

National EMN Conference Czech Republic 2025

Integration of Migrants as a Prerequisite for a Cohesive and Secure Society

Conference Summary

23 October 2025, Prague

The 2025 National Conference of the European Migration Network (EMN) in the Czech Republic focused on the theme “*Integration of Migrants as a Prerequisite for a Cohesive and Secure Society.*” The event aimed to foster professional and public debate on the future direction of Czech integration policy in light of European trends and current challenges.

The opening session recalled that the first *Policy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals* was approved by the Czech Government in 2000 and has since undergone three major updates. Over the past 25 years, the Czech Republic has been actively shaping its own integration policy, which should continue to evolve and strengthen. Speakers emphasised that the approach to integration has changed over time and that a new, shared vision is needed—one that connects migration, integration, security, economic development and social cohesion. Participants agreed that an open, well-informed and realistic public debate on migration and integration is essential to building trust within society and supporting further progress.

During the international panel, it was noted that European countries often face similar challenges—labour shortages, pressure on affordable housing and increasing diversity among newcomers. Discussions highlighted the importance of balancing migrants’ individual responsibility with the support offered by host societies. Long-term legal uncertainty was identified as a factor that can hinder successful integration. Effective integration, participants stressed, requires strategic planning, stable funding and close coordination between public institutions, local authorities, civil society organisations and employers.

Examples from abroad illustrated differences between integration models focused primarily on employment and those centred on social cohesion. Participants pointed out that overly restrictive or administratively complex systems can be counterproductive, whereas community engagement, volunteering and the active role of municipalities and employers have proven to be among the most effective integration tools.

The session dedicated to the Czech context presented an overview of current practice. The Czech Republic was described as having a moderately restrictive approach compared to other European countries, combining educational and motivational measures with certain obligations for newly arrived third-country nationals. The well-developed network of eighteen regional integration centres, along with the work of partner NGOs and municipalities implementing local integration projects, was widely praised. At the same time, participants drew attention to persistent shortcomings, including the limited engagement of some municipalities, a shortage of intercultural workers, and underfunding in parts of the social services sector. Key future challenges identified include the misuse of agency employment by unscrupulous intermediaries, exploitation of workers, and the need for legislative adjustments in this area.

Participants also discussed whether it would be appropriate to adopt a separate law on integration. The prevailing view was that maintaining a flexible conceptual framework—allowing for quicker adaptation to changing circumstances—remains more suitable than introducing statutory regulation at this stage.

In conclusion, integration was reaffirmed as an integral element of national security and social stability. An effective integration policy, participants agreed, must be based on realistic expectations, clear priorities, well-defined roles for all actors and adequate infrastructure. As future funding is likely to decrease, the efficient use of existing capacities, stronger coordination and deeper cooperation at all levels of governance will be essential.

The conference demonstrated that while the Czech Republic has built a solid and largely successful foundation for its integration policy, new and evolving challenges call for a strategic, coordinated and long-term sustainable approach.