and preparedness for an entry to the compulsory education of children in the Czech Republic. It compares the most common institutional forms of preparation for the compulsory education, i.e. nursery school and preliminary classes at elementary schools that are designated especially to the children of socially and culturally disadvantaged background.

The practical part of the thesis uses qualitative research methods and through document analysis, observation, and interviews it gathers information for creating three case studies, in which it thoroughly describes the family environment and the lifestyle of socially and culturally disadvantaged families. In that way, it detects the level of familiarity with terms, situations, and activities, the knowledge of which is the basic condition for a successful entry into the compulsory education. It tracks the results of enrolment to an elementary school, the development of the children during their attendance to the preliminary course, and their school success rate during the first year of elementary school. Based on the facts found, it proposes partial measures and evaluates their effects on the development of the child and its readiness to cope with elementary school curriculum. In the conclusion of the research it proposes a system of interconnected measures leading to an increase in the preparedness of children for an entry to an elementary school and the consequent improved school success rate.