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Background

Historical Context

- Migration during communism (limited inflow and outflow)
- Post-1989: Transition to a democracy and EU integration

Current Statistics

- Total immigrant population
- Countries of origin (e.g., Ukraine, Slovakia, Vietnam)
- Key reasons for migration: work, family reunification, asylum/temporary protection

Migration policy

Legal framework

Act No. 326/1999 Coll. On the Residence of Foreign Nationals

- Differentiates between EU citizens (free movement and labor access) and non-EU nationals
- Governs visa processes (e.g. employee cards, long-term visas)

Act No. 435/2004 Coll on Employment

- Regulates employment of foreign workers with labour market protections for Czech and EU workers
- Includes labor market test – jobs offered to non-EU nationals only if no suitable EU candidates exist

Migration strategy

Responding to labor market needs

- Increased skilled migration pathways to tackle labor shortages
- Quota-based migration programmes ensure transparency and control over non-EU labor migration

Support for displaced persons

- Temporary protection directive enables Ukrainian refugees to work under equal conditions as Czech citizens
- Government initiatives like nasiukrajinci.cz to match jobs and integrate refugees

Future strategic directions

Policy innovations

- Prospective points-based system is being implemented to attract skilled non-EU workers more efficiently
- Expand and refine programmes like Digital Nomad Programme and sector-specific pilot projects

Integration and mobility improvements

- Enhance family reunification pathways and improve job mobility for highly skilled workers
- Develop sectoral priorities to align migration policy with economic growth and long-term planning

Future strategic directions

Broader collaboration

- Strengthen ties between migration policy and international development (e.g. vocational training in origin countries)
- Explore partnership with industries to pilot targeted migration projects beyond current quotas

Migration programmes

Economic Migration

Programs focus on filling labor shortages, targeting industries like IT, agriculture, and healthcare

Key Initiatives:

Fast-track visas for high-demand professions

Quotas for selected countries

Strategic economic migration programmes

Qualified Employee Programme

- Targets medium-skilled workers, focus sectors include manufacturing, construction, and services

Highly Qualified Employee Programme

- Designed for professionals in top-tier fields such as healthcare and tech specialists

Key and Research Personnel Programme

- Focus on scientific and research roles, and senior positions in strategic industries

Addressing labor shortages in agriculture and industry

Special work visa for Ukrainians

- Targets employment in agriculture, food production, and forestry
- Flexible stay (3 to 12 months), activated during critical labor shortages.
- Currently suspended due to war in Ukraine

Pilot project for Indonesian Workers

- Collaboration with Škoda Transportation for 300 Indonesian polytechnic students, focus on automotive industry training

Foreigners Training Programme

- Capacity-building in origin countries to address sector-specific needs

Migration programmes in high-tech sectors

Digital Nomad Programme

- For IT professionals and freelancers from countries like the USA, Japan, and UK

EU Blue Card

- Requires a university degree and high salary threshold (1.5x gross average)
- Focuses on filling healthcare, engineering, and IT roles

Resources



Select topic

All

Border Management

Capacity Building

Complementary pathways

Design and Governance

Legal Migration and Mobility



KEY MESSAGES

- The Belgian labour market is experiencing growing shortages in both low- and high-skilled professions. The most significant shortages are in catering, ICT, professional, technical and scientific jobs, and healthcare. Belgium's wage level is among the highest in the EU, and the availability of skilled workers remains a major concern for employers.
- Pathways to Belgium exist mainly for highly skilled and medium skilled workers in bottleneck occupations for which the labour market test does not apply. Access to the labour market for low- and medium skilled workers is more restricted and subject to labour market test. The labour market test is not applicable for highly skilled and/or employer. The willingness of employer (or regional level) to facilitate labour migration pathway for low-skilled workers is rather limited, the reasoning being that the Belgian labour market already has sufficient low-skilled workers.
- Belgium has experience with skills mobility partnerships and bilateral labour migration projects which it aims to consolidate in the future. Another country which may be relevant to Belgium for a Talent Partnership type experiment is the Netherlands.
- Further flexibility in policies concerning employers could include exemptions from the labour market test level for certain professions.

Mapping Legal Pathways: Belgium Summary (2024)



KEY MESSAGES

- Austria's immigration policy can be described as fairly restrictive within the EU although recent reforms aim to lower barriers.
- Austria's labour migration system is geared towards higher skilled migrants with more limited possibilities for lower skilled labour migrants (e.g. seasonal work in agriculture and tourism).
- Despite having introduced specific schemes (such as White-Red (WRG) Card for skilled workers, Austria seems to struggle to recruit significant numbers of foreign workers.
- Family related migration and asylum related migration are higher in numbers than labour migration. This has partially due to its migration policy which is heavily influenced by the need to deal with complexity and bureaucratic procedures as well as language requirements for foreign workers.
- Austria has only very recently started to engage with third countries and to actively engage in efforts to recruit workers from outside the EU.
- There seems to be agreement that Austria needs to step up its efforts in the race for skills and talent and reform its system to better attract and utilise labour from foreign countries.

Mapping Legal Pathways: Austria Summary (2024)



KEY MESSAGES

- The Czech Republic gives labour migration in one of the integral aspects supporting the development of investments, foreign trade, and the competitiveness of the Czech economy. There are numerous programmes aimed at foreign workers, with the Employee Card being the most commonly utilized work permit.
- Specific industries in the Czech Republic as construction, manufacturing and IT processing are grappling with labour shortages. The government is actively seeking ways to attract foreign workers to these sectors.
- There is a disparity between the programmes addressing the immediate labour market needs of the Czech Republic and the long-term strategies that would contribute to its long-term vision and sustained economic growth.
- Rather than a larger transformation of labour migration policy it is more likely for the government to expand and adjust existing labour migration pathways and programmes and to pilot new projects to streamline, formalize and digitalize the procedures could further strengthen the existing pathways.
- Czech Republic has not yet explored talent schemes in frameworks of the EU Talent Partnerships. Enhancing the migration flows from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, establishing partnerships aligned to a talent strategy in line with the needs of the labour market and the economic development of the country.
- Furthermore, integration measures in employment and broader aspects of migrants would be a helpful

Mapping Legal Pathways: Czech Republic Summary (2024)

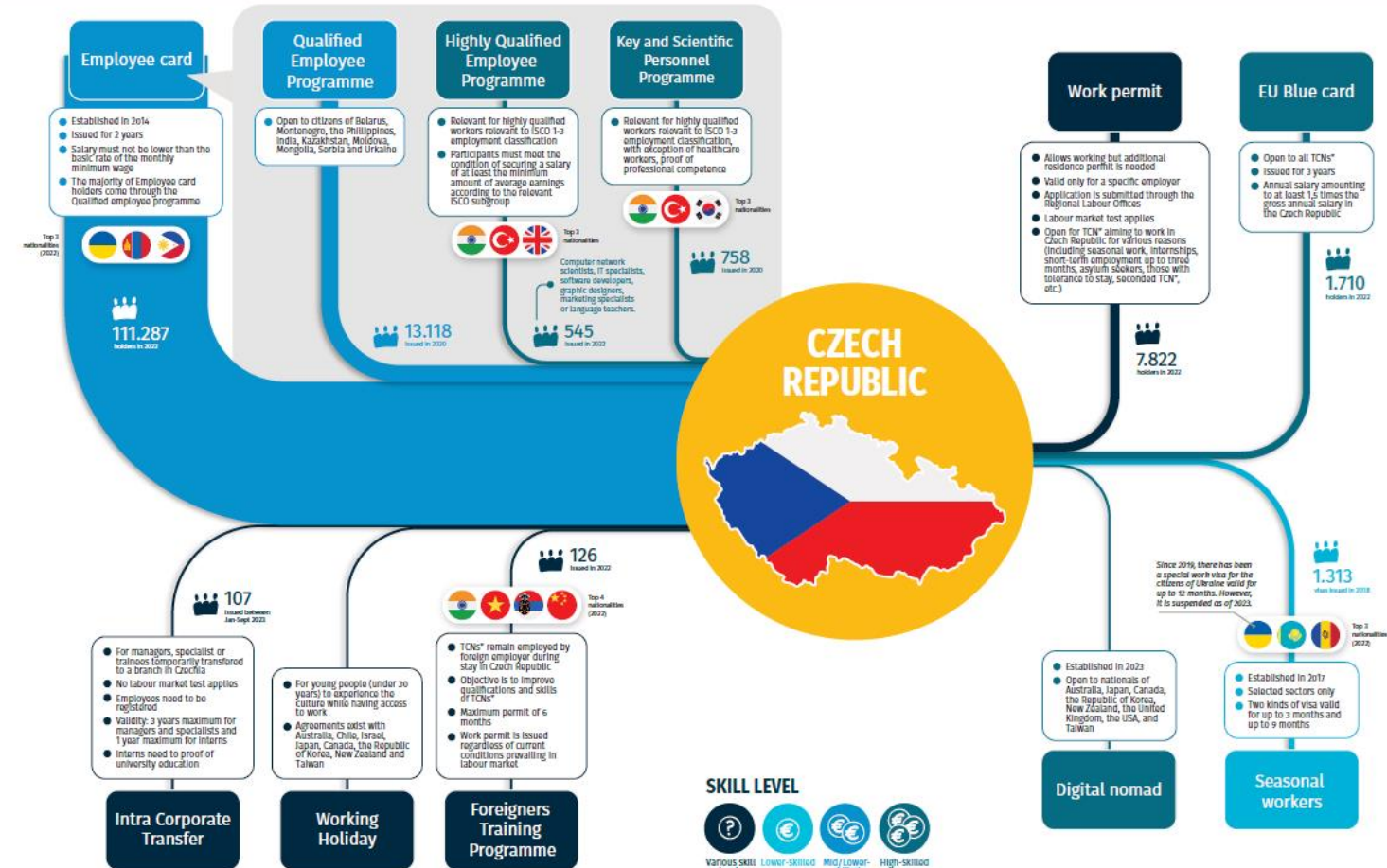


KEY MESSAGE

- The new Finnish government has a high-income migrant national.
- Finland could be more welcoming towards migrants.
- Finland has labour shortages in meeting its labour needs.
- Additional measures are needed to attract migrants.
- Measures to address the labour shortage are needed.

Mappi Summ

LABOUR MIGRATION & MOBILITY PATHWAYS TOWARDS...



Ukrainian refugee situation

- In Czechia, there are over 340 000 displaced persons under temporary protection
- Lex Ukraine VII
- Majority of refugees settled in Prague, Brno or western Bohemia
- Issues with employment-skills mismatch
- Access to education (esp. nurseries - one fifth could not provide places needed, according to the Czech School Inspectorate) and healthcare

Sources

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Thank you for your attention!

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