

IN-CREATE

IO1 National Report *Czech Republic*

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND ARTS IN TCN'S INTEGRATION
AND BEST PRACTICES.



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1. Introduction

The migration situation in the Czech Republic has been undergoing significant progress since the 1990s, when the Czech Republic ceased to be a transit country and gradually became a destination country for foreigners. Immigration to the Czech Republic began to increase and since 1989 the number of foreigners has increased more than thirteen times.

As migration rate increased, some serious problems in the coexistence of Czech citizens and foreigners started to appear and could be solved by creating an effective system to integrate foreigners into society. The Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic responded to the increasing number of foreigners by creating an integration policy for foreigners in the late 1990s, before joining the European Union.

The first state Concept for the Integration of Foreigners called “In Mutual Respect” (cz. - *Ve vzájemném respektu*) was approved by the Government in 2000. This document has been substantially updated twice since then, in 2006 and 2011.

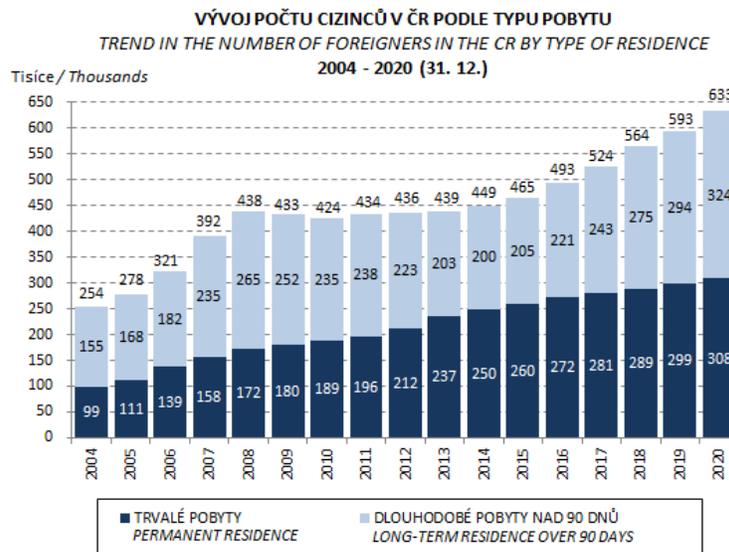
The primary target group of integration measures are third country nationals (TCNs), legal long-term residents in the Czech Republic. The aim of integration policy is to support integration as a process that leads to the harmonious and mutually beneficial coexistence of foreigners and the majority, building awareness of belonging and responsibility for coexistence and creating a mutually interconnected and communicating society. Integration of foreigners is crucial for maintaining the social cohesion in society, for its economic, social and cultural development. Insufficient or unsuccessful integration leads to the risks of creating closed communities of foreigners, social fragmentation of society and the creation of parallel social structures, the growth of xenophobia, intolerance and extremism in society. Integration policy aims to support foreigners’ self-sufficiency so they are able to live in the Czech Republic and be able to perceive themselves as part of this society, know their rights and obligations, orientate in tradition, culture and way of life in a new environment, be socially and economically independent and have sufficient information on where to find help and support when needed.

The main objective of the Concept is to maintain and further develop a proactive integration policy at national, regional and local levels, as well as strengthening the awareness of foreigners and the majority, and deepening communication with the general public on migration and integration issues in relation to citizens and foreigners.

2. Key figures and statistics regarding the socio-economic characteristics of TCNs living in the partner countries including: TCNs' population statistics, gender, age, countries of origin, occupations of TCNs etc.

According to the Czech Statistical Office as of 30.09.2021, the population of the Czech Republic was 10 682 029¹ people, of which 632 570 were foreigners with a residence permit, representing 4,7% of the total population. From this number, 324 000 foreigners had long-term residence, and 308 000 had permanent residence.²

Table 1. Trend in the number of foreigners in the Czech Republic by type of residence.



Source: Directorate of the Alien Police of the Ministry of the Interior

In discussing demographic characteristics of foreigners, we should mention that the working group age prevails (age group 0-14 consists of 64 548, 15-64 -531 143, and after 65 - 36 880). Gender wise there are 361 097 men, and 271 473 women, making the gender proportion in favour of men 57/43³.

According to the latest available data from the Czech Statistical Office from 2021, EU citizens represented 1,5 % of the Czech Republic population, while those with citizenship from non-EU countries accounted for 3.2%.

¹ https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/obyvatelstvo_lide

² <https://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci/cizinci-pocet-cizincu>

³ https://vdb.czso.cz/vdbvo2/faces/index.jsf?page=vystup-objekt&pvo=CIZ03&z=T&f=TABULKA&katalog=31032&c=v10~2_RP2020MP12DP31&v=v24_null_null_null

Among the most represented groups are citizens of Ukraine (165 356 persons), Slovakia (124 544) and Vietnam (62 842). Citizens of these three countries represented 55.7% of all foreigners with a residence permit. Other nationalities present were Russian (41 692), Belarus (7 127), Kazakhstan (7 013), Turkey (3 476).

Table 2. Trend in number of foreigners in the Czech Republic by citizenship 31.12.2020

Public database

CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE

Foreigners by citizenship as at 31 December - selected regions
31.12. Territory: Czech Republic

	Foreigners, Total	Female	Citizenship							
			EU	of which			Other countries	of which		
				Slovakia	Germany	Poland		Ukraine	Viet Nam	Russian Federation
2020	632,570	271,473	243,857	124,544	20,861	20,733	388,713	165,356	62,842	41,692
2019	593,366	253,057	245,292	121,278	21,478	21,767	348,074	145,153	61,910	38,010
2018	564,345	243,628	232,493	116,817	21,267	21,279	331,852	131,302	61,097	38,033
2017	524,142	228,058	219,708	111,804	21,261	20,669	304,434	117,061	59,761	36,642
2016	493,441	215,496	208,166	107,251	21,216	20,305	285,275	109,850	58,025	35,759
2015	464,670	202,474	195,499	101,589	20,464	19,840	269,171	105,614	56,900	34,710
2014	449,367	195,345	184,511	96,222	19,687	19,626	264,856	104,156	56,609	34,416
2013	439,189	190,663	173,593	90,948	18,507	19,452	265,596	105,138	57,347	33,138
2012	435,946	188,119	160,642	85,807	17,149	19,235	275,304	112,549	57,300	32,961
2011	434,153	185,171	151,276	81,253	15,763	19,058	282,877	118,932	58,205	32,376
2010	424,291	180,080	135,408	71,780	13,871	18,242	288,883	124,281	60,289	31,807
2009	432,503	178,097	137,017	73,446	13,792	19,273	295,486	131,932	61,115	30,295
2008	437,565	173,590	145,830	76,034	17,496	21,710	291,735	131,921	60,255	27,084
2007	392,315	155,292	130,906	67,889	15,700	20,601	261,409	126,721	51,101	23,278
2006	321,456	128,653	102,886	58,384	10,109	18,894	218,570	102,594	40,779	18,564
2005	278,312	112,486	87,143	49,446	7,187	17,810	191,169	87,789	36,833	16,273
2004	254,294	102,360	80,245	47,354	5,772	16,265	174,049	78,263	34,179	14,747

The number of employed foreigners (644 164) and the number of entrepreneurs 97 803) increased year-on-year in 2020, despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. While the number of employed foreigners increased by 3.6% last year, the numbers of foreigners with trade licenses increased by 4.3% compared to 2020. Men predominated among foreign employees in Czech Republic (62.8%). A higher predominance of men is evident, especially among the group of citizens of the EU27 countries. Among third-country nationals, the proportion of men is slightly lower.⁴

Geographically the foreigners reside mainly in greater cities with relatively low unemployment rates. One third of all foreigners live in the capital city of Prague (228 532 persons). Outside of Prague, a higher proportion of foreigners can be found living in greater cities such as Plzeň, Brno, Ostrava, Karlovy Vary, and Mladá Boleslav. Foreign residents are also to be found in industrial areas in Central Bohemia, as well as in the border regions in the northwestern and northeastern parts of the country.

In 2020, a total of 4,344 foreigners acquired Czech citizenship. Of these, 2,656 were granted citizenship, mostly to nationals of Ukraine (939), Russia (514) and Slovakia (365) and others.

⁴ <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/pocet-v-cesku-pracujicich-cizincu-loni-vzrostl>

Furthermore, citizenship was granted to 27 children. Another 1,661 persons acquired citizenship of the Czech Republic by declaration⁵.

3. Problems and obstacles faced by TCNs in integrating the country

The problems that a person faces when moving to the Czech Republic can be divided into several types: legislative, adaptive, psychological.

Legislative problems:

According to Tomas Jungwirth, policy officer of Consortium of NGOs working with foreigners, the three main legislative problems are:

Complexity of laws related to foreigners and residence of foreigners.

The legislative framework on migration addresses little more than regulating the entry and residence of foreign citizens in the Czech Republic and related matters. However, this legislation is extremely complicated and often even experienced lawyers face challenges navigating in it.

Lack of legislative acts on the use of foreign labour.

Foreigners labour rights remain an area of particularly serious concern. It is common practice for foreigners to work long hours, to be housed in overcrowded dormitories, facing exploitation by employers and in many cases, not even receiving the agreed wages or compensation.

Barriers to foreigners' civic participation.

In the Czech Republic, foreigners' concerns have been dealt with mostly by NGOs and religious associations, while it is assumed that a lack of political will on the part of Czech officials to promote the civil rights of non-citizens is an important obstacle to foreigners' civic participation⁶.

Adaptive problems:

Language barriers.

It's no great surprise that language tops the list of issues facing foreigners in any country. Being able to communicate (or not) affects every area of life in which we have to interact with others.

⁵ <https://www.mvcr.cz/migrace/clanek/vyrocní-zpravy-o-situaci-v-oblasti-migrace-a-integrace.aspx>

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/pathways-prosperity-migration-and-development-czech-republic_en

From jobs to schooling, to simply finding your way around or buying food, learning the native language is essential.

Even though most foreigners who move to the Czech Republic are native speakers of a Slavic language, it still takes years to learn to communicate fluently. Many foreigners live for years or even decades without learning much more than how to order in a restaurant. This has all kinds of consequences for the integration (or lack thereof) of foreigners into Czech life and society⁷.

Housing.

Official data from the European statistical office Eurostat shows that house prices in the Czech Republic are the second fastest growing in Europe⁸, making housing challenging to access for foreigners and making tenancy the most common option.

An immediate priority for anybody moving to a new area or country is to secure housing. Language barriers can be a big part of the problem for foreigners, but lack of local knowledge or how the housing market works in your new country can also present problems.

Finding affordable housing for foreigners, particularly in industrial areas, is fast becoming quite a quest, not least because many landlords refuse to rent houses to foreign workers.⁹

Discrimination.

The 2019 Eurobarometer on “Discrimination in the European Union” showed that on the question: "Discrimination on the base of ethnic origin" 38% of the Czech population answered "widespread" and 54% answered "rare."¹⁰

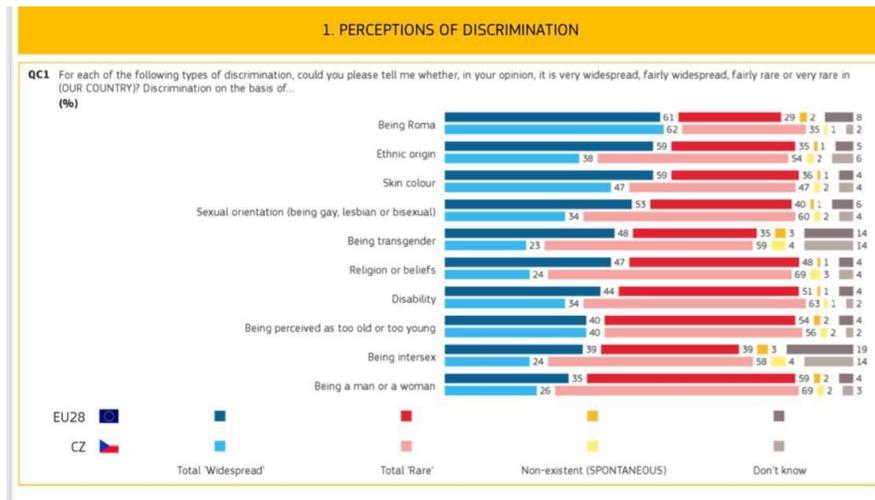
⁷ <https://english.radio.cz/being-expat-mum-czech-republic-can-be-a-struggle-8740087>

⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tipsho40/default/table?lang=en>

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/pathways-prosperity-migration-and-development-czech-republic_en

¹⁰ <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2251>

Table 3. Perception of discrimination in the Czech Republic.



Prejudgment.

The current Czech migration situation reflects the idea that foreigners coming for work are merely substituting for a temporary reduction in the domestic workforce, and that the foreigners will leave the country once work opportunities run out. This also includes the false perception of foreign workers as just a cheap workforce willing to do dull, dirty, degrading and dangerous jobs¹¹.

Cultural Differences.

This is not necessarily the first on the list of practical considerations for foreigners. Housing, employment, transport and services are naturally a priority. However, many foreigners report that, on arrival, it's the cultural differences that really make an impression. This can range from social customs to more significant issues such as attitudes towards gender, religious diversity, ethnicity and sexuality, which can all be vastly different in a new country.

This can raise a host of problems for both foreigners and the people they interact with. It can also lead to a sense of isolation for foreigners and even affect mental health negatively. It's important to accept that values will be different and that this is something that you cannot control.

Psychological:

The mental health of foreigners is crucial for successful integration into their new home country¹². According to numerous studies, the percentage of those foreigners who go through a

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/pathways-prosperity-migration-and-development-czech-republic_en

¹² <https://kont.zsf.jcu.cz/pdfs/knt/2017/04/08.pdf>

range of negative experiences and states - anger, sadness, insecurity, regret about moving, depression - is consistently high: from 72% to 88%.

Social isolation is one of the biggest psychological problems¹³.

Missing the support of friends, family and extended social circles is a big factor for most foreigners. Those who come from societies where traditional support structures within communities are strong can find that they feel lost, alienated and disorientated.

A foreigner often moves to a foreign country without knowing the language and doesn't have any contacts or connections. In the first months, sometimes years, it isolates a person from the society into which they are trying to integrate.

The other frequent psychological problems faced by foreigners are loneliness, chronic fatigue, periods of crisis, anxiety and fears, and crisis of identity.

However, despite all the above-mentioned problems, the foreigner's situation in the Czech Republic is considered rather positive. Immigration has been an engine of substantial economic growth, and many of its effects have improved the lives of the local population.

One of the main tools created for overcoming the above-mentioned obstacles is the joint effort of local governments, public administration and organically developed system of non-governmental and nonprofit organizations which focus on migration and offer various services to foreigners, such as legal and social counseling, Czech language and social adaptation courses etc.

4. Employment or other policies affecting TCNs and their integration

Economic migration is one of the aspects supporting development of investments, foreign trade and competitiveness of the Czech economy.

Migration policy should serve as an effective tool for regulation of qualified workers migration from third countries in order to ensure a sufficient harmony between demand and supply of workforce on the Czech labour market. This means that migration policy should ensure sufficient amount of qualified workers for Czech companies¹⁴.

As a result, employment and entrepreneurship remain the predominant purpose of long-term residence for the third-country nationals.

¹³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-and-forced-displacement>

¹⁴ <https://www.mpo.cz/en/foreign-trade/economic-migration/economic-migration--239491>

Graf 4. Statistics on the growth of the number of working foreigners in the Czech Republic.

Public database

Employed foreigners as at 31 December - selected territory

Territory: Czech Republic

	Employed foreigners	Including	
		Registered at labour offices	Holding valid trade licences
2020	741,967	644,164	97,803
2019	715,651	621,870	93,781
31. 12. 2018	658,519	568,676	89,843
2017	559,582	472,354	87,228
2016	468,517	382,889	85,628
2015	407,106	323,244	83,862
2014	-	-	83,569
2013	-	-	85,887
2012	-	-	91,040
2011	310,921	217,862	93,059
2010	306,350	215,367	90,983
2009	318,462	230,709	87,753
2008	361,709	284,551	77,158
2007	309,027	240,242	68,785
2006	250,797	185,075	65,722
2005	218,982	151,736	67,246
2004	173,203	107,984	65,219

The Czech government established several special regimes under which employers may find and hire workers in third countries in a speedy and simplified procedure. From 2018, there was the 'Regime Ukraine' with a doubled annual capacity, 'Regime Mongolia', 'Regime Philippines' and more recently also a 'Regime Serbia' (each at 1,000 persons per year).

As regards categories of jobs performed by foreigners in the Czech Republic, a majority fall into the category of semi-skilled occupations, with a growing prominence of both high and low-skilled occupations.

The majority of the above-mentioned sectors of the economy generally do not require specific knowledge, a high level of education, or developed technical skills from employees. However, many TCNs working in the Czech Republic have limited opportunities to apply for better jobs due to several reasons such as a language barrier, lack of education, and the need for requalification.

All residents of the Czech Republic (citizens as well foreigners) can qualify for a particular profession by completing a qualification or retraining course. Czech governmental institutions, educational institutions private companies offer the general public requalification courses in different spheres including ICT¹⁵. Courses range mostly from 150 to 800 hours and cost approximately 5,000 CZK (around 200 EUR) to 50,000 CZK (2, 000 EUR). Some courses of basic knowledge and skills are provided for free, however their number is limited. Job seekers registered at the Employment department of Czech Republic can apply for retraining or requalification courses reimbursement, however it is not guaranteed by the law.

¹⁵ https://www.uradprace.cz/documents/37855/1991774/TZ_nezamestnanost_srpen_2021.pdf/14b66898-349f-1cbe-9c77-bdb94f55adb0

The jobs that foreigners from TCN fill in the so-called secondary labor market are often physically demanding, dangerous to their health and sometimes degrading. It is quite common practice for TCNs to work ten-hour, twelve-hour and sometimes even longer working hours, as well as to work on weekends (Saturday, sometimes Sunday)¹⁶.

Due to the "harsher" working conditions, workplace accidents occur often. Unsatisfactory working conditions and non-compliance with safety work can manifest as risk factors especially in situations where the foreigners concerned is not a participant in a public health system insurance (for example, long - term entrepreneurs) or does not have valid insurance at all, or does not know about his rights and has not received an insurance card from the employer.

The unemployment rate in the Czech Republic in July 2021 was 2,8%, the lowest throughout the European Union¹⁷. The low unemployment rate in the country makes it easy for foreigners to find work.

The Czech state integration policy emphasizes the orientation of foreigners in society, which it considers to be one of the pillars of integration. In order to achieve it the Ministry seeks to promote information and thus orientation of foreigners both before leaving the country of origin and after their arrival in the Czech Republic.

Pre-departure measures such as the project "Next Stop the Czech Republic"¹⁸ include information materials (brochures, video) at Czech embassies in the countries of origin and are intended primarily for foreigners from third countries who are considering long-term residence in the Czech Republic. Foreigners can get basic information about the Czech Republic, contacts for state institutions and non-governmental organizations, and possible risks related to dishonest intermediaries.

Upon arrival measures such as the project "Welcome to the Czech Republic"¹⁹ include so-called adaptation integration courses, where foreigners can learn about their rights and obligations in the Czech Republic, find a way to solve practical problems or prevent intercultural misunderstandings.

For foreigners with long-term residence and permanent residence, socio-cultural orientation courses are available, organized by a network of integration centers, which focus on more specific issues like submitting taxes, acquiring citizenship, or delivering a baby in the Czech Republic.

In order to improve access to information the Ministry of Interior established a network of integration centers²⁰ throughout the Czech Republic, where foreigners are provided legal and

¹⁶ <https://www.esfcr.cz/documents/21802/739492/Anal%C3%BDza+-+publikace/d5582df7-6f3e-4705-b23f-275c523180a0>

¹⁷ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/268830/unemployment-rate-in-eu-countries/>

¹⁸ <https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/next-stop-the-czech-republic.aspx>

¹⁹ <https://www.mvcr.cz/docDetail.aspx?docid=21786075&doctype=ART>

²⁰ <http://www.integracnicentra.cz/?lang=en>

social services, job counselling, Czech language courses, interpreting, sociocultural courses, community events, etc.

The Ministry of the Interior's long-term priority is to support integration policy at the regional and local level, where the integration process is actually taking place. The main objective is to engage local governments and respective stakeholders in integration efforts, and to create suitable conditions for co-existence and fostering diversity.

5. The role of culture and arts in the integration of TCNs

The Czech Republic is a country with a rich cultural heritage with works of art seen in theatres, cinemas, libraries, globally recognized galleries, museums and concert halls and with well-maintained traditions especially in the villages of the 2 Moravian-Silesian region²¹.

The Czech Republic also shows its openness to work internationally in cultural matters by joining the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) as an observer. The Czech Republic is also an active member of UNESCO. In fact, the Strategy of Culture State Promotion (cultural policy), which was prepared by the Ministry of Culture, has been inspired by UNESCO documents²².

The biggest challenge currently facing the country is the attitude of the Czech population towards foreigners, especially those who are arriving during the current refugee crisis. As a largely mono-ethnic country, and also due to daily media bombardment and disinformation, Czech society is heavily divided. Apart from the language problem, foreigners in some cases face misunderstandings of their culture and rejection. Integration politics toward foreigners can include building educational tools and campaigns for promoting better inter-cultural understanding and mutual respect. This needs to be reflected especially in primary and secondary education.²³

Most of the work with foreigners is done by NGOs. Many of them offer language courses for foreigners which are free of charge (teachers are volunteers). There are some EU-funded projects providing help for foreign nationals and these are regional, usually run by local NGOs.

Below are some of activities and initiatives that strive towards including elements of cultural and artistic production into TCNs integration:

²¹ <https://is.muni.cz/th/xbmhc/ArreyThesis.pdf>

²² <https://culturalfoundation.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CzechRepublic.pdf>

²³ <https://www.euroguidance.cz/publikace/cross-cultural-guidance.pdf>

ICP

<https://icpraha.com/en/>

The Integration Centre Prague (ICP) is a public service company founded by the city of Prague on 14 March 2012 to effectively coordinate integration activities and establish cooperation between the non-profit sector, local authorities, and Prague City Council.

They have been working with foreigners living in the Czech Republic for a long time. This organization perceives integration as a two-way process. As such, the activities are also designed for the Czech public. What they do:

Consultation.

Organization experts help find a solution for the various situations in foreigners' lives that they are unable to deal with, or when they just need to check if everything is going alright.

The quality of help that ICP provides is based on long-term experience. The consultations they provide are maximally adapted to each unique situation they address.

The Adaptation and Integration Course.

They lead an educational seminar about Czech society, which help foreigners to get oriented in the new country as soon as possible. During four hours with a qualified lecturer and translator, the participant gets essential information about the Czech Republic's life and learns about their fundamental rights and obligations.

Interpretation and Accompaniment.

The organization provides services in the following areas: explaining the basic things required for living in Prague, giving advice about who to contact when solving life situations (ICP lawyers or social workers, public institutions, other non-profit organizations) accompanying foreigners to any public institution (hospital, preschool, foreign police, etc.) and help with communication and giving recommendations on how to learn Czech fast and understand Czech culture.

InBáze

<https://inbaze.cz/en/>

The mission of InBáze is to help foreigners and their families with life in the Czech Republic. They create a safe and open space for mutual knowledge and understanding between Czech citizens and people of other nationalities and cultures. What they do:

Legal and social counseling.

The organization's goal is to provide free support to foreigners living in Prague, regardless of their residence permit or origin, in resolving various life situations. They offer social and legal

counseling provided by qualified and experienced practitioners. Social workers focus on professional social counseling, counseling for families with children and also field social work in the territory of Prague. Lawyers specialize in residential legislation.

Intercultural work, interpreting and accompaniment.

The organization provides assistance and counseling services to foreigners living in Prague in order to support their orientation in the Czech environment and to enable their engagement in public life. Intercultural work services are usually provided in the Czech language and, if necessary, in another world language according to the abilities of the particular intercultural worker.

Clubs for children and youth (5-18 years).

The organization offers a safe environment and creates a friendly place for children and young people with different cultural backgrounds to meet. All meetings are based on mutual tolerance and a friendly approach to children and their needs. Activities for children and young people are open to everyone without differences. The language of communication is Czech, but perfect knowledge is not a prerequisite. Children and young people meet regularly every week.

Psychological counseling services.

The organization offers individual therapy sessions in a safe environment where anyone can talk to experienced therapists about what bothers them. Individual psychological counseling and therapy is provided in the following areas: situations of sudden crisis, family problems, relationships, interpersonal conflicts, support in stress management, training in the use of own compensation mechanisms, recommendations and mediation of appropriate experts and facilities in the state and private mental health care system.

Matertera

<http://matertera.cz/>

Matertera's purpose is to help foreign women overcome barriers and support each other in personal and professional growth. They form a community of women who have decided to live their dreams.

Matertera focuses on the implementation of projects that lead to the support of foreign women in personal and professional growth. They try to make activities financially accessible to all women, which is why most activities are free or for a symbolic fee. What they do:

Supporting career development.

Project " Vlastní cestou " is a comprehensive project focusing on supporting foreign women in their career development, which goes hand in hand with personal growth and integration into Czech society. Project activities are designed to meet the needs of women looking for a job, planing to start their own business or looking to increase their socio-cultural orientation and capital.

The primary target group of the project consists of foreign women living in Prague, regardless of age, country of origin or residence status.

Community empowerment

The "I'm Not Alone" project is a comprehensive project responding to the social isolation of foreign women in the integration process, which has deepened in connection with COVID-19. Its aim is to create information materials for women who would use stories and practical advice to and thus contribute to the prevention of the negative effects of social isolation.

Project "The Women to Each Other" focuses on creating a community of women, sharing knowledge and skills, and encouraging the courage to create and present. As part of the project, they will develop the concept of a time bank, hold a series of networking meetings and, using mentoring, and prepare the participants of the online course for the implementation of their own workshops and events. The activities are adapted to the current situation of COVID 2019 and are being moved to the online space.

SIMI

<https://www.migrace.com/>

The association of integration and migration is a human rights non-profit organization defending rights of foreigners in the Czech Republic.

They provide free legal, social and psychosocial counseling to foreigners living in the Czech Republic. As a successor of the Counseling centre for refugees they have been providing counseling since 1992.

The organization works with the general public to promote tolerance and combat xenophobia and racism. Workers of SIMI appear in the media, participate in discussions, seminars and conferences while they give lectures at elementary and high schools and universities throughout the Czech Republic. What they do:

Legal and social counselling.

The organization provides legal and social counselling to all categories of foreigners and refugees from third countries residing in the Czech Republic, without regard to their residency status. Clients can obtain qualified counselling and information, and also get help in understanding their rights and obligations. Clients are assisted in understanding their situation and in finding an

appropriate solution to their specific issues. They are also encouraged to learn practical skills, which they can subsequently use during their stay or residence in the Czech Republic.

Influencing the public and advocacy.

The association for Integration and Migration develops a number of activities directed at the Czech public. The goal of this is to cultivate tolerance towards foreigners and to fight existing xenophobia and racism in our society. As a result, SIMI workers appear in the media, take part in different discussions, seminars and conferences, educational and cultural happenings.

Therapeutic counseling.

The organization offers professional support and consultations to all clients who are currently in difficult personal situations. They provide assistance with a wide range of issues such as:

- personal, relationship, family and educational problems,
- work-related issues, unfulfilled expectations, feelings of long-term misfortune, alienation, generation gap misunderstandings or problems with transnational marriages,
- victims of uncomfortable or troublesome prejudice (related to their origin, ethnicity, language, religion, etc) experienced in the Czech Republic, etc.

Slovo 21

<https://www.slovo21.cz/>

Slovo 21 is a non-governmental non-profit organization that started operating in Prague in 1999. Their work can be divided into two main branches - activities that seek to improve the overall situation of the Roma in the Czech Republic and those that focus on foreigners from third countries.

Since the beginning, Slovo 21 has been an organization that wants to contribute to building a multicultural society and, above all, to a better coexistence of cultures not only in the Czech Republic but also in Europe. What they do:

Adaptation.

The organization runs the “Family Next Door project”, which is one of their most successful projects. Even though Covid-19 pandemic, the project took its place in full form, as planned by organization team. 30 meetings of Czech and foreigners’ families from 3rd world countries took place in 7 regions of Czechia.

Each meeting took place under the eye of the assistant. Families were paired based on different criteria so that everyone could enjoy each other's company and have similar conversation topics. This could pave the way for families to become friends in the long term.

Integration courses “Vítejte v české republice”.

The aim of this project is to support the quality integration of foreigners from third countries in the form of adaptation-integration courses (AIK). The nature of the project directly corresponds to the needs defined by the Concept of Integration of Foreigners in the Czech Republic. Sufficient information for foreigners will reduce the risk of losing their legal residence and at the same time strengthen the orientation of foreigners in society and their self-sufficiency.

CIC

Center of foreigner's integration helps foreigners integrate into Czech society by offering them social services, educational resources, and other activities. They contribute to a social environment that is more accessible and just to foreigners, one that better supports their social participation and integration. What they do:

Social counselling.

The organization provides consultation to foreigners on the following issues: residence permits, employment and labour law, social security, health insurance and medical care, family matters (marriage, divorce, birth, family reunification, etc.), living arrangements, communication with the authorities, and applying for Czech citizenship.

Perspective for unemployed.

Perspective is a social rehabilitation program that helps people from other countries when they are looking for a job.

This program is for people who have legal residence in the Czech Republic, have been unemployed for over three months and have free access to the labour market.

The organization offers individual support and training in these areas: writing a CV and a motivation letter, rehearsing your phone and face-to-face job interview, choosing a retraining course, rights and obligations of employees, and communication with employment offices and employers.

Clubs.

The Volunteer Support Program is recognized by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic under the title of Volunteer as a guide for asylum seekers and foreign residents living in the Czech Republic. This program helps to connect Czech nationals and people from other countries, regardless of their nationality and origin, so they can get to know each other better and spend time together.

Classes in such groups are aimed to strengthen the ties between mainstream society and people from other countries, reduce social and cultural isolation, support social interactions and provide relevant information, and improve the level of Czech proficiency.

Youth Included

<https://youthincluded.com/>

The youth non-governmental organization works as an open-space for open-minded, curious and active youth who want to know new people and cultures, learn new things, share their skills, and inspire and be inspired. The development of events platform for young Prague residents becomes a great chance to meet, share skills and experience and contribute to the integration of young foreigners. The focus is on informal, peer-to-peer learning, empowerment, joint creation and support of new creative ideas.

Youth Included is a diverse group of educators, academics, and creative young people from different countries, based in Prague, Czech Republic. What they do:

Supporting career development.

YI supports the social inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable groups (third country nationals) through equal access to employment (as third country nationals usually have fewer opportunities for employment compared with EU nationals). The organisation has been implementing the projects aiming at using and upgrading the existing IT/Digital/Entrepreneurial/Journalistic skills and competencies of TCNs in order to meet some of the actual needs of the industry in general and at the Czech labour market in particular.

Projects: MAX, EDDEY, YouthMythbusters, ICT4TCN, RIDE, Avast

Community empowerment

YI is a platform for the young adults of Prague, who are welcome to participate in the local and international projects as participants as well as lecturers. YI manifests the idea that TCNs have great potential and with proper empowerment can reach greater results, which applies both to the newcomers of YI community and its lecturing team. This approach is based on the idea of peer-to-peer education and community building, as YI believes that facilitation of these processes is enough to ignite interest, boost the urge for self-development via education and exchange the knowledge and skill set with each other which sequentially leads to natural integration.

YI has been applying this methodology in the following areas: Theatre, Drawing, Dance, Writing, Poetry, History, Culture, Photography, Video Creation, Employment, Ecology, Zero Waste, Czech Language, IT, Digital Marketing, Sales, Entrepreneurship etc.

Integration through art.

Many of the organisation's projects are related to creativity and arts in general. YI targets to use the conscious urge of the TCNS, migrants and locals for self-expression and self-development as the uniting factors which afterwards merge them into one group, diverse in its national, personal and professional background. Arts have become a social glue that holds like-minded people together.

The following areas of art were used: Theatre, Drawing, Dance, Writing, Poetry, History, Culture, Photography, Video Creation, Music, Singing etc.

YI has implemented variety of forms of the events: workshops, lectures, seminars, educational and production courses, interactive educational games, club meeting, sharing meeting, concerts etc.

Projects: Integration through Arts, Networking for Integration, Artistic Nomads, Out of the box Society, Finding Answers through Writing

6. Presence of TCNs in culture and arts in Czech Republic.

Art and culture is a process without beginning or end. It has the power to erase boundaries and establish new connections between people, even if that contact could not be established before. Thanks to the numerous cultural events held by public organizations in the Czech Republic, foreigners have the opportunity to present their culture and adapt to a new country through art. Creativity plays an essential role in social integration and integration into society.

There are no statistics on the presence of foreigners in the culture of the Czech Republic. We can trace the presence of foreigners in culture through cultural activities, the activities of cultural associations of foreigners, calls to action from ministries to support cultural activities for the integration of foreigners, and best practices related to culture as a means of integrating foreigners.

Here is a representative selection of TCNs presence in culture and arts in Czech Republic:

1. "T-Art" -the first youth experimental russian-language theater in Prague.



Within the framework of this project, actresses, actors and directors from different countries are united by love of the theatre and the common language of performances, which is Russian. The theatre now has two directors and twelve actors in its team.

The performances prepared by the cast of this theatre are very versatile: about love, relationships, stories based on folklore, and much more.

For today, the theatre has six shows. The participants united to erase the boundaries between foreigners and present their vision of theatrical art for Czech society. The show is in the Russian language but with Czech subtitles.

2."Dzerelo"



"Dzerelo" - an amateur creative team created in November 2004 in Prague by Ukrainians. The group unites people of all ages, most of whom have lived in the Czech Republic for several years.

Enthusiast meets in their spare time to draw new energy from songs in their native language. "Dzherelo" includes a dance group led by Yuri Kolv. As a professional dancer on the big stage, Yuri has been one of the soloists of the Prague State Opera Ballet for many years.

At the same time, children and adults under his guidance also learn classical and modern dances. In particular, Prague viewers have already had the opportunity to see the dances in their original arrangement:

"Carpathian Mosaic", "Wild Dances", "Kosari", "Viennese Waltz", "Kyiv Waltz".

Dance training occurs in three age groups on weekends - children, youth and adults.

3.Ziriab



In 1997, several Arab residents founded a music group in Prague. The composition of the group has undergone several changes. Currently, it consists of two Syrians: Marwan Alsolaiman (Arabic lute "ud", Arabic flute "nai", vocals) and Haitham Farag (vocals, Arabic drum "darbuka"), and Lebanese Mouin Abu Chahine (singing, Arabian tambourine "daff").

Their repertoire is diverse, but it can be defined as classical Arabic folk music. Sometimes they play more severe songs and sometimes dance. The band tries to introduce the Czech listener to what they consider original Arabic music that is not imported from anywhere into the Arab world.

Ziriab members explain the origins of purely acoustic music played on traditional Arabic instruments: the oud lute, the nai flute, the darbouka drum and the double-sided tamffin duff. Ziriab does not rely on the unfamiliarity of the Czech audience with their music. They play the way they learned it at home and come up with their own ideas here and there.

7. Good Practices on the use of arts for promoting integration of TCNs

Good Practice 1

Title	“REFUFEST”
Country (Flag)	
Image	
Context	<p>First RefuFest intercultural festival took place in 2006.</p> <p>Representatives of various nations offered a behind-the-scenes look at its traditions and culture of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Curacao (Dutch Antilles), Chechnya, Ecuador, Guatemala, Italy, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Germany, Pakistan, Palestine, Slovakia, Syria, Tatarstan, Ukraine, Vietnam.</p> <p>Through a joyous celebration, the festival showed that foreigners are part of Czech society.</p> <p>RefuFest creates a space for people from all over the world to meet and expresses solidarity with refugees.</p>
Description	<p>With music, dance, theater and a variety of experiences, RefuFest provides visitors with the opportunity to learn more about other cultures.</p> <p>The aim of RefuFest is to demonstrate that Prague is a cosmopolitan center where people of different religions and nationalities live together.</p> <p>The festival allows visitors to look beyond the stereotypes circulating in society and enjoy what diversity has to offer.</p>
Stakeholders	<p>InBáze, z.s. is the leading organization of RefuFest. More than twenty organizations that help to run the festival, such as: Youth Included, ICP, META, SIMI, AMIGA and many others.</p>
Impact	<p>One of the most significant benefits of this festival for foreigners is the sense of visibility. The interest demonstrated in their culture and creativity inspires them for further creativity.</p>

	Additionally, it increased the sense of belonging for participants as they had the opportunity to develop new social networks, forming relationships and friendships.
Success Factors / Transferability	The main success of this festival is that it has been introducing to residents and guests of the Czech Republic the cultures of different nations for fifteen years. It has helped to establish a dialogue between people of different nationalities and fight discrimination and prejudice.
More information	https://refufest.com/

Good practice 2

Title	"PRAGUE HEART OF NATIONS"
Country (Flag)	
Image	
Context	<p>It is the largest joint action of national minorities in the Czech Republic, which has taken place since 1999.</p> <p>This festival is a wonderful manifestation of traditional folk art that takes place at many gigs in the city centre.</p> <p>The traditional international festival offers a rich and varied show of rhythms, melodies and dance creations in the ensemble, soloists and groups from around the world. There have been performers from Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Russia, Greece, Africa, Mexico, Bolivia and many other countries .</p>
Description	<p>The festival includes music, dance, songs (also spiritual), costume show, exhibitions, crafts, creative and dance workshops.</p> <p>The festival message is about connecting heart to heart with music, singing and dancing shows mainly in the heart of old Prague.</p>
Stakeholders	<p>The main organizers of the festival are the Etnica Association z.s., the Limbora Association z.s. and hl. Prague together with associations and entities:</p> <p>Club Polski, Union of Hungarians, Bulgarian Clubs and Associations, Club of Slovak Culture, Society of Friends of Greeks,</p>

	Association of Greeks, Ukrainian Initiative, Cultural Association of German Citizens, Union of Germans, Roma Clubs, Domus Russian tradition, Serbian associations, Music of Judaica, Bona Fide, Detvan and others.
Impact	The main impact for foreigners is to express themselves through their culture, sharing long-standing traditions and the beauty of their nation through art. Festival participants, both viewers and performers, can broaden their horizons, imbued with a sense of respect for other peoples and become more tolerant.
Success Factors / Transferability	The most significant success of this festival is that it has been familiarising residents and guests of the Czech Republic with the cultures of different nations for twenty-three years. It allows foreigners to integrate into Czech society through cultural interaction.
More information	http://prahasrdcenarodu.cz/

Good practice 3

Title	Solidarity Projects: Integration through Arts, Networking for Integration, Artistic Nomads, Out of the box Society, Finding answers through writing
Country (Flag)	
Image	  

Context	<p>Youth non-governmental organisation, which mainstreams integration via network and education to empower TCNs and migrants, connect them between each other and the proper institutions, provide them with the opportunity to upgrade their soft and hard skills to get better chances at the labour market of the hosting country.</p> <p>The events are very diverse and consist of seminars, lectures and discussions, as well as one open forum: cultivation & nutrition, low waste and zero waste workshops, open community celebrations.</p>
Description	<p>Many of the organisation's projects are related to creativity and arts in general. YI targets to use the conscious urge of the TCNS, migrants and locals for self-expression and self-development as the uniting factors which afterwards merge them into one group, diverse in its national, personal and professional background. Arts have become a social glue that holds like-minded people together.</p> <p>The following areas of art were used: Theatre, Drawing, Dance, Writing, Poetry, History, Culture, Photography, Video Creation, Music, Singing etc.</p> <p>YI has implemented variety of forms of the events: workshops, lectures, seminars, educational and production courses, interactive educational games, club meeting, sharing meeting, concerts etc.</p>
Stakeholders	<p>The leading organisation of these projects is Youth Included, the project is implemented by young foreigners from 18 to 30 y.o. The team of the projects is supported by the team of Youth Included and is coordinated by those with the highest competency upon the topic. Besides YI, local NGOs, project teams there is also cooperation and involvement of artistic unofficial groups of migrants in the course of implementation, like DRC, KOVER, Photoclub Majak etc.</p>
Impact	<p>The major impact of the following projects was to trigger community building through variety of Arts movements to lead the participants to integration. When there created a community then all of the members autonomously got the feeling of belonging and did their best to learn the needed skills to become a part of it. Through all of the mentioned projects YI succeeded to empower the participants of the programs, support them on their way of national, personal and professional integration and development.</p>
Success Factors / Transferability	<p>Within the 3 years of working in this area team of YI sees that artistic approach allowed them to ignite interest, curiosity and willingness of the program participants to make the change and to become the change. People started friendships, got empowered to develop their soft and hard skills, got the needed contacts in the community for personal and professional growth, started the cooperations for new artistic projects etc. All in all, used YI space for integration in the local community.</p>
More information	<p>https://youthincluded.com/</p>

8. Field research in the Czech Republic

8.1 Results from the online questionnaire for professionals

Data was collected from eleven (10) professionals working with TCNs using an online questionnaire. A total of 29 questions (See Annex I) were asked and the results summarized as follows:

- 70% of participants were females, 30% were males. 10% of participants were in the 18-24 age group, 70% in the 25-39, 20% in the 40-59. All of the interviewees were the holders of higher education qualification and in the course of their work provide social, psychological, educational, cultural and legal support to TCNs. Most of them (60%) did not know how many people their organisations work with within the year.
- 40% of participants are assured that they have enough knowledge and training to support TCNs through the arts while 60% felt that they lack proper training in this area. 100% of them agreed that art makes them feel good and believe that arts and culture have a principal role in making one feel a part of the community and 80% take art as a crucial area in their lives.
- Most participants (90%) believe that arts and culture are an essential part of their community. 80% of the participants agree that many cultural events take place in the city, 100% see arts and culture to have the ability to express a wide range of community concerns and contribute to the positive change of society. 100% of the participants wanted to have more opportunities for participation in cultural activities and felt that the city should invest more in opportunities for art and culture. 90% agree that arts being both beneficial to participants as well as the broader community as well as that arts is as important to children as it is for adults.
- Over the past 2 years, all participants contributed or attended some sort of artistic activities such as theatre, cinema, exhibition, concert, photography and museum tours. Though all of the members of the group are involved in arts already, 100% of them would like to be more involved in any sort of artistic or cultural program, varied with individuality, from painting, music, photography, poetry, writing, jewellery, fashion, dance etc. Lack of financing, Lack of professionals from TC in the field of art in the Czech republic, Lack of responsible people who are professionals and who still have time to take more jobs were among the biggest challenges faced by professionals in participating in artistic activities.
- The participants agreed that intercultural dialogue was of highest importance(50%) in the process of cultural integration, 30% believe that language teaching is the key to they integration, whilst 20% of the group see that higher frequency of contacts between the host country and country of origin can bring the effect to the process.
- Arts and culture are developing in the communities as 100% of participants indicated that immigrant organisations in their neighbourhoods involved in artistic and cultural activities.
- 70% participants learn about artistic and cultural activities through the internet and word of mouth (friends and coworkers) and at least 70% organized cultural events every 3 months.

8.2 Results from the online questionnaire for TCNs

Data was collected from nine (10) TCNs using an online questionnaire. A total of 30 questions (See Annex II) were asked and the results were put together as follows:

- There were 40% male and 60% female participants, the age group got divided equally in two: 18-24, 25-39. Over 50% of them had lived in the Czech Republic from 5 to 10 years. 60% were holders of Bachelor's degree or equivalent while the remaining 20% had high school diplomas. 2 groups with 30% of TCNs were from Ukraine and Russia, while the others were originally from Kazakhstan and Spain.
- 100% agreed that art and culture play an important role in their lives and agreed that art made them feel good. Most (70%) also felt that immigrant organisations in their neighbourhoods were not actively involved in arts and cultural activities.
- Participants' views upon the important elements of integration varied, in the questionnaire we gave opportunity to choose multiple options for the question: 8/10 people agreed that language training plays significant role, 7/10 felt that promoting the culture of immigrants was the second important thing, meanwhile 5/10 shared the belief that promoting the frequency of contacts with host country and country of origin effects the integration process, as well.
- 70% are assured that the migrant associations in Prague are involved in cultural activities. 90% of participants believed that arts and culture have the ability to express a wide range of community concerns and contribute to the positive change of society, whilst 100% of them think that the city should invest more in arts and culture and that the arts not only helped people who participate but also the wider community. The majority agreed as well that arts is as important to children as it is for adults.
- Over the past 2 years, all of the interviewees had contributed or attended some sort of artistic activities such as theatre, cinema, exhibition, free or paid concert, photography and museum tours. Among the reasons of not participating in artistic activities were Alienation, Shortage of possibilities and small exposure in media, Shyness, Stepping out of comfort zone, Social stigma, Time management and Self criticism.
- Among the offered art movements that might ignite participants' interest the most popular were Photography, Digital Media, Music and Singing. The most common reason (100%) for motivation was genuine desire to educate within the framework of content of high quality. And all of the participants mentioned that they would like to take part in art classes.

8.3 Results from the focus groups/interviews with professionals

The discussion was attended by people from different organisations and was conducted in interviews with some of them. Part of the interviewed work with the narrow target group (migrants and TCNs at the age of 18-35/ 14-18), another part aimed their activities at TCNs in general, without age limitations. Majority of them work in various local NGOs in the department of integration (integration through arts), some work out of NGOs, but still in arts with a target group of migrants. The principal concepts that unite these professionals are that they work with migrants in the Czech Republic using arts as an integration tool.

Participants of the focus group came to a conclusion that moving to a new country becomes some kind of social death for the TCNs due to the extraction of a person out of his routine social circle. The principal approach of integration programs of the local NGOs is to support TCNs in the solving of urgent social or legal questions via counselling or accompaniment to the state institutions with intercultural workers, who function as interpreters.

The professionals agreed that this kind of help is crucial but is one-time service, whilst integration in general is a long-term process. Another important point is that these processes always request full participation of the employees of the NGOs. The challenges that the newcomers face after arriving are mainly the language, alienation, depression over self-deprecation due to social, personal or professional self-realisation, lack of knowledge of rights and responsibilities, lack of knowledge about the culture of the country etc. Arts were agreed to be one of the strongest tools of uniting like-minded people with no consideration of their national background, therefore with a highly strong integration potential. It creates a space for people to both get in touch with themselves and with the others basing on the topic of their interest, that is to say, socialise with either the Czechs or TCNs, autonomously and independently integrating in the existing community, whilst the employees of the NGOs function more as facilitators, who just create the space for the participants to perform in accordance with their needs.

The professionals claim that the existing programs of using art as support of vulnerable groups as TCN's are mostly through theatre, music, cooking and drawing. They definitely have impact and cover part of the needs of the tg, but as it was revealed during discussion this kind of projects are short-term or conducted by the social workers with the lack of competence in the area, what limits the target group to the people with totally basic knowledge of the topic and revolts the TCNs with deeper knowledge, cutting them off the artistic platform of integration.

Part of the focus group agreed that music is considered to be the most generic and the easiest way to attract and include TCNs in community life, i.e. integrate them. Some participants expressed the idea that theatre is extremely popular and very effective but is not supported well enough by the funds for the movement to expand and reach its highest potential (education, professionals, premises etc.). One of the participants claimed that within his scope of experience of working in different departments of NGOs, no matter how great the program is without proper promotion only a small number of people learn of it and of the services that correlate with it.

The issues we see in the accession process of TCNs in art and culture is mainly the weak and unpopular concept among the general public that arts could be used for integration and that only if you take it professionally, you can become part of the community. We believe that when it is presented to the general public in the right way it can have huge results both in the psychological support of TCNs and their integration journey.

8.4 Results from the focus groups/interviews with TCNs

8 TCNs joined the discussion, among the participants were females (5) compared to males (3). All participants were aged between 21 and 35 years. Their presence in the Czech Republic could be estimated from 2 to 12 years.

The major highlighted challenges that the participants shared are the feelings of disconnection and depreciation of self-realisation with enhancing imposter syndrome due to the drastic change of the social environment, lack of social connections in the new community, lack of language knowledge and the knowledge about the rules within which the system works (legal and social rights and responsibilities of the TCNs). Some of the interviewees shared the experience of racism and discrimination based on their national background and historical peculiarities of the relations between the Czech Republic and their country of origin. All agreed that language has been playing the leading role in the process of their integration and has become a determining factor in their decreasing motivation in taking part in socialisation and integration activities.

Despite the challenges all of the participants shared gratitude to the opportunities the country gave them, notably the regulated access to the labour market, same opportunities in education, free education in Czech language. They also identified that the most stressful experience with discrimination and rudeness took place in the state institutions, since the majority of employees do not speak any other languages than Czech, moreover the rules indulge this approach, as officially they are not allowed to speak other languages due to the uncertainty of the language skills what might qualitatively affect the information they transmit. Nevertheless the support and understanding from the side of some of the institutions' workers was always of great help and surprisingly became a stronger experience, which crossed out the negative one.

As it turned out, integration and inclusion in their lives was somehow sustained by art. The most generic and easiest to get with was music. The majority of focus group participants agreed that participation in musical concerts, festivals and even workshops were considered by them less stressful to get out of their comfort zone on the path of socialisation. It was easier for them to get to know people with whom they took part in it and that music helped them to reconnect and express their emotions though they might not understand the language. The second popular art form was exhibitions and fine arts in general. No matter what language it was performed in, it gave a possibility to get in touch with personal feelings and experience upon the art piece and ignited interest about the artist himself, his ideas etc, all that-surpassing the language barrier. The final two mentioned art movements were dance and theatre. Dance was discussed as another way of uniting with no strict need of knowing the language perfectly, whilst theatre was presented in another way. It was said that theatre had always been

something distant and hard to get in, all of the interviewees actively visited the local theatres, found major interest in it but did not believe that they would ever get a chance to become a part of it.

All in all the biggest half of the focus group was somehow related to art movements and participated in the artistic cultural social life in Prague more actively than the other group. Some took part in cultural life only in the commercial sphere, some - both via commercial and non-governmental. Some took part only as participants, whilst the others had experience with organisation and leading the sessions. Regardless of the function they performed in this process, all agreed that art helped them to feel stronger, express themselves, open new talents, showcase the existing skill set and find like-minded people from different countries.

The integrational journey for this focus group looks like a complex process, where support and help from the hosting community plays a crucial role. Moreover, they felt more independent when they became autonomous in their job, hobbies, leisure time etc. The risk which might happen is closing to the social bubble with a limited amount of people, but it was partially overcome when the participants chose to overtake some function in the artistic or social groups and become a member of micro community. This support and self-realisation helped to combat the imposter syndrome, alienation and neglect of the new cultures. Therefore, art was agreed to be a key to a balanced integration of TCNs to a new social environment.

9. Final Recommendations: Needs analysis

9.1 TCNs' Cultural and Social Life Issues

1. **Lack of Financing** – Many cultural and social events created by the TCNs are quite limited in their options and possibilities because of the shortage of budget. There seems to be a lack of investing from the city governments, aimed to help those actions.

For one, this leads to a lack of promotion in these events, which leads to underattendance and in the end lesser possible impact on the community.

Secondly, facilitators of these actions meet poor payment conditions, which in turn negatively affect the quality of those events.

For instance, some participants expressed the idea that theatre is extremely popular and very effective but is not supported well enough by the funds for the movement to expand and reach its highest potential (education, professionals, premises etc.).

- a. Address whether the city is willing to allocate resources for such processes.
 - b. Reinforce the importance of art in integration and in general to the local institutions and policy makers
2. **Representational Problems** – There is a noticeable lack of professionals from TCNs in the field of art in the Czech republic, which is leading to an underrepresentation of TCNs in the larger Czech community. And oftentimes, the TCNs who do succeed in arts are not telling about their original migrant background.

Diversity is important to both access to careers for people from underrepresented or excluded groups and the ability of marginalised people to see creative output that mirrors their identities and experiences. Beyond any ethical imperatives, diversity matters because it enhances the benefits of art to unite, educate, support health, enhance well-being, boost economies, and more. That is to say, these benefits increase when there are no barriers to individuals wishing to create artistic output, and when audiences choose to engage with output that matters to them. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-022-01239-9>

The Czech society, which for a long time was predominantly one-nation, is still facing problems with underrepresentation of the TCN community.

- a. Address diversity issues to the communities, associations and unions of artists, which promote local creators.

- b. Make a research and mapping of the pool of the artists on the national level, focusing on their cultural and national background.

3. **Small Media Exposure** – There is a noticeable gap in media exposure and propagation of TCN's cultural events and events that are aimed at cultural sharing. Usually, artistic cultural events are conducted by the state municipalities or NGOs and therefore do not have proper funding and capacities to promote them on a bigger scale.

The issues we see in the accession process of TCNs in art and culture is the lack of robust concept in the public consciousness that arts could be used for integration. And that only if you take it professionally, you can truly become part of the community. We believe that when it is presented to the general public in the right way it can have huge results both in the psychological support of TCNs and their integration journey.

The larger media exposure would inevitably lead to a larger appreciation of TCNs' culture, will improve the accessibility to the social life and the consequent integration of wider TCN groups, that either do not have the connections or digital literacy skills to participate in the social activities.

- a. Create the mapping of the potential partners with a team with the needed hard skills and budget for promotion, and work on the possible collaborations.
- b. Address the issue of requalification of NGO's workers in the field of marketing and promo campaigns.

4. **Ability to Communicate in a Common Language** – The biggest and most important problem described by TCN participants is lack of language knowledge. This gap can be reduced and possibly bridged with the help of different art movements (theatre, photography, etc.), which do not always require high language skills.

Arts were agreed to be one of the strongest tools of uniting like-minded people with no consideration of their national background, therefore with a highly strong integration potential. It creates a space for people to both get in touch with themselves and with the others basing on the topic of their interest, that is to say, socialise with either the czechs or TCNs, autonomously and independently integrating in the existing community, whilst the employees of the NGOs function more as facilitators, who just create the space for the participants to perform in accordance with their needs.

For example, the majority of focus group participants agreed that participation in musical concerts, festivals and even workshops were considered by them less stressful to get out of their comfort zone on the path of socialisation. It was easier for them to get to know people that it helped them to reconnect and express their emotions though they might not understand the language.

- a. Address the need for more international cultural exchange events between Czechs and TCNs.
 - b. Unify the existing art performers of different cultural backgrounds and connect them with the NGOs and state municipalities, which could create integrational artistic events for the general public and other artists.
5. **Socialisation Problems** – There are certain obstacles which may cause problems in the socialisation of migrants, especially fresh newcomers. Alienation, shyness, social stigma are causing many TCNs to refuse or avoid participating in a social event.

For some of the TCNs, the time management problem is a hard one to face, confining their possibilities for socialisation and participation of cultural activities, either if it is for work or study purposes.

For instance, the low-qualified TCNs often spend all their time working, needing to feed themselves and their families. The students, on the other hand, might find themselves restricted by the learning processes and amount of study. The TCNs who combine their study and work are facing the same issue. All of this is leading to slower integration in the local community.

- a. Creation of programs that combine art and therapy, which can combat alienation, shyness, social stigma and other issues via medium of artistic movements.
 - b. Making programmes, that are taking in consideration the urge to take care of the kids, when their parents are busy with the participation in the events.
6. **Lack of Artistic Integrational Platforms** – As of now, there are no unifying platforms which would organise cultural life of the TCNs.

For most people, the ability and willingness to participate in the social and cultural activities is directly connected to availability, level of quality and price of those events. Artistic integrational platforms could solve this problem by addressing the diversity of the events, handling the promotion of them and by giving the detailed description to the interested people, while keeping the consistent level of modern creative standards.

- a. Create the unifying integrational platform, aimed at organising and promoting cultural life and diversity.
7. **Qualification of Social Workers** – There is a need for high quality educational content on the different art forms for the TCNs in Czech Republic.

With the constantly growing awareness of the improvements on the mental health, social skills and well-being, gained by learning skills from different artistic movements, there is a constant need for the courses aimed to educate people in those art forms. Despite that, there

is a lack of a framework of educational content of high quality, targeted not on the professionals, but on the beginners, interested in self-improvement and therapy through art.

For example, members of the focus group informed that by getting involved in the art movements, either as an organisers or participants, art helped them to feel stronger, express themselves, open new talents, showcase the existing skill set and find like-minded people from different countries. There was a genuine desire to educate within the framework of content of high quality.

- a. Creation of the platforms with the educational materials for professionals from the social sector, aimed at introducing them to arts and how to use these new skills in work with people.

9.2 Topics and art forms

In the process of the interviews participants reported the different topics and forms of arts that they found most appealing. Because the biggest half of the focus group and their communities was somehow related to art movements and participated in the artistic cultural social life in Prague, by addressing these topics we can improve and create additional opportunities for the integration of the TCNs, keeping their creative artistic expression through:

- a. Theatre
- b. Photography
- c. Film Production
- d. Painting
- e. Dance
- f. Music
- g. Handmade Crafts
- h. Fashion Design

9.3 Methodologies and approaches on the use of arts towards TCNs integration

1. **Creation of Integrational Artistic Platform** – As mentioned earlier, the ability and willingness of people to participate in the social and cultural activities is directly connected to their availability, level of quality and price of those events. Establishing the integrational platform will set a precedent for the uniting of people of different artistic movements and will play a huge role in praising the diversity of the local society.

The integrational artistic platform will help promote, catalogue and notify the public of the cultural and social life that might have been hidden from them. From one side, by being able to conveniently search through the different types of upcoming events, it would be easier for the various artists to reach out to their audience and for the audience to find events of interest to them. For the other side, it would help the commercial and government funders to direct the flow of money to the specific categories of certain artistic movements and underrepresented communities.

All in all this would improve the quality of life not only for the TCNs but the society as a whole, by easing the access to information and exposing the diversity to the general public.

2. **Raising Qualification of Social Workers** – Creation of the platform aimed to teach professionals from the social sector the basic creative skills will expand the range of support available at the NGOs for the people seeking help.
3. **Conducting of the Events, Aimed at Sharing of the Cultures** – The importance of culture sharing is necessary, when dealing with the integration in the society. More events aimed at showing and celebrating the uniqueness and richness of the local TCN cultures and specialities will improve and further develop the state of things regarding migrant communities in the public consciousness.
4. **Creation of the Platform from the Professionals by the Professionals** – There is a need for the creation of the unifying platform where different representatives of social enterprise - small, medium and big-sized companies can share their best practices and help each other in improving their strategies and techniques.

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