

12 June 2026

REPORT on the mission to CZECHIA

22 – 24 April 2026

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Introduction

The Council of Europe Division on Migration and Refugees (DMR) was established within the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law ([DG1](#)) on 1 February 2025 to follow-up on the action of the former Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees. Part of its mandate includes fact-finding missions to member States, to collect and analyse information on migration law and policies, good practices as well as challenges in this field, assess member States' needs and identify areas of particular interest in order to further enhance cooperation with the Council of Europe.

On 22, 23 and 24 April 2026 the DMR delegation consisting of Mr Nikolaos Sitaropoulos, Head of Division and Ms Eleana Kyriotaki, Legal Advisor, carried out a visit to Czechia, in the framework of thematic visits to the three countries hosting the largest numbers of displaced persons from Ukraine (Poland¹ – February 2026, Czechia – April 2026 and Germany – envisaged in September 2026). As of the end of March 2026 Czechia hosted 379 820 beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine, rendering it the country with the highest ratio of temporary protection beneficiaries in the European Union (34.8 per 1 000 persons).²

1. Meetings with national and international stakeholders and visit to the Ukrainian Consultation and Community Centre (UCCC)

During the mission the DMR delegation met and exchanged with competent national authorities, international organisations and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) involved in the area of reception, integration and possible return of the displaced persons from Ukraine who sought refuge in Czechia. During the meetings information was provided regarding access to temporary protection, the availability and sustainability of integration mechanisms, the protection of particularly vulnerable groups, the possibility for transitioning to legal statuses after the envisaged end of temporary protection and the possibility for returns to Ukraine.

- At the Ministry of Interior (Unit for International and European Affairs, EU Migration and Asylum Policy Unit, Asylum Legislation Unit and Unit for Integration of Immigrants and Information), discussions focused on issues of reception, labour market integration, access to education and healthcare and cooperation with the civil society.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (European Union and International Cooperation Department, Family and Protection of Children's Rights Department, Non-Insurance Social and Family Benefits Department and Employment Strategies and its Support Department) provided information on labour market issues and children's education as well as the recognition of professional qualifications, housing and mental health issues.
- Discussions at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (International Cooperation and Educational Support Section, Department of International Relations and the European Union, Department of Support for Schools and School Founders, Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation Unit) covered access to schooling and language courses, recognition of academic qualifications, youth participation and support to vulnerable groups.

Moreover, the DMR delegation had insightful meetings with representatives of the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman), the Government Commissioner for Human Rights, the

¹ Council of Europe Division on Migration and Refugees, [Report on the mission to Poland, 4-5 February 2026](#), 1 April 2026.

² Eurostat, [Temporary protection for persons fleeing Ukraine - monthly statistics](#).

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Czechia, as well as the following CSOs active in the area of migration and asylum: Association for Integration and Migration (SIMI), Caritas Czech Republic, Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU) and Romodrom.

Additionally, the DMR delegation was given the opportunity to visit the Ukrainian Consultation and Community Centre (UCCC) which opened on 2 March 2026 in Prague³ and to meet with the Head of the Centre and a representative of the Czech humanitarian programme MEDEVAC. The UCCC provides practical support to displaced persons from Ukraine, both in person and remotely, and promotes the organisation of cultural events involving the Ukrainian diaspora, which already existed in Czechia before the war.⁴ The Centre is funded by the Ministry of Interior in the context of the action “Ukraine: Consultation and Assistance for Resilience and Empowerment (U-CARE)”, aiming to enhance the cooperation with Ukrainian state institutions, especially consular services, and civil society, in ensuring international mobility and the well-being of the displaced population in Czechia as well as to support them for their possible return. The action is implemented in cooperation with ICMPD (implementing partner) in two phases: September 2025 – December 2026 and January 2027 – August 2027.

The UCCC in Prague is staffed with six employees, supported by two more in Vienna and one in Georgia, dealing with around 400 requests each month. The requests come from Ukrainians in Prague but also from other areas of Czechia who face practical issues as a result of their forced displacement. The unique form of service that is provided is based on the close cooperation with the Ukrainian authorities but also the presence and support of the Ukrainian diaspora. Requests reaching the UCCC range from school enrolment enquiries, assistance with legal and administrative matters, preparation of official documents and accommodation issues to the registration of private property back in Ukraine. Special emphasis is placed on the provision of education which includes Ukrainian language, history and literature, either in parallel with the Czech school system or online, to maintain the connection to the home country and facilitate the possible return and reintegration of children there.

The Centre’s added value lies in its direct and efficient approach, since displaced Ukrainians can overcome bureaucratic obstacles, have access to certain information or contact their national authorities in their native language and with the support from people with similar experiences. The Ukrainian diaspora has played a vital role in identifying the need for direct support and raising the Centre’s visibility and accessibility.

2. Reception conditions

Activation of Temporary Protection

Since the beginning of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine in February 2022, more than 4.33 million people have been displaced from the country seeking refuge in Europe,⁵ under circumstances that posed significant challenges for national administrations. In response, both private actors and civil society organisations demonstrated remarkable solidarity and support for the Ukrainian population. Czechia received the highest number of displaced persons per

³ Following up on the ‘[Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach to the transition out of temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine](#)’, Brussels, 8 September 2025, 12015/25 Interinstitutional File: 2025/0651(NLE), which includes the concept of “Unity Hubs” (preamble and Part D, paragraph 7) as a point of information for Ukrainians abroad, funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the UCCC in Prague is the first Unity Hub to be established. More information on UCCC in Prague, [here](#) and in Germany, Poland and Sweden [here](#).

⁴ According to the Czech Statistical Office, on [31 December 2021](#), the number of Ukrainians with residence permit or citizenship in the Czech Republic was 196.875. Within a year ([31 December 2022](#)) and after the beginning of the war in February 2022, this number peaked to 636.282. Also, Markéta Seidlová, ‘The birth of a country of immigration: the case of the Czech Republic’, (2018), *Demografie*, 60(4), 348, at pp. 351, 354.

⁵ Eurostat (ft. 2).

capita during the implementation of temporary protection,⁶ with the majority being women and children.⁷ According to the Ministry of Interior, it is estimated that since February 2022, more than 700 000 people from Ukraine have entered Czechia either in transit or with the intention of requesting temporary protection, including more than 200 000 children.⁸

Following the activation of the EU Council Directive on Temporary Protection⁹ in March 2022, the Czech Republic introduced a legislative package known as *Lex Ukraine I*.¹⁰ This legislation established the legal and administrative framework for the reception, registration, and provision of assistance to individuals displaced from Ukraine and have been updated according to developments in forced migration and integration, the latest legislative update being *Lex Ukraine VII*.¹¹

Although the Czech authorities had put in place a contingency plan for a possible arrival of people from Ukraine following the events of 2014, the scale of displacement in February 2022 exceeded all expectations. In the first weeks of the war, around 250 000 displaced persons from Ukraine arrived in Czechia, and as a result, a shift in migration management policy approach was needed to facilitate large-scale and rapid assistance.¹²

Access to temporary protection

This situation posed a significant challenge for the Czech administration, which nevertheless reacted promptly and comprehensively, with the valuable support of civil society. Early on, the competent national authorities activated a one-stop-shop system for the registration of displaced persons, the Regional Centres for Help and Assistance to Ukraine (KACPU) which were established in all 14 Czech regions, providing registration and necessary information and services.¹³ The most urgent priorities which were identified were access to the labour market, education, healthcare and social housing.¹⁴

A particularly positive practice was the establishment of a central coordination body, a “soft mechanism”, comprising of ministerial and municipal representatives, CSOs and local communities. This body addressed interagency issues regarding temporary protection, with particular focus on integration.

Since Czechia is a landlocked country with no immediate border with Ukraine, high numbers of Ukrainians arrived by direct trains from Poland and the Slovak Republic.¹⁵ Before the activation of temporary protection, a ‘special tolerated stay visa’ was issued for the displaced

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ IOM, [World Migration Report 2026](#), p. 60 and OECD, [International Migration Outlook 2025](#), [Chapter on Czechia](#), p.54.

⁸ UNICEF, [‘Refugee response in Czechia 2022-2025’](#), p.2.

⁹ Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof, OJ L 212, 7.8.2001, Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection OJ L 71/1, 4.3.2022 and Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1460 of 15 July 2025 extending the temporary protection introduced by Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 [2025] OJ L, 24.7.2025.

¹⁰ Lex Ukraine I - Act No. 65/2022 Coll., 17.3.2022.

¹¹ It also included provisions on the recognition of documents in order to access all services in Czechia, including school enrolment for children.

¹² Kateřina Ženková Rudincová and Lukáš Vomlela ‘Czech immigration and integration policy before and after the war in Ukraine’ (2024) 15 (Special Issue) *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, 89, p.98.

¹³ [EMN Country Factsheet 2022: Czech Republic](#) – Main developments in migration and international protection, including latest statistics (European Commission, August 2023) pp. 2-3. The National Centre for Help and Assistance to Ukraine, including representatives of the Directorate-General of Fire Rescue Service, the Foreign Police and the Ministry of the Interior managed the KACPU. At the moment, the KACPU offer only registration services.

¹⁴ European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, [National legislation implementing the EU Temporary Protection Directive in selected EU Member States](#) (October 2022 update).

¹⁵ EMN Country Factsheet 2022: Czech Republic (ft. 13), p. 3.

Ukrainians who reached Czechia, allowing them to stay in the country but without the rights and benefits of asylum seekers or refugees. This arrangement enabled the immediate registration of the displaced persons without overburdening the asylum system, as recipients of this visa automatically passed on to temporary protection status once it was activated.¹⁶ For the same reason, Czechia suspended access to asylum for temporary protection beneficiaries.¹⁷

In line with the Council implementing decision which activates the Temporary Protection Directive, *Lex Ukraine I* defines the categories of forcibly displaced persons who are eligible for temporary protection, granting them full access to the labour market, healthcare, education, integration activities, especially language courses, and various forms of support, such as a humanitarian cash benefit¹⁸ and unemployment assistance.¹⁹ Additionally, under Section 5(1) (c), if an applicant has already applied for or has been granted temporary protection in another EU member State, their application in the Czech Republic is considered inadmissible.

This inadmissibility provision has affected a number of temporary protection applicants. According to information provided by the Ombudsman, approximately 350 cases reached the regional administrative courts, which declared the provision incompatible with Article 8(1) of the Temporary Protection Directive. In November 2023 the Supreme Administrative Court requested a preliminary reference²⁰ from the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) on this issue.²¹ In its 2025 judgment, the CJEU upheld the incompatibility of this provision with EU law, finding that applicants can choose the member State in which they will benefit from temporary protection but they cannot receive temporary protection benefits in more than one member State. For this reason, the Czech authorities may check whether an application has been filed in another member State, but they may not dismiss it on these grounds.²² Despite the case law that was produced on this issue,²³ reportedly for a period of time national practice remained unchanged.²⁴ As a result, the rejected applicants were granted a 'special tolerated stay visa', which allowed them to stay in the country without enjoying fully the rights stemming from temporary protection. According to information provided by the Ministry of Interior, this situation has changed following the *Krasiliva* judgment and applicants for temporary protection in other EU member States are entitled to temporary protection status in the Czech Republic.

Availability of legal aid

Although Czech law does not guarantee a right to free legal aid for persons in need, beneficiaries of temporary protection have access to legal counselling in the framework of

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Council of Europe Division on Migration and Refugees Thematic Paper, '[Ensuring a human rights compliant end to refugeehood through integration, naturalisation or voluntary repatriation](#)', 2026, p. 39.

¹⁸ Today only ¼ of temporary protection beneficiaries receives humanitarian benefits.

¹⁹ EMN Country Factsheet 2022: Czech Republic (ft. 13), p. 2. Persons eligible for temporary protection were i) Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022; ii) Ukrainian nationals who entered Czechia legally without a visa or with a short-stay visa before 24 February 2022 and still legally residing there; iii) Non-Ukrainian third-country nationals and stateless persons enjoying international protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022; iv) family members of the categories mentioned above; v) Non-Ukrainian third-country nationals legally staying (e.g. with visa) in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and who can prove that their return to their country of origin is not possible due to threat of imminent danger.

²⁰ [Case C-753/23, Krasiliva](#), Judgment of 27 February 2025.

²¹ Ombudsman, Investigation Report on the Inadmissibility of Applications for Temporary Protection, Ref. No. 585/2025/VOP/VVO, File No. KVOP-14354/2025, pp. 1-3 (available only in Czech).

²² Ibid, pp.4-5.

²³ Judgments of the Supreme Administrative Court dated April 3, 2025, Case Nos. 1 Azs 336/2024-42 and 1 Azs 174/2024-42 (published in the Collection of Judgments of the Supreme Administrative Court under No. 4682/2025).

²⁴ Ombudsman, Final Opinion with Proposed Remedial Measures Regarding the Inadmissibility of Applications for Temporary Protection, Ref. No.: 585/2025/VOP/VVO, File No.: KVOP-37401/2025, Public (available only in Czech).

integration services provided in the Centres for the Support of Integration of Foreigners (CSIFs).²⁵

3. Measures of integration for war-displaced Ukrainians

The Centres for the Support of Integration of Foreigners (CSIFs)

A network of 18 Centres for the Support of Integration of Foreigners (CSIFs) had already been established in all regions of the Czech Republic since 2009, offering integration services to all legally residing non-nationals including beneficiaries of international protection. Of these, 14 CSIFs in ten regions are under the competence of the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of Interior, while four are operated by CSOs.²⁶

In 2022, these Centres were expanded to include beneficiaries of temporary protection, providing a range of services including language instruction, socio-cultural orientation sessions, and interpreting assistance. Thanks to their extensive network of regional offices and contact points nationwide, the CSIFs have played a pivotal role in facilitating the accommodation of beneficiaries of temporary protection, contributing to the community planning of social services, and supporting the operation of expert platforms designed to assist the displaced population.²⁷

Although in this context the demand for intercultural mediators/assistants is substantial, their presence in CSIFs is limited as, according to the Ministry of Interior, there are few staff who can speak Ukrainian and can provide specific information on the Czech administrative system. In some cases, this can even delay integration, as priority is given to learning the Czech language before dealing with more specific administrative matters.

The funds for those integration activities derive mainly from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and national subsidies, as they constitute part of the National Policy for the Integration of Immigrants since 2000, with the participation notably of ministries, CSOs and the Ministry of Interior in a coordinating role.²⁸

Moreover, tailored integration policies have been developed for individuals displaced from Ukraine, as outlined in the Strategy for the Adaptation and Integration of Refugees from Ukraine,²⁹ and in the Refugee Response Plan for 2025.³⁰ These policy tools put emphasis on inclusivity, socio-economic integration (especially for women with children), availability of language courses, transition to regular housing and access to healthcare and education.³¹ In view of this, it is evident that the authorities' overarching objective is to move away from emergency responses to more stable and long-term solutions.

Access to education

The integration rate of displaced children from Ukraine in the Czech school system is notably high, with rates exceeding 90%.³² As of September 2025, approximately 55 000 school-aged children from Ukraine were enrolled in Czech schools, although their regional distribution

²⁵ Centres for the Support of Integration of Foreigners – Activity Report 2024, p. 5.

²⁶ Ibid, p.4

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Response of the Czech Republic in the European Migration Network 2025 [ad-hoc Query](#) on newly arrived TCNs' involvement in the host society in relation with their integration (request by EMN NCP France), 2025.38 FR AHQ, October 2025, pp. 37- 40.

²⁹ Ženková Rudincová and Vomlela (ft. 12), pp. 101-102.

³⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, '[The Refugee Response Plan 2025 in Czechia Was Introduced at the MFA Headquarters](#)', 4.2.2025.

³¹ UNHCR, '[Country Chapter: Czech Republic, Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan](#)', 2024, p. 3.

³² UNHCR, '[Protection Brief- Czechia](#)', 'The situation of vulnerable refugees from Ukraine', June 2025, p.6.

varies.³³ Some children continue to attend online classes from Ukrainian schools, something that often leads to an overload of schoolwork.³⁴

After registration for temporary protection, parents or guardians are required to enrol children aged 5-15 years old in Czech schools within 90 days. In response to the emergency situation in 2022, specific exceptions were introduced under *Lex Ukraine I*, allowing for modifications to standard registration procedures, such as acceptance of incomplete documentation or alternative enrolment dates. Nevertheless, many beneficiaries of temporary protection have faced difficulties with finding a place in Czech schools, particularly due to limited capacity. Although this issue reportedly still persists in some regions, overall school capacity has increased, and children of school age are being enrolled in the schools of their area of residency (principle of catchment area). Moreover, adaptation groups for children of all ages have been established, offering language classes, school preparation and other activities, as a transitional tool for displaced children from Ukraine, before they enter regular school.

The recognition of foreign educational qualifications (“nostrification”) is compulsory for credentials obtained outside the EU. In this process, higher education degrees are recognised by public universities, whereas diplomas from primary, secondary, and vocational training are recognised by regional authorities. Notably, Ukrainian university diplomas issued between 1972 and 2000 are automatically recognized on the basis of an international protocol, rendering the need for a separate recognition procedure redundant.³⁵

Language training has been deemed a priority for the participation in the national education system and for this reason Czech language courses are offered widely and at different pace in schools. More particularly, in kindergartens (compulsory preschool education) one hour is offered per week, in primary schools, max. 400 hours over 20 months (two school years) and in secondary schools, max. 400 hours over 36 months. Free courses are also available to youth and adults, including specialist training (e.g. for healthcare workers).

During the mission the delegation was informed that issues have been identified regarding secondary school attendance,³⁶ since an entry exam performed in the Czech language is officially required, and many pupils are more interested in entering the labour market instead. This requirement has recently changed, according to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, as it is possible to substitute the Czech language test with an interview in order to assess the basic knowledge required for studying in a specific school. Moreover, according to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the effort of enrolling more children in secondary education has been promoted also by other actions, such as supportive teams provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, school assistance, youth peer support groups etc. As a result, 40% of Ukrainian displaced children who finish primary school, proceed to enroll in secondary school. Additionally, under the [National Youth Strategy 2025-2030](#), a special Platform for Ukrainian Youth Community (15-25 years old) has been established, a space for open dialogue on important topics and presentation of projects implemented in the youth’s communities in the Czech language, while UNICEF has provided support for many young people’s transition to employment through the CESTY Programme.³⁷

³³ According to data provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, 6.047 children were registered in kindergartens, 39.555 in primary schools and 9.381 in secondary schools in Czechia, with those numbers remaining stable.

³⁴ Missing Children Europe, ‘[Reclaiming our voice: Ukrainian Youth, Navigating Forced Displacement in Czechia, Hungary and Poland](#)’, 2026, p. 43.

³⁵ Protocol of equality of documents of education, academic titles and degrees, which are issued or awarded in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed June 6, 1972, published in the Czech language under no. 123/1973 Sb.

³⁶ Missing Children Europe (ft.34), p.42.

³⁷ Initiated by UNICEF, the CESTY programme provides Ukrainian youth in Czechia with opportunities to access education, develop skills and transition to quality first jobs. In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of the Interior, CESTY brought together all relevant stakeholders including government, CSOs, private sector companies, embassies, academia and young

Despite efforts to reduce segregation in schools, according to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, there are still 37 segregated classes. In order to combat this phenomenon, it has tasked a team of experts and psychologists, which have formed mobile units visiting schools to address discrimination and support inclusion. Moreover, since 2025 schools with 180 or more pupils and a high proportion of foreign pupils receive targeted financial support for adaptation and integration activities, while a mobile team, which reportedly may include Ukrainian psychologists, offers advice to school principals in order to develop integration plans.

Access to the labour market

In January 2026, the integration rate of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection in the Czech labour market reached 66%, almost double compared to 2022 rate of 35%.³⁸ According to OECD, Ukrainian refugees have helped to alleviate workforce deficits in Czechia, especially since approximately three quarters of the displaced population are of working age, with their impact being particularly visible in sectors involving lower-skilled occupations.³⁹ It is indicative that female refugees have worked in administrative and support services, manufacturing, accommodation and food services, transportation and trade while male refugees have been mainly employed in the manufacturing and construction sector.⁴⁰ Additionally, Ukrainian refugees paid 8.2 billion CZK in taxes and levies only in the third quarter of 2025.⁴¹

Proficiency in the Czech language is a key factor in securing employment, with a 21% employment rate among those who speak Czech compared to those who do not. However, Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection often work in positions below their qualifications or professional experience and sometimes without a written contract.⁴² During the mission interlocutors noted that the national procedure for recognition of professional qualifications is administratively demanding and time-consuming, especially for regulated professions.

Additionally, many interlocutors during the mission noted that exploitative practices by intermediaries, semi-illegal recruitment agencies (sometimes run by Ukrainians) or labour agencies have been reported. This is partly due to lack of information, dependency on tied accommodation and distrust towards the official system. The temporary nature of the protection status which allows residence and employment rights for only one year, although renewable for the whole duration of temporary protection, in fact may adversely affect job and life security.⁴³

Indicative of this situation is that in 2025, the Labour Inspectorate received 280 complaints filed by Ukrainians mainly on issues concerning unpaid wages, work conditions and lack of working contract/agreement. Although there are seven regional Inspectorates following up on these complaints, the process can take up to two years to complete and its competences are currently limited. In response, a bill on combatting trafficking for labour reasons has been brought before the Parliament, providing, among others, for the liability of principal contractors and subcontractors, control of employment agencies, special residence permits for victims of

people themselves to support refugee youth to stay on the path of continued education, skills building and transition to employment – UNICEF (ft.8), p. 21.

³⁸ UNHCR, '[Labour market integration of Ukrainian refugees in Europe: employment gaps, skill mismatches, and economic gains](#)', January 2026, p.4 and OECD (ft. 7), pp. 63-64.

³⁹ OECD, '[OECD Economic Surveys: Czechia 2025](#)', March 2025, Volume 2025/4, p.17.

⁴⁰ ISA Institute of Labour Economics, '[Discussion Paper by Agnieszka Postepska and Anastasiia Voloshyna, 'The Effect of Ukrainian Refugees on the Local Labour Markets: The Case of Czechia'](#)', IZA DP No. 16965, April 2024, p. 8 and also see [here](#).

⁴¹ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs- [Announcement](#), 2025 (available only in Czech).

⁴² IOM, Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix, '[Czechia: Socio-economic situation of the refugees from Ukraine](#)', 2023 Annual Report, pp. 5, 7 and 11.

⁴³ UNHCR, '[UNHCR Recommendations on the continued use of Temporary Protection arrangements and Guiding Principles for Transition in relation to the Ukraine Refugee Situation](#)', May 2025, paragraph 16.

labour exploitation, a mechanism for the recovery of lost wages and an increase labour inspection capacity.

Access to housing

Since the implementation of temporary protection in Czechia, the national authorities provided state-funded humanitarian housing to all newcomers from Ukraine, since lack of accommodation increases vulnerability.⁴⁴ Taking into consideration the existence of a large Ukrainian diaspora in the country before the start of the war, beneficiaries of temporary protection could arrange their own accommodation or be provided with a private free-of-charge accommodation, with the support of a financial subsidy. The State also initially set up emergency shelters and the regions made sure that free accommodation was available in hotels, hostels etc.⁴⁵

As the situation of emergency subsided, the provision of humanitarian housing by the State was limited to 90 days, with no exception for vulnerable individuals⁴⁶. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, at the moment there are 250 beneficiaries of temporary protection in emergency accommodation,⁴⁷ which is provided for free to newcomers from Ukraine for three months, while a 30 000 drop in demand for emergency housing is registered every year since 2022.

Reportedly the option of collective accommodation is sometimes preferred especially among vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, as it provides a sense of community and mutual support.⁴⁸ The Ombudsman has recorded complaints raised regarding cases of termination of temporary protection due to administrative issues with housing. In cases, for example, of missing or incomplete documents regarding the home address of beneficiaries of temporary protection, they have been automatically and without notification registered at the address of an administrative authority, and after 90 days they were considered as having left the country. As a result, in such cases beneficiaries have lost the status of temporary protection, without any prior knowledge of the situation, transparency or the right to respond.⁴⁹

4. Particularly vulnerable groups

People on the move are usually faced with complex and intersecting vulnerabilities, stemming from age, gender, health status, migration status and other social factors.⁵⁰ The identification of a person's vulnerability may be very challenging in practice especially in cases of complex underpinning needs which are not visible. For example, a person on the move may be physically well but unable to hold a full-time job due to stress and anxiety caused from the displacement or the trauma of war. It is for this reason that vulnerabilities must be addressed at all stages through which persons on the move transit and efficient and effective mechanisms and remedies should be in place.⁵¹

⁴⁴ Article 13 of Temporary Protection Directive and Lex Ukraine I., II., III. and IV, 65/2022 Coll., as amended and also see Council of Europe Division on Migration and Refugees, Thematic Paper on '[Vulnerability of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees: Council of Europe and European Union Standards](#)', 2025, pp.22, 28.

⁴⁵ EMN Country Factsheet 2022: Czech Republic (ft. 13), p. 2.

⁴⁶ Ombudsman, Report on own-initiative investigation regarding housing for beneficiaries of temporary protection, Ref. No. 2375/2024/VOP/VVO, File No. KVOP-16123/2024, p. 7 (available only in Czech).

⁴⁷ Emergency accommodation is provided by the regional authorities, allocated by the Central Administration and funded by the Ministry of Interior.

⁴⁸ IOM, '[Czechia- Older refugees from Ukraine: Assessing and supporting their needs](#)', 2024, p. 18.

⁴⁹ Ombudsman, Report (ft.46).

⁵⁰ See inter alia DMR Thematic Paper on Vulnerability of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees (ft. 44), pp. 8-9; also see [Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe \(2021-2025\)](#).

⁵¹ Ibid. esp. pp.45-47.

Unaccompanied minors

Although official statistics are not available, it is estimated that approximately 800 Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) from Ukraine have arrived in Czechia since 2022, with 300 – 400 of them remaining in the country today, along with 2 000 separated minors. They usually provide all the needed documentation certifying their age, and for this reason there is no particular need for an age assessment procedure to take place. Nevertheless, UAMs represent a particularly vulnerable group, at heightened risk of all forms of exploitation.⁵²

The identification of UAMs takes place in parallel with their registration for temporary protection in the KACPU, and the Authority for Social and Legal Protection of Children (OSPOD) in cooperation with the courts and other institutions took over their protection by appointing a guardian.⁵³ However, gaps have been identified due to lack of standardisation across regions, the absence of a formal process to protect UAMs from exploitation⁵⁴ and insufficient methodological guidance, especially in cases concerning labour exploitation of children.

An issue of particular concern is the employment and reported labour exploitation of UAMs aged 15-17 years old, who come to Czechia in groups, without a legal guardian⁵⁵ but with their parents' permission to live independently and work.⁵⁶ According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 20% of 15-year-olds are employed, and this percentage rises for 16-year-olds to 30-40% and to 70-75% for 18-year-olds. Secondary education in Czechia ends at 19 years old.

Discussions held during the mission highlighted the need for competent social services to be promptly informed about such cases, as UAMs who arrive for employment purposes do not usually show trust in the local authorities and are not aware of ways to seek official help, outside their own diaspora. This vulnerability is exacerbated by a recent legal amendment allowing minors 15-18 to renew temporary protection without the presence of an adult.⁵⁷

Situation of Ukrainian Roma in 2023

The situation of Ukrainian Roma who arrived in the Czech Republic after 2022 differed significantly from that of other social groups, often marked by direct discrimination and heightened vulnerability.⁵⁸ An estimated 30 000 - 50 000 Ukrainian Roma entered Czechia between 2022-2024, but only 3 200 have been registered under temporary protection. Most of them either moved on to a different country or even returned to Ukraine. Reportedly others held citizenship of another EU member State and were not entitled to temporary protection. Those remaining in Czechia were not initially allowed access to KAPCUs to register,⁵⁹ or to collective accommodation. Instead, campsites were created outside train stations and far from the city centres, while they were later relocated to villages with limited access to social support and to education for children, adding another level of vulnerability to their displacement. The main source of support for Roma Ukrainians reportedly comes from [CSOs and international](#)

⁵² Ombudsman, Investigation Report on the matter of determining whether unaccompanied minors are at risk of exploitation, Ref. No.: 4096/2024/VOP/VVO, File No.: KVOP-22753/2025, p.1 (available only in Czech).

⁵³ Eurochild and UNICEF, '[Policy & Legal review for children in alternative care & unaccompanied and separated children from Ukraine arriving in: Czechia](#)', p.7.

⁵⁴ Ombudsman Report (ft. 52), pp. 11-12, 20.

⁵⁵ Missing Children Europe (ft.34), p. 46.

⁵⁶ Czechia accepts this on the basis of a [Treaty between the Czech Republic and Ukraine on legal assistance in civil cases, Kiev, 28 May 2001](#) and the [Convention on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition, enforcement and cooperation in respect of parental responsibility and measures for the protection of children](#), concluded on 19 October 1996 and entered into force on 11.6.2008 – see UNICEF and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, [Alternative care of refugee children in the Czech Republic: situation analysis and recommendations](#), 2025, p. 23.

⁵⁷ Ombudsman Report (ft. 52), p.11.

⁵⁸ See relevant, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Report following her visit to the Czech Republic from 20 to 24 February 2023, CommHR (2023) 26, 5 September 2023, Chapter 2, p.23 ff.

⁵⁹ A limited number of Ukrainian Roma were denied temporary protection on the basis of [double citizenship](#), as they had no official documents with them, but the situation was eventually resolved.

[organisations](#) and the mobile teams set up by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports which provide assistance regarding school attendance and prevention of segregation.

Mental health support

All beneficiaries of temporary protection were initially entitled to free health insurance for 150 days, and at-risk people have continuous coverage.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, access to mental health care is generally limited in Czechia due to shortage of qualified psychologists and psychiatrists⁶¹ making mental health a [governmental priority](#), through reforms and funding.⁶²

The mental health of children and youth is currently at the centre of national policymaking. This is particularly important in the context of the trauma from war and displacement adversely affecting the quality of life, integration and school participation.⁶³ Although many Ukrainian psychologists have not managed to have their qualifications recognised, they offer consultations in Ukrainian, helping to overcome language barriers to mental health care. Helplines and mobile phone applications are also available to provide psychological support in Ukrainian.⁶⁴

The National Institute of Mental Health, in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO, has launched a programme aiming to enhance mental health and psychosocial well-being of pupils in Czech primary schools and enable teachers to help them through training and other material.⁶⁵ Moreover, with the financial support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports school psychologists, special education teachers, and social workers are planned to be permanently placed in primary schools.

Concerns have been raised regarding an increase in violence in Czechia, especially within displaced Ukrainian families, where significant stress related to displacement is reported. Women are often victims of this violent behaviour, sometimes coming from members of their own family members, especially by teenagers under psychological pressure and outside any school system, which could offer some social support. Intervention centres have been set up in each region, run by the local municipalities under the Czech social system, and the number of Ukrainian women seeking help is rising, although language remains a barrier. At the same time reportedly, there is a shortage of psychologists and limited spaces in the shelters for abused women.

5. Transition to other legal statuses

Lex Ukraine VII – Special Long-Term Residence Permit

As the temporary protection system is scheduled to end on 4 March 2027,⁶⁶ the EU and its member States are making provisions for the Ukrainian displaced population that they are hosting. The Council of the European Union issued a Recommendation⁶⁷ in September 2025 on a coordinated approach to the transition out of temporary protection for Ukrainian displaced persons. The Recommendation provides guidance to EU member States concerning

⁶⁰ EMN Country Factsheet 2022: Czech Republic (ft. 13), p. 2; at the moment the temporary protection beneficiaries are entitled to free health insurance for 90 days.

⁶¹ OECD, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, and European Commission, '[State of Health in the EU: Czechia - Country Health Profile](#)', 2023, p.21.

⁶² For example, through the [National Mental Health Action Plan 2020-30](#), Prague: Ministry of Health, 2020.

⁶³ Missing Children Europe (ft. 34), p. 50.

⁶⁴ [UNHCR webpage](#) – Where to seek help / Supporting Your Feelings and Worries.

⁶⁵ National Institute of Mental Health and UNICEF partnership – [press release](#).

⁶⁶ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1460 of 15 July 2025 extending the temporary protection introduced by Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 [2025] OJ L 24.7.2025 and see DMR Thematic Paper on end to refugeehood, (ft. 17), p. 35.

⁶⁷ [Council Recommendation](#) on a coordinated approach to the transition out of temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine", Brussels, 8 September 2025, 12015/25, Interinstitutional File: 2025/0651(NLE), part A "Measures to promote the transition into other legal statuses already before the end of temporary protection", p. 15.

measures to: promote the transition into other legal statuses before the end of temporary protection; pave the way for a smooth and sustainable reintegration in Ukraine; ensure information provision to displaced persons; ensure coordination, monitoring and exchange of information among member States and with the Ukrainian authorities. The condition of at least two years of continuous residence in the Czech Republic is also important.

On 11 February 2025, Czechia became one of the first EU member States to introduce legislation, *Lex Ukraine VII*, aiming to provide a transitional legal status from temporary protection to a [special long-term residence permit](#). Beneficiaries of temporary protection may apply for this permit under conditions primarily focused on their economic independence (annual income, no humanitarian benefits, secured housing), for a five-year residence permit with the possibility to apply for permanent residence in the future.

In two rounds of applications, approximately 82 000 temporary protection holders have applied for this new type of residence permit, and 16 000 have been confirmed as eligible since September 2025.⁶⁸ The application process managed by the Ministry of Interior, is fully digitalised, and although there is no individual assessment of applications, it allows for more time efficient processing and interconnection of data bases, in a system with limited capacities.

Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged that this option for residence permit is “not a solution for everyone”, as it applies notably to financially robust applicants. Its purpose is to prevent overwhelming of the national immigration system, keeping in mind the possibility of an EU wide, common solution after the end of temporary protection in close consultation with the Ukrainian government as well.

In this context, concerns have been expressed regarding the need for the Ukrainian displaced population in Czechia to know their future residence status, as such uncertainty adversely impacts all aspects of life, including housing, children’s education, employment and social inclusion and integration. Additionally, particularly vulnerable groups, especially those who mostly rely on social welfare benefits, are effectively excluded from this residence permit option, further increasing their vulnerability. Lastly, although the digitalisation of the procedure is positive, interlocutors during the mission expressed reservations regarding transparency which is linked to the absence of legal remedy concerning decisions rejecting applicants.

Other options for remaining in Czechia or returning to Ukraine

It is estimated that more than half (51% - 187 268) of the beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine are likely to remain in Czechia even after the end of temporary protection.⁶⁹ Based on their needs, families with children in the Czech educational system are more likely to apply for work-related residence permits in order to ensure their long-term stay in the country.⁷⁰

This does not seem to be an option for particularly vulnerable groups, including older people, single adult caretakers and refugees from frontline territories of Ukraine. Their more likely option would be to apply for international protection, a procedure which can be time-consuming and administratively burdensome.⁷¹ Such circumstances could lead to family separation, especially when elderly members are more likely to return to Ukraine, a country which is still not considered safe, and from which younger people feel disconnected.⁷²

⁶⁸ European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, news article, November 2025, available [here](#).

⁶⁹ UNHCR, ‘[Transitioning from temporary protection: projected stay, legal pathways, and policy options for refugees from Ukraine](#)’, May 2026, p.4.

⁷⁰ Ibid, pp. 5-6.

⁷¹ Ibid p. 7.

⁷² See also UNHCR (ft.69) and EUAA, ‘[Ad hoc Report: Situation in Ukraine and Displacement to the EU+: Trends, Drivers and Future Prospects](#)’, September 2025.

The Czech authorities, in line with the 2025 EU Council Recommendation,⁷³ have established a small-scale return programme, mainly for humanitarian reasons, with the support of the UCCC, but there is no provision for “go and see” visits⁷⁴ since there seems to be no significant interest in returning to Ukraine at the moment or such a request by the Ukrainian authorities.

Conclusion

Four years after the beginning of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression in Ukraine and as the EU-wide temporary protection framework seems to be nearing its end, Czechia’s response to the needs of war-displaced Ukrainians can be characterised as timely, adequate and multi-faceted. Confronted with many unprecedented challenges, governmental and civil society support systems facilitated smooth reception and effective integration for the displaced, addressing complex social and economic needs. Ukrainian communities, already present in the country before 2022, have contributed significantly to this effort, providing a familiar and protected environment for the war-displaced persons, in cooperation with the national and Ukrainian authorities, maintaining the link with the home country to which some intend to return after the end of hostilities.

It was particularly noteworthy and positive to see during the mission that many young Ukrainians have been employed in public services, offering their direct experience, mainly on integration issues, since they possess a solid knowledge of the current situation and challenges both in Czechia and in Ukraine. They can also help identify existing gaps or potential improvements in procedures. Nevertheless, there is still a vital need for long-term solutions that ensure stability for the displaced persons, promote social inclusion that goes beyond humanitarian help, and guarantee full access to education, sustainable housing, fair employment and appropriate support to those belonging to particularly vulnerable groups⁷⁵.

In this framework, and building on the already established and growing partnership between the Czech authorities and the Council of Europe, the following areas of further possible cooperation were identified:

- Keeping in mind the significant contribution of the war-displaced Ukrainians to the national economy, which covered substantial needs of the labour market, it is important to ensure their full access to employment corresponding to their professional and academic qualifications. To this end, it would be mutually beneficial for Czechia to join the European Qualification Passport for Refugees (EQPR),⁷⁶ which is based on the [Council of Europe Lisbon Recognition Convention](#), and which Czechia has ratified. This would be particularly useful in practice with regard to psychologists and other mental health professionals urgently needed to promote social inclusion and treatment of trauma.
- It was particularly interesting to note the contribution of the local government to many practical aspects of the reception and more importantly, the integration of the displaced persons in the country, with the support of the civil society. Czechia may thus envisage to join the [Council of Europe Intercultural Cities \(ICC\) programme](#) which has established a network of cities, regions and local authorities aiming to enhance diversity through the exchange of practical experiences and support each other in creating local and inclusive communities. At the moment there are 160 cities participating in the ICC which are continuously interacting, contributing to sustainable learning, resilience and innovation.

⁷³ Council Recommendation, (ft. 67), p. 16.

⁷⁴ UNHCR (ft.69), paragraph 27.

⁷⁵ See relevant, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘[Safeguarding Ukrainians displaced across Europe](#)’, 12 May 2026.

⁷⁶ See also Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2025\)6](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on qualifications and linguistic competences of refugees in Europe.

- Many interlocutors showed interest in the courses developed in the context of the Council of Europe [Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals \(HELP\) Programme](#), especially on issues related to vulnerable groups, gender, mental health and legal aid. The possibility of translating existing courses, available to everyone, in the Czech language is also viewed as an advantage, as this would provide national authorities with targeted knowledge and expertise on issues of interest.
- The participation and inclusion of young people from Ukraine in the educational system and local society can be further supported through the [Council of Europe Youth Department](#)'s activities in the framework of [the Youth Sector Strategy 2030](#). This includes actions supporting the implementation of the [Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec \(2019\)4](#) on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood, as well as the European Charter for the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life ([Recommendation CM/Rec \(2026\)3](#)). The establishment of a special Platform for the Ukrainian Youth Community (15–25 years old) could be promoted as a promising practice, further strengthening the role of youth work in supporting the transition of Ukrainian young people to adulthood.