

TOOLKIT
INCLUSIVE PROTECTION:
**THE RIGHTS OF LGBTIQ+
REFUGEES &
ASYLUM SEEKERS
IN THE
CZECH REPUBLIC**



**AFGHANISTAN LGBTIQ+
ORGANISATION (ALO)**

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**Inclusive Protection:
Toolkit on the Rights of LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum
Seekers in the Czech Republic**

**Legal Rights Guide for LGBTIQ+ Refugees & Asylum Seekers in the
Czech Republic**

English

The Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO)

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Purpose of this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to empower LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in the Czech Republic to understand, claim, and exercise their legal rights while addressing the overlapping challenges of racism, xenophobia, and queer-/transphobia within the asylum and integration systems.

It serves as both a community guide and a capacity-building resource for practitioners and institutions, ensuring that support to LGBTIQ+ persons is inclusive, trauma-informed, anti-racist, and rights-based.

Through accessible information, lived experiences, and practical tools, the toolkit seeks to:

1. Strengthen legal awareness among LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers by explaining rights and procedures under Czech and EU law in clear, non-legalistic language.
2. Provide practical guidance on how to recognise, document, and report racism, discrimination, and abuse safely, without risking exposure, retaliation, or harm.
3. Enhance personal safety and wellbeing, offering strategies to navigate daily life challenges related to housing, healthcare, employment, and interactions with state authorities.
4. Promote inclusive and accountable practices among service providers and state institutions by translating community experiences into actionable recommendations.
5. Foster solidarity and resilience within LGBTIQ+ refugee and asylum-seeking communities by highlighting peer-led approaches, mutual support, and collective advocacy.
6. Support training and capacity development through ready-to-use materials that help practitioners adopt gender- and diversity-sensitive approaches to protection work.
7. Contribute to systemic change by centering lived experiences in policy dialogue and promoting collaboration between affected communities, civil society, and state actors.

Ultimately, this toolkit is both a guide for survival and empowerment for LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, and a call to action for all stakeholders to build a more equitable, anti-racist, and inclusive asylum system in the Czech Republic.

Primary Audience

The primary audience for this toolkit is LGBTIQ+ refugees, asylum seekers, and persons with temporary or subsidiary protection in the Czech Republic.

It is written in plain, accessible language, aiming to support individuals who may face barriers due to language, discrimination, or limited access to legal resources.

This toolkit is for those who:

- are navigating the asylum or refugee status determination process.
- have experienced or are at risk of racism, xenophobia, or queer-/transphobia in public institutions, accommodation centres, or daily life.

- need practical information on how to report discrimination, seek support, and understand their rights under Czech and EU law.
- wish to build personal and collective strategies for safety, empowerment, and community care.

The guide recognises that many LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers experience multiple layers of marginalisation, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, and sexual orientations, and therefore takes an intersectional approach throughout.

Secondary Audience

The secondary audience includes those who provide assistance, protection, or advocacy for LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, such as:

- NGO caseworkers, social workers, paralegals, and community advocates, who can use the guide to deliver informed, inclusive, and trauma-aware support.
- Lawyers and legal aid providers, who can refer to the toolkit as a plain-language complement to legal texts, ensuring that clients understand their rights and available procedures.
- Service providers, state institutions, and humanitarian actors, who will benefit from the recommendations in Part II, designed to strengthen anti-racist and inclusive practices.

By addressing both audiences, the toolkit creates a shared foundation of understanding, equipping community members to assert their rights while guiding practitioners and institutions to uphold them responsibly and respectfully.

Scope

This toolkit is divided into two interconnected parts, each designed to meet the needs of distinct yet complementary audiences:

1. Part I For the Community:

Focuses on tackling racism, xenophobia, and queer-/transphobia within the asylum and integration systems. It offers plain-language guidance on asylum procedures, anti-discrimination protections, and access to essential services.

This section helps LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, navigate complex systems safely, and take informed action when facing discrimination.

2. Part II For Stakeholders and Service Providers:

Presents a concise set of actionable recommendations for government institutions, NGOs, and practitioners. It translates the lived experiences of refugees and asylum seekers into practical steps toward anti-racist, inclusive, and accountable service delivery.

Together, the two parts aim to bridge the gap between community empowerment and institutional responsibility, fostering a shared commitment to equality and justice.

The toolkit includes:

- Plain-language explanations of asylum procedures, appeal mechanisms, and protection pathways, with LGBTIQ+-specific considerations (privacy, interpreter bias, credibility assessments).
- Practical tools such as checklists, complaint templates, and “Know Your Rights” cards, available in both English and Czech.
- Czech-specific resources and verified contacts for legal aid, psychosocial support, and emergency assistance.
- Insights derived from 20 anonymised interviews with refugees, asylum seekers, and practitioners, complemented by desk research and contextual analysis of Czech and EU legal frameworks.

The scope of this toolkit extends beyond information-sharing, it seeks to create safer spaces, foster inclusion, and strengthen collaboration between LGBTIQ+ refugees, support organisations, and state institutions.

Core Principles

The development and use of this toolkit are guided by the following shaping its content, tone, and application.

01

TRAUMA INFORMED

Recognises that many LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers have survived trauma linked to conflict, displacement, racism, and identity-based violence. The toolkit promotes safety, choice, empowerment, and trust at every step, ensuring that no information or practice re-traumatises individuals.

02

SURVIVOR & REFUGEE CENTERED

Prioritises the dignity, agency, and lived experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. Their voices are central to the design and recommendations of this toolkit, acknowledging them not only as rights-holders but as experts in their own lives.

03

DO NO HARM

Ensures that all guidance and tools minimise the risks of exposure, retaliation, or harm. The toolkit avoids language, visuals, or examples that could endanger individuals, and encourages practitioners to assess safety implications before sharing or implementing any material.

04

INTERSECTIONAL

Recognises that oppression does not occur in isolation. Experiences of racism, xenophobia, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism intersect, shaping how individuals access protection and justice. The toolkit reflects these overlapping realities and promotes holistic inclusion.

05

EVIDENCE BASED

Draws from the findings of 20 anonymised interviews, complemented by legal and policy research. Each recommendation is grounded in documented experiences and contextual realities from the Czech Republic, ensuring both credibility and relevance.

06

ACCESSIBLE LANGUAGE

Use plain, inclusive, and gender-sensitive language to ensure the content can be understood by individuals with different levels of education, literacy, or familiarity with legal systems. Legal terminology is explained clearly, and translations into Czech maintain accuracy and accessibility.

Writing Principles for the Toolkit

The language and tone of this toolkit have been carefully developed to ensure that all information is accessible, inclusive, and safe for its readers, particularly LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers who may not be familiar with legal or bureaucratic terms. These principles guide how the toolkit was written and presented, ensuring that every section reflects the values of respect, clarity, and dignity. They also inform how the material should be adapted, translated, and shared with different audiences.

01

PLAIN LANGUAGE

The text uses short, clear sentences and explains legal or technical terms in simple words. Complex ideas are broken down into direct, easy-to-follow guidance so that everyone, regardless of education level or legal knowledge, can understand their rights.

02

INCLUSIVE & AFFIRMING LANGUAGE

The toolkit consistently uses “LGBTIQ+” and refers to “non-binary individuals” to ensure inclusivity. Language choices reflect diversity and affirm people’s identities without assumptions or stereotypes.

03

PRIVACY & SAFETY IN LANGUAGE

All examples, quotes, and case studies are anonymised to protect privacy. Information that could expose someone’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or legal status is omitted or altered with consent.

04

TONE & SENSITIVITY

The content maintains a supportive and empowering tone. Topics that may cause distress, such as violence or detention, are introduced with content or trigger notes, allowing readers to engage at their own pace.

05

TRANSLATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The toolkit will be available in English and Czech, ensuring consistency in meaning and tone across languages. Special attention is given to cultural nuances, and translations will be reviewed with community input to ensure clarity and resonance.

Ethics And Safeguarding

This toolkit was developed with a strong commitment to ethical integrity, participant safety, and confidentiality. Every effort has been made to protect the identities, dignity, and wellbeing of those whose experiences have informed this work.

1. Anonymity and Confidentiality

All interviews conducted for this toolkit have been fully anonymised. Identifying details such as names, locations, and personal circumstances have been changed or omitted to ensure that no individual can be recognised. When case examples or quotes are used, they appear with pseudonyms and only with the participant's consent.

2. Informed Consent

Each participant was clearly informed of the purpose of the research and how their information might be used. Explicit consent was obtained for any quotes or summaries appearing in the toolkit. A consent log is securely maintained and referenced in Annex B for accountability purposes.

3. Do No Harm Principle

The content was written and reviewed to avoid any information that could put individuals or communities at risk. All examples are framed in a way that promotes dignity and avoids re-traumatisation or exposure.

4. Safety-Sensitive Information

Sections containing material that may be emotionally or psychologically triggering are clearly flagged with a symbol. Readers and trainers are encouraged to approach such content with care, and to pause or seek support if needed.

5. Data Protection and Storage

All research materials and interview notes are stored securely and accessed only by authorised project members. No personal data has been shared outside the project team.

This ethical framework reflects the project's core belief that the protection of participants is inseparable from the pursuit of justice and inclusion. Every word in this toolkit has been shaped by that commitment.

Methodology (Data Source)

This toolkit is grounded in first-hand experiences and evidence-based analysis. It combines insights from community members and practitioners to ensure that every recommendation reflects lived realities within the Czech asylum and integration systems.

1. Data Collection

The content draws on 20 semi-structured interviews conducted in and for the Czech Republic. Participants included LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum, as well as legal practitioners, NGO workers, and service providers who support them. This diversity of voices allowed for a balanced understanding of both community challenges and institutional perspectives.

2. Thematic Analysis

The interviews were analysed thematically to identify recurring barriers, enablers, and recommendations. Themes included access to justice, experiences of racism and xenophobia, interpreter bias, safety in accommodation centres, healthcare access, and legal protection gaps. These findings form the foundation of the toolkit's structure, informing both Part I (Community Guidance) and Part II (Stakeholder Recommendations).

3. Data Integrity and Anonymisation

All interview data were handled in accordance with ethical research standards. Personal identifiers were removed or altered, and pseudonyms were used for illustrative quotes. Every quotation has been lightly edited for clarity and readability, without altering meaning or intent.

4. Triangulation with Secondary Sources

In addition to interview data, the toolkit draws on desk research, including Czech and EU legal frameworks, UNHCR guidance, NGO reports, and previous studies on LGBTIQ+ asylum experiences. This ensures that findings are contextually accurate and aligned with existing legal standards.

5. Participatory Validation

Preliminary findings were discussed informally with members of the LGBTIQ+ refugee community and local practitioners to verify accuracy and relevance. Their feedback informed revisions to ensure that the toolkit truly reflects community realities and priorities.

6. Limitations

The toolkit represents a snapshot in time, based on interviews and policy conditions as of 2025. While efforts were made to ensure accuracy, laws and administrative procedures may change. Users are encouraged to verify key procedural details and seek updated information from legal aid providers.

Disclaimers

This guide is informational and educational in nature. It does not constitute legal advice and should not replace consultation with a qualified lawyer or authorised legal aid organisation. The content is based on the best available data at the time of publication, but laws, administrative procedures, and institutional practices may change. Users are encouraged to seek up-to-date information before making any legal or procedural decisions.

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Part I

For the Community

1. INTRODUCTION

Tackling Racism & How to Use This Guide

This guide is for LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum in the Czech Republic who may experience racism, xenophobia, or discrimination, in reception centres, public spaces, schools, workplaces, or during the asylum process.

It was written to help you understand your rights, stay safe, and act if you face racism or unfair treatment. The guide uses plain language, is available in English and Czech, and is based on 20 anonymised interviews with community members and practitioners.

Your Privacy and Safety

Your privacy and safety always come first. You never have to share details about your sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics unless you choose to.

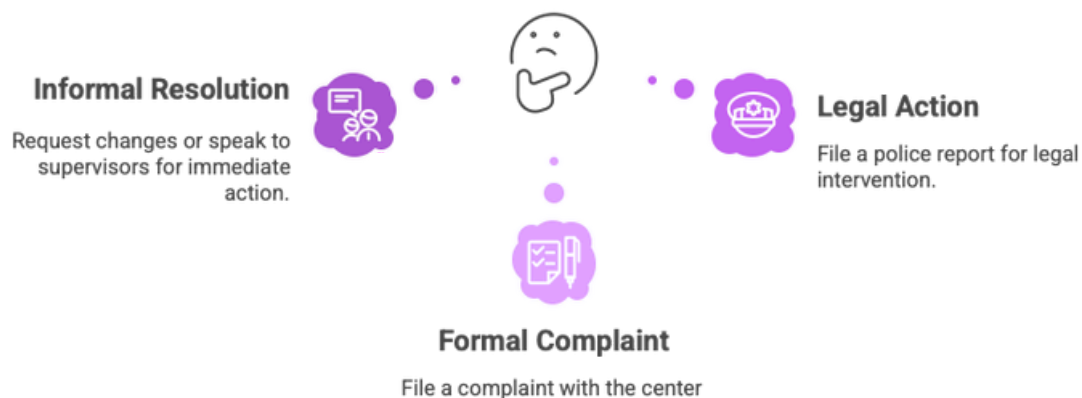
If you feel unsafe or unsure:

- Speak first with a trusted community organisation or lawyer before taking action.
- Ask officials and service providers to use your chosen name and pronouns.
- Request that personal information remain confidential.
- If your privacy is breached, write down what happened and reach out for support (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2).

If You Face Racism or Discrimination

Here's a quick plan you can follow:

1. Get safe. Leave the situation if possible.
2. Write it down. Note the date, time, place, what happened, and who was involved.
3. Keep evidence. Save photos, screenshots, or messages.
4. Tell someone you trust. A friend, NGO, or community worker can guide you.
5. Get support. Contact an LGBTIQ+ -friendly organisation or legal aid provider (see Sections 3 and 5).
6. Choose your next step:



How To Use This Guide

You can read the whole guide or go directly to the part you need:

- Section 2: explains racism and discrimination with real examples and Czech/EU protections.
- Section 3: lists your rights and where to get help.
- Section 4: focuses on wellbeing and community care.
- Section 5: includes practical tools, complaint templates, checklists, and *"Know Your Rights"* cards.

Sections that discuss sensitive topics are marked with a symbol so you can pause or seek support if needed.

How This Guide Was Made

This guide was created through 20 anonymised interviews with LGBTIQ+ refugees, people seeking asylum, and practitioners in the Czech Republic.

Their stories and experiences shaped every section.

Quotes appear under pseudonyms and only with consent.

2. UNDERSTANDING RACISM & DISCRIMINATION (Czech Context)

Racism and discrimination can take many forms, some are open and visible, while others are subtle or hidden within official systems. Understanding how they appear and what your rights are is the first step toward protecting yourself and seeking justice.

What Racism and Discrimination Mean

- Racism is when someone is treated unfairly or with hostility because of their skin colour, ethnicity, nationality, or perceived origin.
- Discrimination happens when a person or institution treats someone differently and unfairly because of who they are. For example, because of their gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or background.
- Xenophobia refers to fear or hatred of foreigners or people seen as outsiders.
- Intersectional discrimination means that more than one form of bias happens at once. For example, being treated badly because you are both Black and Queer, or because you are a trans person from another country.

All these forms of discrimination are prohibited by Czech and European law. You have the right to live with dignity and equality, free from harassment or abuse.

Your Legal Protections

The Czech Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, the Anti-Discrimination Act (No. 198/2009 Coll.), and EU equality directives guarantee equal treatment for everyone, regardless of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other personal characteristics.

These laws protect you:

- In public spaces (transport, shops, housing, services).
- In employment and education.
- During asylum and migration procedures.
- When accessing healthcare, police, or social services.

If someone, including an official, violates these rights, it may constitute unlawful discrimination or hate-motivated conduct, which can be challenged through complaints, appeals, or legal proceedings.

Racism and Discrimination in the Asylum System

You have the right to fair and equal treatment throughout the asylum process. Below is an overview of how the system works and where discrimination might appear.

Key Authorities and Actors

- Ministry of the Interior (Department for Asylum and Migration Policy) – responsible for registering applications, interviews, and issuing decisions.
- Reception and accommodation centres – where many people stay while their application is processed.
- Regional courts and the Supreme Administrative Court – handle appeals if your asylum request is denied.
- Legal aid providers and NGOs – support you with free legal advice, complaints, and interpretation.

Main Steps in the Process

1. Intent to Apply – You can express your intention to apply for international protection (asylum) to the police or at a reception centre.
2. Registration – Officials record your personal details and reasons for seeking protection.
3. Reception and Accommodation – You may be placed in a reception or residential facility while your claim is processed.
4. Interviews – You will have one or more interviews to explain your reasons for seeking asylum.
5. Decision – The Ministry decides whether to grant or deny protection.
6. Appeals – If refused, you can appeal the decision to the regional court within a legal deadline.

Key Documents

Keep safe copies of:

- Your asylum application or registration form.
- Interview records (you can request a copy in a language you understand).
- The decision letter from the Ministry of the Interior.
- Any appeal submission or lawyer correspondence.

Timelines

- The initial decision usually takes up to six months, but complex cases can take longer.
- Appeals must be filed quickly, usually within 15 days of receiving the decision.
- Always confirm the exact deadline with your lawyer or legal aid provider, as missing it can close your case.

Where LGBTIQ+ Issues Commonly Arise

Racism and discrimination can combine with bias related to sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. These situations may include:

- **Credibility Assessments:** Officials doubting someone's story because of stereotypes about what an LGBTIQ+ person *"should look like"* or how they *"should behave"*.
- **Privacy in Reception Centres:** Being forced to share accommodation with people who are hostile toward LGBTIQ+ individuals or not being provided with safe alternatives.
- **Interpreter Bias:** Interpreters expressing personal opinions, mocking, or refusing to use correct names or pronouns.
- **Detention and Search Procedures:** Trans and non-binary people being placed in inappropriate facilities or subjected to invasive questioning.
- **Medical and Psychological Services:** Denial of care or disrespect based on identity.

If any of these happen to you, you have the right to report them (see Section 3.1). You also have the right to privacy, dignity, and safety in all procedures.

Everyday Racism Beyond the Asylum Process

Many LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum also report racism or exclusion in daily life, such as:

- Being followed or insulted in public.
- Being refused housing or employment because of nationality or skin colour.
- Facing verbal abuse in healthcare settings or government offices.
- Being ignored or treated with suspicion when reporting a crime.

Even when incidents feel *"small"*, they matter.

Racism and discrimination are never acceptable.

Support organisations can help you report, document, and challenge such cases safely (see Section 3).

Why Understanding This Matters

Recognising discrimination helps you name what is happening, understand that it is not your fault, and know that the law is on your side. This knowledge can protect you, and by sharing your experiences with trusted organisations, you also help improve protection for others.

2.1 Applied Analysis: What We Learned

This section draws on 20 anonymised interviews with LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum in the Czech Republic. It shows how racism, xenophobia, and queer- or trans-related bias appear in daily life and within official procedures, and what can be done in response.

Each theme below combines community experiences with practical guidance for action.

Theme	Common Situations and Challenges	Why it matters / What you can do
Institutional bias & bureaucratic harm	People reported misgendering, disbelief, intrusive or stereotyping questions, and poor privacy during interviews. Some case notes included sensitive details; some officers/interpreters lacked SOGIESC knowledge. Long waits, repeat interviews, and rejections were common.	You have the right to respectful treatment, privacy, and accurate interpretation. You can request a different interpreter/interviewer, ask that your name/pronouns be used consistently, and note / report breaches (see 3.1). Legal aid can help challenge unfair decisions and wording in files.
Interpreter and language barriers	Interpreters sometimes cut or distort statements, refuse correct pronouns, or are assigned in the wrong language. Phone/email access in healthcare is harder when speaking a non-Czech language.	You can request a change of interpreter and ask for language/gender preferences where feasible. Keep a record of issues (date/time/what happened). If refused, seek NGO/legal aid to file a complaint or have the record corrected (see 3.1).
Unsafe reception & accommodation conditions	People were placed with hostile co-nationals; some facilities tolerated alcohol/violence or ignored harassment. Requests for safer rooms or transfers were sometimes dismissed.	You can request relocation or safer placement citing specific risks. If ignored, contact ombudsman/ institutions/NGOs to lodge complaints. Keep incident notes and evidence (see 3.1 & 5 templates).

Theme	Common Situations and Challenges	Why it matters / What you can do
Everyday racism & xenophobia	Outside camps, people faced housing refusals, workplace mockery or bullying, and verbal abuse in public (accent/skin colour/language). Temporary or foreign documents were used as excuses to deny housing.	Discrimination is unlawful. Keep records (messages, listings, names, dates). Legal aid can help file anti-discrimination complaints or pursue mediation. For workplace issues, consider internal HR routes and NGO support (see 3.3).
Documentation & recognition gaps	Binary forms/databases; ID mismatches(name/gender markers) expose private info and block services. Delays in travel/identity documents hinder work and study. Temporary protection often misses SOGIESC needs.	Carry copies of documents; ask for sensitive info to be handled confidentially. NGOs can support letters for name/pronoun use, file corrections, or advocate for gender-appropriate placement. Keep proof of delays when they cause harm (see 3.2 & 3.4).
Healthcare & mental-health access barriers	Long waits, language barriers, providers declining foreign insurance, and limited LGBTIQ+ - affirming care. Some learned they get better responses when speaking Czech.	Ask for language support; bring a trusted supporter if safe. Keep a symptom/appointment log. If refused or mistreated, request the reason in writing and seek legal/NGO help (see 3.4).
Integration hurdles & economic precarity	Short/ineffective language courses; employment discrimination; fear of being outcast at work; unstable housing.	Seek longer, practical language options(community classes, tandems). Document job/housing bias. Use worker rights info and NGO referrals (see 3.3).
Community, resilience & safe spaces	Queer networks, student groups, and NGOs provide lawyers, safe housing, translation, and belonging. Safe venues and Pride events support healing. Some criticized large NGOs for limited direct aid.	Build peer networks; use trusted NGOs for casework and psychosocial support. See Section 4 for wellbeing strategies and Section 5 for contacts/tools.

Edge notes:

Experiences vary. Some participants reported respectful officers, helpful housing support, and strong community welcome. These positive responses show what good practice looks like and can be adopted as standards or best practices.

What this means for you (quick takeaways):

- Bias and racism are not your fault and are challengeable under Czech/EU law.
- You can request different staff/interpreters, safer housing, and privacy safeguards.
- Keep notes and evidence. Templates and step-by-step reporting are in Section 3.1–3.4 and 5.
- You are not alone. NGOs and peer networks can stand with you.

This section will explain authorities involved, main steps, key documents, timelines, and where SOGIESC considerations commonly arise. (Detailed drafting to follow.)

Key actors:

- Ministry of Interior (asylum authority)
- Reception centres
- Courts (for appeals)
- Legal aid organisations

Timelines:

- Typical time frames
- Note statutory deadlines
- Urgent appeal windows.

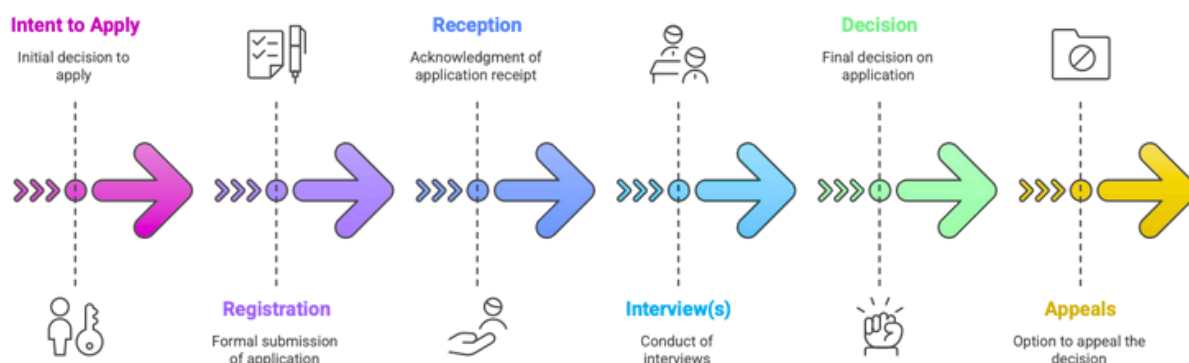
Documents:

- Application/registration
- Interview record
- Decisions
- Appeal submissions

Where LGBTIQ+ issues arise:

- Credibility assessments
- Privacy in reception
- Interpreter bias
- Detention vulnerabilities.

Main Steps



3. YOUR RIGHT AT EVERY STAGE

3.1 Arrival and Registration

When you first arrive in the Czech Republic and say that you need protection, you begin the asylum (international protection) process.

This stage is about registering your claim, your first and most important opportunity to make your situation known safely and clearly.

Your Rights at Arrival

You have the right to:

- Apply for international protection (asylum or subsidiary protection).
- Be treated with dignity, no one can refuse to register your claim or threaten you for asking.
- Use an interpreter if you do not speak Czech. The interpreter should speak your language fluently and translate what you say accurately.
- Receive information in a language you understand about your rights, duties, and the next steps in the asylum process.
- Keep your personal data confidential, including your sexual orientation, gender identity / expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC).
- Ask for privacy if you feel unsafe speaking in front of certain people (for example, a co-national interpreter).
- Contact legal aid or an NGO for advice at any stage.

At arrival, you will:

1. *Express your intent to apply*
You can do this at the border, at the airport, or in person at a reception centre (e.g. Zastávka).
2. *Registration interview*
Officials take your basic details (name, nationality, date of birth). This is not your full asylum interview yet.
3. *Fingerprints and photo*
This is standard and used for identification in the EU system (Eurodac).
4. *Health check and security screening*
Some centres carry out basic medical checks and initial accommodation placement.
5. *Information session*
You should receive a leaflet or oral explanation of your rights in a language you understand.
6. *Temporary document*
You'll receive an official confirmation that you applied for international protection. Keep this document safe, it proves your legal status.

Important for LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- You do not have to reveal your sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status at registration if it feels unsafe. You can share it later with your lawyer or a trusted NGO or during your asylum interview.
- If the interpreter or officer behaves disrespectfully, note the date, time, location, and names (if visible). You can request a new interpreter or report the issue later.
- If you fear being housed with people from your country of origin, mention this early and ask for a different accommodation for safety reasons.

Action Checklist: What to Bring, Ask, and Document

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES / TIPS
DOCUMENT	Passport or ID (if safe to carry), birth/marriage certificate (optional), education or work papers, any proof of persecution (letters, photos, court documents). Keep originals and copies separately.
CONTACTS	Save phone numbers of legal aid NGOs (see Section 5). Keep an emergency contact written on paper.
ASK FOR	Interpreter in your preferred language and gender (if relevant). Written information in a language you understand. A copy of your registration document.
NOTE DOWN	Dates, names of staff or interpreters, any problems or refusals. Keep a small notebook or use your phone (if permitted).
SAFETY	If placed in shared housing or camp, request a safer space if you face harassment.
LEGAL AID	Contact an NGO or lawyer as soon as possible , they can help you through the interview and appeal process.

Key Takeaways

- You have a legal right to apply for protection and to receive interpretation and information in your language.
- It is your choice when to disclose details about your sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Keep copies and notes from your first day. They can help you later if there are errors or discrimination.
- Ask questions. you have the right to understand every step of the process.

3.2 Reception/Accommodation Centres

After registration, you may be sent to a reception or accommodation centre while your application for international protection is processed. These centres are managed by the Ministry of the Interior or its partners and provide housing, meals, and basic services. Some people stay for only a few days; others for several months. This section explains your rights, what to expect, and how to stay safe if you face racism, discrimination, or hostility inside a centre.

Your Rights in Reception or Accommodation Centres

You have the right to:

- Safe and dignified living conditions.
- Freedom from harassment, racism, and homophobic or transphobic behaviour.
- Privacy and confidentiality regarding your identity and personal information.
- Request a transfer if you face threats or unsafe conditions.
- Access to basic healthcare, food, and hygiene facilities.
- Communicate with NGOs, lawyers, and support services.
- Information in a language you understand.

Common Situations and Challenges

Many residents describe both positive and difficult experiences.

Some staff members are supportive, but others may lack awareness of LGBTIQ+ and anti-racism issues.

Common problems include:

- Being housed with co-nationals who hold homophobic or transphobic attitudes.
- Verbal abuse or intimidation from other residents.
- Lack of privacy in shared rooms or bathrooms.
- Limited understanding by staff when safety concerns are reported.
- Unequal treatment (e.g., ignoring certain complaints, mocking accents, or denying supplies).

Special Considerations for LGBTIQ+ Residents

- You can request separate accommodation if you face bullying, harassment, or threats.
- You can ask for a room with people you feel safe with, even if they are not from your nationality.

- Staff must treat your gender identity and expression with respect; you can request to be addressed by your chosen name and pronouns.
- Information about your sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status is confidential and should never be shared without your consent.
- If an interpreter or staff member behaves abusively, write down details immediately (date, time, what happened, any witnesses).
- You can report serious incidents to your lawyer, NGO, or the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman).

Action Checklist: Living Safely in a Centre

If this happens...	What you can do
You feel unsafe or are harassed by residents	Go to the social worker or manager on duty. Ask for a transfer or room change. Keep a record. Contact an NGO for follow-up.
Staff ignore your complaint	Ask for their name or position. Note the date and time. Contact your lawyer or NGO, they can raise it formally.
You are denied food, medical care, or supplies	Request the reason in writing. NGOs can help you escalate the issue to the Ministry or Ombudsman.
Your privacy is breached (outing, mockery, exposure of personal details)	Record what was said/done. Report to your NGO/legal aid. You can ask that the person be replaced or disciplined.
You feel isolated or anxious	Reach out to NGOs providing psychosocial support or to other trusted LGBTIQ+ residents. Peer support saves lives.

Key Takeaways

- You do not lose your dignity or rights by living in a centre.
- Every facility must provide safe conditions and equal treatment.
- Racism, harassment, or neglect by staff or residents can be reported and challenged.
- If you move to another centre, take your documents and notes with you, they help maintain continuity.

3.3 Interviews & Interpretation (Rights, Safety & Privacy)

After registration, you will be invited to one or more asylum interviews. This is your chance to explain why you left your country and why you need protection. These interviews can feel stressful, but knowing your rights helps you stay safe and clear.

Your Rights During the Interview

You have the right to:

- A qualified interpreter in a language you understand.
- Respectful and non-judgmental treatment by officers and interpreters.
- Ask for privacy – interviews should happen in a safe, confidential space.
- Request an interviewer or interpreter of a specific gender, if that helps you feel safe.
- Have your story recorded accurately; you can ask to correct mistakes before signing the record.
- Refuse to answer questions that are humiliating, irrelevant, or unsafe.
- Legal representation or NGO accompaniment if available.

What happens

1. *Scheduling*
You'll receive an invitation letter in camp. Always keep the appointment slip.
2. *Interview setting*
Usually one officer, one interpreter, and you. Sometimes a lawyer or NGO worker can join with permission.
3. *Questions*
Expect to explain your background, experiences of risk, and why you can't return home. Some questions may feel personal, you can ask for a short break at any time. Make sure that you mention everything that could be important in deciding your case. Adding important events later can influence the credibility of your story.
4. *Recording & signature*
Everything is typed in Czech. You can request that it be read back or translated before you sign.
5. *Confidentiality*
Information you share cannot be sent to your country of origin or to anyone outside the procedure.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Some applicants are asked intrusive or stereotype-based questions (*"Why don't you look gay?" "Why didn't you hide better?"*)
- Interpreters sometimes shorten or change words.
- Officers may not understand LGBTIQ+ terms.
- Emotional exhaustion can make it hard to speak clearly.

Special Considerations for LGBTIQ+ Applicants

- You never have to *“prove” your identity* through photos, videos, or personal details - Your word and credible narrative are enough.
- If the interpreter misgenders you, refuses correct pronouns, or laughs, stop the interview and ask to change interpreter.
- If you fear being outed to co-nationals, explain this to the officer and request a different interpreter or a remote session.

Action Checklist:

Stage	What To Do
Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review your story with a trusted NGO or lawyer.• Prepare a short timeline of main events.• Bring your registration paper, ID copy, and any supporting evidence.• Note your interpreter / language preferences in advance.
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask for breaks if tired or emotional.• Speak slowly; make sure the interpreter translates fully.• If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be repeated.• Keep calm, the interview is not an argument.
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask to review or have the record read back in your language.• Check that your answers are correctly written.• Keep your copy of the signed transcript.• Write down how you felt, the names, date, and any problems, this helps if you need to report bias later.• Ask for additional time for providing further evidence.

Key Takeaways

- The interview is your story, in your own words, you control what to share and how.
- You have the right to an interpreter, respectful treatment, and corrections to your record.
- Bias and harassment are not acceptable, if they happen, report them to your lawyer or NGO.
- Keeping notes and copies of every document protects you later in the process.

3.4 Decisions, Appeals & Deadlines

After your interview, the Ministry of the Interior decides whether to grant international protection. If you disagree, you have the right to appeal, but deadlines are short, so acting quickly is essential.

Your Rights

- To receive a written decision in a language you understand (or with translation).
- To appeal within the legal time limit (usually 15 days).
- To request that the appeal has “suspensive effect” , meaning you cannot be deported until it is resolved.
- To receive free legal aid if you cannot afford a lawyer.

Action Checklist

Stage	What To Do
When you receive a decision	Don't panic , note the exact date you received it. Contact your lawyer or NGO immediately. Ask if the appeal has suspensive effect (so you can remain in Czechia during the appeal).
If Appealing	Update your statement and gather any new evidence or letters. Make sure your lawyer submits before the deadline and provides written confirmation of submission.
To Keep	Copies of all decisions, appeal submissions, and correspondence together in one envelope or folder. Label each document with the date received.

Key Takeaways

- Missing the appeal deadline may close your case permanently.
- Always check whether your appeal has suspensive effect before the deadline expires.
- NGOs and legal aid providers can help you file safely and on time.

3.5 Detention & Alternatives

Detention can happen if authorities believe someone might leave the country before a decision or has unclear identity documents. It should always be a last resort, not a routine step.

Your Rights

- To know why you are detained, in a language you understand.
- To contact a lawyer, family, or NGO.
- To challenge detention in court within 7 days.
- To access medical and psychological care.
- To request alternatives to detention, such as regular check-ins, address registration, or deposit guarantees.

Action Checklist

If Detained	Ask for your detention order in writing, in a language you understand. Contact legal aid or an NGO immediately. Inform them of your exact location.
Request	Alternatives to detention, such as reporting duties, community placement, or open centres. If you feel unsafe, ask for a safer or separate space.
To Keep	Copies of all forms, requests, and complaints. Note dates, officer names, and times of key interactions. This record can support your case later.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Some people are detained without fully understanding the reason.
- Facilities can be isolating, especially for queer and trans residents who may face additional harassment or mockery.
- Phone or internet access can be limited, making it hard to contact lawyers or NGOs.

Key Takeaways

- Detention is not punishment; you have the right to be treated with dignity.
- You have the right to challenge detention and to stay in contact with the outside world.
- Always ask for alternatives, they are your legal right under Czech and EU law.

3.6 Work, Education, & Housing

Once registered, you may gain access to work, study, or housing programs depending on your legal status. These areas are essential for rebuilding safety, dignity, and independence, but many LGBTIQ+ refugees still face discrimination and exclusion.

Your Rights

- To work after 6 months from your asylum application (or sooner if you receive your positive decision).
- To ensure equal treatment in pay, conditions, and workplace safety.
- To attend education and language courses.
- To rent accommodation without discrimination based on nationality, gender, or sexual orientation.

Action Checklist

If Detained	Ask for your detention order in writing, in a language you understand. Contact legal aid or an NGO immediately. Inform them of your exact location.
Request	Alternatives to detention, such as reporting duties, community placement, or open centres. If you feel unsafe, ask for a safer or separate space.
To Keep	Copies of all forms, requests, and complaints. Note dates, officer names, and times of key interactions. This record can support your case later.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Many employers refuse applicants with foreign or temporary documents.
- Landlords often reject asylum seekers or demand higher deposits.
- Some schools lack translation or inclusion support, limiting access for refugee children and youth.

Key Takeaways

- Discrimination in work, housing, or education is illegal.
- You have the same rights to safety, fairness, and opportunity as anyone living in Czechia.
- NGOs can help you negotiate, report abuse, or find alternatives when discrimination occurs.

3.7 Healthcare & Mental Health

Access to healthcare is a basic human right. As an asylum seeker or refugee, you are entitled to medical treatment, emergency care, and mental health support regardless of status or identity.

Your Rights

- To primary and emergency healthcare, including hospital treatment.
- To mental health support (psychologists, counsellors).
- To confidential HIV and sexual health services.
- To gender-affirming and respectful care (if applicable).
- To translation or interpretation during medical visits.

Action Checklist

Status	What To DO
When Seeking Care	Bring your asylum or insurance card and ask for an interpreter if needed.
If Refused	Ask for the reason in writing. Contact NGOs that partner with clinics or lawyers who can intervene.
Mental Health	NGOs offer free or low-cost counselling in several languages. Don't wait until crisis , early help supports recovery.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Some clinics reject asylum cards or foreign insurance.
- Language barriers cause misunderstandings or misdiagnosis.
- Queer and trans people report judgmental or invasive comments from providers.
- Mental health services are often limited, costly, or not trauma-informed.

Key Takeaways

- Healthcare is your right, not charity.
- You can request confidentiality and respectful treatment at all times.
- Emotional and mental wellbeing are essential parts of protection, asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

4. LGBTIQ+ SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

4.1 SOGIESC-Based Claims

As an LGBTIQ+ person, you may apply for asylum based on persecution related to your sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC). These are recognised grounds for protection under both Czech asylum law. Persecution can include violence, arrest, harassment, family rejection, forced marriage, blackmail, “conversion” attempts, or laws criminalising same-sex relations or gender diversity.

You do not need to have been physically attacked, threats, discrimination, and fear of exposure may also qualify as persecution.

Your Rights

- You have the right to apply for asylum based on your SOGIESC.
- You have the right to be believed without needing to conform to stereotypes about how an LGBTIQ+ person “should” act or look.
- You can choose when and how to share your SOGIESC-related experiences.
- Authorities must assess your claim individually, without assumptions or prejudice.
- You can request that your interview and documents remain confidential.

Evidence Examples

You do not need “*proof*” of your identity, but you can include supporting evidence if you wish. The most important evidence is your own testimony, your story, told in your words.

Other possible supporting materials include:

- Community statements (letters from NGOs, LGBTIQ+ groups, or trusted individuals).
- Digital traces, messages, photos, or social media posts, *only if safe to share*.
- Official documents (police reports, medical notes, court files) if you have them.
- Expert reports or NGO confirmations about the situation for LGBTIQ+ people in your country of origin.



Safety Note: Never hand over phones or private accounts without legal advice. Digital files can expose others or be misunderstood. If unsafe, you can describe your experiences verbally.

Should I share my phone or private accounts?

Share with Legal Advice
Ensures protection and understanding of implications



Describe Verbally
Avoids digital exposure and potential misuse

Action Checklist

Status	What To DO
Before The Interview	Think about which experiences you want to share. Write a timeline. Practice telling your story safely with an NGO or lawyer.
During The Interview	Focus on key moments that show <i>why you cannot return safely</i> . You can refuse humiliating or irrelevant questions.
After the Interview	Check that your statement is recorded accurately. Ask for a copy of your interview record if possible. Keep contact with your lawyer or NGO for updates.

Key Takeaways

- Your identity and experiences are valid evidence; you do not need to perform or prove to them anything.
- Safety comes first, share only what you are comfortable with.
- Keep in touch with trusted NGOs or lawyers for advice on presenting SOGIESC-related information.

4.2 Privacy, Data Protection & Confidentiality

Your identity and private information deserve full protection throughout the asylum process. You decide when, where, and to whom to disclose details about your SOGIESC.

Your Rights

- To keep your sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or sex characteristics confidential.
- To request that information about you not be shared with interpreters, staff, or other residents.
- To ask that your chosen name and pronouns be used in all records.
- To be informed if your data are stored, shared, or transferred to another authority.
- To report privacy breaches and request correction or removal of sensitive information.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Some applicants reported that interpreters or staff disclosed personal details to others.
- Case notes sometimes contained irrelevant information about sexual orientation or family relations.
- People were called by dead names or wrong pronouns even after corrections.

Action Checklist

Status	What To DO
If personal details are shared without consent	Note the date, time, and who was involved. Inform your lawyer or NGO immediately. Ask for the incident to be logged as a privacy breach.
If forms use the wrong name/gender	Politely request correction; Provide written confirmation of your chosen name/pronouns. Keep copies.
If unsure about data use	Ask officials to explain who can access your file and for what reason. You are entitled to this information.

Key Takeaways

- You own your story. No one may disclose your identity without consent.
- Privacy and dignity are legal rights, not favours.
- Report breaches promptly — this helps build accountability.

4.3 Safer Interactions with Officials & Interpreters

Respectful communication is the foundation of a fair process. You have the right to be treated with dignity by all officials, interpreters, and staff.

Your Rights

- To request a different interviewer or interpreter if you feel unsafe or disrespected.
- To have your interview conducted in privacy, without unnecessary staff present.
- To pause or stop an interview if bias, mockery, or harassment occurs.
- To record details of incidents for later complaints or appeals

Common Situations and Challenges

- Some interpreters refused to use correct pronouns or laughed during translation.
- Officials sometimes ignored requests for gender-matched interpreters.
- Many applicants stayed silent out of fear of retaliation or disbelief.

Action Checklist

Status	What To DO
If You Feel Unsafe or Disrespected	Calmly ask for the interview to stop. State that you want a different interpreter/officer because of bias.
After The Interview	Write down names, dates, and details of what happened. Contact your lawyer or NGO to report the incident.
If Bias Continues	File a formal complaint through your lawyer or the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman).

Key Takeaways

- You can choose safety over silence. Asking for a new interpreter is your right.
- Documentation matters — even short notes can support later appeals.
- Respectful communication builds trust and better outcomes.

4.4 Trans-Specific Documents & Recognition

Trans and gender-diverse people often face extra hurdles with identity documents, medical care, and recognition. This section explains what you can ask for and where to find help.

Your Rights

- To have your name and gender respected in all interactions.
- To request that officials use your chosen name/pronouns, even if your documents differ.
- To access gender-affirming healthcare and referrals.
- To ask for privacy when explaining document differences.

Common Situations and Challenges

- Czech forms and databases are often binary-only, forcing people to misgender themselves.
- Some officials refuse corrections without updated passports.
- Access to gender-affirming medical care can be slow, confusing, or blocked by insurance.

Action Checklist

Status	What To DO
Name / Pronoun Respect	Politely correct staff and ask for consistent use in all documents. NGOs can issue letters supporting name/pronoun use.
Documents Mismatch	Carry copies of old and new IDs together. Explain calmly that both refer to you. Keep a note of any refusals or mockery.
Medical Transition Support	Contact NGOs or clinics experienced in trans-specific care for guidance on procedures and coverage.

Key Takeaways

- Your identity is valid even if documents don't match.
- Respectful language and correct names are legal and ethical obligations.
- Keep copies, notes, and NGO contacts to support advocacy and correction requests.

5. WHERE TO GET HELP

Here is the list of organisations that you may ask for help or support:

The Minorities organisation:

- An organisation based in Brno that focuses primarily on legal and other support for LGBTIQ+ foreigners. Here you can get a lawyer for your asylum or other case, support for housing, finding a job or healthcare. It also organises community-oriented events where you can meet other LGBTIQ+ foreigners, as well as Czechs.

Web: <https://theminorities.info>.

Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO):

- ALO documents human rights violations of LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers and advocates at the international level and the EU level for the rights of LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. You can report any rights violations and abuses to the organisation.

Web: <https://AfghanLGBT.com>

IG: @AfghanLGBT

RainbowFox:

- RainbowFox is a joint project between the Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO) and the Minorities Organisation that supports LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers at any stage. In their website you can have access to much practical information about living in the Czech Republic as an LGBTIQ+ asylum seeker and refugee.

Web: <https://rainbowfox.org>

Prague Pride

- The first Prague Pride festival took place in 2011 and it is not just about a parade through the city. It takes place over a week, from Monday to Sunday, and features 200 different events. Festival classics include various lectures and discussions, film screenings, theater and dance performances, talk shows, sports events, spiritual gatherings, and of course, entertainment in the form of concerts, parties, and picnics.

Web: <https://praguepride.cz>

FB: @PraguePrideCZ

IG: @prague.pride

Queer & Trans Youth CZ

- The organisation welcomes all LGBTQIA+ teens, including those who are still searching for themselves. Offering a safe space full of acceptance, support, and social contact and assisting in your gender journey, they provide guidance for gender identity or sexual orientation. They provide with community for people feeling isolated and publish literature about queer and trans topics in the Czech Republic.

Web: <https://qty.cz/>

FB: @queerteens.cz

IG: @ qty.cz

Plusko+

- Collective Plusko+ is a Brno-Prague queer group that strives to create a safe space for all members of the lgbtqia+ community, for all those who are looking for themselves, for those who don't fit in, and for all those who are themselves a plus in our society.
 - Web: <https://pluskolektiv.cz/>
 - FB: @pluskolektiv
 - IG: @pluskolektiv

Trans*parent

- Trans*parent z. s. strives to promote rights and positive social changes for the benefit of transgender, non-binary and intersex people. The association was founded in Prague in the spring of 2015 due to the need to share information and experiences and change policies in the field of equality for transgender people. Trans*parent thus seeks to promote understanding and acceptance of trans, non-binary and intersex people both at the social and legislative levels.

Web: <https://jsmettransparent.cz/>

FB: @transparentCZ

IG: @transparentCZ

Logos

- Logos is an ecumenical Christian community with nationwide activity, open to people of various religious backgrounds and those who are non-believers in the traditional sense of the word. It's goal is to create conditions for the healthy spiritual development of LGBT+ citizens and their integration into society and churches, support partner and family relationships and social activities helping people with a minority sexual orientation and their families in crisis situations and in finding a responsible lifestyle.

Web: <https://www.logoscr.cz/brno/>

FB: @LogosCR

Queer Geography

- Are you looking for quality and verifiable information that relates to the social side of human sexuality or issues related to gender diversity, or social gender? Are you interested in the field of LGBTQ+ psychology and the mental health of non-heterosexual and trans* people? Do you want to learn more about the HIV epidemic and the stigma associated with it? Then we hope that you will find answers to at least some of your questions by this organisation.

Web: <https://queergeography.cz/>

FB: @queergeography

IG: @queergeography

Q-HUB

- Q-Hub is a network of volunteers from the professional and lay public who participate in awareness-raising, research and educational activities in the field of sexual, gender and relationship diversity through various projects. Its main perspective is health and psychology, which is given by our roots at the Institute for Psychological Research (INPSY) at Masaryk University. The goal of Q-Hub is to disseminate evidence-based knowledge and recommendations regarding the care of LGBTQAI+ people, actively participate in research and educate the public and professionals through lectures and workshops.

Web: www.q-psy.cz

FB: @q.hubCZ

IG: @q.hubcz

STUD

- STUD, z.s. was founded in 1996 as an independent non-governmental non-profit organisation (civic association), whose mission is to work for the benefit of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender minority and to strive for its full legal and de facto equality with other members of society. The association brings together people with homosexual and bisexual orientation, but also heterosexual supporters.

Web: <https://stud.cz>

FB: @studbrno

Sdružení pro integraci a migraci

- A human rights organisation that defends the rights of migrants and provides them with comprehensive support without discrimination, promotes integration, mutual coexistence and strives for a fair and open society. It provides free legal, social and psychosocial counseling to foreigners living in the Czech Republic.

Web: <https://migrace.com>

e-mail: poradna@migrace.com

Part II

For Stakeholders and Service Providers

What We Learned From The Community: *Policy and Practice Recommendations for Inclusive Asylum and Integration Systems in the Czech Republic*

INTRODUCTION

This section is based on 20 anonymised interviews with LGBTIQ+ refugees, people seeking asylum, and practitioners in the Czech Republic. Community accounts show recurring barriers linked to racism, xenophobia, and bias related to sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics. The findings below summarize lived experiences and translate them into actionable recommendations for ministries, agencies, municipalities, and NGOs. Light legal anchors are provided to support implementation, including the Czech Anti-Discrimination Act, the Asylum Act, GDPR, and relevant EU directives on qualification, procedures, reception, and equality.

Theme 1. Racism and Everyday Discrimination in Daily Life

What we heard

"I can't rent a flat because of my passport."
"Landlords hang up when they hear my accent."
"At work they said be grateful to have a job even without a contract."

Participants reported housing refusals, wage exploitation, and harassment in public spaces. Racism often intersects with refugee status and queer or trans identity, multiplying barriers to inclusion. These practices contravene the Czech Anti-Discrimination Act and the EU Racial Equality Directive, which prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and access to services.

Recommendations

1. Enforcement and redress

- Resource inspections and equality bodies to proactively test for discrimination in rental markets and hiring.
- Standardise simple complaint pathways with multilingual templates and free legal aid referrals.

2. Inclusive employment pathways

- Require fair-recruitment pledges for publicly funded employers and contractors.
- Finance job-coaching and language support tied to real vacancies, with monitoring of outcomes for LGBTIQ+ refugees.

3. Municipal housing access

- Expand access to municipal or social housing for vulnerable applicants and require anti-discrimination clauses in allocation rules.
- Partner with NGOs for landlord mediation and guarantees.

Theme 2. Bias and Stereotyping in Asylum Procedures

What we heard

"They asked why I did not look gay."
"The interpreter changed my words."
"They said I need proof that I am gay."

Accounts indicate credibility assessments that rely on stereotypes, misgendering, and interpreter bias. This undermines the right to an individual, impartial examination under the EU Qualification and Procedures Directives and the Czech Asylum Act. Trauma responses, language barriers, and cultural differences are too often misread as inconsistency.

Recommendations

1. Competency standards for interviews

- Mandatory training for officers and interpreters on SOGIESC concepts, trauma-informed interviewing, and anti-racism.
- Introduce an interview quality checklist that requires privacy, respectful language, and accurate read-back before signature.

2. Interpreter safeguards

- Create a vetted roster that records language competence, SOGIESC training, and conflict-of-interest checks.
- Provide a simple mechanism to request replacement where bias or safety risks are reported, without negative impact on the case.

3. Credibility guidance

- Issue internal guidance that credibility is not performance and does not require stereotypes or intrusive evidence.
- Promote acceptance of consistent personal testimony, supported by country-of-origin information and NGO letters where relevant.

Theme 3. Reception and Accommodation Safety

What we heard

"They put me in a room with men from my country who threatened me."
"When I said I did not feel safe, they told me to be strong."
"Some staff were kind, others looked away when harassment happened."

Residents described harassment by co-nationals, lack of privacy, and weak responses to complaints. Reception conditions must meet safety and dignity standards under the EU Reception Conditions framework and Czech law. LGBTIQ+ residents face elevated risks that require specific measures.

Recommendations

1. Safe placement and transfers

- Introduce a confidential vulnerability screening at entry that includes SOGIESC and racism risks.
- Provide rapid transfers or separate accommodation upon credible safety concerns.

2. Accountability in centres

- Establish confidential reporting channels and a standard incident log reviewed weekly by senior staff.
- Require clear consequences for harassment by residents or staff and communicate these rules visibly in multiple languages.

3. Minimum facility standards

- Ensure gender-sensitive bathrooms and private consultation rooms.
- Schedule regular visits from independent monitors and the Public Defender of Rights, with published summaries of findings.

Theme 4. Decisions, Appeals, and Timely Communication

What we heard

“I did not know I had only two weeks.”
“They found an interpreter late and I almost lost my chance.”

People reported late or unclear decisions and missed deadlines. Timely, comprehensible communication is central to the right to an effective remedy. The appeal window is typically short, so delays in translation or unclear letters create structural disadvantage.

Recommendations

1. Plain-language decisions

- Require a one-page summary in the applicant’s language that states the decision, deadline, suspensive effect, and next steps.

2. Deadline safeguards

- Start appeal clocks only after confirmed service in a language the applicant understands, and offer quick legal-aid triage at notification.

3. Legal aid coverage

- Guarantee immediate referral to free legal aid for all negative decisions, with hotlines and walk-in hours in reception centres.

Theme 5. Detention and Use of Alternatives

What we heard

“I did not even know how long I would be there.”
“They separated me for my safety but it felt like punishment.”

Detention was reported as confusing, isolating, and harmful, especially for LGBTIQ+ people. Under EU and Czech standards, detention must be lawful, necessary, proportionate, and used only when alternatives cannot achieve the objective.

Recommendations

1. Alternatives first

- Prioritise reporting duties, community placement, and address registration.
- Require written justification that explains why an alternative is not suitable.

2. Information and contact

- Provide written reasons for detention in a language the person understands, with immediate access to legal aid and phones.
- Track time in detention and publish anonymized statistics disaggregated by gender and vulnerability.

3. Safe placement

- Ensure protection from harassment and enable confidential complaints.
- Provide access to psychosocial support delivered by trained staff.

Theme 6. Healthcare and Mental Health Access

What we heard

"The nurse said we do not treat foreigners."

"Therapy in my language saved me."

"The doctor used my old name in front of everyone."

Barriers included language, insurance acceptance, and stigmatising attitudes toward queer and trans people. The *Reception Conditions Framework* and national law require access to primary and emergency care, with attention to vulnerable applicants.

Recommendations

1. Inclusive provider network

- Develop a mapped network of clinics that accept asylum documentation and provide LGBTIQ+ -competent care.
- Fund interpretation for medical visits and publish simple access instructions.

2. Confidentiality and respect

- Require staff to use chosen names and pronouns and to protect privacy at reception and in records.
- Offer corrective pathways when names or markers differ across documents.

3. Mental health scale-up

- Contract multilingual counsellors and peer supporters.
- Introduce early screening for distress in reception centres and fast-track referrals.

Theme 7. Privacy, Data Protection, and Confidentiality

What we heard

"The interpreter told others about me after the interview."
"My file had details I never shared."
"They kept using my old name even after I corrected them."

Data leaks and careless language create real safety risks. GDPR and Czech data protection rules require lawfulness, purpose limitation, minimisation, and confidentiality. SOGIESC information is highly sensitive and must be handled with strict safeguards.

Recommendations

1. Need-to-know handling

- Limit access to sensitive fields to essential staff only, with audit trails.
- Remove irrelevant SOGIESC details from case notes.

2. Correct names and pronouns

- Allow preferred names and pronouns across all interfaces and correspondence, even when legal markers differ.
- Provide a quick correction process and staff prompts to avoid deadnaming.

3. Breach Response

- Create a simple route for reporting privacy breaches and notifying affected individuals.
- Provide remedies such as staff removal from case, transfer options, and written apologies.

Theme 8. Strength, Community Networks, and Positive Practice

What we heard

"Only queer friends and NGOs make life bearable."
"We created our own little family and shared what we have."

Community networks, small NGOs, and peer support consistently bridge gaps in housing, health, interpretation, and advocacy. Sustainable collaboration with these actors improves outcomes and trust.

Recommendations

1. Partnership and funding

- Fund peer-led initiatives, safe community spaces, and mutual-aid microgrants.
- Involve LGBTIQ+ refugee leaders in policy design, staff training, and monitoring.

2. Pathway to inclusion

- Support language tandems, mentorships, and employer partnerships that value lived experience.
- Recognise and scale positive practices identified by community feedback.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations for Ministries, Municipalities, and NGOs

These recommendations reflect what people living through the system have already taught us. Implementing them will reduce harm, improve decisions, and build trust. Most changes are practical and low-cost. All are achievable through partnership between ministries, municipalities, frontline providers, and LGBTIQ+ community organisations.

Recommendations

1. *Standards and Oversight*

- Issue minimum standards for respectful, safe, and confidential treatment across interviews, reception, detention, health, and housing.
- Mandate SOGIESC and anti-racism training for all frontline staff and interpreters, refreshed annually.
- Monitor with independent audits, publish anonymized metrics, and create feedback loops with affected communities.

2. *Access and Redress*

- Guarantee early access to legal aid and translate all key notices into languages people actually use.
- Provide simple, multilingual complaint forms in centres, clinics, and labour offices and ensure non-retaliation.
- Introduce service charters that state response times and escalation points.

3. *Data Protection and Dignity*

- Apply privacy-by-design in all systems and forms.
- Allow preferred names and pronouns on correspondence and badges while legal updates are pending.
- Treat privacy breaches as safety incidents and provide remedies.

4. *Inclusive integration*

- Tie public funding to anti-discrimination compliance in housing and employment.
- Expand municipal housing access for vulnerable people and support NGO landlord mediation.
- Scale mental health and community-based support in multiple languages.

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Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO)



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