

ARA ART, z.s.

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



| ARA ART, z.s. |  
| Legal form: registered association |  
| Registered office: Na Václavce 1136/8, 150 00, Prague 5 |  
| ID No.: 01188461 |  
| Founded: 25 October 2012 |  
Statutory body:  
Association Committee composed of  
Michal Žolták, Pavlína Matiová and Veronika Šafránková



# ARTIVISM

**ARA ART combines art, action, activism and people in its long-term concept of ARTIVISM.** The concept was supported by a two-year EEA Grant (2014–2021) in the programme Culture; all our cultural activities in this year were part of the “Artivism – A Chance for Better Coexistence” project.



## 1. International Romani Day (7–9 April 2021)

The celebrations of International Romani Day took place on 7–9 April 2021 with one concert talk show every evening (main programme) and one format of accompanying programme (literary evening, cooking show, debate).

The talkshows were hosted by two experienced moderators, Claudia Laburdová and Vojta Lavička.

The theme for this year's celebrations was We Stick Together. We have been in a pandemic for more than a year, which has meant constant uncertainty, existential hardship and in many cases extremely painful personal losses. This affects all of society, regardless of origin, nationality and colour of skin.

The first day opened with a literary programme realised in cooperation with the Kher publishing house as our partner organisation. Its editor Lenka Jandáková talked about contemporary Romani literature with Renata Horvátová and Věra Horváthová, who also read excerpts from her works.

The guest of the concert talkshow was Tibor Žida and his gypsy jazz ensemble Lače Manuša.



The main day of the celebrations was supposed to be dedicated to one of the icons of contemporary Romani music Mario Bihári and the band Bachtale Apsa, but due to an illness of one of the members, we had to quickly change the programme. But the “substitute” that we found was more than acceptable – we heard three fantastic musicians who have been an integral part of the Romani music scene as performers and composers for many years: Zdeněk Lázok, Milan Kroka and Milan Kurej. In the afternoon programme, the popular Romani designer and chef Pavel Berky together with his sister, Romani scholar Renata Berkyová prepared a cooking show and taught people how to make the traditional Romani dish Goja.

Together with Slovo 21, we organised a debate on Criticism in Romani Music (as part of Slovo 21’s long-running Andro Media programme). The debate was attended by journalist Jarmila Balážová, musicians Jan Dužda and Tibor Žida and Michal Miko, manager of the band Kale. The debate proved to be very fruitful and necessary – it opened many related and multi-layered topics and launched a massive discussion on social media.

## **2. Leperiben: We Do Not Forget! – 2 August, Náměstí Míru, Praha**

On the Roma Holocaust Memorial Day on 2 August, a cultural programme was performed for the third year in a row. The core of the production was the scenic narration of the story of Dezider Daduč from Michalovce/Pozdišovce, Slovakia, by František Kudry. The scenic story was complemented by live music conducted by Viliam Didiáš and accompanied by the singers Maria Bikárová and Erika Nováková. At the end, a memorial was held where the names of the victims were read from the Book of the Dead, followed by a minute of silence.

Reading from the Book of the Dead this year were: Karel Karika (deputy mayor of a district in Ústí nad Labem), Anna Polívková (actress), Jana Černochová (mayor of Prague 2), Robert Gabris (Jindřich Chalupecký Prize laureate), Yechiel Bar Chaim (philanthropist), Jan Červenka (head of the Romani Studies Seminar at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University), Kateřina Saporová (Prague Pride), Tomáš Kraus (Federation of Jewish Communities) and Dana Hrušková (social worker). The readers are picked to reflect the plurality of Czech society; we invite representatives of various religions, ethnic and sexual minorities, politicians from various sides of the spectrum, academics and artists while also making sure there are both Romani and non-Romani people present.

The crowd attending the event was not as large as we had expected (which we attribute to several cultural events held on the same day), but the event received very good media coverage (see the end of the report).

## **3. World Day of Romani Language – 5 November, Prague**

We prepared the programme for World Day of Romani Language in collaboration with Slovo 21. While the main part of the event took place in Prague, it also had a regional component (five Czech cities hosted readings of literary works by Romani authors accompanied by debates, discussions and of course music).

The Prague part of the programme kicked off at 7 p.m. with a discussion on criticism of Romani literature. The main guest was the linguist of Bulgarian origin Sofiya Zahova, who currently

works at the International Centre for Multilingualism and Intercultural Understanding in Iceland. This was followed by readings by Ilona Ferková, Věra Horváthová and Mária Hušová, who were accompanied by the Rokycany band Le Čhavendar. The programme was hosted by the Romani scholar and activist Michal Miko.



#### 4. ARA FEST – 8–10 July, Plzeň & Rokycany

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the multi-genre festival of Romani culture ARA FEST took place in the Pilsen region in July. Thanks to international financial support (European Commission, EEA Grants), we were able to expand the festival this year in terms of (1) location – in addition to Plzeň, more events happened in Rokycany, one of the largest traditional centres of Romani music in the Czech Republic; (2) scope of the programme, both in the number of events and their wide thematic range; and finally (3) network of partners and collaborators – this year DEPO 2015, Slovo 21 and Amare čhave.

The programme of the festival from 8 to 10 July 2021 was as follows:

The festival opened with the traditional open-air exhibition, this time Lukáš Houdek's "Naši" (for annotation of the exhibition, see below under Phundrado Vudar Gallery).

The second event was a showcase of young Romani talent, which was more of a community-focused event that took place in the Vinyl Gallery.

From 6 p.m., there was a concert of the gypsy jazz band Lače Manuša at Depo 2015.

On the second day of the festival, the programme relocated to the nearby town of Rokycany; on the main square, there were performances by Kale (world-famous musicians from Rokycany) and Bachtale Apsa with Matio Bihári and Bára Hrzánová. In the evening, the programme returned to ZachsPub where the local band Le čhavendar performed in the courtyard.

On the main day of the festival, i.e. Saturday 10 July, there were also accompanying activities in addition to the music at the venue (U Branky, Smetanovy sady, Pilsen) to enable the visitors to delve deeper into one of the areas related to Romani art - including a series of informal discussions with Romani artists, cultural promoters, and journalists.

The attendance was higher than expected, with an estimated 1,000 attendees (mainly Roma, but a smaller portion of the visitors consisted of the non-Romani public).

#### 6. PHUNDRADO VUDAR GALLERY LUKÁŠ HOUDEK: NAŠI / OURS

## 6.7. 29 JULY, PILSEN, SMETANOVY SADY

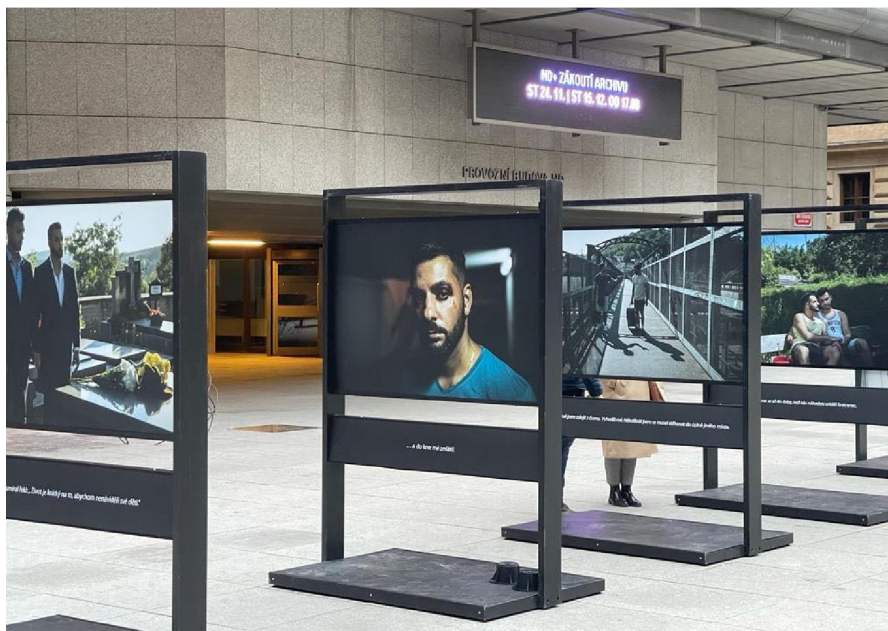
This year, we organised 2 outdoor exhibitions in the Gallery project.

Romani people have been part of Czech (or Czechoslovak) society for centuries. Even though some parts of society keep telling them that Czechia is not a country for them ("Let them go back where they came from!"), most of them were born here and consider the Czech Republic or its specific regions their home. They feel Romani, but also identify as Czechs.

In the interwar years, many Romani people lived in particular in the Moravian countryside, often integrated with the majority population. From this period, we even have photographs of Romani people in traditional Moravian folk costumes. They participated, and some continue to participate, in the preservation and development of Czech folklore. This process was however violently interrupted by the Holocaust in which most of these Romani people, alongside Romani people from Bohemia, were exterminated in Nazi concentration camps.

## JAN MIHALIČEK: I DID A TERRIBLE THING

18 NOVEMBER – 2 DECEMBER, PRAGUE, VÁCLAV HAVEL SQUARE



The Romani LGBT+ minority faces discrimination not only from majority society on the grounds of ethnicity or sexual orientation, but also from inside the traditional part of Romani society, which perceives homosexuality as unacceptable. Sometimes they are excommunicated from their families or entire communities and find themselves homeless, alone, without family or friends.

The exhibition of 8 photographs tells a story inspired by a true event; one of the many stories that ARA ART heard in its work with the Romani LGBT minority. The photographs were taken by Jan Mihalíček as part of a broader awareness campaign about Romani LGBT+ people in the Czech Republic.



## 7. THEATRE GROUP

The Ara Art theatre group still remains the only representative of Romani theatre in Bohemia. In 2021, we started working on a new auteur show called DAJORI (Mom).

Dajori is a monodrama mapping the stories of Romani women against the backdrop of key historical milestones of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The script is a mixture of adaptations of existing literary works and personal stories that never received literary treatment, told from authentic period documents.

Four characters, all performed by a single actress, take viewers through almost an entire century of the history of pre- and post-war Czechoslovakia. Their life stories answer the question of what it means to be a Romani woman in societies (both Romani and majority) that changed dynamically in the complex period they lived in, but very often lacked respect to those who could not defend themselves.

Due to the various anti-pandemic measures, the gestation of the show was very difficult and took much longer than usual. For this reason, we decided to stage a preview for a limited number of viewers in December 2021 and postponed the official premiere to 2022.





## VIDEO: "Na nadávky jsou romští gayové a lesby bohužel zvyklí. Řada Romů už nás ale taky podporuje," říká David Tišer

17.5.2021 11:39



„Řada romských gayů a leseb se necítí doma bezpečně. Jejich příbuzní je mnohdy šikanují a v některých případech i fyzicky napadají. Na druhou stranu mám ale pocit, že vztah Romů k LGBT komunitě se postupně lepší. Je víc lidí z řad Romů, kteří nás i podporují. Alespoň v Česku,“ říká v rozhovoru pro ROMEA TV David Tišer, první romský LGBT aktivista, držitel ceny Františka Kriegla a ředitel organizace Ara Art, která se jako jediná na světě zabývá právy LGBT romské komunity.

V rozhovoru pro první internetovou romskou televizi Tišer reagoval i na nedávné homofobní komentáře, které psali někteří Romové na sociálních sítích. A to poté, co mezi kytaristou Tiborem Židou a zpěvákem a hercem Janem Bendigem vznikl spor, který se týkal kromě jiného seriálu Ďábelské cikánky. „Na tento typ komentářů jsem vlastně zvyklý. Já jsem kvůli tomu taky napsal prohlášení, ve kterém jsem odsoudil toto jednání. Celé se to totiž nesmyslně a zbytečně obrátilo proti LGBT komunitě,“ uvedl Tišer.

Podle Tišera romští gayové, lesby, bisexuálové nebo transsexuálové čelí vícečetné diskriminaci. Tedy nejen ze strany většinové společnosti kvůli etnickému původu nebo sexuální orientaci, ale i právě ze strany romské společnosti a paradoxně taky přímo od samotné LGBT komunity: „Měli jsme v Praze workshop, kde byli Romové z řad LGBT komunity z celého světa. Když jsme pak chtěli jít do nočního klubu, tak nás tam nechtěli pustit kvůli tomu, že jsme Romové,“ dodal Tišer. Jeho organizace kromě jiného provozuje on-line poradnu, na kterou se mohou obrátit právě romští gayové či lesby. Například v situaci, kdy je rodina kvůli jejich homosexualitě zavrhuje, nebo dokonce šikanuje. Ale i třeba v případech, kdy se bojí o své homosexualitě mluvit se svými nejbližšími.





# Support for the Romani LGBT+ Community

In 2021, our activities in this area were funded mainly from the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (REC 2014–2020). They were co-funded by organisations such as the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Dreilinden, Ponticus, the US Embassy and the Norwegian Grants 2014–2021 in the Human Rights Programme.

In 2021, we wrote an analytical report/paper “Romani LGBTIQ Minority and Its Status in Selected EU Countries (CZ, SK and HU)” which helped fill the information gap and provided to key authorities and institutions a comprehensive overview of the situation of this minority. The analytical report/paper also highlighted the persistent legal vacuum and the need to expand social policy and legislation with an intersectional approach.



2. Following the publication of the analytical report/paper and as part of our advocacy activities, we organised in each partner country (CZ, SK, HU) two round tables with representatives of key authorities, the academia and civil society which aimed to increase the visibility of the issues with multiple discrimination of the Romani LGBT+ community on the national and European level, dispel the taboo surrounding the topic and encourage the introduction of targeted measures and policies.

3. In 2021, we organised thematic events for the public during LGBT+ Pride festivals in Prague, Košice and Pécs. According to available figures, the Pride festivals in the Czech Republic (Prague), Hungary (Pécs) and Slovakia (Košice) were attended by more than 26,300 people. As part of Pride festival programmes, visitors could enjoy concerts of contemporary Romani music, sample Romani food during the rainbow festival in Košice and watch the student documentary “Roma Boys – A Love Story” followed by a public debate of representatives of the Romani LGBT+ community; in Prague, the programme included the theatre play Čirikloro (“Little Bird”) and the opportunity to visit the ARA ART information booth. Partner organisations also prepared a workshop for LGBT+ Romani people during Pride festivals (64 participants).

4. We highlighted the issue of multiple discrimination in 2021 with the campaign “[I Did a Terrible Thing](#)” which ran in all the participating partner countries simultaneously.

The aim of the campaign was to increase support and transform social attitudes and behaviours towards the Romani LGBTI minority with particular focus on reducing homophobia and eliminating taboo, prejudice and stereotypes.

A short film “[I Did a Terrible Thing](#)” was produced, based on a true event, and published on social media of partner organisations, in the media and on the website and landing page at [www.udelaljsmhroznouvec.cz](http://www.udelaljsmhroznouvec.cz).

The total reach of all posts, videos and stories in the campaign on social media was 923,710 people across all countries; in total, they recorded 1,616,942 views.

5. A new “Roma LGBT+” website was created in 2021 as part of the systematic activities of the international Romani LGBTIQ platform, aiming to strengthen its position as a respected network that acts as a contact point and communication channel in matters concerning the primary target group. The website offers various tools that improve communication, increase access to relevant information, raise awareness and strengthen cooperation (an interactive map showing a total of 40 organisations in partner countries that help/provide services to Romani LGBT people, 20 examples of good practice and 20 stories of LGBT+ people of Romani origin etc.).






# LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Stronger Together

The project supports the representatives of smaller Romani non-profit organisations in their personal and professional development. Through education, inspiration, experience sharing and mentoring, it contributes to further development and capacity building in order to develop organisations and new initiatives. The project in particular supports smaller or starting initiatives that are organised by civically active Romani people from various parts of the Czech Republic.



Smaller Romani organisations generally face financing issues in their activities, often because the condition for receiving a grant or subsidy is that the organisation must have been established for at least two years. The classic fundraising models (state subsidies, foundation grant programmes) for smaller or new initiatives face strict conditions for receiving a grant that are impossible for them to meet. Many interesting initiatives and projects do not get implemented because more and more emphasis is placed on the ability to present the plan for the project in such a way that it meets the conditions of the grant call. However, what is important for the participants in the ARA ART Leadership Academy is their genuine interest and the perceived need to help, in particular, at the local level and within Romani communities, so that they can help improve the circumstances of Roma in places where they do not get equal treatment and support from the state or municipalities.



Romani people in the Czech Republic still belong to a minority that is marginalised and does not have equal starting conditions in education and access to work or housing. Generally, there is a lack of confidence in the abilities of Romani people themselves, even on the part of foundations or donors who want to support them. That is why we need to prepare, educate ourselves and persist. The project currently involves over 30 participants from all over the Czech Republic. Among the aspects that the participants perceive as important are mutual support and cooperation, the opportunity to attend training courses that target both their personal and professional needs precisely and are held with respect to the development of their organisation, expert mentoring managed by experienced individuals and the feeling that they do not need to deal with their issues alone.

### **Target Group**

In 2021, a total of 11 smaller Romani non-profit organisations or starting initiatives from all over the Czech Republic were involved in the Leadership Academy. 25 to 28 participants took part.

### **Objectives of the Academy**

1. Strengthen and develop the leadership of representatives of Romani organisations.
2. Promote the participation of Romani people in public life and changes to it, in particular with respect to the marginalised needs of the Roma.
3. Support the need for self-realisation of the programme participants on both the personal and professional levels.
4. To provide expert guidance, mentoring and other educational activities with regard to strengthening the capacities and development of organisations or initiatives.
5. Foster the team spirit among the participants in the ARA ART Leadership programme.
6. To improve the self-esteem of the participants and increase their confidence in their own abilities despite the numerous barriers and prejudices they often have to overcome because of their ethnicity.
7. Strengthen the integrity of the participants through education in the field of Romani history and socio-cultural specifics so that they understand the historical and social context of the position of the Roma in society and understand themselves better, and so that they are better equipped to provide arguments and present the needs of Roma as leaders of their communities not only with respect to donors but also to institutions and state authorities at the local, regional and national levels.
8. Create a tight-knit group of Romani people working together across the entire Czech Republic to support, inspire and contribute to improving the position of Roma in society.
9. Work on the strategic development of the participant organisations and initiatives.
10. Provide education on fundraising in its full range of possibilities, i.e. not only grants and state grant support, but also work with individual donors, major donors and other forms of fundraising necessary for the implementation of projects and long-term sustainability of the activities of non-profit organisations.

In addition to regular online trainings and ongoing mentoring support, we also organised one multi-day retreat meeting in 2021. Here we focused on the ability to present oneself, one's

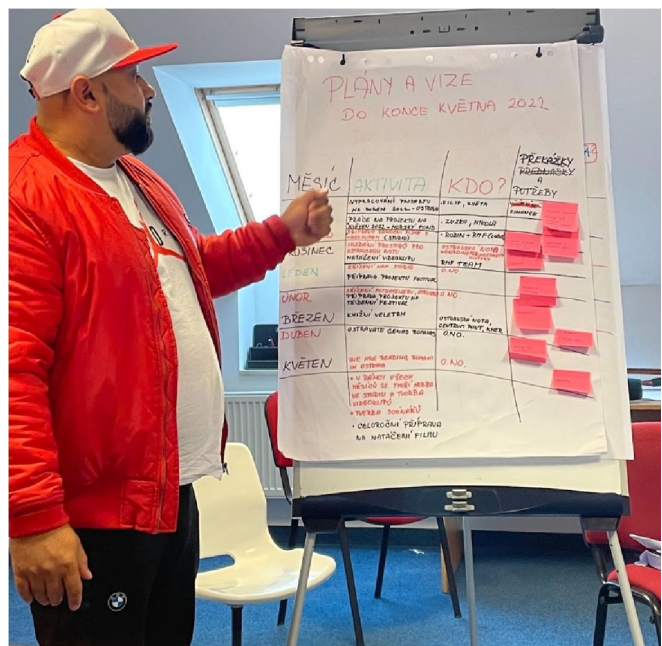
organisation and projects through experiential activities. There was also a session with a representative of an international foundation who explained to participants the approach of donors and foundations from the other side. Part of the meeting was also devoted to individual donors and in particular the participants' ability to convince donors that their project needed support. The representatives of the various organisations also left with a comprehensive plan of activities for the next six months.

Several online trainings were implemented during the year, for example on "Sociocultural Specifics of the Roma", "European Romani Organisations and Lobbying on the European Level", "Principles of Teamwork" and more.

In addition to group training, there were also individual programmes to help with professional development of the participants and their organisations.

In the progress report at the end of 2022, 100% of participants reported positive results in personal development and enhanced leadership skills e.g. in confidence, increased motivation, greater openness to collaboration, better ability to communicate and step out of their comfort zone and improved planning and organising skills.

80% of the participants said that their organisation and initiative improved e.g. in their fundraising strategy, implementation of new projects, strategic development and the establishment of partnerships with other organisations.



Despite the covid measures, we managed to implement many activities and fulfil the main objectives of the project. Over the next eighteen months, we will continue to develop the current participants of ARA ART Leadership Academy to support their professional and personal growth, but also develop their organisations that will strategically plan their next activities and will be able to reach long-term financial sustainability.



# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The organization's accounts were audited in 2022 by 22HLAV s.r.o., an independent auditing company.

Profit and Loss Statement  
according to Annex 2  
to Decree 504/2002 Coll.

## PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT in abbreviated form

as of 31 December 2021  
(in thousands of CZK)

Name, seat and legal form of  
accounting unit  
ARA ART, z. s.  
Na Václavce 1136/8  
Prague  
150 00

The accounting unit will submit:  
1 copy to respective tax authority

Company ID No.

01188461

Identification	TEXT	Line No.	Tasks		
			Main	Financial	Total
			5	6	7
<b>A.</b>	<b>Costs</b>	1			
A. I.	Consumed purchases and services	2	5,245	124	5,369
A. II.	Change in finished goods and work-in-progress	3			
A. III.	Personnel costs	4	2,509		2,509
A. IV.	Taxes and fees	5	1		1
A. V.	Other expenses	6	39		39
A. VI.	Depreciations, disposal of assets, reserves and adjusting entries (credit/debit)	7			
A. VII.	Contribution provided	8			
A. VIII.	Income tax	9			
	<b>Total costs</b> Sum of A.I to A.VIII	10	7,794	124	7,918
<b>B.</b>	<b>Revenues</b>	11			
B. I.	Operating subsidies	12	7,749		7,749
B. II.	Contributions received	13	16		16
B. III.	Revenue from own products and services	14		153	153
B. IV.	Other revenues	15	3		3
B. V.	Sales of assets	16			
	<b>Total revenues</b> Total B.I to B.V	17	7,768	153	7,921
<b>C.</b>	<b>Profit or loss before tax</b> I. 17 * (I. 10 - I. 9)	18	-26	29	3
<b>D.</b>	<b>Profit or loss after tax</b> I. 18 - I. 9	19	-26	29	3

Prepared on: 21 April 2022		Signature of the accounting unit's governing body or signature specimen of an individual entrepreneur who constitutes an accounting unit	
Legal form of accounting unit	Line of business	Note:	

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**in abbreviated form**  
**as of 31 December 2021**  
(in thousands of CZK)

Name, seat and legal form of  
accounting unit  
ARA ART, z. s.  
Na Václavce 1136/8  
Prague  
150 00

The accounting unit will submit:  
1 copy to the relevant financial authority

Company ID No.

01188461

Identification	ASSETS	Line number	As of the first day of the fiscal year	As of the last day of the fiscal year
a	b	c	1	2
<b>A.</b>	<b>Fixed assets, total</b>	<b>Sum of A.I to A.IV</b>	1	
A. I.	Intangible fixed assets, total	2		
A. II.	Tangible fixed assets, total	3		
A. III.	Long-term investments, total	4		
A. IV.	Adjustments to acquired fixed assets, total	5		
<b>B.</b>	<b>Short-term assets, total</b>	<b>Total B.I to B.IV</b>	6	5,150
B. I.	Total inventory	7	18	24
B. II.	Receivables, total	8	47	1,671
B. III.	Short-term financial assets, total	9	5,077	5,644
B. IV.	Other assets, total	10	8	
	<b>Total assets</b>	<b>Sum of A to B</b>	11	5,150
				-7,339

Identification	LIABILITIES	Line number	As of the first day of the fiscal year	As of the last day of the fiscal year
a	b	c	3	4
<b>A.</b>	<b>Total equity</b>	<b>Sum of A.I to A.II</b>	12	429
A. I.	Total assets	13		77
A. II.	Total profit or loss	14	429	627
<b>B.</b>	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>Total B.I to B.IV</b>	15	4,721
B. I.	Total provisions	16		
B. II.	Long-term liabilities, total	17	50	7
B. III.	Short-term payables, total	18	331	5,791
B. IV.	Other liabilities	19	4,340	837
	<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>Sum of A to B</b>	20	5,150
				-7,339

Prepared on: 21 April 2022		Signature of the accounting unit's governing body or signature specimen of an individual entrepreneur who constitutes an accounting unit
Legal form of accounting unit	Line of business	Note:



# THANKS TO SPONSORS

In 2021, our activities were supported by the following institutions:

- Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic
- The Capital City of Prague
- Pilsen Region
- European Union (REC 2014–2020)
- EEA Grants 2014–2021, programme Culture
- Norway Grants 2014–2021, programme Human Rights
- Sigrid Rousing Trust
- Bader Philanthropies
- Open Society Foundation
- Heinrich Böll Stiftung
- Dreilinden
- Porticus
- Embassy of the USA
- LUSH

In addition to institutional donors, we would like to thank all individuals who supported us during the year either directly at our events or through the Darujme.cz platform.

We really appreciate your support and trust!