

6 HEALTH CARE FOR FOREIGNERS

Data on foreigners provided in this chapter come from the National Health Information System (NHIS) and have been processed by the Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the CR (IHIS CR). To put it concretely, the data have been collected by national health registers (the National Register of Hospitalised Patients, the National Register of Reproduction Health), an information system of bodies for public health protection (the Register of Tuberculosis), and by an Annual report on the utilisation of health care by foreigners. The aforementioned selected data sources on the health sector only provide partial information on the total utilisation of health care by foreigners in the CR and their state of health. Further information on data sources of the NHIS can be found on the website of the IHIS CR at: <https://www.uzis.cz/index-en.php>.

Besides information from data of the NHIS published here, the Health Insurance Bureau publishes data on utilisation of health care by foreigners – citizens of the EU/EEA and Switzerland, and foreigners from countries with which it has signed an agreement on social security, including the area of health insurance and provision of health care, and data on costs spent on that health care. For more information see: <https://www.kancelarzp.cz/index.php/en>.

Methodological notes on the Tables

Table 6-1 Trends in utilisation of health care by foreigners in the years 2010–2021, Tables 6-2a (6-2b) and 6-3a (6-3b) Utilisation of health care by foreigners in 2022

Data on the utilisation of health care by foreigners are measured by an annual report “V (MZ) 1-01”. It is only filled in by providers of inpatient care for health care establishments denoted as hospitals regardless the type of care they provide to foreigners, i.e. including outpatient care. The report does not measure health care paid from the public health insurance. Therefore, it only regards foreigners who cover health care from health insurance policies concluded in the CR, insurance policies concluded abroad, in cash, or whose health care is reimbursed by state authorities (the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, regional authorities, and the like). The figures also include asylum applicants accommodated in asylum facilities health care for whom is paid by the Ministry of the Interior. On the other hand, foreigners with refugee status and granted asylum should not be included in public health insurance statistics anymore. Despite that, it cannot be ruled out that some health establishments may have problems distinguishing refugees from Ukraine in view of the exceptional situation in 2022. These persons are part of the public health insurance, however, they have usually not been assigned a standard birth certificate number. From the total number of 205 providers, 2 reporting units did not deliver the report in 2022, which means that compared to the previous year, data for the year 2022 comprise by one hospital more. It contributed to an increase by 1.6% in the number of treated foreigners, which is roughly the total increase from 148.5 thousand to 150.9 thousand foreigners compared to the year 2021. As for costs, the total year-on-year increase was more considerable and reached 10.5% from CZK 1.167 bn to CZK 1.290 bn, while the share of the previously missing reporting unit only contributed about 0.6 percentage point to that increase.

The number of foreigners utilising health care in hospitals outside the public health insurance thus continued to considerably increase from 2010 to 2022 by 89.7%, i.e. from 79.6 thousand persons to 150.9 thousand persons. In 2020, probably due to an influence of measures limiting movement of persons during the pandemic, there was a decrease by 18.7% to 103.8 thousand persons. In 2021, on the other hand, the number of reported foreigners considerably increased by 44.7 thousand (43%), namely also due to operation of COVID-19 vaccination centres for foreigners, too, as was explained by the providers. In 2022, the number of treated foreigners from non-EU countries increased by 3 thousand persons (3.8%); however, as for foreigners from the EU Member States, their number decreased by 676 persons (1%). The share of treated foreigners from the EU thus decreased to 44%; however, it still keeps prevailing part of the volume of costs (58%).

The average costs per foreigner in 2022 increased, compared to the previous year, from CZK 5.9 thousand to CZK 6.4 thousand as for foreigners from third countries (non-EU nationals),

and from CZK 10.3 thousand to CZK 11.3 thousand for foreigners from Member States of the EU, thus approaching the values and the rising trend until 2020.

In terms of distribution in the territory of the CR, the highest number of foreigners was again treated in hospitals in the Hl. m. Praha Region; to put it concretely, it was 59.5 thousand persons (39.4%), with a decrease by 4.9 thousand. As for the number of treated foreigners, other Regions ranked as follows: the Jihomoravský Region (24.2 thousand persons, an increase by 5.6 thousand), the Středočeský Region (13.7 thousand, an increase by 2.2 thousand), the Ústecký Region (7.8 thousand, an increase by 1.1 thousand), and the Moravskoslezský Region (7.5 thousand, a decrease by 1.0 thousand). In 2022, the highest number of foreigners treated in the CR consisted of citizens of Ukraine, there were 37.6 thousand of them. Their number increased by 9.5 thousand (34%) compared to the year 2021. They were followed by Slovaks (34.3 thousand), Germans (9.1 thousand), Russians (6.1 thousand), and Vietnamese (5.7 thousand).

The highest costs were for citizens of Slovakia (CZK 456.2 mil.) followed by citizens of Ukraine (CZK 237.7 mil.), Germany (CZK 96.2 mil.), Poland (CZK 53.2 mil.), the Russian Federation (CZK 31.6 mil.), other countries of the former Soviet Union (CZK 38.2 mil.), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (CZK 28.2 mil.), and Viet Nam (CZK 27.2 mil.). As at 31 December 2022, for health care provided to foreigners, the total of CZK 88.5 million remained unpaid after the maturity date, which is 6.9% of the total amount of costs for health care provided to foreigners in hospitals. For foreigners from Member States of the EU, costs in the amount of CZK 36.1 million (40.8%) were overdue.

Table 6-4 Foreigners treated in hospitals by cause of hospitalisation in 2022

Data in the Table come from the National Register of Hospitalised Patients (NRHOSP); they were included in the publication after two years again. Data from the years 2016 and 2017 were vastly reported in an incorrect way as for citizenship, which artificially caused an enormous increase in the number of hospitalised foreigners. Along with a transition to a new information system within the NHIS united technological platform, rules for reporting foreigners were made stricter in 2019.

The National Register of Hospitalised Patients (unlike the “V (MZ) 1-0” report) measures care regardless the way of payment and only for patients hospitalised on a bed. Thus, unlike the report, it also monitors foreigners with permanent residence in the Czech Republic who are participants of the public health insurance as required by law. On the other hand, the report measures both the outpatient and inpatient care, however, only the one, which is not paid from the public health insurance. Although both the cases apply to care provided in hospitals in the Czech Republic, the mentioned numbers of foreigners in both the data sources are incomparable due to those reasons. They only overlap as for utilisation of inpatient health care by foreigners paid outside the public health insurance.

In 2022, over 104.5 thousand cases of hospitalisation of foreigners in hospital departments (wards) were reported, i.e. compared to the previous year (2021) it was a considerable increase by 43 thousand (70%), of which 25 thousand were females. A more significant increase in hospital admissions in 2022, taking into account the immigration situation, was recorded for foreigners from third countries (non-EU countries) by 24 thousand (79%) to 54.9 thousand compared to 49.6 thousand cases of hospitalisation of foreigners from EU countries. The most frequent reason for hospitalisation of foreigners remains the same as in the previous years: “pregnancy, childbirth, and the puerperium” (27% of female hospitalisations). It is followed (with 12% of all hospitalisations) by related “factors influencing health status and contact with health services” (most often, hospitalisation of healthy newborns, accompaniment of a sick child; it is followed by examinations and investigations (medical check-ups), which require hospitalisation, and the like). The third most frequent reason (10% of hospitalisations) among foreigners was diseases of the circulatory system, which among males rank first with 14% of hospitalisations. The second most frequent reason as for males, also with 14% of hospitalisations, was “injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes,” and diseases of the digestive system ranked third (12%). Regarding females, diseases of the genitourinary system were in third place (9%). Compared to the previous year, the number of hospitalisations of foreigners increased virtually in all groups of reasons. When expressed in absolute numbers, mainly as for hospitalisations due to “pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium” (Chapter XV) it was by 4.1 thousand cases (34%) and due “factors influencing health

status and contact with health services” within the Chapter XXI it was by 6.1 thousand (95%). Furthermore, the number of hospitalisations also increased due to diseases of the circulatory system by 4.7 thousand cases (89%) and hospitalisations for injuries increased by 4.2 thousand cases (81%). Hospitalisations for diseases of the digestive system (4.1 thousand, 78%) and neoplasms (3.9 thousand, 80%) also increased significantly.

Tables 6-5 and 6-6 Abortions in female foreigners

Data on abortions in female foreigners come from the National Register of Reproduction Health - Abortions. All types of abortions made in health establishments of the CR have to be reported on the form “Application for (a Legally) Induced Abortion – Report of Abortion and Ectopic Pregnancy”. This report is compulsory and both are liable to it: Czech nationals – females with permanent residence in the territory of the CR as well as female foreigners regardless of the type and length of their stay. Data on abortions are only published as for female foreigners with a permanent or a long-term residence in the territory of the CR.

In 2022, 2 447 abortions in female foreigners with a permanent or a long-term residence in the territory of the CR were registered in the Czech Republic, which is an increase, compared to the previous year, namely by 52.1 p. p. This increase will be related to the increase in abortions in Ukrainian women. As for female foreigners with Ukrainian citizenship, there was an increase by 170.7 p. p. (420 abortions in 2021, 1 137 in 2022). Abortions in Ukrainian women accounted for 46.5% of the total number of abortions in female foreigners in 2022. Of the total number of abortions in female foreigners, 1 685 abortions (68.9%) were legally induced abortions, of which 10.5% were medically indicated. Vacuum aspirations (menstrual regulations) made 67.8% of all legally induced abortions; compared to the previous year, they significantly increased, namely by 84.4 p. p. (620 in 2021, 1 143 in 2022). The increase can be related to a change in the reporting of vacuum aspirations (menstrual regulations). Before 2021, they were reported by means of the item of length of gestation, whereas from 2021 onwards these abortions are determined from the item of age of the foetus. Another reason is likely to be the significant increase in vacuum aspirations (menstrual regulations) among Ukrainian women in 2022 (258 in the year 2021, 553 in 2022).

Since 2002, the total number of abortions in female foreigners has been gradually decreasing (from 2 751 in 2002 to 2 238 in 2005). From 2006 to 2008, the number of abortions increased. After the three years of growth, the number of abortions in female foreigners in the CR was continually decreasing from 2009 to 2017 (from 3 020 in 2009 to 1 691 in 2017). Although in 2018 there was an increase compared to 2017, in 2019 there was a decrease in the number of abortions again (from 1 712 in 2018 to 1 699 in 2019). In 2020 and 2021, the number of abortions in female foreigners continued to decrease (1 612 abortions in 2020 and 1 609 in 2021). In 2022, there was an increase in the number of abortions (2 447 in 2022), whether this is a temporary blip or a new trend, time will tell. The evaluation of the data by Region is influenced by the biggest concentration of foreigners in the Hl. m. Praha Region and the Středočeský Region, in which there is together with the Moravskoslezský Region the highest proportion of abortions within the whole CR. In 2022, we recorded a significant increase in abortions in the Moravskoslezský Region to 353 abortions, of which 322 were legally induced abortions. This increase is only slightly due to an increase in abortions among Ukrainian women. In the Region, 40 abortions were made in Ukrainian women compared to 6 in 2021.

Table 6-7 Newly notified TB cases in the CR by the patient’s country of birth

The table gives the number of new(ly) notified cases of tuberculosis (TB) in the CR broken down by the country of birth of patients (not necessarily foreigners).

In 2022, 383 TB cases were newly notified in the CR in total. Compared to the previous year, the number of notified cases increased (by 26 cases more, compared to 2021). From a long-term point of view, the number of TB cases in the CR has been permanently decreasing. The number of TB cases among Czech citizens decreased, year-on-year (by 8 cases), whereas the number of TB cases among persons born outside the CR increased (by 34 cases). Out of the total number of recorded TB cases, the share of persons born outside the CR is 43.3%. The highest number of new(ly) notified TB cases in the CR in 2022 was among citizens of Ukraine (88 cases), Viet Nam (17), India (9), Slovakia (7), Philippines (6), Poland (6), and Romania (6).

Since 2018, Table 6-4 has been added again to Chapter 6 on health care for foreigners in the Czech Republic. It shows numbers of hospitalised foreigners in hospitals in the CR, the same as in the publication with data for the year 2015 (formerly Table 6-3). The data are provided for the health sector as a whole. Before 2003, data in tables were only published for the sector of the Ministry of Health.

From 2018 onwards, the Table 6-1 including a chart is being added in the beginning of the chapter; the chart shows utilisation of health care by foreigners in hospitals in the CR outside the public health insurance. It is followed by Tables 6-2a, 6-2b, 6-3a, and 6-3b, which have the same source. Due to an undetected error of several providers that provided (despite the methodology of the report) costs in CZK, while it had to be in thousands of CZK, overestimated results were presented in publications in 2016 and 2017. This publication already contains the series with corrected data for the years 2015 and 2016. In the “Foreigners in the Czech Republic” publication, an overview table has been published since 2011, which applies to utilisation of health care by foreigners by Region (Table 6-2b) and by total costs (Table 6-3b).