



Czech Republic's Compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

**Submitted by The Czech Women's Lobby
and**

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The **Czech Women's Lobby (CWL)** is a network of 30 member organizations dedicated to advancing gender equality and improving the lives of women in the Czech Republic. Since 2008, CWL has been actively engaged in human rights advocacy and influencing legislation to benefit women.

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The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the U.S. and around the world, including monitoring and fact-finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications. The Advocates is committed to ensuring human rights protection for women around the world.

I. Legislative framework and definition of discrimination against women

1. In its response, the State referred to the multiple legislation as the framework to address discrimination against women,¹ including the Anti-Discrimination Act (ADA).² Although the ADA prohibits discrimination on grounds including sex, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and other statuses,³ it does not explicitly recognize *intersectional* discrimination arising from multiple combined grounds.
2. Women from marginalized groups, such as migrant and Roma women, encounter compounded discrimination because of the lack of intersectional protection. Research confirms that in healthcare, vulnerability of foreign-born women is compounded by the intersection of gender with language barriers, cultural norms, or race, leading to tangible harm, dismissive treatment, and non-consensual procedures.⁴
3. For Roma women, ADA's legal gap materializes as systemic invisibility. "Double marginalization" is not legally recognized, leading to a void in official data and a consequent policy vacuum that allows compounded discrimination in areas like housing to persist unmeasured and unremedied.⁵
4. The ADA provides for individual complaints, but it lacks a mechanism for collective or structural complaints (*actio popularis*), which is often necessary for systemic or institutional discrimination affecting whole communities.⁶ Furthermore, there is no mandatory nationwide system of disaggregated data collection on discrimination by intersecting grounds, which hinders monitoring, policy evaluation, and targeted interventions.⁷

5. Recommendations:

- Amend the Anti-Discrimination Act and related legal provisions to explicitly recognize and prohibit intersectional discrimination.
- Ensure that anti-discrimination policies and enforcement mechanisms address multiple and overlapping grounds of discrimination, particularly as experienced by Roma women, migrant women, women with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.
- Introduce a mechanism for collective complaints and structural claims to allow civil society organizations (CSOs) or representative organizations to bring claims on behalf of marginalized communities.
- Implement a mandatory nationwide system of disaggregated data collection on discrimination.

II. Gender Equality

Czechia's Performance on Gender Equality

¹ Charter of fundamental Rights and Freedoms, Constitutional Act No. 2/1993 Coll., as amended by Constitutional Act No. 162/1998 Coll. (1992); Labour Code, Act No. 262/2006 Coll. (2006).

² Anti-Discrimination Act, Act No. 198/2009 Coll. (2008).

³ Ibid, Arts. 1–3 (2008).

⁴ Gender and Research, *The Elderly and Foreigners: Vulnerability and Intersectionality in Healthcare*, by Hřešánová and Glajchová (2018), https://www.gendersonline.cz/artkey/gav-201802-0005_elderly-and-foreign-vulnerability-and-intersectionality-in-healthcare.php?l=EN

⁵ Ara Art, *Nenávist a Mlčení: Analytická Zpráva z Monitoringu Protiromských Projevů*, by Bučková et al. (2025), Final_Analytická-zpráva-1.pdf

⁶ Amnesty International, *Injustice Renamed: Discrimination in Education of Roma Persists in the Czech Republic* (2010), 53–54, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/eur710032009en.pdf>

⁷ Council of Europe, *Strategy on the Advancement of Romani Women and Girls (2014–2020)* (2016), 6, <https://rm.coe.int/16806f32ff>

6. The State Party's report outlines the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030 and notes efforts to strengthen the Gender Equality Department and ministerial gender equality coordinators.⁸ In the Global Gender Gap Index 2025,⁹ Czechia performed poorly in political decision-making, ranking 113th, with women representing 33% of the Chamber of Deputies, 21.3% of the Senate (upper chamber), and two women in the 15-member government.¹⁰
7. Despite evidence of gender inequality in political life, Czechia still lacks political will to affix gender quotas for candidate lists.¹¹ The Gender Equality Strategy 2021–2030 recognizes the importance of balanced gender representations and identifies legislative quotas as a potential tool but nevertheless favors non-legislative approaches.¹²
8. Violence against women in politics has become increasingly prevalent. A study of 36 of 51 Czech women Members of Parliament (MPs) from across the political spectrum found that psychological violence (81%) was the most common form of violence experienced by women MPs. Nearly 42% of respondents have experienced sexualized violence. 11% of the respondents reported experiencing economic and physical violence.¹³ These findings illustrate how violence against women in politics reflects and reinforces broader patterns of gender inequality.

The Shortcomings of National Machinery for Gender Equality

9. Funding for the state-level grant program supporting gender equality and violence prevention has been modest and variable, with approximately €80,000 per year allocated from the state budget for CSO and municipal projects.¹⁴ Consequently, gender equality initiatives are primarily funded by EU and EFTA funds, including precarious employment in the Gender Equality Department, where only two systematized positions are funded by the state budget.¹⁵
10. Growing disinvestment in gender equality programming restricts CSOs' activities. CSOs also report how the underfunding of government mechanisms is undermining progress in political participation, GBV prevention, and support for vulnerable groups.¹⁶ Examples include the large-scale defunding of programs such as the “Support for Publicly Beneficial Activities in the Field of Gender Equality and Violence Prevention” program.¹⁷ Furthermore, between 2021 and 2023, the national grant program dedicated to gender equality reduced its annual allocations to between four and five million CZK (approximately 160,000 EUR).¹⁸

⁸ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Seventh periodic report submitted by Czechia under article 18 of the Convention*, due in 2020, (2024), U.N. Doc. CEDAW/C/CZE/7, 14; 26.

⁹ World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2025* (2025), https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2025.pdf.

¹⁰ Foundation Robert Schuman, *Czech Republic*, 2025, <https://server.www.robert-schuman.eu/storage/en/dossiers-pedagogiques/connaitre-europe/carte/republique-tcheque.pdf>

¹¹ Hrbková and Fellegi, *The Quota Debate in the Czech Republic and the Post-Communist Legacy*, Women's Studies International Forum (2022), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277539522000863>.

¹² Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, *Gender Equality Strategy for 2021–2030* (2021), Measure 2.2.3, <https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/gcfcg/Gender-Equality-Strategy-2021-2030.pdf>

¹³ Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, *Czech Women MPs and Gender-Based Violence*, by Mottlová and Šprincová (2025), <https://padesatprocent.cz/cz/czech-women-mps-and-gender-based-violence>

¹⁴ Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *Minutes of the Meeting of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men* (2024), 13, https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/cinnost_rady/Zapis-z-jednani-Rady-pro-rovnost-zen-a-muzu_final-podepsany.pdf.

¹⁵ Information in file with authors (2025).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Supra Note 12.

11. The closure of the Working Group on Gender Impacts of COVID-19 in 2022 illustrates weak political will on gender equality.¹⁹ Its termination overlooks disproportionate impacts on women from marginalized groups. The pandemic amplified existing inequalities, leading to a rise in GBV within migrant communities, exacerbated work-life balance challenges for migrant and refugee women, and increased mental health issues among women.²⁰ While general strategies exist, there is no sustained focus on developing a long-term recovery plan with specific, targeted measures to address the impacts.²¹
12. The second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS NAP 2021-2025) appears to have nominal policy influence. Weak political support, disconnection from domestic issues, lack of dedicated budget, and inadequate evaluation undermined implementation.²² For example, despite the existence of multiple special envoys, there is no Special Envoy for Gender Equality at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²³
13. While revised and complemented by an improved monitoring mechanism, the third WPS NAP (2026-2030)²⁴ has a flawed funding model as it relies on ministries' existing budgets rather than a dedicated, trackable allocation. Implementation gaps may persist, undermining the translation of commitments into funded action.

14. Recommendations:

- Adopt and implement effective legislative gender quotas.
- Establish a permanent, adequately funded mechanism to monitor and address the long-term, gendered impacts of crises and to prevent backsliding on women's rights, ensuring the meaningful participation of Roma women, migrant women, and all affected groups in policy and recovery processes.
- Prioritize the WPS agenda at the political level by appointing an empowered Special Commissioner for WPS, ensuring coherence between NAP implementation and domestic policies, and establishing transparent mechanisms to track ministerial WPS funding alongside a proposal for dedicated state financing.

III. Gender-based violence against women

Legislative framework for gender-based violence against women

15. The Istanbul Convention was signed, but not yet ratified, on May 12, 2016.²⁵ Notably, the government accepted the call for ratification in 2023; the Senate later rejected its proposal in 2024.²⁶ Furthermore, the Government opted not to submit the Convention for vote by the lower

¹⁹ UNECE, *Beijing +30 National Report of the Czech Republic Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) in the context of the Thirtieth Anniversary of The Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 2025* (2024), 14,

<https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-08/Czech%20Republic-Report.pdf>

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 37-38.

²¹ Supra Note 15.

²² Institute of International Relations Prague, *The Third Czech National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Addressing Local and Global Security Challenges* (2025), 3,

<https://www.iir.cz/en/the-third-czech-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security>.

²³ See the absence of the Special Envoy for Gender Equality at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Special Envoys*, 2022, https://mzv.gov.cz/jnp/en/about_the_ministry/organization_of_the_ministry/special_envoys_1/index.html

²⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Národní akční plán k agendě Ženy, mír a bezpečnost na období 2026–2030* (2025).

²⁵ CWL, *Istanbulská Úmluva a Vývoj Situace v České Republice*, 2018, <https://czlobby.cz/istanbulska-umluva-a-vyvoj-situace-v-ceske-republice/>

²⁶ Supra Note 19, p. 10.

house of Parliament. As a result, the country remains among the minority of European states that have signed but not ratified it.

16. Opponents describe the Convention as embodying a foreign “gender ideology” that undermines traditional roles.²⁷ Others argue that existing laws already adequately address violence against women and domestic violence.²⁸ Additional opposition centers on financial and administrative burdens on the state and the fear that ratification would require the establishment of new institutions, or the funding mechanisms for international oversight.²⁹ Such debates and the refusal to ratify the Convention reveal a critical political and structural impediment to the State’s commitment to international standards to combat GBV.

State’s mechanisms for GBV response and prevention

17. Under the 2019–2022 Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (GBV)³⁰ only 19 of 39 measures were fully implemented.³¹ Under the 2023–2026 Action Plan only 31 of 91 scheduled outputs (34.1%) were fulfilled in 2024, while 39.6% remain unmet.³² The critical victim protection sector has 58.1% non-fulfillment rate with general fulfillment in both prevention and protection stagnating at 25%.³³ These results confirm that implementation remains a series of one-off initiatives lacking systematic integration, showing no significant improvement across reporting periods.
18. Specialized services also remain underfunded, planned nationwide GBV prevention campaigns are not dispersed, and a sustainable financing framework has not been created.³⁴ In 2023, the government allocated only 2 million CZK from the budget for perpetrator work and 3.5 million CZK for GBV activities.³⁵ With low budgets, the service sector also suffers from understaffing.³⁶ Budget constraints affect the quality and availability of services, often leading to fragmentation and limiting CSOs' capacity to provide adequate support.
19. The provision of specialized services falls significantly below to standards of one family place per 10,000 individuals and one specialized center per region.³⁷ Access to specialized services is

²⁷ Prague Security Studies Institute, *PSSI Perspectives – 32: The Istanbul Convention & the Czech Republic: Barriers to Ratification* (2024), https://www.pssi.cz/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/11076_pssi-perspective-32-istanbul-convention.pdf; Supra Note 25.

²⁸ Supra Note 25.

²⁹ Supra Note 27.

³⁰ Úřad vlády České republiky, *Zpráva za rok 2022 o plnění Akčního plánu prevence domácího a genderově podmíněného násilí na léta 2019–2022* (2023), 74–75,

https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Zprava_2022_AP_DGPN.pdf

³¹ Supra Note 15.

³² Úřad vlády České republiky, *Zpráva za rok 2024 o plnění Akčního plánu prevence domácího a genderově podmíněného násilí na léta 2023–2026* (2025), 20–21,

https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Zprava_2024_plneni_AP_DGPN.pdf

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Supra Note 15.

³⁵ Supra Note 19, p. 24.

³⁶ Asociace poskytovatelů sociálních služeb ČR, *Nedostatek pracovníků v sociálních službách se mezi lety 2023 a 2025 prohloubil*, 2025,

<https://www.proprarodice.cz/c/nedostatek-pracovniku-v-socialnich-sluzbach-se-mezi-lety-2023-a-2025-prohloubil-1713>

³⁷ Council of Europe, *Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*, by Council of Europe Treaty Series - No. 210 (2011), ¶135, <https://rm.coe.int/1680a48903>

very scarce, with only one GBV center in the country.³⁸ As for shelters, there are 90 available beds in specialized shelters, located in only two cities.³⁹

20. Women comprise 20-30% of the total homeless population; in Prague alone, there are 2,000-3,000 homeless women, with another 32,000 at risk.⁴⁰ Women's homelessness is closely related to lower incomes, labor market discrimination, and sexual and domestic violence.⁴¹ Further, homeless shelters provide insufficient and inadequate support to those experiencing addiction or GBV.⁴²
21. The State has not introduced a national methodology for assessing the risk of repeated violence, nor has it established unified data collection on domestic and sexual violence.⁴³ Absence of institutional will, monitoring, and evaluation leads to the prevalence of GBV and ineffective prevention and response.

22. **Recommendations:**

- Ratify the Istanbul Convention and implement a coordinated communication strategy to inform legislators and the public about its purpose and provisions, actively countering disinformation narratives.
- Ensure long-term, systemic implementation of the Action Plan on GBV.
- Significantly increase and ensure stable, dedicated funding from the state budget for the national machinery for gender equality, including the Gender Equality Department and grant programs for CSOs and municipalities, to meet the minimum allocation stipulated in the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030 and account for inflation.
- Allocate adequate and sustained funding to ensure the availability and accessibility of comprehensive services for both victims and perpetrators of GBV, including financial and structural support for CSOs delivering key frontline services in victim assistance. Ensure adequate funding for services supporting diverse vulnerable groups in social distress and integrate the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women experiencing homelessness into all relevant policies.
- Introduce a national methodology for assessing the risk of repeated violence and establish unified data collection on domestic and sexual violence.

IV. **Access to justice: rape and sexual violence**

23. Despite measures mentioned in the State report, the response to rape and sexual violence remains inadequate and fails to ensure accountability. The State acknowledged only 5–10% of rape cases are reported but offers no strategy to foster public confidence in reporting.⁴⁴
24. Approximately 50% of reported cases of rape and sexual violence result in suspended sentences.⁴⁵ This suggests that existing judicial perspectives underestimate the gravity and

³⁸ Supra Note 19, p. 7.

³⁹ Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, *Report for 2022 on the Implementation of the Action Plan for Prevention of Domestic and Gender-based Violence for the Years 2019–2022* (2022).

⁴⁰ IPR Praha, *Strategy for Preventing, Reducing and Ending Homelessness in Prague by 2030* (2024), <https://iprpraha.cz/assets/files/files/f16181230bc33f2576c572895a8a0e82.pdf>

⁴¹ Supra Note 15.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Supra Note 8, 92.

⁴⁵ Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention, *How We Punish: Statistics and Stories from Czech Criminal Justice*, <https://jaktrestame.cz/>

long-term consequences of these crimes. In 2025, the State amended Act No. 6/2002 Coll. (*lex Anička*)⁴⁶ to require judges to prepare individual three-year educational plans.⁴⁷ However, the amendment provides minimal oversight of the submitted plan.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Judicial Academy classifies gender-sensitivity training as voluntary rather than mandatory.⁴⁹

25. Recommendations:

- Introduce mandatory, expert-led trainings for judges on GBV, and establish accountability mechanisms to ensure that presented education plans meet gender-sensitive standards and are effectively applied in judicial practice.
- Strengthen sentencing practices for crimes related to gender-based and domestic violence by ensuring consistent application of penalties, integrating risk-assessment tools, and prioritizing victim safety and offender accountability.

V. Health

26. Systemic barriers to women's reproductive rights in maternity care persist. Reports indicate that healthcare workers treat informed consent as a mere formality.⁵⁰ A study also reveals how women frequently report experiencing non-consensual interventions.⁵¹ Women also experienced a lack of support, disrespect, and obstetric violence during childbirth.⁵² Obstetric violence continues to be downplayed both in public discourse and within the medical profession. Women and their advocates are often stigmatized by healthcare practitioners, the media, and the legal system;⁵³ women who take an active interest in their own healthcare or present birth plans are frequently labeled as "non-compliant."⁵⁴

Midwifery Care

27. The international recommendations⁵⁵ regarding the midwife-led continuity of care model are yet to be implemented. The Ministry of Health's ("the Ministry") regulatory framework⁵⁶ restricts the scope of midwives' practices,⁵⁷ thereby restricting women's ability to choose midwives as their preferred health providers. Despite efforts to remove the physician-referral requirement for

⁴⁶ Act No. 6/2002 Coll., Act on Courts and Judges, as amended Aug. 6, 2025 –2025, <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2002-6>

⁴⁷ Cihlářová, *Soudci budou muset mít od ledna 2026 říleté individuální plány zděvlávání*, Advokátní Deník, 2025, <https://advokatidenik.cz/2025/07/04/soudci-budou-muset-mit-od-ledna-2026-trilete-individualni-plany-vzdelavani/>

⁴⁸ Reuters & Editorial Board of the Czech Justice, *More Money for Victims of Crime. The Senate Approved an Amendment That Was Fought over by Deputies*, Česká Justice, 2025, <https://www.ceska-justice.cz/2025/07/senat-penezita-pomoc-obetem-trestnych-cinu/>

⁴⁹ Supra Note 15.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Heliyon, *Qualitative Analysis of Czech Women's Views on Maternity and Childbirth Care*, by Wilhelmová et al. (2025), 7-9, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844025012897>

⁵² Ibid, p. 9.

⁵³ League of Human Rights, *Obstetric Violence Given Tacit Support by Czech Courts*, Liberties.eu, 2017, <https://www.liberties.eu/en/stories/obstetric-violence-approved-by-czech-courts/11265>

⁵⁴ Supra Note 15.

⁵⁵ WHO, *Implementation Guidance on Transitioning to Midwifery Models of Care* (2025), <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/bd2e2a20-e5f4-4d2d-aa19-cbf2ee45fc0d/content>; International Confederation of Midwives, *Philosophy and Model of Midwifery Care* (2025), <https://internationalmidwives.org/resources/philosophy-and-model-of-midwifery-care/>

⁵⁶ Act on Non-Medical Health Professions, Act No. 96/2004SB (2004) and Decree No. 55/2011 Coll., on the Activities of Health Workers and Other Workers (2011).

⁵⁷ Supra Note 12, p. 64.

midwife care,⁵⁸ persistent gender stereotypes and lobbying by medical practitioners have contributed to the Ministry and Parliament's omission to update these standards.⁵⁹

28. Midwife-led continuity of care remains excluded from public health insurance coverage.⁶⁰ Although the Ministry has considered requiring hospitals to automatically offer postpartum midwife-led care,⁶¹ health insurance funds have not contracted with community midwives and have been reticent to include them in reimbursement schemes.⁶²
29. In 2024, the Constitutional Court halted penalties on midwives assisting home births and reaffirmed the need to address the legal vacuum surrounding home births and maternity care. However, it held that midwifery does not constitute healthcare.⁶³ Despite professional support and demand for freestanding birth centers and alongside-midwifery units,⁶⁴ legal uncertainty and regulatory gaps continue to undermine access to midwifery-led birth options. Further, the Ministry repeatedly rejected proposals that would allow women to freely choose midwives as primary care providers.⁶⁵ Opposition from medical professional bodies⁶⁶ has reportedly blocked the adoption of the *Midwifery Care Concept*⁶⁷ and weakened provisions in the *Strategy for the Development of Respectful Care for Mothers and Children*⁶⁸ that support women's autonomy to select midwife-led care.

Breastfeeding

30. Insufficient protection and breastfeeding support impact mothers and children. Breastfeeding is recognized under international standards; however, the Ministry of Health underfunds its protection and promotion.⁶⁹
31. Connections between infant-formula producers with health professionals have been documented.⁷⁰ These partnerships raise concerns about conflicts of interest that may undermine breastfeeding, as these companies have an economic interest in promoting formula use. While there is no specific data on direct interference, concerns have arisen that these partnerships undermine the work of the Ministry's Expert Committee on Infant and Young Child Nutrition.⁷¹

⁵⁸ Pazdera, *Midwifery in the Czech Republic, Midwifery By Lenka*, 2021, <https://midwifery.cz/2021/06/21/midwifery-in-the-czech-republic/>

⁵⁹ Supra Note 15.

⁶⁰ Supra Note 58.

⁶¹ Supra Note 15.

⁶² Suchardová and Kašparová, *Midwifery Care in the Puerperium Is Still Virtually Unavailable for Most Women in the Czech Republic*, UNIPA, 2025,

<https://unipa.cz/pece-porodni-asistentky-v-sestinedeli-je-pro-vetsinu-zen-v-cr-stale-fakticky-nedostupna/>

⁶³ Lazarová, *Czech Constitutional Court issues landmark ruling in long-standing battle over home births*, Radio Prague International, 2024,

<https://english.radio.cz/czech-constitutional-court-issues-landmark-ruling-long-standing-battle-over-home-8827637>

⁶⁴ Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, Department for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, *Summary for the Working Group on Maternity Care at the Meeting on May 26, 2025* (2025), 5,

https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/prac_skupiny/Pracovni_skupina_k_porodnictvi/Priloha-c-4-Zapisu-z-26-05-2025-Shrnuti-pro-PS-k-porodnictvi-na-jednani-26-05-2025.pdf

⁶⁵ Supra Note 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Supra Note 55.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Kopecká, *Lékařská Elita v Síti Výrobců Mléka pro Kojence. Odmítněte Je! Vyzývá Stat*, Seznam Zprávy, 2025,

<https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-zivot-v-cesku-lekarska-elita-v-siti-vyrobcu-mleka-pro-kojence-odmitnete-je-vyzyva-stat-280573>

⁷¹ Supra Note 15.

Breastfeeding advocates reported concerns the promotion of breast milk substitutes conflicts with WHO/UNICEF standards, undermining breastfeeding practices both in policy and practice.

32. Czechia has not adopted the proposed amendment to the Act on Advertising,⁷² which would enforce the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Critical provisions related to conflicts of interest among healthcare professionals remain unenforceable despite extensive, well-documented violations in maternity hospitals, pediatric clinics, and public spaces.⁷³ The amendment has reportedly been blocked due to insufficient oversight of lobbying by manufacturers and medical professionals who hold significant conflicts of interest.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, breastfeeding rates have declined due to limited information and options.⁷⁵

Access to sexual and reproductive rights

33. The law stipulates that contraception should be provided free-of-charge,⁷⁶ but public health insurance excludes hormonal contraception from coverage.⁷⁷ As a result, low-income women face disproportionate barriers in accessing this contraception.⁷⁸
34. Abortion services are inaccessible to low-income women, as public health insurance does not cover this procedure. Women seeking an abortion procedure pay approximately 5,277 CZK,⁷⁹ which can amount to one-fourth of a minimum-wage earner's monthly income. Non-residents face further barriers due to the law's ambiguous interpretation, with almost half (43%) of hospitals refusing to perform the procedure for EU citizens without permanent residency.⁸⁰

Forced Sterilizations

35. The current compensation framework for victims of unlawful sterilizations continues to create substantial barriers to justice, disproportionately affecting Roma women. Although recent legislation established a redress mechanism,⁸¹ the Ministry of Health has applied restrictive evidentiary standards, resulting in high rejection rates and hindering access to compensation.⁸² For instance, a 2024 analysis found that from 1,381 processed applications, almost one-third were rejected, frequently due to missing medical documentation from procedures carried out decades ago; these records that were often incomplete or never created, particularly in facilities serving Roma communities.⁸³

⁷² Parliamentary Document 918/0, Amendment to the Act on Regulation of Advertising- EU (2025).

⁷³ Working and Advisory Bodies, *Expert Round Table on the Implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes in Czech Legislation and Methodological Support for Its Enforcement* (2022), <https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/aktuality/odborny-kulaty-stul-k-implementaci-mezinarodniho-kodexu-marketingu-nahrad-materskeho-v-ceske-legislativne-a-moznostem-metodicke-podpory-jejeho-vymahani-196370/>

⁷⁴ Supra Note 15.

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ Act No. 48/1997 Coll. on Public Health Insurance (1997).

⁷⁷ Kalousková, *The Czech Republic Ranks Thirty-Sixth out of 47 Countries in the Availability of Contraception in Europe*, CT 24, 2025.

⁷⁸ Supra Note 15.

⁷⁹ Abortion Support Alliance Prague, *Reproductive Justice and Access to Abortion in the Czech Republic* (2024), https://cz.boell.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/report_2024_eng-a5_single-pages.pdf

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Act No. 297/2021 Coll. created a compensation mechanism for people unlawfully sterilized between 1966 and 2012.

⁸² Albert, *Czech Senate approves extending deadline to apply for compensation for illegal sterilizations, final adoption depends on President*, Romea.cz, 2025,

<https://romea.cz/en/czech-republic/czech-senate-approves-extending-deadline-to-apply-for-compensation-for-illegal-sterilizations-final-adoption-depends-on-president>

⁸³ Albert and Cirok, *Civil society asks Czech Government to extend the law compensating illegally sterilized women, analysis shows problems with the process*, Romea.cz, 2024,

36. Recent jurisprudence requires authorities to accept alternative forms of evidence, including witness testimony,⁸⁴ but the Ministry has been slow to implement these standards. This has contributed to substantial administrative delays: some proceedings have exceeded two years, despite the statutory 60-day deadline.⁸⁵ These delays place elderly Roma women at risk of being denied redress.
37. Proactive outreach to Roma communities remains insufficient. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights has urged authorities to ensure accessible, culturally-appropriate information about compensation processes, noting that lack of awareness continues to deter applicants.⁸⁶ CSOs, rather than the government, primarily conduct outreach.⁸⁷
38. In 2025, the Parliament extended the deadline for filing claims to the end of 2026.⁸⁸ CSOs welcomed the measure but noted the extension does not address inconsistent application of jurisprudence, rigid evidentiary demands, and lack of State-led outreach.⁸⁹

39. Recommendations:

- Recognize obstetric violence as a specific form of GBVAW. Adopt legislative and systemic measures to prevent it, including education, monitoring mechanisms, and accountability.
- Prevent the stigmatization of women choosing home birth, as well as the respective healthcare personnel.
- Ensure that state institutions provide accurate, impartial information on options for choosing the place, method, and conditions of birth. Ensure the consistent implementation of informed consent in the provision of health services, including the education and methodical guidance of healthcare staff, the standardization of procedures, and the monitoring of practice.
- Ensure legislative changes to regulate home births and enable midwives to act as primary providers of reimbursed care, without the need for medical indication.
- Establish and systematically support the creation of freestanding birth centers and alongside midwifery units.
- Ensure strict adherence to international standards and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, including protection against conflicts of interest in healthcare.
- Introduce full coverage of contraception by public health insurance.
- Ensure that abortion services are fully covered by public health insurance and that access is legally guaranteed for all EU citizens and residents.

<https://romea.cz/en/czech-republic/civil-society-asks-czech-government-to-extend-the-law-compensating-illegally-sterilized-women-analysis-shows-problems-with-the-process>

⁸⁴ Albert and Ryšavý *Czech Chamber of Deputies passes extension of deadline for compensating those who have been illegally sterilized*, Romea.cz, 2025,

<https://romea.cz/en/czech-republic/czech-chamber-of-deputies-passes-extension-of-deadline-for-compensating-those-who-have-been-illegally-sterilized/>

⁸⁵Supra Note 83.

⁸⁶ Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Czech Republic: the authorities should extend the law on compensation for victims of forced sterilisations*, 2024,

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/czech-republic-the-authorities-should-extend-the-law-on-compensation-for-victims-of-forced-sterilisations>

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸Supra Note 84.

⁸⁹ Supra Note 82.

- Ensure a victim-centered and non-discriminatory compensation process for unlawful sterilizations, particularly for Roma women, by shifting the burden of proof to the State, accepting alternative forms of evidence (especially when missing medical records), and conducting proactive, culturally-sensitive outreach to Roma communities to ensure all affected individuals receive just and timely redress.

VI. Education

Education is inaccessible for minority girls

40. Language support is an additional barrier for minority girls who speak a different first language.⁹⁰ For minority girls, particularly Roma girls, secondary-level education lacks adequate Czech-language support, limiting their ability to access and benefit from mainstream schooling.⁹¹ The recent amendment to the Education Act extends the free language support to Czech pupils who lack sufficient proficiency in Czech.⁹² However, the Act does not yet provide public data on uptake, regional distribution, or its impact on minority girls.⁹³
41. When multilingual teaching assistants are hired in schools, their employment is dependent on unstable funding, as they are primarily funded through European funds. Starting in January 2026, an amendment to the Education Act means the State will only cover teaching positions, while school authorities—municipalities and regions—will assume full responsibility for the salaries of non-teaching staff, including multilingual teaching assistants.⁹⁴ This risk is a sudden discontinuation or reduction of support, especially in under-resourced localities.
42. Many schools, especially those serving Roma, migrant, or refugee communities, lack systematic institutional support for inclusion, and teachers often face complex classroom situations without adequate professional training, resources, or external support.⁹⁵ For example, CSOs have documented longstanding systemic segregation, such as the over-representation of Roma children in “practical schools” or Roma-only classes, the routine absence of language support even where Czech is not the mother-tongue, and reports of discrimination and racial bullying in mainstream schools.⁹⁶

Gender stereotypes in women and girls' professional advancement

43. In its report, Czechia referred to the national curricula and the Competency Framework for Teacher Education Graduates.⁹⁷
44. Neither the national curricula nor the Competency Framework addresses the depictions of women in textbooks. New curricula and competency frameworks are being developed under the

⁹⁰ Supra Note 19, p. 36.

⁹¹ Amnesty International, *Must Try Harder: Ethnic Discrimination of Romani Children in Czech Schools* (2015), 35, https://www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/musttryharder_embargoed_report.pdf

⁹² Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, *Czechia: Amendment to the Education Act on the Education of Foreigners*, European Commission, 2025.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ National Pedagogical Institute, *Novela školského zákona 2025* (2025), <https://www.npi.cz/aktuality/90390-novela-skolskeho-zakona-2025>

⁹⁵ Supra Note 91, pp. 6; 19-22; 35.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *National Reform Programme 2024: Reforms of Pre-service Teacher Education and Support for Educational Professionals* (2025), https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/evropske-zalezitosti/aktualne/NPR-2024_EN-version_2.pdf

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.⁹⁸ However, these measures lack systemic and mandatory training on gender and intersectionality for teachers.

45. Women are currently underrepresented and misrepresented in textbooks. Of textbooks in circulation, women are only mentioned around 25-30%⁹⁹ and often stereotypically portrayed in private or caregiving roles. Furthermore, textbooks frequently mishandle sensitive topics without adequate contextualization or support references, and there is a significant lack of active representation of Roma people, LGBTIQ+ people, and persons with disabilities.¹⁰⁰

46. **Recommendations:**

- Establish systematic language support for children with a different first language and availability of high-quality language classes at all school levels.
- Ensure that Czech as a second language is firmly embedded in the national curriculum across all levels of education and provide stable funding for multilingual teaching assistants, who play a key role in supporting children's integration and facilitating communication with families.
- Provide mandatory teacher training on gender equality and intersectionality in both initial and continuing education.
- Mandate the revision of textbooks to eliminate stereotypical and discriminatory content, including the absence or marginalization of Roma women and other marginalized groups, and ensure active representation of diverse identities and roles.

VII. Employment

Care Work

47. Women experience a 15% lower employment rate than men, spending nearly twice as much time on childcare and household tasks.¹⁰¹ In May 2025, the government introduced legislation requiring municipalities to provide preschool education for three-year-old children.¹⁰² Childcare costs and shortages impede effective implementation of this measure.

48. Childcare availability is severely limited, with only 9% of children under three in formal care.¹⁰³ In response, the government introduced the Neighborhood Children's Group amendment, which provided childcare in groups of up to four children from six months until compulsory school age.¹⁰⁴ Recent legislative changes affected funding, leading to the closure of some neighborhood children's groups.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Financováno Evropskou unií, *Reflexe Diverzity: Analýza Repräsentace Identit ve Vybraných Českých Učebnicích*, by Paul et al. (2024), <https://tinyurl.com/5n8te2nu>

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Gender Equality Department and the Labour Market & Equal Opportunities Statistics Department, *Women and Men in Czechia 2023* (2024),

https://vlada.gov.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/Aktuality/FINAL_ENG_ZaMvD23.pdf

¹⁰² *Amendment to the Act on the Provision of Childcare Services in Children's Groups – Guaranteeing Early Childhood Care for Three-Year-Olds* (2025), Act No. 84/2025 Sb., <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2025-84>

¹⁰³ Eurostat, *Children Under 3 Years in Formal Childcare in Czechia* (2024),

<https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor/en/country-reports/czechia.html>

¹⁰⁴ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, *Neighborhood Children's Groups*, 2025,

<https://www.mpsv.cz/sousedske-detske-skupiny>

¹⁰⁵ Hochmanová, *Ušité horkou jehlou. 'Dětské skupiny bojují s časem, kvůli novele jim hrozí nejen finanční potíže'*, iRozhlas, 2025,

49. Long career interruptions for childcare amongst mothers remain common, pushing women into precarious, low-paid, or temporary jobs. These structural barriers are largely unaddressed in national employment or pension policies.¹⁰⁶ Since 2025, Czechia has been working to implement the EU Work-Life Balance Directive,¹⁰⁷ which prioritizes flexible working arrangements and remote work rather than expanding childcare capacity or strengthening non-transferable parental leave for fathers.¹⁰⁸
50. The Directive's goal of increasing flexible opportunities has not been met domestically as flexible work policies remain scarce. Only 10.6% of these opportunities are available to women, compared with the EU average of 31.3%.¹⁰⁹ Part-time employment remains rare, and employer support is uneven, limiting women's employability and their ability to remain in the workforce.¹¹⁰
51. Women experience one of the highest gender pay gaps (GPGs) across Europe at 17.9%.¹¹¹ This disparity is driven by women's disproportionate employment in lower-paid sectors. Only 27% of women are appointed to management positions.¹¹²

Minorities & Labor Exploitation

52. The State party did not address the request for disaggregated data intersecting forms of discrimination for Roma women; instead, the government presented the Strategy 2021+.¹¹³ Data gaps on Roma women's economic participation undermine the effectiveness of strategies.
53. Available information indicates Roma women face structural discrimination in education and the labor market. Nearly 66% of Roma women aged 20-64 do not perform paid work, and among those who do work, the GPG reaches 30.8%.¹¹⁴ Available data, though limited, indicates that most Roma women work in the informal economy, primarily as cleaners. Beyond discrimination based on gender stereotypes and cultural assumptions,¹¹⁵ the underlying causes of low employment and education rates remain undocumented.

https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/usite-horkou-jehlou-detske-skupiny-bojuji-s-casem-kvuli-novele-jim-hrozi-nejen-2504181114_elev

¹⁰⁶ PLOS ONE, *The Impact of Childcare Availability on Maternal Employment: Evidence from Czech Municipalities*, by Kalíšková and Münich (2023), <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0288987>

¹⁰⁷ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, *Směrnice Work-Life Balance*, 2021, <https://www.mpsv.cz/smernice-work-life-balance>

¹⁰⁸ OECD, *Gender Equality in the Czech Republic* (2023), noting that in Czechia “only about 2 % of all recipients are men” among parental benefit (parental leave) claimants, https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/05/gender-equality-in-the-czech-republic_152cb31a/c5a3086f-en.pdf

¹⁰⁹ Supra Note 12.

¹¹⁰ OECD, *Promoting Better Career Mobility for Longer Working Lives in Czechia* (2025), 14–15, <https://doi.org/10.1787/dd8eafc2-en>

¹¹¹ European Commission, *Statement: Gender Pay Gap in the EU Remains at 13 % on Equal Pay Day* (2023), https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_23_5692

¹¹² Supra Note 101.

¹¹³ Supra Note 8.

¹¹⁴ Slovo21 and ERGO Network, *Roma Access to Decent and Sustainable Employment in the Czech Republic*, by Beňák (2020), 8, <https://ergonetworg.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/CZECH-REPUBLIC-Roma-access-to-decent-and-sustainable-employment-final.pdf>

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

54. Women migrant workers are vulnerable to discriminatory employment practices. Migrant women comprise 40% of the migrant working population.¹¹⁶ According to government data, 942,328 migrant workers were either employed or self-employed by end of 2023.¹¹⁷
55. Women migrant workers often face language barriers and challenges of balancing work with their caregiving responsibilities.¹¹⁸ Migrant women are frequently placed in underpaid, low-skilled, precarious, and sometimes informal jobs, regardless of their education, professional qualifications, and work experiences.¹¹⁹ Women migrant workers often lack sufficient information about their rights and labor legal frameworks,¹²⁰ preventing them from fully realizing their professional potential.¹²¹
56. The State supports the integration of refugees from Ukraine and women from vulnerable groups through the OP Employment+ programme. CSOs also play a crucial role in supporting women migrant workers to navigate the labor market and promote their inclusion.¹²² However, the nostrification, or formal recognition, of foreign professional qualifications¹²³ and disproportionate socio-economic inequalities faced by women migrants remain a significant challenge. As a result, the skills and expertise of many qualified migrant professionals remain underutilized, even in sectors facing workforce shortages, such as healthcare.¹²⁴ For example, Ukrainian healthcare workers are present in large numbers,¹²⁵ but their qualifications are often overlooked due to their immigration status.

57. Recommendations:

- Lower the guaranteed age for municipal pre-school education to two years, aligning with the two-year job maintenance obligation for parents on parental leave.
- Increase and safeguard public funding for accessible, affordable childcare services, with a focus on expanding options for children under three.
- Introduce a legally mandated, non-transferable portion of parental leave reserved exclusively for fathers.
- Focus public policies on supporting the inclusion of young Roma women in education, retraining, and employment, with an emphasis on flexible learning options and support for caregivers.
- Ensure employment anti-discrimination measures address the rejection of Roma women applicants, supported by systematic monitoring and improved, disaggregated data collection on Roma women in the labor market.
- Ensure conditions for decent work and qualified jobs of migrant women and expand access to information on labor rights and support services for migrant women.

¹¹⁶ Czech Statistical Office, *Economic Activity (Status) of Foreigners* (2024), <https://csu.gov.cz/economic-activity-status-of-foreigners>

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Faces of Migration, *Governance of Migrant Integration in the Czech Republic: Monitoring report on progress towards the 2030 Agenda in relation to migration*, by Martin Guzi et al. (2021), 7; 24, https://gcap_global/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Diakonie_Monitoring-rep_FINAL_ENG.pdf

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Supra Note 15.

¹²¹ Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, *Drawing of European subsidies starts, the European Commission has approved the Operational Programme Employment Plus*, 2022, <https://www.mpsv.cz/cerpani-evropskych-dotaci-startuje-evropska-komise-schvalila-operacni-program-zamestnanost-plus>

¹²² Supra Note 15.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

- Simplify and improve access to qualification recognition, provide free retraining and language courses, while also strengthening the capacity of childcare and other care services for dependents, so migrant women can more easily enter the labor market.

VIII. Ukrainian refugee and other refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

58. As of June 30, 2025, a total of 1,091,409 foreign nationals were registered.¹²⁶ Among these, 378,421 individuals – predominantly Ukrainian nationals – are residing under the temporary protection regime (see *Lex Ukraine*¹²⁷), with women constituting 61% of economically active holders.¹²⁸
59. Despite the EU-wide extension of Temporary Protection (TP) until March 2027,¹²⁹ uncertainty persists regarding long-term solutions. Czechia’s growing reliance on employment-based residence transitions risks exacerbating inequalities, as the special national residence permit for TP holders relies on economic self-sufficiency.¹³⁰ Consequently, these permits are largely inaccessible to many vulnerable groups, including elderly persons, single mothers, people with disabilities, and others facing structural barriers.
60. The situation of Ukrainian women refugees with TP has further deteriorated after 2024, when the *Lex Ukraine VI* amendment came into force, ending free housing for vulnerable groups — including women, children, elderly persons or people with disabilities.¹³¹ The new amendment only allows cost-free humanitarian housing for individuals with TP status for a maximum of 90 days.¹³² After this period, women must either leave their accommodation or establish a paid rental agreement.¹³³
61. In response to the reduced housing availability, the government has allowed individuals to remain eligible for a humanitarian subsidy intended to cover basic living needs and housing expenses.¹³⁴ Vulnerable persons receive a monthly allowance of 4,000 CZK and Ukrainian refugees receive 6,000 CZK.¹³⁵ Nonetheless, these allowances are insufficient to cover housing costs and basic living needs.¹³⁶ As a result, refugees from vulnerable groups now spend nearly their entire allowance on rent,¹³⁷ with women particularly affected by high costs, insecure leases, and overcrowded housing conditions.¹³⁸

¹²⁶ Ministry of the Interior, *Quarterly Report on Migration for the Second Quarter of 2025* (2025), <https://mv.gov.cz/clanek/ctvrtletni-zprava-o-migraci-za-ii-ctvrtleti-2025.aspx>

¹²⁷ Act No. 65/2022 Coll., on Certain Measures in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine Caused by the Invasion of the Troops of the Russian Federation (2022).

¹²⁸ European Migration Network Czech Republic, *EMN Annual Report on Asylum and Migration 2023*, (2023), 73–74, <https://www.emncz.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Vyrocnni-zprava-2023-EN-WEB-final-II.pdf>

¹²⁹ European Commission, *Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Coordinated Approach to the Transition Out of Temporary Protection for Displaced Persons from Ukraine* (2025), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0651>

¹³⁰ Supra Note 128.

¹³¹ Lansdorfová and Málek, *Extension of temporary protection for citizens of Ukraine allowed again – until when can it be extended and what other changes await foreigners?*, PEYTON legal, 2025, <https://www.peytonlegal.cz/en/extension-of-temporary-protection-for-citizens-of-ukraine/>

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, *Czechia: Housing support increased for people displaced from Ukraine*, European Commission, 2024, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/czechia-housing-support-increased-people-displaced-ukraine-2024-07-26_en

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ IOM, *Czechia: Accommodation and Financial Situation of Ukrainian Refugees* (2024), 9, <https://czechia.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11681/files/DTM/iom-czechia-dtm-report-accomm-fin-2023-en.pdf>

¹³⁸ Ibid.

62. Access to private accommodation is limited, as landlords often impose strict conditions, such as requiring a Czech guarantor, proof of employment, or a work contract.¹³⁹ Although approximately two-thirds of working-age Ukrainian refugees are employed, mainly in manufacturing and hospitality, underemployment, precarious work, and barriers stemming from unrecognized qualifications and limited Czech language skills¹⁴⁰ undermine their ability to secure stable and adequate housing. Even when refugees meet all formal requirements, securing temporary housing remains administratively burdensome. As a result, limited options and widespread housing scarcity often forces individuals to accept disadvantageous rental agreements or the first available offer.¹⁴¹
63. Women migrants are often at heightened risk along the continuum of violence, especially due to limited access to healthcare, reproductive rights, and other forms of care.¹⁴² Their risk of violence intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic and persists today.
64. **Recommendations:**
- Adopt an inclusive, rights-based transition framework that ensures continuity of protection and provides accessible alternative residence pathways for all TP holders, including those who cannot meet the criteria for the special residence permit.
 - Ensure accessible and sustainable housing support for vulnerable groups by reinstating or redesigning housing mechanisms to ensure dignified living conditions for those unable to secure income due to legal, health, or care-related barriers.
 - Undertake support for social and economic inclusion for vulnerable women migrants, especially those experiencing violence, and strengthen gender-sensitive integration policies. Complement protection and residence measures with targeted support for women at risk of violence to access services, psychosocial support, affordable and safe housing, childcare and pathways to employment or education.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ UNHCR, *Czech Republic: Multi-Sector Needs Assessment: Final Report* (2023), 6, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105509>

¹⁴¹ Supra Note 15.

¹⁴² Supra Note 140, p. 12.