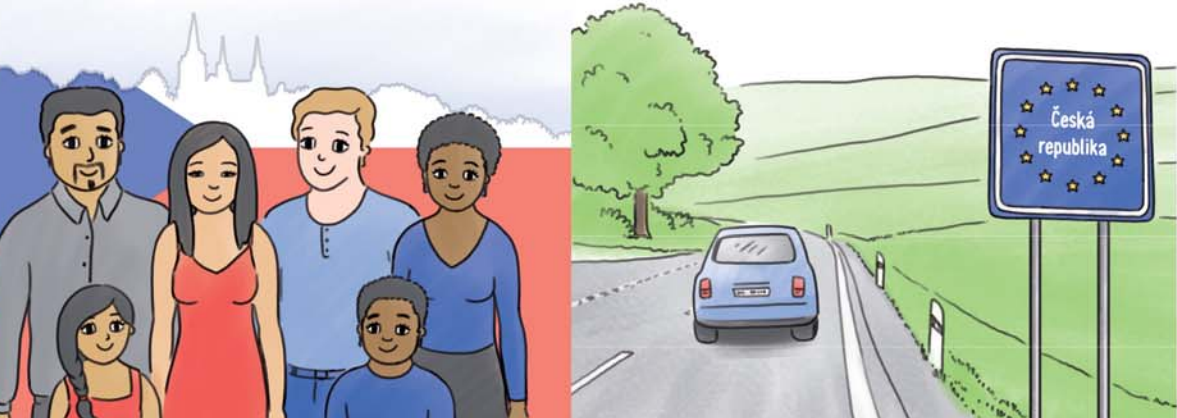


CZECH REPUBLIC

Basic Information

International Protection Procedure



Welcome to the Czech Republic

This leaflet will provide you with the background information about the Czech Republic, the procedure for granting international protection and the basic rules of conduct in the Czech society.

Please observe these rules.

The Czech Republic is located in the centre of Europe and has approximately 10.5 million inhabitants of which foreign nationals make up about 4.5%.

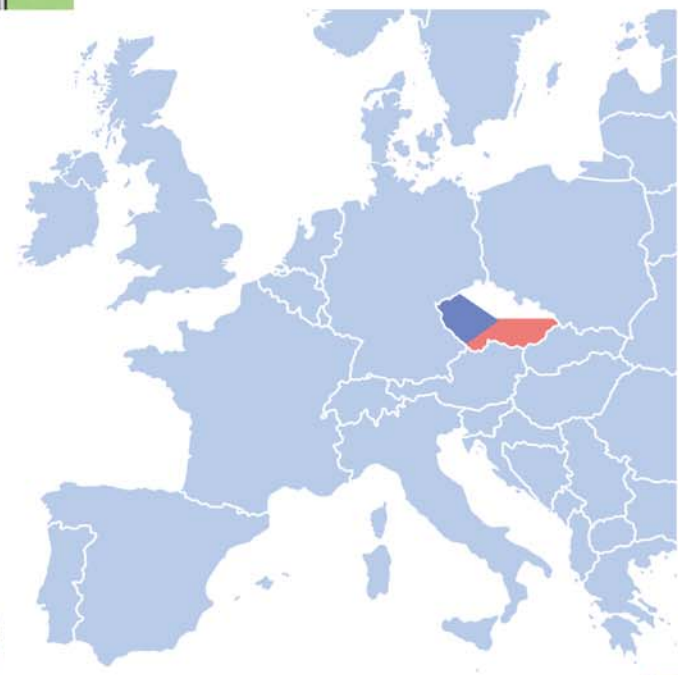
The country is divided into 14 regions. The capital city is Prague with around 1.2 million inhabitants; the remaining inhabitants live in other towns and cities and in rural areas.

The official language of the Czech Republic is Czech.

Christianity is the most common religion in the country. However, many Czechs do not profess any religion.

Map of the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has a mild climate with four alternating seasons. Winter temperatures range between 0 and -5°C with occasional snow; in extreme cases, temperature may drop below -20°C. Summer temperatures range between 20 and 25°C and in extreme cases may rise above 30°C.



Right to seek international protection

If you meet the requirements set forth in the law, the Czech Republic will grant you international protection.

International protection means either asylum or subsidiary protection.

Under the Asylum Act, asylum is granted to a foreign national who:

- is persecuted for exercising political rights and freedoms, or
- has legitimate fear of being persecuted on the grounds of race, sex, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group or for holding certain political opinion.
- Asylum may also be granted to selected family members of the asylum seeker.
- Asylum may also be granted for humanitarian reasons.

If you do not meet the condition for being granted asylum but have concerns that you would face a real risk of suffering serious harm in your country of origin, you may be granted subsidiary protection.

Serious harm means in particular the imposition of capital punishment, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and serious threat to life as a consequence of an armed conflict.



Procedure for granting international protection

The procedure for granting international protection is commenced with the submission of an application for international protection on the territory of the Czech Republic.

As an applicant, you will first be accommodated in a reception centre. You are obliged not to leave the centre without permission.

You will undergo a personal and medical examination; you will be fingerprinted and a photograph of your face will be taken.

You will receive an international protection applicant card as evidence to prove your identity.

You will also be given advice document containing additional important information. Please read it carefully.

You have the right to communicate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

You have the right to a legal counsellor.

Non-government organisations may also provide free legal advice to the applicants for protection.



Important information

- **The Police of the Czech Republic** will receive your application for international protection.
- **The Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic** will register your application and will conduct the administrative procedure regarding the granting of international protection, including interviews, and it will issue a decision regarding your application.
- **The Refugee Facilities Administration** runs reception, residential and integration asylum centres, and provides social services.
- During the interview, please provide any and all important information – why you have left your country, and how and by whom you were persecuted.
- Be honest when giving answers to all questions.
- Submit your personal and other documents to support your claims.
- Don't worry, all the information you provide is treated as confidential.
- You are not allowed to leave the Czech Republic throughout the entire international protection procedure.
- The employees of the Ministry of the Interior must be able to contact you at the given contact details. Any change must be immediately reported. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of the procedure regarding your application for protection.
- Please come to your appointments on time; you will be awaited by a Ministry of the Interior employee and an interpreter.
- Please be polite to all employees and treat them with respect; they are here to help you.



Granting of international protection

The Ministry of the Interior will hand over the decision on granting international protection into your own hands. An interpreter will be present upon delivery.

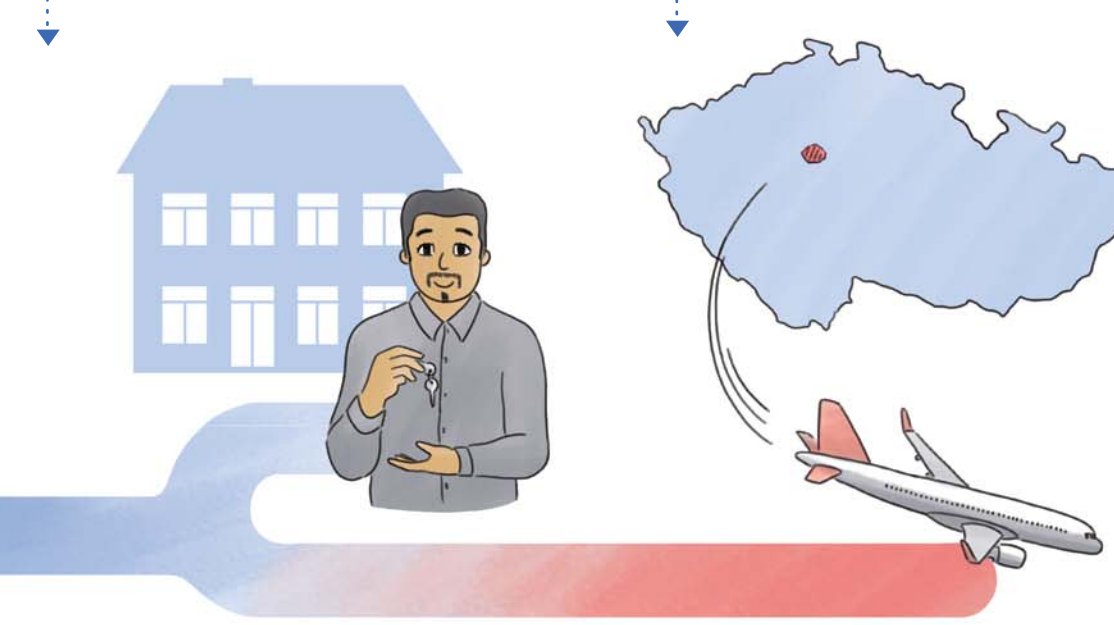
You may be granted asylum or subsidiary protection. Asylum is granted for an unlimited period of time. Subsidiary protection is temporary and is granted for a minimum of one year. You can apply to extend its validity before its expiration.

As a holder of international protection, you will receive a residence permit card that must be protected against damage, loss and abuse.

You will also be given advice containing other important information. Please read it carefully.

If you are granted international protection, you can register for the State Integration Programme and live temporarily in an integration asylum centre and use other integration services and assistance.

As a beneficiary of international protection, you will have similar rights as a citizen of the Czech Republic.



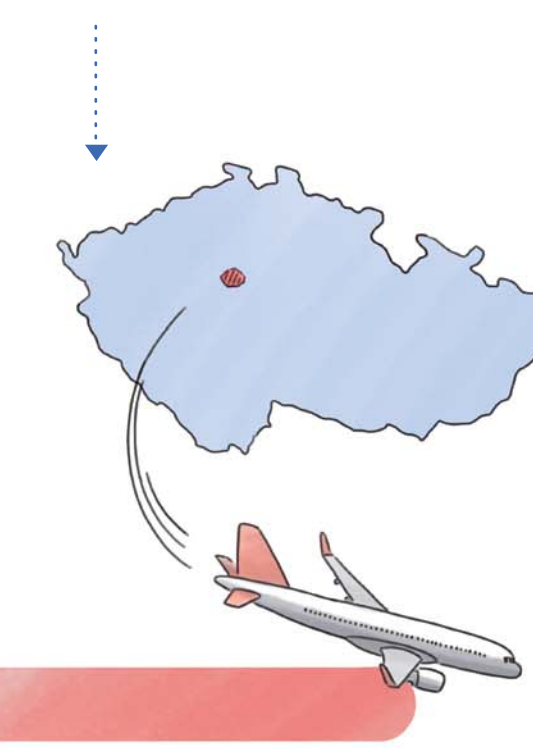
Refusal to grant international protection

If you are not granted international protection, you will have to leave the Czech Republic.

You can appeal against the decision of the Ministry of the Interior before a competent regional court. You will be advised on this procedure in the respective decision.

You will not be granted integrational protection in the Czech Republic if, in particular:

- You are coming from a safe country of origin or another safe country.
- You have previously applied for asylum in another member state of the European Union – in such event, you may be transferred to that country. This country will assess your application for protection.
- You have left your country for economic reasons because you had, for example, a badly paid job or were unemployed.



The asylum procedure in the Czech Republic is governed by the Act on Asylum (Act No. 325/1999 Coll.).

For more information, visit:
www.mvcr.cz
www.imigracniportal.cz
www.unhcr.cz



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Illustrations: Adéla Růčková Moravcová

Important telephone numbers – toll-free

- 112 European emergency phone number
- 150 Firefighters
- 155 Medical emergency
- 156 Municipal Police
- 158 Police of the Czech Republic
- 116 111 Helpline for children in need
- 251 51 13 13 Helpline for women in need

LIFE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Freedom of speech is a fundamental right.

In the Czech Republic, everyone has the right to freedom of expression.

Yet freedom has its limits. Do not invade dignity and freedom of others.

Treat everyone with respect and regard.



The Czech Republic is a democratic country.

All people have equal rights.

The citizens of the Czech Republic may decide who will administer their country through free elections.



The Czech Republic abides by the rule of law.

Relations in the society are regulated by laws and legislations. Laws and legislations must be respected or else you will face penalisation and sanctions.

Ignorance of the law excuses no one.



The law takes precedence over religion.

Authorities make decisions in accordance with legislation. They never decide according to religious rules.

We all are equal before the law.



Religion is a private matter.

Everyone has the right to choose one's religion or have no religion.

Respect the personal decision of others.



Women and men are equal.

Women make free decisions regarding their life just like men.

Women may work in all professions just like men and they contribute to the provision of family income just like men.

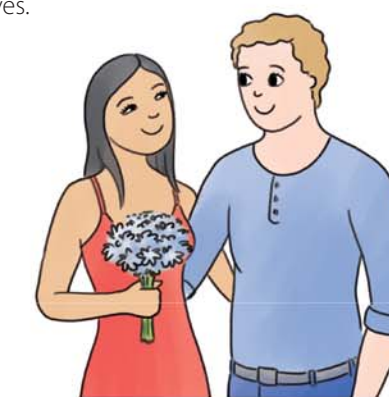


A woman may freely choose her husband.

A woman may live with a man even without being married to him. It is also common that people in a close relationship touch each other, hug each other and kiss each other in public.

Only a person over 18 years of age may enter into marriage.

It is prohibited by law for a man to have multiple wives.



People of the same sex may live together and enter into a registered partnership in the Czech Republic.

A woman may live in a partnership with another woman and a man may live with another man. They can bring up children together.



Domestic violence and sexual harassment is prohibited.

Any violence against women and children as well as among men is prohibited by law. Victims of violence are offered with help from the competent authorities.

Any forceful sexual contact with a woman or a man against the will is a crime.



All children in the Czech Republic must complete compulsory education lasting nine years.

Any failure to adhere to compulsory education constitutes breach of law.

Boys and girls attend the same schools. They attend all subjects together, including physical education.

Higher education provides greater chances to find a good job in the future.



Parents are responsible for the behaviour of their children.

Both parents are equally responsible for the behaviour of their children.

The minimum age of criminal responsibility for children is 15 years of age.



Private property must be respected.

For instance, keep off someone else's garden, do not pick agricultural crops on someone else's field, do not hunt wild game and fish without a licence.



Road traffic rules must be respected.

Any failure to comply with the road traffic rules can lead to a penalty or a driving prohibition.

A passenger vehicle may only be driven by a person over 18 years of age. There is zero tolerance for alcohol and drugs consumption while driving in the Czech Republic. You are not allowed to drive a vehicle if you have drunk alcohol or used an addictive substance.

Road traffic rules also apply to pedestrians and cyclists.



It is very important to be punctual.

When going to school, work and appointments, always come on time. If you are not able to come or arrive late, it is necessary to apologise in advance.



Healthcare services are provided on the basis of health insurance.

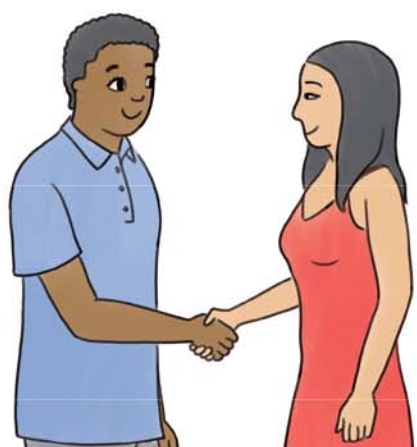
Each inhabitant of the Czech Republic must make contributions to a public health insurance system. Always ask whether your care is covered by public health insurance or else you may be exposed to the risk of running into debt.

The options to choose a doctor are limited. Women may be treated by male doctors and men may be treated by female doctors.



When entering a room, it is customary to say hello, and when leaving to say goodbye.

A greeting and an introduction may be accompanied with a short and firm grip of the right hand. As a rule, a superior extends his/her hand to a subordinate, a woman to a man, and an older person to a younger person.



It is not unusual in the Czech Republic that people keep a greater distance while talking.

If possible, observe this rule also in the means of transport and do not sit too close to other passengers.

It is not usual to touch another person during a conversation; this applies especially to contacts between a man and a woman.

Closer contact is only possible if you have a familiar relationship with the other person.



It is important to be polite and respect other people.

Respect people around you. For instance, do not play loud music at home and do not hold noisy parties at home. The quiet hours are from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

When travelling by means of transport, let people get off first before you get on.



It is customary to help the elderly and infirm people.

When travelling by means of transport, we offer a seat to the elderly and disabled people as well as to pregnant women.

If you see someone with health problems in the street, give such person first aid and call 155 for an ambulance. The treatment will be covered by health insurance of the injured person.



Observe the norms of polite behaviour.

It is very impolite to burp, smack one's lips and slurp while eating.

It is improper to spit and urinate in the street.

It is allowed to drink alcohol from 18 years of age.

It is not allowed to smoke in restaurants and other restricted areas or public places with a large number of people, e.g. at bus and tramway stops.



It is not allowed to litter in buildings and streets.

Litter must be thrown into litter bins and containers. Waste must be sorted by type (plastic, paper, glass, mixed waste). There are special containers for bulk waste.



Always make sure that you have your personal documents on you.

You should always carry on you your international protection applicant card or residence permit card of an asylum beneficiary or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection as well as your health insurance card.

When driving a vehicle, you must always have your driving licence on you.



The Police of the Czech Republic and the municipal police provide security for all inhabitants.

The police must be respected.

In case of danger, contact the police by calling 158.

