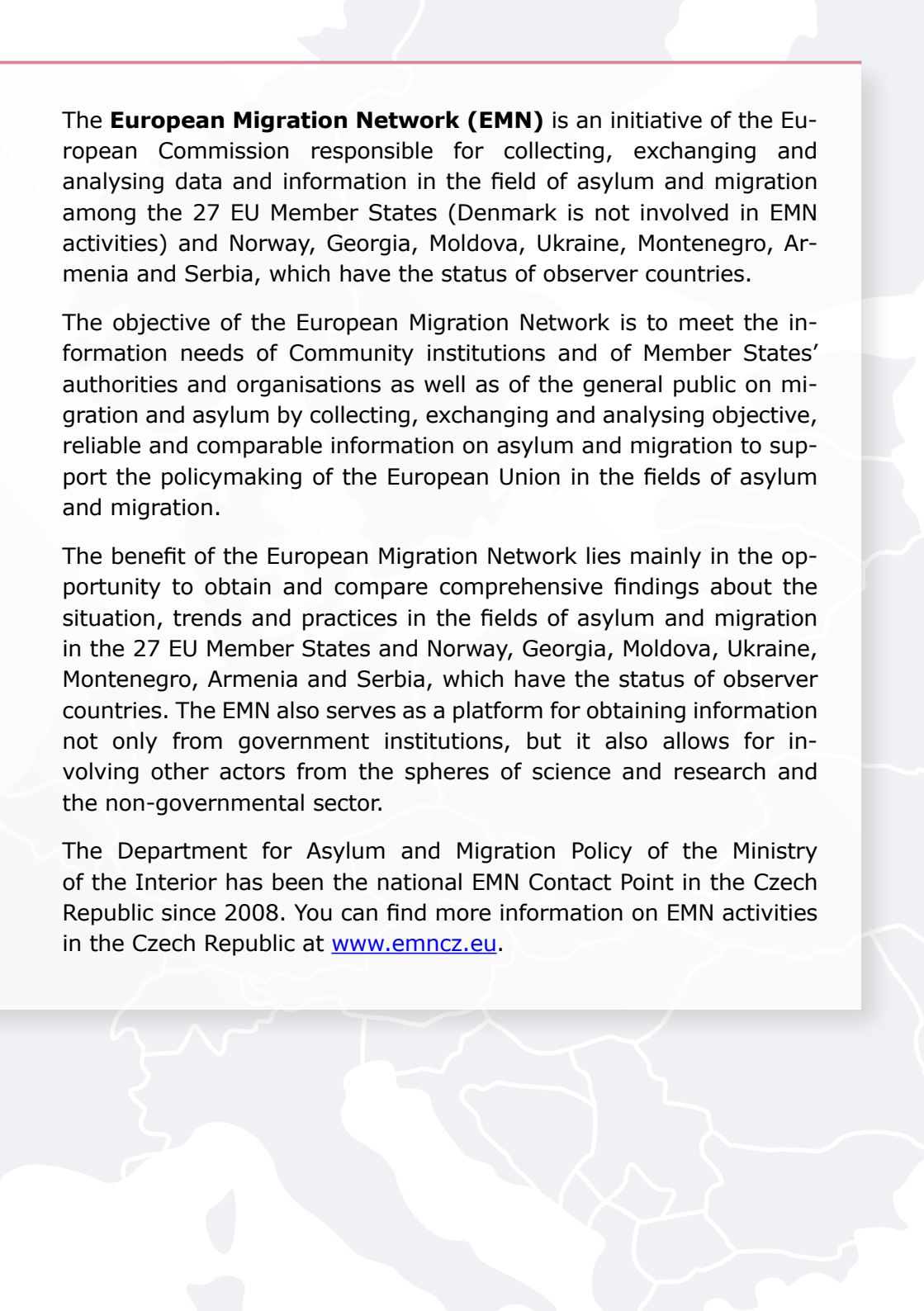


**EMN Annual Report
on Asylum and Migration 2023**





The background of the page features a light blue map of Europe with white outlines of the countries. A thin red horizontal line is positioned near the top of the page.

The **European Migration Network (EMN)** is an initiative of the European Commission responsible for collecting, exchanging and analysing data and information in the field of asylum and migration among the 27 EU Member States (Denmark is not involved in EMN activities) and Norway, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Montenegro, Armenia and Serbia, which have the status of observer countries.

The objective of the European Migration Network is to meet the information needs of Community institutions and of Member States' authorities and organisations as well as of the general public on migration and asylum by collecting, exchanging and analysing objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration to support the policymaking of the European Union in the fields of asylum and migration.

The benefit of the European Migration Network lies mainly in the opportunity to obtain and compare comprehensive findings about the situation, trends and practices in the fields of asylum and migration in the 27 EU Member States and Norway, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Montenegro, Armenia and Serbia, which have the status of observer countries. The EMN also serves as a platform for obtaining information not only from government institutions, but it also allows for involving other actors from the spheres of science and research and the non-governmental sector.

The Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior has been the national EMN Contact Point in the Czech Republic since 2008. You can find more information on EMN activities in the Czech Republic at www.emncz.eu.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANACEN	Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration
CIS	Information System of Foreign Nationals
CR	Czech Republic
CZSO	Czech Statistical Office
DAMP	Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior of the CR)
DFPS	Directorate of the Foreign Police Service
EEA	European Economic Area
EMN	European Migration Network
ETIAS	European Travel Information and Authorisation System
EU	European Union
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
eu-LISA	European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
FN	University hospital (Czech abbreviation)
FPI	Foreign Police Inspectorate
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GPIS	General Provider of Integration Services
IA	International airport
IAC	Integration Asylum Centre
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JRS	Joint Reintegration Services

KACPU	Regional Assistance Centres for Help and Assistance to Ukraine (Czech abbreviation)
MEDEVAC	Programme of Humanitarian Evacuations of Inhabitants with Health Issues (Medical Evacuation)
MfRD	Ministry for Regional Development
MoC	Ministry of Culture
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
NCOZ	Criminal Police and Investigation Service's National Central Unit for Combatting Organised Crime (Czech abbreviation)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSPOD	Social-legal Child Protection Authority (Czech abbreviation)
PCR	Police of the Czech Republic
RC	Reception Centre
RDP	Regional Directorate of the Police
SIP	State Integration Programme
SUZ	Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (Czech abbreviation)
UAM	Unaccompanied minors
UN	United Nations

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
ÚP ČR	Labour Office of the Czech Republic (Czech abbreviation)
V4	Visegrad Group
ZDC	Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals (Czech abbreviation)



The 2023 European Migration Network (EMN) Annual Report on Asylum and Migration provides a summary of the developments and most important changes in the fields of migration, asylum and integration in the Czech Republic during the year 2023. The migration situation was significantly affected by the Russian aggression in Ukraine, which resulted in the activation of the Temporary Protection Regulation in the EU in 2022.

LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

As of the end of the year 2023, a total of 1,065,740 foreign nationals, i.e. 9.8% of the CR's population, were staying legally in the territory of the Czech Republic (for a period longer than 90 days). The slight decrease resulted from the fact that some foreign nationals, who had obtained temporary protection, left the CR.

From among the total number of foreign nationals with residence permits in the Czech Republic, **approximately one third of them had permanent residence in the country, one third had temporary residence and one third consisted of beneficiaries of temporary protection.** Third-country nationals accounted for more than three quarters of all foreign nationals in the territory of the CR. The largest groups among the holders of permanent and temporary residence permits were Ukrainians, Slovaks and Vietnamese.

As of 31 December 2023, a total of **823,945 foreign nationals were registered as employees**, with employees from third countries (including beneficiaries of temporary protection) accounting for slightly over half of them. The highest numbers of foreign employees were registered in Prague, in the Central Bohemian Region, the South Moravia Region and Pilsen Region.

Traditionally, nationals of Ukraine, Russia and Vietnam were the most represented non-EU countries on the labour market. Among the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland, nationals of Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria were the most represented ones.

The **economic migration programmes**, which are an effective instrument to support migration of selected target groups of third-country nationals, in whose entry and stay the Czech state has an increased interest, have continued to be implemented. Since 2019, **a total of 4 government-approved migration programmes** have been implemented. In 2023, the Digital Nomad Programme, the Pilot Project of Work Migration from Indonesia and Pilot Project were added.

A fundamental aspect of the integration of foreign nationals is **the network of 18 Centres for the Support of Integration of Foreigners**, which operate in all the regions of the Czech Republic.

In 2023, **the citizenship of the CR was acquired by a total of 6,437 foreigners**, most often by citizens of Ukraine (1,257), Russia (1,176) and Slovakia (858).

FOREIGN NATIONALS WITH TEMPORARY PROTECTION IN THE TERRITORY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

As of the end of 2023, a total of **374,642 foreign nationals who were granted temporary protection** granted in connection with the Russian aggression in Ukraine were registered in the territory of the Czech Republic, which accounts for **3.5% of the CR's population and is the highest figure per capita from among the EU Member States**. During the year 2023, the Lex Ukraine laws were amended.

In February 2023, the responsibility for coordinating the adaptation and integration of refugees from Ukraine was transferred from the MoI to the Czech Government Human Rights Commissioner. **The Regional Assistance Centres for Assistance and Help to Ukraine (KACPU)** continued to operate for the purpose of providing the new arrivals with initial assistance. Starting from April 2023, the coordination of KACPU activities was transferred to the MoI.

In the year 2023, **the process of extending temporary protection for those persons**, who had been issued with a visa valid until 31 March 2023, **took place**.

Most persons with temporary protection obtained jobs but most of them worked in non-skilled or very-low-skilled positions.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In 2023, a **total of 1,422 persons applied for international protection** in the Czech Republic. The main source countries of applicants for international protection were Türkiye, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

The Czech Republic has granted international protection in the form of asylum in 56 cases, mostly to nationals of Myanmar, Russia and Afghanistan. **Subsidiary protection was granted to 268 applicants**, most often citizens of Ukraine and Afghanistan.

Foreigners who have been granted international protection in the form of asylum or subsidiary protection can benefit from the **State Integration Programme (SIP)**. In 2023, a total of **227 eligible persons** entered the SIP. There were 1,347 applicants for international protection staying in the asylum facilities of the MoI during the year 2023.

The Czech Republic registered 1,101 of so-called Dublin cases (i.e. applications received as well as sent) in the year 2023. There were 106 Dublin transfers carried out to the Czech Republic and 104 from the Czech Republic.

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

A total of **48 unaccompanied minors**, mostly from Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan, passed through institutions of institutional and protective education last year.

19 unaccompanied minors were granted temporary protection and 2 clients applied for international protection.

MEASURES TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The situation of trafficking in human beings during 2023 has not seen significant changes compared to the previous period. Sexual and labour exploitation remain the most common forms of trafficking. **The Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings** (hereinafter referred to as the Programme) is a measure designed to provide support and appropriate protection to victims of trafficking in human beings on the basis of an individual risk assessment. It is intended for victims of trafficking in human beings over the age of 18.

In 2023, **18 probable victims of trafficking in human beings** were included in the Programme.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PROJECTS

In 2023, negotiations were taking place about the final wording of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, which aims to reform and update migration policy in the EU. International cooperation in the field of migration continued in the year 2023, particularly through intensive contacts at the level of respective authorities of the European Union, including its agencies, particularly the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). In 2023, the Czech Republic **continued its chairmanship of the Prague Process Steering Committee**.

In 2023, **MEDEVAC**¹ continued to operate in priority regions – **the Middle East** (Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq), **Africa** (Ghana, Senegal, Rwanda, Zambia) **and Eastern Europe** (Ukraine).

Under the **Aid in Place** programme, the MoI provided financial donations abroad, mainly to help refugees directly at the place of their initial displacement and to assist countries hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants or struggling as transit countries. The budget of the Aid in Place programme in 2023 amounted to **CZK 150 million**. **Support was directed to countries along the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean migration routes, as well as to countries along the Western Balkan migration route**. Financial support was also provided to Türkiye after a devastating earthquake and to refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia.

In addition, **assistance to Ukraine and Moldova** worth **CZK 70 million** was provided in 2023 under the Aid in Place programme.

¹ The MEDEVAC program is a government-run, medical humanitarian program of the Czech Republic that focuses on providing medical care for vulnerable populations in regions affected by migration, burdened by large numbers of refugees or in places where specialised specialist care is not available.

ILLEGAL MIGRATION, PEOPLE SMUGGLING

In 2023, a total of **13,898** persons were identified as perpetrators of **illegal migration** in the territory of the Czech Republic. While the number of persons detected in transit irregular migration in 2022 accounted for 74.7% of the total number of persons identified as perpetrators of irregular migration, in 2023 it was only 34.1% of the total.

The persons identified as perpetrators of illegal migration were most frequently citizens of Syria, Ukraine and Moldova.

Starting from 4 October 2023, the protection of the internal borders between the Czech Republic and Slovakia was reintroduced on a temporary basis.

RETURNS

During the year 2023, a total of **674 voluntary returns of third-country nationals** were carried out. This included 654 assisted voluntary returns of foreign nationals carried out by the MoI CR and 20 assisted voluntary returns of applicants for international protection carried out by the Refugee Facilities Administration (SUZ). Citizens of Moldova, Türkiye, Mongolia and Georgia accounted for the highest numbers among these returnees.

In its programme, the MoI primarily focuses on foreign nationals with an issued decision on administrative expulsion. As part of its programme, SUZ assists unsuccessful applicants for international protection to return voluntarily to their country of origin. Under all these programmes for voluntary returns, the MoI and SUZ make sure not only that the actual voluntary return takes place but they also provide all the related consultancy and assistance, which are necessary for efficient, quick and successful accomplishment of a return.



The *Annual Report on Asylum and Migration* provides a summary of the most important political and legislative changes and the basic statistical data regarding asylum and migration in the territory of the Czech Republic for the year 2023.

The report was prepared by the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network in the Czech Republic. According to Article 9 (1) of the Council Decision 2008/381/EC establishing the European Migration Network, each EMN Contact Point prepares a report on developments regarding asylum and migration in the given country on an annual basis.

The report consists of ten chapters and three annexes. The chapters describe the developments in legal migration and international protection; one chapter is concerned with the issues of foreign nationals who are unaccompanied minors. The report also contains information on measures to combat human trafficking and measures to combat illegal migration. The report also provides an overview of international cooperation and projects, and describes the developments regarding the returns of foreign nationals² to their countries of origin. Each chapter also contains basic statistical data. The structure of the report complies with the recommended structure of national reports of separate EMN Contact Points in order to make it possible to compare the separate documents and to maintain continuity with the reports prepared in previous years.

The presented report was prepared mainly using the source materials of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for the fields of migration, asylum and integration. Other source materials used in preparation of the report included source materials from the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service; the Police Presidium; the Department of Crime Prevention of the Ministry of the Interior; the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Justice; the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the In-

² For the purposes of the report, only third-country nationals are regarded as foreign nationals.

terior; the National Central Unit for Combatting Organised Crime; and the Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals. More detailed information on the methodology is contained in Annex 1. Annex 2 contains a list of sources and literature; Annex 3 contains a list of tables and charts.

1.1 Organisation of Asylum and Migration Policy

The Ministry of the Interior (MoI) is the main body responsible for the asylum and migration policy in the Czech Republic on a legislative and policy level as well as on the implementation level.

The Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (DAMP) is a unit of the Ministry of the Interior responsible for exercising the powers assigned to the Ministry in the fields of international protection, refugees, entry and stay of foreign nationals, the policy for integration of foreign nationals, the State Integration Programme (for persons who were granted international protection) and Schengen cooperation. This department is also a unit of the Ministry that is responsible for managing the governmental organisation of the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. The department submits proposals for establishing or modifying the nature of asylum facilities or facilities for detention of foreign nationals.

The Coordination Body for Managing the Protection of the State Borders and Migration is a permanent interdepartmental body, which is composed of representatives of the relevant Ministries and which has the authority to take the necessary measures in the fields of migration and the protection of state borders. The Ministry of the Interior leads the activities of the Coordination Body. The Coordination Body holds meetings at the level of the members of the Cabinet or Deputy Ministers.

The Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration (ANACEN) is a permanent analytical body of an interdepartmental nature controlled by the Ministry of the Interior. In its activities, it concentrates on monitoring and analysing migration as a comprehensive phenomenon. The Analytic Centre operates at an expert level; its activities are managed by the Coordination Body for Managing the Protection of the State Borders and Migration. All the key bodies involved in the system for ma-

naging the protection of state borders and migration control participate in the activities of the Analytic Centre; the close cooperation and information exchange on this platform allow for a flexible and quick response to any problems that arise.³

The Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (SUZ) is the operator of reception, accommodation and integration asylum centres. In these facilities, SUZ provides particularly accommodation, boarding, psychological, social, educational and consulting services, and also provides opportunities for leisure-time activities. Most of these activities also take place in the facilities for detention of foreign nationals, which are also operated by the SUZ. The SUZ also established and operates 10 regional Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners, which are the centres of integration activities in respective regions.

The Directorate of the Foreign Police Service (DFPS) is a highly specialised unit of the Police of the Czech Republic (PCR), which, for the issues related to foreign nationals, acts as an umbrella authority for performance of tasks related to detection of illegal migration, application of repressive measures against foreign nationals illegally staying in the territory of the Czech Republic in violation of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic.

The bodies, which are directly subordinated to the DFPS, include five Foreign Police Inspectorates (FPIs) at international airports (IAs),⁴ which ensure the protection of external borders at all international airports of the Czech Republic, the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals in Bělá-Jezová, the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals in Vyšní Lhoty, the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals in Balková and the Reception Centre for Foreign Nationals in Zastávka u Brna. In the territories of individual

³ The members of the Analytical Centre are delegated representatives of the Ministry of the Interior; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Industry and Trade; the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Finance (the General Directorate of Customs); the Police of the Czech Republic and the intelligence services and security forces.

⁴ These are: the Foreign Police Inspectorate at the Václav Havel Praha International Airport; the Foreign Police Inspectorate at the Mošnov International Airport; the Foreign Police Inspectorate at the Brno Tuřany International Airport; the Foreign Police Inspectorate at the Karlovy Vary International Airport; and the Foreign Police Inspectorate at the Pardubice International Airport.

regions, the departments of the Foreign Police, which are embedded in the organisational structures of Regional Directorates of the Police of the CR (RDP), perform the tasks related to migration of foreign nationals.

The Criminal Police and Investigation Service's **National Central Unit for Combatting Organised Crime** (NCOZ) is the unit of the Police of the CR with a national jurisdiction, which also performs tasks in the field of illegal migration, particularly in combatting people smuggling. It's Organised Crime Section, Department of Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration is responsible for monitoring, analysing and combatting crime groups that perpetrate serious organised crimes in the fields of illegal migration, human trafficking, human organ and tissue trafficking and forced labour as well as other forms of exploitation.

The **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (MoFA) is a central administrative body of the Czech Republic, which creates the concept of foreign policy and coordinates foreign development cooperation and humanitarian aid provided abroad. It carries out public administration in the matters of permitting the residence of foreign nationals in the territory of the Czech Republic who enjoy the privileges and immunities defined by the international law. Through embassies, it carries out public administration in the matters of granting visas pursuant to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals. Within its separate purview, it carries out public administration in the matters of granting short-term visas according to the EU Visa Code.

The **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** (MoLSA) is responsible for the policy in the field of employment of foreign nationals. Among other things, it defines the group of entities playing the role of an employer and, in relation to foreign nationals, it defines the criteria governing the entry of separate categories of foreign nationals into the labour market. According to the situation on the labour market, it defines the terms and conditions for permitting employment and is responsible for the legislation governing the employment of foreign nationals in relation to the applicable legislation of the European Union and the intergovernmental agreements in force. The MoLSA is also responsible for maintaining the central register of vacant job positions, which can be filled by the holders of an Employee Card or a Blue Card.

Besides the national legislation, the field of labour migration is also governed by bilateral international treaties governing social security and employment as well as by multilateral conventions concerning human rights, the status of refugees and social rights, which are binding on the Czech Republic. Among other authorities, the Interdepartmental Body for Combatting Illegal Employment of Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic addresses the issues in the field of illegal employment of foreign nationals; the MoLSA is responsible for this body.

Other institutions, which have their defined terms of reference in the field of asylum and migration, are: the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT); the Ministry of Justice (MoJ); the Ministry of Health (MoH); the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS); the Ministry of Finance (MoF; the General Directorate of Customs); the Ministry of Culture (MoC); and the Ministry for Regional Development (MfRD).

1.2 Asylum and Migration Legislation

Asylum and migration is governed particularly by the following legislation:

- ▶ Act No. 326/1999 Coll., **on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic** and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Act on the Residence of Foreigners”)

This Act defines the conditions for the entry of a foreign national into the territory of the CR and the departure of a foreign national from the country; it defines the conditions of the stay of a foreign national in the country and defines the competence of the PCR, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this field of public administration.

- ▶ Act No. 325/1999 Coll., **on Asylum**, as amended

This Act defines the conditions for the entry and residence of a foreign national who applies with the CR for international protection in the territory of the CR; governs the residence of recognised refugees or beneficiaries

of subsidiary protection in the country; the proceedings on the granting of international protection in the form of asylum or subsidiary protection; and the proceedings on withdrawal of asylum or subsidiary protection; the rights and obligations of an applicant for international protection, a recognised refugee and a beneficiary of subsidiary protection in the country; the purviews of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Police of the Czech Republic in this area of the public administration; the State Integration Programme and asylum facilities.

- ▶ Act No. 191/2016 Coll., **on the Protection of the State Borders of the Czech Republic** and on Amendments to Certain Related Acts

This Act entered into force on 1 August 2016. Building on Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code), as amended, this Act governs the protection of the state borders against unauthorised crossing. It defines the terms and conditions for setting up a border crossing at an international airport, the obligations of airplane captains and airport operators as well as the rules for temporary reintroduction of the protection of internal borders, offences and administrative offences related to the protection of borders.

- ▶ Act No. 221/2003 Coll., **on the Temporary Protection of Foreign Nationals**, as amended

This Act defines the conditions for the entry and residence of foreign nationals in the territory of the CR for the purpose of provision of temporary protection and the conditions for their departure from the country, and governs the proceedings on the granting and withdrawal of a residence permit for the purpose of provision of temporary protection in the territory of the CR; the legal status of a foreign national who applies for a residence permit for the purpose of temporary protection; and the legal status of a foreign national who has been granted a residence permit for the purpose of temporary protection.

Act No. 221/2003 Coll., on the Temporary Protection of Foreign Nationals, is applied only if the temporary protection was declared by a decision of the Council of the European Union. It is an instrument intended to be used in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons.

▶ Act No. 435/2004 Sb., **on Employment**,⁵ as amended

This Act defines the conditions for employment of foreign nationals in the territory of the CR.

▶ Act No. 186/2013 Coll., **on the Citizenship of the Czech Republic** and on Amendments to Certain Acts

This Act defines the ways of acquiring, losing, proving and ascertaining the citizenship of the CR, the ways of issuing certificates on the citizenship of the CR; it governs the maintenance of the register of natural persons who acquired or lost the citizenship of the CR; and it governs the proceedings relating to the matter of citizenship and the offences relating to citizenship.

⁵ With regard to migration.



- ▶ Presidential elections took place in January 2023, which were won by Petr Pavel.
- ▶ An amendment to Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, entered into force in July 2023.
- ▶ The Employment Act was also amended.
- ▶ The Lex Ukraine legislation was amended in 2023. The most important changes pertained to **the provision of accommodation to beneficiaries of temporary protection.**
- ▶ **Once again, the provision of temporary protection was extended by one year until 31 March 2025.** Furthermore, changes relating to the provision of accommodation were made, which will enter into force in September 2024.

2.1 Political Developments

The year 2023 continued to be affected by the **armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine, triggered by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation.** The Czech Republic hosts the highest per capita number of Ukrainian refugees in the EU.

Presidential elections took place in January 2023. Petr Pavel, who defeated Andrej Babiš in the second round of the elections by securing 58.32% of votes, became the fourth president of the independent Czech Republic. The election turnout was 70.72%. The new president was inaugurated in March.

2.2 Legislative Developments

During the year 2023, **legislative activities** were focused on amendments to the Acts mentioned below.

▶ Act No. 326/1999 Coll., **on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic**

The amendment to Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals), which entered into force on 1 July 2023, has introduced several changes. The main change in the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals was the transposition of the new **EU Blue Card Directive**.⁶

The changes include, for example, **faster procedures, more flexible criteria for admission and, last but not the least, more extensive rights for Blue Card holders**, including easier mobility within the EU. Blue Card is now newly issued with a period of validity of up to 3 years.

The amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals also introduced changes in the list of persons who are eligible to apply for **long-term residence for the purpose of family reunification**. A foreign national of legal age can no longer file such an application, even if he or she is a dependent.

Changes in the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals also responded to recommendations from **Schengen evaluations**, to which the Czech Republic was subjected in 2019. Furthermore, **the provisions governing the proceedings regarding stateless persons have been elaborated in greater detail**.

The second amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals, which entered into force on 20 September 2023 **abolished the mo-**

⁶ Directive (EU) 2021/1883 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment.

nopoly of the VZP Insurance Company on commercial insurance of foreign nationals with long-term residence permits. The insured amount was also changed from EUR 60,000 to EUR 400,000.

Furthermore, **the penalties for people smuggling were made more severe** (Act No. 40/2009 Coll.) and **participation of third-country nationals with long-term residence permits in the system of public health insurance up until when they reach legal age** was permitted (amendments to Act No. 592/1992 Coll., and Act No. 48/1997 Coll.).

▶ Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum

The extensive amendment to Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Asylum Act") entered into force on 1 July 2023. The amendment consisted mainly in making the legislation more accurate in order to minimise practical problems and in making the already transposed directives of EU asylum law more accurate and in making additions to them. Furthermore, the international protection proceedings have been made more efficient and the changes also concerned the reception conditions for applicants for international protection.

▶ Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment⁷

Besides the aforementioned amendment⁸ to the Employment Act, which amended the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals and the Asylum Act (by transposing the Asylum Directive and the Blue Card Directive), Act No. 408/2023 Coll., was passed, which amended Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment, as amended, and related legislation and which has an impact on employment of foreigners. The adopted changes, which will enter into force as of the year 2024, resulted in the following:

- ▶ the definition of illegal work has been modified;

⁷ With respect to migration.

⁸ The amendment to the Employment Act made by Act No. 173/2023 Coll., which amends Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and other related Acts (transposition of the Asylum Directive and the Blue Card Directive).

- ▶ the list of reasons for not including a position in the register of vacant positions that can be filled by Employee Card and Blue Card holders has been expanded;
- ▶ the list of reasons for not issuing an employment permit has been expanded;
- ▶ the register of vacant job positions has been modified (the maximum period for inclusion in the register is 6 months);
- ▶ the mandatorily reported information on a vacant job position, including the code according to the job classification categories (CZ-ISCO) published by the Czech Statistical Office has been expanded;
- ▶ there has been a change made in the labour market test for vacant positions that can be filled by holders of an Employee Card (unification with the legislation governing Blue Cards) in order to improve the efficiency of the process of filling vacant job positions with foreign nationals;
- ▶ the category of foreign nationals with what is referred to as a free access to the labour market has been expanded in order to speed up the access of foreign workers to the labour market (more efficient and simpler work migration);
- ▶ the way of complying with the disclosure obligations of employers employing foreign nationals and EU citizens has been changed to the effect of full digitisation;
- ▶ the disclosure obligation of the posting employer in the context of transnational provision of services has been modified.

Furthermore, Ordinance No. 205/2023 Coll., on the list of jobs where a higher professional skill is recognised as evidence of high qualification and on the minimum period of required work experience for providing evidence of the professional skill. If an employer desires so, in certain sectors, high qualification may be proven by higher professional skills for the purposes of an application and subsequent issue of a Blue Card.⁹

⁹ This specifically concerns the jobs falling under the following categories: managers in the field of information and communication technology services (CZ-ISCO 133); specialists in the field of information and communication technology (CZ-ISCO 25).

Work experience of a minimum of 3 years acquired over a period of 7 years immediately preceding the filing of the application for a Blue Card is required for achieving a higher professional skill.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CRIMINAL CODE CONCERNING CRIMINAL PROSECUTION OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION

On 1 July 2023, Act No. 173/2023 Coll. entered into force, which has amended Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, as amended, Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, and other related legislation. This Act contains two changes in the Criminal Code regarding criminal prosecution of illegal migration (prepared by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior).

The first change concerns the punishment of an offender who stays in the Czech Republic even though he has been sentenced to expulsion or has been administratively expelled.

The second change concerns criminal offences related to illegal migration and perpetrated in the territory of the Czech Republic.¹⁰

It will now be possible to prosecute cases where illegal migration was organised from the territory of the Czech Republic but the actual illegal migration occurred in another EU state (across the borders of other European states), or cases where an offender in the territory of the Czech Republic facilitated an unauthorised stay in the territory of another EU Member State. Furthermore, the penalty for organising and facilitating the illegal crossing of the state border has been made more severe, specifically by providing that the exposure of a larger number of persons to inhuman or degrading treatment is now a circumstance requiring the application of a more severe penalty.

¹⁰ These offences are the crime of forcibly crossing the state border pursuant to Section 339 of the Criminal Code, the crime of organising and facilitating an illegal crossing of the state border pursuant to Section 340 of the Criminal Code and the crime of facilitating an unauthorised stay in the country pursuant to Section 341 of the Criminal Code.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY RELATED TO THE INFLUX OF PERSONS AS A RESULT OF THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

The legislation crucial for coping with the arrival of a large number of individuals from Ukraine is the set of laws referred to as Lex Ukraine. This includes the following:

- ▶ **Act No. 65/2022 Coll.**, on certain measures in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine resulting from the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation, as amended, defines the scope and conditions of the provided temporary protection;
- ▶ **Act No. 66/2022 Coll.**, on measures in the field of employment and social security in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine resulting from the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation, defines the conditions of employment of foreign nationals with temporary protection and the provision of humanitarian benefits;
- ▶ **Act No. 67/2022 Coll.**, on measures in the field of education in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine resulting from the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation, governs all the areas of education, i.e. pre-school, primary, secondary, higher vocational and other education as well as studies at universities.

In 2023, these Acts were amended. The amendment to Act No. 65/2022 Coll., as amended, (i.e. Lex Ukraine V) has been in force since April 2023 and introduced **certain changes regarding the provision of accommodation to beneficiaries of temporary protection.**

With effect as of October 2023, an amendment to Act No. 65/2022 Coll., as amended, introduced what is referred to as **the register of Ukrainian vehicles.** The main objective of this legislation was to respond to the growing number of problems with finding the vehicles and drivers that were involved in a road traffic accident.

Once again, the provision of temporary protection was extended until 31 March 2025. Furthermore, changes were made relating to the provision of accommodation that will enter into force in September 2024.

2.3 Debates in the Media

Similarly as in the year 2022, the interest of the Czech media in the topic of migration was largely influenced by the Russian military aggression in Ukraine, which resulted in the largest forced migration in Europe since the end of World War II. In the European Union, European Economic Area and European Free Trade Association countries alone, more than four million beneficiaries of temporary protection were present as of the end of 2023.

At the beginning of the year, migration was a discussed topic particularly in the context of the presidential elections. During the election campaign, several candidates explicitly used the topic of migration.

In connection with the legislation referred to as Lex Ukraine, the media reported on a special award that was given as part of the Act of the Year survey organised by Deloitte Legal, a law firm, in cooperation with its partners from the business and legal community. Lex Ukraine was appreciated for its benefits to the legal environment. The effort to achieve maximum simplicity and minimum administrative obstacles was highlighted, which enabled the Czech Republic to cope with the arrival of an extraordinarily high number of refugees particularly at the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. This legislation governing the legal status of persons from Ukraine who are beneficiaries of temporary protection in the Czech Republic, their access to health care, free access to the labour market, social security and access to education has an undoubtedly crucial and society-wide impact.

During the year, the media also paid considerable attention to the changes introduced by the government-initiated amendment to the Lex Ukraine legislation. This was the fifth amendment, and it addressed the changes to the setting of social benefits and emergency accommodation in the past year.

Besides that, the domestic news media reported on the preparation of a new Act governing the entry and stay of foreigners in the country. It has been proposed to enter into force on 1 January 2026 and envisions, for example, mandatory registration of European Union citizens staying

longer than 90 days and their subsequent inclusion in the population register. At present, European Union citizens are not required to register anywhere, which poses a problem particularly for municipalities, which cannot collect fees from them or do not plan for the necessary capacity of schools for their children. The main change, which this Act will introduce, will be digitisation of the residence agenda. Digitisation will speed up the residence procedure and make the whole process simpler and more transparent.

Within the coverage of the topic of migration policy, the ten-day trip of Vít Rakušan, a Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, to Africa received rather significant attention. During his trip, he successively visited Senegal, Ghana and Rwanda. These countries represent a region, which is of key importance to the Czech Republic and the European Union in terms of security and migration. The main items on the agenda were the Medevac and Aid in Place humanitarian projects, which are the instruments of external migration policy used by the Ministry of the Interior. The activities within the external dimension of migration policy are primarily of a humanitarian nature for people seeking protection, and at the same time, they are also an act of solidarity with third countries that are affected by increased migration flows as well as with those other European Union states, which receive a disproportionately larger part of asylum seekers than other states.

The agreement of the EU countries on the general approach to the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the compromise draft text of which was supported by a large majority of countries, including the Czech Republic, was a high-profile foreign policy event. The draft was subsequently used by the EU Council for further negotiations about the final versions of migration rules with the European Parliament.

Both in the mainstream media and on alternative platforms, the tension within the Roma community regarding the approach of the government and the Czech society to various minorities was a major topic, particularly in connection with the fatal knife wound suffered by a young Roma man at a water reservoir in Brno, which was inflicted during an altercation with a Ukrainian man. In response to expression of support for Hamas in many places around Europe, whose members massacred civilians during the unprecedented direct attack on Israel in October,

the media discourse featured the topic of failed integration of refugees and migrants from the area of the entire greater Middle East. At the end of the year, a topic covered by the media was the agreement with Albania, under which Italy planned to build and operate, at its own expense, two centres for accommodation of migrants. From among other topics discussed during the year both in domestic and foreign contexts, the media covered, for example, the rate of employment of foreigners, German random checks at the Czech-German border, or the migration situation at the US-Mexican border.





- ▶ In the year 2023, a total of **1,065,740 foreign nationals** were staying in the territory of the CR on a long-term basis (for a period longer than 90 days).
- ▶ A total of **374,642 foreign nationals were staying in the country for the purpose of temporary protection.**
- ▶ **A total of 691,098 foreign nationals with permanent or temporary residence were registered.** Of this number, 49.4% were staying in the country temporarily and 50.6% permanently.
- ▶ Of the total number of foreign nationals staying in the territory of the CR, 21.6% were EU citizens. The number of foreign nationals from third countries slightly decreased in 2023 and accounted for 78.4% (836,044).
- ▶ The most numerous foreign nationals are citizens of **Ukraine, Slovakia, Vietnam, Russia** and **Romania.**
- ▶ In 2023, citizenship of the Czech Republic was granted to 6,437 persons.

3.1 Foreign Nationals with Residence Permits in the Territory of the CR

After the high growth of the number of foreign nationals in the territory of the Czech Republic in 2022, a decrease was seen in 2023, which mainly resulted from the fact that not all foreign nationals, who had been granted temporary protection 2022, settled in the CR.

As of the end of 2023, a total of **1,065,740 foreign nationals were registered in the CR for legal residence** (for a period longer than 90 days).¹¹

At the end of 2023, **foreigners accounted for 9.8% of the CR's population**,¹² which is 0.8 percent less than in 2022.

Table 1:

Development of the numbers of foreign nationals with residence permits in the territory of the CR (2013–2023)

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of foreign nationals	441,536	451,923	467,562	496,413	526,811	566,931
Year-on-year change in %	0.8	2.4	3.5	6.2	6.1	7.6

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of foreign nationals	595,881	634,790	660,849	1,116,154	1,065,740
Year-on-year change in %	5.1	6.5	4.1	68.9	-4.5

Source: IS CIS

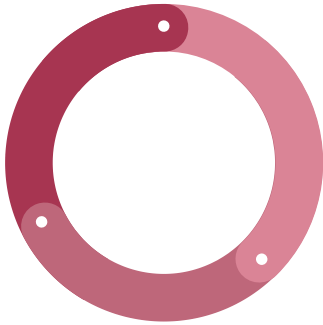
A total of **374,642 foreigners resided in the country for the purpose of temporary protection. A total of 691,098 foreign nationals with permanent or temporary residence were registered.** The growth rate of the number of foreign nationals with long-term residence slowed down as compared with the preceding year. While their number increased by 21,765 persons in 2022, the increase for the year 2023 amounted to 8,484 persons.

¹¹ The data includes foreigners with permitted residence in the Czech Republic registered in the Foreigners' Information System. However, the actual number of foreigners legally residing in the Czech Republic may vary, as the registered number of foreigners does not include all citizens of other EU Member States residing in the Czech Republic. Statistical surveys record only those EU citizens who have applied for or been issued with a registration certificate (instead of the earlier temporary residence permit). Those who only exercise their right of free movement within the EU, are not captured statistically.

¹² The Czech Republic had a total population of 10,900,555 as of 31 December 2023 (Source: CZSO).

Chart 1:

Foreign nationals in the Czech Republic by type of stay in 2023



35% (374,642) temporary protection

33% (349,995) permanent residence

32% (341,103) temporary residence

Source: IS CIS

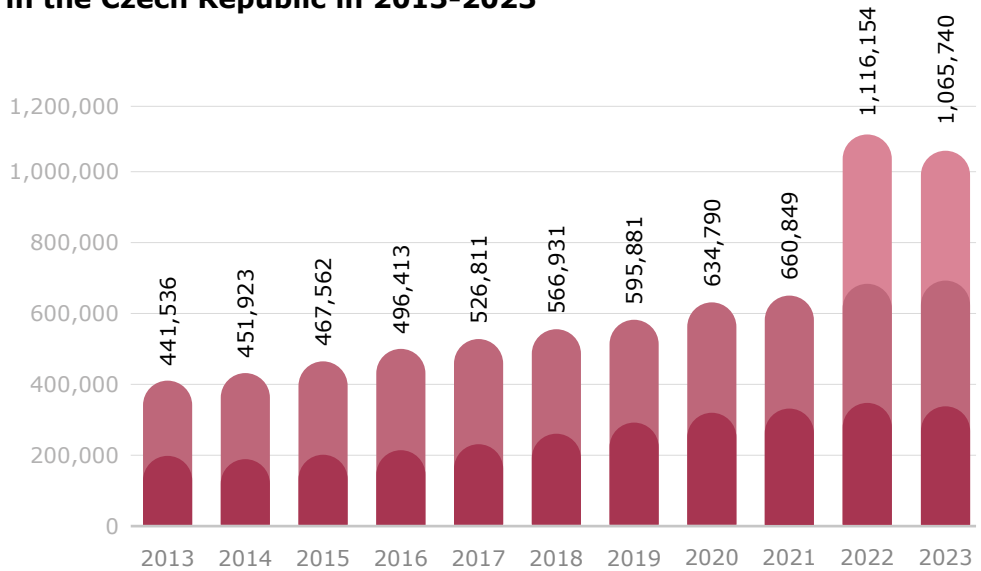
While there was a year-on-year decrease (-7,357) in the number of foreign nationals staying in the Czech Republic with temporary residence permits, the observed increase in the number of persons occurred exclusively among persons with permanent residence permits (+15,841).

At the end of 2023, foreign nationals accounted for 9.8% of the CR's population.

Of the total number of foreigners residing in the Czech Republic, 21.6% were EU citizens. The number of foreigners from third countries slightly decreased in 2023 and accounted for 78.4% (836,044).

Chart 2:

Development of the numbers of foreigners with temporary residence permits and permanent residence permits in the Czech Republic in 2013-2023



Source:
IS CIS

● temporary residence ● permanent residence ● temporary protection

3.1.1 PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY RESIDENCE

Of the total registered number of 691,098 foreigners¹³ with a residence permit in the Czech Republic, 66.8% fall into the category of foreigners from third countries (461,410 persons).

A total of 229,688 EU citizens were registered, which represents 33.2% of the total number of foreigners residing permanently or temporarily. This is a year-on-year increase by 2,355 persons. The majority of foreigners from EU Member States are staying in the Czech Republic on a temporary basis (50.8%), while permanent residence slightly predominates in the category of third-country nationals (51.4%).

¹³ This number does not include beneficiaries of temporary protection.

Table 2:**Foreigners with temporary and permanent residence in the Czech Republic by EU membership and residence category – comparison 2022/2023**

Year (as of 31 Dec)		2022		2023		year-on-year change	
		number of foreigners	i.e. %	number of foreigners	i.e. %	absolute number	i.e. %
Foreigners with temporary and permanent residence	Total	682,614	100.0	691,098	100.0	8,484	1.2
	of which temporarily	348,460	51.0	341,103	49.4	-7,357	-2.1
	of which permanently	334,154	49.0	349,995	50.6	15,841	4.7
EU citizens	Total	227,333	33.3	229,688	33.2	2,355	1.0
	of which temporarily	120,855	53.2	116,634	50.8	-4,221	-3.5
	of which permanently	106,478	46.8	113,054	49.2	6,576	6.2
Third-country nationals	Total	455,281	66.7	461,410	66.8	6,129	1.3
	of which temporarily	227,605	50.0	224,469	48.6	-3,136	-1.4
	of which permanently	227,676	50.0	236,941	51.4	9,265	4.1

Source: IS CIS

3.1.2 CITIZENSHIP OF FOREIGN NATIONALS

The composition of foreigners by their citizenship within the top ten source countries is nearly the same as in 2022. The only change is Bulgaria whose number of citizens in the Czech Republic has exceeded the number of citizens of Poland.

Table 3:**Foreign nationals with temporary and permanent residence permits in the Czech Republic by residence category and citizenship (as of 31 December 2023)**

Type of residence	number	share in %	year-on-year change in %	z toho			
				temporary residence	tj. %	permanent residence	tj. %
Foreign nationals in total	691,098	100.0	1.2	341,103	49.4	349,995	50.6
of which TOP 10:							
Ukraine	200,702	29.0	-1.6	101,633	29.8	99,069	28.3
Slovakia	119,182	17.2	1.6	53,075	15.6	66,107	18.9
Vietnam	67,735	9.8	2.2	12,058	3.5	55,677	15.9
Russia	40,636	5.9	-5.6	16,429	4.8	24,207	6.9
Romania	20,468	3.0	3.8	13,282	3.9	7,186	2.1
Bulgaria	17,907	2.6	1.3	10,292	3.0	7,615	2.2
Poland	17,837	2.6	-0.2	6,419	1.9	11,418	3.3
Germany	12,719	1.8	-9.4	8,047	2.4	4,672	1.3
Mongolia	12,661	1.8	5.8	6,308	1.8	6,353	1.8
Hungary	11,113	1.6	5.7	7,996	2.3	3,117	0.9
EU citizens	229,688	33.2	1.0	116,634	50.8	113,054	49.2
Third-country nationals	461,410	66.8	1.3	224,469	48.6	236,941	51.4

Source: IS CIS

Also, more than 10 thousand foreign nationals from the United States of America were staying in the territory of the Czech Republic. The highest year-on-year increase was seen with citizens of the Philippines. The number of citizens of the Philippines staying in the Czech Republic increased from 4,864 to 7,026 on a year-on-year basis. This was mainly an increase in the category of temporary residence for employment purposes relating to the interest in labour migration to the Czech Republic implemented by increasing quotas under the economic migration programmes. Higher increases were also seen with citizens of Bangladesh, Nigeria and India.

3.1.3 FOREIGN NATIONALS BY GENDER AND AGE

Men have continued to slightly predominate among foreigners with both permanent and temporary residence permits. As of the end of 2023, men accounted for 56.2% of foreign nationals. In the category of permanent residence, the share of men was 52.6%. In the category of temporary residence, men predominated even more markedly, accounting for 59.9%. The differences in the representation of foreign nationals by gender in the respective residence categories can be linked to the nature of temporary residence, which is temporary and primarily economically motivated.

Table 4:

Foreign nationals with temporary and permanent residence permits in the Czech Republic by gender (as of 31 December 2023)

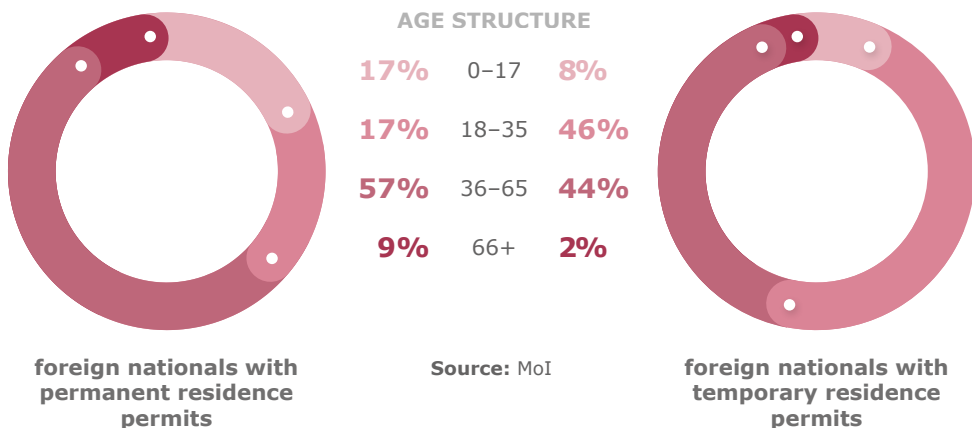
Gender	Foreigners in total	Of which			
		Men	i.e. %	Women	i.e. %
Holders of temporary and permanent residence permits in total	691,098	388,364	56.2	302,734	43.8
of which:					
temporary	341,103	204,201	59.9	136,902	40.1
permanent	349,995	184,163	52.6	165,832	47.4

Source: IS CIS

In the total number of foreign nationals with temporary and permanent residence, the predominant age category has been 36-65 years on a long-term basis; this category accounted for 50.9% in 2023. The age structure varies according to the type of residence. In the category of temporary residence, the age categories of 18-35 years and 36-65 years are more balanced, while in the category of permanent residence, the age category of 36-65 years is clearly the predominant one, and there is also a higher representation of minors and persons over 66 years of age in this category (see the charts below).

Graf 3:

Age structure of foreign nationals with residence permits in the Czech Republic (as of 31 December 2023)

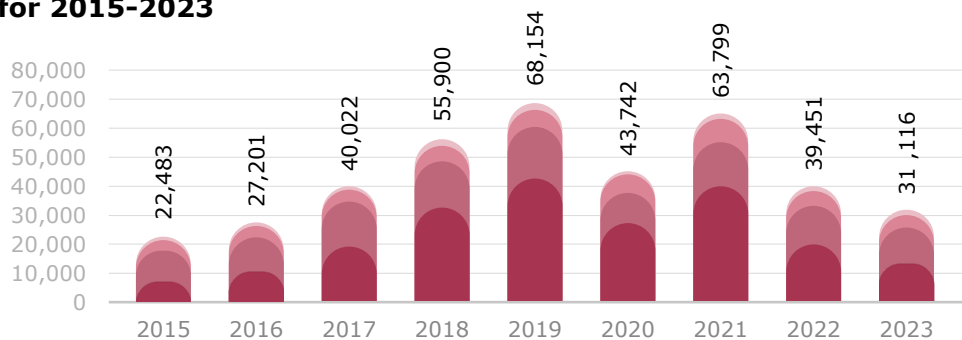


3.2 Residence Permits by Purpose

Foreigners from third countries who wish to stay in the Czech Republic temporarily for more than 90 days can apply for a visa for a stay of more than 90 days (long-term visa) or a long-term residence permit on special grounds for residence under European directives (visa policy, study, scientific research, including dual residence permits for employment purposes – Employee Card and Blue Card).

The number of applications for long-term visas or long-term residence permits filed at embassies of the Czech Republic abroad decreased by 21.1% in comparison with 2022.

The year 2023 was marked by the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine and the related reduction in the operation of embassies in Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. As a result, the acceptance of applications for long-term residence permits continued to be limited.

Chart 4:**Development of the numbers of applications for long-term residence permits at the entry into the Czech Republic for 2015-2023**

Source: MoI ● economic activities ● educational activities ● family ● other purpose

Table 5:**Applications for long-term residence permits filed in 2023 by purpose**

Purpose	Number of applications for residence permits	i.e. %	% change as compared to 2022	Absolute change as compared to 2022
Economic activities	12,795	41.1	-35.5	-7,034
Educational activities	12,537	40.3	-4.3	-563
Family	4,652	15.0	-18.2	-1,037
Other	1,132	3.6	35.9	299
Total	31,116	100.0	-21.1	-8,335

Source: MoI

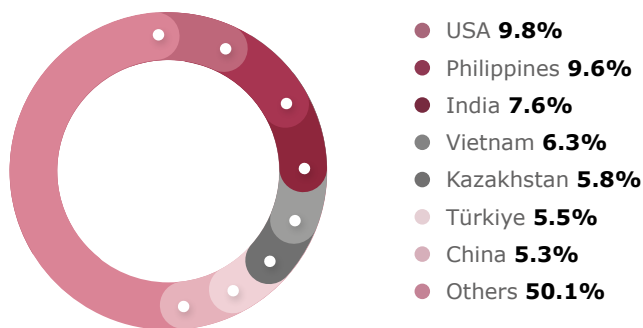
The number of applications for long-term visas or long-term residence permits filed at embassies of the Czech Republic abroad (**31,116**) once again decreased, specifically by 21.1% in comparison with 2022.

In 2023, a total of **37,567 long-term residence permits** (long-term visa, long-term residence) was granted, which represents a year-on-year decrease by 10,797 (i.e. 28.1%).

In comparison with the year 2022, there was a change regarding the countries of origin of the foreign nationals who were most often granted long-term residence documents. While citizens of Ukraine predominated for a long time; the highest number of residence permits were granted to citizens of the United States of America in 2023. Citizens of the remaining 121 countries accounted for less than 5% of the number of approved applications.

Chart 5:

Long-term residence permits granted in 2023 by nationality



Source: MoI

Table 6:

Long-term residence permits granted in 2023 by purpose

Purpose	Number of granted residence permits	i.e. %	% change as compared to 2022	Absolute change as compared to 2022
Economic activities	11,924	48.3	-41.2	-8,353
Educational activities	10,474	38.0	-10.5	-1,230
Family	4,098	14.9	-26.7	-1,495
Other	1,071	3.9	-35.6	281
Total	27,567	100.0	-28.1	-10,797

Source: MoI

3.2.1 ECONOMIC MIGRATION

As of 31 December 2023, **a total of 823,945 foreign workers were registered as employees** by regional branches of the Czech Labour Office (ÚP ČR).

A total of **409,775 foreign workers** came from **the European Union Member States, the European Economic Area and Switzerland** (hereinafter referred to as "EU/EEA and Switzerland"), including their family members. The most numerous groups were citizens of Slovakia (216,239 information cards), followed by citizens of Poland (49,194 information cards), citizens of Romania (46,208 information cards) and citizens of Bulgaria (36,630 information cards). **There were a total of 414,170 foreign workers who were not citizens of the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland – third-country nationals**, with the highest numbers found among citizens of Ukraine (216,128 information cards¹⁴ + 69,417 work permits¹⁵), citizens of Russia (17,180 information cards + 3,801 work permits) and Vietnam (14,649 information cards + 3,727 work permits).

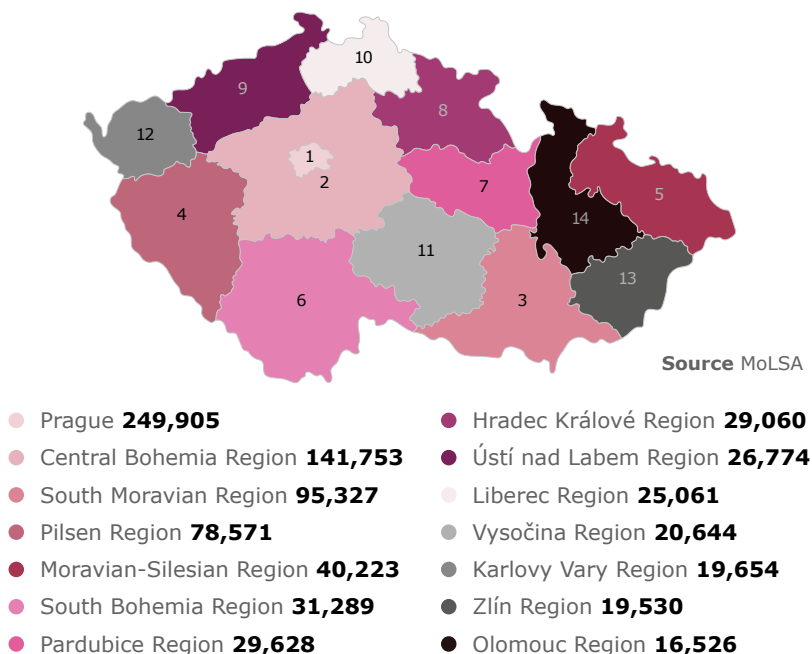
With respect to geographical distribution, **the highest numbers of foreign workers in the position of employees** have been registered, on a long-term basis, **in the Capital City of Prague**, followed by the Central Bohemia Region, South Moravia Region and Pilsen Region.

¹⁴ This includes workers from third countries who do not need an employment permit, an Employee Card, a Blue Card or an intra-corporate transferee card.

¹⁵ This includes employment permits, Employee Cards, Blue Cards and possibly intra-corporate transferee cards.

Figure 1:

Distribution of foreign workers in the Czech Republic in 2023 by region



Foreign workers with free access to the labour market accounted for the majority of foreign workers in 2023. Out of a total of **823,945** foreign workers, the register contained **409,775** information cards of citizens of the **EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland**, including their family members, and **294,774** information cards of citizens of other countries than the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland – foreigners from third countries. Among foreign workers who enter the labour market on the basis of a work permit, 108,756 holders of Employee Cards, 8,802

There were 2,168 registered job agencies as of 31 December 2023.

holders of employment permits and 1,838 holders of Blue Cards were registered as of the end of 2023 out of a **total of 119,396**.

As of 31 December 2023, there were a total of 2,168 registered job agencies, entities with a license to mediate employment, issued by the General Directorate of the Labour Office.

3.2.1.1 ECONOMIC MIGRATION PROGRAMMES

Migration programmes and projects represent **an effective tool for supporting the migration of selected target groups of third-country nationals whose entry into and stay in the territory of the Czech Republic is of increased interest to the Czech State**.

The objective of all economic migration programmes is to simplify the entry of qualified professionals from abroad into the territory of the Czech Republic in order to support targeted and selective legal economic migration.

The programmes operate as a selection tool for Czech employers and their foreign employees who are provided with preferential treatment, subject to meeting transparent criteria, when they submit applications for residence permits at embassies, and with other benefits (the option to migrate together with their closest family members, reduced bureaucratic requirements, fast-track processing of the application for residence). The programmes strengthen the control of governmental authorities over the work migration process, reduce the risks associated with migration and enhance preventive protection of foreign workers.

Since 2019, a total of 4 government-approved migration programmes have been implemented:

- 1) The Highly Skilled Employee Programme** is intended for companies employing highly skilled workers from third countries (i.e. for foreigners performing professions in the CR which are included in the main classes 1 through 3 in the CZ-ISCO job classification: managers, specialists, technical and expert workers). The target group also includes medical professionals. The Programme **is open to citizens of all third countries**. Along with the migrant workers, their closest family members can also become participants of the programme.

The functioning of the programme continued to be affected by the war in Ukraine, which was the main source country of skilled labour force. **The medical professions saw the most significant decrease since the launch of the programme. The Highly Skilled Employee Programme enrolled 472 foreigners in 2023, with applicants from India, Türkiye, the UK, South Korea, Nepal and Nigeria being the most numerous represented ones.** The most common candidates were computer network specialists, programmers, software developers, graphic designers, construction technical planners, designers, marketing specialists, sales representatives and clerks, lecturers and language teachers, professional administrative staff members from the healthcare sector and chefs.

In the Highly Skilled Employee Programme, a total of 224 applications for an Employee Card were submitted¹⁶ and 217 decisions were issued, with a success rate of 90.3%. Applications were most frequently submitted by citizens of India (39), Nepal (31) and Türkiye (28).

- 2) The Skilled Employee Programme** is designed for companies employing medium-skilled to low-skilled employees. For this Programme, the countries selected as source countries of economic migration to the CR were the ones which the government found to be suitable with regard to the requirements of the Czech labour market, while taking into account the security-related and migration-related risks. The Programme is currently open to Armenia (550 persons per year), Montenegro and Serbia (1,900 in total), the Philippines (2,300), Georgia (600), India (600), Kazakhstan (500), Moldova (1,500), Mongolia (1,000), North Macedonia (400). After temporary suspension of the Programme for Ukraine in 2022, the government made a decision in 2023 to resume the Programme partially for citizens of Ukraine starting from the year 2024. The Programme remains suspended for Belarus. In 2023, the capacity of this Programme was **50,350 applicants per year**; due to the suspension of the Programme in relation to Ukraine and Belarus, however, the actual capacity was 9,350.

¹⁶ The participants of the Programme are issued Employee Cards, Blue Cards, intra-corporate transferee cards, and their family members are issued long-term visas for family purposes and long-term residence permits for the purpose of family reunification. However, within the residence statistics, the Ministry of the Interior only tracks participation in the Programme for applicants for Employee Cards.

For all other countries, except for North Macedonia, most of their allocated quotas were used up. With the Philippines, Mongolia, India and Kazakhstan, **the main source countries** (except for Ukraine), **their annual quotas were fully used up**. There was also strong demand for employees from Moldova where 75% of the quota was used up. In total, **6,695 foreign nationals** were included in the Skilled Worker Programme from all source countries, except for Ukraine.

In the Skilled Employee Programme, 4,653 applications for an Employee Card were submitted and 6,252 decisions were issued; the success rate was 74.3%. Applications were submitted mainly by citizens of the Philippines (1,875), Moldova (765) and Mongolia (736).¹⁷

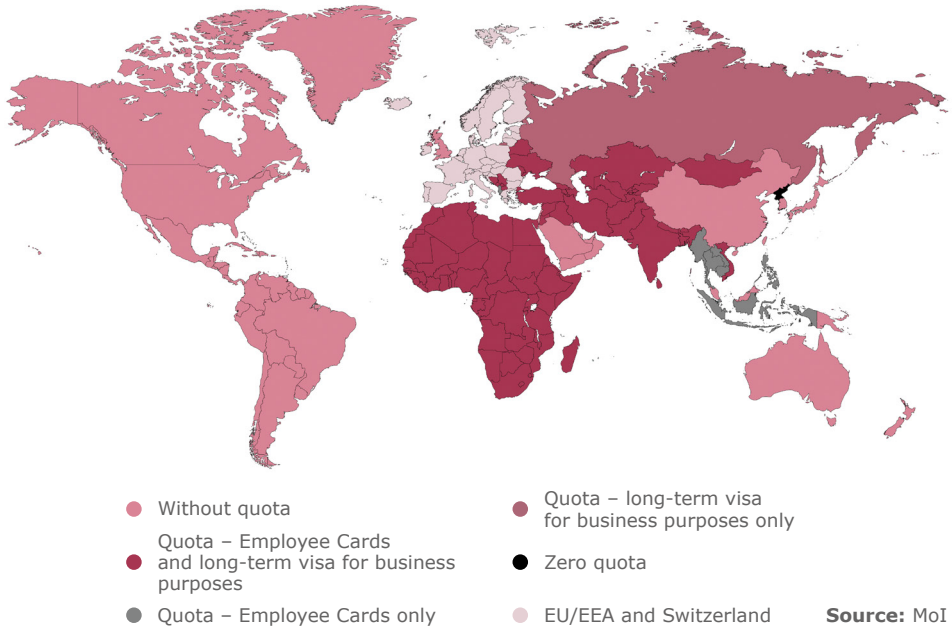


The Highly Skilled Employee Programme enrolled 472 foreigners in 2023, with most of them being from India, Türkiye, the UK, South Korea, Nepal and Nigeria.

¹⁷ The low success rate of applications (the overall success rate of applications in 2023 was 80.4%) and the high number of decisions exceeding the number of applications mainly resulted from the fact that in the year 2023, the Ministry of the Interior completed the processing of a number of applications from Ukrainian citizens from before the Russian invasion of Ukraine either by discontinuing the proceedings or by rejecting the application (in 2023, the success rate of citizens of Ukraine across all programmes was 78.3%). The main reason was that Ukrainian applicants for Employee Cards were granted temporary protection in the Czech Republic.

Figure 2:

World map showing quotas for economic migration to the Czech Republic in 2023



3) The Key and Scientific Personnel Programme is designed for investors, newly incorporated companies, start-ups as well as research organisations and tech companies, which are interested in employing workers from third countries with top qualifications. The Programme is open to citizens of all third countries. Along with the migrant workers, their closest family members can also become participants of the Programme.

The breakout of the war conflict in Ukraine has also affected this Programme and key employees from Russia and Belarus have been replaced by Indian and Turkish employees to a significant extent. In 2023, **1,300 foreign nationals** were enrolled in the Programme. The most common occupations of the applicants were: IT specialists, software developers, mechanical engineers in research and development, industrial engineering specialists, marketing specialists, financial advisors, accounting specialists and managers. The most com-

mon source countries for this Programme included India, Türkiye, Japan, South Korea, China, the USA, Brazil, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

In 2023, there were 459 applications for an Employee Card¹⁸ submitted under the Key and Scientific Personnel Programme and there were 562¹⁹ decisions issued, with a success rate of 95%. The most frequent applicants were citizens of India (130), South Korea (66) and Türkiye (50).

- 4) The Special Work Visa for Citizens of Ukraine Working in Agriculture, Food Industry or Forestry Programme** was designed exclusively for employers seeking low-skilled and non-skilled workers in the sectors stated in the name of the Programme. After temporary suspension of implementation of the Programme in 2022 due to the military conflict in Ukraine, the government approved transformation of the Programme into the **Special Work Visa for Citizens of Certain States Working in Agriculture, Food Industry or Forestry Programme** in 2023. Starting from the year 2024, the Programme will be launched in its new version, with its target group having been extended to include citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova and North Macedonia. (The Programme will only be open to those citizens of Ukraine who are residing in Ukraine and are authorised to leave the territory of Ukraine according to Ukrainian regulations, i.e. particularly women and the men that are older than 60 years.)

Besides the aforementioned economic migration programmes, implementation of **a project titled Internship** has been going on since 2014. This project is intended for third-country nationals who are sent by foreign employers to Czech companies with the aim of im-

¹⁸ The participants of the Programme are issued Employee Cards, Blue Cards, intra-corporate transferee cards, long-term visas for business purposes, and their family members are issued long-term visas for family purposes and long-term residence permits for the purpose of family reunification. However, within the residence statistics, the Ministry of the Interior only tracks participation in the Programme for applicants for Employee Cards.

¹⁹ The number of issued decisions exceeding the number of accepted applications is due to the fact that decisions are made at the beginning of a calendar year on applications that were filed before the end of the preceding years.

proving their skills and qualifications for the purpose of their further employment with their foreign employers. The duration of their internship must not be longer than 6 months. In 2023, a total of **65 foreign nationals** were enrolled in the project, with the highest numbers of applicants being from China, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vietnam and Malaysia. In 2023, there were 22 applications for long-term visa submitted and granted, nearly all of them from citizens of Albania.

On 1 July 2023, a new government-approved programme titled **Digital Nomad Programme** was launched. This Programme is designed for highly skilled specialists in information technologies – referred to as digital nomads who are interested in residing in the Czech Republic on a long-term basis. The Programme is open to citizens of **Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the USA and Taiwan**. Their closest family members are also included in the Programme. As of the end of the year 2023, there were 5 applications for long-term visa submitted by digital nomads; 3 were processed; all the processed applications were granted.

In the second half of the year 2023, the government-approved **Pilot Project for Work Migration from Indonesia** was implemented on a one-time basis. The purpose of the project was to utilise the capabilities of the students of Indonesian polytechnic schools, who need to gain working experience in their fields, for development of Czech railway industry. The project's objective was to ensure that 300 citizens of Indonesia come to the Czech Republic in order to perform work as members of skilled staff in the positions of welders, (electrical) mechanics and locksmiths at a specific domestic employer (Škoda Group, a.s.) for a period of 2 years. Applications for Employee Cards were accepted and processed in the autumn months of the year 2023.

Furthermore, the **Aircraft Pilot Project** was launched in December 2023, the objective of which is to support the training of qualified pilots from selected third countries. The foreign nationals enrolled in the Project are guaranteed the opportunity to apply for a residence permit for the purpose of flight training. The persons eligible for this Project are citizens of **Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, the Philippines, Ghana, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya,**

Malaysia, Maldives, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Vietnam or holders of passports issued by one of these countries. The MoIT is the owner of this Project. As of the end of the year 2023, a total of **12 future professional** pilots from Vietnam were enrolled in the Project.

Table 7:

Number of Employee Card applications and decisions under economic migration programmes in 2023

Programme	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Positive decisions	% of positive decisions
Key and scientific personnel	459	562	534	95.0
Highly skilled employee	224	217	196	90.3
Skilled employee	4,653	6,252	4,643	74.3
of which:				
Philippines	1,875	2,129	1,922	90.3
Moldova	765	790	691	87.5
Mongolia	736	859	776	90.3
India	476	587	449	76.5
Kazakhstan	272	278	233	83.8
Serbia	217	343	221	64.4
Georgia	150	141	129	91.5
Armenia	114	77	72	93.5
North Macedonia	27	29	25	86.2
Montenegro	0	4	2	50.0
Ukraine	-	972	117	12.0
Belarus	-	29	0	0

Source: MoI

3.2.2 LONG-TERM RESIDENCE PERMITS AT THE ENTRY INTO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

There were **15,964** long-term residence permits granted in 2023.

Similarly as in the previous years, the year 2023 saw the highest number of long-term residence permits granted to applicants for an **Employee Card** – these accounted for nearly two thirds of the total number of granted long-term residence permits. The highest number of decisions to grant an Employee Card was received by citizens of **the Philippines, China and Mongolia**.

In 2023, **Blue Card** was most often granted to citizens of **India, Türkiye and Ukraine**.

More than half of the permits for the purpose of an **intra-corporate transfer** were granted to citizens of **China**, followed by citizens of **India** and **Japan**.

The number of residence permits granted for the purpose of **family reunification** decreased by more than one quarter (788). One third of residence permits was received by citizens of **Vietnam**, which reached a total of 718, accounting for 30.9%, and citizens of this country replaced citizens of Ukraine as the highest-ranking in this respect, similarly as was the case with Employee Cards. Citizens of **India and Russia** followed at a fairly significant distance.

Long-term residence for the purpose of **studies** was the third most frequent type of long-term residence issued. It was most often granted to citizens of **Vietnam** (33% share of all the residence permits granted for this purpose). Citizens of **India** and citizens of **Bangladesh** followed at a distance.

In 2023, long-term residence permits for the purpose of **research** were most often granted to citizens of **India** (30.8% of the total number of long-term residence permits granted for the purpose of research). At a significant distance, they were followed by citizens of **China** and **the United States of America**.

Table 8:**Long-term residence permits granted in 2023, based on applications submitted at embassies of the Czech Republic, by purpose of stay**

Purpose	Number of permits granted	i.e. %	% change as compared to 2022	Absolute change as compared to 2022
Total	15,964	100.0	-36.6	-5,432
of which by purpose of stay:				
employment – Employee Card	10,398	65.1	-43.2	-7,924
family reunification	2,319	14.5	-25.4	-788
studies	2,314	14.5	5.6	122
employment – Blue Card	393	2.5	-13.1	-59
research	334	2.1	-0.9	-3
intra-corporate transfer	203	1.3	30.1	47

Source: MoI

Due to the ongoing armed conflict, the highest number of long-term residence permits was not granted to citizens of Ukraine, unlike in the previous years. As a result, in 2023, the highest number of long-term residence permits was granted to citizens of **the Philippines**, followed by citizens of **Vietnam and India**.

Table 9:**Long-term residence permits granted, based on applications submitted at embassies of the Czech Republic, by citizenship – 2022/2023 comparison**

Year	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Total	24,566	100.0	15,964	100.0	-35.0	-8,602
of which TOP 10 (ranked according to 2023):						
Philippines	1,790	7.3	2,553	16.0	42.6	763
Vietnam	1,481	6.0	1,590	10.0	7.4	109
India	1,499	6.1	1,422	8.9	-5.1	-77
China	419	1.7	1,198	7.5	185.9	779
Mongolia	951	3.9	969	6.1	1.9	18
Moldova	640	2.6	752	4.7	17.5	112
Türkiye	663	2.7	592	3.7	-10.7	-71
Serbia	719	2.9	583	3.7	-18.9	-136
Ukraine	10,724	43.9	457	2.9	-95.7	-10,267
Indonesia	89	0.4	373	2.3	319.1	284

Source: MoI

Projects in the area of student migration:

- ▶ **Student Scheme:** a concept to facilitate the visa procedure for selected students, referred to as the “Student Scheme”

The point of this project to **facilitate the visa and residence process** for foreigners from selected countries admitted to study under accredi-

ted study programmes at universities in the Czech Republic. Through the Student Scheme, these students are given faster access to the embassy to apply for residence permits.

In 2023, **38 public and private colleges** and a total of **3,035 applicants** were enrolled in the Student Scheme. A total of 32 countries were included in the Student Scheme, with some embassies having consular responsibility for multiple countries (a total of **89 countries** were covered in this way).

▶ **Fast Track Procedure for Granting Residence Permits to Foreigners** – Foreign Students from Third Countries

The project focuses on student migration of foreign scholarship holders. Students are included in the project on the basis of a nomination by the sponsor of the placement, which is the host institution.

The target group consists of students from third countries (Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Zambia, Ukraine) who have been admitted to study in the Czech Republic under bilateral or multilateral international treaties and government resolutions (developing countries and compatriots), as well as participants in the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility Programme and the Fulbright Programme.

3.3 Visa Policy

Since fully joining Schengen cooperation (i.e. since 21 December 2007), the Czech Republic has been implementing **the common visa policy**. This agenda is within the purview of the MoFA, which closely cooperates with the MoI in this respect. The basic document of the common visa policy is Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 of the European Parliament and of the Council (referred to as the “Visa Regulation”). This document lists the third countries whose citizens must have visas when crossing the external border, and also lists the third countries whose citizens are exempt from this obligation. The basic legal instrument, which governs the issue of short-term visas (Schengen visas), is Regulation (EC) No

810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code).²⁰

In April 2023, the EU legislators approved a proposal for implementing a visa-free regime for citizens of **Kosovo** travelling to the EU. Starting from 1 January 2024, holders of Kosovan passports are able to travel to the EU without visa for a period of up to 90 days during any period of 180 days. This also enables EU citizens to travel to Kosovo without visa.

In June 2023, the European Parliament and the EU Council temporarily agreed on the **rules for digitisation of the visa procedure**. The pillar of the proposal is to create a single portal for submitting applications for visa online and to cancel the visa sticker in a hardcopy format (to be replaced with a digital visa). After approval by the Council, the final act was signed on 22 November 2023.

3.3.1 DIGITISATION OF THE VISA PROCEDURE

On 13 November 2023, the legislative process was completed and Regulation (EU) 2023/2667 was adopted to digitise the visa procedure. Under this Regulation, a single portal for submitting applications for uniform Schengen visas online will be created in the future and the hardcopy visa sticker will be replaced with a digital visa. The envisioned use of the single EU application portal is expected to reduce administrative obstacles and costs associated with such operations as archiving applications, transporting visa stickers, etc. At the same time, the entire procedure will be faster and safer; the risk of visa shopping is expected to decrease. Personal presence of an applicant will only be required for first-time applicants, applicants who have a new travel document or for the purpose of collecting biometric data. Thus, the digital process will make the EU more attractive for citizens with a visa requirement.

²⁰ This is directly applicable legislation, which became a part of the Czech legislation on its effective date, i.e. on 5 April 2010. The implementing regulation for the Visa Code is the "Handbook for the Processing of Visa Applications and the Modification of Issued Visas". The Visa Code governs, among other things, the processes in a visa procedure, lists the requirements for visa applications, defines the circumstances of representation and outsourcing, etc.

3.4 Schengen Cooperation

In June 2023, Member States reached agreement on the mandate of the EU Council regarding Regulations governing the collection and exchange of Advance Passenger Information (API), meaning information on the identities of passengers contained in their travel documents, in combination with the information on the flight collected at the time of check-in.

On 23 September 2020, the Commission presented a proposal for a Regulation establishing screening of third-country nationals at the external borders and amending Regulations (EC) No. 737/2008, (EU) 2017/226, (EU) 2019/817. This was the last legislative proposal regarding what is referred to as the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The screening represents a set of rules and procedures for the fast screening of third-country nationals at the external border and within the country. This applies to those third-country nationals who do not undergo the regular border control (as defined in the Schengen Borders Code). It specifically involves carrying out registration and collecting relevant information on the given person so as to make it possible to assess whether the person poses a security or health risk, or whether the person belongs to any of the vulnerable groups, and to subsequently refer the person to the relevant asylum or return facility.



Starting from 31 March 2024, the Bulgarian and Romanian air and sea borders will be a part of the Schengen area.

Following the Strategy for ensuring a fully functional and resilient Schengen area and in response to the current situation at the external borders in the context of the instrumentalisation of migration, on 14 December 2021, the Commission presented a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU)

2016/399 establishing a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code). The proposed amendments concerned both of the main pillars of the Schengen Borders Code, which are the external and the internal borders of the Schengen area (European Union).

The proposal addressed, inter alia, the issue of the uniform application of external border measures in the event of a public health threat, a response to the instrumentalisation of migration at external borders, the internal border regime and the issue of the temporary reintroduction of internal border controls.

3.4.1 REINTRODUCTION OF BORDER CONTROL AT THE INTERNAL BORDER WITH SLOVAKIA

In the context of the sharp increase in illegal secondary migration, increased activity of organised groups of people smugglers and the deterioration of the migration and security situation at the EU's external borders, the relevant authorities identified a serious threat to the public order and internal security in the Czech Republic. Therefore, **protection at the internal borders along the entire land border with the Slovak Republic was reintroduced on 4 October 2023.**²¹ This reintroduction was repeatedly **extended by the Government until 2 February 2024.** Controls were carried out along the entire internal border with Slovakia in a flexible manner proportionate to the current threat, depending on the developments in the situation, while trying to hinder the flow of the cross-border traffic as little as possible.

3.4.2 ENLARGEMENT OF THE SCHENGEN AREA

In December 2023, the Ministers of the Interior of the Member States decided to **enlarge the Schengen area by including Bulgaria and Romania. Border controls at the internal air and sea borders with**

²¹ CR Government Resolution No 745 of 4 October 2023 on the temporary reintroduction of internal border protection in the Czech Republic, on an increase of the funds earmarked for staff income and on a change in the systemisation of the Police of the Czech Republic for the year 2023.

Bulgaria and Romania will be abolished as of 31 March 2024. Additional decision of the Council will be needed for abolishing border controls at the internal land borders. Enlarging the Schengen area by including Bulgaria and Romania was one of the priorities of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU.

3.5 Integration

Migration into the Czech Republic can be effective and beneficial to both foreign nationals and the majority society only if it is directly linked to integration measures. An active integration policy is an absolute necessity.

The primary target group for the integration are third-country nationals legally staying in the country. In 2023, the necessary complementarity in terms of the target group for the strategy focusing on **persons with temporary protection** was allowed. A number of integration tools (e.g. provision of information, social and legal counselling, language courses, or assistance in difficult life situations) can also be used by **EU citizens** and **beneficiaries of international protection** (beyond the services prepared for them that are provided under the State Integration Programme). Given that integration is a two-way process, the target group of integration is also the majority society. Integration policy is increasingly focused on the integration of foreigners in a vulnerable or disadvantaged position. These are mainly foreign women (both economically active and housewives), foreign seniors and foreign children and youth.



In 2023, 565 adaptation-integration courses were implemented for 8,897 foreigners.

The Ministry of the Interior is in charge of coordinating the policy on the integration of foreigners, but individual ministries are responsible for its implementation within their respective areas of responsibility. The basic document of the integration policy of the Czech Republic is ***Policy for the Integration***

of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic, approved in 2016. The Policy defines five basic priorities for the integration of foreign nationals, which are knowledge of the Czech language, financial self-sufficiency, foreign nationals' general understanding of the society, development of mutual relationships between communities and gradual acquisition of rights depending on the duration of stay. The MoI presents a draft resolution on the *Procedure for Implementing the Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals* (hereinafter referred to as the "Procedure") to the government every year. This draft resolution contains specific integration measures, which the relevant Ministries responsible for implementing the integration policy during the following year will take to support successful integration of foreign nationals in the CR. In 2023, the integration measures were based on document *Procedure for the implementation of the updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals - In Mutual Respect 2023*, which was approved by Government Resolution No. 1051 of 14 December 2022. Annually, at the beginning of the following year, the Ministry of the Interior submits information on the implementation of the Procedure in the Report on the Situation in the Field of Migration and Integration of Foreigners in the Czech Republic for the previous year to the Government.²² The integration of beneficiaries of international protection is a separate matter and is regulated by the State Integration Programme.²³

A crucial tool for supporting the integration of foreign nationals on a regional level is **the nationwide network of 18 Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners**, which monitors the situation of foreigners in the given region and shares important information with other actors. They also provide foreigners with an equal access to integration services and to expert integration assistance of comparable quality in all the regions of the CR. Thus, they offer a whole range of integration services, such as Czech language courses, socio-cultural courses or social and legal consultancy.


²² The Policy, Procedure and Reports are available at www.mvcr.cz/migrace/clanek/zakladni-dokumenty-k-integracni-politice-ke-stazeni.aspx.

²³ On 16 January 2017, the Government of the Czech Republic approved by Resolution No. 36 an amendment to Government Resolution No. 954 of 20 November 2015 on the State Integration Programme for Persons Granted International Protection in 2016 and Subsequent Years.

Selected groups of third-country nationals are legally obliged to complete an **adaptation-integration course**. The aim of this measure is to familiarise foreigners with their rights and obligations and enhance their self-sufficiency and independence.

Another key tool to support integration at a local level are projects of municipalities. These help to create suitable conditions for the smooth integration of foreigners and conflict-free coexistence of all inhabitants of the given municipality. Municipalities and city districts can use funds from state subsidies to implement comprehensive integration projects, which are created based on the knowledge of the local situation and needs. The projects are implemented in cooperation with foreign nationals and other integration actors in the municipality (such as a Centre for the Support of the Integration of Foreign Nationals, non-profit non-governmental organisations, schools). Other integration actors at a local level are non-profit non-governmental organisations, which, as part of their activities, provided foreign nationals with assistance in offices of DAMP or methodologically supervised the adaptation-integration courses, among other things.

In 2023, the amount of CZK 54,290,290 was earmarked from the CR's state budget for support of the integration of foreign nationals under the Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals.



Within the framework of the Concept for the Integration of Foreigners, CZK 54,290,290 was allocated from the state budget to support the integration of foreigners in 2023.

3.6 Citizenship

In 2023, a total of **4,426 foreigners were granted citizenship²⁴ of the Czech Republic** (595 fewer than in the previous year), including 22 foreigners who were residing in the Czech Republic on the basis of international protection in the form of asylum.

Table 10:

The number of foreign nationals who were granted citizenship of the CR in the period 2013-2023

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of foreign nationals who were granted citizenship of the CR	2,253	4,915	2,620	3,897	5,006	3,757	2,973	2,656	4,298	3,949	4,426

Source: MoI

In 2023, among the persons who acquired citizenship of the Czech Republic by having been granted the citizenship, the largest group consisted of citizens of **Ukraine** – 1,257 (113 fewer than in the previous year). Within the top 5, these were followed by citizens of **Russia** – 1,176 (378 more than in the previous year), **Slovakia** – 858 (378 more than in the previous year), **Belarus** – 168 (47 more than in the previous year) and **Vietnam** – 126 (37 fewer than in the previous year).

In 2023, the Ministry of the Interior also recorded an increase in the total number of applications for citizenship of the Czech Republic. A total of 5,254 applications for citizenship of the Czech Republic were received by the Ministry of the Interior in 2023.²⁵ The increase is related to the ongoing war conflict in the territory of Ukraine (citizens of Ukraine, Russia and Belarus together form the most numerous group of applicants for citizenship of the Czech Republic) and to the generally increasing number of foreign nationals with permitted permanent residence in the Czech Republic, which has been growing on a long-term basis.

²⁴ Pursuant to Section 11 of the Citizenship Act.

²⁵ Pursuant to Section 11 of the Citizenship Act.

Table 11:**Special ways of granting Czech citizenship in 2023**

Provision of the Czech Citizenship Act	§ 28 ²⁶	§ 29 ²⁷	§ 30 ²⁸
Number of persons who were granted Czech citizenship	53	4	0

Source: MoI

At the same time, **1,954 foreigners acquired Czech citizenship in 2023 on the basis of one of the declarations** provided for in the Czech Citizenship Act²⁹ (5 more than in the previous year).

Among the persons who acquired Czech citizenship in 2023 by declaration under Section 31 of the Citizenship Act (former Czech citizens or Czechoslovak citizens and their descendants up to the second generation), the most numerous ones are nationals of the United States of America, Germany and the UK.

Among the persons who acquired Czech citizenship in 2023 by declaration under Section 35 of the Citizenship Act (referred to as second-generation immigrants aged 18-21), the most numerous ones are nationals of Vietnam, Ukraine and Russia.

Thus, **in 2023, there were a total of 6,437 persons** (314 more than in 2022) **who acquired citizenship of the Czech Republic in 2023 by having been granted the citizenship or by having acquired it through declaration.**

In 2023, Czech citizenship was acquired by a total of 6,437 persons.

²⁶ Cases where Czech citizenship that was granted to minor children whose father is a citizen of the Czech Republic and whose mother is a foreign national without permanent residence in the country and is not a citizen of an EU Member State, Switzerland or a country that is a party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area, and where the paternity to the child was determined by concurring statements from the parents.

²⁷ Cases where children were born in the territory of the Czech Republic and have not acquired citizenship of either parent by birth and where at least one of the parents had a residence permit for staying in the territory of the Czech Republic for more than 90 days.

²⁸ A natural person over 3 years of age found on the territory of the Czech Republic, whose identity cannot be established due to his/her degree of intellectual maturity or disability, unless it becomes apparent within 6 months from the date of discovery that he/she has acquired the citizenship of another state.

²⁹ Section 31 – Section 36 of Act No. 186/2013 Coll., on Citizenship of the Czech Republic.

3.7 Raising Awareness of Foreigners

In 2023, the activities of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy involving provision of information to foreign nationals continued to be

In 2023, the Client Centre registered a total of 550,708 incoming calls and 20,563 e-mail inquiries.

expanded. The **Information Portal for Foreigners** continued to be developed, which now **serves as the main online source of accommodation information for foreigners** staying in or heading to the Czech Republic. In 2023, a lot of information was updated on this portal (particularly to reflect the changes brought about by the amendment to the Act on

the Residence of Foreign Nationals) and the services for the clients using the portal were further developed.

In addition to that, another online information channel was developed by means of **the Facebook page Our Ukrainians**; online campaign activities were increased and cooperation with non-profit organisations and other actors involved in providing information to foreigners (particularly information on temporary protection) has been expanded.

The Client Centre for Provision of Information to Foreigners has traditionally been another major information project. This centre has been launched in 2020 and, since then, has operated as the main telephone and e-mail source for giving answers and information to foreigners in the Czech Republic in both Czech and English.

62.4% of incoming calls were handled by the line for making appointments; the service rate of this line reached 77%.

In 2023, **foreigners with temporary protection**, who are able to legally stay in the Czech Republic due to the mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine, **continued to represent a specific category**. There were approximately 34 beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine per thousand inhabitants. These beneficiaries of temporary protection thus represented nearly three and a half percent of the population. As a result, the Czech Republic hosted the highest number of people with temporary protection per capita in the EU.

The temporary protection was first activated at EU level as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine when Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 establishing that there is a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC was implemented. New legislation, referred to as Lex Ukraine, was passed in the Czech Republic. In 2023, several amendments to these Acts were adopted to respond to the current developments in this area.

In February 2023, the responsibility for coordinating the adaptation and integration of refugees from Ukraine was transferred to the Government Human Rights Commissioner; up until then, the coordination was being ensured by the Ministry of the Interior through the Central Crisis Team. In 2023, meetings continued to be held by **the Strategic Group Task Force**³⁰ whose members consist of representatives of the relevant Ministries, governmental authorities and representatives of the local government. In 2023, the activities addressing the issues at hand were primarily focused on the adaptation and integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection.

³⁰ The activities of this task force are provided for in CR Government Resolution No. 309 of 13 April 2022 establishing strategic priorities of the Government of the Czech Republic to handle the refugee surge related to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. This was a framework strategic document defining the priority areas for addressing the refugee surge and identifying basic measures so as to avoid disruption of the functioning processes in the Czech Republic, while creating basic conditions for the adaptation and integration of refugees from Ukraine at the same time.

The Regional Assistance Centres for Assistance and Help to Ukraine (KACPUs) continued to operate for the purposes of providing the new arrivals with initial assistance in 2023. Starting from April 2023, the coordination of KACPU activities was transferred to the MoI. KACPUs continued to assist persons fleeing the war in Ukraine with submitting applications for temporary protection and obtaining accommodation in those cases where these persons have not secured accommodation on their own.

The process of extending temporary protection of those persons who were holders of visa with an expiry date of 31 March 2023 took place in 2023.

4.1 Demographic Structure of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in the Czech Republic

In 2023, the number of registered beneficiaries of temporary protection in the territory of the Czech Republic was being identified more accurately in connection with the process of extending temporary protection for those persons who arrived in the country in 2022. During the year 2023, new refugees kept arriving, although the number of arrivals decreased and stabilised. **As of the end of 2023, a total of 374,642 foreign nationals with temporary protection were registered in the territory of the Czech Republic.**³¹ In spite of the year-on-year decrease by 13.6%, the Czech Republic is still the country, which accepted the highest number of refugees per capita.

The overwhelming majority of beneficiaries of temporary protection residing in the Czech Republic consisted of citizens of Ukraine (373,745) who accounted for 99.8% of all beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of the year. Persons with other citizenships represented a negligible percentage (0.2%) and they were most often citizens of Russia (345), Moldova (135), Azerbaijan (53), Belarus (50), Vietnam (48), Georgia (46), Armenia (29), Uzbekistan (23) and the United

³¹ Including 279,140 who arrived in the Czech Republic in 2022.

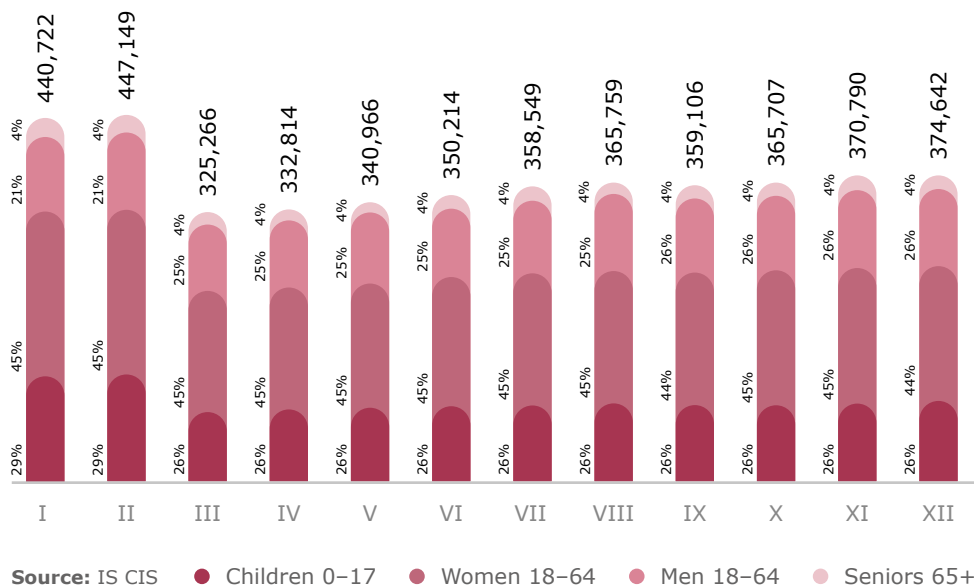
States of America (13). These are predominantly family members of citizens of Ukraine.

Women with children predominate among foreigners with temporary protection. The share of minors (0-17 years old) was more than one quarter (26%). In comparison with the end of the year 2022 when the share of minors amounted to nearly 32%, there has been a significant decrease. Adults of working age accounted for 70% at the end of the year. Most persons among adults of working age were women (63%), same as in the preceding year, although there has been a decrease in this case, too (women accounted for 69% in 2022).

As of 31 December 2023, a total of 374,642 foreign nationals who were granted temporary protection were present in the territory of the Czech Republic.

Chart 6:

The numbers of foreign nationals with temporary protection in each of the months of the year 2023 by age and gender for persons of working age

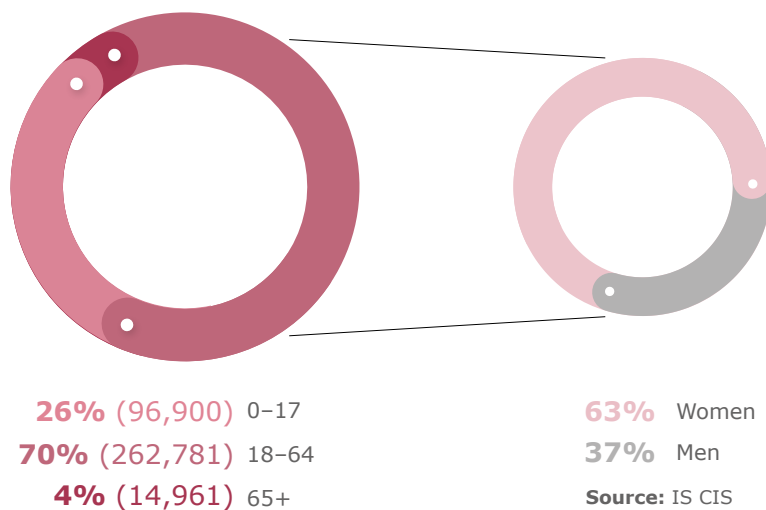


Source: IS CIS ● Children 0-17 ● Women 18-64 ● Men 18-64 ● Seniors 65+

The share of children among beneficiaries of temporary protection is declining and, conversely, the percentage of men of working age is growing. The percentage of the age category of seniors is virtually unchanged and represents 4% of the total number of beneficiaries of temporary protection.

Chart 7:

Age structure of foreigners with temporary protection as of 31 December 2023



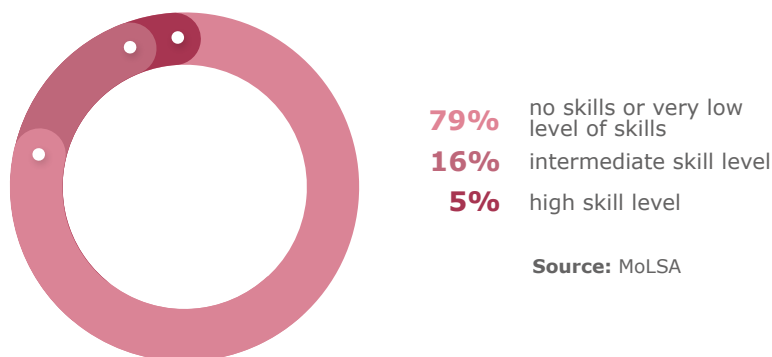
4.2 Employment Rate of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection

Foreign nationals with temporary protection have free access to the labour market. From the breakout of the conflict until the end of the year 2023, **more than 352 thousand beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine got a job**, and a total of **122,283** beneficiaries of temporary protection were active on the Czech labour market at the end of the year 2023. Thus, beneficiaries of temporary protection accounted for more than 41% of third-country nationals with free access to the labour market.

As of the end of 2023, most beneficiaries of temporary protection had jobs requiring very low level of skills or no skills. The most often held job positions include labourers in the construction, manufacturing and transportation industries or workers assembling products and equipment as well as operators of stationary machines and equipment. While the work activity level of beneficiaries of temporary protection is continually rising over time, the structure of employment has remained almost unchanged in terms of job classification.

Chart 8:

Employment rate of beneficiaries of temporary protection by skill level



Source: MoLSA

4.3 Awareness of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection

The Information Portal for Foreigners, which provides up-to-date information on temporary protection in the Czech and Ukrainian languages, continued to be the main source of information in 2023. Extension of temporary protection and subsequent official acts were also done via this portal.

The helpline on temporary protection and **the Facebook page titled Our Ukrainians**, which was created in mid-2022, were still in operation. The goal of this page is to provide verified information to beneficiaries

of temporary protection and other people as well as to disprove the misinformation disseminated about these issues. The campaign regarding extension of temporary protection and changes in government-provided humanitarian accommodation was also important. During the year 2023, the Facebook page was visited by more than 223 thousand users; it had more than 23 thousand followers in February 2024.

The Ministry of the Interior also participates in managing the information available on **the Our Ukrainians web page**. The page serves as a signpost with links to practical information pertinent to life in the Czech Republic. There is mainly information on job seeking or finding a school, medical insurance or what needs to be arranged before departing from the Czech Republic.

In 2023, virtual assistants (voicebot and chatbot), the pilot version of which was launched in 2022, were also used by the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy to provide information on temporary protection. In February 2023, a chatbot was launched on the Information Portal for Foreigners in the Temporary Protection section. The voicebot works outside the operating hours of the helpline for temporary protection. Both provide information in the Czech and Ukrainian languages and their responses are modified according to the current developments.

- ▶ In 2023, a total of **1,425 applications for international protection** were registered in 2023, 15.9% fewer than in 2022.
- ▶ The main source countries of applicants for international protection in 2023 were Türkiye (213), Uzbekistan and Vietnam (both 136 each).
- ▶ International protection **in the form of asylum was granted to 56 applicants**, with the top three groups being citizens of Myanmar (22), Russia (8) and Afghanistan (7).
- ▶ **International protection in the form of subsidiary protection was granted in 268 cases.** It was most frequently granted to citizens of Ukraine (138) and Afghanistan (47).
- ▶ In 2023, a total of **227 eligible persons** joined the State Integration Programme designed for persons who were granted international protection. During the year, **a total of 128 individual integration plans (IIP) were prepared for a total of 21 persons.**

³² The conditions governing the entry and stay of a foreign national who has applied for the granting of international protection in the territory of the Czech Republic and the stay of a recognised refugee and a beneficiary of subsidiary protection in the country are defined by the Asylum Act.

An applicant for international protection is deemed to be a foreign national who applied for international protection in the Czech Republic or a foreign national who submitted an application for international protection in another EU Member State, if the Czech Republic is responsible for examining the application. A foreign national has the status of an applicant during the proceedings on the granting of international protection or, as the case may be, during the court proceedings on a legal action against a decision of the MoI under a special law, if this legal action has a suspensory effect.

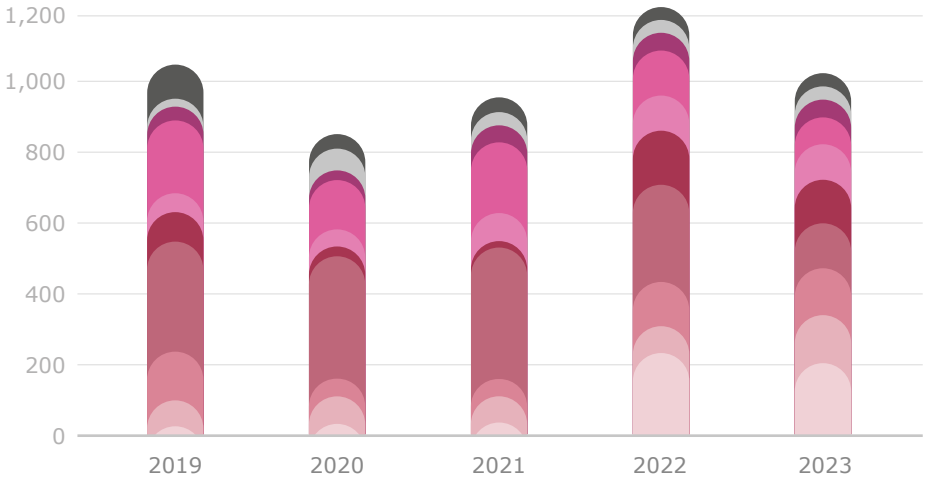
A recognised refugee is deemed to be a foreign national, who was granted asylum under the aforementioned Act. Such a person holds this status during the period of validity of the decision to grant asylum.

A beneficiary of subsidiary protection is deemed to be a foreign national who does not meet the requirements for being granted asylum pursuant to the aforementioned Act but who was granted subsidiary protection. Such a person holds this status during the period of validity of the decision to grant subsidiary protection.

Development of the numbers of applicants from the top ten source countries over the last five years in 2023 is illustrated by the chart below.

Chart 9:

The most common citizenships of applicants for international protection



Source: MoI

- Türkiye
- Uzbekistan
- Vietnam
- Ukraine
- Russian Federation
- Moldova
- Georgia
- Syria
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan

5.1 Application for International Protection

Compared to most EU+ countries,³³ the Czech Republic receives significantly lower numbers of applicants for international protection. The Czech Republic was ranked 25th in the list of destination countries for applicants for international protection in 2023.

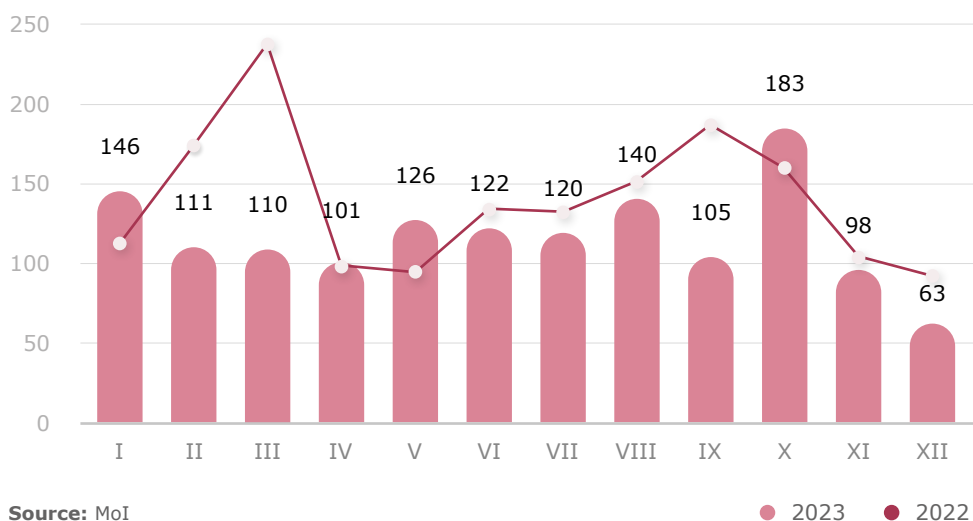
³³ Meaning the European Union Member States along with Luxembourg, Norway and Switzerland.

Table 12:**The numbers of applicants for international protection in the Czech Republic in the period 2012-2023**

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of applicants	753	707	1,156	1,524	1,478	1,450	1,702	1,922	1,164	1,411	1,694	1,425
Year-on-year change in %	-0.4	-6.1	63.5	31.9	-3.1	-1.9	17.3	13.0	-39.4	21.2	20.1	-15.9

Source: MoI

From among the total number of 1,425 applications for international protection filed in 2023, a total of **1,150 applications** (i.e. 80.7%) **were filed for the first time** and 275³⁴ were filed multiple times. The top source countries for first-time applications were Türkiye (187), Ukraine (109), Uzbekistan (108), Vietnam (102) and Russia (95).

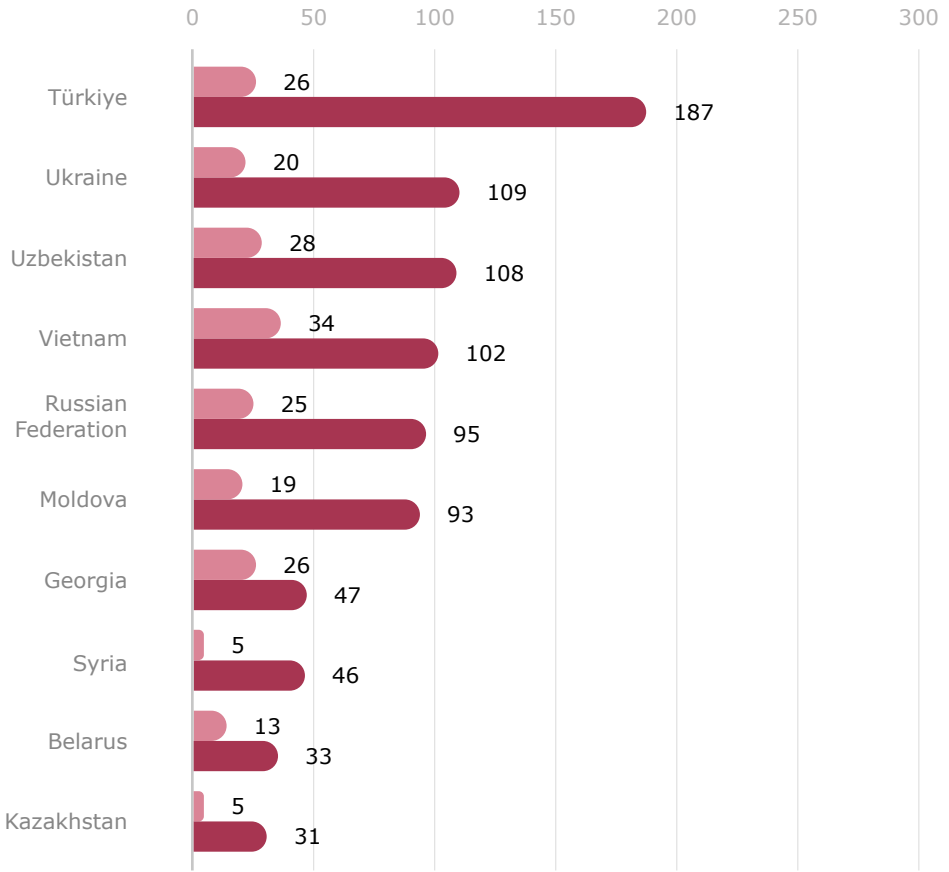
Chart 10:**The number of applications for international protection in each month of the year – comparison between 2022 and 2023**

Source: MoI

³⁴ Meaning the European Union Member States along with Luxembourg, Norway and Switzerland.

Chart 11:

First-time applications and repeated applications for international protection in 2023



Source: MoI

● first-time application ● repeated application

In total, foreign nationals from 56 countries applied for international protection in the Czech Republic in 2023. Stateless applicants submitted a total of 8 applications.

Due to the significant decline in the number of citizens of Ukraine among applicants (-151 applications) who are able to benefit from temporary pro-

tection, **the largest group of applicants for international protection consisted of citizens of Türkiye.** Most of their applications were filed for the first time (187) and there were 53 minors among the applicants.

Table 13:

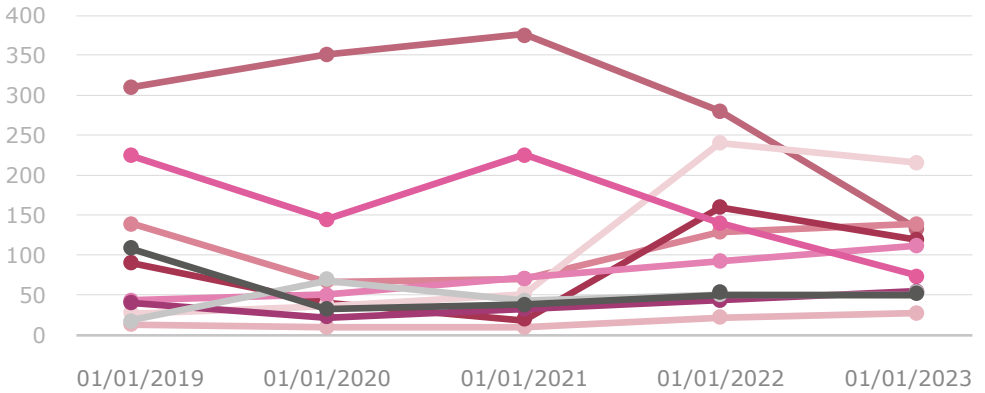
Applicants for international protection by citizenship – comparison between 2022 and 2023

Citizenship	2022			2023			Change from the previous period	
	Number of applicants	i.e. %	Ranking	Number of applicants	i.e. %	Ranking	i.e. %	Absolute figure
Total	1,694	100.0	-	1,425	100.0	-	-15.9	269
of which TOP 10 (ranked according to 2023):								
Türkiye	236	13.9	2.	213	14.9	1.	-9.7	-23
Uzbekistan	88	5.2	7.	136	9.5	2.	54.5	48
Vietnam	128	7.6	5.	136	9.5	3.	6.3	8
Ukraine	280	16.5	1.	129	9.1	4.	-53.9	-151
Russia	157	9.3	3.	120	8.4	5.	-23.6	-37
Moldova	94	5.5	6.	112	7.9	6.	19.1	18
Georgia	138	8.1	4.	73	5.1	7.	-47.1	-65
Syria	50	3.0	9.	51	3.6	8.	2.0	1
Belarus	46	2.7	10.	46	3.2	9.	0.0	0
Kazakhstan	22	1.3	18.	36	2.5	10.	63.6	14
Others	455	26.9	-	373	26.2	-	-18.0	-82

Source: MoI

Chart 12:

Applicants for international protection by citizenship – development in 2019-2023



Source: MoI

- Türkiye
- Uzbekistan
- Vietnam
- Ukraine
- Russian Federation
- Moldova
- Georgia
- Syria
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan

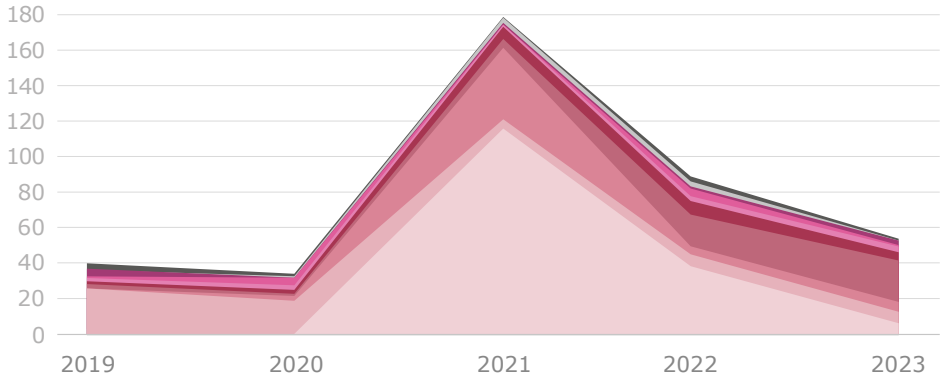
5.2 Proceedings on the Granting of International Protection

In 2023, the MoI issued a total of 1,633 decisions in proceedings on the granting of international protection and 424 decisions in proceedings for extending subsidiary protection. As of the end of 2023, there were 612 persons with pending proceedings (i.e. persons whose applications have not yet been decided).

A total of 324 foreigners were granted international protection in the form of asylum or subsidiary protection.

Chart 13:

Top citizenships with granted asylum in the period 2019–2023



Source: MoI

- Afghanistan
- Russia
- Belarus
- Myanmar
- Azerbaijan

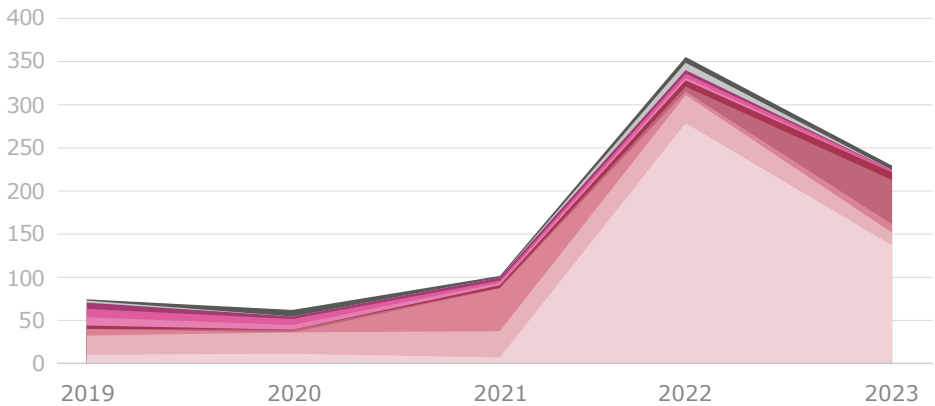
- Kazakhstan
- Uzbekistan
- Türkiye
- Venezuela
- Ukraine

International protection **in the form of asylum was granted to 56 applicants in 2023**. These were mainly citizens of Myanmar who received asylum in 22 cases, followed by citizens of Russia (8) and Afghanistan (7).

International protection in the form of subsidiary protection was granted in 268 cases in 2023. It was most often granted to citizens of **Ukraine (138)**, **Afghanistan (47)**, **Syria (14)**, **China (14)** and **Belarus (12)**.

Chart 14:

Top citizenships with granted subsidiary protection in the period 2019-2023



Source: MoI

- Ukraine
- Syria
- China
- Afghanistan
- Belarus
- Libya
- stateless
- Yemen
- Somalia
- Russia

Subsidiary protection was extended in 414 cases in total, 248 more than in the preceding year (+149.4%). This significant increase is linked to the higher number of Ukrainian refugees who received subsidiary protection in 2022 due to the armed conflict in Ukraine.

During the year 2023, **a total of 622 negative decisions** (i.e. 65.8%³⁵) **were issued** in international protection proceedings where the decision was not to grant international protection or to reject the application as clearly unfounded. Proceedings were discontinued in 687 cases.

The rate of granting international protection in 2023 was 34.2% of the total number of merits decisions (all decisions, excluding the discontinuance of proceedings).

³⁵ The percentage of negative decisions is calculated only from the total number of decisions referred to as merits decisions, i.e. the number of positive decisions on international protection and the number of negative decisions (international protection not granted and application rejected as clearly unfounded). The number of discontinued proceedings is not included for these purposes.

Table 14:**Granted asylum in 2023
by citizenship**

Citizenship	Asylum granted	i.e. %
Myanmar	22	39.3
Russia	8	14.3
Afghanistan	7	12.5
Azerbaijan	5	8.9
Belarus	4	7.1
Kazakhstan	3	5.4
Türkiye	2	3.6
Uganda	2	3.6
Uzbekistan	1	1.8
Ukraine	1	1.8
Cuba	1	1.8
Total	56	100.0

Source: MoI

Table 15:**Granted subsidiary protection
in 2023 by citizenship**

Citizenship	Subsidiary protection granted	i.e. %
Ukraine	138	51.5
Afghanistan	47	17.5
Syria	14	5.2
China	14	5.2
Belarus	12	4.5
Kazakhstan	6	2.2
Azerbaijan	5	1.9
Russia	4	1.5
Iraq	4	1.5
stateless	4	1.5
Pakistan	4	1.5
Vietnam	4	1.5
Iran	3	1.1
Türkiye	3	1.1
Armenia	3	1.1
Ethiopia	1	0.4
Uganda	1	0.4
Turkmenistan	1	0.4
Total	268	100.0

Source: MoI

5.3 Asylum Facilities in the Czech Republic

The **Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (SUZ)** is the operator of reception, accommodation and integration asylum centres. SUZ provided services to applicants for international protection and to foreign nationals who have been granted international protection in a total of **nine asylum facilities** of three types. **A reception centre (RC)** serves to provide foreign nationals who applied for international protection with initial accommodation while the initial steps, such as registration or medical examination, are carried out. **An accommodation centre (AC)** serves to accommodate applicants for international protection until the time when the proceedings on the granting of international protection are finally completed. **An integration asylum centre (IAC)** serves to provide temporary accommodation for recognised refugees and persons who have been granted subsidiary protection.

The capacity of reception and accommodation asylum centres in the Czech Republic is 923 beds.

In 2023, a total of **1,347** newly arrived foreigners, who were applicants for international protection (including new-borns born during the mother's stay in an asylum facility) or persons accommodated by way of exception, came to asylum facilities. Citizens of **Türkiye, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Russia** and **Vietnam** came most often to asylum facilities as applicants for international protection.

The average utilisation rate of the capacity of reception and accommodation centres was 22%. This figure includes only persons physically staying in these facilities. If persons who are registered in accommodation centres but leave to live outside accommodation centres were to be included, the average capacity utilisation rate of reception and accommodation centres would be 51%.

80 persons were accommodated in IACs in 2023.

5.4 Integration of Recognised Refugees and Beneficiaries of Subsidiary Protection

The integration of persons who were granted international protection is governed by the **State Integration Programme (SIP)**. Legislatively, SIP is governed by Sections 68 through 70 of the Asylum Act and by Government Resolution No. 36 of 16 January 2017. In addition to the binding principles of SIP, this legislation also provides for an umbrella entity for integration activities, which is referred to as the **general provider of integration services (GPIS)**. **Since January 2017, this provider with an overall responsibility for integration activities has been the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior,**³⁶ which is, among other things, the operator of integration asylum centres.

The goal of the programme is to facilitate the process of integration of recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection (eligible persons) into the society in the Czech Republic. This involves particularly providing assistance and social consultancy regarding housing, entry into the labour market, health care, welfare assistance and education, including the retraining system, and assistance with acquiring and improving the knowledge of the Czech language.

The provider may subcontract individual services through a third party (non-governmental non-profit organisation).

An Individual Integration Plan (IIP) is a key document describing the integration goals of a particular person. It is prepared by the provider in close cooperation with the beneficiaries and the staff of the integration asylum centres. This plan contains activities that will lead to the fulfilment of the stated integration goal. The implementation and realisation of the activities is financed from the special budget of the SIP and the cooperation for its implementation lasts a maximum of 12 months.

³⁶ This role is also assigned by the amendment of the aforementioned Act (Act No. 222/2017 Coll.), which entered into force in August 2017.

In 2023, a total of 227 eligible persons joined the SIP. During the year, a total of 128 individual integration plans were prepared for a total of 214 persons. A total of **CZK 15.4 million** was drawn from the state budget to provide integration services through the implementation of the IIPs. In addition to the implementation of the IIPs, the SIP also provides assistance to persons who are placed in health care facilities or registered social service facilities. For these clients, the SIP fully covers their stay in the respective facilities for the entire duration of their stay. In 2023, a total of 6 persons were provided with such accommodation and the associated costs paid from the SIP's budget amounted to CZK 1.662 million.

Table 16:

SIP beneficiaries in 2023 by citizenship

Citizenship	Number	Citizenship	Number
Ukraine	72	Türkiye	4
Afghanistan	52	stateless	3
Myanmar	16	Iran	3
China	14	Uganda	3
Belarus	12	Moldova	1
Syria	10	Cuba	1
Azerbaijan	9	Vietnam	1
Russia	8	Turkmenistan	1
Kazakhstan	7	Ethiopia	1
Pakistan	4	Uzbekistan	1
Iraq	4	Total	227

Source: MoI

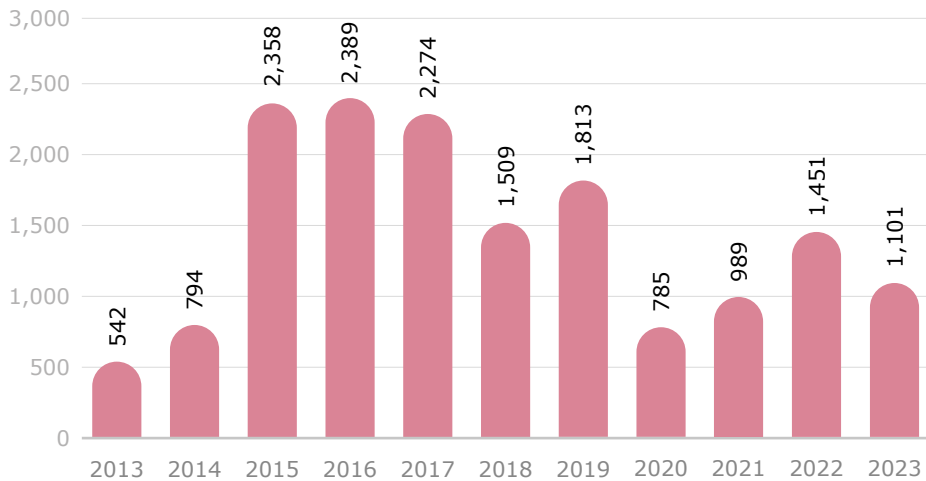
5.5 Application of the Dublin Regulation³⁷

In terms of implementation of the Dublin system, the year 2023 was without significant fluctuations or changes. The government's decision to reintroduce temporary controls at the border with the Slovak Republic due to the increase of illegal migration across Europe and the progressive reintroduction of border controls in countries adjacent to the Czech Republic largely contributed to this situation.

In 2023, the Czech Republic registered a total of **1,101 Dublin cases** (i.e. requests received and submitted).

Chart 15:

History of Dublin cases in the period 2013–2023³⁸



Source: MoI

³⁷ The Dublin Regulation, Council Regulation (EC) No 604/2013, sets out the criteria for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection. These criteria include, for example, the visa or residence permit issued, the first application for international protection on the territory of a Member State or family ties.

³⁸ From 2012 through 2015, requests for information were not included in the statistics on Dublin cases.

During the year 2023, **the Czech Republic received a total of 661 requests** from another Member State. Of this number, 256 take-back requests³⁹ and 405 readmission requests⁴⁰ were registered. The Czech Republic received these requests most often from **Germany** (329), **France** (96) and **the Netherlands** (51), i.e. from the same countries as in the previous year.

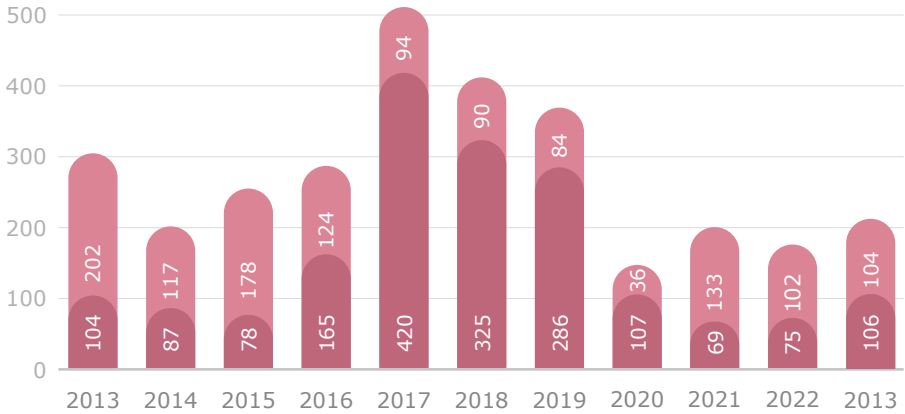
In 2023, the Czech Republic submitted a total of 440 readmission or take-back requests regarding foreign nationals. The main countries to which the Czech Republic submitted the requests were **Germany** (90), **Romania** (62) and **Poland** (44). The submitted requests concerned particularly applicants for international protection and foreign nationals from **Uzbekistan** (61), **Georgia** (33) and **Syria** (32).

³⁹ A request to take back a foreign national is submitted by a Member State, in which the foreign national is now staying and in which he or she filed an application for international protection, and this request is addressed to that EU Member State, which is already examining the applications for international protection from the foreign national concerned or which examined such applications in the past, and therefore is responsible for making a decision on the application for international protection.

⁴⁰ A request for readmission of a foreign national is submitted by a Member State, in which the applicant applied for international protection, to that Member State, which granted a visa or a residence permit to this foreign national and which, therefore, is responsible for making a decision on the application for international protection. In 2021 and 2022, readmission requests accounted for 32% and 69% of the total number of received requests, respectively.

Chart 16:

Transfers carried out from and to the territory of the Czech Republic in the period 2013–2023⁴¹



Source: MoI ● transfers to the Czech Republic ● transfers from the Czech Republic

⁴¹ From 2012 through 2015, requests for information were not included in the statistics on Dublin cases.



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

6

- ▶ In 2023, the facilities for provision of institutional and protective care, established by the MoEYS, provided a universal care to a total of **48 unaccompanied foreign minors**.
- ▶ **Two unaccompanied foreign minors applied for international protection in the CR.**
- ▶ **19 minors from Ukraine** passed through the facilities for provision of institutional and protective care who also obtained **temporary protection**.

6.1 Unaccompanied Minors

In this field, the Czech Republic follows the *Policy for the Protection and Care of Unaccompanied Minor Foreign Nationals, Including Applicants for International Protection*, which was adopted in 2012. This policy defined the rules for treatment of UAMs who arrive in the territory of the Czech Republic without a legal representative and also defined the system of care and the conditions for the integration of this group.

If it is established that an UAM is present in the territory of the Czech Republic, the Social-Legal Child Protection Authority (OSPOD) is promptly notified by the Police of the CR. Care of an UAM starts immediately after the UAM is received by an OSPOD official who is obliged to act in the best interest of the child and provide the child with adequate care.


To take care of unaccompanied foreign minors, the Czech Republic has a unique institution for this purpose – the **Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals (ZDC)**, which provides care to children who are not citizens of the CR and meet the conditions defined by the Act on the Social-Legal Protection of Children.

The Facility includes a diagnostic institute, a centre for educational care and an elementary school. The diagnostic institute serves to provide primarily diagnostic, therapeutic, medical and educational training servi-

ces. Clients who study at a secondary school or a university are allowed to remain in the facility under a contract up until the age of 26 years. To ensure a successful integration process, there is also an apartment referred to as a training apartment where clients prepare for leaving the facility (in 2023, 3 clients lived there).

A total of **48 minor migrants** passed through the facilities for institutional and protective care last year. The largest group consisted of children from Ukraine; they were mostly clients who came from failing family or foster family environment. Other clients can be put into the common category of unaccompanied minors. Once again, another large group were clients from Syria, followed by clients from Afghanistan.

Of the total, 11 were girls and 37 were boys; 14 clients were under the age of 15 years and 34 were over the age of 15 years. 19 clients received temporary protection; 2 clients applied for international protection.



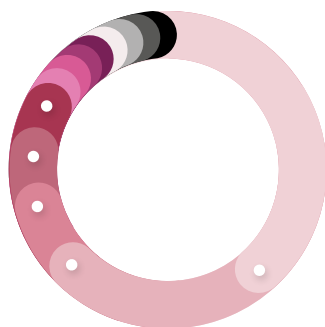
The Facility for-Children of Foreign Nationals provides children who are not citizens of the CR with full direct care, therapeutic and support services, education, assistance in the integration process and preparation for their future independent lives.

Table 17:**The numbers of unaccompanied minor foreign nationals who applied for international protection in the period 2009–2023**

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of unaccompanied minors applying for international protection	9	4	8	5	2	6	14	4	7	10

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of unaccompanied minors applying for international protection	8	7	6	1	2

Source: DAMP and ZDC

Chart 17:**Citizenships of unaccompanied minors who received care in 2023⁴²**

- Ukraine **19**
- Syria **11**
- Afghanistan **4**
- Germany **3**
- Türkiye **3**
- Egypt **1**
- Jamaica **1**
- Morocco **1**
- Moldova **1**
- Romania **1**
- Somalia **1**
- Sweden **1**
- Tunisia **1**

Source: Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals

⁴² Only unaccompanied minors who received care in the Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals and other subordinate facilities, i.e. the VÚ and SVP Klíčov, VÚ and SVP Pšov and VÚ Višňové, are included.

6.2 Other Vulnerable Groups of Persons

Same as unaccompanied minors and victims of human trafficking whose proceedings on the granting of international protection are pending, persons with disability, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents with a minor child, persons with a mental disorder and persons who have been exposed to torture, rape or another serious form of psychological, physical or sexual violence also belong to groups referred to as vulnerable groups according to Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (Reception Directive).

The Czech Republic has a system in place to provide victims of human trafficking with support and assistance and also focuses on prevention in this field. For victims of human trafficking older than 18 years, the Czech Republic has the Programme of Support and Protection of Victims of Trafficking, and for victims of human trafficking younger than 18 years, there is a special system of assistance in place, which is within the purview of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The offices of OSPOD, which protect the rights and defend the interests of a vulnerable child, also play an important role in addressing the situations of child victims of human trafficking. The topic of human trafficking is covered in greater detail in Chapter 7.

- ▶ In 2023, **there were 18 probable victims of human trafficking** included in the Ministry of the Interior's **Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings**, most of them from the Czech Republic (9), Ukraine (3) and Venezuela (3). In total, there were 8 women and 10 men.
- ▶ The year 2023 continued to be affected by the **arrival of refugees as a result of the war conflict in Ukraine**. Public authorities and NGOs organised **prevention and awareness-raising activities and campaigns** to reduce the risk of the refugees' vulnerable position being used for labour or sexual exploitation.
- ▶ During the year 2023, the trend of targeting men and women from socially and educationally disadvantaged environment in the Czech Republic continued, which involved luring such persons abroad, especially to the UK, where women are forced into prostitution and men have to perform physically demanding work.

7.1 Human Trafficking

Pursuant to the Act on Victims of Crime (No. 45/2013 Coll.), victims of human trafficking are regarded as a group of especially vulnerable persons, who need to be treated in a sensitive and special manner. The National Reference Mechanism is configured accordingly.

7.1.1 PROGRAMME FOR THE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

There is a **Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking** operated by the **Ministry of the Interior** (hereinafter referred to as Programme) as a measure created to provide victims of human trafficking with support and appropriate protection based on individual risk assessment. It is intended for victims of human trafficking older than 18 years and covers EU citizens trafficked in the territory

of the CR, third-country nationals trafficked in the territory of the CR as well as Czech citizens trafficked in the territory of the CR or abroad.

In 2023, there were 18 presumed victims of trafficking in human beings included in the Programme in total (i.e. 15 fewer than in 2022), specifically from the Czech Republic (9), Slovakia (1), Ukraine (3), Romania (1), Venezuela (3) and Colombia (1). In this group, there were 8 women and 10 men. 6 persons (the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Venezuela and Colombia) were suspected to be victims of sexual exploitation; one person was suspected to be a victim of forced begging (Ukraine) and all the others were suspected to be victims of labour exploitation. One person took advantage of the option to voluntarily return to their country of origin (Colombia).

A key objective of the Programme is the humanitarian dimension of assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings. For victims of this serious crime, the Programme offers accommodation, psycho-social and medical assistance, interpretation services, legal assistance, the services of a lawyer, assistance in finding employment, assistance in changing their residence permits and, if desired, the implementation of a dignified return to their countries of origin. However, its purpose is also to obtain relevant information about the criminal environment that can lead to detection, punishment and conviction of offenders.

7.2 Preventive Activities and Educational Events in 2023

During the year 2023, in cooperation with public authorities, the police and stakeholders from among NGOs as well as international partners, a wide range of preventive and educational activities were implemented to provide information on the possibilities to support and protect victims of human trafficking, the current trends in human trafficking, the possibilities and ways of identifying potential victims by relevant professional communities, etc.

Due to the ongoing war conflict in Ukraine, the vulnerability of refugees from Ukraine may increase. The protection of Ukrainian refugees in the Czech Republic from crime, including human trafficking, continued to be one of the main priorities of the awareness-raising activities in 2023. **Refugees**



In 2023, great emphasis was placed on dissemination of information and education, whether through training sessions, roundtables or informational videos.

have been and still are provided with specific and intensive assistance in all aspects of their lives with the aim of ensuring their safety, protection and maximum degree of integration into the everyday life of our society.





- ▶ In 2023, the situation in terms of migration was fundamentally affected by the impacts of the Russian invasion into Ukraine, the growing migration pressures resulting from the increased number of conflicts and the attempts at instrumentalisation of migration.
- ▶ Since 2015, the Ministry of the Interior has been implementing the **Aid in Place** Programme (Programme of the Ministry of the Interior for Assistance to Refugees in Regions of Origin and for Prevention of Large Migration Flows). In 2023, the budget of the Aid in Place Programme was **CZK 150 million**.
- ▶ Support was directed to countries along the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean migration routes as well as to countries along the Western Balkan migration route. In response to the wave of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and the earthquake in Türkiye, financial aid in the amount of two times CZK 12.5 million was earmarked. Furthermore, **assistance to Ukraine** amounting to CZK 70 million was implemented under the Aid in Place Programme.
- ▶ In 2023, implementation of the **MEDEVAC** programme continued. This programme focuses on providing specialist medical care to vulnerable populations in regions affected by a refugee crisis or a natural disaster.
- ▶ **10 Czech hospitals** and a team of physicians from the Armed Forces of the CR were involved in the implementation of **17 surgical missions in Ghana, Jordan, Lebanon, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia**. During the year, 128 persons from Ghana, Iraq, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia were trained in six specialties. The budget of the MEDEVAC programme in 2023 was **CZK 60 million**.

- ▶ As part of **emergency assistance to Ukraine**, aid worth **CZK 48.85 million** was provided. This included material aid packages, a surgical mission, training of Ukrainian healthcare professionals and a donation of CZK 5 million to the oncology department of the children's hospital in Lviv.
- ▶ During the year 2023, a total of **39 members of Czech expatriate communities in Ukraine, Russia, Moldova and Venezuela** were resettled to the Czech Republic under the **Programme of Assistance to Czech Compatriots**. The significant year-on-year decrease was caused by the war situation in Ukraine, which does not allow men as well as women of certain professions to leave the country.

8.1 International Cooperation Concerning Migration⁴³

The Czech Republic's migration policy is firmly rooted in the common policies of the European Union and its implementation is largely determined by the common legal instruments of the EU. The specific fields of migration, which are mostly regulated by the EU common policies, include primarily international protection, the common visa policy, the protection of the external border of the EU and the field of returns (including the expulsion of illegally staying foreign nationals). In the field of legal migration and the integration of foreign nationals, the EU Member States retained a fairly high degree of sovereignty.

In 2023, the situation in Europe in terms of migration continued to be **fundamentally affected by the impacts of the Russian invasion into Ukraine**, the growing migration pressures resulting from the increased number of armed conflicts (their number doubled over the last ten years and reached the highest level since 2016) and attempts at instrumentalisation of migration.

The ongoing military aggression of the Russian Federation has resulted in an **increase of the number of internally displaced persons in Ukraine**⁴⁴ and in arrival of additional persons in the EU. Thus, the de-

⁴³ Within the purview of the MoI.

⁴⁴ According to the IOM statistics, there were a total of 3.7 million of internally displaced persons in Ukraine as of the end of the year 2023.

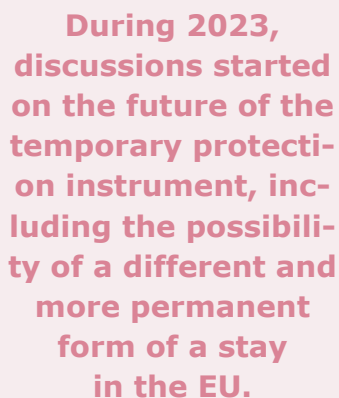
velopment of the situation in Ukraine has remained a crucial issue that largely determined the overall shape of Czech Republic's international cooperation in the field of migration. The main **emphasis in this respect was on strengthening the capacity and capability of states to host newcomers from Ukraine**, including the issue of providing sufficient financial, material and technical assistance. During the year 2023, discussions on the future of the temporary protection instrument also started to take place, including debates about the possibilities of a different and more permanent form of stay in the EU.

Another migration trend in 2023 was the increase in the number of migrants heading to Europe via the Central Mediterranean route and the illegal transit migration through the territory of the Czech Republic in connection with the developments on the Western Balkan migration route. In this context, **the Czech Republic was actively engaged particularly in combatting illegal migration from the Western Balkans**. Besides participating in the measures taken directly in the region, the Czech Republic also participated in negotiations with its closest neighbours and the countries along the Western Balkan route to coordinate border protection measures and to reduce migration pressure (bilaterally or in regional formats, such as V4 plus Austria and Germany, or the Salzburg Forum).

The negotiations about the final wording of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the goal of which is to reform and update the migration policy in the EU, took place in 2023.

The Czech Republic continued to be actively involved in **regional activities through the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**, especially through its participation in regional dialogues (Rabat Process, Khartoum Process, Budapest Process, Prague Process), which the Czech Republic used for presentation, to build partnerships and promote its long-term goals in relation to third countries.

In 2023, the Czech Republic **continued its chairmanship of the Prague Process Steering Committee**, participating, together with the ICMPD



During 2023, discussions started on the future of the temporary protection instrument, including the possibility of a different and more permanent form of a stay in the EU.

secretariat, in implementing the Action Plan for 2023-2027 adopted at the Ministerial Conference during the Czech Presidency of the EU Council. As part of the implementation process, the Czech Republic, in cooperation with Moldova, started to participate in managing the activities focused on supporting readmission cooperation, voluntary returns and sustainable reintegration.

Furthermore, the Czech Republic participated in EUAA activities. It attended the regular meetings of the EUAA Management Board and other expert meetings with a special emphasis on the launch of transformation agendas (such as the new monitoring mechanism). Same as in the previous year, the Czech Republic received operational support from the EUAA and also participated in fulfilling its European obligations (such as deployment of staff).

8.2 Humanitarian Projects

8.2.1 AID IN PLACE PROGRAMME

In response to the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the immediate vicinity of the EU, mainly related to the ongoing armed conflict in Syria, the Government of the Czech Republic approved the establishment of a permanent **Ministry of the Interior's Programme for Assistance to Refugees in Regions of Origin and Prevention of Large Migration Movements** (Aid in Place) in January 2015.

Through the Aid in Place programme, the MoI makes cash donations abroad, mainly to assist refugees at the point of their initial displacement and countries hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants or dealing with them as transit countries. Such an approach reduces the reasons for people to move further towards the European Union and contributes to reducing irregular migration.



In 2023, the budget of the Aid in Place programme was **CZK 150 million**. In 2023, the programme supported 7 projects and 1 regional programme in a total of 10 countries along the Eastern, Central and Westerns Mediterranean migration routes and the Western Balkan migration route (see

Table 20 for more details).⁴⁵ As in previous years, in 2023, special attention was paid to vulnerable groups, in particular children and minors, when supporting projects.

In addition to that, assistance was provided to Ukraine under the Aid in Place programme in 2023, which was linked to the established Programme of Humanitarian, Stabilisation, Reconstruction and Economic Assistance to Ukraine for the Period 2023-2025 (the Ukraine Programme). Under the Aid in Place programme, implementation of 4 projects in Ukraine and 1 project in Moldova was supported in 2023 with a total of CZK 70 million.

Table 18:

List of donations from the Aid in Place programme in 2023

	Country	Purpose of the donation	Implementation partner	Amount
Priority 1: Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan migration routes	Jordan, Lebanon	Contribution to Phase III of the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) for the Middle East	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark	CZK 25 million
	Cyprus	Support of construction of an accommodation centre for unaccompanied minor applicants for international protection	Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus	CZK 12.5 million
	Greece	Support of safe zones for unaccompanied minor applicants for international protection on Greek islands	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	CZK 12.5 million
Priority 2: Central Mediterranean migration route	Libya, Malta	Building the capacities of Libyan authorities responsible for migration and border management and material support for the Maltese government for protection of the maritime border	Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Malta	CZK 25 million
	Tunisia	Support of voluntary returns and reintegration of migrants in Tunisia	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	CZK 25 million
Priority 3: Western Mediterranean migration route	Senegal	Support of reintegration of Senegalese returnees and prevention of irregular migration from Senegal (Phase II)	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	CZK 25 million

⁴⁵ The cash donations to Cyprus, Libya, Malta, Greece, Senegal and Tunisia were made as Czech contributions under what is referred to as the European Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism based on the Solidarity Declaration, which was adopted by a majority of the European Union Member States, including the Czech Republic, on June 2022.

	Country	Purpose of the donation	Implementation partner	Amount
Emergency situations	Armenia	Support of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	CZK 12.5 million
	Türkiye	Support of migrants, refugees and local communities affected by the devastating earthquake in Türkiye	International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)	CZK 12.5 million
Support of Ukraine and adjacent countries	Moldova	Technical support of the Border Police Inspectorate	International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)	CZK 15 million
	Ukraine	Support of returnees, internally displaced persons and hosting communities in the Dnepropetrovsk region	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	CZK 25 million
	Ukraine	Support of humanitarian demining	HALO Trust	CZK 20 million
	Ukraine	Psychological-social support for internally displaced inhabitants in the west of Ukraine	Kryla Nadiyi	CZK 5 million
	Ukraine	Raising awareness among the residents about the protection of health in mine-contaminated areas	Myrne Nebo	CZK 5 million

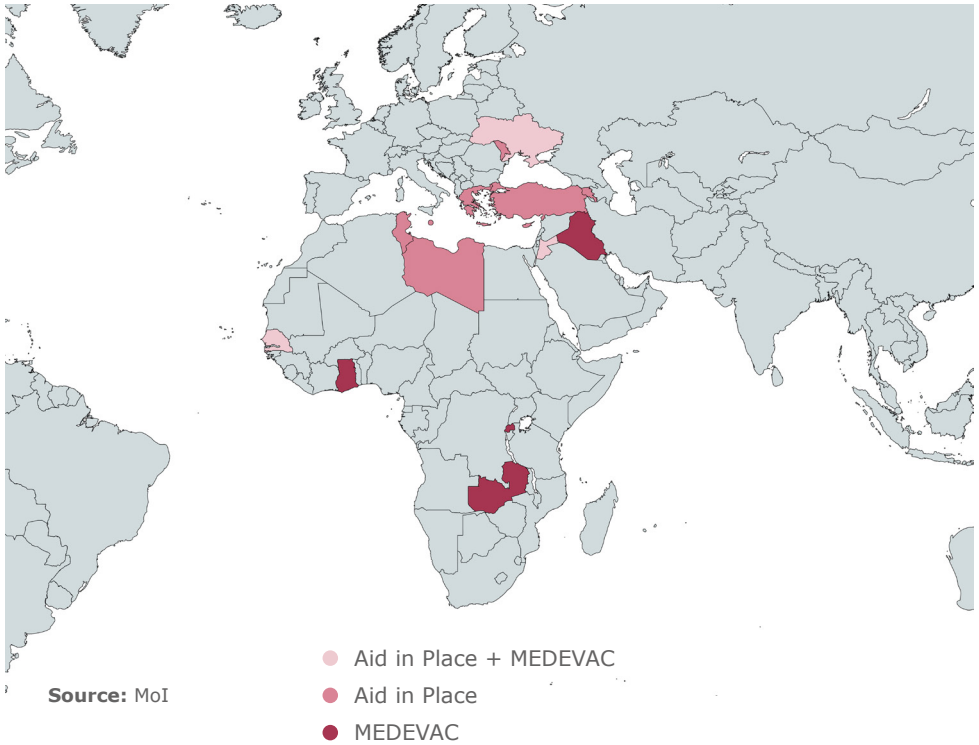
Source: MoI

Under the Aid in Place programme, implementation of 4 projects in Ukraine and 1 project in Moldova was supported in 2023 with CZK 70 million.

In 2023, the Aid in Place programme had a budget of CZK 150 million.

Figure 3:

The geographic scopes of the Aid in Place and MEDEVAC programmes



8.2.2 THE PERMANENT PROGRAMME OF HUMANITARIAN EVACUATIONS – MEDEVAC PROGRAMME

The **MEDEVAC** Programme is a governmental, medical humanitarian programme of the CR, which focuses on providing medical care to vulnerable groups of population in regions affected by migration or strained by a large number of refugees, or in places where specialised professional care is not available. Treatment is provided for free and exclusively to civilians whose medical condition is serious or whose medical condition does not allow them to lead a dignified life. The programme is implemented by sending teams of Czech physicians abroad, by training medical staff and by supporting projects designed to build and develop medical infrastructure.

In 2023, the MEDEVAC Programme continued to operate in priority regions – **the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon,**

MEDEVAC czech

Iraq), Africa (Ghana, Senegal, Rwanda, Zambia) and Eastern Europe (Ukraine) – by implementing medical missions, training medical staff and financially supporting projects to build medical infrastructure. In 2022, the MEDEVAC Programme’s budget amounted to CZK 60 million.

8.2.2.1 SUMMARY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEDEVAC PROGRAMME IN 2023

- ▶ **10 Czech hospitals** (FN Bulovka, FN Brno, IKEM, FN Královské Vinohrady, FN Motol, FN Olomouc, ÚVN, VFN, Fakultní Thomayerova nemocnice, Nemocnice Na Homolce) and a team of physicians from the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic **participated in the implementation of the programme.**
- ▶ **17 surgical missions** with 1,018 surgical procedures performed on 917 patients in Ghana, Jordan, Lebanon, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia (gynaecology, ophthalmology, ENT, plastic surgery, traumatology).
- ▶ During internships, training and missions, 128 persons from Ghana, Iraq, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia were trained in 6 specialties (anaesthesiology, gynaecology, infectology, ENT, plastic surgery and traumatology).

In 2023, the MEDEVAC Programme operated in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Ghana, Senegal, Rwanda, Zambia and Ukraine.

8.2.2.2 IMPLEMENTING URGENT AID TO UKRAINE

Following Government Resolution No. 855 of 12 October 2022 on the provision of emergency assistance to Ukraine, the MEDEVAC programme provided emergency assistance to Ukraine by delivering material medical assistance and by organising medical missions in Ukraine, educational ac-

tivities (internships, training) in the Czech Republic and financial support from international organisations. The assistance provided under the MEDEVAC programme was worth a total of CZK 48.85 million and took the form of material aid packages, surgical missions or training of Ukrainian healthcare professionals.

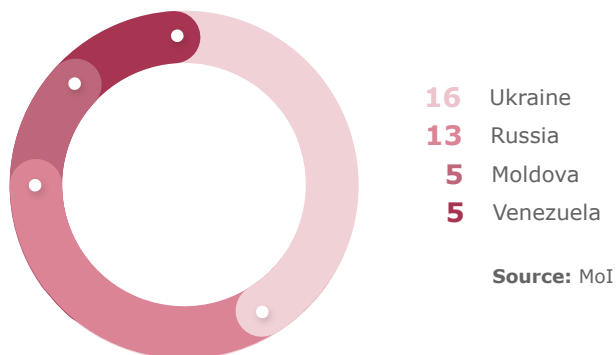
8.3 Assistance to Compatriots

In 2023, the programme providing resettlement assistance to Czech expatriates continued.

Participation in the programme does not automatically grant permanent residence. It represents a simplification of the whole procedure, especially as the State takes responsibility for providing accommodation and the resources for the stay. However, these benefits are provided only to persons who are in need of such assistance, i.e. persons from vulnerable areas or medically, socially or economically disadvantaged members of Czech expatriate communities.

Chart 18:

The number of members of expatriate communities resettled to the Czech Republic in 2023



The implementation of the programme in 2023 was significantly complicated by the war situation in Ukraine, which prevented a number of compatriots from resettling to the Czech Republic,

due to mandatory military service, which does not allow men as well as women of certain professions to leave the country. Due to the complicated situation, **only 39 persons resettled to the Czech Republic in 2023.** These were members of Czech expatriate communities in Ukraine (16 persons), in Russia (13 persons), in Moldova (5 persons) and in Venezuela (5 persons). During the year 2023, a total of 53 persons found permanent places of residence and jobs, including 30 members of a group, which resettled to the Czech Republic in 2023. After moving out of the temporary accommodation facility, all clients became completely self-sufficient. The rest of the resettled compatriots will move to their permanent places of residence in early 2024. Archdiocesan Caritas Prague, which was entrusted with direct work with clients, was, as in the past, a partner of the MoI in the implementation of this programme in 2023.

Since the launch of this programme in 2015 to 31 December 2023, a total of 2,361 persons have been resettled to the Czech Republic. The average period of their stay in the temporary accommodation provided by the MoI was 71 days, which is the same figure as in 2022.



- ▶ During 2023, a total of **13,898 persons** were detected illegally migrating to the Czech Republic.
- ▶ Same as in 2022, the majority of persons illegally residing in the Czech Republic were **Syrians, Ukrainians** and **Moldovans**.
- ▶ Starting from 4 October 2023, **the protection of the internal border between the Czech Republic and Slovakia has been reintroduced**.
- ▶ In 2023, **301 persons** were identified as **facilitators of irregular migration**. Compared to the previous year, there was a significant increase by 115 persons. These were mostly citizens of **Ukraine, Syria** and **Uzbekistan**.

9.1 Illegal Migration into the Territory of the Czech Republic

Since 2008 (joining to the Schengen area), two basic categories of illegal migration in the territory of the Czech Republic have been monitored:

- 1) Illegal crossing of the external Schengen border of the Czech Republic - this category monitors persons who have illegally crossed or attempted to illegally cross the external Schengen border (airport) of the Czech Republic. By persons we mean foreigners and citizens of the Czech Republic.
- 2) Illegal stay – this category is used to report foreigners found in the territory of the Czech Republic, including the transit area at airports (illegal entry, overstaying, etc.). This category also includes the sub-category of what is referred to as transit illegal migration (statistics have been collected since 2015; foreigners illegally crossing mostly land internal Schengen borders with the aim of continuing their trips across the territory of the Czech Republic to other EU/Schengen area countries).

Chart 19:

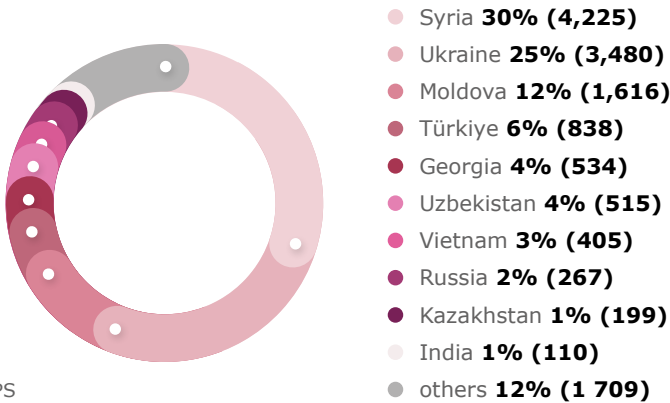
Development of irregular migration in the period 2008–2023



Source: DFPS

Chart 20:

Irregular migration in 2023 by citizenship



Source: DFPS

As compared to the preceding year, the sharp decline of transit illegal migration in 2023 significantly changed the percentages of the citizenships of transiting foreign nationals and the citizenships of those foreign nationals for whom the Czech Republic is usually the destination country. The number of persons detected during transit illegal migration in 2022 accounted for 74.7% of the total number of persons detected during illegal migration, while it was merely 34.1% in 2023.

TEMPORARY REINTRODUCTION OF THE PROTECTION OF THE INTERNAL BORDERS OF THE CR

Due to the ongoing growth of illegal migration in Europe, the protection of internal borders was reintroduced for a period from 4 October 2023 to 2 February 2024.⁴⁶

TRANSIT ILLEGAL MIGRATION

Transit illegal migration as a separate subcategory of illegal residence has been monitored statistically since mid-2015, i.e. since the previous migration wave. Foreigners (third-country nationals) who illegally enter the Czech Republic by land (i.e. via the internal Schengen border) or by air (intra-Schengen flights) intend to use the Czech Republic only as a transit country. The destinations of these foreigners are other EU/Schengen countries, in particular neighbouring Germany.

Although a sharp year-on-year decrease by 17,110 persons (i.e. -78.3%) was seen in 2023, transit migration still accounted for 34.1% of the total illegal migration.

The year-on-year decrease of transit illegal migration was a result of the following:

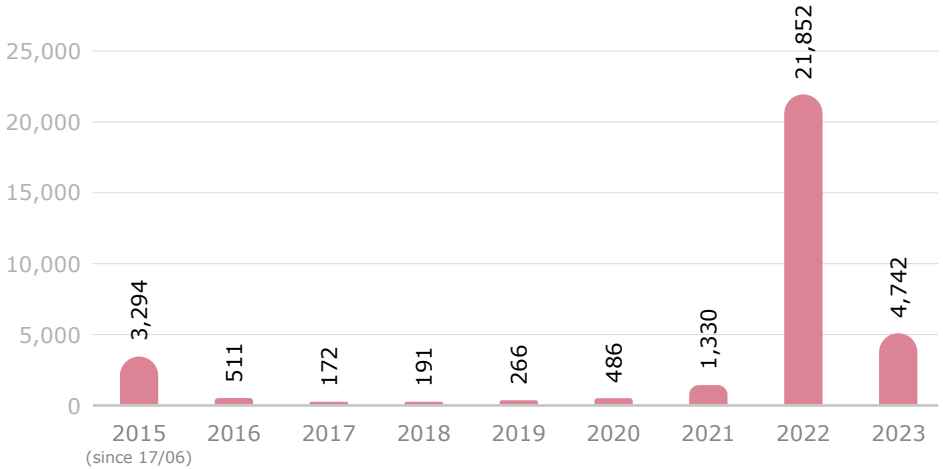
- ▶ the measures implemented against transit illegal migration in the countries situated along the Western Balkan migration route (particularly the measures implemented in Serbia at the border with Hungary);

⁴⁶ Under a special measure implemented by the Ministry of the Interior of the CR as the competent authority pursuant to Section 12(1) of Act No. 191/2016 Coll., on the protection of the state borders of the Czech Republic and on amendments to related Acts, and within the meaning of Article 28(1) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code).

- ▶ the measures implemented in other EU/Schengen area countries (particularly the measures at the Czech-German border);
- ▶ temporarily reintroduced protection of the internal border between the Czech Republic and Slovakia during two periods in 2023 (see Chapter 10.1.1 Temporary Reintroduction of the Protection of the Internal Borders of the Czech Republic).

Chart 21:

History of transit migration in the period 2015–2023



Source: DFPS



Table 19:**Illegal residence in the Czech Republic – comparison between 2022 and 2023**

	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Total	29,034*	100.0	13,530**	100.0	-53.4	-15,504
of which EU citizens	101	0.3	97	0.7	-4.0	-4
of which third-country nationals	28,925	99.7	13,427	99.3	-53.9	-15,694
of which TOP 10 (ranked according to 2023):						
Syria	20,980	72.3	4,222	31.2	-79.9	-16,758
Ukraine	2,829	9.7	3,437	25.4	21.5	608
Moldova	1,005	3.5	1,659	12.3	65.1	654
Türkiye	767	2.6	833	6.2	8.6	66
Uzbekistan	306	1.1	501	3.7	63.7	195
Georgia	352	1.2	461	3.4	31.0	109
Vietnam	386	1.3	397	2.9	2.8	11
Russia	235	0.8	212	1.6	-9.8	-23
Kazakhstan	72	0.2	194	1.4	169.4	122
India	120	0.4	102	0.8	-15.0	-18

* the citizenship of the person was not identified in 8 cases

Source: DFPS

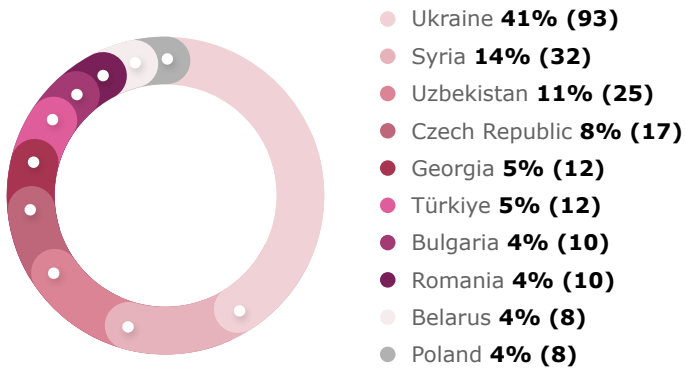
** the citizenship of the person was not identified in 6 cases

9.2 Facilitation of Illegal Migration

In 2023, there were **301 smugglers of illegal migrants** detected, 128 more than in 2022. The year-on-year increase is related to a change in the way of illegally transporting people by cars across the state border in the direction from Slovakia.

Chart 22:

Citizenships of persons facilitating illegal migration in 2023



Source: DFPS

Table 20:**Facilitation of an illegal stay or crossing of a border – comparison between 2022 and 2023**

Year	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Total number of persons	190	100.0	305	100.0	60.5	115
of which, the way of facilitating illegal migration:						
facilitation of an illegal crossing of the state border	173	91.1	301	98.7	74.0	128
facilitation of an illegal stay (procurement of visa, accommodation, irregular documents)	1	0.5	2	0.7	100.0	1
paternity fraud and organisation thereof	8	4.2	2	0.7	-75.0	-6
sham marriage and organisation thereof	2	1.1			-100.0	-2
sham cohabitation (male partner/female partner) and organisation thereof	6	3.2			-100.0	-6

Source: DFPS



- ▶ In 2023, a total of **6,558 administrative decisions on returns** were registered. From this amount, a total of **5,240 enforceable decisions on administrative expulsion** and **1,318 decisions on imposition of the obligation to leave the country** were issued.
- ▶ In the field of voluntary returns, **the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic** and the **Ministry of the Interior's Administration of the Refugee Facilities** implement their **programmes of assisted voluntary returns**.
- ▶ In 2023, **a total of 674 voluntary returns of foreigners from third countries** were carried out. Of this number, 654 assisted voluntary returns of foreigners were implemented by the MoI of the Czech Republic and 20 assisted voluntary returns of applicants for international protection were implemented by the SUZ.
- ▶ The largest numbers of people were returned to **Moldova** (166) and **Türkiye** (118).
- ▶ During 2023, **expulsion sentence was imposed by courts on a total of 1,047 persons**, mostly on citizens of **Ukraine** (573 persons) and **Moldova** (159 persons).
- ▶ Primarily due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, only **176 deportations** were carried out, mostly to Slovakia (57 persons), Moldova (19 persons) and Bulgaria (18 persons).

The return policy aims to reduce and deal with the consequences of illegal migration through close cooperation with third countries in accordance with the readmission policy. The readmission policy, the transfer/readmission of illegally staying persons, needs to be addressed in a broader context of international cooperation, which goes beyond the field of migration. An effective return policy is an absolute prerequisite for an effective migration policy.

A return of a foreign national can either be voluntary or forced.

VOLUNTARY RETURN

This type of return provides for a safe and dignified return to the foreign national's country of origin or another state, which allows the foreign national to enter its territory. The returnee travels as an ordinary tourist, without the assistance of the police or other governmental authorities. The return is carried out by air or possibly by land, depending on the destination and the preferences of the returnees. Governmental institutions in the country of return are notified neither of the arrival of the returnees nor of the circumstances of their stay in the country, from which they are returning.

FORCED RETURN

This type of return concerns those foreign nationals who are staying illegally in the country or who were sentenced to expulsion by a court and are obliged to leave the country. If they do not take advantage of the opportunity to apply for a voluntary return, a forced return must be carried out.

10.1 Administrative Decision on Return

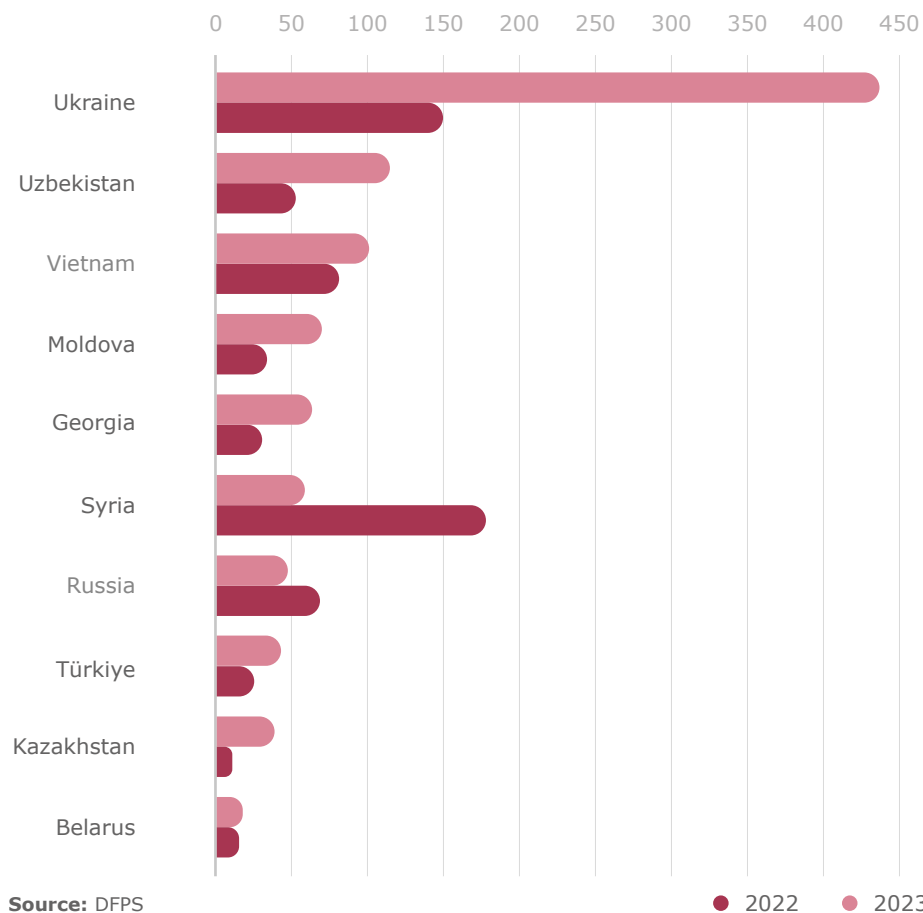
In 2023, a total of **6,558 administrative decisions on returns** were recorded. An administrative decision on a return can take on the form of a decision on the obligation to leave the country or a decision on administrative expulsion.

10.1.1 DECISION ON THE OBLIGATION TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY⁴⁷

In 2023, a total of 1,318 persons were issued a **decision on the imposition of an obligation to leave the territory of the Czech Republic**. In the year-on-year comparison, 362 more persons were issued this decision (i.e. there was an increase by 37.9%).

Chart 23:

Decision on the obligation to leave the territory of the CR by citizenship – comparison between 2022 and 2023



Source: DFPS

⁴⁷ The institution of a decision on the obligation to leave the country was introduced in connection with the Return Directive in January 2011 and was defined in Section 50a of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals.

In 2023, decisions were made on appeals against decisions on the obligation to leave the territory of the CR in 50 cases (a year-on-year increase by 41 cases). In 28 cases, the appeal was dismissed; in 6 cases, the decision was annulled and the proceedings were discontinued; in 11 cases, the decision was overturned and returned for reconsideration; and in 5 cases, the decision statement was changed. In 206 cases (-109 cases), decisions were made on appeals against decisions on the obligation to leave the territory of the EU Member States where the appeal was dismissed in 108 cases; the decision was annulled and the proceedings discontinued in 34 cases; the decision was overturned and returned for reconsideration in 40 cases; and the decision was changed in 24 cases.

10.1.2 DECISION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPULSION

Administrative expulsion means termination of a foreign national's stay in the country, which is associated with setting a time limit for leaving the territory of the EU Member States and a period, for which the foreign national cannot be permitted to enter the territories of the EU Member States.

In 2023, the situation was still affected by the consequences of the war in Ukraine. If citizens of Ukraine are issued with a decision on administrative expulsion, there are reasons precluding their departure (return to Ukraine)⁴⁸ and they were granted a visa for a stay longer than 90 days for the purpose of leave to remain in the country.⁴⁹

In total, **5,240 foreign nationals were issued with administrative expulsion decisions**,⁵⁰ which means there was a year-on-year decrease by 1,209 persons, i.e. -18.7%.

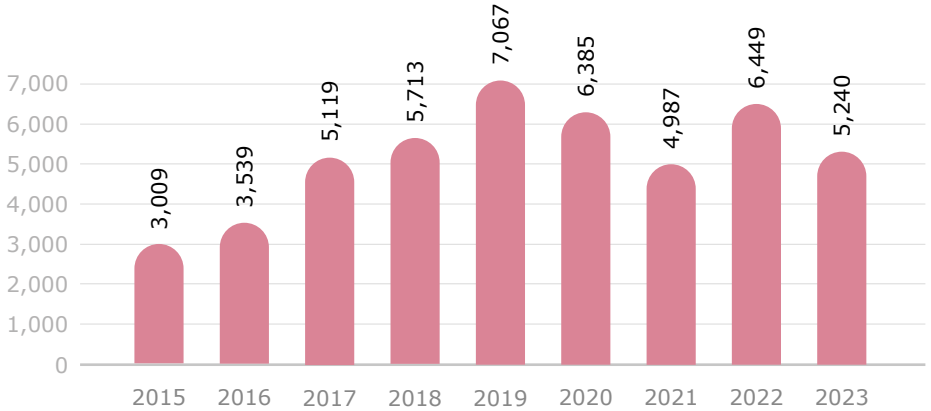
⁴⁸ Procedure according to Section 120a of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners.

⁴⁹ Pursuant to Section 33 of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners.

⁵⁰ The number of persons registered in the IS CIS as of 31/12/2023.

Chart 24:

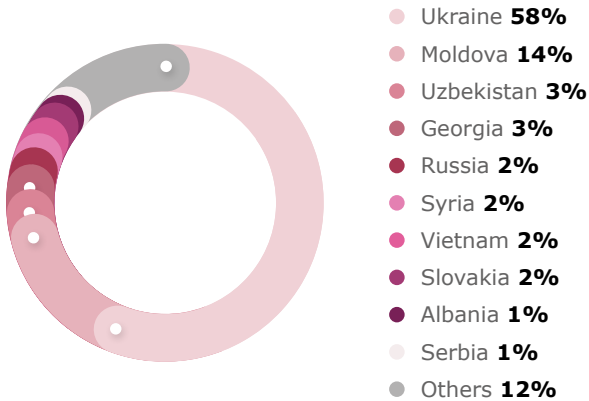
Number of foreign nationals with issued final decisions on administrative expulsion in the period 2015–2023



Source: DFPS

Chart 25:

Foreign nationals with issued decisions on administrative expulsion in 2023



Source: DFPS

In 2023, **5,240 final administrative expulsion decisions** were recorded.⁵¹

⁵¹ Multiple decisions can be issued to the same person in a given time period.

Same as in 2022, the reason that predominated among the grounds for administrative expulsion was overstaying in the territory of the Czech Republic, especially among third-country nationals who are exempt from the visa requirement when crossing the external borders of Member States for residence permits whose total duration does not exceed 90 days during any period of 180 days; to a lesser extent, overstaying occurred among those foreign nationals who were issued visas or residence permits by another Member State. The main motive for overstaying was performance of an economic activity (employment), particularly among citizens of Moldova and Uzbekistan.

10.1.3 THE EXPULSION PENALTY IMPOSED BY THE COURTS

The penalty of expulsion from the territory of the Czech Republic may be imposed by a court on an offender who is not a citizen of the Czech Republic, either as a separate penalty or in addition to another penalty, if the safety of people or property or any other general interest requires so.⁵²

The penalty of expulsion is implemented in cases where foreign nationals are serving a prison sentence or are in deportation custody. In this case, the DFPS provides travel and transport documents, communicates with embassies, cooperates with other state administration bodies, in particular the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, courts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2023, the penalty of expulsion was imposed by courts on **1,047 persons**⁵³ (a year-on-year decrease by 138 persons, i.e. -11.6%) and the top two citizenships were the same as last year – **Ukraine** and **Moldova**. While there was more than a two-fold increase with citizens of Ukraine with the penalty of expulsion, there was, conversely, a decrease with citizens of Moldova. Among citizenships that followed, there was a decrease among citizens of **Georgia, Vietnam and Syria**.

⁵² Multiple decisions can be issued to the same person in a given time period.

⁵³ Section 80(1) of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code.

The implementation of judicial expulsion, based on the penalty of expulsion imposed by a court, was carried out for 176 persons in 2023. The judicial expulsion was most often implemented for citizens of Slovakia, Moldova and Bulgaria.

10.2 Execution of a Decision on Return

10.2.1 VOLUNTARY RETURNS

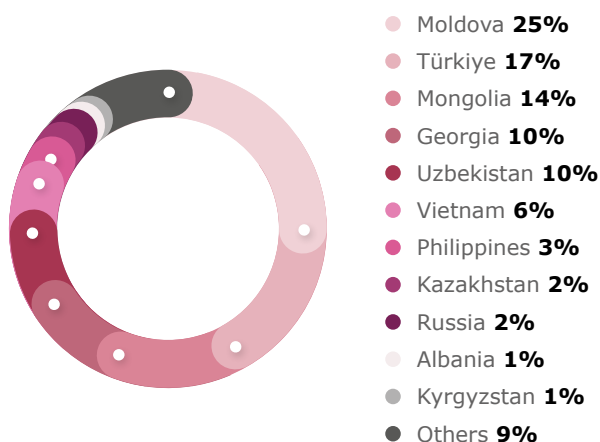
The Czech Republic prefers the option of a voluntary return to a forced return. At the national level, voluntary returns are governed by the provision of Section 123a of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals. Upon a written request from a foreign national submitted to the Ministry of the Interior or the Police, the Ministry may also arrange for payment of the costs associated with the voluntary return of the foreign national who is detained in the facility for detention of foreign nationals or who was given a time limit for leaving the country or who is staying in the country without a valid residence permit.

Programmes of assisted voluntary returns are currently implemented by the Ministry of the Interior and Refugee Facilities Administration of the MoI (SUZ). In its programme, the Ministry of the Interior focuses particularly on those foreign nationals who received a decision on administrative expulsion or a decision on the obligation to leave the country, with emphasis on those foreign nationals who were placed in detention. Under its programme, SUZ provides assistance with voluntary departure for the country of origin to unsuccessful applicants for international protection.

During the year 2023, **a total of 674 voluntary returns of third-country nationals** were carried out. A total of 654 assisted voluntary returns of foreign nationals were carried out by the MoI CR and 20 assisted voluntary returns of applicants for international protection were carried out by SUZ. Among these returnees, the most numerous groups consisted of citizens of **Moldova, Türkiye, Mongolia or Georgia**.

Chart 26:

Voluntary returns in 2023 by citizenship



Source: MoI

10.2.1.1 VOLUNTARY RETURNS IMPLEMENTED BY DAMP

The Ministry of the Interior, specifically the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, has been implementing its own programme of voluntary returns since January 2017. The DAMP voluntary returns programme is governed by the basic rules laid down in the provision of Section 123a of Act No. 326/1999 Coll. on the Residence of Foreign Nationals. In accordance with the aforementioned law, the current target group of the programme consists of foreign nationals who were issued a decision on administrative expulsion.

The Ministry of the Interior not only carries out the actual voluntary return but also provides all the related consultancy and assistance, which are necessary for effective, fast and successful implementation of a return. During 2023, MoI CR DAMP started the implementation of two interconnected return projects funded from the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.


Since April 2022, the MoI CR has been involved in a programme funded by FRONTEX called *Joint Reintegration Services (JRS)*. Under this programme, reintegration support is available to returning. As of the end of 2023, there was a network of partner organisations available in a total of 41 countries

of return. Participation in the JRS programme offers foreigners the possibility to obtain, as part of the implementation of a voluntary return, support for starting a business, long-term support with housing, social, healthcare and psychological-social support, support with entering the labour market, financial support, support of education, support of further vocational training or support for family reunification. During the year 2023, reintegration assistance was provided under the JRS programme in a total of 54 cases of individuals and families, with the highest numbers of cases being from Mongolia (26), Vietnam (14) and Türkiye (6). A total of 80 foreigners were supported under the JRS programme.

In 2023, the Ministry of the Interior implemented a total of 654 assisted voluntary returns. Of this amount, 456 persons were placed in detention facilities for foreigners.

The MoI most frequently implemented voluntary returns for citizens of **Moldova** (166 persons) and **Türkiye** (118 persons). In total, voluntary returns of foreigners of 38 different nationalities were successfully implemented.

During the year 2023, the implementation of returns continued to be affected by the impacts related to the breakout of the conflict in the territory of Ukraine. Since the breakout of the conflict, it is only possible to return citizens of Ukraine in exceptional cases under the voluntary return programme. Therefore, only one citizen of Ukraine was returned in 2023. The return practice was also impacted by the reduction or complete cancellation of certain flights in connection with the breakout of the conflict. In 2023, the total number of implemented returns of foreigners outside the facility for detention of foreigners increased from 77 persons to 198 persons. Among other reasons, this resulted from the fact that the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) did not implement any voluntary return project in 2023.



In the process of a voluntary return carried out by the MoI, the foreigner is provided with counselling and assistance.

10.2.1.2 VOLUNTARY RETURNS IMPLEMENTED BY THE REFUGEE FACILITIES ADMINISTRATION

Every foreign national meeting the conditions defined in the provision of Section 54a of the Asylum Act is eligible to apply for repatriation – meaning a voluntary, dignified and safe return to their country of origin or a third country, paid from the state budget. The eligibility for a voluntary return is not acquired automatically. Each application is examined on a case-by-case basis; however, it is in the interest of the State to support returns of persons who voluntarily request it. SUZ bears the costs of repatriation, taking into account whether the foreign national meets the conditions defined by the law. The foreign national's health and mental state, their family and social situation and other factors are also taken into account in the implementation.

When carrying out a voluntary return, SUZ provides applicants with a free plane ticket or a free ticket for travel by land to the destination country, direct assistance at their departure and consultancy; and if it is not possible to ensure transportation for the client to their chosen destination, a contribution for transportation to the requested place in the destination country can be paid to the client.

In 2023, a total of **26 applications for voluntary return** were processed, of which a total of **20 persons** were returned to the requested countries, specifically to the following countries: **Azerbaijan** (5 persons), **Iran** (4 persons), **Uzbekistan** (4 persons), **Georgia** (3 persons), **Vietnam** (2 persons), **China** and **Russia** (1 person to each of these two countries).

Table 21:**Persons voluntarily returned under the assisted voluntary return programmes in 2023 by citizenship**

Citizenship	Total number of foreign nationals returned under voluntary return programmes	
	Implemented by the MoI of the Czech Republic	Implemented by SUZ of the MoI of the Czech Republic
Albania	9	
Algeria	1	
Armenia	2	
Australia	1	
Azerbaijan	3	5
Belarus	4	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	
China	1	1
Cuba	1	
Georgia	67	3
India	1	
Iran		4
Iraq	1	
Kazakhstan	13	
Kenya	1	
Kosovo	1	
Kyrgyzstan	9	
Mexico	2	
Moldova	166	
Mongolia	92	
Morocco	2	
Nigeria	1	
North Macedonia	3	
Pakistan	1	
Philippines	17	

Citizenship	Total number of foreign nationals returned under voluntary return programmes	
	Implemented by the MoI of the Czech Republic	Implemented by SUZ of the MoI of the Czech Republic
Russia	13	
Saudi Arabia	1	
Senegal	1	
Serbia	8	
Republic of South Africa	1	
Sri Lanka	1	
Taiwan	1	
Tajikistan	1	
Tunisia	4	
Türkiye	118	
Turkmenistan	3	
Ukraine	1	
Uzbekistan	62	4
Vietnam	37	2
Total	654	20

Source: MoI

10.2.2 FORCED RETURNS

In 2023, **administrative expulsion was carried out for 500 persons**,⁵⁴ i.e. there was a year-on-year increase by 23 persons. The number of persons for whom the process of carrying out administrative expulsion was carried out (500) is usually significantly lower than the number of persons who received a decision on administrative expulsion (5,240) due to the fact that only a part of foreign nationals who received a decision on administrative expulsion are detained in the facility for detention of foreigners for the purpose of its implementation. For other foreign nationals, it is assumed that they will depart from the territory of the Czech Republic

⁵⁴ The expulsion was carried out from the facility for detention of foreigners.

on their own, or there are obstacles due to which citizens of certain third countries cannot be physically deported.

10.3 Readmission Agreements

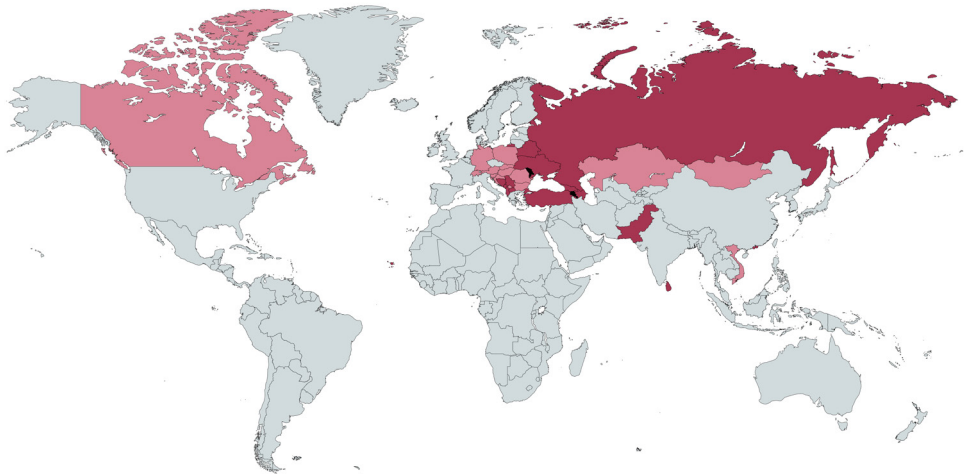
One of the tools for effective implementation of a forced return of a person to their country of origin is a **transfer under a readmission agreement**.

On 11 October 2023, a bilateral readmission agreement with Uzbekistan was signed, the text of which had been agreed in 2022. The negotiations about the agreement were taking place intermittently since as early as 2014. The agreement will enter into force after ratification, probably in 2024.

The Czech Republic has already entered into readmission agreements with most of the third countries with which the Czech Republic is interested to cooperate under an agreement. In view of the current migration situation, the Czech Republic is interested in concluding agreements with Bangladesh, Lebanon, Iran and Nepal. The Czech Republic is also interested in entering bilateral readmission agreements of lesser legal force with Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia (since the European Commission already has a mandate to negotiate a readmission agreement). These negotiations have not been started yet. Effort will be made to start negotiations with at least some of these countries in 2024.

Figure 4:

Readmission agreements of the CR and the EU



Source: MoI

- Bilateral agreements of the Czech Republic
- Readmission agreements negotiated by the EU
- both

The Czech Republic has negotiated bilateral implementing protocols to some of these agreements, which define the technical details of the readmission procedure. The implementation protocol to the agreement with Azerbaijan is still under preparation. In 2023, the Commission did not receive a mandate to negotiate a readmission agreement with a new third state and has not entered into any readmission agreement.

Readmission procedures are carried out under readmission agreements. Bilateral readmission agreements between the Czech Republic and the State concerned and readmission agreements entered into by the European Union are used in the readmission procedure.

Readmission agreements with neighbouring countries are used most frequently. On a long-term basis, in previous years, persons from Germany were most often readmitted to the Czech Republic, while the transfers back to Slovakia accounted for the highest number of transfers of persons. The year 2023 has continued this trend.

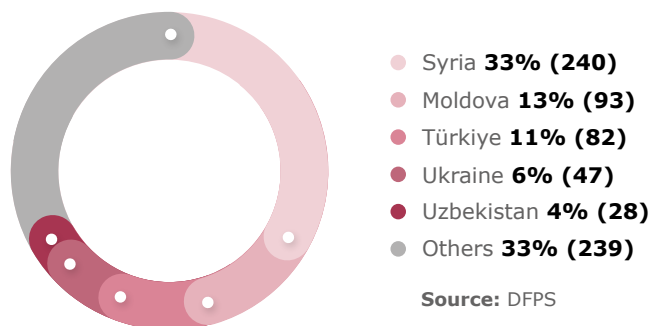
Table 22:**Readmission procedures with neighbouring countries – comparison between 2022 and 2023**

Year	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Persons readmitted under readmission agreements	3,221	100.0	2,687	100.0	-16.6	-534
of which by neighbouring countries	1,110	34.5	1,958	72.9	76.4	848
by the Czech Republic	2,111	65.5	729	27.1	-65.5	-1,382
Transfers rejected	3,157	100.0	452	100.0	-85.7	-2,705
of which by neighbouring countries from the Czech Republic	3,028	95.9	273	60.4	-91.0	-2,755
by the Czech Republic from neighbouring countries	129	4.1	179	39.6	38.8	50

Source: DFPS

In **2023, the Czech Republic readmitted a total of 729 persons from neighbouring countries under the readmission procedure**, which represents a year-on-year decrease by 1,382 persons (-65.5%). The number of persons readmitted from Germany decreased by two thirds in comparison with the year 2022. (The high number in the preceding year was the result of transit illegal migration across the territory of the Czech Republic predominantly to Germany.)

By citizenship, the most frequently persons readmitted from neighbouring countries were citizens of **Syria** (240 persons), **Moldova** (93), **Türkiye** (82), **Ukraine** (47) and **Uzbekistan** (28).

Chart 27:**Persons readmitted to the Czech Republic under a readmission procedure in 2023****Table 23:****Readmission procedures with neighbouring countries – persons readmitted by the authorities of the CR from neighbouring countries – comparison between 2022 and 2023**

Year	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Persons readmitted by the authorities of the CR from neighbouring countries	2,111	100.0	729	100.0	-65.5	-1,382
of which:						
from Germany	2,102	99.6	707	97.0	-66.4	-1,395
from Poland	2	0.1	9	1.2	350.0	7
from Austria	7	0.3	8	1.1	14.3	1
from Slovakia	0		4	0.5		4

Source: DFPS

In 2023, the Czech Republic transferred a total of 1,954 persons to neighbouring countries under the readmission procedure, with a year-on-year increase by 844 persons (i.e. +76.0%) having been re-

corded. The high numbers of transferred persons in both reference years were the result of transit illegal migration. The highest number of persons was transferred to Slovakia (1,899, i.e. +81.3%).

Table 24:

Readmission procedures with neighbouring countries – persons transferred by the authorities of the CR to neighbouring countries – comparison between 2022 and 2023

Year	2022	i.e. %	2023	i.e. %	Change from the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
Persons transferred by the authorities of the CR to neighbouring countries	1,110	100.0	1,958	100.0	76.4	848
z toho						
to Slovakia	1,042	93.9	1,893	96.7	81.7	851
to Germany	25	2.3	33	1.7	32.0	8
to Austria	38	3.4	27	1.4	-28.9	-11
to Poland	5	0,5	5	0,3	0,0	0

Source: DFPS

Citizens of Syria (1,660 persons) and Türkiye (226) were most often transferred to neighbouring countries, followed by much lower numbers of citizens of Afghanistan (20), Armenia (11) and Iraq and Moldova (6 persons each).



ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

This report was prepared mainly using the source materials of institutions engaged in asylum, migration and integration. This agenda is particularly within the terms of reference of the Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, source materials from the following entities were used in preparation of the report: the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service, the Police Presidium, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Refugee Facilities Administration, the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime and the Facility for Children-Foreigners. Most of these institutions were contacted by the National Contact Point of the EMN in the Czech Republic, which is a part of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior, or directly by this Department. The source materials of these institutions represent most of the content of this report. Another source was information in the public domain.

Statistical data were taken particularly from the information systems of the Police of the Czech Republic, the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the MoI and the Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals.

For the most part, information and data from the working version of the Report on the Situation in Migration and the Integration of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic in 2023⁵⁵ and from the reports and studies of the European Migration Network in the areas concerned were used. Particularly the national contribution to the 2023 EMN Annual Synthesis Report (EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2023), which the Czech National Contact Point of the EMN prepared in early 2024, was used.

For the purposes of this report, the analysis of press articles concerned with asylum and migration in 2023 was also used.

The terminology was used in accordance with the national practice and legislation. The definitions of terms contained in the 6th edition of the EMN Asylum and Migration Glossary were also used.

⁵⁵ This report is prepared by the Ministry of the Interior on an annual basis.

ANNEX 2: LIST OF SOURCES AND LITERATURE

SOURCES

Ministry of the Interior

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Justice

Directorate of the Foreign Police Service

Police Presidium

Refugee Facilities Administration

National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime

International Organisation for Migration

Facility for Children of Foreign Nationals

LITERATURE

MoI CR, the Report on the Situation in Migration and the Integration of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic 2023

EMN, 2023 EMN Annual Policy Report, Annex 1, national contribution from the Czech EMN Contact Point

EMN, Specification of Requirements for the 202 EMN Annual Policy Report

EMN, Asylum and Migration Glossary, 6th edition

LEGISLATION

Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on amendments to certain Acts, as amended

Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, as amended

Act No. 191/2016 Coll., on the Protection of the State Borders of the Czech Republic and on amendments to related Acts

Act No. 222/2017 Coll., amending Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on amendments to certain Acts, as amended, and other related Acts

Act No. 221/2003 Coll., on the Temporary Protection of Foreign Nationals, as amended

Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment, as amended

Act No. 186/2013 Coll., on Citizenship of the Czech Republic and on amendments to certain Acts

Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code

Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Victims of Crimes and on amendments to certain Acts

Act No. 277/2019 Coll., amending certain Acts in connection with adoption of Act on the Collection of Laws and International Agreements

Act No. 165/2020 Coll., amending Act No. 141/1961 Coll., on Judicial Criminal Proceedings (Code of Criminal Procedure), as amended, and certain other Acts

Act No. 285/2020 Coll., amending Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code, as amended, and certain other related Acts

Act No. 350/2020 Coll., on the Special Methods of Voting in the Elections to Regional Councils and the Senate in 2020

Ordinance No. 520/2020 Coll., on Implementation of Adaptation-Integration Courses

Act No. 274/2021 Coll., amending Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on amendments to certain Acts, as amended, and other related Acts

Act No. 65/2022 Coll., on certain measures in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation, as amended

Act No. 66/2022 Coll., on measures in the field of employment and social security in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation

Act No 175/2022 Coll., on further measures in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation and on amending other Acts in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation

Act No. 198/2022 Coll., amending Act No. 65/2022 Coll., on certain measures in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion of Ukraine by the troops of the Russian Federation, as amended by Act No. 175/2022 Coll., and Act No. 66/2022 Coll. on measures in the field of employment and social security in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the invasion by the troops of the Russian Federation, as amended by Act No. 175/2022 Coll.

Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning irregularly staying third-country nationals

Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for reception of applicants for international protection

Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code)

Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing

Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 September 2018 establishing a European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)

Regulation (EU) 2018/1726 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 on the European Union Agency for the Operational

Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA)

Council Regulation (EC) No. 604/2013 (Dublin III Regulation)

Government Resolution No. 621 of 29 July 2015 on the Migration Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic and on the Migration Communication Strategy of the Czech Republic

Government Resolution No. 954 of 20 November 2015 on the State Integration Programme for Persons with Granted International Protection in 2016 and the Following Years

Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 956 of 20 November 2015 on the Creation of the Permanent Medical Humanitarian Programme MEDEVAC

Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 14 December 2022 No. 1051 on the Procedure for the Implementation of the Updated Concept of Integration of Foreigners - In Mutual Respect in 2023

INTERNET SOURCES

www.mvcr.cz

www.suz.cz

www.mzv.cz

www.mpsv.cz

www.emncz.eu

www.frs.gov.cz

www.nasiukrajinci.cz

www.psp.cz

www.vitejtevcr.cz

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The content of this **EMN Annual Report on Asylum and Migration 2023** – Czech Republic represents the views of the author(s) and is their sole responsibility. The European Commission accepts no responsibility for use of the information it contains.

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