INTRODUCTION AND AIMS: Ethnicity is a significant factor regarding health status of dialyzed patients. In Slovakia Roma represent the largest minority. Thus far, it has been shown that Roma compared to non-Roma have a significantly higher likelihood of getting end-stage renal disease and that their chances for survival on dialysis are lower. Evidence is lacking regarding morbidity between Roma and non-Roma. The aim was to compare the health status of dialyzed Roma and non-Roma using the Charlson comorbidity index (CCI).

METHODS: All Slovak dialysis centers for adults were asked to fill in a questionnaire with demographic and clinical data, including comorbidities. Cross-sectional analysis of 2082 patients of average age of 63.8±13.8 years was performed. Comorbidities were expressed as the CCI, and ethnic differences were calculated. Linear regression was performed to adjust for differences in gender and age in both ethnic groups.

RESULTS: Roma represented 13.0% of the whole dialyzed population in Slovakia (n=270). Morbidity expressed as CCI was significantly lower in the Roma population (p<0.001). After adjusting for gender and age, ethnicity failed to be associated with the CCI in the linear regression analysis (p=0.965, variance of the model - adjusted R² 38.6%).

CONCLUSIONS: The health status of dialyzed Slovak Roma does not differ cross-sectionally and adjusted for age and gender from the health status of dialyzed non-Roma.