

Reception - Czechia | DIP EUAA

PDF generated on 2026-01-14 22:07

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Reception system

Relevant EU legislation

Czechia is bound by the recast Reception Conditions Directive and transposed its provisions by Act No 325/1999 Coll. on Asylum | [Zákon č. 325/1999 Sb., o azylu](#).

National legislation

11/11/199: Act No 325/1999 Coll. on Asylum | [Zákon č. 325/1999 Sb., o azylu](#). The Reception Conditions Directive was transposed through subsequent amendments to this Act.

Competent authority and stakeholders

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| Authority responsible for reception | The Refugee Facilities Administration (RFA) established and operating under the Ministry of the Interior, manages reception facilities. It also carries overall, both executive and financial responsibility over the reception facilities (it pays for the establishment and maintenance costs of reception). The Ministry of the Interior is however legally responsible for establishing and closing the centres. |
| Other actors involved | Other actors such as Church and Health Care Secondary School Brno, Diocesan Charity Brno, Diocesan Charity Hradec Králové, Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague (as legal entities), may operate in reception centres based on the agreement with the Refugee Facilities Administration. NGOs and other contracted persons or entities may provide supplementary services in provision of material reception conditions. For instance, legal counselling is provided by NGOs. Leisure activities (music and sewing workshops) might be also provided by NGOs. In several centres there is a supply of second hand clothes provided by NGOs. Even if NGOs could operate whole facility, there is no experience with it in Czech Republic. |

Organisational aspects

Reception is managed at a central level.

The reception system in the Czech Republic consists of [5 state centres](#) owned and managed by the Refugee Facilities Administration (2 arrival centres: in the transit area of the international airport in Prague and in Zastávka) and 4 residential centres in Kostelec nad Orlicí, Bělá pod Bezdězem, Zastávka (arrival and residential centre in one) and Havířov. According to the law, management of reception facility can be outsourced to external contractors. This however is not applied in practice.

Allocation of applicants to geographical areas within their territory

After completing the entry procedures, the applicants might be distributed from the arrival centres to the residential centres according to their individual needs or current needs of the organisation.

Staff and training

There are four groups of specialized personnel who are in direct everyday contact with applicants. The specialisations are: social workers, 24/7 staff, housing experts and leisure specialists. Apart from the indicated personnel, there is usually an operation and financial department in each facility. Although the indicated system might differ in each centre.

The trainings include general overview as well as targeted training for each group.

Reception phases

An applicant is entitled to reception immediately after expressing the intent to apply for asylum, either at the border or within Czech territory.

There are three types of centres according to the reception phases. Arrival centres (where the application is lodged), residential centres (which are designed for the applicants while waiting for the decision) and integration asylum centres for successful applicants. The applicants lose the entitlement to reception centre in case of the rejection after a final decision.

Contingency planning

A contingency plan related to asylum is currently under review.

Facilities

Overview of different types of reception facilities according to national classification

In Czechia, there are three types of reception facilities: arrival centres, residential centres, and integration asylum centres.

Arrival Centres are located at Václav Havel Airport in Prague-Ruzyně and in Zastávka accommodate newly arrived applicants for international protection until the end of the basic entry procedures:

- identity identification,
- initiation of proceedings for the granting of international protection,
- entrance interview and social investigation,
- prescribed entrance health examination.

Residential Centres can be found in Kostelec nad Orlicí, Havířov, Bělá pod Bezdězem and Zastávka. They accommodate applicants who have passed the prescribed entry procedures in the arrival centres for the duration of the proceedings in the matter of their application for international protection.

Integration Asylum Centres accommodate persons who have been granted international protection and who have entered the State Integration Programme and requested temporary accommodation. They are located in Jaroměř, Přelice and Brno. The residential centre in Havířov has also served as an integration centre since the summer of 2014.

Premises at the border

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| Name of the reception facility | N/a |
| Access description | N/a |
| Management | N/a |
| Type of applicants accommodated | N/a |
| Number of centres | N/a |
| Capacity | N/a |

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| Location of the centres within the country | N/a |
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Initial reception centres

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| Name of the reception facility | Arrival Centres (where applicants have to stay during the initial phase of the asylum procedure). |
| Regime | Closed |
| Management | Refugee Facilities Administration |
| Type of applicants accommodated | The Prague-Ruzyně accommodates newly arrived applicants of international protection who arrive on the territory of Czechia. It also serves as a transfer centre for so-called Dublin applicants, who travel from there to the arrival centre in Zastávka. Zastávka accommodates newly arrived applicants of international protection. Since May 2018, the facility has also served as a Residential Centre. This is used to accommodate applicants who have passed the prescribed entry procedures, for the duration of their applications for international protection. |
| Number of centres | 2 |
| Capacity | The Václav Havel Airport Prague has a capacity of 36 beds. Zastávka has a capacity of 199 beds. Due to a short term stay of applicants, Zastávka is able to receive an increased number of persons applying for international protection. |
| Location of the centres within the country | Transit area of Václav Havel Airport Prague. Zastávka (South Moravian Region). |

Collective accommodation centres

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| Name of the reception facility | Residential Centres |
| Regime | Open |

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| Management | Refugee Facilities Administration or a legal entity within the scope of authorisation granted by the Ministry and for a fee |
| Type of applicants accommodated | Kostelec nad Orlicí, Havířov, Zastávka and Bělá pod Bezdězem accommodate applicants who have gone through the prescribed entry procedures at the arrival centre. Zastávka accommodates newly arrived applicants for international protection. However, the facility it also serves as a Residential Centre, which is used to accommodate applicants who have passed the prescribed entry procedures. |
| Number of centres | 4 |
| Capacity | Kostelec: 277 Zastávka: 199 Havířov: 228 Bělá: 180 |
| Location of the centres within the country | Kostelec nad Orlicí (Hradec Králové Region) Havířov (Moravian-Silesian Region) Zastávka (South Moravian Region) Bělá pod Bezdězem (Central Bohemian Region) |

Individual accommodation centres (such as private houses, flats, hotels)

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| Name of the reception facility | N/a |
| Regime | N/a |
| Management | N/a |
| Type of applicants accommodated | N/a |
| Number of centres | N/a |
| Capacity | N/a |
| Location of the centres within the country | N/a |

Temporary solutions when housing capacities is temporarily exhausted

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| Name of the reception facility | N/a |
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| Regime | N/a |
| Management | N/a |
| Type of applicants accommodated | N/a |
| Number of centres | N/a |
| Capacity | N/a |
| Location of the centres within the country | N/a |

Reception facilities for applicants with special needs

All asylum accommodation centres are suitable for families with children or other vulnerable persons, so their needs and interests are taken into account.

Vulnerabilities are considered when providing accommodation, with options such as protected zones or barrier-free rooms available. Special reception measures are provided to individuals as needed. E.g. Persons with reduced mobility are accommodated in an appropriate asylum facility. As indicated in Section 73 (8) of the Act on Asylum, *“the Ministry shall ensure that applicants for international protection in asylum facilities, especially in the case of vulnerable persons, are provided with staff who have been appropriately trained.”* Section 81 (2) provides that, when it is determined that an applicant for international protection is vulnerable, the management of the reception facility *“shall further determine whether this applicant for international protection has specific needs, determine the nature of these needs and take them into account throughout the applicant's stay in the asylum facility”*.

There are no special reception centres for unaccompanied minors. Nonetheless, there are asylum facilities which are child friendly and can provide support to unaccompanied minors. These facilities are outside the scope of Ministry of Interior and are operated by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Regarding single women and mothers, they are accommodated in protected zones.

Material reception conditions provided in kind and cash

Definition of material reception conditions

Material reception conditions are defined in Section 42 of the [Asylum Act](#). They include accommodation, meals, basic hygiene items and pocket money.

Material reception conditions provided in kind

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| Type and purpose | Accommodation, food, basic hygiene items, and pocket money. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior shall arrange psychological, health, social, and other essential services and items based on the individual needs of the applicant. Reception conditions are provided in kind in almost all cases. |
| Duration and recurrence | The provision of reception conditions begins upon the submission of an application for international protection and from the moment of arrival at the reception centre for all applicants, unless they have sufficient means to sustain themselves. Meals are provided three times a day (five times for children). In two reception centres, financial assistance is provided instead of meals. |

Financial allowances and vouchers

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| Type and purpose | Daily allowance (in reception centres without catering) / pocket money (in reception centres with catering). |
| Duration and recurrence | Pocket money shall only be provided for the period during which the applicant is residing in an asylum facility. Pocket money is paid to the applicant in arrival centres every Wednesday; if this day falls on a non-working day, the payment will be made on the last working day immediately preceding the Wednesday. In residential centres, payment is made on the 15th day of the calendar month; if this day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or non-working day, the payment deadline is the last working day immediately preceding the 15th. In asylum facilities where no common catering is provided, the financial contribution is issued every two weeks. |

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| <p>Calculation and amount</p> | <p>The Ministry shall stipulate by decree the amount of pocket money per calendar day, depending on the applicant's age and the payment dates for reception and accommodation centres. In general, the applicant will be provided with a pocket allowance of CZK 30 (around EUR 1.19) per calendar day.</p> <p>If the asylum facility does not provide food, the applicant shall receive financial assistance corresponding to the minimum living standard for the applicant and any dependent persons. During the provision of financial assistance, the applicant will not be entitled to pocket money.</p> <p>If the applicant's health requires increased costs for a special diet, as recommended by a specialist physician, financial assistance will be increased by the amount corresponding to the increased livelihood amount under special legislation for the special diet.</p> <p>If an applicant over 18 years of age is accommodated in a reception centre and carries out activities that benefit other applicants and contribute to the smooth operation of the asylum facility and improved mutual interaction, they may receive increased pocket money. Such activities, based on an assignment from the head of the asylum facility, can be carried out up to a maximum of 30 hours a month. The Ministry shall determine the amount of pocket money and increased pocket money per hour of activity by decree.</p> <p>If the applicant stays in a residential centre, they receive financial support to cover their essential needs. If they stay in a centre where food is provided in a canteen, they receive CZK 30/day as pocket money. If they stay in reception centres without a canteen, they receive CZK 4,860/month (calculated based on the minimum subsistence level). This amount may vary depending on factors such as the number of persons in the family. The exact amount is displayed on the information billboards at the facility. This money is provided to cover the applicant's needs, including food.</p> |
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| Applicants granted allowance | All applicants with their registered address at an asylum facility. |
| Modalities of provision | Applicants are provided with cash only. |

Material reception conditions for vulnerable persons

Officials from the Refugee Facilities Administration assess vulnerability based on identification indicators, such as the applicant's personal data and medical history. The Refugee Facilities Administration, in cooperation with officials from the Ministry of the Interior, determine the applicant's vulnerability and adopt reception conditions and asylum procedures accordingly. The Refugee Facilities Administration identifies the specific needs of each applicant, particularly those from vulnerable groups, and works with each individually. Staff in accommodation centres are legally obliged to identify and address any special reception needs. These individual special needs are assessed by trained staff in each case. For applicants who are considered vulnerable, the operator shall further assess whether the applicant has any special needs, identify the nature of these needs, and ensure that such needs are taken into account during the applicant's stay in the asylum facility.

Services are tailored to meet the specific needs of applicants, including psychological and legal support, medical care, contact with non-governmental organizations addressing particular issues, personal assistance, interpretation, and more. For example, applicants can access services designed for survivors of trafficking in human being.

Psychological support is offered to all applicants. However, when the vulnerability is identified the specially trained personnel might direct the applicant towards targeted services (psychosocial support, tailored medical assistance, etc.)

Rights and obligations during reception

Provision of information and counselling

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| Modalities of information provision on benefits and obligations related to reception conditions | <p>For applicants for international protection, the Ministry of the Interior has prepared a leaflet with information on the procedure for granting international protection and life in Czechia. The publication is available in Czech, English, Arabic, Ukrainian, Russian and French. Written information on rights and obligations is offered in approximately 30 languages.</p> <p>The applicant is further provided with information on how to gain access to accommodation and other material reception conditions immediately after his/her arrival to the asylum facility. The first information about the legal status of the person is given to the person at the time of arrival to border crossing point. Further information about reception conditions is provided after his/her arrival to the relevant asylum facility. Information is available on the websites of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, the Refugee Facilities Administration (SUZ), and the Centres for Support of Integration of Foreigners (CPIC). Information is also provided by NGOs, e.g. the Organisation for Aid to Refugees (OPU).</p> <p>The house rules are published in a language that the majority of accommodated persons are able to understand and displayed in a publicly accessible place. If a foreign national is unable to understand the language in which the house rules have been issued, the operator shall ensure that the foreign national is informed of the contents thereof in an alternative manner.</p> |
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| Provision of legal assistance on the reception conditions available | <p>The general administrative procedures are applied (Act on Administrative Procedure and Administrative Court Procedure Act). There is a possibility to lodge a legal complaint with a court through a free of charge legal counselling provided by private counselling firm and NGOs or Caritas (Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations, Diocesan Caritas Hradec Králové).</p> |
| House rules | <p>According to Section 48 letter a of the Asylum Act, an applicant for international protection is obliged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to respect accommodation rules for asylum facilities; • to respect hygiene regulations in the accommodation areas of an asylum facility and participate in maintenance of hygiene standards within of the asylum facility as stipulated by the rules for accommodation; • to follow orders and instructions in the asylum facility given by the Police and the Ministry while performing tasks in accordance with the Act on Asylum; • to protect the property of the asylum facility and of the other accommodated persons; and • undergo a medical examination, if necessary for the protection of public health. <p>In addition, a person accommodated in a arrival or residence centre may not bring into the centre, or produce, store and consume alcohol and other addictive substances, or produce and store things that could be used to endanger the safety of persons and property or that would due to their quantity or nature, they could disturb order or harm health (Section 81a paragraph 1 of the Asylum Act).</p> |

Freedom of movement within the territory

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| Assignment of a particular area of residence to applicants | Applicants in general can freely move within the territory of Czechia. Except for applicants in the arrival centre in the transit area at the airport, but formally they are not 'on the territory' |
| Reporting obligations | An applicant for international protection shall be obliged to notify the Ministry in writing of his/her leaving a residence centre for any period exceeding 24 hours. In the notification, the applicant for international protection shall provide the address at which he/she shall be staying and the length of stay outside the residence centre. An applicant for international protection is required to notify the Ministry in writing of any departure from the residence centre for a period exceeding 3 days, at least 24 hours before leaving the residence centre. Upon request, the Ministry may permit leaving the residence centre for a period longer than 15 consecutive days, if this does not prevent the proper implementation of the procedure in the matter of international protection and if the applicant for international protection has submitted proof of accommodation. |

Employment and vocational training

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| Time limit to access the labour market | Applicants for protection cannot access the labour market earlier than 6 months after the lodging of their application. Upon the elapsing of this 6-month period, they must be issued a valid employment permit by a regional branch of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic without the so-called labour market test. |
| Criteria to access the labour market | Czechia does not apply the labour market test. |
| Employment support for applicants | NGOs and integration centres can provide employment support for applicants. |

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| Adults' access to vocational training | No specific legislation exists to regulate applicant's access to vocational training. |
| Access to tertiary education | Pursuant to Act No 561/2004 Sb , applicants have full access to education under the same conditions as Czech/EU citizens |

Healthcare

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| Medical screening | All applicants undergo a medical screening (general check, blood test, lung x-ray) by medical professionals in the first days after their arrival to the arrival centre. Psychologists are also available in case it is deemed necessary. |
| Level of healthcare | The health care is provided free of charge to all applicants in the scope of services paid by health assurance according to the respective act – Public Health Assurance Act. The same provisions are applied as for citizens of the Czech Republic. Each applicant is automatically referred to the health assurance authority which provides health care. Health insurance is paid by state. The provider of arrival and residence centres cooperate with several NGOs in order to find concrete surgeries to provide the health care for the applicants for the international protection accommodated in residence centres. Hospitals are obliged to provide the health care to all persons including asylum seekers. |
| Access to healthcare | Access to healthcare for applicants for international protection accommodated in reception centres are the same as for citizens of the Czech Republic. All applicants are covered by national insurance scheme and employment does not have any effect on that. |

Education for minors

Education for applicants for international protection in Czechia is integrated within the state education system. There is no separate education system within

accommodation centres; instead, children attend mainstream schools that are part of the state education infrastructure. However, preparatory classes may be provided to help foreign children integrate into the regular school system, particularly to support their knowledge of the Czech language.

There is no specific time-limit for enrolling children in education mentioned in the Asylum Act. However, the Reception Conditions Directive sets a limit of 90 days for access to education. The Schooling Act in Czechia follows a similar rule. Moreover, the New Migration Pact proposes a 60-day limit for access to education for applicants for international protection.

Applicants for international protection have access to education under the terms and conditions stipulated by the Education Act. This includes access to pre-school education, basic artistic education, and school services on the same basis as Czech citizens.

Coordination of the [Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals](#) falls under the [Ministry of the Interior, while the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports](#) is responsible for coordinating the integration of children into schools. The integration process is supported by an annually updated [Procedure for the Implementation of the Updated Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals](#).

To support the inclusion of foreign children, especially in terms of learning the Czech language, the legislation provides specific measures, including the teaching of Czech in nursery and basic education. School attendance is compulsory for applicants until the end of the school year in which they reach the age of 17.

Additional support for school attendance and language training is available, particularly for unaccompanied minors, with NGOs also providing assistance. More detailed information is available on the [Eurydice page for Czechia](#).

Socio-cultural orientation and language learning

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| <p>Access to socio-cultural orientation</p> | <p>Czechia has a state integration programme aimed at helping refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection integrate into the society. The state integration programme mainly includes individual support aimed at ensuring full economic self-sufficiency, housing, education, health and social care, orientation in society and the creation of prerequisites for acquiring knowledge of the Czech language. Personnel in the reception centres provides socio-cultural support based on the individual needs of each applicant.</p> |
| <p>Language classes</p> | <p>Voluntary Czech language lessons (open courses) are provided to applicants in all reception centres. These are designed as low-threshold language courses and therefore are accessible for any applicant at any stage of the stay.</p> <p>The state integration programme in the area of acquiring knowledge of the Czech language is implemented by the Ministry in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the form of a free language course.</p> |

Sufficient means

Arrangement of private accommodation

Applicants have the possibility to live in centres or outside the reception system. The applicants who choose the possibility to stay out of the accommodation centre shall cover all their costs except the health care on their own. Nevertheless, the placement in the accommodation centre is guaranteed for all applicants.

Contribution to reception and healthcare costs

Czech legislation does not allow for the seizure of assets to contribute to the costs of material reception conditions. Persons having sufficient means (funds that exceed

the minimum standard of living) may be charged for accommodation and asked to cover food costs, if they stay at the reception facility managed by the Refugee Facilities Administration.

The [minimum subsistence level](#) is regulated by law.

Sufficient means test

All applicants fill in the form where their means are clearly indicated. The threshold for sufficiency of means equals the amount of the 'living wage' as specified by law.

Sanction regimes, reduction or withdrawal of material reception conditions

Circumstances for reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions

An applicant's entitlement to reception ends when their application for international protection is either:

- Rejected after a final decision (the applicant is then required to leave the country).
- The applicant withdraws the application or abandons the procedure.
- The applicant is granted asylum or subsidiary protection, at which point they transition to an integration phase.
- The applicant is granted residence for reasons other than protection (e.g., for family reunification).

Possible sanctions and procedure

The Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior decides about the sanctions by issuing a formal decision to reduce the allowance.

The Ministry shall decide to reduce the financial assistance provided for the applicant for international protection to an amount equal to the subsistence minimum for a period of 1 month.

The financial allowance provided in the reception centre can be reduced by up to approximately one third (down to the amount equal to the subsistence minimum of CZK 3,130 - about EUR 124; housing and other material reception conditions are still provided) for a period of 1 month.

If an applicant for international protection breaches the obligation to comply with the accommodation rules for asylum facilities, she/he can be imposed a fine of up to CZK 2,000 (about 74 €).

However, the Asylum Act bans the use of both type of sanctions for the same individual case: authorities either impose a fine or reduce the financial allowance.

A serious breach of the obligation to comply with the rules for asylum facilities is constituted namely by situations where the applicant in the asylum facility endangers the lives or health of persons, produces, is in possession of or consumes alcohol or any other addictive substance, fabricates or possesses items that could be used to endanger the safety of persons or property, enters the asylum facility under the influence of alcohol or any other addictive substance, repeatedly breaches smoking bans or persistently fails to observe the principles of hygiene.

A worker designated by the reception facility operator to prevent an applicant from entering or remove them from the facility if the applicant is under the severe influence of alcohol or other addictive substances, or if the person is a threat to him/herself or to others, to the property, public order or had already caused harm. In this case, the applicant would not be merely removed from the centre, but further appropriate steps are taken, such as bringing the applicant to a sobering centre in case of alcohol or substance intoxication. For cases when the intoxication is manageable and it is not necessary to prevent the applicant from staying on the premises of the reception facility, another procedure applies and, for example, the

applicant is placed in a separate room.

Review of the sanction decision

It is possible to lodge a remonstration according to Section 152 of the Administrative Procedure Code, which has no suspensive effect. An appeal to the Administrative Court of first instance may be lodged as a last instance.