

Leading Factors in Migrant Entrepreneurial Success in the Czech Republic

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Abstract: This study examined the key factors of migrant entrepreneurial success in the Czech Republic through secondary data analysis which was collected from national databases and existing literature. The results show that individual-level factors such as work experience, education, language skills and motivation are vital for immigrant entrepreneurial success in the Czech Republic. Additionally, social capital, community engagement, and adaptation to the local culture also play a crucial role in their success. Economic and institutional factors including residency status, access to finance and government regulation are also very important in the Czech context. The study concludes that encouraging migrant entrepreneurship requires improved government actions, business training and inclusive finance structures for immigrants. Both the Czech government and potential immigrant entrepreneurs should pay attention to these observations.

Keywords: Czech Republic, entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurs, key factors, migrant entrepreneurship, social capital, success factors.

JEL classification: L26, O15, J61

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Introduction

Migrants play an important role in diversifying the labor market and driving entrepreneurship. But a large migration flow can be difficult for a country to control and manage. Migrants not only contribute to the host country's labor market but also play a role in entrepreneurship and innovation. They help create new jobs and serve their own community, as well as other members of wider community, promoting social inclusion (Acs 2006, Naudé 2010, as cited in Mason et al. 2015).

Czech Republic is one of the central European countries, sharing borders with Germany to the west, Austria to the south, Slovakia to the east and Poland to the north. Every year, a significant number of immigrants come from different countries for various reasons. Some of them come for study, some of them come as a skilled worker, and some of them come as refugees, after a certain time some of the immigrants leave the Czech Republic but a large number of immigrants choose to live there as permanent residents ¹.

According to the Czech Statistical Office ², as of December 31, 2023, in total 1,065,740 foreigners from different countries live in Czech Republic where in total 228,789 come from 27 European countries and 889,728 from other countries which is 7.9% of the total population of Czech Republic. The citizens of Ukraine are the dominant group with total of 574,447 (54%) immigrants, Slovakia follows in second place with 117,265 (11%) immigrants, Vietnam and the Russian Federation are third and fourth respectively with 67,784 (6%) immigrants and 40,990 (4%) immigrants. Among them a large number of immigrants participate in entrepreneurial

¹ Web portal of Czech statistics office [online] [vis. December 25, 2024]. Available at <https://csu.gov.cz/migration?pocet=10&start=0&podskupiny=136&razeni=-datumVydani>

² Web portal of Czech statistics office [online] [vis. December 25, 2024]. Available at <https://csu.gov.cz/produkty/foreigners-in-the-czech-republic-an1762u80s>

activities. According to the Czech Statistical Office office, as of December 31, 2024, in total 118,383 foreigners hold valid trade licences and in total 43,005 are from 27 European countries and in total 75,378 are from other countries.

This diverse demographic landscape highlights the importance of understanding the factors that contribute to migrant entrepreneurial success in the Czech Republic. Based on the Czech Statistical Office, 32.7% (332,772) immigrants hold permanent resident status, which is a very positive indicator for long-term business perspective.

As reported by the Czech Labour Office³, as of June 30, 2022, the majority of these immigrants came for employment purposes and it is around 57% of total immigrants, 24% came for family reunification purposes and 14% came for studies, there is therefore a growing need to explore how these migrants navigate the challenges and opportunities in the Czech entrepreneurial ecosystem, particularly considering their diverse nationalities, legal statuses and motivations for staying in the country.

A lot of immigrants have started their own businesses in Czech Republic, some of them from Asia, some from Africa and some of them from other European countries. They have different types of business such as food, grocery, clothing, even some of the immigrants started service-base businesses in Czech Republic. All of the immigrant entrepreneurs do not perform equally well in their business, they face various difficulties or barriers to achieving success in their business. Those immigrant entrepreneurs who are successful in their business perform well and spread their business, on the other hand some entrepreneurs struggle with their business success and sometimes they are disappointed and decide to quit their business. So, it's important to know which factors affect their business positively and what may be lacking. There can be many factors which have significant effect on their business such as business location, business type, product quality, customer service, business management system. To figure out key factors for entrepreneurial success, further analysis is required.

The main goal of this article is to examine the key factors which have impact on migrant entrepreneurs' business success in Czech Republic. The paper is organized as follows: the literature on migration and entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic is reviewed in the following section. The third section presents the data collection procedure and research techniques. The primary results of this study are presented in the fourth part. The results are discussed, along with conclusions and suggestions, in the last section.

1 Theoretical framework

In recent years, migrant entrepreneurship has become a popular topic for research, especially in the European context due to the serious immigration crisis in Europe. Some of the immigrants have shown interest in becoming entrepreneurs in the host country. In 2022, 7% of Ukrainian refugees showed interest in being self-employed in Norway (Hernes et al. 2022). The idea of migrant entrepreneurship in Europe has changed over the last few decades, covering cross-border international businesses and business ventures founded by refugees in addition to ethnic entrepreneurship. These days, the concept is used to refer to a wide range of migrant generations and groups, taking into consideration factors such as resources, ethnic backgrounds, qualifications, migration motivations, all of which are impacted by specific social and geographical contexts (Rath and Schutjens 2016, Sandoz et al. 2022). Migrant entrepreneurship promotes social mobility and integration by enhancing power relations and increasing social

³ Web portal of Czech Labour office [online] [vis. December 25, 2024]. Available at <https://www.cizinci.cz/web/cz/data-o-cizincich-2022>

inclusion (David, Evans and Terstriep 2019; as cited in David, Terstriep and Elo 2024). Migrant entrepreneurs come from different countries with different cultures, and cultural diversity in European regions positively contributes to innovative entrepreneurship. Their findings support the Schumpeter-Jacobs theory of entrepreneurship (Prenzel et al. 2024).

In previous research two types of migrant entrepreneurship are discussed, one is necessity-driven entrepreneurship and the other is opportunity driver entrepreneurship. According to Chrysostome (2010), necessity driven entrepreneurship refers to entrepreneurs who have less access or face difficulties entering the main labor market because of their low skill levels or education. This type of entrepreneurship is more common in developing countries. On the other hand, opportunity driver entrepreneurs are those people, who migrate to the host country for study or work, they are highly educated and many of them hold a degree from the host country (Min and Bozorgmehr 2000, as cited in Chrysostome 2010), and later they decide to stay in the host country and start a business to take advantage of those entrepreneurial opportunities. They aim to make money, enjoy their independence and fulfill their dreams. In that paper the author also mentions that immigrants who came to the United States to study or work are an important group, and they have a great contribution to the United States' economy.

In the past, a lot of researchers have discussed various factors influencing the success of migrant entrepreneurs. The main objective of this literature review is to summarize existing literature on migrant entrepreneurship to understand the key factors contributing to entrepreneurial success. The aim of this review is to provide a clear overview of how socio-level, economic, cultural and personal factors influence entrepreneurial activities of migrants. There is a clear geographic research gap in migrant entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic. There are many existing research about migrant entrepreneurs all over the world but very few studies have been conducted on migrant entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic.

1.1 Definition of migrant entrepreneurship

Migrant entrepreneurship is a broad concept, so before discussing it, first we need to define the two terms “migrant” and “entrepreneurship” individually. Migrants refer to foreign-born people who have not acquired citizenship in their host country but are living in the country (Hernes et al. 2022, Davidavicienė and Lolat 2016). Migrants can be either permanent or temporary, and migration can be internal or international. This research is about international migrants who were born outside of the Czech Republic and moved to Czech Republic permanently. According to the IOM⁴, the act of people moving from their regular place of residence to a new location, either within a state or across an international boundary, is known as migration. When a person, who has been living abroad for a minimum of 12 months, he/she is considered as a permanent migrant. On the other hand, an entrepreneur refers to a person who creates or establishes a business (Glinka and Hensel 2020, Širec and Tominc 2017, Solano 2021, as cited in Polychronopoulos and Nguyen-Duc 2024). In general, the terms migrant, immigrant, ethnic (minority), foreign, or refugee entrepreneurship are used to describe a business started by an individual who was not born in the country where they started their business (Davidavicienė and Lolat 2016). The European Commission also provides a clear definition of entrepreneurship in its publication. However, it defines entrepreneurship in a broad, general sense. According to the Commission of the European Communities (2003), *entrepreneurship is the mindset and process to create and develop economic activity by blending risk-taking, creativity and/or innovation with sound management, within a new or an existing organization.*

⁴ Web portal of IOM [online] [vis. February 12, 2025]. Available at <https://www.iom.int/fundamentals-migration>

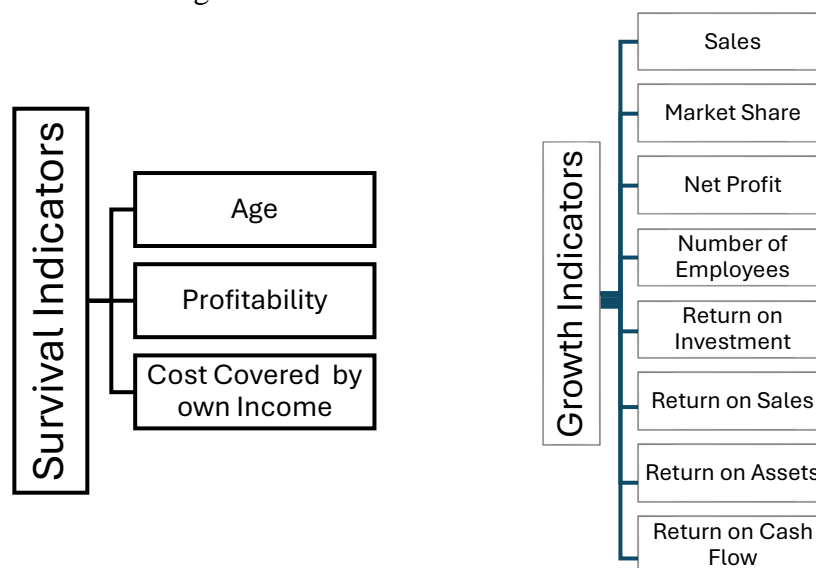
1.2 Migrant entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic

Nowadays, the Czech Republic is one of the most attractive countries for long-term and permanent immigrants. Foreign labor is highly essential for the Czech economy, and the Czech government actively trying to attract foreign labor to the Czech labor market, especially the government is seeking to attract Ukrainian citizens who have a long tradition of working in the Czech labor market (Seidlová 2018). Not only Ukrainian citizens, but many citizens from other developing countries also live permanently in the Czech Republic. According to data from the Czech Statistical Office, the second-largest group of immigrants in the Czech Republic is from Slovakia, followed by Vietnam and the Russian Federation as the third and fourth largest groups, respectively. These communities have established numerous successful businesses in the country. The Czech economy has benefited greatly from the contributions of immigrant entrepreneurs, particularly during times of serious economic change. As an example, many Ukrainian immigrants benefited from the changes occurring in the country in the late 1990s, helping to propel immigrant-led small businesses and support the country's overall economic expansion (Čermáková et al. 2011, as cited in Kovály and Čermáková 2016). Czech migration policy has changed several times in the past. Since 2014, it has included a dual citizenship option for foreign nationals and its immigration policy has moved away from a discriminatory model and now focuses on multicultural environments to attract foreign immigrants and integrate them with the local culture (Seidlová 2018).

1.3 Factors influencing migrant entrepreneurial success

Success has different meanings for different people. Some entrepreneurs think they are successful when they achieve financial success and stability, customer satisfaction or both financial and non-financial goals, financial success and customer satisfaction are positively connected (Virnanda et al. 2024). Other entrepreneurs think they are successful when they fulfill their purpose and passion and enjoy implementing their business ideas. Some people like to have a work-life balance, and when they achieve it, they think they are successful. Others believe that solving problems in society and creating new jobs represent real business success. There are also groups of people who think that continuous learning and business growth define real business success. Now the question is how we can measure a business's success. Chrysostome (2010) mentioned some success-measuring factors in his paper and classified them into two groups.

Figure 1: Survival and growth indicators of a business



Source: Adapted from Chrysostome (2010, pp.140)

Migrant entrepreneurs face many barriers that negatively impact their success. Removing those obstacles can make the path to success easier and smoother for new migrant entrepreneurs. A lot of scholars have already discussed in their papers those barriers that negatively affect migrant entrepreneurial success. Migrant entrepreneurs lack social, cultural, financial and human capital all of which are very important for their business success (Bourdieu 1986, as cited in, David and Terstriep 2024). Some of the entrepreneurs grow their businesses more quickly than other entrepreneurs. In the Czech Republic, there are thousands of different entrepreneurs from different countries, their language and culture are different, they have different individual-level characteristics. Among all of those factors, some of the factors might have a higher positive impact than others.

According to Sun et al (2010, cited in Ma et al. 2022), entrepreneurial performance has four aspects namely social influence, employment, personal satisfaction and profit. Ma et al. (2022) discussed the entrepreneurial performance of new-generation rural migrant entrepreneurs in China. The authors discussed two types of capital specifically social and psychological capital. In their results, they show that both forms of capital significantly influence entrepreneurial performance. They also show that financial performance is positively correlated with five independent variables of social capital and three independent variables of psychological capital.

1.3.1 Individual-level factors

Individual-level factors play an important role in migrant entrepreneurial success. These factors primarily include entrepreneurs' personal characteristics, skills, and preferences, all of which significantly influence business performance. Migrant entrepreneurs encounter various challenges in their business, and these factors help them overcome those difficulties and achieve entrepreneurial success.

In existing literature, most of the scholars agree that education is one of the most important individual-level factors which has a strongly positive impact on migrant entrepreneurial success. Education plays an important role as a form of social capital in increasing migrant entrepreneurs' success (Metzger 2016; as cited in David, Terstriep and Elo 2024). According to Rath and Schutjens (2016), a college-educated entrepreneur has a greater likelihood of achieving success than a less-educated entrepreneur. Investment in research and education can expand new business opportunities and entrepreneurship, which leads to economic growth. Entrepreneurs who are both foreign-born and highly educated are more likely to engage in innovation-oriented entrepreneurial activities (Prenzel et al. 2024). Highly educated entrepreneurs are good at identifying gaps and bringing effective solutions; this also enhances business management and marketing capabilities. However, highly educated individuals tend to be less willing to take risks and start their own businesses (Wei, Jiao and Growe 2018).

Work experience is another important individual-level factor that has a significant impact on migrant entrepreneurial success. Necessity-driven migrant entrepreneurs have lower levels of education and limited work experience, while opportunity-driven entrepreneurs have professional experience and higher university degrees (Chrysostome 2010). Work and entrepreneurial experience help entrepreneurs make the right decisions and take necessary steps at the right time; these experiences strengthen decision-making skills that contribute to entrepreneurial success (Unger et al. 2011; as cited in Urban, Murimbika, and Mhangami 2024). Work experience greatly increases the chances of success for immigrant entrepreneurs because it gives them a deeper understanding of the subtleties of their industries, which makes it easier for them to identify or create opportunities in the industries in which they had experience before moving abroad (Urban, Murimbika and Mhangami 2024). The authors show in their model that

higher levels of human capital particularly work and entrepreneurial experience have a strong and positive impact on entrepreneurial success.

Language proficiency is another important factor for migrant entrepreneurs, as it plays a crucial role in entrepreneurial success. For immigrant entrepreneurs, knowledge of the local language and culture is essential. When immigrants know the local language, they can connect more effectively with the local community and utilize all local resources. People who speak the same language share the same culture, values, and ways of thinking, which naturally increases trust among individuals who share the same identity. In the beginning, a small entrepreneur always struggles to build trust and long-term relationships among customers, retailers, and suppliers (Wei, Jiao and Growe 2018). Language proficiency significantly supports small entrepreneurs in building trust and developing a strong local business network.

Migrant entrepreneurs often face a wide range of different challenges. They face language barriers, cultural differences, lack of financial resources, as well as many legal issues. However, highly motivated entrepreneurs tend to overcome these obstacles more effectively and demonstrate greater innovation than others. Highly motivated entrepreneurs like to take risks in their business and develop skills to stay updated in a competitive market. It also helps to build a good social network with local business groups, and motivated entrepreneurs are better at integrating into the local culture. Some people may be motivated by earning extra money, while others are motivated to be independent and have the aspiration to become their own boss. Levent and Nijkamp (2006) examine the driving forces, motivation, and performance of migrant female entrepreneurs in Turkey. In their research, they show that economic motivation is not the main motivation for Turkish migrant female entrepreneurs; they are strongly motivated to be independent and to be their own boss.

1.3.2 Social-level factors

Social-level factors are an important aspect of immigrant entrepreneurial success. They help immigrants gain access to resources, build effective business networks, and create new business opportunities, ultimately leading to their success.

Community engagement and local networking are the most important social-level factors for immigrant entrepreneurs for achieving business success in the host country. In general, immigrants are often involved in their own small community; they are not comfortable engaging with the local community due to their language barriers and cultural gaps. As a result, they are not able to understand the current market situation in the host country, its problems, and the expectations of the local people. Even if immigrant entrepreneurs increase their involvement in their own community, it helps them understand the opportunities in the community's market. Community engagement helps increase trust among entrepreneurs and community members, and trust can be another key factor in their success as it functions as social capital in their business.

Mentorship can be another important social factor. Small business owners often face many difficulties and challenges, especially immigrant entrepreneurs who face even more challenges at the beginning. They lack resources and face financial and legal issues. A mentor can support them with the right guidance when they are facing difficulties, providing strong mental support to new immigrant entrepreneurs and making them more optimistic about achieving success. Social capital is viewed as an investment in social relationships that are expected to yield returns and consists of two key components: resources and structure (Lin 1999). Research indicates that social networks and strong ties within co-ethnic communities offer significant advantages

to immigrant entrepreneurs, helping them establish and sustain small businesses more effectively (Tavassoli and Trippel 2019).

For immigrant entrepreneurs, social integration and adaptation are very important social-level factors that help them become more successful in their business and enhance connectivity and trust among local people as well as the local business community. Learning the local language and culture and understanding customer preferences are fundamental for long-term business success. With a good knowledge of the local language, entrepreneurs can increase customer engagement in their business, which can help them carry out effective marketing. They can even participate in business seminars to build their knowledge and expand their network.

1.3.3 Economic and institutional factors

Migrant entrepreneurs tend to establish their business in sectors where there is a market gap for ethnic communities, they try to find the best niche by targeting a specific group of people such as customers of restaurants or grocery stores. Some of the migrant entrepreneurs also think about market gaps outside of their own community and decide to provide services, they do not target only a specific group of people, they think about the entire Czech market. In the Czech Republic, Ukrainian entrepreneurs have taken over the construction market (Makarewicz 2025, p.182), and they have established many successful businesses in the Czech market.

Niche selection is also an important factor for a successful entrepreneur. The best niche can help to achieve success more easily, with a low budget and in a short time. On the other hand, some of niches are so competitive that achieving success in them is difficult and costly. In this case, entrepreneurs need a proper marketing plan and a large marketing budget. For this reason, niche selection requires the entrepreneur to be careful, conduct proper market gap research, and analyze the demand for specific products or services. Migrant entrepreneurs can get some extra benefits from their international experience, and they can provide some specialized services that are not available or are less available in the host country. In the Czech Republic, there are many Vietnamese people who are running business, and most of them operate retail grocery or clothing stores, or Vietnamese restaurants. Nowadays it is also quite competitive for new comers. For any kind of business, capital is essential. Without proper investment, it can be difficult to remain in a competitive market. Migrant entrepreneurs face significant difficulties in obtaining bank loans, especially in the initial stages of their business when they lack a strong credit history.

Many migrant entrepreneurs struggle to access traditional bank loans due to a lack of credit history, collateral, or legal resident status. In response, they turn to community-based financing models. Sometimes, they depend on personal savings, family loans, or other informal financial sources. This financial barrier can be one of the major obstacles to their success. They may seek other funding sources, such as NGOs, microfinance institutions (MFIs), or government funds. Competing with other entrepreneurs for these resources is also challenging. On the one hand, migrant entrepreneurs struggle with financial constraints due to limited access to the mainstream banking system and insufficient capital. On the other hand, if their competitors have sufficient capital, a well-structured marketing plan, and a proper budget, it becomes even more difficult for migrant entrepreneurs to remain in the market for an extended period.

Regulation and policies of the host country can directly impact migrant entrepreneurs' success. Migrant entrepreneurs who hold permanent status receive more advantages compared to temporary immigrant entrepreneurs. In some cases, temporary residency card holders may not have permission to start a business until they have spent a certain period in the host country.

Another important factor is access to financial services. When entrepreneurs apply for bank support, banks may require the applicant to have permanent residency to obtain a large loan. So, in this case a permanent immigrant will receive more financial benefits than a temporary immigrant. Since some of the funds are designed primarily for Czech or EU citizens, it could be hard to obtain for non-EU citizens.

Infrastructure is another important factor in the success of migrant entrepreneurs. Infrastructural factors have a direct impact on some businesses. For example, Prague is one of the most expensive cities in Europe, so rental costs in Prague are higher compared to smaller cities in the Czech Republic. Some entrepreneurs relocate to smaller cities or start online-based businesses due to high expenses in Prague, although larger cities offer greater opportunities to generate higher revenue. Therefore, business location is an important factor for success, which should be carefully considered in this research. Some of the businesses have very good transport access, which can reduce some transportation costs, as well as make processes smoother, especially which is important for export- and import-related businesses. Some migrant entrepreneurs lack digital literacy, but this skill can provide an advantage for business success.

1.3.4 Cultural and environmental factors

Adapting to host-country norms and business practices is crucial to being a successful entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs who adapt to the local language and culture in a short time have a more positive effect on their business in terms of success compared to other entrepreneurs. Immigrant entrepreneurs do not depend solely on their own community once they understand local customer preferences and business practices. This also helps them communicate with local offices, banks, and other stakeholders, and these practices increase their acceptance in business. Cultural misunderstandings can damage strong professional relationships with stakeholders. In the Czech Republic, Vietnamese entrepreneurs quickly adapted the Czech language and culture, understood local customer preferences, and started their restaurant businesses targeting both Czech and Vietnamese customers. They are not fully dependent on the Vietnamese community.

Business location is another important factor for the success of a new business. Some businesses are directly connected with customers, while others depend on tourists. In the Czech Republic, Prague is the largest and most multicultural city where most immigrants live, and every year a significant number of tourists visit the city. According to the Czech Statistical Office, in the first quarter of 2024, 4.1 million guests arrived and were accommodated in the Czech Republic, spending 10.1 million nights. So, when an entrepreneur starts a business, they first need to define their target customers and then choose the right business location. For location selection, entrepreneurs need to consider the total number of residents, tourists, or immigrants in that city, their culture and habits, the supply chain and distribution network there, and operational costs. In the largest cities, operational costs are higher and business competition is stronger than in smaller cities. However, in large cities, it is also easier to find skilled workers to operate the business. So, business location can be an important factor in entrepreneurial success. For example, souvenir shops and real estate businesses tend to perform well in Prague due to high demand from an increasing number of immigrants and tourists. On the other hand, a local grocery store, café, or small restaurant can succeed in a smaller city. Local customers are their main target, but in this case, entrepreneurs also need to consider their food habits and culture, which is very important for success.

Government policy has a significant impact on immigrant entrepreneurs' business success. In some countries, certain immigrants are not allowed to start a business until they have completed a specific period of residence. For example, in the Czech Republic, immigrants are allowed to

start their businesses after five years of residence, except those who came to the Czech Republic to study and successfully complete their university degree. According to the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, those graduates have full access to the Czech labor market, and they are allowed to start their own businesses. Entrepreneurs need financial support at the beginning of their business, and it is difficult to obtain financial support from banks. Government policy can make it smoother and easier for immigrants who want to start small businesses in the host country. Citizens and immigrants holding permanent residence status always receive more benefits from the government under the law. For any kind of financial support or tax relief, they always receive additional benefits compared to temporary immigrants.

1.4 Challenges and barriers to success

In previous research, authors have discussed the challenges of immigrant entrepreneurs in different countries. In most cases, they face common types of challenges. Murshed (2023) discussed in his paper Turkish entrepreneurs in Germany; in his paper, he points out some common difficulties, such as a lack of trust, a lack of skilled and experienced employees, cash flow shortages, high operational costs, language and cultural differences, limited access to information, government regulations, and discrimination. Immigrant entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic might face the same types of challenges when operating their businesses in the host country. Further research is needed regarding the Czech Republic, and in my research, I will find out the main challenges and barriers that immigrant entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic face to be successful.

According to Fashakin (2023), the language barrier is the most significant barrier to entrepreneurship and motivation. In his paper, he presented several other barriers as well, such as unequal distribution of opportunities, lack of education, lack of capital, limited experience in information acquisition, documentation, and city population size.

Experts have highlighted culture, morals, and gender norms, specifically gender preconceptions and biases, as the primary obstacles. People consider men and women in different ways, and women are compared to male attributes, which are considered the standard. In business, women also face gender discrimination. Male entrepreneurs receive certain advantages compared to female entrepreneurs. Experts pointed out that women's entrepreneurship is undervalued because of their perceived lack of technical skills and risk-taking ability. It is difficult to find highly technically skilled women entrepreneurs and leaders. They also receive less financial support to start their businesses and innovations (Křížková et al. 2023).

Aaltonen and Akola (2012) state that immigrant entrepreneurs have a significantly lower business survival rate compared to local entrepreneurs. The authors also identify in their research three significant barriers to immigrant entrepreneurship. Firstly, one of the major problems for immigrant entrepreneurs is the lack of funding for start-ups. They have limited access to financial support systems due to a lack of collateral and an unrecognized credit history from their home country. Secondly, in most cases, they are not familiar with the local market and business environment. Thirdly, immigrant entrepreneurs often face challenges related to their immigration and visa status.

After evaluating the above statements, we can see that most scholars have pointed out common barriers that immigrant entrepreneurs frequently face. The most common barriers are language barriers, limited financial access, cultural differences, limited resources for immigrant entrepreneurs, discrimination, and visa issues. To solve some of these problems, immigrant

entrepreneurs need to take action and develop their skills at an individual level, and some of them need government support to create an entrepreneurship-friendly environment for immigrants.

2 Methods and material used

Nowadays, the influx of immigrants is one of the major challenges for the European Union. Every year, a large number of immigrants arrive in Europe from different countries. Recently, a significant influx of Ukrainian refugees has entered the EU due to the war. Many immigrants have diverse skill sets and business experience from their home countries. As a result, some are highly motivated to start their own businesses in the host country. However, launching a new business as an immigrant is not easy. After spending a certain amount of time in the Czech Republic, gaining skills, and understanding the local market, many immigrants aspire to start their own businesses. Achieving success in entrepreneurship, however, is challenging due to limited access to finance, the need for proper training and guidance, and complex regulatory requirements. While many immigrant entrepreneurs manage to establish successful businesses, a significant number struggle, losing their capital and facing severe financial difficulties. Understanding the key challenges, they encounter and learning from the strategies of successful immigrant entrepreneurs can help others navigate the path to success. By identifying the factors that contribute to entrepreneurial success, aspiring migrant business owners can make informed decisions and improve their chances of long-term sustainability. Successful immigrant entrepreneurs not only achieve financial stability but also contribute to their communities by creating jobs and supporting economic growth in the host country. Their success can play a vital role in strengthening both their personal financial standing and the overall economy of the Czech Republic.

There is a significant amount of existing research on migrant entrepreneurship in other European countries. However, only a limited amount of research has been conducted on migrant entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial success in the Czech Republic. Nevertheless, migrant entrepreneurs are an important part of the Czech economy, and their business success can play a crucial role in its growth. This presents a clear research gap to which this study aims to contribute. Moreover, the number of immigrants in the Czech Republic is rapidly increasing. Therefore, this research can support migrant entrepreneurs by helping them understand the key factors behind business success, enabling them to implement or improve these aspects in their ventures. At the same time, it will assist policymakers in taking the necessary steps to support migrant entrepreneurs and enhance their chances of success.

This research is based on secondary data analysis. The Czech Statistical Office's official website (Český statistický úřad), which frequently releases statistical data on immigration, employment, and entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic, served as the primary source of secondary data. The number of foreigners, their employment status, valid trade licenses and regional distribution among districts are among the data used in this study, which spans the period up to December 2023. Additional data sources used in this research include the Czech labor office, UN migration office, case studies, academic publications and corporate reports about migrant entrepreneurship in Czech Republic which serve as a foundation for understanding the key factors influencing their business success. These official data are reliable, comparable over time, and relevant for analyzing national migration and business trends. The data analysis chapter of this paper presents and interprets the collected data through tables and shows the overall development of migrant entrepreneurship in the Czech Republic, including predicted foreign entrepreneurs amount in Czech Republic by 2035. And regression analysis presented the conversion rate of holding trade license and the relation between the immigrant who

registered at labor office and the number of immigrants who are holding valid trade licenses in the Czech Republic. This secondary data analysis supports the later discussion and helps to identify those areas that require further investigation.

3 Secondary data results

This section presents secondary data collected from the Czech Statistical Office, which publishes data up to the end of 2023. This is part of the pre-research activities, and the data provide insight into the current and projected situation of immigrants in the Czech Republic and their entrepreneurial activities. The data are presented to analyze immigration trends.

Table 1: Development of the number of employed foreigners by status in employment

Year	Holding Valid Trade Licenses (Thousand)	Registered at Labor Office (Thousand)
2004	65	108
2005	67	152
2006	66	185
2007	69	240
2008	77	285
2009	88	231
2010	91	215
2011	93	218
2012	91	232
2013	86	246
2014	84	261
2015	84	323
2016	86	383
2017	87	472
2018	90	569
2019	94	622
2000	98	644
2021	102	702
2022	112	793
2023	118	824

Source: Czech statistics office (2024). Retrieved March 7, 2025 from <https://csu.gov.cz/produkty/foreigners-in-the-czech-republic-an1762u80s>

Table 2: Anova testing

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	67,34	3,679	18,304	4,42E-13	59,614	75,07	59,614	75,073
Registered at Labor Office (Thousand)	0,05205	0,0083	6,278	6,41E-06	0,0346	0,069	0,0346	0,0694
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	1	2625,682	2625,682	39,41418	6,41E-06			
Residual	18	1199,118	66,61769					
Total	19	3824,8						
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.828546							
R Square	0.686489							
Adjusted R Square	0.669071							
Standard Error	8.161966							
Observations	20							

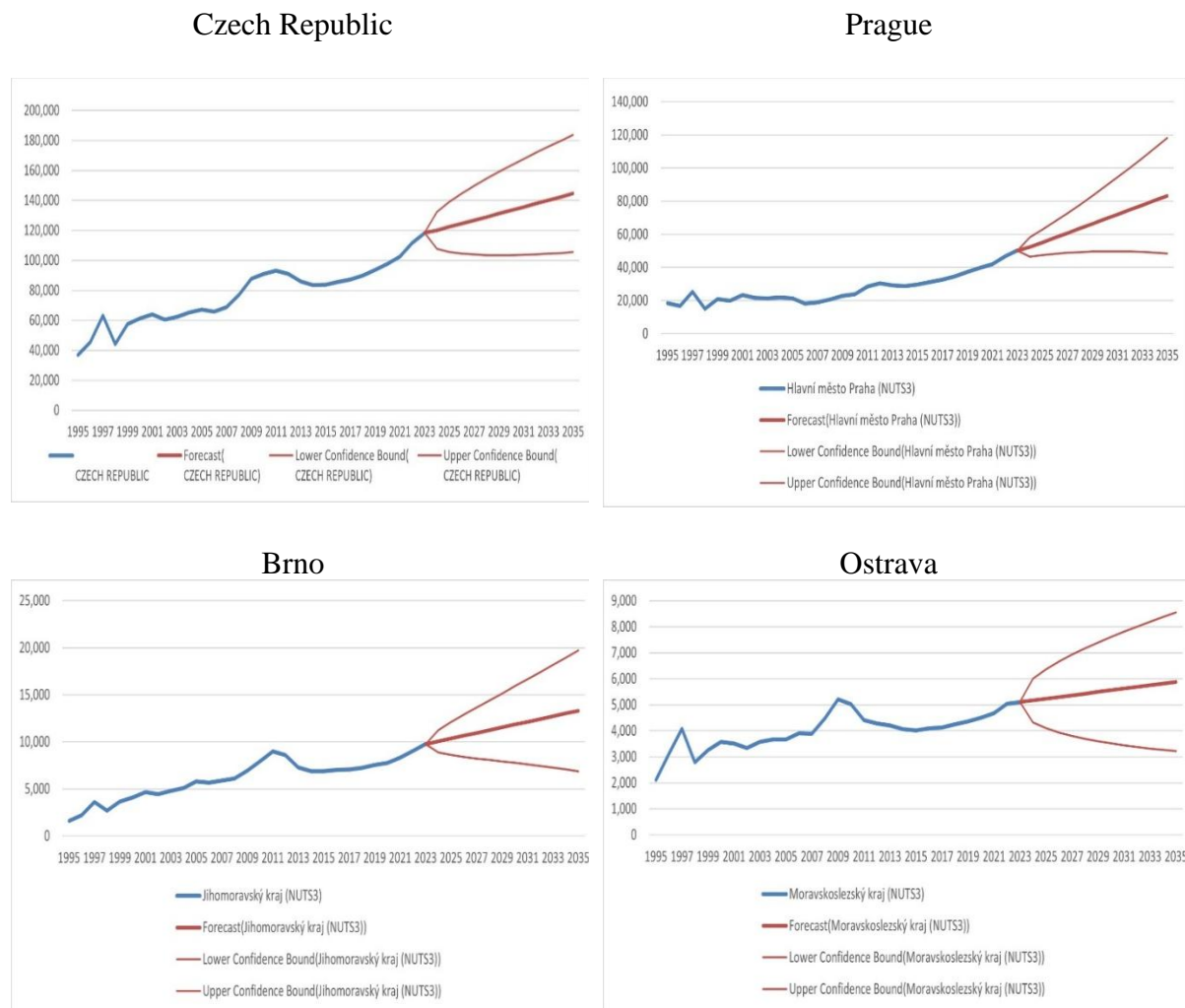
Source: own elaboration

The regression analysis of above data shows a strong and statistically significant relationship between the immigrant who registered at labor office and the number of immigrants who are holding valid trade licenses in the Czech Republic. This output explained approximately 69% of the variation in holding valid trade licenses ($R^2 = 0.686$).

The coefficient for labor registrations was positive and significant where β value is 0.052 ($p < 0.001$), its describe that the increasing number of immigrants in labor office registrations are associated with increasing number of immigrants with hoilding valid trade licenses. Specifically, for every 1000 additional labor office registrations, the number of valid trade licenses holders increases by roughly 50.

The ANOVA results further confirm that the overall regression model is statistically significant ($F = 39.41$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting that labor office registrations contribute considerably to explaining variance in valid trade license holding.

Table 4, which presents data collected from the Ministry of Industry and Trade, shows that the ratio of Czech trade license holders among Czech natural persons is significantly higher than among foreigners. For every 1,000 Czech natural persons, 177 hold a valid trade license, which is more than three times higher than the rate for foreigner.

Figure 2: Current and Projected Number of Foreigners with Valid Licenses by District (2023-2035)

Source: Czech statistics office (2024). Retrieved March 7, 2025 from <https://csu.gov.cz/produkty/foreigners-in-the-czech-republic-an1762u80s>

Figure 2 illustrates the outlook for the whole Czech Republic in terms of foreign entrepreneurs from 1995 to 2023, and foreign immigrant predictions from 2023 to 2035. At the same time, the graph also shows the current and predicted numbers of foreign entrepreneurs for three major cities: Prague, Brno, and Ostrava. For the next 12 years, the predicted results are based on data from the past 18 years, which are presented in Table 5. All of these data were collected from a reliable source of the Czech Statistical Office.

In 2023, the total number of foreigners in the Czech Republic holding a valid trade license is 118,383, and the projected number of such license-holding foreigners may reach 183,692. Prague is their top choice. Most foreign entrepreneurs prefer to start their businesses in Prague. In Prague, the projected number of foreign entrepreneurs by 2035 may reach a maximum of 118,201, which is two-thirds of all foreign entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic.

On the other hand, other major cities such as Brno and Ostrava are not able to attract as many foreign entrepreneurs. Therefore, Prague is becoming highly competitive for new entrepreneurs. In this situation, city authorities need to take some initiatives and provide support

to foreign entrepreneurs to ensure their business success. More research in this area is also needed.

Table 3: Immigrants are more likely to enter as well as exit self-employment

	Entry into self-employment		Exit out of self-employment	
	Foreign-born	Native-born	Foreign-born	Native-born
AUS	11.5	6.9	6.8	5.8
AUT	12.1	8.3	10.1	5.5
BEL	8.8	5.9	4.8	3.5
CHE	30.3	26.1	11.8	6.7
CZE	5.7	6.3	4.3	4.4
DNK	7.9	5.7	8.0	4.4
ESP	9.1	5.8	12.9	11.6
FIN	19.8	16.0	14.1	10.8
FRA	11.2	12.1	17.8	13.5
GBR	17.9	15.7	8.5	7.6
GRC	4.4	1.9	4.8	2.5
ITA	11.3	7.0	6.7	4.8
LUX	21.5	19.9	14.7	11.6
NOR	19.0	12.6	11.7	11.1
PRT	12.5	8.2	8.5	4.9
SVN	3.5	6.3	4.1	4.8
DEU	13.7	9.6	6.5	4.2

Source: OECD (2024). Retrieved November 28, 2025 from https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/international-migration-outlook-2024_50b0353e-en/full-report/migrant-entrepreneurship-in-oecd-countries_72f44494.html#chapter-d1e40076-4677ed18e1republic-an1762u80s

Table 3 shows seventeen OECD countries data regarding entry and exit into self employment both immigrant and local born. Z-scored is calculate to indentify the situation of the Czech Republic and doing an effective and accurate compariasm. In this z-score calculation the Czech Republic is excluded because the Czech Republic will be campared itslef with other OECD countries. So, here number of total countries ($N=16$). Average entry and exit value of those 16 countries

$$\mu_{entry} = 13.40625 \text{ and } \mu_{exit} = 9.4875$$

Standard deviation (σ) for both entry and exit

$$\sigma_{entry} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (X_{i,entry} - \mu_{entry})^2}{N}}$$

Standard deviation (σ) for entry = 6.871

$$\sigma_{exit} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (X_{i,exit} - \mu_{exit})^2}{N}}$$

Standard deviation (σ) for exit = 4.007

z-score for entry and exit

$$z_{entry,CZE} = \frac{X_{CZE,entry} - \mu_{entry}}{\sigma_{entry}} = -1.12 \quad \text{and} \quad z_{exit,CZE} = \frac{X_{CZE,exit} - \mu_{exit}}{\sigma_{exit}} = -1.29$$

The z-score for the Czech Republic's foreign-born entry rate into self-employment is -1.12 . This means the Czech migrant entry rate (5.7%) is 1.12 standard deviations below the OECD average (13.41%). This indicates that migrants in the Czech Republic are substantially less likely to enter self-employment compared to migrants in other OECD countries. A deviation of over one standard deviation reflects a structurally more restrictive or less supportive entrepreneurial environment in the Czech context. Foreign-born individuals are not entering

self-employment as much as in other OECD countries, possibly due to barriers such as administrative hurdles, residency status restrictions, limited access to capital, and language requirements.

On the other hand, the z-score for the Czech Republic's foreign-born exit rate from self-employment is -1.29 . This shows that the Czech exit rate (4.3%) is 1.29 standard deviations below the OECD average (9.49%). This result indicates that once migrant businesses are established in the Czech Republic, they are much less likely to exit compared to migrant businesses elsewhere in Europe. Being more than one standard deviation below the average suggests a higher level of business stability and continuity among migrant entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic, which is positive. When they start their own business, they tend to persist even if they face challenges, showing a strong entrepreneurial attitude. Still, authorities need to support them to ensure their success, making their journey smoother and further reducing the exit rate.

Conclusion

Economic growth of the Czech Republic is strongly supported by migrant entrepreneurs. They support the national economy with their innovative business ideas, creating new jobs for local people and making the market more competitive and effective. A competitive market plays an important role in the economy. Some markets are dominated by migrant entrepreneurs such as the Ukrainian construction industry, Vietnamese community has a significant presence in small retail shops as well as in the wholesale market and restaurant sector. The food and beverage sector is also served by many immigrant entrepreneurs from different countries.

This study confirms several findings from the theoretical framework discussed in the first chapter. Similar to Chrysostome (2010) and Rath and Schutjens (2016), the results show that individual-level factors such as education, work experience, and motivation play a crucial role in entrepreneurial success. In line with David and Terstriep (2024), social and cultural integration is also very important for business performance. However, in Western Europe, social networking and financial access for migrant entrepreneurs are somewhat challenging and the Czech Republic has another distinctive business environment where entrepreneurs' legal status, government rules for immigrant entrepreneurship and limited institutional support have a significant impact on overall entrepreneurial success. Additionally, the results align with Sandoz et al. (2022) and Prenzel et al. (2024), who highlight the beneficial relationship between social inclusion, innovation, and migrant entrepreneurship. However, in the context of the Czech Republic, there are some differences that are clearly visible. Most migrant entrepreneurs in Czech Republic strongly rely on their own community rather than cross-cultural collaboration which can be challenge for their long-term success. Although overall success criteria align with global theories, our findings imply that the Czech context brings specific structural and policy-related obstacles that impact entrepreneurial activities.

The results of the z-score show that in the Czech Republic, the foreign-born self-employment entry rate is lower than the OECD average entry rate, which indicates that there are some barriers for foreign-born individuals to become self-employed in the Czech Republic. However, at the same time, the exit rate from self-employment is also lower than the OECD average, meaning that once they start their careers in self-employment, they tend to be more stable.

Another result from the regression shows that the number of foreigners with a valid trade license and immigrant labor office registrations are highly and statistically significantly correlated. This relationship explains about 69 percent of the variance in international entrepreneurial activity and suggests that labor market participation is a significant driver of entrepreneurial

involvement. It also indicates that the total number of immigrant entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic, especially in Prague, will increase significantly by 2035. These predicted results suggest the need for a more regionally balanced strategy and highlight the increasing competition in large cities.

The main factors influencing migrant entrepreneurs' success in the Czech Republic were identified by this study. The findings can assist business owners in identifying their weaknesses and strengthening those areas to achieve better results. At the same time, the findings provide valuable suggestions for policymakers to design more effective business environments for migrants.

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Table 4: Annual overview of Entrepreneurs and Trade licenses

Date	31.12.2024	31.12.2023	31.12.2022	31.12.2021	31.12.2020	31.12.2019	31.12.2018	31.12.2017	31.12.2016	31.12.2015	31.12.2014
Total valid trade licenses	3947665	3868230	4077526	4018839	3921322	3831792	3743413	3660644	3645647	3556358	3475812
For trades : Concession Trades	342073	327295	327364	314747	300402	287915	274695	262937	248137	232298	217926
: regulated trades	364801	352375	356552	348955	334193	317013	308220	299786	360637	346865	331165
: craft trades	996788	985238	1059460	1049220	1033228	1017046	998126	981317	964650	948230	935552
: free trade	2244003	2203322	2334150	2305917	2253499	2209818	2162372	2116604	2072223	2028965	1991169
Trade licenses for individuals	2946055	2891079	3124694	3091488	3023756	2961390	2904078	2854598	2871189	2819905	2773866
Trade license for legal entities	1001610	977151	952832	927351	897566	870402	839335	806046	774458	736453	701946
Trade license for foreigners	181327	161827	151244	138346	131155	124568	118173	113817	111034	107255	105245
Entrepreneurs in total	2484918	2452846	2645796	2627378	2581680	2545149	2505551	2468334	2433756	2400945	2375752
: natural persons	1927275	1906644	2111733	2106539	2076010	2051614	2028496	2009927	1996337	1982757	1974925
: legal entities	557643	546202	534063	520839	505670	493535	477055	458407	437419	418188	400827
Total foreign entrepreneurs	131738	118383	111693	102422	97803	93781	89843	87228	85628	83862	83569
Number of inhabitants	10897237	10882235	10526937	10682029	10707839	10681161	10637794	10597473	1,1E+07	10546120	10528477
Number of trade licenses per 1000	362,263	355,46	387,34	376,2243	366,2104	358,743	351,89749	345,43	344,826	337,2196	330,13436
Number of entrepreneurs per 1000	228,032	225,4	251,34	245,9624	241,1019	238,2839	235,53295	232,92	230,198	227,6615	225,65011

Source: Ministry of Industry and Trade (2025). Retrieved November 22, 2025 from <https://mpo.gov.cz/en/business/licensed-trades/statistical-data-on-entrepreneurs/>

Table 5: Number of foreigners holding valid licence by dictriect as at 31 December 2023

Year	CZECH REPUBLIC	Forecast (CZECH REPUBLIC)	Lower Confidence Bound (CZECH REPUBLIC)	Upper Confidence Bound (CZECH REPUBLIC)	Hlavní město Praha (NUTS3)	Forecast(H lavní město Praha (NUTS3))	Lower Confidence Bound(Hlav ní město Praha (NUTS3))	Upper Confidence Bound(Hlav ní město Praha (NUTS3))	Jihomoravský kraj (NUTS3)	Forecast(J ihomoravsk ý kraj (NUTS3))	Lower Confidenc e Bound(Jih omoravsk ý kraj (NUTS3))	Upper Confidence Bound(Jih omoravský kraj (NUTS3))	Moravskoslezský kraj (NUTS3)	Forecast(M oravskosle zský kraj (NUTS3))	Lower Confidence Bound(Mor avskoslezsk ý kraj (NUTS3))	Upper Confidence Bound(Mor avskoslezsk ý kraj (NUTS3))
1995	36,996				18,506				1,585				2,109			
1996	45,499				16,704				2,194				3,115			
1997	63,191				25,389				3,599				4,081			
1998	44,201				15,022				2,679				2,781			
1999	57,415				20,999				3,655				3,261			
2000	61,340				19,817				4,073				3,567			
2001	64,000				23,411				4,662				3,516			
2002	60,532				21,585				4,424				3,335			
2003	62,293				21,505				4,792				3,569			
2004	65,219				21,836				5,113				3,676			
2005	67,246				21,405				5,783				3,669			
2006	65,722				18,113				5,662				3,913			
2007	68,785				18,919				5,901				3,892			
2008	77,158				20,682				6,085				4,494			
2009	87,753				22,834				6,922				5,218			
2010	90,983				23,894				7,918				5,020			
2011	93,059				28,437				9,002				4,411			
2012	91,040				30,397				8,588				4,275			
2013	85,887				29,234				7,288				4,208			
2014	83,569				28,771				6,888				4,068			
2015	83,862				29,659				6,895				4,019			
2016	85,628				31,095				7,042				4,090			
2017	87,228				32,600				7,063				4,118			
2018	89,843				34,505				7,228				4,247			
2019	93,781				37,245				7,527				4,358			
2020	97,803				39,652				7,764				4,499			
2021	102,422				42,064				8,317				4,681			
2022	111,693				46,540				9,042				5,040			
2023	118,383	118,383	118,383	118,383	50,263	50,263	50,263	50,263	9,763	9,763	9,763	9,763	5,108	5,108	5,108	5,108
2024		120,089	107,737	132,441		52,329	46,398	58,260		10,058	8,885	11,231		5,170	4,326	6,013
2025		122,315	105,688	138,941		55,145	47,425	62,865		10,353	8,612	12,094		5,235	4,100	6,371
2026		124,541	104,526	144,555		57,962	48,227	67,697		10,649	8,413	12,885		5,300	3,934	6,667
2027		126,767	103,854	149,679		60,778	48,835	72,722		10,944	8,241	13,647		5,366	3,801	6,930
2028		128,992	103,504	154,481		63,595	49,270	77,919		11,240	8,081	14,399		5,431	3,690	7,171
2029		131,218	103,386	159,051		66,411	49,549	83,273		11,536	7,924	15,147		5,496	3,595	7,397
2030		133,444	103,446	163,442		69,228	49,682	88,773		11,831	7,765	15,897		5,561	3,513	7,610
2031		135,670	103,648	167,692		72,044	49,678	94,410		12,127	7,603	16,651		5,626	3,440	7,813
2032		137,896	103,967	171,825		74,860	49,543	100,177		12,422	7,435	17,410		5,692	3,375	8,009
2033		140,122	104,383	175,861		77,677	49,285	106,068		12,718	7,261	18,175		5,757	3,316	8,198
2034		142,348	104,883	179,813		80,493	48,909	112,078		13,014	7,079	18,948		5,822	3,264	8,381
2035		144,574	105,456	183,692		83,310	48,418	118,201		13,309	6,890	19,729		5,887	3,216	8,559

Source: Czech statistics office (2024). Retrieved March 7, 2025 from <https://csu.gov.cz/produkty/foreigners-in-the-czech-republic-an1762u80s>

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