



# Czechia operational plan 2022-2023

## Ex post evaluation report

Prepared by the EUAA's Quality Management and Evaluation Sector

*The sole responsibility for this report lies with the author. The EUAA is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.*

EUAA/EVAL/2023/11/FR; Final

February 2024





## Contents

Contents .....	2
Acronyms and definitions.....	3
Executive summary .....	4
1. Introduction: purpose and scope .....	5
2. Intended results of the action .....	5
2.1. Description of the action and its intended results .....	5
2.2. Points of comparison.....	6
3. Implementation of the action: current state of play .....	7
4. Evaluation findings .....	10
4.1. To what extent was the action successful and why? .....	10
4.2. How did the Agency make a difference through the action? .....	12
4.3. Is the action relevant? .....	12
5. Conclusions and recommendations .....	13
5.1. Conclusions.....	13
5.2. Good practices and lessons learnt .....	15
5.3. Recommendations .....	16
Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used .....	17
Annex 2: Evaluation matrix .....	18
Annex 3. Intervention logic .....	20



## Acronyms and definitions

Term	Definition
EU	European Union
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KACPU <sub>s</sub>	Regional Centres for Help and Assistance to Ukraine
OP	Operational plan
TP	Temporary protection
TPD	Temporary Protection Directive
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



## Executive summary

Since February 2022, Czechia experienced a high influx of persons from Ukraine who were leaving the country following the Russian invasion. In response, Czechia and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) signed an operational plan (OP) which initially ran from 10 June to the end of December 2022 and was subsequently extended until the end of 2023, with an amendment agreed in May 2023. The main objective and scope of this evaluation was to assess the results during the 19 months of the Agency's support in Czechia. It was conducted internally by the Agency and assessed the OP's effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and European Union (EU) added value.

The original OP focused on two main areas: firstly support to the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) through the provision of container units to accommodate new arrivals, site design and planning, information material and interpretation, and secondly training and professional development for staff of the national administration, as well as temporary personnel from other entities. A decrease in arrivals throughout 2022 and changing needs at national level led to the amended OP, which limited the Agency's activities to training, interpretation, and information and communications technology (ICT) support.

The EUAA effectively provided the support foreseen in the areas of interpretation, ICT, and training. The increased utilisation of the Agency's training support, including in-country, tailored and translated sessions, is expected to have positive effects beyond the OP's duration. The OP faced delays, outside the Agency's control, in its provision of interpretation support and container units. The latter were ultimately not needed due to the decrease in arrivals. Despite this, work in this area allowed the Agency to learn and improve its response in the field of reception capacity. The collaboration between the Agency's centres on the design of customised container layouts was recognised in the evaluation. This evaluation also identified the need for adapted planning approaches for new OPs, relating to a clearer definition of timelines and implementation modalities. In addition, there is scope for better Agency guidance on the provision of container units and a clearer definition of interpretation deliverables.

This evaluation recommends optimising the follow-up of the training achievements through permanent support in Czechia. This could be secured with the enlargement of the internal pool of Czech trainers.



## 1. Introduction: purpose and scope

In the three months following the Russian invasion of Ukraine that started in February 2022, Czechia received more than 360 000 Ukrainian persons in need of protection. This development exerted pressure on the country's registration and reception capacities. In response to this situation, Czechia and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) signed an operational plan (OP) which initially ran from 10 June to December 2022 and was subsequently extended until the end of 2023, with an amendment agreed in May 2023. The OP was coordinated by the Agency's First Response Sector of the First Operational Response Unit within the Operational Support Centre.

The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the results of the operational measures of the Agency's support. To ensure proportionality, this evaluation was conducted internally and assessed the five evaluation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and added value) in a balanced manner. The evaluation took place between October 2023 and January 2024 and was carried out by the Quality Management and Evaluation Sector in the Business Support and Security Unit of the Agency's Institutional and Horizontal Affairs Centre.

This evaluation had several limitations. Its scope was limited to the operational measures as defined in the OP, which was relatively short in duration and included time for the setting up of the cooperation. The results framework included a small number of indicators and incorporated targets only starting from 2023, which challenged the assessment of the OP's effectiveness.

## 2. Intended results of the action

This chapter describes the intended results under the OP and the situation before the intervention as points of comparison.

### 2.1. Description of the action and its intended results

The original (extended) OP prior to the amendment included two main results.

**Measure 1 (result outcome):** Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) and provide accommodation for temporary protection (TP) beneficiaries.

This measure foresaw the provision of material support to temporarily expand and improve accommodation capacity, site design and planning, information material and interpretation services.

**Measure 2 (result outcome):** Enhanced skills of new recruits and specialised staff of the Czech authorities.

This measure included training and professional development for staff of the national administration, as well as temporary personnel from other entities. This involved large scale national induction



programmes, training on communication skills, information provision and special needs of TP beneficiaries, train the trainer sessions and training of interpreters.

Following a request from the authorities, an amendment of the extended OP was signed on 16 May 2023. The amended OP, which continued between 17 May and 31 December 2023, reduced the support to one measure: enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD. This measure included as result output the support to TP implementing procedures and activities. It foresaw the provision of interpretation services, information and communications technology (ICT) support and equipment, and the delivery of training on TP-related topics and/or modules.

The intervention logic of both the OP and its amendment is presented in Annex 3 to this report.

## 2.2. Points of comparison

On 21 March 2022, Czechia triggered the TPD following the launch of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022<sup>1</sup>. The mass displacement of persons fleeing Ukraine exerted pressure on the country's reception system. Whereas Czechia received a yearly average of 1 494 first-time asylum applications between 2019 and 2021, it granted TP to 352 870 persons between March and May 2022<sup>2</sup>. Given its large Ukrainian diaspora<sup>3</sup>, Czechia acted both as a transit and destination country.

The country applies a centralised reception management system approach, governed by the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. By the end of 2021, the country had two arrival (Zastávka and Václav Havel Airport Prague) and three residential (Kostelec nad Orlicí, Havířov and Zastávka) centres which were operational<sup>4</sup>. Following the activation of the TPD, Czechia put in place a comprehensive contingency plan to facilitate the reception of arrivals, as well as national and regional centres to coordinate assistance activities. As of 4 March 2022, the country established a state of emergency in order to speed up the issuing of residence permits to Ukrainian arrivals. This allowed priority provision of childcare and healthcare, as well as access to social and other support services. The Regional Centres for Help and Assistance to Ukraine (KACPU) provided limited short-term shelter. By June 2022, Czechia had 13 KACPU<sup>5</sup>, while 80 %<sup>6</sup> of the persons granted TP were hosted in private accommodation settings.

Following a request for support, the EUAA conducted a rapid needs assessment in April 2022. It identified two key priorities: TP support and training and professional development in the context of TPD implementation.

---

<sup>1</sup> EUAA IDS: <https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu/temporary-protection>.

<sup>2</sup> Eurostat (accessed 25 October 2023): [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/view/migr\\_asytpfm](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/view/migr_asytpfm).

<sup>3</sup> Estimated at 200,000 before Russia's invasion. Source UNHCR : <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/93854>.

<sup>4</sup> See: [https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/2021\\_situational\\_update\\_issue8\\_reception\\_systems\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/2021_situational_update_issue8_reception_systems_EN_0.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/93054>.

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/czech-republic-ukraine-situation-update>.



### 3. Implementation of the action: current state of play

This chapter describes how the situation in Czechia evolved during the implementation of the OP and gives an overview of the main results achieved by the Agency.

Following the signature of the OP, arrivals from Ukraine decreased. Between June and December 2022, Czechia granted TP to a monthly average of 15 393 persons, composed mainly of women and children. During this same period, it received a monthly average of 111 asylum applications<sup>7</sup>. The OP extension (December 2022) came at a time when arrivals from Ukraine stabilised and the state of emergency was already lifted. In the first three months of 2023, an average of 10 367 persons were granted TP, with the reception pressure continuing to decrease for the remainder of the year. In October 2023, there were 360 820 TP beneficiaries in Czechia, representing a 20 % reduction from the highest point in April 2023<sup>8</sup>. The Czech authorities were also provided interpretation and accommodation support by other international organisations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)<sup>9</sup> and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

This evaluation makes a distinction between the initial 11 months and the last eight months of the OP’s implementation, as these were guided by a different intervention logic.

#### *The original (extended) operational plan*

Under **measure 1 (TP support)**, the OP foresaw the following:

1. Provision of material support to improve the accommodation capacity of TP beneficiaries (up to 200 container units);
2. Support to site design and planning (up to two experts);
3. Provision of information material;
4. Provision of interpretation services (up to 20 interpreters);
5. Upon agreement, additional support for the implementation of TP activities, such as ICT equipment.

In the first few months of the OP, the Agency examined the type and volume of support needed. As of September 2022, it deployed a field support officer in Prague.

The OP indicated the delivery of up to 200 residential container units. Starting in August 2022, the Agency engaged in discussions on their design and specifications. Ultimately progress in this area was put on hold. The Agency shared with the authorities the containers’ design at the end of January 2023, but the authorities refrained from seeking additional support.

In September 2022, the authorities requested 150 laptops and 50 printers. Following the necessary contractual arrangements, 100 laptops and 20 printers were delivered in early December 2022.

---

<sup>7</sup> Eurostat (accessed 21/11/2023):

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/explore/all/all\\_themes?lang=en&display=list&sort=category](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/explore/all/all_themes?lang=en&display=list&sort=category).

<sup>8</sup> TP beneficiaries in Czechia peaked in April 2023, with 453 858 persons. See UNHCR:

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/277?sv=54&geo=10819>.

<sup>9</sup> The UNHCR provided 500 housing units. See: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/96855>.



The provision of up to 20 interpreters was foreseen for early September 2022. Due to contractual challenges, the first batch of interpreters was deployed in early October to 10 locations. Within the first three weeks of deployment almost all of the 19 interpreters had to be re-deployed. During this time period some reception centres declined the EUAA's support. As of November 2022, 20 interpreters were deployed on a regular basis, though with high mobility, to 10 designated KACPU, in addition to an interpreters' coordinator. In January 2023, interpretation support was temporarily paused and resumed the following month with the deployment of 20 interpreters and one coordinator in nine locations.

Under **measure 2 (training and professional development)**, the following activities were foreseen:

1. Rolling out of national induction programmes on a large scale, with a specific focus on TP;
2. Strengthening the capacity of the Czech frontline personnel to provide relevant information to people fleeing Ukraine (training on communication skills, including in emergency contexts, and information provision to vulnerable groups) and strengthening their specialisation (e.g., identification of special needs);
3. Expanding the pool of existing trainers through train the trainer sessions;
4. Training interpreters deployed to support information provision activities (up to ten).

Between August and September 2022, the EUAA presented its training package to the authorities. In October 2022, a first training session (Provision of information and communication to people displaced from Ukraine) was delivered. Between November and December 2022, the following sessions took place: Communication with displaced children, Legal framework on TP, and Communicating with people who experienced traumatic events. In addition, national authorities participated in additional training sessions on topics such as Becoming an EUAA trainer and Management in the context of reception. By the end of 2022, a total of 26 persons from the Ministry of the Interior and the Refugee Facilities Administration participated in the Agency's training activities. The 11 sessions had a 97 % satisfaction rate<sup>10</sup>.

The first two training sessions of 2023 took place in March and included tailor-made sessions on Interpreting in the context of TP, delivered in Ukrainian. These were delivered to 18 interpreters and were the first training sessions for interpreters since the start of the OP.

### ***The amended operational plan***

Following a formal request to withdraw the planned provision of container units, the revised OP planned the provision of three activities for the period May-December 2023:

1. Interpretation services (up to 20);
2. ICT support and equipment;
3. Training on TP-related topics.

---

<sup>10</sup> The notion 'satisfaction rate' represents the aggregated percentage of the highest two scores in the five-point scale ('strongly agree' and 'agree') reported in the training session feedback forms.





The Agency provided a monthly average of 17 interpreters between January and June 2023. From July 2023 onwards, it provided 11 interpreters per month. In October 2023, the authorities requested that the Agency donates half of the equipment (50 laptops and 10 printers) at the end of the OP. By January 2024, this had been processed.

In 2023, a total of 24 training sessions took place, with an average of almost 12 participations per session (and a total of 214 individuals trained), 93 % of which included participations from the national authorities. These sessions covered topics such as the legal framework, ethics and professional standards, vulnerable groups and interpretation. They had a satisfaction rate of 88 %<sup>11</sup>. The authorities requested additional training sessions on Information provision to persons who experienced trauma and Introduction to ethical and professional standards, among other topics, which took place in the last quarter of 2023.

In 2023, the Agency had quarterly targets at output level which included the provision of interpreters and training sessions. In the first quarter, the Agency underdelivered on interpreters (65 %; target 20) but delivered in the second (105 %; target 20) and the third and fourth quarters (100 %; target 11). On training, no sessions were recorded in the second quarter, but targets were met in the first quarter and exceeded in the second half of 2023 (11 out of three planned). It is worth noting that these were moving targets.

In terms of human resources, the Agency deployed a field support officer from September 2022 to June 2023. A planned training expert was deployed from November 2022 to March 2023. An average of 18 interpreters were deployed between October 2022 and the beginning of June 2023. From June 2023 onwards, the Agency supported with 10 interpreters and one interpreters' coordinator.

The original OP included operational preconditions on:

1. TPD being transposed into national law;
2. Quarterly measure steering committee meetings being held;
3. Office space and any necessary permits (e.g., physical access);
4. A two-way data sharing;
5. Identification of sites and agreement of terms of reference for container units;
6. Responsibility and use of ICT equipment;
7. Participation in training sessions (i.e., willingness and facilitation);
8. Information sharing on recruitment (i.e., plans, job profiles and expected tasks).

The amended OP included the same operational preconditions with the exception of the last two related to training and professional development. While some of the operational preconditions were met, delays and unclarity on the terms and sites for the container units hampered implementation. Formal meetings took place though these were not considered as structured steering committees. Information sharing on recruitment was limited. The participation in the training sessions increased over time.

---

<sup>11</sup> This does not include four sessions where the number of respondents was less than six.



## 4. Evaluation findings

Building on the above, this chapter provides an analysis on the evaluation questions. It triangulates evidence from different data sources such as desk research, interviews, and focus group discussions.

### 4.1. To what extent was the action successful and why?

The operational support, initially agreed for a seven-month duration, was extended until the end of 2023. Despite the many activities in the original OP, the Agency concentrated its efforts on four key areas: reception accommodation, interpretation, ICT equipment and training. The provision of materials on information provision was deprioritised.

In preparation for the provision of the 200 residential **container units**, the Agency held regular meetings between August and December 2022 to ensure alignment with the required specifications. The evolving in-country dynamics, marked by the discontinuation of the state of emergency and a decline in arrivals, resulted in a decreased need for containers. During this period, there was also national and European Union (EU) funding (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) for different residence schemes. For example, the UNHCR provided multiple mobile wooden (IKEA®) houses, which were delivered before the end of 2022. These were ultimately not used and were stocked in warehouses for contingency purposes. The Agency made a notable effort to adapt the design of the containers to the specific proposals of the authorities. Technical support was provided by the Agency's Asylum Knowledge and Administration Centres. The EUAA's proposal on the design was shared with the authorities in early 2023. By then, however, container units were no longer needed.

Efficiency was limited as additional time was needed to re-design the standard housing units to fit the needs expressed by the Czech authorities. The need for tailor-made support required significant coordination and human resources, and did not allow for the delivery of the units within the state of emergency period. While recognising the adaptability and flexibility of the Agency to align its support to the changing needs, the intervention could be considered as being of limited cost-efficiency. On the other hand, as the container housing was intended to support the national contingency and there were alternative solutions available, the withdrawal from this activity could be considered as cost-effective (with a saving of just under five million EUR) and having had no environmental consequences. This was also acknowledged by the authorities who were of the opinion that these decommitted resources may be of greater benefit to other Member States under pressure.

In the area of **interpretation**, the Agency was effective in providing the requested support, which stood at a monthly average of 18 between October 2022 and June 2023. This complemented the support already available to national authorities, which had an estimated equivalent of about 90 full-time interpreters. Initially, the EUAA's interpretation was intended to support the integration centres in the different provinces. However, as these were sufficiently supported by national and UNICEF interpreters by the end of 2022, the Agency's support was reduced and redirected to Prague. The support was delayed due to contractual challenges (including accreditation) and language and competency discrepancies. This was the case in particular at the start of the deployment in October 2022, when almost all interpreters needed to be replaced. In the following months, there remained a high level of mobility, making coordination, training, and quality assurance challenging.



The EUAA's interpreters mainly supported registration and information management and were highly valued by the authorities. They facilitated communication at the information desk and supported the completion of registration forms and interviews and medical checkups. There were some concerns about efficiency in view of the variable workload and the working shifts assigned by the authorities to the interpreters. The support provided became more efficient following a change in local coordination during the first month of implementation. The first training for interpreters took place in March 2023 and contributed to a better understanding of the tasks.

On **ICT equipment**, the Agency was quick to respond to the needs of the authorities. It provided 100 laptops and 20 printers in a timely fashion by December 2022, despite this number being lower than the request made by the Czech authorities (150 and 50 respectively). The printers supported the TP procedure but were reported to have a short lifespan. Following a formal request, half of the equipment was donated to Czechia upon the OP's conclusion.

The **training** sessions were embedded in the training plan of the authorities. Overall, the Agency exceeded expectations and incorporated additional topics, such as ethics and conflict management. The OP stated that the skills of new recruits and specialised staff of the Czech authorities would be enhanced. It was unclear how the OP intended to measure these results. In addition, there was limited information on how the knowledge of the training was applied. Despite this, available data showed a positive and increased uptake of training. Whereas 26 individuals participated in 11 sessions in 2022, the number rose to 214 individuals in 24 sessions in 2023. The cost-efficiency of the translation of the training modules was favourable, with much lower costs than planned. The overall participant feedback was very positive and there was a special interest in soft skills topics. The increased interest for capacity building in 2023 stimulated more structured planning and a swifter implementation of activities.

Despite a prompt reply to the request for support, the Agency's operational activities commenced in September 2022, three months after the signature of the OP. The OP did not plan for an inception period with tangible start-up deliverables. The original OP was ambitious in what it planned to deliver, and evolved in a more realistic amended OP. This was illustrated in the Agency's informal results framework which included two activities for measure 1 (out of five in the OP) and one for measure 2 (out of four in the OP). Result output level indicators, which only included targets as of 2023, were at times in nature input indicators, further limiting the effectiveness assessment.

The planned budget for 2022 was initially 5 810 964 EUR but was reduced to 294 788 EUR in October 2022, to exclude the foreseen container units. For 2023, the budget was initially set at 1 160 589 EUR but then revised to 523 239 EUR. By the end of 2023, internal financial monitoring indicated that 90 % of the revised budget was committed, primarily allocated to interpretation and training costs. Of the 35 training sessions, 11 were supported with translated material. These translations cost on average 6 849 EUR per session, with the tailor-made training on introduction to vulnerability being the most expensive session. Since a majority of the training sessions (69 %) did not require any type of translations, the total cost seems fair. Given the budget revision and activity amendments, the OP's cost-efficiency appears adequate.



The OP benefitted from the multi-disciplinary collaboration among different Agency centres. There were some opportunities for enhanced synergy with external organisations, particularly those deploying EU funds (e.g., the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund). While the OP included limited interactions with other organisations providing similar support (e.g., UNICEF and the UNHCR), the close communication with national counterparts, who coordinated the support of the different entities, ensured the coherence of the OP.

## 4.2. How did the Agency make a difference through the action?

The EU added value of the Agency's intervention through the OP was mixed. The Agency responded to the request of the Member State with an OP encompassing different fields of support related to TP. In practice however, the largest OP budget component, namely the provision of container housing, was not provided upon reconsideration of the authorities. This support could have contributed to the contingency capacity of the Czech authorities but was ultimately not needed.

The EUAA's support in the fields of interpretation, IT equipment, and information provision was of limited added value in view of its size and scope. Moreover, over time, the migratory pressure reduced and it became clear that there were alternative solutions at hand. The increased uptake of the EUAA's training support involving in-country and tailor-made translated training sessions is likely to trigger positive effects beyond the duration of the OP. These training activities could be undertaken under permanent support in collaboration with the six Czech officials who followed the Becoming an EUAA Trainer and Assessor module in 2023. This pool, however, remains relatively small and could be further expanded.

## 4.3. Is the action relevant?

The Czech government was under disproportionate migratory pressure at the time of the request for support in April 2022. While the country managed yearly averages of about 1 191<sup>12</sup> asylum requests previously, it granted TP to 352 870 persons between March and May 2022 (see above). This number, which represents over 3 % of Czechia's population, placed the country as one of the largest EU recipients per head of persons fleeing Ukraine<sup>13</sup>. The majority of arrivals were women (45 %) and children (37 %)<sup>14</sup> accommodated in private residences. The government declared the state of emergency on 4 March 2022 and activated to this extent its contingency plan. In this context, support in the field of TP was highly relevant. While there was a significant gender and child rights dimension, it was not clear that the OP took this into account. The overall situation stabilised as of July 2022 with the government lifting the state of emergency shortly after. The number of TP beneficiaries increased gradually from 412 024 in October 2022 to a record 453 858 in April 2023 but decreased to 364 058 persons in October 2023<sup>15</sup>.

---

<sup>12</sup> Average asylum applications between 2018 and 2021. Eurostat (accessed 4/12/2023):

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/view/migr\\_asytpfm](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/view/migr_asytpfm)

<sup>13</sup> See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20220603-1>.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://reporting.unhcr.org/czech-republic-ukraine-situation-update>.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/277?sv=54&geo=10819&secret=unhcrrestricted>.



The main challenge was the feasibility to deliver the ambitious activities foreseen in the initial OP within a short period, which led to unrealistic expectations. A clearer definition of the needs, including the place, characteristics and/or modalities and timeframe for the delivery of container units, could have led to a more focused preparation, faster response and delivery of the activities. The needs assessment would have been more complete if it had incorporated a more detailed mapping of the different actors supporting the authorities on TP. The lifting of the state of emergency also limited the flexibility of the working modalities of the authorities, making the geographic allocation of the container houses challenging. With the possibility to offer Ukrainian arrivals alternative residential housing and a decrease in arrivals, the need for containers became redundant.

These changes triggered the need for a revision of the OP and a withdrawal of the request for accommodation support. The authorities did not consider information provision activities relevant as these were not country-specific enough. The extension of the OP allowed the Agency to complete outstanding activities in the field of interpretation, training, and ICT support.

The training support was highly appreciated. There was more interest in soft skills subjects such as ethics, conflict management and mediation rather than theoretical sessions on the legal framework of TP.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusions

The EUAA and Czechia signed an OP in June 2022, covering TP reception and training, intended to support the country following disproportionate migratory pressure as a consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The OP was extended until December 2023 and subsequently amended and planned a limited set of activities in the field of TP, such as interpretation, information provision, ICT equipment, and training.

In mid-2022, the OP was **relevant** given the disproportionate pressure stemming from the influx of arrivals from Ukraine. Czechia granted TP to 352 870 persons between March and May 2022, which placed the country as one of the largest EU recipients of persons fleeing Ukraine. However, shortly after the plan's signature, the situation stabilised leading to a deprioritisation of some of the foreseen activities. The OP's relevance as a consequence gradually decreased over time. The largest support action, the supply of up to 200 container units, was discontinued in view of changing needs and alternative solutions. While the planned information provision was deprioritised, the authorities appreciated the support in the fields of training, interpretation, and ICT equipment. The extension of the OP allowed for the implementation of additional training activities, in line with the authorities' needs.

The original OP was ambitious in what it planned to deliver. While the OP initially included different areas of TP support, its main component (containers representing 95 % of the budget) was ultimately not implemented due to a reassessment by the Czech authorities. Interpretation, training, and ICT equipment support were delivered adequately in line with the plans. In particular, the training support



exceeded expectations and incorporated additional topics. Information provision was not implemented. As such, the **effectiveness** of the OP’s result areas ranged from ‘fair’ to ‘very good’.

The OP was challenged with a number of delays. Examples, often due to external factors, are the delayed deployment of interpreters and the related impact on their training, as well as limited progress in the delivery of containers. The former did not materialise due to the change in in-country needs. The activity amendments led to a significant budget reduction, which had an impact on the Agency’s budget management. This can be considered as an adverse cost-efficiency finding, in view of the time and resources invested in its preparation. In hindsight, however, this was the best option from a cost-effectiveness perspective as there was no longer the need for this expensive support. The Agency was also flexible in adapting to the evolving needs. As such, **efficiency** can be assessed as ‘good’ throughout both measures.

The OP was very **coherent** with the national training planning and practices. It benefitted from synergies across Agency centres and with national counterparts. The Agency could have increased its efficiency by consulting other international and national actors at the needs assessment stage to identify potential duplication of similar activities (with some utilising EU funds).

The increased uptake of training support during the OP can have lasting effects beyond the OP’s duration, thereby leading to **EU added value**. Some of the other OP activities (e.g., interpretation) had a ‘fair’ contribution to the national contingency capacity as alternatives were available at national level. The extension of the OP beyond May 2023 allowed for the continuation of some of the planned activities, which were nonetheless not of high added value.

Table 1 gives an overview of the assessment of the evaluation criteria by result, based on the evaluation team’s judgements derived from the analysis and the triangulation of available data sources.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria by result<sup>16</sup>

	Initial OP (10 Jun 22 – 16 May 23)		Amended OP (17 May – 31 Dec 23)
	Measure 1 (TPD)	Measure 2 (training)	Measure 1 (TPD)
Relevance	Fair/Good	Good	Fair
Effectiveness	Fair	Good	Very good
Efficiency	Good	Good	Good
Coherence	Good	Very good	Good
EU added value	Fair	Good	Fair/Good

<sup>16</sup> The five evaluation criteria were rated using a four-point scale (insufficient, fair, good, very good). These ratings are judgements based on the triangulation of different information sources, such as interviews and internal data.



## 5.2. Good practices and lessons learnt

This evaluation observes a number of good practices that took place during the OP:

- The deployment of EUAA staff to Czechia, particularly at the start of the OP when activities were still being defined, allowed for a stronger cooperation;
- The Czech counterparts hosted the Agency expert in an adequate office space on their premises, thereby facilitating optimal communication and coordination at workplace level;
- The Agency swiftly adapted and reacted to the changing needs at national level. They took into account the lessons learned from the Czechia OP to develop internal guidance for future requests;
- There was a close collaboration between the Agency's centres on the design of the customised container units' layout with experience being gained even though implementation did not follow;
- The training component was flexible, adapted to new needs and was embedded in the authorities' training plan;
- The transfer of material support with the closure of the OP was documented transparently.

This evaluation also takes note of a number of **horizontal considerations** which can be taken forward.

The OP was very small in scope and was accompanied by a limited results framework, which included only a select number of elements from the more detailed Annex 1 to the OP. In similar small OP settings, it could be more useful to apply short-term flexible workplans with deliverables and focus less on higher-end results. This would also make the assessment of effectiveness more meaningful.

The Agency has learnt through this experience that the support to Member States with the provision of container units can be complex. There is a need to build on these recent experiences and develop strategic guidance (or operating procedures) at Agency level to allow all concerned parties to have clarity on possibilities, start and exit conditions, workflows, and timelines.

A clearer definition of the needs, timelines and implementation modalities are key to align expectations. This underlines the importance of ensuring that the needs assessment captures basic technical specifications. In addition, in order to ensure effectiveness, operational preconditions should be better followed up in coordination with the counterparts.

The evaluation corroborates some of the recommendations made in previous Agency evaluations<sup>17</sup>, such as the need for the inclusion of a clear start-up phase for new OPs and the simplification of modalities for the delivery of short-term emergency OP support. Similar to previous exercises, the current report also observes the need for clearer interpretation deliverables. In the Czechia OP, interpretation outcomes could have been enhanced with earlier training support, in particular if the core group of interpreters was more stable. There was also the opportunity to provide more gender-sensitive interpretation deployments, such as targeted deployment of female interpreters for health screenings.

---

<sup>17</sup> See the Agency's meta-evaluation of horizontal recommendations of evaluations of OPs conducted between 2019 and 2023.



The authorities coordinated the support of different organisations. However, it would have been beneficial for the Agency to seek synergies and complementarity with other EU funding instruments (in line with a meta-evaluation recommendation). This could have been enhanced if a clear mapping of actors was undertaken at needs assessment stage and updated thereafter.

### 5.3. Recommendations

Drawing from the above findings, this evaluation recommends the Agency to optimise the follow-up of the training achievements through permanent support in Czechia. This could be secured with the enlargement of the internal pool of Czech trainers.





## Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used

The aim of this exercise was to answer the following evaluation questions, in line with the EUAA’s evaluation framework.

Criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	How well has the action been able to respond to stakeholders’ needs?
Effectiveness	How successful has the action been in achieving (or progressing towards) the intended results?
Efficiency	To what extent are the costs (including inputs and deployments) of the support justified given the results?
Coherence	To what extent is the action coherent internally and externally?
EU added value	What is the added value resulting from the action compared to what could have been expected from Czechia acting alone?

To answer the above questions, the evaluation team triangulated information from a number of sources, starting with desk research. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders were conducted. These included Agency staff and national counterparts. In total, two group discussions and six individual interviews were conducted with 10 individuals. As the implementation of the OP was underway during the evaluation, documentation referring to the last month of implementation was not available on time.



## Annex 2: Evaluation matrix

Sub-questions	Indicators/descriptors	Norms/judgement criteria	Sources of evidence
<b>Relevance:</b> How well has the action been able to respond to stakeholders' needs?			
Optional prompt question: Did all key stakeholders demonstrate effective commitment (ownership)?	Priority areas identified in the needs assessment	Comparison between needs assessment and OP priority areas with implemented areas	Needs assessment, OP, monitoring and reporting tools, interview
<b>Effectiveness:</b> Did the OP achieve what was planned?			
Optional prompt question: Were there other (unexpected) factors that influenced the results?	Results indicators	Comparison planned targets versus achieved	Internal monitoring data
<b>Efficiency:</b> To what extent are the costs (including inputs and human resources) of the support justified given the results?			
	Output and input indicator values	Relationship achieved outputs versus inputs Qualitative challenges (processes and related indicators)	Qualitative and quantitative monitoring data, financial records, nature of underlying processes needed to achieve the planned results
<b>Coherence:</b> To what extent is the operation coherent internally and externally?			
	Nature of activities and coordination processes	Level of coordination and synergies with other national actors/internal Agency actors	Monitoring data; interviews; planning documents; mapping of national actors in the field of TPD; interviews
<b>EU added value:</b> What is the added value resulting from the operation, compared to what could have been expected from Czechia acting solely?			
	Existence of elements of EUAA added value	Number and level of added value elements related to financial,	Monitoring data; interviews; planning documents; interviews



Sub-questions	Indicators/descriptors	Norms/judgement criteria	Sources of evidence
		technical and material support	



## Annex 3. Intervention logic

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Needs/problems</b></p> <p>Exerted pressure on the country’s registration and reception capacities – need of material, and technical support</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Expected objectives</b></p> <p>As per Member State request: enhancing their capacity to effectively implement the TPD, focusing particularly on the areas of short- and medium-term accommodation and the provision of IT equipment</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Result impact</b></p> <p>Provision of effective operational, technical and emergency support in line with the Agency’s mandate to enable Czechia to implement its obligations under the Common European Asylum System and the TPD</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Result outcomes</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD and provide accommodation for TP beneficiaries</li> <li>2. Enhanced skills of new recruits and specialised staff of the Czech authorities</li> </ol> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD</li> </ol> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD and provide accommodation for TP beneficiaries</li> <li>2. Enhanced skills of new recruits and specialised staff of the Czech authorities</li> </ol>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD</li> </ol>
<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD and provide accommodation for TP beneficiaries</li> <li>2. Enhanced skills of new recruits and specialised staff of the Czech authorities</li> </ol>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced capacity of the Czech authorities to effectively implement the TPD</li> </ol>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Result outputs</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in the provision of accommodation for beneficiaries of TP</li> <li>1.2 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> <li>2.0 Support to training and professional development in the context of the implementation of the TPD</li> </ol> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> </ol> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in the provision of accommodation for beneficiaries of TP</li> <li>1.2 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> <li>2.0 Support to training and professional development in the context of the implementation of the TPD</li> </ol>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> </ol>
<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in the provision of accommodation for beneficiaries of TP</li> <li>1.2 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> <li>2.0 Support to training and professional development in the context of the implementation of the TPD</li> </ol>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Support in implementing procedures and activities regarding TP</li> </ol>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Activities</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <p><b>Under output 1.1 and 1.2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of material/in-kind support to temporarily expand and improve accommodation capacity for TP beneficiaries ;</li> <li>• Support to the site design/site planning (in person or online, upon mutual agreement);</li> <li>• Provision of information material;</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of interpretation services;</li> <li>• Provision of ICT support and equipment;</li> <li>• Provision of training on TP-related topics/modules.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <p><b>Under output 1.1 and 1.2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of material/in-kind support to temporarily expand and improve accommodation capacity for TP beneficiaries ;</li> <li>• Support to the site design/site planning (in person or online, upon mutual agreement);</li> <li>• Provision of information material;</li> </ul>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of interpretation services;</li> <li>• Provision of ICT support and equipment;</li> <li>• Provision of training on TP-related topics/modules.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)</u></p> <p><b>Under output 1.1 and 1.2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of material/in-kind support to temporarily expand and improve accommodation capacity for TP beneficiaries ;</li> <li>• Support to the site design/site planning (in person or online, upon mutual agreement);</li> <li>• Provision of information material;</li> </ul>	<p><u>Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of interpretation services;</li> <li>• Provision of ICT support and equipment;</li> <li>• Provision of training on TP-related topics/modules.</li> </ul>		



- Provision of interpretation services;
- Additional support for the implementation of TPD-related activities, including ICT equipment, upon agreement between the EUAA and the Czech authorities.

**Under output 2.0:**

- Roll-out of national induction programs on large scale, including specific focus on the TP legal framework, aimed to strengthen the capacity of newly recruited staff;
- Strengthening the capacity of frontline personnel from the Department of Migration and Asylum Policy, and of other relevant stakeholders acting on behalf of the Czech authorities, as well as of personnel at the central level in the Ministry of the Interior, to provide relevant information to displaced Ukrainians, through basic and specialised training on communication skills, information provision to vulnerable categories, and communication in emergency contexts;
- Supporting the specialisation of the Czech authorities and personnel from relevant stakeholders acting on behalf of the authorities, in particular in identifying and addressing special needs of displaced persons from Ukraine and any other relevant topics;
- Facilitating the Czech authorities' long-term self-reliability by expanding pool of existing trainers through the enrolment of appointed personnel in the EUAA's train the trainer sessions on asylum and reception matters, as needed;
- Training interpreters deployed to support information provision activities.



### Inputs

All inputs were conditional on the Agency's budget availability:

Initial OP (10 June 2022 – 15 May 2023)

**Under output 1.1 and 1.2:**

- Material support: provision of up to 200 containers.
- Human resources:
  - 2 site design/site planner;
  - Up to 20 interpreters.

**Under output 2.0:**

Human resources:

- 2 training experts;
- 1 training support officer;
- Up to 10 interpreters.

Horizontal support can include inter alia provision of equipment, works, services, communication/promotional material, costs for training/meetings/workshops, infrastructure costs, ICT equipment, office supplies and others.

Amendment (16 May 2023 – 31 Dec 2023)

Human resources: interpretation support – up to 20 Interpreters

### External factors

Migratory emergency context following the Russian invasion in Ukraine, national and international laws, policies and practices; availability of financial and human resources; COVID-19 pandemic; actions by national counterparts, international and non-governmental organisations