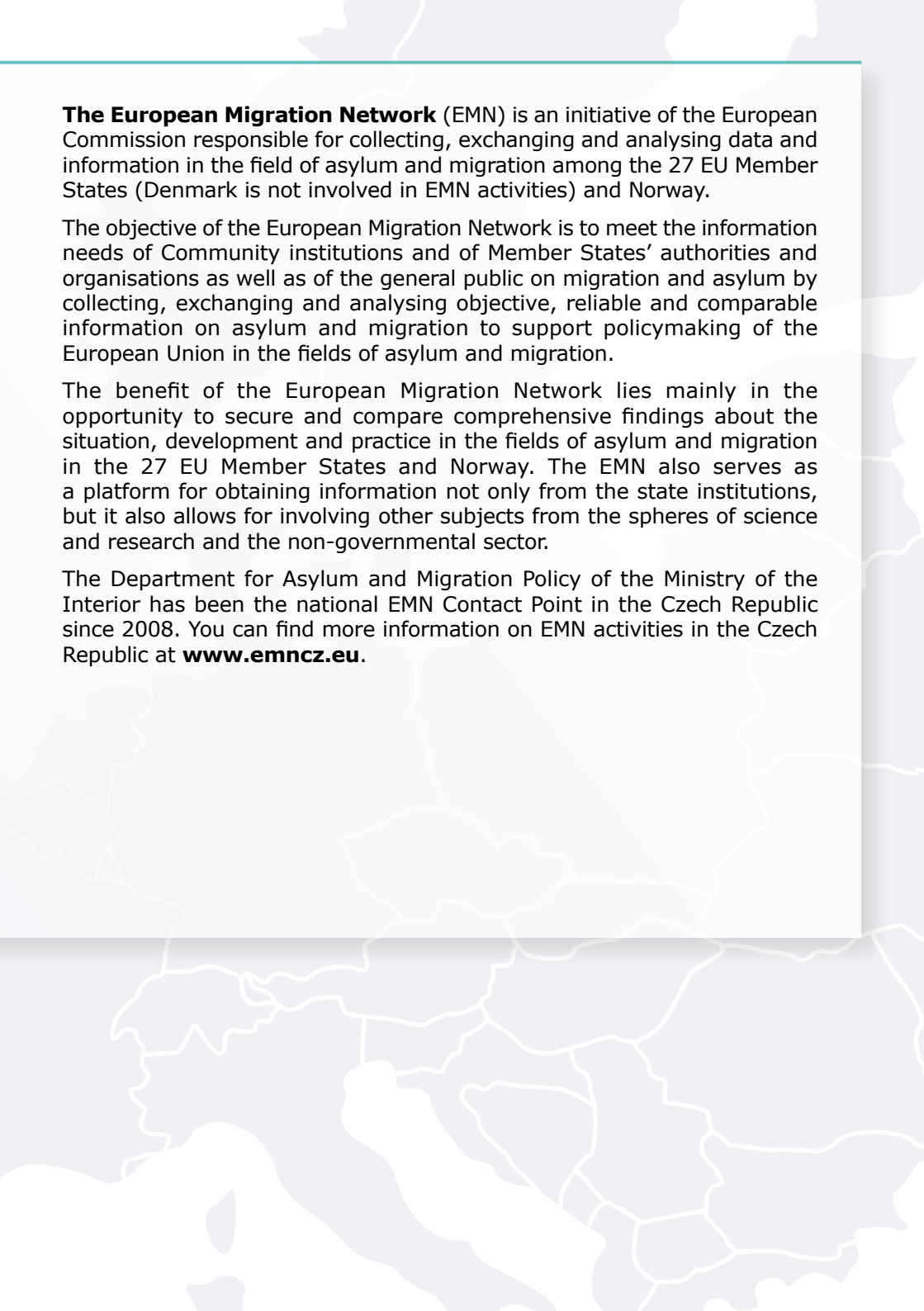


**EMN Annual policy report  
on asylum and migration**







**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.

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 policymaking of the European Union in the fields of asylum and migration.

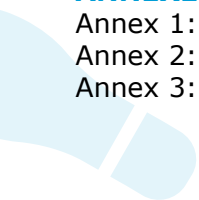
The benefit of the European Migration Network lies mainly in the opportunity to secure and compare comprehensive findings about the situation, development and practice in the fields of asylum and migration in the 27 EU Member States and Norway. The EMN also serves as a platform for obtaining information not only from the state institutions, but it also allows for involving other subjects 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](http://www.emncz.eu)**.



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<b>AC</b>	Accommodation Centre
<b>ANACEN</b>	Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration
<b>ANO</b>	ANO 2011
<b>CIS</b>	Information System of Foreign Nationals
<b>CR</b>	Czech Republic
<b>DAMP</b>	Department of Asylum and Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior of the CR)
<b>DCAF</b>	The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
<b>DFPS</b>	Directorate of the Foreign Police Service
<b>EASO</b>	European Asylum Support Office
<b>ECRIS-TCN</b>	European Criminal Records Information System – Third Country Nationals
<b>EES</b>	Entry/Exit System
<b>EMN</b>	European Migration Network
<b>EMPACT</b>	European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats
<b>EMSC</b>	European Migrant Smuggling Centre
<b>ESIF</b>	European Structural and Investment Funds
<b>ETIAS</b>	European Travel Information and Authorisation System
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>eu-LISA</b>	European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
<b>EUROSUR</b>	European Border Surveillance System
<b>FADO</b>	False and Authentic Documents Online
<b>FN</b>	University hospital (Czech abbreviation)
<b>FPD</b>	Foreign Police Department
<b>FPI</b>	Foreign Police Inspectorate
<b>FRONTEX</b>	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
<b>GAMM</b>	Global Approach to Migration and Mobility
<b>GPIS</b>	General Provider of Integration Services

<b>IA</b>	International airport
<b>IAC</b>	Integration Asylum Centre
<b>ICMPD</b>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>JITs</b>	Joint Investigation Teams
<b>MEDEVAC</b>	Programme of Humanitarian Evacuations of Inhabitants with Health Issues (Medical Evacuation)
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>MfRD</b>	Ministry for Regional Development
<b>MoC</b>	Ministry of Culture
<b>MoEYS</b>	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of the Interior
<b>MoIT</b>	Ministry of Industry and Trade
<b>MoJ</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>MoLSA</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
<b>MSCA</b>	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
<b>NCUCOC</b>	National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental non-profit organisation
<b>OP RDE</b>	Operational Programme Research, Development and Education
<b>OPU</b>	Organisation for Aid to Refugees (Czech abbreviation)
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>OSPOD</b>	Social-legal Child Protection Authority (Czech abbreviation)
<b>PCR</b>	Police of the Czech Republic
<b>RC</b>	Reception Centre
<b>RDP</b>	Regional Directorate of Police
<b>RDPP</b>	Regional Development and Protection Programme



<b>SF</b>	Salzburg Forum
<b>SIP</b>	State Integration Programme
<b>SIS</b>	Schengen Information System
<b>SUZ</b>	Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (Czech abbreviation)
<b>UAM</b>	Unaccompanied minors
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>V4</b>	Visegrad Group
<b>VIS</b>	Visa Information System
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>ZDC</b>	Facility for Children-foreigners (Czech abbreviation)
<b>ZÚ</b>	Embassy (Czech abbreviation)
<b>ZZC</b>	Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals (Czech abbreviation)



The 2020 European Migration Network (EMN) Annual Policy Report on Asylum and Migration provides a summary of the developments and the most important changes in the fields of migration, asylum and integration during 2020. Among other factors, migration was significantly influenced by the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic (hereinafter referred to as "Covid-19 pandemic") in the reference year.

### **MIGRATION POLICY STRATEGY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

In making its migration policy, the Czech Republic continues to apply the principles of migration policy, which were formulated in the Migration Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic (adopted on 29 July 2015 in Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 621). This document defines the key principles of the Czech Republic's migration policy, sets the goals in the given field on both the national and the EU level and states specific instruments serving to achieve these goals

The Migration Policy Strategy covers the full scope of migration-related issues. It is divided into 7 theme-specific modules corresponding to the individual fundamental principles. Besides the national security, which is the cross-cutting element of the Strategy, there are the following theme-specific areas:

- ▶ the integration of foreign nationals;
- ▶ illegal migration and return policy;
- ▶ international protection;
- ▶ the external dimension of migration (including development and humanitarian aspects);
- ▶ free movement of persons within the EU and the Schengen Area;
- ▶ legal migration; and
- ▶ coherence with the EU's common policies in the field of migration.

Implementation of the Strategy is supervised by the Coordination Body for Managing the Protection of State Borders and Migration.

## LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

As in the previous years, the **upward trend in legal migration** into the Czech Republic continued in 2020. As of 31 December 2020, a total of **634,790 foreign nationals**<sup>1</sup>(a year-on-year increase by just below 6.5%) were staying legally in the territory of the Czech Republic (for a period longer than 90 days). At the end of 2020, foreign nationals accounted approximately for 5.9% of the population of the Czech Republic<sup>2</sup>, which means that their number has grown by 0.3% in comparison with the year 2019. From among the total registered number of foreign nationals with residence permits in the Czech Republic, 48.8% of them (309,608 foreign nationals) were staying in the country permanently and 51.2% of them (325,182 foreign nationals) temporarily<sup>3</sup>. In terms of citizenship, the largest groups among them were the citizens of Ukraine (165,654), Slovakia (124,544) and Vietnam (62,884).

In the field of **economic migration, a total of 644,164 foreign nationals** were registered as employees with the regional branch offices of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic as of 31 December 2020, which represents an increase of 3.6% as opposed to the year 2019. According to the registered information cards<sup>4</sup>, this number included 390,058 citizens of EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland (including their family members) and a total of 254,106 third-country nationals, among whom there were 109,790 foreign workers who entered the labour market with a work permit (an Employee Card or a Blue Card, an employment permit).

From among the non-EU countries, the citizens of Ukraine (159,468 persons), Russia (17,236 persons) and Vietnam (14,401 persons) traditionally held the highest shares of the labour market. Among the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland, the citizens of Slovakia (204,294 persons), Poland (46,567 persons), Romania (44,669 persons) and Bulgaria (37,145 persons) had the strongest presence.

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- 1 This information includes foreign nationals with residence permits in the Czech Republic, registered in the Foreign Information System. Nevertheless, the actual numbers of foreign nationals legally staying in the territory of the Czech Republic may be different because the registered number of foreign nationals does not include all the citizens of other EU Member States staying in the Czech Republic. The statistical compilations only record those EU citizens who applied for or were issued a certificate of temporary residence. Those who are just exercising their right to free movement are not included in the statistics.
  - 2 The population of the Czech Republic was 10,701,777 as of 31 December 2020.
  - 3 The category includes persons with residence based on visa for more than 90 days, with long-term residence permits and temporary residence permits, which are granted to the EU citizens and their family members.
  - 4 Information card = a written notice given by an employer that a foreign national started working in a job, which must be submitted by an employer to a regional branch office of the Public Employment Service of the CR according to the Employment Act.

In 2020, the Ministry of Industry and Trade registered a total of 97,803 foreign businesspersons who had 131,155 registered trade licenses. Among the foreign businesspersons, the largest groups in terms of citizenship were the citizens of Ukraine (24,155 persons), Vietnam (20,505 persons) and Slovakia (20,253 persons). These three citizenships represented more than 66% of all foreign businesspersons.

In the field of economic migration, the implementation of **economic migration programmes (formerly referred to as projects)** continued, which have been created within interdepartmental cooperation of the central governmental authorities since 2012. These projects represent an effective instrument for supporting migration of selected target groups of third-country nationals. The implementation of **a total of 4 government-approved migration programmes** have been taking place since 2019.

In 2020, residence permits were granted to approximately 20 thousand migrant workers from third countries under the programmes. In December 2020, the government issued a regulation (No. 556/2020 Coll.), in which it sets new quotas for the year 2021. **The quotas for the migration of highly skilled workers were increased by 30% in the Highly Skilled Employee Programme and the Key and Scientific Personnel Programme at 28 embassies and the quotas for the migration of medium and low skilled labour force were doubled in the Skilled Employee Programme at the embassies in Manila (Philippines) and Minsk (Belarus).** As a consequence of cancellation of what is referred to as the "residual quota" for reception of applications for Employee Cards at the Embassies in Lvov, Delhi and Nursultan, long-term labour migration from the third countries concerned (Ukraine, India and Kazakhstan) will continue to take place solely under the economic migration programmes.

The economic migration programmes proved to be successful even in times of the Covid-19 pandemic. The significance of the economic migration programmes in 2020 was even more underscored by the fact that they represented the only way for Czech companies to recruit skilled employees from third countries for longer-term employment.

In 2020, **the integration policy** was based on the government-approved *2020 Procedure for Implementing the Updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals – In Mutual Respect*.

The crucial element for the integration of foreign nationals is **the network of 18 Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners**, which are operated in all the regions of the CR. They provide foreigners with a wide range of integration services and they also help foreigners and the majority to get to know each other better. At present, the integration centres are funded from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). **Since 1 January 2021**, selected groups of third country nationals are **legally obliged to complete an adaptation-integration course**. The goal of this measure is to acquaint foreigners with their rights and obligations and to enhance their

self-sufficiency and independence. At the same time, this course should help them to break free from the system of dependence on intermediaries and should provide them with information on the opportunities to take advantage of integration measures. In 2020, there was also an intensive collaboration going on in the process of preparing and passing the crucial Ordinance No. 520/2020 Coll., on Implementation of Adaptation-Integration Courses. The entire implementation system was also being prepared.

Furthermore, **great emphasis was placed on supporting projects on a local level** because the integration takes place primarily during the mutual interaction between foreigners and the majority population. In 2020, subsidies totalling 21 million CZK from the MoI were received by 20 municipalities and city districts, which was 2.7 million CZK more than in 2019. The Ministry of the Interior also continues to implement the subsidy scheme "Integration of Foreigners", through which primarily the projects of non-governmental non-profit organisations in the field of the integration of foreigners continued to be funded. In 2020, there were 10 entities supported with an amount of approximately 16 million CZK.

In 2020, the **citizenship** of the CR was acquired by a total of **4,344 foreigners**. Among them, the citizenship was granted in 2,656 cases, most often to citizens of Ukraine (939), Russia (514) and Slovakia (365). In addition to that, 1,661 persons acquired the citizenship of the CR by declaration.

## **INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION**

In 2020, **a total of 1,164 persons applied for international protection** in the Czech Republic (as a result of the pandemic, there was the most significant decrease over the last several years, specifically by nearly 40%). **The main source countries** of international protection applicants in 2020 were **Ukraine (351), Georgia (144), Vietnam (65), Belarus (65) and Uzbekistan (63)**. In the Czech Republic, asylum was granted to 42 applicants, most often to citizens of Russia (19). Subsidiary protection was granted to 72 applicants, most often to citizens of Syria (24), Ukraine (11) and Libya (9). In comparison with the other EU Member States, the numbers of applicants for international protection in the CR are below average.

Those foreign nationals who were granted international protection in the form of asylum or in the form of subsidiary protection can take advantage of the **State Integration Programme (SIP)**. In 2020, a total of **83 eligible persons** joined the SIP, which represents a 24% decrease as opposed to the previous year. A total of 47 individual integration plans for a total of 71 beneficiaries of international protection (both individuals and families) were prepared during the year.

## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

In 2020, the facilities for provision of institutional and protective education established by the MoEYS provided an all-round care for a total of 93 unaccompanied minors (this concerns dozens of persons every year). In the same year, 7 unaccompanied minor children from third countries applied for international protection (the number of minor unaccompanied applicants from among third-country nationals applying for international protection hovers around single digits every year). These are very low numbers in comparison with the other Member States.

## MEASURES TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There were no major changes in the situation concerning human trafficking during the year 2020 in comparison with the previous period. The most frequent forms of human trafficking were still sexual and labour exploitations. However, there were also mixed cases where the forms are combined, including forced marriages or forced criminal activity. The **Programme for Support and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking** (hereinafter referred to as the "Programme") is a measure created to provide victims of human trafficking with support and appropriate protection based on individual risk assessment. It is designed for human trafficking victims older than 18 years, specifically for EU citizens trafficked in the territory of the Czech Republic, for third-country nationals trafficked in the territory of the Czech Republic as well as for the citizens of the Czech Republic trafficked in the territory of the Czech Republic or abroad.

In 2020, a total of **13 probable victims of human trafficking** were included in the Programme (a decrease by 2 persons as compared to the year 2019), specifically from the Czech Republic (4), Ukraine (4), Bulgaria (2), Philippines (1), Mongolia (1) and Honduras (1). These were 6 men and 7 women. The cases of these persons involved **suspected labour and sexual exploitation and suspected forced criminal activity**. Since the Programme started in 2003, a total of 273 probable victims of human trafficking have been included in it.

In 2020, there was one voluntary return of a victim carried out to their country of origin under the **Voluntary Returns Programme**, which is a part of the Programme.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PROJECTS

International cooperation in the field of migration continued in the year 2020 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 Asylum Support Office (EASO). The Czech Republic also concentrated on strengthening the practical and operational cooperation in all aspects of migration, asylum and state border protection at the bilateral level as well as at the multilateral and Union levels.

In 2020, the **MEDEVAC programme**<sup>5</sup> was implemented in eleven priority countries, specifically in the Middle East (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon), in Africa (Ghana, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal) and in South and East Europe (Belarus, Ukraine and Greece).

Under the **Aid in Place** programme, the MoI gave financial donations abroad, intended particularly to assist refugees directly on the site of their initial displacement and to assist the countries, which host large numbers of refugees and migrants or which struggle with them as transit countries. The budget of the Aid in Place programme in 2020 amounted to 135 million CZK. The priority areas of the programme in 2020 included the Balkan region and the region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

In 2020, as concerns the external dimension of the European Union, the Czech Republic continued to participate in developing and implementing the instruments of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) representing a policy framework of the external migration policy of the EU.

In order to implement its priorities in the field of asylum and migration, the Czech Republic also closely collaborated with international organisations, particularly the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

As part of international cooperation, the Regional Directorates of the Police of the Czech Republic carry out **joint patrols**, which are used for standard police work. These joint patrols focused on monitoring illegal migration, carrying out Schengen national searches, monitoring the movements of vehicles, fighting cross-border crime, searching for stolen vehicles and perpetrators of criminal offences, checking the residence permits of foreign nationals, which included checking residence permits in night clubs, and checking persons and vehicles. In 2020, a total of 226 joint patrols were carried by police officers from the Foreign Police Departments of the RDP in collaboration with the police units of neighbouring countries.

## **ILLEGAL MIGRATION, PEOPLE SMUGGLING**

In 2020, a total of **7,093 persons** were identified as perpetrators of **illegal migration** in the territory of the Czech Republic (a year-on-year increase of 24.9%). This number included 448 persons caught during illegal migration across the external Schengen border of the Czech Republic<sup>6</sup> and 6,645 persons

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5 The focus of the MEDEVAC programme is on providing professional medical care to vulnerable groups of inhabitants in regions affected by a refugee crisis or a natural catastrophe.

6 Since the external Schengen border only consists of an air border, persons who illegally migrated across the external Schengen border are only recorded with the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service, which was organisationally expanded in 2008 by including 5 Foreign Police Inspectorates at international airports.



detected as illegally staying persons. In connection with illegal migration across the external Schengen border, the most frequently detained persons were citizens of Ukraine (211 persons), Georgia (58 persons) and Russia (43 persons). Irregular travel documents at the external Schengen border were used by 28 persons, most often by citizens of Albania (10 persons). The highest number of persons identified as illegally staying persons was among citizens of **Ukraine** (3,453 persons), followed by citizens of **Moldova** (1,005 persons), **Georgia** (243 persons), **Vietnam** (232 persons) and **Russia** (213 persons). There were 103 persons who were illegally staying in the country and presented an irregular travel document, these persons were most often citizens of Ukraine (44 persons) and Moldova (24 persons).

## RETURNS

During the year 2020, a total of **1,060 voluntary returns of third-country nationals** were carried out. This included 687 assisted voluntary returns of foreign nationals carried out by MoI, 337 voluntary returns of foreign nationals were carried out by IOM and 36 assisted voluntary returns of applicants for international protection were carried out by Refugees Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (SUZ). Citizens of Ukraine, Mongolia, Moldova, Albania and Uzbekistan accounted for the highest numbers among these returnees.

As part of implementation of what is referred to as the Dublin Regulation, which determines the EU Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection, the Czech Republic carried out a total of 107 transfers of third-country nationals to another EU Member State in 2020.

In the field of voluntary returns, the Ministry of the Interior, the Refugees Facilities Administration and the International Organisation for Migration implement their programmes for assisted voluntary returns. In their programmes, the MoI and the IOM primarily focus on foreign nationals with an issued decision on administrative expulsion. In its programme, SUZ provides failed applicants for international protection with assistance for voluntary returns to their countries of origin. Under all these programmes for voluntary returns, the MoI, SUZ and the IOM 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.

If foreign nationals are detained and placed in the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals (ZZC), the returns of these foreign nationals are carried out by the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service (DFPS) in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, which only provides assistance and related consultancy for foreign nationals.



The *Annual Report on Asylum and Migration Policy in the Czech Republic* 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 2020.

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 nine chapters and three annexes. The chapters describe the developments in legal migration and international protection, and one chapter is concerned with the issues of foreign nationals who are unaccompanied minors. The report also contains information on measures against human trafficking and measures against illegal migration. The report also provides an overview of international cooperation and projects and describes the developments regarding the returns of foreign nationals<sup>7</sup> to their countries of origin. Each chapter also contains the basic statistical data. The structure of the report complies with the recommended structure of national reports of 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 from the Department of 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 Interior; the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime; and the Facility for Children-foreigners. 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.

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

### **MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (MOI)**

The Ministry of the Interior 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.

### **DEPARTMENT OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY (DAMP)**

The Department of Asylum and Migration Policy 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 residence of foreign nationals, the policy of 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 STATE BORDERS AND MIGRATION**

The Coordination Body for Managing the Protection of the State Borders of the Czech Republic and Migration is a permanent interdepartmental body, which is composed of representatives of the technically 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.

Cooperation among institutions within the purview of the Coordination Body enables the governmental bodies to respond flexibly to the current migration situation and contributes to greater flexibility when dealing with specific issues falling within the terms of reference of multiple Ministries. The Coordination Body also manages the activities of the Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration, the permanent office of the Ministry of the Interior with a focus on interdepartmental cooperation at the expert level. Pre-discussing materials intended for the Government of the CR at a meeting of the Coordination Body allows, for example, for their subsequent approval without a debate. No less importantly, the Coordination Body also serves as a platform for discussion of the future direction of the migration policy. The Coordination Body was also authorised by the government to make changes in economic migration projects by its decisions.

In 2020, based on the authorisation given by the government, the Coordination Body approved a change in the migration programme titled **Fast Track Procedure for Granting Residence Permits to Foreign Nationals – Foreign Students from Third Countries**, which is newly open to scholarship holders from the Erasmus+ programme and the Fulbright Program.

In January 2020, the Coordination Body was the place of debates about the new settings of annual quotas for economic migration introduced on 1 September 2019 by Government Regulation No. 220/2019 Coll. The occurrence of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 and its anticipated impacts on the economic and employment rate trends in the CR subsequently resulted in postponing the conclusion of these discussions. After the debate was resumed in October 2020, the Coordination Body approved new proposed quotas, which were subsequently discussed with social partners and approved by the government in the form of Regulation No. 556/2019 Coll. in December 2020 with effect as of 1 January 2021.

## **ANALYTIC CENTRE FOR BORDER PROTECTION AND MIGRATION (ANACEN)**

The Analytic Centre for Border Protection and Migration 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 complex phenomenon. The Analytic Centre operates at an expert level and 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 managing 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.<sup>8</sup>

The activities of the Analytic Centre take place on several theme-specific fora and involve continuously monitoring and analysing the current phenomena, which can be identified as risk factors or potentially problematic with respect to security and migration.

During the year 2020, the Analytic Centre continued to prepare reports titled *Trends and Findings in Migration and Border Protection* on a monthly basis, which were intended for the internal purposes of the public administration bodies, among whom these reports are distributed systematically to allow them to use the information contained in the reports.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.



## **REFUGEE FACILITIES ADMINISTRATION (SUZ)**

The Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior is an operator of the 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.

## **DIRECTORATE OF THE FOREIGN POLICE SERVICE (DFPS)**

The Directorate of the Foreign Police Service 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, fulfilment of the obligations arising from international treaties and directly applicable legal regulations of the European Community and which addresses the crimes committed in connection with the crossing of state borders and cross-border criminal activities. The DFPS is also responsible for implementation of judicial or administrative expulsion, specifically for providing travel and transport documents for the foreign nationals who are being expelled from the territory of the Czech Republic. It is responsible for establishing the identities of foreign nationals in connection with their detention for the purpose of administrative expulsion. It is also responsible for implementing readmission agreements, including transports carried out by a police escort, and for performing other tasks arising from the legislation of the European Union and international treaties.

In relation to the territorial units of the Foreign Police, the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service serves the functions of a specialised central methodological, managing, expert, analytical and monitoring authority and is also an executive unit of the Police of the Czech Republic with a national scope of operation. The bodies, which are directly subordinated to the DFPS, include five Foreign Police Inspectorates (FPIs) at international airports<sup>9</sup>, 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,

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<sup>9</sup> 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.

the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals in Vyšní Lhota, the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals in Bálková and the Reception Centre for Foreign Nationals in Zastávka u Brna. In the territories of individual regions, the departments of the Foreign Police, which are embedded in the organisational structures of Regional Directorates of the Police of the Czech Republic (RDP), perform the tasks related to migration of foreign nationals.

## **THE NATIONAL CENTRAL UNIT FOR COMBATING ORGANISED CRIME (NCOZ)**

The National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime is the unit of the Police of the Czech Republic with a national jurisdiction, which also performs tasks in the field of illegal migration, particularly in combating people smuggling. Its Organised Crime Section, Department of Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration, is responsible for monitoring, analysing and combating 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.

## **MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MOFA)**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs 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.

## **MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (MOLSA)**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs 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 concluded intergovernmental agreements. 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. There is still the phenomenon of illegal employment of foreign nationals in the Czech Republic. Among other authorities, the Interdepartmental Body for Combatting Illegal Employment of Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic addresses the issues in this field, 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 Finance (MF); the Ministry of Health (MoH); the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS); the Ministry of Finance (the General Directorate of Customs); the Ministry of Culture (MoC); and the Ministry for Regional Development (MfRD).

## 1.2 Asylum and Migration Legislation

# 1.2

**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**

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 powers of the PCR, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this field of public administration.

In 2020, it was necessary to make legislative-technical changes at the national level in connection with the exit of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the EU and to make preparations for the period after the end of the transition period (after 31 December 2020). Therefore, an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals was prepared at the national level, which refers to the Agreement on the Withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community (hereinafter referred to as the "Withdrawal Agreement"). The amendment was not passed in 2020, however, it is expected to be passed in 2021.

As early as in 2019, a legislative process was started for an amendment concerning the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals and other related laws (Asylum Act, Employment Act, Temporary Protection of Foreigners Act). The government presented the amendment to the parliament on 1 October 2020, nevertheless, its first reading did not take place in 2020.



### ▶ **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 and governs the residence of a recognised refugee or a person enjoying 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 person enjoying 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.

As mentioned above, a legislative process was started as far back as in 2019 for an amendment concerning the Asylum Act and other related laws. In the field of asylum, the reason for presenting the amendment was particularly the need to respond legislatively to the practical problems, which had been seen by the administrative authority, which conducts international protection proceedings, or by the National Security Audit since the last extensive amendment made to the Asylum Act in 2015.

### ▶ **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. This Act **was not amended** in 2020.

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 re-establishment of the protection of internal borders, offences and administrative torts 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 a foreign national 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 a foreign national who has been granted a residence permit for the purpose of temporary protection.

The proposed amendments to this Act are related to the proposed amendments to the Asylum Act and the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals (see above) and also seek to make the existing mechanisms more accurate and specific and to ensure improved efficiency of the procedures. Amendments to this Act are of a limited scope and are, for the most part, amendments of an organisational-technical nature.

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

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

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government successively issued several resolutions, which automatically renewed employment permits and the related residence permits (see sub-chapter 2.2 for more information).

On 30 July 2020, Act No. 285/2020 Coll., amending Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code, as amended, and certain other related Acts, entered into force. This involved transposing Directive (EU) 2018/957 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 June 2018 amending Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, whereby short-term and long-term postings and the related rights of workers are differentiated.

### ▶ **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.

This Act was not amended in 2020.

During the year 2020, several resolutions were successively issued in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, under which **employment permits and the related residence permits were automatically renewed.**

Also, with regard to the **withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the EU**, it was necessary to make legislative-technical changes at the national level and make preparations for the period after the end of the transition period (after 31 December 2020). Therefore, an agreement referred to as the "Withdrawal Agreement" was prepared at the national level, which, however, was not approved by the end of the year 2020.

Besides that, the amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals entered into force on 1 July, which provided for **funding the Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners, managed by the Refugee Facilities Administration, from the state budget**, whereby their long-term sustainability will be ensured. The amendment also provides that selected groups of foreigners have the **obligation to complete an adaptation-integration course after 1 January 2021.**

## 2.1 Political Developments

## 2.1

### POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

During October 2020, elections to the councils of 13 regions and the Senate took place. In connection with Covid-19, the Parliament of the Czech Republic approved an Act on special ways of voting in the elections to the regional councils and the Senate in 2020. This Act defined the way of voting in the autumn elections for persons in isolation or quarantine due to Covid-19. The alternative methods of voting included the option to vote from a motor vehicle at a polling site (referred to as "drive-in voting"), the option to vote in a social care residential facility, which was closed off, or the option to cast a vote into a special portable ballot box. ANO 2011 won the regional elections, followed by Czech Pirate Party (Česká pirátská strana) in the second position and Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana) in the third position (the voter turnout for the regional elections was 37.95%).

In the period from July 2019 to June 2020, the CR presided over V4 countries and included the topic of migration among its top priorities.

During the year 2020, **legislative activities** 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**

In 2020, a partial amendment was made to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals, which was a part of Act No. 165/2020 Coll., of 18 March 2020, amending Act No. 141/1961 Coll., on Judicial Criminal Proceedings (Code of Criminal Procedure), as amended, and certain other Acts. The Act also included an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals, which made a minor modification to the Provision of Section 176(6) governing the provision of medical services during the detention of a foreign national.

In 2020, it was necessary to make legislative-technical changes at the national level in connection with the exit of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the EU and to make preparations for the period after the end of the transition period (after 31 December 2020). Therefore, an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals was prepared at the national level, which refers to the Agreement on the Withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community (hereinafter referred to as the "Withdrawal Agreement"). This amendment particularly addresses the issue of the status of citizens of the United Kingdom who were legally staying in the Czech Republic during the transition period and continue to stay in the country even after the end of the transition period, the issue of the status of their family members and the issue of the documents, which will be issued to citizens of the United Kingdom and their family members who fall within the scope of the aforementioned agreement. The amendment was not passed in 2020, however, it is expected to be passed in 2021.

In 2019, a legislative process was started for an amendment concerning the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals and other related laws (Asylum Act, Employment Act, Temporary Protection of Foreigners Act). The government presented the amendment to the parliament on 1 October 2020, nevertheless, its first reading did not take place in 2020. The main reason behind the presented amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals is to ensure the implementation of 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) and amending Regulations (EU) No 1077/2011, (EU) No 515/2014, (EU) 2016/399, (EU) 2016/1624 and (EU) 2017/2226 (hereinafter referred to as the "ETIAS

Regulation”). The draft Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals as well as the draft Asylum Act reflect the dynamic practical requirements arising particularly from the knowledge gained from the implementation of the agenda in the field related to the entry and residence of foreigners and the termination of their residence.

In the field of the integration of foreigners, the amendment to this Act, which entered into force on 1 July 2020, provided for funding the Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners, managed by the Refugee Facilities Administration, from the state budget, whereby their long-term sustainability will be ensured. The funding from the state budget will cover the basic operating costs, while the extra activities will continue to be funded from other sources. The amendment also provided an obligation for selected groups of foreigners to complete an adaptation-integration course after 1 January 2021.

### ▶ **Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum**

As mentioned above, a legislative process was started in 2019 for an amendment concerning the Asylum Act and other related laws. The government presented the amendment to the Chamber of Deputies on 1 October 2020 but its first reading did not take place in 2020 (see above). With respect to the field of asylum, the reason for presenting the amendment was particularly the need to respond legislatively to the practical problems, which had been seen by the administrative authority, which conducts international protection proceedings, or by the National Security Audit since the last extensive amendment made to the Asylum Act in 2015

The proposed changes to the **Asylum Act** can be divided into the following topic-specific areas.

- ▶ Making the existing mechanisms more accurate and specific to eliminate or minimise the identified practical and interpretation problems;
- ▶ Making more accurate and supplementing European Union asylum law directives, which have already been transposed;
- ▶ Making changes aiming for improved efficiency of international protection proceedings, including the related judicial review by regional courts and the Supreme Administrative Court;
- ▶ Implementing a new mechanism of a “procedure in the event of a special situation”;
- ▶ Making changes concerning the reception conditions for applicants for international protection and creating an opportunity to participate in improving the environment in the asylum facility as well as outside the asylum facility by performing an activity against payment in the form of what is referred to as “increased cash allowance”;

The draft amendment to the Asylum Act as well as to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals also reflects the dynamic practical requirements arising particularly from the knowledge gained from the implementation of the agenda in the field related to the entry and residence of foreigners and the termination of their residence.

### ▶ **Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment**<sup>10</sup>

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government successively issued several resolutions, under which employment permits and the related residence permits for specific groups of foreign nationals were automatically renewed. The first of these was the Government Resolution No. 214 of 15 March 2020 (which entered into force on 19 March 2020 due to inaccuracies adjusted by the Government Resolution No. 248 of 18 March 2020), which ensure **the extension of the validity of an employment permit and a short-term Schengen visa for the purpose of employment**, which had been issued before the date of promulgation of this measure and the validity of which will expire no later than 60 days after the date of termination of the state of emergency. This measure was in effect on the condition that an employer would agree with a foreign national on an extension of the employment, based on which the relevant permit had been issued, in such a way so that this employment would continue during the validity of the permit extended by this measure. The last of these government resolutions was the Government Resolution No. 875 of 24 August 2020, under which holders of employment permits, which were due to expire sometime between 12 March 2020 and 16 November 2020, **were permitted to stay in the territory of the CR and perform their work no later than until 16 November 2020**, provided that their employment was extended or that they entered into new employment.

On 30 July 2020, Act No. 285/2020 Coll., amending Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code, as amended, and certain other related Acts entered into force. This involved transposing Directive (EU) 2018/957 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 June 2018 amending Directive 96/71/EC concerning the **posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services**. As a result, short-term and long-term postings and the related rights of workers have been differentiated and the conditions for such postings have been defined more accurately. In the event of a long-term posting exceeding the duration of 12 months, or 18 months if the employer submits a substantiated notification to the Labour Office of the CR, all the working conditions arising from the Labour Code will start to apply to the posted workers, with the exception of the start, change and termination of employment.

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<sup>10</sup> With respect to migration.

## During the year 2020, **other legislative changes concerning employment of persons have also been in preparation:**

- ▶ The obligation to register all employment relationships – to keep a register that would record all employment relationships, including agreements to complete a job and agreements to perform work, and the related extension of the scope of relevant offences to include failure to comply with this new registration obligation. The main purpose of this legislation is to improve the efficiency of audits focusing on illegal employment and to protect employees from circumvention of labour legislation by employers. The proposal is a part of a draft Act, which is supposed to amend Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment, as amended, and certain other related Acts.
- ▶ The changes proposed in the Employment Act, connected to changes in the Asylum Act and the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals (see above) and aiming to make more accurate the existing mechanisms and to ensure improved efficiency of the procedures are, for the most part, changes of an organisational-technical nature, for example, the changes involve introducing liability of a user for facilitating hidden job brokerage into the Employment Act (this proposal is a part of the draft Asylum Act) or making amendments to the Employment Act concerning the process of issuing employment permits (this proposal is a part of the draft Asylum Act).

### 2.3 Debates in the Media

## 2.3

In 2020, the media mainly covered topics related to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the issues of foreigners and migration were still among highly popular topics both in the public media and on social networks.

In this respect, it was most often possible to see posts regarding employment of foreigners in the CR since there has been a very low unemployment rate on a long-term basis, one of the lowest in the EU, and there is a permanent shortage of labour forces on the domestic labour market. Employers compensate for this fact by employing foreign workers.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health introduced a number of emergency or protective measures to minimise the impacts of this disease. These included restrictions on entering the country, which affected a number of foreigners. The media paid considerable attention to these issues and regularly informed, for example, about the lack of labour forces in the CR as a result of the entry restrictions and brought interviews with representatives from among employers, or published stories of foreigners who were unable to travel to the CR under the defined conditions (these were, for instance, partners and relatives of Czech citizens or foreigners living in the CR).

The media also took notice that several dozens of Belarusians, who had spoken out against the regime of Alexander Lukashenko after the August presidential elections and had been facing considerable reprisals in their home country for this reason, arrived in the CR under the Ministry of the Interior's MEDEVAC programme.

Throughout the year 2020, the media were continually providing reports on the numbers of migrants detained by the police while illegally transiting through the territory of the CR. The reports mostly mentioned the citizenships of such detained foreigners, where and in what way they were travelling.

Significant attention was also paid to crimes perpetrated by foreigners. However, in this context, it needs to be added that there was no abnormally high number of criminal cases.

The Czech media also continued to follow the developments along migration routes and the illegal migration into the EU in general.

**In the media and public debates, attention was paid (to a varying degree) particularly to the following topics:**

- ▶ employment of foreign nationals in the CR (for example, employment of Ukrainians, the programmes for foreign workers; lack of "local" workers and related demands from companies for a quick supply of foreign workers);
- ▶ the impacts of the restrictions on entry into the CR on foreigners (particularly the issues of unmarried couples where a partner living abroad cannot travel to the CR to visit his or her partner);
- ▶ the stories of Belarusians who got into the CR under the MEDEVAC programme;
- ▶ foreign nationals in the CR in general (the number of foreign nationals, the integration of foreigners, the crime rate among foreigners, illegal transit migration);
- ▶ the situation along migration routes:
  - ▶ migrants arriving in Europe on land/by sea, particularly the situation on the Greek-Turkish border;
  - ▶ migration from the countries of Latin America to the USA (referred to as "migrant caravans");
- ▶ the situation in the refugee camps in Greece;
- ▶ legislative proposals concerning the EU migration policy (the reform of the common migration policy, new migration pact, etc.);
- ▶ the situation regarding migration in other EU Member States (for example, the situation in Germany and the German migration policy, the unrest in France, the problems in Swedish suburbs where large numbers of migrants reside, etc.);



- ▶ the situation in migration source countries (particularly the developments in Libya and Syria);
- ▶ the security-related aspects of migration;
- ▶ the reception of refugees, particularly children, from Greek refugee camps;
- ▶ the activities of the CR in relation to the migration crisis abroad (for example, financial involvement of the CR in areas affected by the migration crisis, the MoI's MEDEVAC programme and the Aid in Place programme);
- ▶ the granting of international protection in the CR or the EU.

Due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of a number of actions was significantly limited or made impossible. Thus, many activities related to the issues of migration and foreigners were performed online. As a result, there was a considerable decrease in these activities in 2020 in comparison with previous years. Despite the decline of interest in this topic among both the media and the general public, migration and foreigner-related issues were still significant and discussed social topics.



In the year 2020, a total of **634,790 foreign nationals** were staying in the territory of the CR on a long-term basis (for a period longer than 90 days). At the end of 2020, foreign nationals accounted for approximately 5.9 % of the population of the CR, which represents a 0.3 percentage increase in comparison with the year 2019. Citizens of Ukraine (165,654), Slovakia (124,544) and Vietnam (62,884) were the largest groups among foreign nationals.

In 2020, residence permits were granted to approximately 20 thousand migrant workers from third countries under the programmes of economic migration. In December 2020, the government issued a regulation (No. 556/2020 Coll.), in which it sets new quotas for migrant workers for the year 2021. **The quotas for the migration of highly skilled labour force were increased by 30%** in the Highly Skilled Employee Programme and the Key and Scientific Personnel Programme at a total of 28 embassies and **the quotas for the migration of medium and low skilled labour force were doubled** in the Skilled Employee Programme at the embassies in Manila (Philippines) and Minsk (Belarus).

In 2020, **the integration policy** was based on the government-approved *2020 Procedure for Implementing the Updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals – In Mutual Respect*. **With an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals passed in 2019, the network of Integration Centres was legislatively enshrined.** This amendment to the Act also provided that selected groups of foreigners would have **the obligation to complete an adaptation-integration course starting from 1 January 2021.**

Last year, **citizenship** of the Czech Republic was acquired by a total of **4,344 foreigners**. Among them, the citizenship was granted to **2,656** foreigners and **1,661** persons acquired the citizenship of the Czech Republic by declaration.

### 3.1 Foreign Nationals with Residence Permits in the Territory of the CR – Statistics

# 3.1

#### NUMBERS OF FOREIGN NATIONALS WITH RESIDENCE PERMITS IN THE TERRITORY OF THE CR

As of 31 December 2020, a total of **634,790 foreign nationals** were registered as legally staying in the territory of the CR (for a period longer than 90 days),<sup>11</sup> which represents an increase of 38,909 persons in comparison with the end of the year 2019. The year-on-year increase of the number of foreign nationals was 6.5%. At the end of the year 2020, foreign nationals accounted for approximately 5.9% of the population of the Czech Republic, which represents a 0.3 percentage increase as compared to the year 2019.

**Table 1**  
**History of the numbers of foreign nationals with residence permits in the territory of the CR (2010–2020)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of foreign nationals	425 301	436 389	438 213	441 536	451 923	467 562
Year-on-year change in %	-1,8	2,6	0,4	0,8	2,4	3,5

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of foreign nationals	496 413	526 811	566 931	595 881	634 790
Year-on-year change in %	6,2	6,1	7,6	5,1	6,5

Source: IS CIS

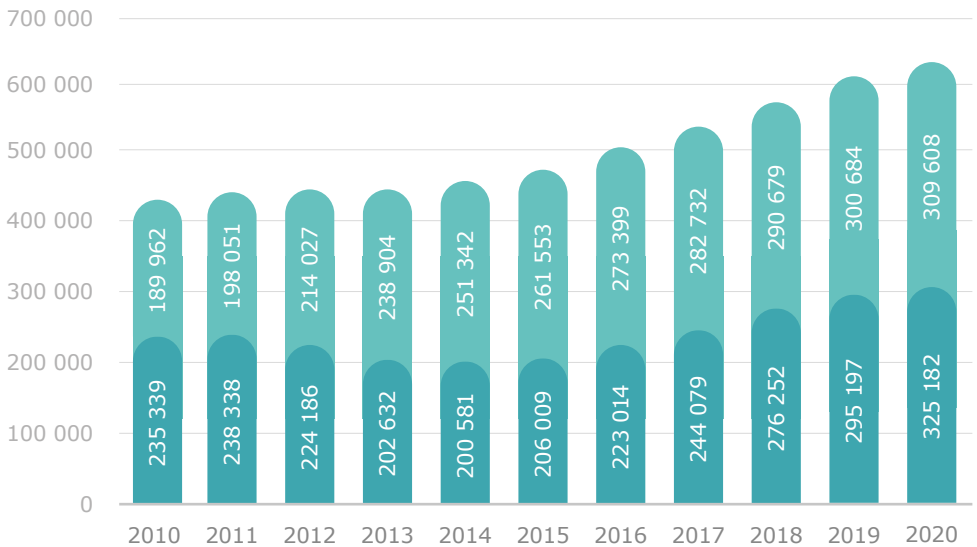
<sup>11</sup> This figure includes foreign nationals with residence permits in the CR, registered in the Information System of Foreign Nationals (CIS). Nevertheless, the actual numbers of foreign nationals legally staying in the territory of the CR may be different because the registered number of foreign nationals does not include all the citizens of other EU Member States staying in the CR. The statistical statements only register those citizens of the EU who applied for or who were issued a temporary residence certificate. Those who just exercise their right to free movement are not statistically recorded.

## PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY RESIDENCE

**In recent years, the number of foreign nationals staying temporarily in the territory of the CR has been steadily growing.**<sup>12</sup> In 2020, the number of temporarily staying foreign nationals was higher than the number of permanently staying foreign nationals, unlike the two previous years. The year-on-year increase of the number of temporarily staying foreign nationals was 10.2%, while the number of permanently staying foreign nationals increased by 3%. The increases in both categories of residence apply to third-country nationals. The number of EU citizens increased only in the category of permanent residence. The total increase in the number of foreign nationals with temporary residence amounted to 29,985 persons, among whom there were 27,180 third-country nationals. The year-on-year increase for permanent residences amounted to 8,924 persons, among whom there were 4,211 third-country nationals.

**Chart 1:**

**History of the numbers of foreign nationals with temporary residence permits and permanent residence permits in the CR (2010–2020)**



Source: IS CIS

● temporary residence ● permanent residence

<sup>12</sup> This includes persons with a long-term visa (for more than 90 days), long-term residence permit, temporary residence permit for a family member of an EU citizen and a person with a temporary residence certificate for an EU citizen or a citizen of a country bound by the Agreement on the European Economic Area.

**If the foreign nationals are distinguished into the category of the citizens of EU Member States<sup>13</sup> and other states, which are bound by the Agreement on the European Economic Area<sup>14</sup> (hereinafter referred to as “EU citizens”) and the category of foreign nationals from non-EU countries (that is, foreign nationals from countries referred to as “third countries”), it is clear that the larger category in terms of numbers consists of **third-country nationals who accounted for 60% of foreign nationals staying in the Czech Republic at the end of the year 2020, which represented 380,951 persons.** Their number increased by 9% on a year-on-year basis. However, it needs to be added that not all foreign nationals from EU Member States are recorded in official statistics. Statistical summaries only record those EU citizens who applied for or were issued with a temporary residence certificate. Those who just exercise their right to free movement (and the resulting right to reside) in the EU territory are not recorded in the statistics.**

In the category of temporary residence, foreign nationals from the EU Member States have predominated over third-country nationals since 2013. At the end of the year 2020, there were registered 253,839 EU citizens and their year-on-year increase was 3.1%. The EU citizens staying in the territory of the CR in the category of temporary residence accounted for 61.6% of the total number of EU citizens residing in the CR. The situation is the opposite with third-country nationals – 55.7% of them were staying in the territory of the CR in the category of permanent residence. **Therefore, it is still true that foreign nationals from the EU countries most often reside in the CR on a temporary basis, while the majority of third-country nationals reside in the CR on a permanent basis** but there has been a more significant increase of the number of third-country nationals in the category of temporary residence in recent years.

## **CITIZENSHIP OF FOREIGN NATIONALS**

**The percentages of foreign nationals residing in the CR have remained almost unchanged on a long-term basis as concerns their citizenships. At the end of the year 2020, citizens from these 3 countries: Ukraine (165,654), Slovakia (124,544) and Vietnam (62,884) accounted for more than a half of foreign nationals (55.6%) with residence permits in the territory of the CR.** The other citizenships followed after a relatively large gap.

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13 Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Austria, Romania, Greece, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

14 Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland.

**Table 2:**  
**TOP 10 citizenships of foreign nationals with residence permits**  
**in the CR by residence category (as of 31 December 2020)**

Type of residence	Number	Percentage in %	Year-on-year change in %	Of which			
				Perm.	i.e. %	Temp.	i.e. %
<b>Foreign nationals in total</b>	<b>634 790</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,5</b>	<b>325 182</b>	<b>48,8</b>	<b>309 608</b>	<b>51,2</b>
<b>TOP 10 citizenships:</b>							
Ukraine	165 654	26,1	13,8	88 478	53,4	77 176	46,6
Slovakia	124 544	19,6	2,7	55 666	44,7	68 878	55,3
Vietnam	62 884	9,9	1,5	53 320	84,8	9 564	15,2
Russia	41 907	6,6	9,7	22 648	54,0	19 259	46,0
Germany	20 861	3,3	-2,9	4 555	21,8	16 306	78,2
Poland	20 733	3,3	-4,8	10 970	52,9	9 763	47,1
Romania	18 396	2,9	9,3	4 817	26,2	13 579	73,8
Bulgaria	17 917	2,8	4,3	6 140	34,3	11 777	65,7
Mongolia	10 141	1,6	2,9	5 293	52,2	4 848	47,8
United Kingdom	9 084	1,4	9,0	2 917	32,1	6 167	67,9
EU citizens	253 839	40,0	3,1	97 593	38,4	156 246	61,6
Third-country nationals	380 951	60,0	9,0	212 015	55,7	168 936	44,3

Source: IS CIS

Among the 10 top citizenships, the highest percentage increase was seen with the citizens of Ukraine (+13.8%, i.e. +20,136), followed by the percentage increase of the number of citizens of Russia (+9.7%, i.e. +3,700), Romania (+9.3, i.e. +1,572) and the United Kingdom (+9.0%, i.e. +752). Conversely, decreases occurred among the top 10 citizenships for Poland (-4.8, i.e. -1,034) and Germany (-2.9%, i.e. -617).

## FOREIGN NATIONALS BY GENDER AND AGE

Among the foreign nationals with residence permits in the territory of the CR, **men continued to predominate** in 2020 (362,336 men, i.e. 57.1%). The ratio between men and women is more balanced with those foreign nationals who reside permanently in the territory of the CR. In the category of permanent residence, the share of men was 52.7%. In the category of temporary residence, the share of men was higher, specifically 61.2%. The differences in the percentages of foreign nationals with respect to gender in the individual categories of residence can be linked to the nature of temporary residence, which is mostly provisional and mainly economically motivated.

Among the total number of foreign nationals, the age category of 36-65 years predominates and accounts for 50.4%. The age structure differs according to the type of residence. In the category of temporary residence, the age categories of 18-35 years and 36-65 years are almost equal, while in the category of permanent residence, the age category of 36-65 years clearly predominates; and there are also higher percentages of minors and persons older than 66 years in the category of permanent residence.

### Chart 2:

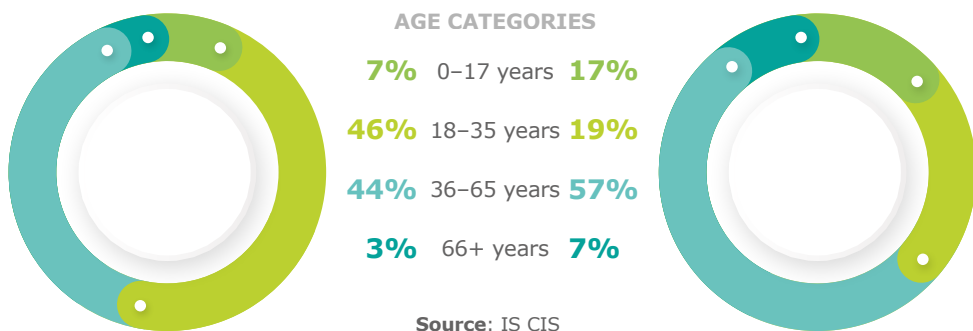
#### Age structure of foreign nationals

with temporary residence permit in the CR

(as of 31 December 2020)

with permanent residence in the CR

(as of 31 December 2020)



## 3.2 Economic Migration

## 3.2

As of 31 December 2020, the regional branch offices of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic **registered a total of 644,164 foreign workers in the positions of employees, which was 3.6% more than in 2019** (there were 621,870 foreign workers in that year). A total of **390,058 foreign workers (i.e. 60.6%) came from the EU Member**



**States**, the European Economic Area and Switzerland (hereinafter referred to as "EU/EEA and Switzerland"), including their family members. Among them, the largest groups consisted of the citizens of **Slovakia** (204,294 information cards), **Poland** (46,567 information cards), **Romania** (45,363 information cards) and **Bulgaria** (37,145 information cards). **There were a total of 254,106 foreign workers (i.e. 39.4%) from among those who were not citizens of the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland** – third-country nationals, with the highest numbers found among the citizens of **Ukraine** (81,874 information cards<sup>15</sup> + 77,594 work permits<sup>16</sup>), **Russia** (14,018 information cards + 3,218 work permits) and **Vietnam** (11,573 information cards + 2,828 work permits).

With respect to territorial structure, **the highest number of foreign workers** in the positions of employees has been seen in the **capital city of Prague** (205,947) on a long-term basis, followed by **the Region of Central Bohemia** (107,598), **the Region of South Moravia** (69,868) and **the Region of Pilsen** (62,901).

**Foreign nationals with free access to the labour market accounted for the majority of foreign workers in 2020.** According to the register, the total number of 644,164 foreign workers included **390,058 information cards of the citizens of the EU/EEA Member States and Switzerland, including their family members**, and **144,316 information cards** of third-country nationals. Among the foreign workers who enter the labour market with a work permit, there were 71,759 Employee Card holders, 37,193 employment permit holders and 838 Blue Card holders registered as of 31 December 2020 (the total number of work permits was 109,790).

**As of 31 December 2020, there were 2,218 licensed job agencies**, entities with a license to mediate employment, issued by the General Directorate of the Labour Office.

## **PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC MIGRATION**

Migration programmes (formerly referred to as projects), which have been created and implemented since 2012 as part of the interdepartmental cooperation of the central governmental authorities, represent **an effective tool for supporting migration of selected target groups of third-country nationals, in whose entry and residence the Czech state is interested to an increased degree.** Creation of migration programmes was included among the instruments serving to accomplish the goals of the CR in the field of legal migration set in the Government Resolution No. 621 of 29 July 2015 on the Strategy of the Migration Policy of the CR and

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<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> This includes employment permits, Employment Cards, Blue Cards and possibly intra-corporate transferee cards.

on the Migration Communication Strategy of the CR. Since 2015, these programmes have been approved by government resolutions.

The goal of economic migration programmes is **to improve the efficiency of the migration procedure by simplifying the process of filing and processing the applications of foreign nationals for residence permits or employment permits**. The guarantor of the programme makes decisions on inclusion of foreign nationals and domestic entities (employers, business corporations, schools), which are directly interested in their arrival, into the programme, provided that the defined criteria are met. In previous years, the programmes have proved to be a suitable tool for managing work migration. They significantly preventively contributed to reducing the security risks associated with work migration from third countries to the CR thanks to the higher degree of scrutiny from the employers, for the benefit of whom the migration was being carried out.

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

### 1) The Highly Skilled Employee Programme

is designed 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.

In 2020, **700 candidates and 170 companies** were included in the Highly Skilled Employee Programme and most workers came from **India, Ukraine, Russia and Belarus**. The professions in IT, medical care, veterinary care, management and clerical work were in greatest demand.

### 2) The Skilled Employee Programme

is designed for companies employing medium-skilled to low-skilled employees (for foreigners performing professions included in the main classes 4 through 8 in the CZ-ISCO job classification, such as drivers, welders, seamstresses, butchers, assemblers, workers in automotive and chemical industries, etc.). The programme guarantors (i.e. the business representations in the CR and the CzechInvest agency) decide on inclusion of a specific employer in the programme and they are responsible for assessing the need for inclusion of each employer on an individual basis. For this programme, the countries selected as the 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. These countries are the **Philippines, Monte Negro, Mongolia, Serbia, Ukraine, Belarus, India, Kazakhstan and Moldova**. Due to the popularity of this programme, the quotas for Belarus and the Philippines were increased with effect as of 1 January 2021.

The overall data for the year 2020 show that in spite of the strong restrictions implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic, **50% of the annual quota was used up for most countries** (Belarus, Philippines, Mongolia, Serbia, Monte Negro and Ukraine). With India, only around 33% of the annual quota was used up due to the unfavourable epidemic situation, while the annual quotas for Kazakhstan and Moldova were used up to the extent of around 75%. There was an increased demand for employees from Kazakhstan and Moldova, in addition to Mongolia and the Philippines, which along with Ukraine, which is in greatest demand, represent the main source countries of labour force under this programme. The professions in greatest demand were assemblers and drivers. A total of 20,594 applications for an Employee Card were filed and 20,047 decisions were made; the success rate amounted to 92.8%. Applications were mainly filed by citizens of Ukraine (18,226), Serbia (608), Mongolia (508) and the Philippines (315).

### 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, and their closest family members can become participants of the programme along with the migrant workers. Their applications for residence permit are processed within a reduced time limit (within 30 days). In 2020, **more than 1,300 candidates** (including family members) **for more than 170 companies** were included in the Key and Scientific Personnel Programme, and most foreign workers came from Russia, Japan, India, Belarus and Turkey. Managers, IT specialists, marketing specialists, accountants and auditors, lawyers as well as researchers and journalists were in highest demand.

### 4) The Special Work Visa for Citizens of Ukraine Working in Agriculture, Food Industry or Forestry Programme

is designed exclusively for employers seeking low-skilled and non-skilled workers (included in the main classes 4 through 9 in the CZ-ISCO job classification) in the sectors stated in the name of the programme and its target group only consists of citizens of Ukraine. Based on the need for labour forces in the agricultural sector, particularly in connection with

liquidation of the bark beetle calamity, which has been going on since 2018, and with regard to the acute lack of labour forces on the Czech labour market currently faced by the agricultural sector, too, the mechanism of a special work visa was **activated for citizens of Ukraine working in agriculture, food industry or forestry**. The programme has a monthly quota of 125 applications. The end of the programme was set to be the end of the year 2022.

The implementation of this programme in 2020 was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the anti-epidemic measures, which the government had to implement, and which included suspending the implementation of this programme for 2 months in the spring. In spite of that, last year saw a growing interest of businesses persons in this programme. During the reference period, **95 employers** applied for including **696 Ukrainian workers** in the programme, mostly in the forestry and timber sector.

Besides the aforementioned programmes, **a project titled Internship** was implemented in 2020; nevertheless, reception of applications for residence permit was suspended at the embassies of the CR on 12 March 2020, and this also resulted in suspending the implementation of this project, which was not resumed in 2020. From 1 January 2020 to 12 March 2020, **101 interns and 9 companies** participated in the Internship project and the most represented countries were Ukraine, India, Serbia and China.

**By introducing new government programmes, the territorial coverage of the previous project was significantly expanded, the option to take advantage of the new programmes was made available to a wider group of employees and the criteria for joining these programmes were simplified and unified.** Migrant workers do not apply for inclusion into these programmes on their own; applications for their inclusion are filed by their employers who must meet the criteria for inclusion. The criteria are defined in such a way so that the programmes cannot be joined by employers who have outstanding obligations to the state, do not comply with their statutory obligations and violate laws and do not contribute to the development of the economy and improvement of the employment rate by creating jobs. One of the important criteria are the minimum wages for various categories of migrant workers, which the employer must ensure, and which serve as prevention of social dumping and strengthen the economic position of foreign workers.

**The goal of all economic migration programmes is to simplify the influx of skilled workers from abroad to the territory of the CR to support targeted and selective legal economic migration.**

The maximum annual volume of work migration under these programmes and outside them is defined by a government regulation. In 2020, **residence permit was granted to approximately 20 thousand migrant workers from third countries** under the programmes. In December 2020, the government issued a regulation (No. 556/2020 Coll.), by which it defined **new quotas for the year 2021. The quotas for highly skilled migrant workers were increased by a total of 30%** in the Highly Skilled Employee Programme and the Key and Scientific Personnel Programme at a total of 28 embassies, **and the quotas for medium-skilled and low-skilled migrant workers were doubled** in the Skilled Employee Programme at the embassies in Manila (the Philippines) and Minsk (Belarus). As a result of cancellation of what is referred to as a “residual quota” for acceptance of applications for Employee Cards at the embassies in Lviv, Delhi and Nursultan, long-term work migration from the third countries affected (Ukraine, India, Kazakhstan) will continue to take place exclusively under the economic migration programmes.

### 3.3 Family Reunification

### 3.3

There have been no legislative changes in this area in 2020.

Of the total number of applications for long-term residence permits filed at the embassies of the Czech Republic in 2020, 10% of those applications were filed for the purpose of family reunification – this represents an increase of 171 applications as compared with the year 2019. These applications were filed most often by citizens of Ukraine (1,467), Vietnam (794) and Russia (239).

### 3.4 Students and Scientists

### 3.4

In 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, the MoEYS approved the **Strategic Document on the Entry and Residence of Third-Country Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic for the Purpose of Studies and Other Educational Activities** in June 2016, which proposes a number of legislative, organisational and other measures aiming to facilitate the visa process for foreign university students who are interested in studying in the Czech Republic.

In connection with the amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and on changes to certain Acts, as amended, and other related Acts, which entered into force on 31 July 2019, the rules for entry and residence in the territory of the CR were simplified for

university students and researchers. The changes concerned, for example, the laying down the definition of studies or extending the possibility of visa-free residence in the country to include specific groups of researchers and students from third countries (the possibility for students to stay for up to 9 months for the purpose of seeking employment or starting a business after completion of their studies in the country, and the same possibility for researchers after they complete their research work). Besides this, the changes have made it easier for the family members of researchers to enter the labour market because they will have the possibility to enter the labour market immediately without any waiting period.

The MoEYS, in cooperation with the MoI, the MoFA and the representatives of universities, proposed and is currently implementing a joint project concerning facilitation of the visa procedure for selected university students, referred to as the "Student Mode". The project was approved by the government on 22 May 2017 with effect as of 1 June 2017. The basic goal of the Student Mode project is to facilitate the visa procedure for foreigners from selected countries accepted for studies under accredited study programmes at universities in the CR, which were included into the **Student Mode** by the MoEYS. Under the Student Mode, foreign students are provided with a faster access to an embassy to file an application. The purpose of the Student Mode is to ensure flexible cooperation of the included universities with the relevant administrative authorities in the Czech Republic and to make sure that foreigners receive correct information from universities, which will result in the filing of applications without formal and substantive errors.

In 2020, there were 33 public and private universities participating in the Student Mode. The collection of nominations for the Student Mode took place in January, February, May through December, and 2,083 candidates were included in it in 2020, which represents an increase of 228 candidates as compared with the previous year. A total of 37 countries were included in the Student Mode as of 1 December 2020, with some embassies having consular authority for multiple countries, which means that the Student Mode covered a total of 78 countries.

In 2020, the implementation of the project titled **Fast Track Procedure for Granting Residence Permits to Foreigners – Foreign Students from Third Countries**, which was first launched in 2013, continued. The project focuses particularly on student migration of foreign scholarship holders. The MoEYS is the administrator of this project (the co-administrators are the MoI and the MoFA). The participation of foreigners in selected scholarship programmes is based on international agreements (bilateral or multilateral ones) or decisions by the Government of the CR (developing countries or compatriots abroad). In April 2020, the government discussed an updated version of the project titled "Fast Track Procedure for Granting Residence Permits to Foreigners – Foreign Students from Third Countries", the target group of which formerly consisted of students from third countries who were accepted for studies in the CR under bilateral or multilateral international agreements and government

resolutions (developing countries or compatriots abroad). In the updated version, participants of the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility Programme and the Fulbright Program have also been included in the project.

Starting from the year 2017, the MoEYS has been supporting the international mobility of PhD students, post-graduate students and researchers under the Research, Development and Education Operational Programme under the challenges titled **International Mobility of Researchers** and **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – MSCA-IF**. The goal of these challenges is to strengthen international cooperation as well as to support development of Czech research organisations by adding experts from abroad to their human resources. The scope of actions to support international mobility also includes the integration of researchers with experience acquired abroad into the Czech research and development system. From the aforementioned International Mobility of Researchers – MSCA-IF, the MoEYS also provides finances for those scientists' mobility projects, which were successful in applying for a grant under the European Programme Horizon 2020 as part of the challenges Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) – Individual Fellowships but were put on the backup list due to lack of resources and could not be financed under this programme.

### 3.5 Visa Policy and Schengen Cooperation

## 3.5

#### VISA POLICY

Since fully joining Schengen cooperation (i.e. since 21 December 2007), the Czech Republic has been implementing **the common visa policy**. 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.** In this context, it needs to be said that one of the major changes, which had an impact on Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 of the European Parliament and of the Council is the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in 2019. At the turn of the year 2019, the UK parliament, the EU Council and the European Parliament approved the final agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the EU. UK citizens will not be obliged to have visas for travels to the Czech Republic. They will only file applications for Schengen visas only if they travel for a gainful purpose. The time spent staying not only in the Czech Republic but in all the Schengen Area countries is counted towards the specified time limits.

**Starting from 2 February 2020, the Visa Code amendment has been in effect.** The amendment is based on the effort to find a balance between



supporting legal travel and strengthening the tools for combating illegal migration. The most important elements of the amendment include facilitation of the visa procedure for applicants with a positive Schengen history, for whom mandatory issue of multiple-entry visas with a progressively prolonged period of validity (from 1 year to 5 years) has been introduced. At the same time, the obligation to be personally present when filing an application has been repealed, except for those cases where it is necessary to collect biometric data.

The amendment responds to the latest developments in the fields of security and migration and, as a tool for addressing problems associated with illegal migration, it integrated the visa policy with the collaboration of individual third countries in readmission of illegal migrants. The amendment has introduced an option for certain tiered visa restrictions towards non-cooperative third countries and makes it possible to exert pressure to improve returns (for example, by raising the visa fee or by extending the time limit for making a decision on a visa). If the collaboration is good, it is possible to offer the third country concerned an easier procedure for issuing visa. Besides that, **the visa fee was slightly raised to 80 €** in order to cover the growing costs of processing visa applications and in the context of the necessary IT innovations.

Due to other innovations, it is from now-on possible to file a visa application 6 months before the expected departure but no later than 15 days before the travel. The option to fill out and sign the application form electronically has also been introduced. The regulation more clearly defines, which Member State is responsible for examining an application, if the intended visit spans across several Member States.

The amendment also included the changes, which the evolution of visa practice brought into the visa procedure; the most important ones include the need for establishing wider cooperation with external service providers (i.e.





using the visa centres) when receiving visa applications, and the progressing digitalisation of the administrative procedure, while maintaining the integrity and security of the visa procedure.

As concerns **visa liberalisation**, there were no changes in the list of countries with visa-free travel to the EU in 2020. Given the consequences of visa-free travel of certain previously liberalised countries, the EU concentrated its efforts in 2020 on the effectiveness of the suspensive mechanism (the mechanism for suspending a visa waiver status) enshrined in the Visa Regulation No. 2018/1806 and on compliance with the liberalisation criteria by the previously liberalised countries. Within certain working groups of the EU Council, including the Visa Working Group, the possibility of renewing the discussion about completion of the liberalisation process with Kosovo was debated in the second half of the year 2020.

As concerns **digitalisation of the visa process**, work continued on the tasks identified in the detailed impact study, prepared in the second half of the year 2019, which assessed digitalisation in the form of introducing the electronic format of the visa sticker and making it possible to file an application for a Schengen visa online as the suitable direction of further development in the field of the common visa policy. The topic was discussed within the specially set up Working Group for Digitisation of the Visa Procedure as part of the Visa Committee of the European Commission. In 2020, negotiations took place with the supplier (Deloitte) of the prototype of the portal for filing visa applications. In early 2021, the representatives of the Member States will be able to test the first version of the portal, the purpose of which will be to create a suitable structure of the portal.

During the year 2020, **intensive negotiations about the revision of the Visa Information System (VIS)** and about the exchange of information



on short-term visas among Member States continued as part of trilogue negotiations. The subject matter of the change to the regulation is to strengthen the security of the procedure for granting short-term visas, to include long-term visas and residence permits in VIS and to ensure interoperability between VIS and other relevant EU systems and databases. As an innovation, the Union systems and databases (SIS, EES, ETIAS, including the lists of persons of interests, the databases of Europol and Interpol [SLTYD, TDAWN]) should be consulted when visa applications are examined. On 8 December 2020, the EU Council and the European Parliament arrived at an agreement on the text of the Regulation. Formal adoption of the Regulation is anticipated to take place in March/April 2021. The modified system should be launched by the end of the year 2023 and its implementation will take place under the eu-INIS Programme.

**The visa policy during the year was significantly affected by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.** Implementation of the visa agenda was first determined by the state of emergency declared on 12 March 2020, during which a substantial majority of the visa agenda was suspended, and later on, after 11 May 2020, the agenda was affected by a series of protective measures announced by the Ministry of Health, the subsequent updated versions of which only allowed most embassies of the CR to carry out the visa agenda only partially. In March 2020, Member States suspended the visa-related activities of consulates in a number of cases, including the reciprocal representation agreements. In accordance with a recommendation by the EC, the acceptance of applications for short-term (Schengen) visas was significantly reduced; the only exceptions were travels for narrowly defined categories of travellers or travel purposes. In accordance with the provisions of the protective measures, the Visa Department was giving the Visa Sections of the embassies of the CR instructions for acceptance of applications, particularly in the category of the protective measure "Interest of the CR", which was most often stated for a business, sports-related and cultural purpose. In the context of the protective measures, the Visa Department of MoFA also processed the agenda of unmarried couples, in whose case a partner of a citizen of the CR and later on a partner of any EU citizen with temporary residence in the CR was able to travel to the CR. For such a travel, the Visa Department of MoFA issued a certificate for entry after assessing the existence of a lasting relationship. In 2020, the Visa Department of MoFA issued 700 such certificates.

As concerned applications for long-term visas and residence permits, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the CR tried to maintain support for the private sector by maintaining the capacities for receiving applications for Employee Cards, particularly in Ukraine.

The Visa Codex leaves Member States the possibility to define **exceptions to visa requirement exemption for short-term stays** at the national level, particularly in relation to holders of diplomatic passports, service passports or special passports. On 7 August 2020, the *Agreement between the Government of the CR and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador on Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports*, which was signed on 12 February 2019, entered into force.

## SCHENGEN COOPERATION

Since the spreading of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the outbreak of the global **Covid-19 pandemic** in spring 2020, the global movement of persons has come to an unprecedented halt. Most countries in the world introduced more or less **strict restrictions on entry into their territories**. The overwhelming majority of countries limited entry only to essential travels (return of citizens and foreign nationals with permitted residence, international transport, family reunification and cross-border workers). The entire European Union responded to this course of action on 16 March 2020 by imposing a coordinated across-the-board ban on entry into the European Union from third countries with defined exceptions. This ban was subsequently extended multiple times.

The Schengen Border Code (Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council) permits the Schengen Member States to reintroduce temporarily the protection of internal borders in the event of a serious threat to the public order or internal security. **In connection with the Covid-19 pandemic, a total of 18 Schengen Member States, including the CR, proceeded to reinstate border checks on a temporary basis in 2020.** A number of other Member States of the European Union and the Schengen Area imposed other restrictions on entry. In addition to that, some Member States (France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Austria) continued to carry out checks at internal borders in connection with the threat of terrorism or secondary migration.

**On 1 June 2020, the government approved a material titled Report on Implementation of the National Schengen Plan As of 31 December 2019.** It was the sixth evaluation of the 2014 National Schengen Plan, which represents the basic strategic document for the field of Schengen cooperation and border protection. The goal of this plan and the tasks defined in the plan is to ensure a high standard in all fields of Schengen cooperation, and the accomplishment of this goal is verified through regular Schengen evaluations.

On 1 June 2020, the government approved the **2020-2024 Strategy of the Czech Republic for the European Integrated Border Management**, which has become the main policy document of the CR for the management of external borders and returns for the period of the years 2020-2024. The main objective of the Strategy is to improve the efficiency of external border management at the national level and, at the same time, to contribute to the improvement of the situation at the European level in such a way so as to strengthen the security of the Schengen Area, while maintaining free movement of persons. The Strategy is a separate government document, which can be updated, particularly in response to possible new EU legislation and current needs in the field of external border management and returns. The Strategy is based on the results of Schengen evaluation obtained so far, on the assessment of vulnerability and on auto-evaluations, the tasks arising from the new legislation and the strategic goals of the CR in the field

of border management. It also includes activities, which are relevant to the CR and the implementation of which is required according to the technical and operational strategy of the Frontex agency. It also incorporates the good practices and recommendations arising from the Schengen evaluations of other Schengen states.

On 27 April 2020, the government approved **the Programme for Implementing National Parts of EU Information Systems in the Fields of Justice and Internal Affairs (eu-INIS Programme)**, which includes the implementation of new or the modification of the already functioning large-scale European information systems in the fields of justice and internal affairs in the CR (EES, ETIAS, SIS, Interoperability Tools, VIS, Eurodac, ECRIS-TCN, EUROSUR, FADO, PNR, API). The entire Programme should be completed by 2023 with a possibility of extension, depending on the actual status of implementation in the European context. With its scale and time limits, it is a task of unprecedented scope in European integration. The eu-INIS Programme contains tools for coordinating, supporting and monitoring 11 national and 2 horizontal projects in the period of 2019-2023. The state budget and European funds participate in funding the national parts of the projects with an estimated amount of approximately 3.2 billion CZK. In the period from 6 February 2019 to 17 August 2020, the eu-INIS Programme was implemented through a preparatory steering committee. During that period, the methodology was developed, and the necessary organisational structures were created. The steering committee fully built on that activity and, in September 2020, approved the eu-INIS Strategic Plan at its first meeting and took over all the activities of the preparatory steering committee. Regular discussions of experts responsible for the implementation of national projects are also held.

In January 2019, a Schengen evaluation of visa policy took place at the embassy of the CR in Abu Dhabi and at the General Consulate of the CR in Chengdu, from which a number of recommendations arose, particularly in the field of visa IT systems as well as in the fields of procedures and the protection of personal data. The MoFA prepared an action plan for implementation of the recommendations, which it is executing on an ongoing basis. In 2020, another **three action plans** were prepared and updated. At present, some points relating to the modification to the visa information system and the security measures at embassies remain to be implemented. These are major changes in the system, which require longer time for implementation. In other points, the recommendations arising from the latest Schengen evaluation in the field of visa policy were implemented.

On 1 December 2012, the **European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA)** started to perform its tasks. In 2013, the Agency assumed responsibility for the operational management of large-scale information systems supporting the activities of the responsible

authorities in this area (SIS II, VIS, Eurodac). In view of the extension of the scope of responsibility for the new information systems in preparation, the structures of the eu-LISA agency worked, for example, on expanding the agency's mandate, contractual matters, financial aspects, audits, human and financial resources, work programmes, security and operational matters in 2020.

In 2020, a total of 4 meetings of the eu-LISA's Management Board were held in the form of videoconferences, which were informed on the discussions of the advisory groups for SIS II, VIS and Eurodac. These discussed documents concerning the operational matters of the agency, the information systems, the addressing of urgent problems and the planning of future activities. The EES Programme Management Board (PMB) held 12 meetings, also in the form of videoconferences.

### 3.6 Integration, Citizenship

## 3.6

#### 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. Its goal is to support the integration of foreigners into the society, to create opportunities for harmonic conflict-free co-existence between foreigners and the majority society, **to prevent occurrence of negative social phenomena** related to the co-existence (such as emergence of closed communities of foreigners or radicalisation) **and to ensure the protection of the rights and security of all inhabitants of the Czech Republic.** Integration is a mutual process, which requires the willingness to integrate on the part of foreigners on one side and the willingness of the majority society to support their efforts to integrate into the society on the other side.

**The primary target group of the policy for the integration of foreigners are third-country nationals** who have been staying in the territory of the Czech Republic legally on a long-term basis. The secondary target group of the integration measures are EU citizens who have the opportunity to take advantage of certain integration tools, i.e. mainly the provision of information, and assistance in addressing a difficult life situation. As a supplementary group, the integration measures can also be taken advantage of by beneficiaries of international protection<sup>17</sup> who can take advantage of the integration measures provided beyond the framework of services ensured under the State Integration Programme. In exceptional cases, the target group may also include citizens

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17 That is recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

of the CR who have provably similar integration needs as the aforementioned population groups.

The basic document of the integration policy of the CR is the ***Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic***<sup>18</sup>. The MoI presents a draft Resolution on the Procedure for Implementing the Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals to the government every year. This draft Resolution contains specific measures, which the relevant Ministries responsible for implementing the integration policy during the given year will take to support successful integration of foreign nationals in the CR. In 2020, the key document was the *Procedure for Implementing the Updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals – In Mutual Respect in 2020*<sup>19</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the “Procedure”). At the beginning of the following year, the MoI then always presents information to the government on implementation of the Procedure in a *Report on the Situation in Migration and the Integration of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic for the Previous Year*<sup>20</sup>.

Integration measures are focused on supporting self-sufficiency of foreign nationals to make sure that they know their rights and are able to fulfil their obligations; that they know their way around in the new environment; that they get to know the customs and way of life in the CR; that they understand and can communicate in Czech; that they are autonomous and self-sufficient in social and economic terms; and that they have enough information on where they can find help and support, if they need it. Assistance with the integration of foreign nationals significantly reduces the risk that they will be abused, manipulated and dependent on intermediaries.

A crucial element of the integration of foreign nationals is **the network of 18 Centres for the Support of the Integration of Foreigners**, which operate in all the regions of the CR. They provide foreigners with a wide range of integration services and help foreigners and the majority society to get to know each other. At present, the Integration Centres are funded from the state budget and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Selected groups of third-country nationals are legally obliged to complete **an adaptation-integration course** starting from 1 January 2021. The goal of this measure is to familiarise foreigners with their rights and obligations and enhance their self-sufficiency and independence. At the same time, completion of this course should help them break free from the system of dependence on intermediaries and should provide them with information on the opportunities to take advantage of the integration measures. There was intensive collaboration in the preparation and approval of the crucial Ordinance No. 520/2020 Coll., on Implementation of Adaptation-Integration Courses.

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18 Government Resolution No. 26 of 18 January 2016

19 Government Resolution No. 918 of 16 December 2019

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

Also, the entire implementation system was being prepared.

The Ministry of the Interior once again ensured subsidy procedures intended for the projects of municipalities and city districts aiming to support the integration of foreigners **at the local level**. The projects are a set of intensive and comprehensive integration activities and measures aiming to address or improve the existing situation in the given location and to prevent possible conflicts. In 2020, these projects were implemented by 20 municipalities and city districts. The projects were supported with an amount of approximately 21 million CZK.

The Ministry of the Interior also continued the implementation of the subsidy procedure “**Integration of Foreigners**”, through which particularly the projects of non-governmental non-profit organisations concerned with the integration of foreigners continued to be funded. In 2020, there were 10 entities supported with an amount of approximately 16 million CZK.

In 2020, emphasis continued to be placed on the awareness of both foreigners and the majority society. This is why the website dealing with the issues of the integration of foreigners are updated on an ongoing basis. The MoLSA in cooperation with the MoI operates the website at **www.cizinci.cz** where it is possible to find comprehensive information on the integration of foreigners, the statistics regarding foreigners, the possibilities of funding projects in this field and informational materials for foreigners. The continuously updated information on matters relating to the process of obtaining a residence permit for a foreigner can be found on the official website of the Ministry of the Interior at **www.mvcr.cz/cizinci**, which is also available in the English language. Particularly in response to the epidemiological situation, new information sections were created and, in some cases, were translated into more languages. An updated information service for foreigners can also be found on the website of some local governments, for example, on the website of the Capital City of Prague at **www.metropolevsech.eu**.

The active involvement of the MoI’s officials in the activities of the European Integration Network Working Group of the European Commission and other forms of international cooperation continued, although these activities were severely limited by the epidemiological situation.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

In 2020, **the citizenship of the CR was granted to a total of 2,656 foreign nationals** (a decrease by 317 persons in comparison with the previous year). In 31 cases, this included persons who had been granted international protection in the form of asylum in the CR in the past. Also, 27 applications for granting the citizenship of the CR to minor children pursuant to Section 28 of the Czech Republic Citizenship Act were granted (a decrease by 14 persons in comparison with the previous year); these were children whose father was a citizen of the CR and whose mother was a foreign national



without permanent residence in the country and was not a citizen of an EU Member State, Switzerland or a state that is a signatory of the Agreement on the European Economic Area and for whom the paternity for the child was determined by concurring statements of the parents.

In 2020, there was no instance of granting a citizenship of the Czech Republic pursuant to Section 29 of the Czech Republic Citizenship Act (it was granted to 7 persons in 2019), which is granted to children who were born in the territory of the Czech Republic and who did not acquire the citizenship of either of their parents and who had at least one parent that had a residence permit for residence in the territory of the Czech Republic for a period longer than 90 days.

In 2020, the citizenship of the Czech Republic was most often granted to the citizens of **Ukraine**: 936 persons (67 fewer than in the previous year). These were followed by the citizens of **Russia**: 511 persons (63 fewer than in the previous year); **Slovakia**: 365 persons (56 fewer than in the previous year); **Belarus**: 106 persons (1 fewer than in the previous year); and **Vietnam**: 89 (40 fewer than in the previous year).

In 2020, the MoI issued **a total of 185 rejection decisions at first instance** (29 fewer than in the previous year), while **1,661 foreign nationals** (173 more than in the previous year) **acquired the citizenship of the CR based on one of the declarations**, which are laid down in the Czech Republic Citizenship Act, in 2020.

Thus, **in 2020, a total of 4,344 persons** (165 fewer than in 2019) **acquired the citizenship of the CR either as a result of having been granted the citizenship or having made a declaration.**

**Table 3:**  
**The number of foreign nationals who were granted the citizenship of the CR in the period 2010 – 2020**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of foreign nationals who were granted the citizenship of the CR	1 088	1 653	1 565	2 253	4 915	2 620	3 897	5 006	3 757	2 973	2 656

Source: MoI



**In 2020, as a result of the pandemic, there was the most significant decrease in the number of applicants for international protection over the last several years, specifically nearly a 40% decrease. In total, there were 1,164 applications for international protection registered in 2020.**

The largest groups of applicants were the citizens of **Ukraine (351), Georgia (144), Vietnam (65), Belarus (65) and Uzbekistan (63)**. International protection in the form of **asylum** was granted to **42 applicants** (most often to citizens of Russia); **subsidiary protection** was granted in **72 cases**, most often to citizens of **Syria (24), Ukraine (11) and Libya (9)**.

The integration of persons who were granted international protection is governed by the **State Integration Programme (SIP)**. Since January 2017, the entity with overall responsibility for integration activities has been the Refugee Facilities Administration (SUZ). The goal of the programme is to facilitate the process of integrating recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and their inclusion in the society in the Czech Republic. **A total of 83 eligible persons joined the SIP in 2020.**

#### 4.1 Applicants for International Protection in the Czech Republic

As concerns international protection, the situation in 2020 was considerably affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the last two years, there was a gradual increase in the number of applicants for international protection. As a result of the pandemic, there was the most significant decrease over the last several years, specifically a nearly 40% decrease. In total, **there were 1,164 applications for international protection** registered in 2020. The lower number of applications in comparison with the previous years (the last time when lower numbers were seen was in 2013) was caused by the measures adopted to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as by the fact that there was no significant wave of applicants in 2020 unlike the previous years.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In comparison with other EU Member States, the numbers of applicants for international protection in the CR are still below the average. The CR has registered significantly fewer applicants for international protection than

the neighbouring countries Germany (109 thousand applicants) and Austria (14 thousand). It is still true that with respect to international protection, the CR is not a destination country primarily preferred by applicants for international protection in comparison with the other EU Member States. The demographics of the applicants are also different in terms of their nationalities.

**Table 4:**  
**The numbers of applicants for international protection in the Czech Republic in the period 2010-2020**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of applicants	833	756	753	707	1 156	1 525
Year-on-year change in %	-33,8	-9,2	-0,4	-6,1	63,5	31,9
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Number of applicants	1 478	1 450	1 701	1 922	1 164	
Year-on-year change in %	-3,1	-1,9	17,3	13,0	-39,4	

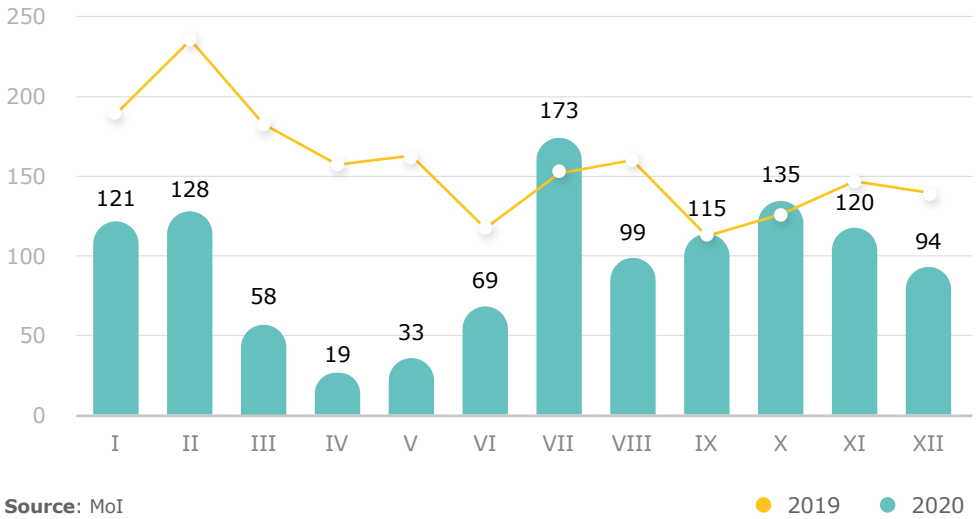
Source: IS CIS

From among the total number of 1,164 applications for international protection filed in 2020, **798** (i.e. 68.6%) **applications were filed for the first time** and **366** (i.e. 31.4%) **were filed multiple times**. While the total number of applications decreased, the number of applications filed multiple times was even somewhat higher than in 2019 and, consequently, their percentage also increased. In 2019, such applications accounted for just below one fifth, but in 2020 they accounted for nearly one third.

From among the applications filed in 2020, the highest number was filed during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (387) and the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (349) of the year; the decrease caused by the Covid-19 pandemic occurred mainly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter when merely 121 applications in total were filed over a period of three months. Consequently, the average monthly number of applications was 97, which means a decrease of 63 applications in a year-on-year comparison. This is also the lowest monthly average over the last several years. A lower average was last recorded in 2014 (96) before the onset of what is referred to as the "migration crisis".

### Chart 3:

## The number of applications for international protection in each month – comparison between 2019 and 2020



Source: MoI

● 2019 ● 2020

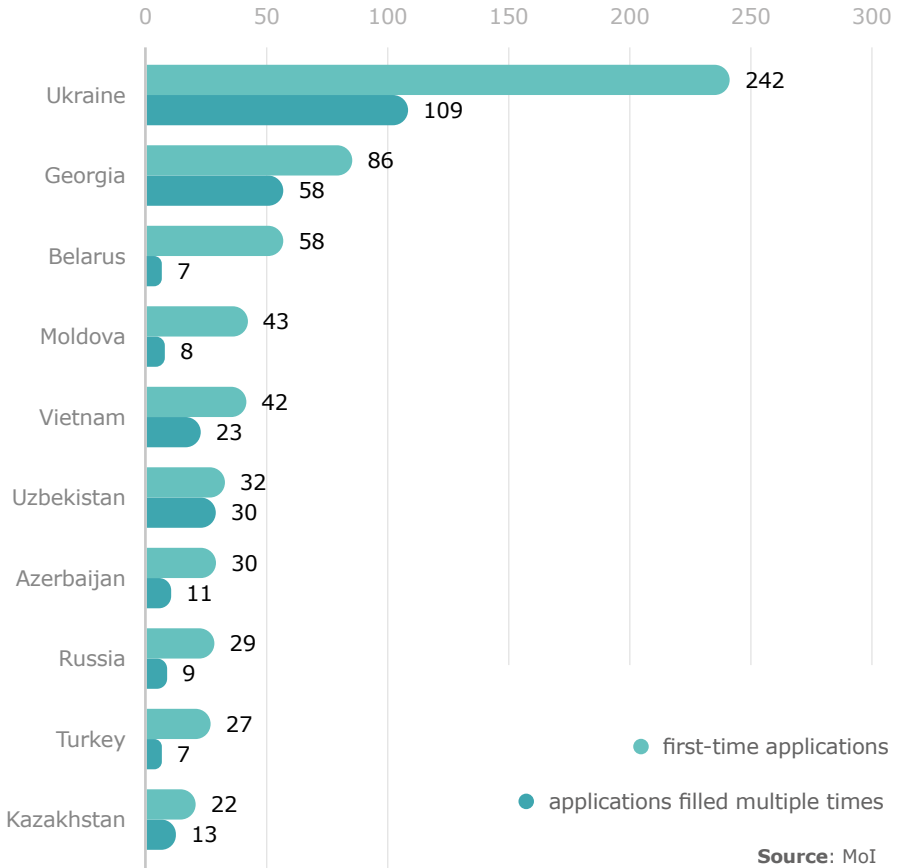
In 2020, the main source countries of applicants for international protection were Ukraine (351), Georgia (144), Vietnam (65), Belarus (65) and Uzbekistan (63).

**In the Czech Republic, asylum was granted to 42 applicants.** Asylum was most often granted to citizens of Russia (19). These were followed by citizens of Uzbekistan, Belarus, China and Kazakhstan.



### Chart 4:

## The numbers of first-time applications and applications filed multiple times in 2020



The most significant change, which can be seen when applicants in 2019 and 2020 are compared, is the decrease of the number of applicants from Armenia. This is a consequence of the measures implemented in 2019 in order to prevent misuse of the transit area of the Václav Havel International Airport for filing unfounded applications for international protection. Citizens of Armenia now rank 9<sup>th</sup> among the most often represented source countries, with a total number of 37 applications, while in 2019, they were first.

Thus, citizens of **Ukraine** returned to the first position with a total number of 351 applications for international protection (i.e. 30.2%). While most citizenships saw a decrease due to the Covid-19 pandemic, citizens of Ukraine filed 41 more applications (+13.2%) than in 2019. The downward trend in the number of

applications for international protection filed by persons with this citizenship in the last several years ended. It is still true that citizens of Ukraine file their applications in the territory of the CR in an attempt to legalise their stay.

Citizens of **Georgia with 144 applications for international protection** (i.e. 12.4%) ranked second in terms of the number of applicants. In comparison with the preceding year, this represented a decrease of 36%, which is the second largest decrease. The trend characterised by a relatively higher number of applicants from Georgia is primarily related to the fact that visa liberalisation took place for the citizens of this country in 2017. Since then, the number of applications has been growing every year. In 2020, there were 17 women and 4 minors among Georgian applicants. In total, 58 applications were filed multiple times, which is twice more than in 2019.

They were followed by citizens of **Vietnam with 65 applications for international protection**, which accounted for 5.6% of all applicants. In comparison with 2019, the number of applications from citizens of Vietnam decreased by 55%. There were merely 5 women and 4 minor children among the applicants. In total, 23 applications were filed multiple times.

In November, **Belarus** appeared among the TOP 10 source countries because its citizens filed a total of **65 applications for international protection** in 2020. The increase in the number of applications from citizens of that country occurred in connection with the MEDEVAC Programme, which provided help to Belarusian citizens persecuted by the Belarusian state after anti-government protests in August. In total, 40 Belarusian citizens applied for international protection in this way. In comparison with 2019, citizens of Belarus filed 46 applications more (+242%) in 2020.

Furthermore, **63 applications for international protection were filed by citizens of Uzbekistan** (i.e. 5.5%). While in the year 2015-2017, the numbers of applicants from that country hovered around single digits, there have been several dozen applications filed per year since 2018, even though there is a downward trend in this respect. In 2020, the number of applicants from this country decreased by more than a quarter. Nearly half of the applications (30) were filed multiple times; there were only 3 women and 3 minor children among the applicants.

The decreases in the numbers of applications from citizens of Armenia, Georgia, Vietnam and Uzbekistan have already been mentioned. Among the TOP 10, the largest decreases occurred with Kazakhstan (-74), Russia (-51) and Azerbaijan (-6). Beyond the TOP 10, there were other significant decreases with citizens of Iran (-26), Venezuela (-26), Syria (-17) and Mongolia (-16).

Conversely, there was an increase with citizens of Moldova (+8) among the TOP 10 source countries, besides the aforementioned citizens of Belarus (+46) and Ukraine (+41). Beyond the TOP 10, there was also an increase on the part of citizens of Turkey (+9) and Bangladesh (+6).

## PROCEEDINGS ON GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In 2020, **a total of 1,455 decisions were issued by the MoI in proceedings on granting international protection and 457 decisions were issued in proceedings to extend subsidiary protection.** As of 31 December 2020, there were **606 persons registered in pending proceedings** (i.e. persons on whose applications decision was not made yet).

In 2020, there was a year-on-year decrease in the number of issued decisions by a quarter (-26.4%), which could be attributed to the measures adopted against the Covid-19 pandemic. **International protection in the form of asylum or subsidiary protection was granted to a total of 114 foreign nationals**, 33 fewer than in the preceding year.

**Subsidiary protection was extended** in a total of 405 cases, which is 9 more than in the preceding year (+2.3%). Similarly, as in the preceding year, this concerned most often citizens of **Syria** (166), **Ukraine** (67) and **Kazakhstan** (61).

During the year 2020, **a total of 804 negative decisions** (i.e. 55.3%) **were issued** in proceedings on granting international protection, in which it was decided not to grant international protection or in which an application was rejected as clearly unfounded. Proceedings were discontinued in 537 cases (i.e. 37%).

## APPLICATION OF THE DUBLIN REGULATION <sup>21</sup>

In 2020, the CR registered **a total of 785 Dublin Cases**, which represented **a decrease by more than a half** (-56.7%) **in comparison with the year 2019.** During the reference period, **the most represented citizenship** was the citizenship of **Georgia** (86 persons), followed by the citizenship of **Ukraine** (72) and the citizenship of **Armenia** (64).

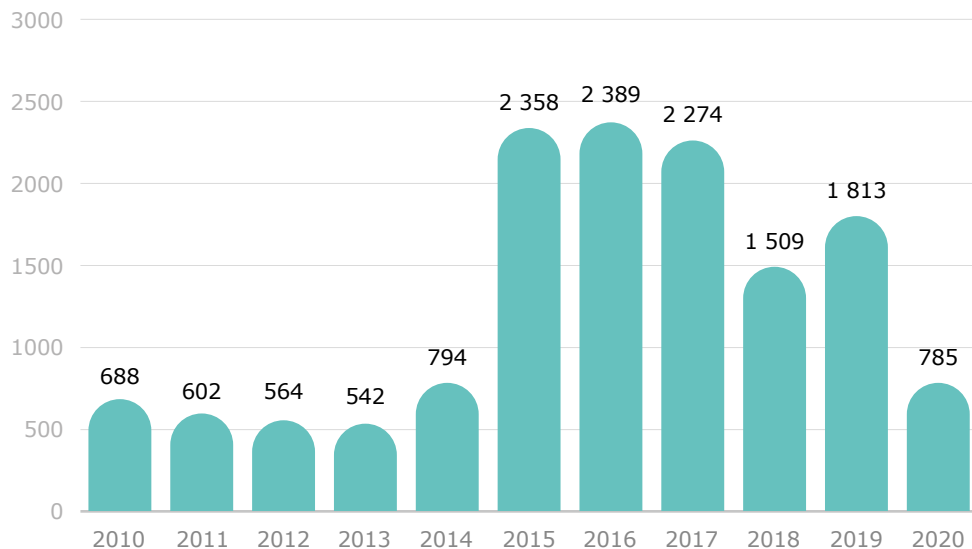
During the first two months of the year 2020, the situation regarding the implementation of the Dublin Regulation was basically stable. A significant change occurred in March 2020 as a result of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the rapidly worsening epidemiological situation in the territories of all Member States. The immediate and **prompt response of Member States to the given situation was to suspend the transfer of persons during the period from March until June** or, in certain cases, until July 2020. With the exception of the transfers, the application of the Dublin Regulation continued and the CR, same as all Member States, sent and accepted requests

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

for reception or readmission. During the summer, the situation calmed down a bit but the epidemiological situation in the autumn once again worsened due to the second wave of the pandemic. In order to prevent the spreading of Covid-19, the CR **once again suspended the transfer to the responsible Member States during November** and, **at the same time, cancelled reception of applicants for international protection from other EU Member States.**

**Chart 5:**  
**History of Dublin Cases in the Period 2010–2020<sup>22</sup>**



Source: MoI

During the year 2020, **the CR received a total of 498 requests** from other Member States (a decrease by 64.7% in comparison with the previous year) for reception or readmission of an applicant for international protection to the territory of the CR. The highest numbers of these requests were received from **Germany (204)**, **France (121)** and **Sweden (31)**. In all cases, the numbers of requests received from these countries decreased in comparison with the preceding year; in terms of percentages, the largest decrease was seen with France (-73.8 %), followed by Sweden (-71.3%) and Germany (-66.9%).

During the same period, **the CR sent other Member States a total of 287 requests** (a decrease by 28.4%) for reception or readmission of an applicant or a foreign national.

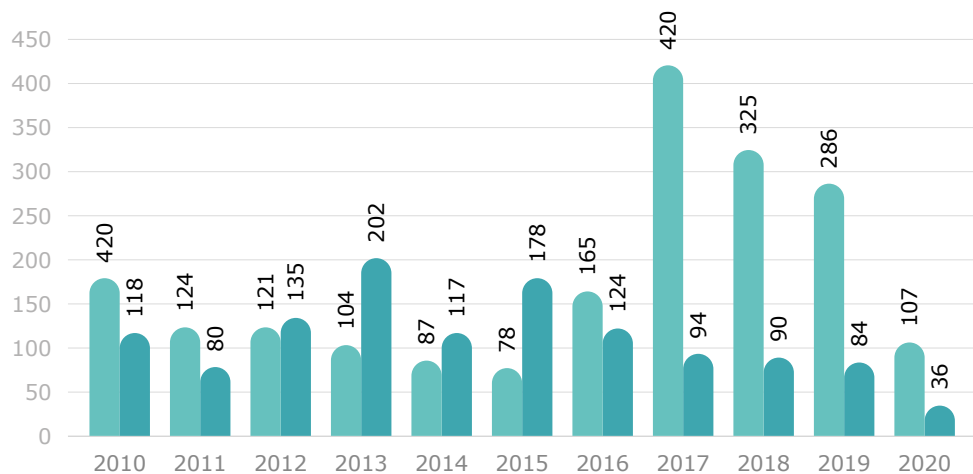
<sup>22</sup> Requests for information in the years 2012 through 2015 were not included in the statistics on Dublin Cases.

As concerns outgoing Dublin Cases, the number of requests for readmission into Romania significantly increased for citizens of Afghanistan, particularly during the last two months of the year 2020. These were mostly persons who were detained in the Czech territory without identity documents and authorisation to stay in the country during checks carried out by the Police of the Czech Republic, and who were found to be applicants for international protection in Romania in subsequent investigation. This was why the highest number of requests (64 in total) were sent to Romania in 2020.

In 2020, **a total of 107 transfers were carried out in the territory of the CR** (a decrease by 62.6%). The highest numbers of persons were transferred to the territory of the CR from **Germany (61), Sweden (10) and Austria (10)**.

During the same period, **a total of 36 transfers were carried out from the territory of the CR** to another Member State (a decrease by 57.1%). The highest numbers of persons were transferred from the territory of the CR to **Germany (10), Poland (9) and France (4)**.

**Chart 6:**  
**Transfers carried out from and to the territory of the Czech Republic in the period 2010-2020<sup>23</sup>**



**Source:** Moi      ■ transfers to the Czech Republic      ■ transfers from the Czech Republic

<sup>23</sup> Requests for information in the years 2012 through 2015 were not included in the statistics on Dublin Cases.



The **Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior (SUZ)** is the operator of reception, accommodation and integration asylum centres. SUZ provides 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 granting 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.

SUZ operates **three reception centres, specifically the quarantine facility reception centre in Bělá-Jezová, the reception centre in Zastávka and the reception centre at the Václav Havel International Airport in Prague**. In 2020, SUZ set up the quarantine facility reception centre in Bělá-Jezová under a special measure adopted by the Ministry of the Interior, the Department of Medical Security, as the authority responsible for protecting public health. The facility is designed for accommodating newly arriving clients in a quarantine regime in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic, both applicants for international protection and detained foreigners. This facility was set up as early as during the first wave of the pandemic on 1 April 2020 with a capacity of 65 beds. SUZ operates **three accommodation centres, specifically the accommodation centre in Havířov, the accommodation centre in Kostelec nad Orlicí and, since 2018, the accommodation centre in Zastávka (serving a dual purpose of both a reception centre and an accommodation centre)**. In both types of facilities, food is provided in addition to accommodation services (either the operator prepares meals or donates a regular financial contribution that serves to help with cooking one's own meals). The role of social workers is irreplaceable; a balanced offer of leisure-time activities is available. The workers who are in direct contact with the target group work under expert supervision. Services of social nature are available to clients; a psychologist comes to visit the facility particularly to fulfil the needs of vulnerable persons.

As of 31 December 2020, **the total capacity of the reception and accommodation centres was 686 beds**.

**Integration asylum centres serve** to provide temporary accommodation for those persons who have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection in the first stage of their integration (the maximum period of accommodation is defined as 18 months in the Asylum Act). Here, all accommodated recognised

refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are provided with assistance from a social worker, consultancy aimed at obtaining housing, employment, and other integration activities and Czech language courses are also provided.

As of 31 December 2020, SUZ operated a total of 4 integration asylum centres where a total of 44 accommodation units with the maximum capacity of 124 beds are available to recognised refugees (they are assigned according to the size and nature of the accommodated families).

## USE OF ACCOMMODATION CAPACITIES IN 2020

In 2020, a **total of 1,083 newly arrived foreign nationals – applicants for international protection** (including newborns born while the mother was staying in an asylum facility) or persons accommodated based on a granted exception – came to asylum facilities. The citizens of **Ukraine** (314 persons, i.e. 29%), **Georgia** (146 persons, i.e. 13.5%), **Vietnam** (76 persons, i.e. 7%), **Uzbekistan** (66 persons, i.e. 6.1%) and **Moldova** (44 persons, i.e. 4.1%) most often came to asylum facilities.

On the average, **45% of the capacity of reception and accommodation centres** was used; these data include only the persons physically staying in these facilities. If foreign nationals who are registered in the accommodation centres but who are physically staying outside the accommodation centres were also included, the extent of using the capacity of the accommodation centres would be 96% on the average.

Applicants for international protection accommodated in an accommodation centre have the option to leave the centre on a long-term basis at their request. In 2020, this option was used, on the average, by 53.6% of the registered applicants for international protection

The accommodation capacity of the integration asylum centres remained unchanged during the year.

The information extent to which the capacity of the IACs was used is only approximate because the accommodation capacity consists more of apartment units than separate rooms. Therefore, the number of vacant beds does not correspond to the number of vacant apartment units. In 2019, the average number of persons accommodated in an IAC was 71; therefore, the average for the year 2020 amounting to 52 persons indicates a certain downward trend.

### 4.3 Integration of Recognised Refugees and Beneficiaries of Subsidiary Protection

# 4.3

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. The current SIP was approved in Government Resolution No. 954<sup>24</sup> of 20 November 2015 and entered into force on 1 January 2016. On 16 January 2017, the government approved the updated version of SIP in its Resolution No. 36.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the binding principles of SIP, this Resolution provides that the Minister of the Interior **will ensure the function of the general provider of integration services (GPIS) in 2017 and in the following years. Since January 2017, this provider with an overall responsibility for integration activities has been the Refugee Facilities Administration<sup>26</sup>**, which is, among other things, the provider of integration asylum centres. In its updated version, the programme is better able to respond to the needs of the integration process.

The goal of the programme is to continue to facilitate the process of integration of recognised refugees and beneficiaries of international 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, social assistance and education, including the retraining system, and assistance with acquiring and improving the knowledge of the Czech language.

The general provider of integration services under the State Integration Programme, i.e. the Refugees Facilities Administration of the MoI, mediates the integration services to recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection throughout the territory of the CR. The general provider is responsible for coordinating and ensuring integration services for recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection also in cooperation with other entities, which mainly include the relevant Ministries, municipalities, non-governmental non-profit organisations, churches, volunteers, employers, etc. The provider may ensure individual services through a third party on a subcontracting basis. As a result of the transition to the GPIS, the much-desired stabilisation of the provision of these services under SIP has been achieved.

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24 On the state integration programme for beneficiaries of international protection in the year 2016 and in the following years.

25 On amendment to 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.

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

All the assistance to, support for and cooperation of the eligible person is governed by **an individual integration plan**, which the provider prepares in close cooperation with the eligible person and the workers of integration asylum centres. The integration plan is a basic document describing the integration objectives for a specific person and the course of integration in the following key integration areas: housing, employment, education and removal of the language barrier as well as in the welfare and medical areas. These are activities that will lead to accomplishment of the defined goal. Finances for implementation and performance of the activities are allocated from a special budget and the duration of the cooperation on the implementation of the plan is 12 months. The plan also includes providing the eligible person with material equipment, which is paid from the budget according to pre-set limits.

In 2020, a total of **83 eligible persons** joined SIP, which represents a 24% decrease as compared with the previous year. During the year, **a total of 47 new individual integration plans were prepared for a total of 71 beneficiaries of international protection (both individuals and families)**. There was allocated 46.5 million CZK to SIP in the year 2020, the amount of 3.9 million CZK was used to provide integration services through implementation of individual integration plans. Direct costs of services, accommodation and equipment for the eligible persons accounted for the largest part of this amount; other costs included payments for integration services to non-profit organisations.



In 2020, the facilities for provision of institutional and protective care, established by the MoEYS, provided a universal care to a total of **93 unaccompanied minor foreign nationals**. During the year, **7 unaccompanied minor foreign nationals applied for international protection in the CR**.

In the second half of the year 2020, all MoEYS facilities responsible for providing care to unaccompanied minors faced not only extensive anti-pandemic measures but also an increased rate of migration and a high number of clients to be placed. Therefore, it was necessary to adopt additional measures to optimise the care of unaccompanied minors.

## 5.1 Unaccompanied Minors

## 5.1

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.

At the moment when it is found out 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 minor foreign nationals, the CR has a unique institution – the **Facility for Children-Foreigners (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 provides full direct custody, therapeutic and support services, education, intensive work on the integration process and preparation for future self-reliant life.

At the beginning of each child's stay at the ZDC, the needs and situation of the child are comprehensively assessed and, based on the results of this assessment, an individual personality development plan and individual educational plan is prepared for each client. The system adopted in 2015 particularly made sure that each minor foreign national is given the opportunity of being subjected to the comprehensive assessment at the ZDC. Based on

such identified objective facts, it was possible to set up the aforementioned integration plans together with the client.

Collaboration with three institutions, which were assigned to collaborate with the ZDC in 2015 and which can also provide expert services for UAMs under the methodological guidance of the ZDC, has also proved to be very fruitful. Last year, the details of the interconnection and close cooperation between the ZDC and these institutions, which provide clients with follow-up services after completion of diagnostics, were fine-tuned.

**Collaboration with volunteers**, which was taking place under the volunteer programme in a project of Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům (Organisation for Assistance to Refugees), was also of great importance for work with the clients of the ZDC throughout the year.

In the second half of the year 2020, all the MoEYS facilities responsible for providing care to UAMs faced not only extensive anti-pandemic measures but also an increased rate of migration and a higher number of placed clients. There was a lack of quarantine beds, the bed capacities were exhausted, clients who intentionally and falsely stated they were under legal age and clients suffering from various infectious diseases, including Covid-19, were getting into the facilities. In connection with this trend, the authorities responsible for the social-legal protection of children also had to address the practical issues of finding a suitable placement for UAMs with regard to their specific needs. Therefore, it was necessary to adopt additional measures to optimise the care of UAMs.

On 10 November 2020, the MoLSA held an interdepartmental online meeting attended by the relevant stakeholders: the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy of the MoI, the Department for Management and Support of Regional School System of the MoEYS, the Refugee Facilities Administration, the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service and the director of the Facility for Foreign Children and of the related diagnostic institute, the related centre of educational care and the related primary school. The topic of the meeting was optimisation of the capacities in the facilities suitable for placement of UAMs with regard to their needs, and the setting-up and harmonisation of the procedures of all actors.

Across the Ministries concerned – the MoEYS, the MoLSA, the MoI and the MoJ – a high-quality cooperation was established, thanks to which it was possible to handle the wave successfully and to provide fully professional and superior services.

**There were no changes in the legislation governing the methods of work with UAMs in 2020.**

## STATISTICS

In 2020, a total of **93 third-country unaccompanied minor foreign nationals** were staying in the specialised facilities for the provision of institutional and protective education, established by the MoEYS, and were receiving a universal care (this number amounts to dozens of persons every year); <sup>727</sup> third-country unaccompanied minor children applied for international protection in the same year (the number of third-country unaccompanied minor applicants applying for international protection is approximately in single digits every year). In comparison with the other Member States, these are still very low numbers.

According to the figures for recent years, it is true that most third-country unaccompanied minors staying in the CR are older than 15 years but they are not close to reaching legal age. Males clearly predominate.

**Table 5:**  
**The numbers of unaccompanied minor foreign nationals who applied for international protection in the period 2008-2020**

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of unaccompanied minors applying for international protection	36	9	4	8	5	2	6

Year	2015	2016 <sup>28</sup>	2017 <sup>29</sup>	2018	2019	2020
Number of unaccompanied minors applying for international protection	14	4	7	10	8	7

**Source:** DAMP (for the period 2008-2015); ZDC (for the years 2016-2017), starting from 2018, DAMP has once again been the source.

## 5.2 Other Vulnerable Groups of Persons

## 5.2

As concerns proceedings on granting international protection, persons with health issues, seniors, pregnant women, single parents with a minor child, persons with a mental disorder and persons who were subjected to abuse,

<sup>27</sup> Source: DAMP

<sup>28</sup> This number may not be complete for the CR; this is the number of children who were placed in the Facility for Children-foreigners and applied for international protection in this facility in 2016.

<sup>29</sup> This number may not be complete for the CR; this is the number of children who were placed in the Facility for Children-foreigners and applied for international protection in this facility in 2017.



rape or another serious form of mental, physical or sexual violence, as well as unaccompanied minor foreign nationals and victims of human trafficking belong to what is 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 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 for 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 6.



In 2020, **21 persons** were prosecuted for the crime of human trafficking and **nobody** was convicted of this crime in the same year.

In 2020, there were **7 victims of human trafficking from among third-country nationals** and 6 persons from EU countries included in the *Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking* operated by the Ministry of the Interior.

During the year 2020, the trend of targeted search for men and women who have a socially and educationally lower status in the CR continued. These men and women are subsequently lured abroad, particularly to the United Kingdom, where men are forced to perform physically demanding work and women are forced into prostitution or are forced to marry citizens from non-EU countries.

## 6.1 Human Trafficking

## 6.1

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

There is a **Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking** operated by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Programme") for victims of human trafficking older than 18 years, and this Programme covers EU citizens trafficked in the territory of the CR, third-country nationals trafficked in the territory of the CR as well as CR citizens trafficked in the territory of the CR or abroad. The Programme is a measure created to provide victims of human trafficking with support and appropriate protection based on individual risk assessment.

In 2020, a total of 13 probable victims of human trafficking were included in the Programme (this represents a decrease by 2 persons in comparison with the year 2019). The victims came from the Czech Republic (4), Ukraine (4), Bulgaria (2), the Philippines (1), Mongolia (1) and Honduras (1). It was suspected that these persons were subjected to labour and sexual exploitation and forced into committing crime.

The key objective of the Programme is the humanitarian dimension of assistance to and protection of victims of human trafficking. Under the Programme, the victims of this serious crime are offered accommodation,

psychological-social and medical assistance, interpretation services, legal assistance, lawyer services, assistance in searching for a job, the option to legalise the victim's residence and a dignified return to the victim's country of origin. Nevertheless, its purpose is also to obtain relevant information on the criminal environment that may lead to exposing, convicting and sentencing perpetrators. **All the victims included in the Programme showed interest in pressing charges at the relevant unit of the PCR to initiate investigation into their cases.**

In 2020, one voluntary return of a victim to their country of origin was carried out under the Programme. The provision of services and care to victims of human trafficking was not interrupted even by the Covid-19 pandemic.

There were no major changes in the situation in human trafficking during the year 2020 as compared with the previous year. Sexual and labour exploitations were still among the most frequent forms of human trafficking. However, there were also mixed cases where the forms are combined, including forced marriages or coercion to perpetrate crimes. During the year 2020, the trend of targeted search for men and women who have a socially and educationally lower status in the CR continued. These men and women are subsequently lured abroad, particularly to the United Kingdom, where men are forced to perform physically demanding work and women are forced into prostitution or are forced to marry citizens from non-EU countries.

It needs to be added that the information on the number of persons does not reflect the overall situation in human trafficking in the Czech Republic. The Programme needs to be perceived merely as one of the possible measures for victims of human trafficking. Since 2003 when the Programme was launched, a total of 273 probable victims of human trafficking were included in the Programme.

## 6.2 Preventive Activities and Educational Events in 2020

Support of preventive activities and educational measures is also an important part of the Programme. Extensive preventive-informational activities designed to raise awareness of human trafficking are regularly carried out with the financial support of the MoI every year. In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic showed the need to transfer the work with clients as well as with the potentially trafficked persons, and the work on prevention and awareness-raising to online and remote communication environment to a greater extent. This is why modernisation of the website of an assisting organisation was supported, including the creation of its own SOS chat platform, and an online awareness-raising campaign was launched. At the same time, the print and re-print of the usual leaflets and brochures with the contact information of the assisting organisation, which are used during actions in the field, was supported.

Two training sessions with consular officials regarding the problematic of human trafficking took place in 2020. Other training sessions and seminars were organised by the NCOZ as part of police training.

Cooperation of the involved entities contributes to effective combat against human trafficking. A meeting of the **Interdepartmental Coordination Body for Combatting Human Trafficking** was held in 2020. This coordination body serves as a platform for exchange of information among the members of the interdepartmental body and for coordination of activities in the combat against human trafficking at the national level. Furthermore, the members of this body, which include governmental as well as non-governmental organisations, provide input for the annual report on the status of human trafficking in the CR.<sup>30</sup>

The Czech Republic also cooperates with significant source countries and international organisations (OSCE,<sup>31</sup> ICMPD,<sup>32</sup> DCAF,<sup>33</sup> etc.). It also actively participates in the sessions of the platform of National Rapporteurs and Equivalent Mechanisms, which are organised by the European Commission and the EU Member State currently holding the presidency twice a year. In the field of police cooperation, Joint Investigation Teams (JITs<sup>34</sup>) are used abundantly and there is also cooperation with established platforms such as EMPACT.<sup>35</sup>

## STATISTICS

In 2020, **21 persons** were criminally **prosecuted** by the Police of the Czech Republic and **no persons** were **convicted** of the crime of human trafficking in the same year.

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30 <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/obchod-s-lidmi-dokumenty-924305.aspx>

31 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

32 International Centre for Migration Policy Development

33 The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

34 Joint Investigation Teams

35 European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats

**Table 6:****The number of persons criminally prosecuted for and convicted of human trafficking in the period 2012-2020<sup>36</sup>**

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Number of persons prosecuted for human trafficking*</b>	31	25	16	12	23	24	15	26	21
<b>Number of persons convicted of human trafficking**</b>	11	20	6	19	8	14	16	9	0

Source: \* The Police Presidium; \*\* The Ministry of Justice

**CRIME OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN RELATION TO FOREIGN NATIONALS**

In 2020, the number of probable victims of human trafficking from the Philippines within the scope of human trafficking in the CR decreased in comparison with the previous years. It was not proved in 2020 that illegal migrants were subjected to human trafficking.

<sup>36</sup> There was an extensive reconstruction of the Crime Registration Statistical System carried out in 2016, and therefore it is not possible to compare the number of persons prosecuted for human trafficking in that year with the numbers from previous years.

The Ministry of the Interior has been implementing the **Aid in Place** programme (Programme of the Ministry of the Interior to Aid Refugees in Regions of Origin and to Prevent Large Migration Flows) since 2015. In 2020, the budget of the programme was 135 million CZK. The prioritised areas of the programme in 2020 included the Balkan region and the region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Implementation of the **MEDEVAC** programme continued in 2020. This programme is focused on providing professional medical care to vulnerable groups of inhabitants in regions affected by a refugee crisis or a natural catastrophe, specifically in **eleven countries**, which reflect its territorial priorities.

During the year 2020, a total of **228 members of Czech compatriot communities in Ukraine, Russia and Venezuela** resettled to the CR under the **Programme for Providing Assistance to Czech Compatriots**.

## 7.1 International Cooperation and Projects

## 7.1

**The international cooperation in migration-related issues was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.** Member States, including the CR, reintroduced checks at internal borders and restricted entry into their territories as early as during the first wave of the pandemic. Thus, international and particularly European cooperation was intensively focused primarily on harmonising the approach to this unprecedented situation. This cooperation resulted in presentation of a number of recommendations and guidelines not only on mobility but also, for example, on asylum or returns. Due to cross-border impacts, bilateral contacts with neighbouring countries were also more intensive.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the related agenda, the presentation of the **New Pact on Migration and Asylum** was also repeatedly postponed, and it was **presented by the European Commission as late as on 23 September 2020 instead of spring**. The presented pact introduces the whole planned reform of the Union's asylum and migration policy and, in the words of the European Commission, is supposed to offer a new "fresh start". In spite of the fact that the Commission presented completely new legislative and non-legislative proposals (recommendations and guidelines of the European Commission), the Commission also envisions finalisation of the negotiations

about some of the proposals from the previous reform package of the Single European Asylum System (SEAS) from the years 2016 and 2018 and has announced the presentation of additional legislative and non-legislative acts during the year 2021.

**The CR generally welcomed the presentation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum** and, in accordance with its long-term migration policy, declared its preparedness to support such new measures in negotiations, which will lead to rectification of the shortcomings in the existing system. During the initial negotiations, the CR continued to support, in accordance with the approved framework positions, an integrated reform of the European migration and asylum system based on a comprehensive approach, which involves strengthening the activities in the external dimension of migration policy, ensuring effective protection of the EU's external borders and establishing a strong consensual system inside the Union. It continued to emphasise the need for a sustainable system, which will also be resilient to new challenges, whether security-related, economic or environmental ones. In the external dimension of migration policy, the CR continued to strive for accomplishing its long-term goals, namely to prevent illegal migration outside the territory of the EU, to provide aid in the countries of origin and transit, to combat people smuggling networks and to enter into agreements on readmissions and returns with countries of origin. It placed a major emphasis on effective protection of the EU's external borders, which it considers to be absolutely crucial to ensuring the safety of the Union's citizens.

Beyond the cooperation within the EU, **cooperation dealing with asylum-related and migration-related issues in the form of international and regional meetings continued in 2020**, although the usual format of the meetings was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the year 2020, most contacts at various levels took place virtually via online communication platforms.

**At the international level**, the CR continued to foster cooperation particularly with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to address the largest global challenges impacting the EU. As concerns **regional cooperation**, the CR was actively involved in cooperation within the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), particularly through regional dialogues (the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process, the Budapest Process, the Prague Process), which the CR used to present and advance its long-term goals in relation to the third countries.

**The Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process**, addressing the cooperation with African countries, continued to implement their main goal, i.e. to implement the 2015 Valletta Action Plan. Therefore, the CR supported all efforts aiming to prevent illegal migration, combat against people smugglers and improvement in the effectiveness of the return policy. After France, the presidency of the Rabat Process was assumed by Equatorial Guinea, the historically first African country to assume the presidency.

The CR also fostered regional cooperation within the scope of the **Salzburg Forum**, which focuses its efforts on political coordination within the EU and on cooperation with the West Balkan countries. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected the usual activities of the Salzburg Forum. Bulgaria, the presiding country, eventually cancelled all its planned events in the first half of the year 2020 (including the ministerial conference, originally scheduled for May 2020). During Croatia's presidency in the second half of the year 2020, the ministerial conference was eventually also cancelled. However, on the backdrop of the cooperation within the Salzburg Forum, *Operational Platform Eastern Mediterranean Route*, based in Vienna, was set up at the initiative of Austria. The goal of this platform is to strengthen cooperation and the implementation of specific activities in the field of migration in the countries along the West Balkan migration route, which fully matches the long-term priorities of the CR, and therefore the CR supported the platform from the very beginning.

In 2020, in the external dimension of the European Union, the MoI CR continued to participate in developing and implementing the instruments of the **Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)** representing a strategic framework of the external migration policy of the European Union. In 2020, in order to implement its priorities in asylum and migration, the Czech Republic closely cooperated with international organisations, especially with the International Organisation for Migration, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

## EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:

### PRAGUE PROCESS

The Czech Republic maintains good relationships in the issues of eastern and south-eastern dimensions through the Prague Process, among other instruments. The Prague Process is the main dialogue with the countries of eastern regions, which are the main migration source countries for the Czech Republic. It is in the interest of the Czech Republic that there is a reinforced and effective dialogue, which will have a favourable impact on the overall situation in the EU. In 2020, the Prague Process built on the activities performed in the previous years, which the CR has been performing on a long-term basis through its active participation in the Strategic Group of the process. **In November 2020, the CR assumed presidency of the Strategic Group of the Prague Process to head the process of formulating a new political mandate for the period 2023-2027.**

### COOPERATION AMONG THE VISEGRAD GROUP

At the regional level, the cooperation among the countries of the Visegrad Group (V4) continued to be fostered. During the period from **July 2019 to June 2020, the CR held the presidency of V4** and included the topic of

migration among its top priorities. At the political level, among other events, it organised a meeting of the prime ministers of the V4 countries with Sebastian Kurz, the Austrian prime minister, in January 2020 where the discussed topics included migration, enlargement of the EU or multiannual financial framework. The prime ministers of the V4 countries also discussed the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the gradual relaxation of measures at the borders with Angela Merkel, the German chancellor. Cooperation of the V4 countries within the scope of the Migration Crisis Response Mechanism was considerably affected by the pandemic 2020 and the work on joint projects was transferred to the virtual environment and the implementation of some of these projects was postponed.

## **EUROPEAN ASYLUM SUPPORTING OFFICE (EASO)**

In 2020, the key activities of the European Asylum Supporting Office (EASO) continued to include particularly the operational and technical support of the asylum systems in selected EU Member States – primarily in Greece and Italy. As early as the year 2019, EASO proceeded to restructure its activities in Italy and subsequently in Greece, too. The focus activities of the EASO authorities in Italy in 2020 was shifted to the area of structural support of the relevant Italian authorities. In parallel, the operational support for Greece also transformed in 2020 in the context of the changes in the Greek asylum legislation. While this support continues to concentrate on providing assistance in what is referred to as the “first line” (particularly to improve the functioning of the asylum system, the system for receiving of applicants for international protection as well as to support the actual proceedings on international protection), now it also requires Greek-speaking experts in most cases. As a result of these changes, it had been anticipated that the need to send national experts of the EU Member States to support the implementation of the aforementioned operational plans would further decrease in 2020. However, the actual implementation of these operational plans was significantly affected by an unforeseeable factor in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic and the related restrictive measures, which affected not only the plans for sending national experts but also all the other planned activities of the EASO in 2020.

In 2020, the EASO continued to carry out its duties arising from the current mandate, which entrusts the office with a supporting role for Member States particularly in the harmonisation of the Single European Asylum System (SEAS), for example, as concerns the reception conditions, improvement of the quality of asylum procedures, assessment of vulnerability, Dublin Cases, preparation of shared information on countries of origin, etc. The office continues to perform these activities despite the measures adopted in response to Covid-19, which were successively implemented in Malta as well as in individual EU Member States in spring 2020. Nevertheless, thanks to transferring most of its activities online, the EASO was able to continue to carry out, for example, the training of national experts in the partial areas of its purview.



The CR participated in the activities of the EASO by attending the regular meetings of the EASO board and other expert meetings, which took place as planned thanks to online videoconferences. The CR also traditionally participated in supporting the implementation operational plans of the EASO for Greece and Italy, particularly through the engagement of national experts, which were sent to these countries. In the period 2015-2019, a total of 102 Czech national experts were sent abroad as part of this support. Regrettably, due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and the adopted restrictive protective measures, it was not possible to continue the existing practice of implementing the operational plans. The CR, same as other Member States, concentrated on supporting the EASO in its search for new human resources, which could meet the current needs of the aforementioned operational plans and which would also better correspond to the current strategy and needs of the EASO's actions in the countries concerned.

Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictive measures aiming to control the spreading of the disease, it was not possible to carry out the planned trainings of the MoI officials in SEAS and the Dublin Regulation. For the same reason, the management of the EASO also cancelled the annual promotional event called "EASO Day", which serves to present the current activities performed by the EASO and to provide information on the experience so far with the work of Czech experts within the implementation of the office's operational plans. The MoI was forced to postpone the implementation of the aforementioned training and promotional activities until the epidemiological situation improves adequately and the restrictive protective measures are sufficiently relaxed.

## 7.2 Humanitarian Projects, Relocation, Resettlement

## 7.2

### ASSISTANCE ABROAD

In response to the worsening of the security and humanitarian situation in the immediate surroundings of the EU, associated mainly with the continuing armed conflict in Syria, the Government of the CR approved the establishment of a permanent **Programme of the Ministry of the Interior for Assistance to Refugees in Regions of Origin and for Prevention of Large Migration Flows** (hereinafter referred to as "Aid in Place") in January 2015. In autumn of the same year, the government approved *Policy of the Ministry of the Interior for Assistance to Refugees and States under Strong Migration Pressure*, which formulates the general framework within which the Ministry of the Interior is carrying out its current activities and will carry out its future activities relating to the external dimension of migration. The implementation particularly takes on the form of assistance to refugees and those states, which are under strong migration pressure.

Under the Aid in Place programme, the Ministry of the Interior sends financial donations abroad, which are intended particularly to help refugees directly on the site of their initial displacement and those states, which host a large number of refugees or face them as transit countries. In 2015, when the migration crisis was culminating particularly in the region of the Middle East, the Ministry of the Interior allocated a total of 100 million CZK to projects involving support for refugees. Thus, the Czech Republic manifested solidarity directly with refugees who were provided with the basic care as well as with the states facing large migration pressure and, with its part, contributed to mitigation of the escalated migration situation.

However, the needs of refugees and the states hosting migrants in their territories persist. There are still 5.4 million Syrian refugees living in countries adjacent to Syria. In 2020, migration pressure on Europe was seen on the Central Mediterranean, West Mediterranean and West Balkan migration routes, with the Central Mediterranean route and the West Balkan route having experienced an increase of nearly 155% and 78% in comparison with the year 2019.

Moreover, the year 2020 was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the loss of job opportunities and livelihoods of the inhabitants of poor countries and refugees caused by the pandemic may result in increasing the risk of growth of illegal migration of many inhabitants of poor regions as well as refugees who found a temporary refuge in these regions. Therefore, the support under the Aid in Place programme tried to contribute to reducing this risk, among other things, in 2020.

The budget of the Aid in Place programme was **135 million CZK** in 2020. The priority areas of the programme in 2020 included the **Balkan region and the region of the Middle East and North Africa** (MENA).

## LIST OF DONATIONS UNDER THE AID IN PLACE PROGRAMME IN 2020

### PRIORITY 1 – BALKAN REGION

- ▶ **Greece - aid in kind in response to the current migration situation worth 2.7 million CZK**

At the request of Greece, a delivery of aid in kind was carried out in March 2020 to help address the current migration situation in Greece. In collaboration with the Fire Brigade of the CR, mattresses, electric power generators, pumps, sleeping bags, rain boots, towels, blankets, raincoats, etc. for migrants and refugees were delivered to Greece. Implementation of the project ended in March 2020.

- ▶ **Greece – support of the migration system – 27 million CZK**

In response to the increased pressure at the Greek-Turkish border in spring 2020, a financial donation was given to the Ministry of Citizen Protection of the

Hellenic Republic, the purpose of which was to contribute to the prevention of illegal migration to the EU. The donation is intended to be used to purchase patrol vehicles, boats, inflatable boats, thermal imaging cameras, night vision equipment and telecommunication technology. The implementation of the project is underway and will end in August 2022.

► **Serbia – support of refugees’ access to the asylum procedure and integration measures – 20 million CZK**

The goal of the project implemented by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was to support the refugees’ access to the asylum procedure in Serbia and to support integration measures in the situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly for unaccompanied minors. As part of the project, free legal aid and consultancy was provided to nearly 5,000 refugees; activities were supported, and essential assistance was provided to more than 600 unaccompanied minors. In addition to that, a housing allowance was provided to 150 persons. The project’s activities also included border monitoring and providing social and legal advice to asylum seekers. Implementation of the project ended in December 2020.

## **PRIORITY 2 – REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

► **Jordan – support of higher education of Syrian refugees – 25 million CZK**

The goal of the project implemented by the UNHCR is to support higher education of Syrian refugees in Jordan. The support was provided to the UNHCR programme titled DAFI, which aims to ensure access to education for young refugees in Jordan and 53 other countries by granting scholarships. The granted scholarships financially cover the school fees and school supplies, meals, accommodation and transport. The scholarship holders are also provided with language and other educational courses under the programme. From the financial donation given by the CR, it will be possible to support 143 Syrian students in Jordan in their studies at higher vocational schools and universities. The implementation started in November 2020 and will end in October 2021.

► **Lebanon – support of Syrian refugees in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic – 10 million CZK**

The goal of the project implemented by the UNHCR was to support Syrian refugees in Lebanon in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic. The project included supporting the capacities for testing refugees for Covid-19 who live

in overpopulated areas and increasing the hospital capacities of the Lebanon healthcare system in such a way so that it was possible to hospitalise not only Lebanese citizens but also persons from the refugee community, if necessary. The financial donation was specifically used to procure PCR tests, to raise awareness among refugees and to procure additional 800 hospital beds and 100 equipped beds in intensive care units in Lebanese hospitals. Besides that, urgent medical care for 440 most vulnerable refugees, mainly women and children, was paid from the financial donation. Implementation of the project ended in December 2020.

► **Iraq, Jordan – financial donation for stabilising the situation of migrants and for capacity building at border crossings in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic – 25 million CZK**

Two projects of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) were supported from the financial donation. The goal of the project in Iraq is to stabilise the situation of migrants in the country or to allow for their return to their countries of origin. This will be a direct support of the most vulnerable migrants, victims of human trafficking who have found themselves in a very vulnerable position due to loss of their income. The assistance will involve providing information, legal aid, financial aid, sanitation packages and return assistance. The goal of the project in Jordan is to strengthen the capacities at the Jordanian border crossings in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, the infrastructure, data collection, sanitation and healthcare equipment at border crossings will be enhanced for safe migration management after the Jordanian borders are opened. The financial donation was split for the activities Iraq and Jordan in a ratio of 50:50. Implementation of both parts of the project was launched in November 2020 and will end in October 2021.

### ► **Libya – support for creation of job opportunities along migration routes – 10 million CZK**

The goal of the project implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) is to stabilise the situation of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons in the territory of Libya. The project will include supporting the creation of job opportunities along migration routes in Libya, specifically in the southwest region of Fezzan. The project's activities will include training the programme participants so that they can find jobs on the local labour market in agriculture, building industry and maintenance in the agricultural sector in Libya, to generally enhance the sustainability of the agricultural sector through innovative agricultural technologies and to create new job opportunities. There will be 2,450 persons from among migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and the local community participating in the project. Implementation of the project started in November 2020 and will end in October 2021.

### ► **North Africa – support of asylum systems – 15 million CZK**

The goal of the project implemented by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is to support the asylum systems of North African countries. This is a pilot project of the EASO in the region. The project is funded jointly by the CR and Denmark, which contribute an equal share, and Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany will participate in it through their experts. The project is implemented under the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) for North Africa. The project will specifically focus on the central and western Mediterranean routes; consequently, the activities to be implemented will cover a wider range of countries – Egypt, Niger (phase 1 of the project), Morocco and Tunisia (phase 2 of the project). The activities will aim to build national asylum and reception systems in the North African countries (for example, regional conferences, workshops, study visits and targeted training sessions with EASO national experts will be organised). Furthermore, the projects and activities of the EU Member States and other actors in North Africa will be mapped; the situation and legislation regarding asylum in North African countries will be mapped in order to create knowledge-based management for implementation of other projects. Implementation of the project started in November 2020 and will continue until October 2022.

## **THE PROGRAMME OF HUMANITARIAN EVACUATIONS OF INHABITANTS WITH HEALTH ISSUES – 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 there is no specialised professional care available. Treatment is provided for free and exclusively to civilians

(predominantly to women, children and seniors) whose medical condition is serious or whose medical condition does not allow them to lead a dignified life. In 2020, the programme was implemented under Resolution No. 956 of the Government of the Czech Republic of 20 November 2015 by sending teams of Czech physicians abroad, by training medical staff and by supporting projects designed to build and develop the medical infrastructure.

In 2020, the MEDEVAC Programme supported the healthcare systems and provided assistance in a total of 11 priority countries, specifically in the Middle East (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon), in Africa (Ghana, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal) and in Southern and Eastern Europe (Belarus, Ukraine and Greece). Medical missions were organised there, medical professionals were trained there, patients were evacuated to be treated in the CR, and healthcare projects were supported and donations in kind were provided. The activities themselves were considerably affected by the restrictions related to Covid-19, which prevented implementing medical missions in such scope as had been originally planned.

### **Summary of MEDEVAC Programme implementation in 2020:**

- ▶ **3 medical teams sent abroad** with the participation of 3 Czech hospitals (Hradec Králové University Hospital, Olomouc University Hospital, Na Bulovce Hospital);
- ▶ **265 surgical procedures carried out abroad** (ophthalmology, orthopaedics and traumatology); in addition to that, **10 patients were treated using a non-invasive method** serving as a substitute for a knee surgery;
- ▶ **304 specialist examinations** with diagnostics;
- ▶ **60 patients** and their family members **evacuated** from Belarus to the Czech Republic for treatment;
- ▶ **5 online training sessions** with a focus on hospital epidemiology in connection with Covid-19 (Ghana, Iraq, Morocco, Mauritania, Ukraine);
- ▶ **support provided to 3 medical projects** of international organisations (ADRA Int., ICRC) worth **a total of 15 million CZK** (Lebanon, Mali, Ukraine);
- ▶ **2 in-kind donations worth a total of 6.5 million CZK** given to Lebanon and Greece (in collaboration with the General University Hospital in Prague, the Fire Brigade of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Defence).

The Programme has had a constant budget of **60 million CZK** since 2016.

The Programme for Providing Assistance with the Resettlement of Czech Compatriots continued in 2020. The implementation of this programme was made possible by adoption of Government Resolution No. 1014 of 8 December 2014, in which the government approved new governmental policies for resettling persons with proven Czech origin (compatriots) living abroad.

For the participants, taking part in the programme does not mean that they automatically receive permanent residence permits. The programme simplifies the entire procedure, particularly by having the state assume responsibility for providing accommodation for them and funds for their stay. However, these benefits are only provided to those persons, in whose case such assistance is justified, that is, to persons from endangered areas or for those members of Czech compatriot communities who are disadvantaged medically, socially or economically.

A total of **228 persons** (members of Czech compatriot communities in Ukraine, Russia and Venezuela) were **resettled to the CR during the year 2020**. The compatriots from Ukraine were mainly members of the compatriot communities in the Zaporozhe, Odessa and Zhytomyr Regions as well as from the areas of anti-terrorist operations in the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions. By the end of the year, 167 people from this group found permanent places of residence and jobs and have become completely self-sufficient, whereby the purpose of this programme was accomplished. The rest of resettled compatriots will move to their places of permanent settlement in early 2021. The highest number of compatriots resettled in Prague and in the Region of Pilsen, the Region of South Bohemia, the Region of Central Bohemia, and the Region of Ústí nad Labem. The Caritas of Archdiocese of Prague, which ensured direct work with clients, continued to be a partner of the MoI in the implementation of this programme in 2020.

A total of **1,970 persons** have been resettled to the CR since the launch of the programme in 2015 until 31 December 2020. The average period of their stay in temporary accommodations provided by the MoI amounted to 70 days, which is 13 days more than in 2019. The prolongation of the periods of their stay in temporary accommodations was mainly caused by the restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, which complicated movement of persons in the territory of the CR on a long-term basis and limited recruitment of labour forces and housing offers.

Under the aforementioned Government Resolution, the programme is open to members of Czech compatriot communities regardless their countries of origin. The implementation of the programme will continue in 2021 and the following years due to the demand from clients, and it can be expected that the target group will be extended to include compatriots from other areas, particularly from South America and the countries of the former Soviet Union.

In 2020, preparations for the implementation of the **revised European Border and Coast Guard Regulation** (Regulation (EU) 2019/1896), which is an important element of the EU's comprehensive approach to migration and border management. The security of external borders has been declared, for a long time, to be the basic prerequisite for the functioning of the Schengen Area without checks at the internal borders as well as the prerequisite for further progress in addressing the EU's migration policy.

The DFPS officials are regular participants of the Frontex agency meetings and special trainings within the **task force dealing with joint return operations** (Direct Contact Points). Due to the global situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, only 1 meeting took place physically in Zagreb in February 2020. The number of return operations decreased due to the international situation regarding Covid-19 pandemic.

The DFPS monitors the opportunities offered by the Frontex agency in relation to return operations and monitors the plans of joint return operations implemented through the Frontex agency, while constantly assessing the offers of the return operations concerned, which it compares with the current number of persons detained and placed in the facilities for detention of foreigners and the number of persons found in prisons, serving their prison sentences, or in pre-expulsion detention with an imposed expulsion sentence. **In 2020, the CR was not an organiser of any joint return operation mediated by the Frontex agency.** As part of a joint return operation organised by Poland in December 2020, 8 persons were returned to Vietnam (this involved participation of 25 police officers from the Flight Escort Department of the DFPS and cooperation with the Army of the CR and the Airbase Prague-Kbely).

Police officers from the Foreign Police, predominantly from the teams of the mobile unit of the DFPS and Frontex, participated **in joint operations at various sections of external European borders** (predominantly in Greece, North Macedonia and Serbia). In addition to that, they were a part of several police details operating in North Macedonia and Serbia under bilateral agreements.<sup>37</sup> As part of operations of the Frontex agency, the police officers of the Foreign Police were deployed at airports, which are the key points for illegal migration. Foreign police officers were also deployed at the Václav Havel International Airport in Prague. Due to anti-coronavirus measures, only a small part of the planned guest deployments and participations in joint operations took place. Two police officers of the Frontex agency were deployed as guests at airports. The main purpose was to exchange information on migration and

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<sup>37</sup> Detailed information on the deployment of police officers is at the disposal of the Police Presidium, which is responsible for deploying the police officers.



to foster international cooperation. Czech police officers were sent to a travel document training of the Frontex agency. Furthermore, police officers were deployed in joint operations at the land border between Hungary and Serbia and Croatia and Monte Negro (the first operation of the Frontex agency with executive powers in the territory of a third country) and to the Chisinau airport (Moldova), Milan (Italy) and Tirana (Albania). The guest deployment was prematurely terminated.

Representatives of the **Flight Escort Department of the DFPS** participated in an event of the Frontex agency, the Trainers Annual Meeting, which took place in Amsterdam from 6 to 9 September 2020. The training year 2020 was evaluated and plans of Frontex for the forthcoming years were presented. The possibilities of the FAR system, which is used by Member States during return operations, were presented. During the discussions, a new methodology of providing first aid was presented, along with the equipment, which Frontex would be using when performing its tasks in the area of border protection and return operations. The trainers were informed that due to the situation surrounding the events immediately associated with the global Covid-19 pandemic, the training of police officers on the Lesbos island for the purpose of carrying out readmissions from Greece to Turkey would not continue in 2020 (originally, a total of 13 training sessions were scheduled).

Mutual exchange of information on documents successfully takes place on the platform of the EU Council task force Borders/False Documents, Committee of Documents Specialists within the Frontex agency and other organisations. The information on documents is also exchanged through information systems (such as the FADO international system). Through national contact points for documents within the EU+, it is possible to request the assistance of partner states at any time. Nevertheless, based on international cooperation in the field of documents, the CR has also been establishing and maintaining contacts with experts outside the EU+ on an ongoing basis (Canada, USA, Australia, the Republic of Korea).

Data concerning irregular travel documents, illegal migration, expulsion, persons cleared at the external Schengen border, etc. are sent to the Frontex agency regularly. The DFPS is also integrated into the EUROSUR system (the European Border Surveillance System), which is used to share information and cooperation mechanisms.

## COOPERATION WITH THE NEIGHBOURING STATES

The specific forms of cooperation with the neighbouring states are defined in international agreements on police cooperation.

As part of international cooperation, **joint patrols** are carried out under the jurisdiction of regional directorates of the Police of the Czech Republic and are used for standard police work. The operations of the joint patrols have been proven to yield good results on a long-term basis, particularly with respect to prevention, exchange of information and experience and general development of cross-border cooperation. The joint patrols are planned in advance but both sides are able to respond quickly and flexibly, if necessary. Police officers who received special training are assigned to the joint patrols.

In 2020, a total of **226 joint patrols were carried out by police officers from the Foreign Police Departments of the RDPs together with units from the neighbouring states**. In comparison with the year 2019, this was a large decrease by 539 patrols (i.e. -70.5%). The reason for this low number were the measures adopted in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic. Joint patrols took place from 1 January 2020 until 2 March 2020 when, in accordance with the instruction from the Police President, all international work contacts were cancelled based on the decision of the Minister of the Interior, made at the meeting of the National Security Council on 2 March 2020, due to the spreading of Covid-19 (the exceptions were the Foreign Police Departments of the RDPs of the Region of Pilsen and the Region of Ústí nad Labem – special joint patrols at former border crossings carried out as part of the measures responding to the Covid-19 pandemic). The joint patrols were resumed on 1 July 2020. Subsequently, all cross-border activities were cancelled once again starting from 14 September 2020 until the end of the year 2020 due to the worsening of the current trend in the spreading of Covid-19.



**Common centres of police and customs cooperation** play a crucial role in cooperation with the neighbouring countries. Cooperation takes place particularly with the aim of obtaining information on specific foreign nationals, with whom proceedings are conducted (checks in the registers of the given state carried out to verify the identity of a person), mediating offers to transfer and receive persons and coordinating joint patrols.

**Direct operational cooperation with the authorities of the neighbouring states** plays an important role in combat against illegal migration, cross-border crime, the trafficking of women, etc. The Department of Crime Investigation and Documentation of the DFPS is actively trying, to the extent possible, to cooperate with the security forces of Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary because this cooperation is very important for effective and quick action in combat against illegal migration. This cooperation is established depending on the current need and situation. Besides focusing on illegal migration and detection of cross-border crime, the cooperation also involves documenting legal migration of third-country nationals carried out through sham marriages, sham paternity, misuse of work visas, etc. The liaison officers at the embassies of the CR abroad who promptly report any suspicion of legal or illegal migration also play an irreplaceable role. Due to the epidemiological situation in the CR in 2020, the regional directorates of the Police of the CR imposed strict measures to prevent the spreading of Covid-19. In view of the implementation of these measures, **it was necessary to reorganise, reschedule or completely cancel certain international activities** (such as professional and language training of police officers, joint exercises and drills or workshops).

## **COOPERATION WITH OTHER STATES**

Besides the neighbouring states, close cooperation has also been established with those states, across which the main migration routes crossing the territory of the CR lead, specifically with Hungary and Serbia.



In 2020, there were **7,093 persons** identified as perpetrators of **illegal migration into the territory of the Czech Republic**. From the total number of such perpetrators, **6,645 persons (i.e. 93.7 %)** were detected as **illegally staying** and **448 persons** were detected when they were **perpetrating illegal migration across the external Schengen border of the CR**. In the context of illegal migration across the external Schengen border, the detained persons were most often citizens of Ukraine, Georgia and Russia. The detected illegally staying persons were most often citizens of Ukraine, Moldova and Vietnam.

When illegally migrating across the external Schengen border, **28 persons used irregular travel documents**; in terms of citizenship, the largest group among them were the citizens of Albania. In the context of illegal stay, 103 persons presented irregular travel documents (these were most often citizens of Ukraine and Moldova). In connection with **facilitation of illegal stay or the crossing of the border**, **37 persons** were registered in 2020.

## 8.1 Illegal Migration into the Territory of the CR

## 8.1

Since 2008 (accession to the Schengen Area), two basic categories of illegal migration into the territory of the Czech Republic have been monitored:

**1. Illegal crossing of the external Schengen border of the CR** – in this category, persons who illegally crossed or attempted to illegally cross the external Schengen border (airport) of the Czech Republic are monitored. By “persons”, we mean foreign nationals and the citizens of the CR.

**2. Illegal stay** – this category registers those foreign nationals who are identified in the territory of the CR, including the transit areas at airports (illegal entry, expiration of validity or period of stay, etc.). This category also includes the sub-category of what is referred to as **“transit illegal migration”** (this sub-category has been statistically monitored since 2015 and contains foreign nationals illegally crossing mostly the land internal Schengen borders to travel across the Czech Republic to other EU/Schengen Area countries).

With respect to the reasons for illegal migration, the Czech Republic has become the destination country for most persons in recent years. The exception to this was the period of the global migration wave, which became apparent in the territory of the CR in late 2014 and culminated in 2015. During that time, the CR was abundantly used by foreign nationals as a transit area for illegal migration to other European countries. Since 2016, after the wave of

transit illegal migration subsided, the CR has been misused for movement to other EU/Schengen Area countries to a far lesser extent.

The trend in illegal migration after 2008 (major changes occurred on 27 December 2007 as a result of the CR's accession to the Schengen Area) showed gradual increase in annual numbers after a sharp decline in 2010. The year-on-year increase in the period 2011-2014 was between 7 and 16%. A major change occurred in 2015 when a marked increase of 78% occurred in comparison with the year 2014. As a result, the highest annual number of identified illegal migrants was registered in 2015 since 2008. There was a significant decrease of 39% in 2016 but if we compare the number for that year with the years 2008 through 2014, then the number was higher than the numbers for these years. In 2017, the decline, albeit more moderate, continued and there was a year-on-year decrease by 10%. In 2018, the trend of year-on-year decline stopped and a slight increase of 5% was reported. In 2019, the increase continued and a year-on-year increase of 13.7% was reported. **A marked increase occurred in 2020 (+25%), which was affected by the situation regarding the prevention of the spreading of the Covid-19 pandemic.** If we evaluate the annual numbers since the year 2008 (that is, over a period of 13 years), then the number for the year 2020 is the second highest one.

**Transit illegal migration<sup>38</sup> across the territory of the CR** is associated with illegal entry into the country mainly from Slovakia and Austria or via air travel, with Germany and other states of Western and Northern Europe (particularly France, the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries) being the destination. In 2020, most transiting persons used the two main migration routes, meaning the Eastern Mediterranean route (Turkey-Greece across both sea and land borders) and the West Balkan route (Albania and North Macedonia remain the main points of entry into the region from Greece; the migration routes then go north, particularly across Serbia and, to a lesser extent, across Bulgaria and Romania, then to the Hungarian borders; or the route across Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia is used).

In 2020, **486 persons were detected as perpetrators of transit illegal migration.** From among the 486 persons, 462 persons and 24 persons were detected illegally crossing the land border and the air border, respectively. Based on a year-on-year comparison, there was a high increase by 220 persons (i.e. +82.7%). In the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the year 2020, 81 persons were detected (i.e. 16.7%), while in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year 2020, there were 405 persons detected (i.e. 83.3%). Very low numbers were detected in March through June (5, 4, 6 and 11 persons). The factors, which affected the numbers of detained persons, included the situation along the Eastern Mediterranean and the West Balkan migration routes in early 2020 where migrants accumulated along the

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38 This has been reported separately as a sub-category of illegal migration since 17 June 2015.

Greek Turkish land border. The migration pressure also influenced the situation on the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea to an increased degree where the capacities of all hotspots for accommodation of migrants were exceeded many times over. Another factor was the global situation concerning the spreading of the coronavirus in March and April 2020 when the EU/Schengen Area states agreed to jointly close their borders in order to prevent the spreading of the coronavirus (travelling restrictions and closure of borders within the Schengen Area and source/transit countries, along with the decision of the Greek government to suspend reception of asylum applications resulted in a sharp decline in the number of illegal migrants coming to the EU, particularly to Greece). After the measures against the Covid-19 pandemic had been cancelled/relaxed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year 2020, migrants tried to enter the Schengen Area as quickly as possible. After the epidemiological situation had worsened in autumn 2020 and after measures against the Covid-19 pandemic had consequently been tightened, there was once again pressure along the migration route to the EU/Schengen Area due to the poor, particularly economic, situation in the source countries of illegal migration, and the persons "stuck" along the route, mainly in Greece and the Balkan states, started to move again.

Same as in 2019, in terms of citizenship, the largest group of detected illegal migrants consisted of citizens of **Afghanistan** (139 persons) in 2020. These were followed by citizens of **Syria** (83 persons), **Morocco** (62 persons), **Turkey** (55 persons) and **Algeria** (31 persons). These 5 citizenships account for more than 76% of the total number and year-on-year increases have been reported for all these 5 citizenships. **Interception of citizens of Morocco was a new phenomenon in 2020.** While in the years 2018 and 2019, these citizens were completely absent among the migrants detained during transit migration, their numbers have been growing since October. After citizens of Morocco, **the highest year-on-year increases were seen with citizens of Afghanistan** (+55 persons), Turkey (+50 persons), Syria (+48 persons) and Algeria (+29 persons). The largest decrease was seen with citizens of Iraq (16 persons). Among the persons whose country of arrival was found out, that is, a neighbouring country or a country with their flight destination (385 persons, i.e. 79.2 %), the persons heading from Slovakia (279 persons) intercepted at a land border, predominated over the persons heading from Austria (88 persons), intercepted at a land border. At the air border, the highest number of persons flew in from Greece (12 persons). The overwhelming majority of persons stated Germany as the destination of their travels.

The main *modi operandi* for transit illegal migration were to misuse the asylum procedures of the EU/Schengen Area Member States, to use mainly trucks and vans (with hiding places in these means of transport) during movement across the country, to use people smuggling networks, and to use particularly flights from Greece and irregular travel documents at the air border.

## STATISTICS

In the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020, there were **a total of 7,093 persons detected when illegally migrating into the territory of the CR** (a year-on-year increase by 24.9 %). In comparison with the year 2019, **there was an increase by one quarter, that is, by 1,416 persons**. Among them, **6,645 persons (i.e. 93.7 %) were detected as illegally staying and 448 persons were detected when they were perpetrating illegal migration** across the external Schengen border of the CR.<sup>39</sup>

**There were 295 persons** (i.e. 4.2 % of the total number of persons detected during illegal migration) **repeatedly detected as perpetrators of illegal migration**. On a year-on-year basis, there was a decrease by 170 persons (i.e. -36.6 %). In terms of citizenships, the top position was held by citizens of **Ukraine (131)**, followed by citizens of **Moldova (36)** and **Vietnam (22)**.

**Table 7:**

### **Illegal migration in the CR in 2020 – TOP 10 by category**

Illegal migration in the Czech Republic					
Illegal stay	Persons detected	i.e. %	Illegal migration across the external Schengen border	Persons detected	i.e. %
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 645</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>100,0</b>
of which EU citizens	131	2,0	of which EU citizens	-	-
third-country nationals	6 514	98,0	third-country nationals	448	100,0
<b>of which TOP 10:</b>			<b>of which TOP 10:</b>		
Ukraine	3 242	48,8	Ukraine	211	47,1
Moldova	992	14,9	Georgia	58	12,9
Vietnam	231	3,5	Russia	43	9,6
Georgia	187	2,8	United States of America	16	3,6
Russia	170	2,6	Israel	13	2,9
Afghanistan	148	2,2	Moldova	13	2,9
Uzbekistan	139	2,1	Albania	12	2,7
Albania	130	2,0	Azerbaijan	9	2,0

Source: DFPS

<sup>39</sup> Since the external Schengen border only consists of an air border, persons who illegally migrated across the external Schengen border are only recorded with the DFPS (the Directorate of the Foreign Police Service), which was organisationally expanded in 2008 by including 5 Foreign Police Inspectorates at international airports.



Syria	123	1,9	Turkey	8	1,8
Serbia	96	1,4	Belarus	8	1,8

As regards **citizenships**, the citizens of Ukraine have been traditionally the largest group of persons detected as perpetrators of illegal migration since 2008. There was a change in 2015 due to the large migration wave and the top position went to the citizens of Syria. After the migration wave subsided, the citizens of Ukraine returned to the top position in 2016. A total of **3,453 citizens of Ukraine** (i.e. 48.7 %) were detected in 2020. The following positions based on the statistics were occupied by citizens of **Moldova** (1,005 persons, i.e. 14.2 %), **Georgia** (243 persons, i.e. 3.5 %), **Vietnam** (232, i.e. 3.3 %) and **Russia** (213 persons, i.e. 3.0 %). In comparison with the year 2019, these are the same five citizenships with the only difference that the rankings of the citizens of Georgia and the citizens of Vietnam were switched. These 5 citizenships account for approximately 73 % of the total number of persons detected as perpetrators of illegal migration. In the two categories of illegal migration (illegal stay and illegal migration across the external Schengen border), the representation of citizenships in the top positions used to be different for a long time; however, the year 2020 is an exception and the citizens of Ukraine represent the highest number in both categories.

If we divide persons who arrived illegally into two categories, specifically children (aged less than 18 years) and adults (18 years or more), then the share of children (219 children) was merely 3.3 % in 2020. A total of 73 children were found to be unaccompanied by an adult relative. The situation of these children was addressed in cooperation with the Social-Legal Child Protection Authority (OSPOD).

With respect to structure by gender, the share of illegally staying men (80 %) was higher in comparison with women. With respect to structure by age, persons aged 26-35 years (33 %) predominated; the other highly represented categories were persons aged 18-25 years (24 %) and persons aged 36-45 years (22 %).

## 8.2 Facilitation of Illegal Migration

## 8.2

After the accession of the CR to the Schengen Area (December 2007), the issues of facilitation of illegal migration across the state border (people smuggling) shifted more to facilitation of illegal stay in the territory of the CR (sham marriages, misuse of the mechanism for concurring declaration of parents on determination of paternity, procurement of forgeries of various certificates necessary for the stay, etc.). In 2015, in connection with illegal transit migration, the trend changed and the predominant activity was facilitation of illegal migration across the state border, that is, help with the

crossing of the border into the CR and with the subsequent movement across our territory to Western European and Scandinavian countries. After the illegal migration wave in 2016 subsided, the main trend in facilitation of migration returned to facilitation of an illegal stay in the territory of the CR. In 2020, the number of persons detected during illegal transit migration increased (high degree of assistance from other persons) and facilitators were detained more frequently but not commonly.

Although, the people smuggler was not directly detained in many cases, it clearly follows from the testimonies of foreigners that they used the assistance of other persons during a certain part of their journey. The overall lower numbers of detained people smugglers have also been caused by the fact that the migrants receive the instructions for their travel from their relatives, acquaintances and people smugglers via modern technologies to make communication and navigation easier. People smuggling rings operate as far back as in the home countries of the foreigners where these get instructions in advance for their subsequent travel across the external Schengen border. In 2020, there were a few cases where the driver of a vehicle transporting illegal migrants fled the scene and was not tracked down even after a search operation was launched (for example, with the use of night vision thermal imaging equipment or a police search dog).

Facilitation of illegal migration is also carried out by **providing irregular documents**. Irregular documents were presented by foreign nationals during residence proceedings, during their employment, after the end of their legal stay or during their illegal migration across the territory of the Czech Republic. In terms of citizenship, the main groups who used irregular documents for residence or for illegal gainful activity were citizens of Ukraine and Moldova. As concerns illegal migration, the highest number of cases involved citizens of Syria entering the country (who flew in from Greece via Schengen flights). Besides travel documents, forged/altered residence permits, driving licenses, certificates of accommodation, medical reports on Covid-19 tests, decisions on temporary incapacity to work, medical insurance documents, criminal record certificates, documents on completion of retraining courses, etc.

In 2020, information was also confirmed regarding international foreign-language criminal gangs partially operating in the CR and partially operating abroad, which participated in the procurement of forged or altered personal documents used to legalise the stay of migrants (and their subsequent illegal employment) who are already found in the territories of European countries, including the CR; or illegal migrants are trying to get into the Schengen Area countries with the help of such gangs. This activity is the domain of particularly the Ukrainian community. The most often misused irregular documents were Romanian and Lithuanian identity documents, which were predominantly misused by citizens of Ukraine and Moldova, mainly for the purposes of illegal employment. These persons get employment at various companies where

they pose as EU citizens and present forged documents, whereby they avoid the lengthy work permit procedure or possibly the verification of the legality of their stay.

**Sham marriages** continued to be used to legalise residence in the territory of the Czech Republic. In most cases, it was the same *modus operandi* where female citizens of the CR entered into marriage in the territory of the CR as well as outside the territory of the CR (Tunisia, Egypt, etc.) with foreign nationals for the pretended purpose of family reunification against financial payment promised to them by the organiser.<sup>40</sup> Based on the marriage, the foreign national applies at an embassy for a permit for temporary residence in the territory of the CR pursuant to Section 26 of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the CR. Subsequently, the foreign national is issued with a short-term visa for a family purpose and the foreign national arrives in the CR with this visa. Another reported *modus operandi* involves cases where female citizens of the Czech Republic made it possible for a third-country national to stay in the territory of another Member State after entering into marriage with him (Czech women, as citizens of the European Union, had a job and place of residence administratively arranged in another EU Member State and their husbands then applied for residence in that state for family reunification based on the sham marriages).

The officials of the Documentation Units of the Foreign Police Departments of the RDPs also investigated those persons who facilitated residence through **false paternity** (using the official option of parents' concurring declaration). This involves registering an EU citizen/a foreign national as a parent in a child's birth certificate against payment or organising such operations. The identified forms of misuse of this official option include the method where the foreign national has himself or herself registered as the father or mother, hereinafter referred to as the parent, of a Czech child (whether the child has already been born or is yet to be born) and subsequently applies for residence for the purpose of reunification with a citizen of the Czech Republic. There is also a method where a Czech citizen has himself or herself registered as the parent of the child of a foreign national (whether the child has already been born or is yet to be born) and a method where a foreign national has himself or herself registered as the parent of the child of another foreign national who already has permanent residence status in the territory of the Czech Republic.

As concerns other forms of facilitation of an illegal stay in the country, a continuing trend in illegal migration is to misuse the official mechanism for filing an application for temporary residence based on a **concurring declaration on reunification of a male or female partner with a citizen of the CR**, with the purpose or reason of the requested residence permit is

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40 For example, in 2020, the Foreign Police Department of the RDP of the Region of Karlovy Vary investigated 13 cases for possible sham marriages between citizens of the CR and third-country nationals who were citizens of Vietnam in all the cases.

“of family nature”. Mostly persons of lower social status from among citizens of the CR make a statutory declaration in the offices of DAMP of the MoI that they live with third-country nationals in the aforementioned partnership and these third-country nationals then, as their family members, apply for a temporary residence permit based on a concurring declaration on reunification of a male or female partner with a citizen of the CR. With this, such citizens of the CR facilitate the illegal stay of such third-country nationals not only in the territory of the CR but in the entire EU, thanks to which they need not meet all the conditions required for entry and residence in the territory of the CR as defined in Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the CR, as amended, and Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code).

The Foreign Police Departments also carried out checks during **the language examinations** in the Czech language taken by foreign nationals. This involved checking those foreign nationals who are applying for a permanent residence permit for citizenship of the CR; the checks were focused on verifying the authenticity and validity of the submitted foreign identity documents of the participants of the examination and on verifying that the identity document is really being submitted and the examination is really being taken by the specific applicant because there was a risk of misuse of identity or another fraud with respect to passing the examination in the Czech language and obtaining the related Certificate. In earlier years, cases had occurred to a greater extent where there had been persons posing as other persons, fraud during the examinations or circumvention of the system of examinations based on corruption of the examiners. Changes in the examination system and the examination procedures significantly contributed to prevention of this phenomenon. But even in the year 2020, isolated cases of this kind were detected.

The police officers from the ADP Documentation Units also investigated findings relating to the activities of groups of persons **facilitating illegal employment**. These are mainly cases where such persons mediate jobs to foreign nationals who do not have valid employment permits, or where such persons, in order to make it easier for the foreign nationals to start a job, procure forged or otherwise altered identity documents for these foreign nationals with the intention that such documents will be used later as authentic documents.

## STATISTICS

In 2020, there were **37 persons detected who facilitated illegal migration**. In comparison with last year, there was an increase of 11 persons (i.e. +42.3 %). As concerns the form of facilitation, 22 cases involving smuggling across the border (+14 persons on a year-on-year basis) and 15 cases involved arranging a sham marriage (+6 persons). In terms of citizenships, particularly citizens of the CR (18), Bulgaria (6) and Romania (3) were investigated.

**Table 8:**  
**Facilitation of an illegal stay or a crossing of a border – comparison between the years 2019 and 2020**

Year	2019	i.e. %	2020	i.e. %	Change as compared with the previous period	
					in %	Absolute figure
<b>Total number of persons</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>42,3</b>	<b>11</b>
persons who facilitated illegal migration:						
sham marriage and organisation thereof	9	34,6	15	40,5	66,7	6
sham paternity and organisation thereof	5	19,2	0	0,0	-100,0	-5
facilitation of an illegal cross of the state border	8	30,8	22	59,5	175,0	14
other facilitation of an illegal stay**	4	15,4	0	0,0	-100,0	-4

\*\* such as procurement of visas, forged documents, etc.

Source: DFPS



In 2020, a total of **7,319 administrative return decisions** were registered. Among them, a total of **6,436** enforceable decisions on administrative expulsion were registered, which was 681 decisions fewer than in the previous year. There were also **883** decisions on imposition of the obligation to leave the country issued in 2020, which meant there was a year-on-year increase of 12.5 %.

The largest groups of foreign nationals who were issued an enforceable decision on administrative expulsion were the citizens of Ukraine, Moldova and Uzbekistan. Based on an enforceable decision on administrative expulsion, the expulsion was carried out for 729 foreign nationals, which represents a significant increase by 335 persons (i.e. +85 %) in comparison with the previous year.

In the area of voluntary returns, **the programmes of assisted voluntary returns are implemented by the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy at the Ministry of the Interior of the CR, the International Organisation for Migration, and the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior.** During the year 2020, a total of **1,060 voluntary returns** of third-country nationals were carried out. This number included 687 assisted voluntary returns of foreign nationals carried out by the MoI, 337 voluntary returns of foreign nationals carried out by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and 36 assisted voluntary returns of applicants for international protection carried out by the SUZ. The largest groups among these returnees in terms of citizenship consisted of citizens of Ukraine, Mongolia, Moldova, Albania and Uzbekistan.

The return policy forms an integral part of the migration policy as a whole. The Czech Republic always prefers the option of a voluntary departure from the country to a forced return, which is also reflected in the statistics.

In 2020, a total of **7,319 administrative return decisions** were issued. An administrative return decision may have the form of a decision on an obligation to leave the country or a decision on administrative expulsion

### DECISION ON AN OBLIGATION TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY

Under the Return Directive, legislation providing for a decision on an obligation to leave the territory of the Czech Republic was adopted in January 2011.<sup>41</sup> In 2020, a total of **883 decisions on imposition of an obligation to leave the country** were issued. According to a year-on-year comparison, there has been a slight decrease by mere 10 decisions (i.e. -1.1 %).

In 2020, a decision was made in 86 cases on an appeal against a decision on an obligation to leave the country, which represents a slight decrease by 12 decisions according to a year-on-year comparison. In 47 cases, the appeal was dismissed; in 14 cases, the appeal was granted; and in 20 cases the decision was overturned and returned.

### DECISION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPULSION

Administrative expulsion is an administrative decision by which the stay of a foreign national in the country is terminated, the time limit for leaving the country is set and the period of time for which the foreign national cannot be permitted to enter the territories of the European Union Member States is defined. The period for which the foreign national cannot be permitted to enter the territories of the European Union Member States is set by the Police of the CR according to the precise conditions defined by the law.

In 2020, a total of **6,385 foreign nationals with an issued enforceable decision on administrative expulsion** were registered, which, in comparison with the previous year, represents a decrease of 682 persons (i.e. -9.7 %). In terms of citizenships, the largest group of foreign nationals who were issued with an enforceable decision on administrative expulsion consisted of citizens of **Ukraine** (4,233 persons), the same as in the previous years. They account for two thirds (66.3 %) of the total number of such persons and, on a year-on-year basis, there was the largest year-on-year decrease among them, specifically by 398 persons (i.e. -8.6 %). After a large gap, they were followed by citizens of **Moldova** (1,050 persons, i.e. 16.4 %) in the second position with whom the second-largest decrease of such persons was seen (-121 persons, i.e. -10.3 %). The third position was taken by citizens of **Uzbekistan** (125 persons, i.e. 2.0 %).

41 Section 50a of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals



In 2020, **6,436 enforceable decisions on administrative expulsion** were registered.<sup>42</sup>

As concerns the reasons (a total of 8,050 reasons) for issuing a decision on administrative expulsion, once again the category of illegal stay accounted for the largest share (3,402 reasons, i.e. 42.3 %), followed by the category of violation of the Employment Act (2,187 persons, i.e. 27.2 %, where the largest year-on-year decrease by 1,753 reasons, i.e. -44.5 %, was seen). This was closely followed by the category of miscellaneous reasons (2,106 reasons, i.e. 26.2 %) where there was a year-on-year increase by 1,939 reasons (i.e. +1,161.1 %).

## 9.2 Execution of a Decision on Return

## 9.2

### **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. On 31 July 2019, an amendment to Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals entered into force, and the provision of Section 123a was expanded to include a new group of foreign nationals who may apply with the Ministry for reimbursement for the costs associated with a voluntary return. Thus, after this amendment, the Ministry may now also bear the costs associated with the voluntary return of a foreign national who was given a time limit for leaving the country in a decision on an obligation to leave the country or the territories of the EU Member States, and may carry out a return of a foreign national whose long-term visa was cancelled or expired, whose application for a permanent or long-term residence permit was rejected or whose residence was cancelled, who is serving a prison sentence or on whom an expulsion sentence was imposed. Pursuant to this provision, it is the Ministry of the Interior, specifically DAMP, which is responsible for making a decision on an application filed by a foreign national and for possibly approving and implementing his or her application. If a foreign national, who has been detained and placed in the Facility for Detention of Foreign Nationals (ZZC), applies for a voluntary return, then the forced return of such a foreign national is carried out by the DFPS.

Voluntary repatriation is also governed by the Asylum Act; pursuant to its Section 54a, the Ministry of the Interior may bear the costs associated with a voluntary return, if it is in the public interest.

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<sup>42</sup> Multiple decisions can be issued to a single person over a given period of time.

In the context of the issues of voluntary returns and returns in general, the EU's legislation is also important with respect to the legislation governing these issues. This specifically includes 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.

As concerns voluntary returns, the MoI, SUZ and the IOM implement their **programmes of assisted voluntary returns**. In their programmes, the Ministry of the Interior and the IOM focus particularly on those foreign nationals to whom a decision on administrative expulsion was issued. Under its programme, SUZ provides assistance with voluntary departure for the country of origin to failed applicants for international protection.

Under all these programmes of voluntary returns, the Ministry of the Interior, SUZ and the IOM carry out not only the actual voluntary return but they also provide all the related consultancy and assistance, which are necessary for effective, fast and successful implementation of a return. The provided services include the provision of information on voluntary return to foreign nationals placed in reception and accommodation centres for applicants for international protection or in facilities for detention of foreign nationals as well as the provision of consultancy concerning returns, which is provided to foreign nationals with an obligation to leave the territory of the CR who have not been detained. In connection with the consultancy concerning returns, the foreign nationals concerned are also provided with assistance in their communication with the embassies of their countries of origin, most often in connection with procurement of an emergency travel document. If necessary, the IOM can also provide a foreign national with transit assistance and assistance after his or her arrival in the country of origin.

Besides the possibility to use one of the functioning programmes of assisted voluntary returns, failed applicants for international protection, foreign nationals with terminated residence or foreign nationals on whom administrative expulsion was imposed can leave the country spontaneously at their own expense.

During the year 2020, **a total of 1,060 voluntary returns of third-country nationals** were carried out. This included **1,024 assisted voluntary returns** of foreign nationals carried out by the MoI and the IOM, and **36 assisted voluntary returns** of applicants for international protection carried out by SUZ. In terms of citizenship, the largest groups among these returnees consisted of citizens of Ukraine, Mongolia, Moldova, Albania and Uzbekistan.

#### a) Voluntary returns carried out by DAMP

The Ministry of the Interior, specifically the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy, has been implementing its 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 with a decision on administrative expulsion.

As part of the implementation of voluntary returns, 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. With the support of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the Ministry of the Interior has been implementing a project titled *Building Return Capacities of the MoI CR* since 1 April 2020 and this project is scheduled to continue until 30 November 2022. Thanks to this project, the capacity and the quality of the return mechanisms of the MoI CR will be enhanced so that maximum availability of this service is ensured throughout the country in order to significantly increase the number of implemented returns and improve the efficiency of the entire return process. In 2020, a total of 4 field offices of the Voluntary Returns Unit of DAMP were set up in regions, specifically in facilities for detention of foreigners (ZCC Balková, ZCC Bělá-Jezová, ZCC Vyšní Lhoty) and as part of the DAMP Brno office. The actions ensured by the Voluntary Returns Unit include mainly the provision of information on voluntary return to foreign nationals placed in facilities for detention of foreigners. Return-related consultancy is also provided to those foreign nationals with an issued decision on administrative expulsion, terminated residence, an expulsion sentence or a decision on an obligation to leave the country who have not been detained. In connection with return-related consultancy, the foreign nationals concerned are also provided with assistance in communication with the embassies of their countries of origin, most often in connection with procurement of an emergency travel document. If a foreign national decides to take advantage of the option of a voluntary return, the Ministry ensures implementation of the return, while taking into account the needs and preferences of individual foreign nationals, for example, as concerns their requirements for the final destination.

**In 2020, the Ministry of the Interior carried out a total of 687 voluntary returns.** This number included 657 persons placed in facilities for detention of foreign nationals. The Ministry of the Interior most often carried out voluntary returns for citizens of **Ukraine (450 persons), Moldova (123 persons)**, followed, after a large gap, by **Albania (29 persons)**.

**In 2020, the implementation of returns was affected by the major impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.** The spring months of April and May were affected by the closure of the entire economy as well as certain other activities in the country. During April and May, mere 5 voluntary returns were carried out, which faced great complications during their implementation, mainly in the form of the protective measures of individual countries and the across-the-board restriction of flights. During June, the number of voluntary returns started to grow gradually as the restrictive measures were being

relaxed and the flights were being resumed. As a result of the increased activity of the Foreign Police, which started to punish to a greater extent the third-country nationals' violations of the protective epidemiological measures imposed by the Ministry of Health, there was a sharp rise in the number of foreign nationals detained in the facilities for detention of foreigners during the summer. This also affected the implementation of voluntary returns, of which nearly 200 were carried out at the height of the voluntary returns, and this busiest period was in August. This situation continued approximately until the beginning of November when the numbers of voluntarily return foreign nationals dropped to the usual level. Due to the temporarily high numbers of voluntary returns implemented during this period, the mechanisms for an assisted voluntary departure from the country were severely tested. Superior cooperation among all the stakeholders participating in the return process was necessary in order to carry out the departure of the large numbers of foreign nationals within the given time limits and in compliance with the restrictions set by airlines or individual countries as well as within the limits of the staff capacities of the individual authorities involved in the process.

When carrying out the return activities, DAMP cooperates with other entities at the national level. Cooperation with other entities, which implement their own voluntary returns programmes, such as SUZ and the IOM, is an indispensable part of the return activities performed by DAMP.

**b) Voluntary returns of applicants (after withdrawal of an application)/failed applicants for international protection carried out by SUZ of the MoI**

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 obtained automatically. Each application is examined individually. SUZ bears the costs of repatriation, taking into account whether the foreign national meets the conditions defined in Section 54a of the Asylum Act, the financial standing of the applicant, the degree of cooperation on the part of the foreign national; and the state of health and mental state, the 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 air 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 the destination chosen by the client, a contribution for transportation to the requested destination can be paid to the client.

In addition to that, SUZ may provide other necessary assistance that will lead to a successful return of a foreign national; this includes, for example, assisting with procurement of a travel document if such a document is absent,

paying the costs associated with this, ensuring transportation to the point of departure from the Czech Republic, providing a medically unfit foreign national with a specialised transport medical service that will accompany him or her, providing assistance during a possible transfer in a foreign country, etc.

If necessary, SUZ cooperates with DAMP, the IOM or the Czech Red Cross in implementing repatriations. In order to protect the personal data of applicants for international protection, SUZ does not come into direct contact with the foreign authorities in the countries of origin. SUZ cooperates with the aforementioned organisations under a contract particularly in the following cases:

- ▶ if it is necessary to procure emergency travel documents or to renew the period of validity of the existing travel documents;
- ▶ if a child is born to an applicant for international protection in the territory of the Czech Republic and, as a result, is not stated in the parent's travel document, and the Police of the CR cannot issue a travel identity card or such a travel identity card is not sufficient for the return;
- ▶ if assistance is necessary during a layover (for example, due to a disability);
- ▶ if a layover and a transfer in the countries of the Schengen Area is inevitable;
- ▶ if the returnee is an unaccompanied minor applicant for international protection.

In 2020, SUZ processed a total of **55** applications for voluntary returns filed by applicants for international protection (after they withdrew their applications for international protection/after they failed to receive international protection); from among them, a total of **36 persons** were returned to the requested countries. The most frequent destination country of return was the **Moldova** (9 persons), **Russia** (8 persons), **Ukraine** (6 persons), **Kazakhstan** (4 persons) and **Armenia** (3 persons).

**c) Voluntary returns of third-country nationals with an issued decision on return, carried out through the International Organisation for Migration**

The IOM has also been engaged in voluntary returns for a long time. This organisation ensures not only the actual implementation of a voluntary return but also all the related consultancy and assistance, which are necessary for successful implementation of a return. In the implementation of its own programme of voluntary returns, the IOM focuses on foreign nationals with an issued decision on administrative expulsion who were not detained in a facility for detention of foreign nationals (ZZC) and who were given a deadline for leaving the country.

The services provided by the IOM include providing foreign nationals with basic information on a voluntary return as well as providing foreign nationals with comprehensive consultancy regarding returns, including assistance in communication with the embassies of their countries of origin, most often in connection with procurement of an emergency travel document. As a rule, the returning foreign nationals are provided with departure assistance at the airport and, if necessary, also with transit and post-arrival assistance.

**The IOM carried out a total of 337** voluntary returns, with Mongolia (212 persons) and Uzbekistan (28 persons) being the most frequent destinations.

**Table 9:**  
**The numbers of persons by their citizenships, who were returned voluntarily under assisted voluntary return programmes in 2020**

Citizenship	Total number of citizens returned under assisted voluntary return programmes		
	Carried out by the MoI CR	Carried out by the IOM	Carried out by SUZ of the MoI CR
Albania	29		
Armenia		1	3
Azerbaijan	2	2	1
Bangladesh	1		
Belarus		1	
Brazil	2		
China			1
Columbia		3	
Cuba		1	
Egypt	1		
Georgia	11	8	1
Ghana		1	
India			1
Iraq		2	2
Kazakhstan	4	11	4
Kosovo	2		
Kyrgyzstan	2	22	

Citizenship	Total number of citizens returned under assisted voluntary return programmes		
	Carried out by the MoI CR	Carried out by the IOM	Carried out by SUZ of the MoI CR
Malaysia		1	
Moldova	123		9
Mongolia	3	212	
Monte Negro	1		
Nigeria	1		
North Macedonia	10		
Philippines	2	2	
Romania	3		
Russia	2	4	8
Serbia	13		
South Korea	2		
Stateless	1		
Thailand		4	
Turkey	3		
Uganda		1	
Ukraine	450	20	6
USA		1	
Uzbekistan	17	28	
Vietnam	2	12	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>36</b>

Source: MoI

## FORCED RETURNS

Based on a final and enforceable decision on administrative expulsion, the execution of such a decision was carried out for 729 foreign nationals in 2020, which represents a significant year-on-year increase of 335 persons (i.e. +85 %). The difference between the number of persons who were issued with

a decision on administrative expulsion (6,385) and the number of persons whose expulsion was carried out results from the fact that only a part of the foreign nationals with an issued decision on administrative expulsion is detained in a facility for detention of foreigners (if there are legal reasons for their detention in a ZZC) with subsequent implementation of administrative expulsion. It is assumed that the other foreign nationals would leave the territory of the CR on their own.

When it comes to implementation of the voluntary returns programme by DAMP for foreign nationals detained in a facility for detention of foreigners (ZZC) who have applied for a voluntary return from the ZZC, it is a case of what is referred to as a **"pseudo-voluntary return"**. In this case, the MoI CR only provides assistance and an air ticket; the other matters, i.e. establishment of identity, consular interviews, procurement of travel documents, and the escorting of foreign nationals are carried out by the DFPS. Although these are foreign nationals who have applied to join the voluntary returns programme, the legal conditions for their detention and implementation of expulsion are still met.

During the year 2020, **rulings were made on appeals against a decision on administrative expulsion in 1,167 cases**, which is 58 fewer appeals less than in the year 2019 (i.e. -4.7 %). This number includes 715 cases, in which an appeal was dismissed; 12 cases, in which the decision was overturned and the proceedings were discontinued; 256 cases, in which the decision was overturned and returned for a new hearing; and 184 cases, in which the decision statement was changed.

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**. The Czech Republic is engaged in negotiating bilateral readmission agreements and also participates in the work of the European Commission in the negotiations of EU readmission agreements with selected third countries.



In 2020, the Czech Republic did not start any negotiations about readmission agreements with any new countries. The main reason was that most third countries where the CR would be interested in establishing an agreement-based cooperation with them have already been contacted and the relevant readmission agreements have already been entered into or are in various stages of preparation. Therefore, the CR tries to finalise the agreements in preparation and to agree on the implementing protocols for the EU readmission agreements, where this is desirable.

At present, the CR has a total of 17 bilateral readmission agreements in place: Austria, Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Canada, Croatia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Moldova, Vietnam, Switzerland, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Mongolia (in 2019, a readmission agreement and its implementing protocol with Mongolia were signed but this agreement has not entered into force yet). A bilateral readmission agreement between the government of the CR and the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the readmission and transit of persons and the protocol for its implementation are also ready to be signed. It will be possible to sign these documents depending on cooperation from the other party to the agreement.

As concerns negotiations of EU readmission agreements, the Commission did not receive a mandate for negotiating a readmission agreement with a new third country in 2020. During the year 2020, negotiations were held in the form of videoconferences about readmission agreements/return arrangements with Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ivory Coast, Moldova, Monte Negro, North Macedonia, Russia, Serbia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The readmission agreement with Belarus entered into force on 1 July 2020.

At present, the EU has a total of 18 readmission agreements in place: Hong Kong, Macao, Sri Lanka, Albania, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, Monte Negro, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Pakistan, Georgia, Turkey, Cape Verde, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

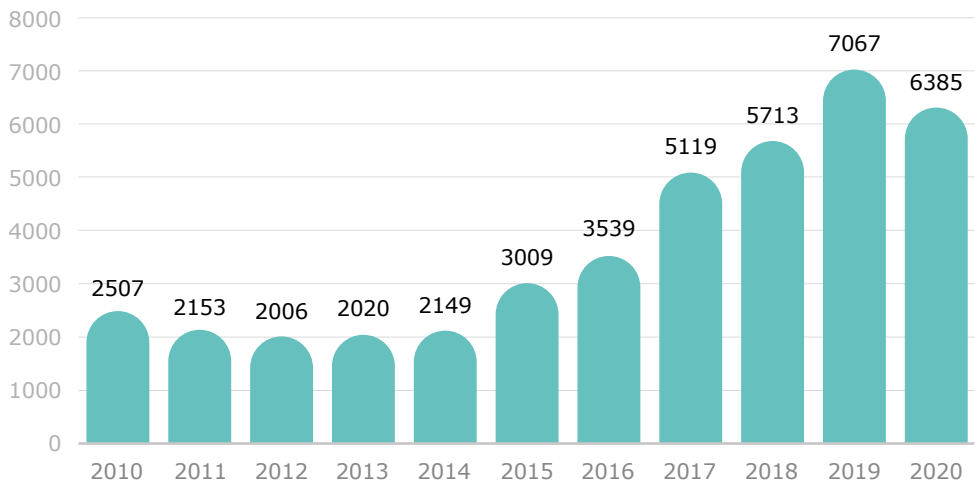
For some of the agreements, the CR successfully negotiated bilateral implementing protocols, which define technical details of the readmission procedure. In 2020, the implementing protocol between the CR and Armenia and Georgia entered into force. The implementing protocol with Azerbaijan is in preparation.

If a decision on administrative expulsion is not respected, such an act of a foreign national can qualify as a crime of obstructing the execution of an official decision. However, in practice, this provision of the law is usually not applied until the occurrence of the second and further violation of/failure to comply with the imposed obligation.

A sentence of expulsion from the territory of the Czech Republic is imposed by courts on those perpetrators who are not citizens of the Czech Republic as a standalone sentence or alongside another sentence pursuant to Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended, if the security of people or property or another public interest requires so. An expulsion sentence can be imposed as a standalone sentence, if imposition of another sentence is not necessary in view of the nature and gravity of the perpetrated crime and in view of the person and circumstances of the perpetrator. A court can impose an expulsion sentence for one through ten years or for an indefinite period of time.

An expulsion sentence is carried out by the DFPS if the foreign national is serving a prison sentence or has been placed in expulsion detention. In this case, the DFPS procures the travel and transport documents, communicates with the embassies and cooperates with other public administration authorities, particularly the Penitentiary Service of the CR, courts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

**Chart 7:**  
**The number of persons who were sentenced to expulsion in the period 2010–2020**



Source: PCR

In 2020, there were a total of **1,234 persons registered, on whom courts-imposed expulsion sentences in criminal proceedings**, which represented a year-on-year decrease by 512 persons (i.e. -29.3 %). This category was dominated by citizens of **Ukraine** (350 persons, i.e. 28.4 %), **Romania** (136 persons, i.e. 11.0 %) and **Slovakia** (128 persons, i.e. 10.4 %). These 3 citizenships accounted for nearly 50 % of the total number of persons on whom expulsion sentences were imposed. The largest year-on-year decreases were seen with citizens of Ukraine (-160 persons; i.e. -31.4 %), Romania (-88 persons, i.e. -39.3 %) and Moldova (-70 persons, i.e. -37.6 %). Among the citizens of Ukraine, the predominating grounds for expulsion were endangerment under the influence of an addictive substance and obstruction of execution of an official decision and expulsion; among the citizens of Romania, Slovakia and Poland, the predominating grounds for expulsion was theft, and among the citizens of Moldova, it was forgery and alteration of a public document.

The most frequent **grounds** for an expulsion sentence (this concerned a total of 1,604 criminal acts) were theft (298 criminal acts, i.e. 18.6 %), obstruction of execution of an official decision and expulsion (245 criminal acts, i.e. 15.3 %), endangerment under the influence of an addictive substance (161 criminal acts, i.e. 10.0 %), forgery and alteration of a public document (135 criminal acts, i.e. 8.4 %), and unlicensed production and other management of intoxicating and psychotropic substances and poisons (126 criminal acts, i.e. 7.9 %). The largest year-on-year decrease was seen with the crime of forgery and alteration of a public document (-175 criminal acts, i.e. -56.5 %).

**Court-imposed expulsion was carried out for 207 foreign nationals** during the reference period, which represents a year-on-year decrease by 74 persons (i.e. -26.3 %). In terms of citizenships, the largest groups consisted of citizens of **Slovakia** (65 persons, i.e. 31.4 %), **Ukraine** (42 persons, i.e. 20.3 %) and **Poland** (20 persons, i.e. 9.7 %). According to a year-on-year comparison, the largest decreases were seen with citizens of Romania (-18 persons, i.e. -56.3 %) and Slovakia (-11 persons, i.e. -14.5 %).



## 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 Facilities 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 of 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. The other 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 of Asylum and Migration Policy of the MoI and the Facility for Children-foreigners.

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 2020<sup>43</sup> and from the reports and studies of the European Migration Network in the areas concerned were used. Particularly the national contribution to the synthesis report titled EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2020, which the Czech National Contact Point of the EMN prepared in early 2021, was used.

For the purposes of this report, the analysis of press articles concerned with asylum and migration in 2020 was also used.

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

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43 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-foreigners

### LITERATURE

MoI CR, the Report on the Situation in Migration and the Integration of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic in 2020

EMN, 2020 EMN Annual Policy Report, Annex 1, national contribution from the Czech EMN Contact Point

EMN, Specification of Requirements for the 2020 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

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 No. 918 of 16 December 2019 on the Procedure for Implementing the Updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals – In Mutual Respect in the Year 2020

Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 214 of 15 March 2020 on Adoption of an Emergency Measure

Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 248 of 18 March 2020 on Adoption of an Emergency Measure

Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 875 of 24 August 2020 on Adoption of a Measure in Response to the Epidemiological Situation in the World

## **INTERNET SOURCES**

[www.mvcr.cz](http://www.mvcr.cz)

[www.suz.cz](http://www.suz.cz)

[www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz)

[www.mpsv.cz](http://www.mpsv.cz)

[www.emncz.eu](http://www.emncz.eu)

[www.psp.cz](http://www.psp.cz)

[www.vitejtevcr.cz](http://www.vitejtevcr.cz)



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Transfers carried out from and to the territory of the Czech Republic in the period 2010-2020

### **Chart 7:**

The number of persons who were sentenced to expulsion in the period 2009–2020



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