

Centre of Migration and Refugee Law, PF CUNI

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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CENTRE FOR MIGRATION
AND REFUGEE LAW

CeMiReLa



CeMiReLa in 2024

The year 2024 was filled with intense and diverse activity for CeMiReLa.

The first months of the year were dedicated to the organization of the international conference **"Legal Discourses on International and EU Migration and Refugee Law in Central and Eastern Europe: Emerging New Narratives or Business as Usual?"**. It took place at our Faculty on 9 and 10 May 2024 and was attended by almost a hundred colleagues from various countries. We were fortunate to host leading European experts in their respective fields - whether it was the opening presentations by ECtHR Judge Kateřina Šimáčková and CJEU Advocate General Laila Medina, or the academic panels with such prominent figures as Vasilka Sancin, Pavel Šturma, Boldiszar Nagy, Iris Goldner Lang, Veronika Bílková or Tamás Molnár. Combined with the contributions of an emerging generation of young legal scholars from all over Europe, it was an extremely inspiring meeting. It is clear from the feedback that the conference was a success and that we have once again shown that we have a place on the migration map of Europe.

Alongside the preparation of the conference, we worked intensively on the UNHCR project. Thanks to this project, we had the opportunity to revise the Migration Law module we teach. For some time now, we have wanted to review our courses in relation to graduate outcomes and assess whether their structure, content, and teaching methods align with our objectives. Thanks to the collaboration with Dr. Schutz from the Legal Skills Department, we have done so and have worked through the curriculum, lesson plans and new scripts in detail.

The second part of the project proved to be an extremely interesting challenge, in which we prepared both audio and video clips that we wanted to use for teaching and for a wider audience. Ultimately, this led to a collaboration with highly skilled professionals Konstantin Sulimenko and Tadeusz Burski and a **set of four videos on refugees**. What started as an effort to document temporary refuge stories evolved into a collaboration with the Memory of the Nation organization, resulting in the filmed series *Stories of Czech Refugee Experience*. We will continue this work in the coming year and hopefully use our newly acquired skills more in the classroom. Personally, I am also very happy for the opportunity to collaborate with the graphic artist Filip Blažek or the painter Toy Box, who drew the cover of our upcoming book *Migration Law* and with whom we will continue to work. Both are professionals whom I have long admired.

In relation to the second part of this project, we embarked more on the path of communicating the topic to the public. Migration has enjoyed its fifteen minutes of fame virtually continuously, and understanding of its mechanisms and legal basis remains relatively low. We plan to focus even more on this aspect over the coming years.

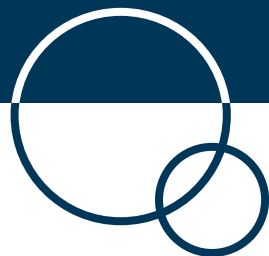
This year, for the first time, we have been able to work as a team. We were able to meet and discuss more days a week, and smaller teams were formed for projects and events, working together on an ongoing basis. The results, which you will read more about in the rest of this report, are worthwhile and I am therefore very proud of all the members of the Centre.

JUDr. Věra Honusková, Ph.D.,

Head of the Centre of Migration and Refugee Law,
Faculty of Law, Charles University



Members



Věra Honusková

Founder and Head
of the Centre



Eliška Flídrová

Researcher, Deputy
Head of the Centre



Enes Zaimović

PhD student and
assistant professor



**core
team**

Sára Barčáková

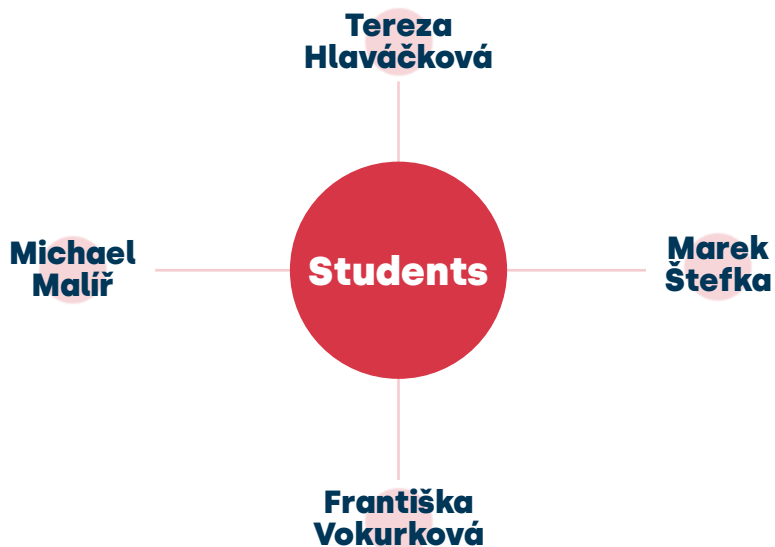
Research Fellow

Tomáš Svoboda

Research Fellow

Štěpán Komárek

Research Fellow



What We Do



Teaching Migration

We offer both theoretical foundations and practical insights into migration and refugee law at national, European, and international levels.

Research and Publications

We create the necessary conditions for the development of experts and academics, we publish and actively participate in conferences.

What we do?

Participation in the Public Debate

We contribute to policy-making and explain important issues to the general public.

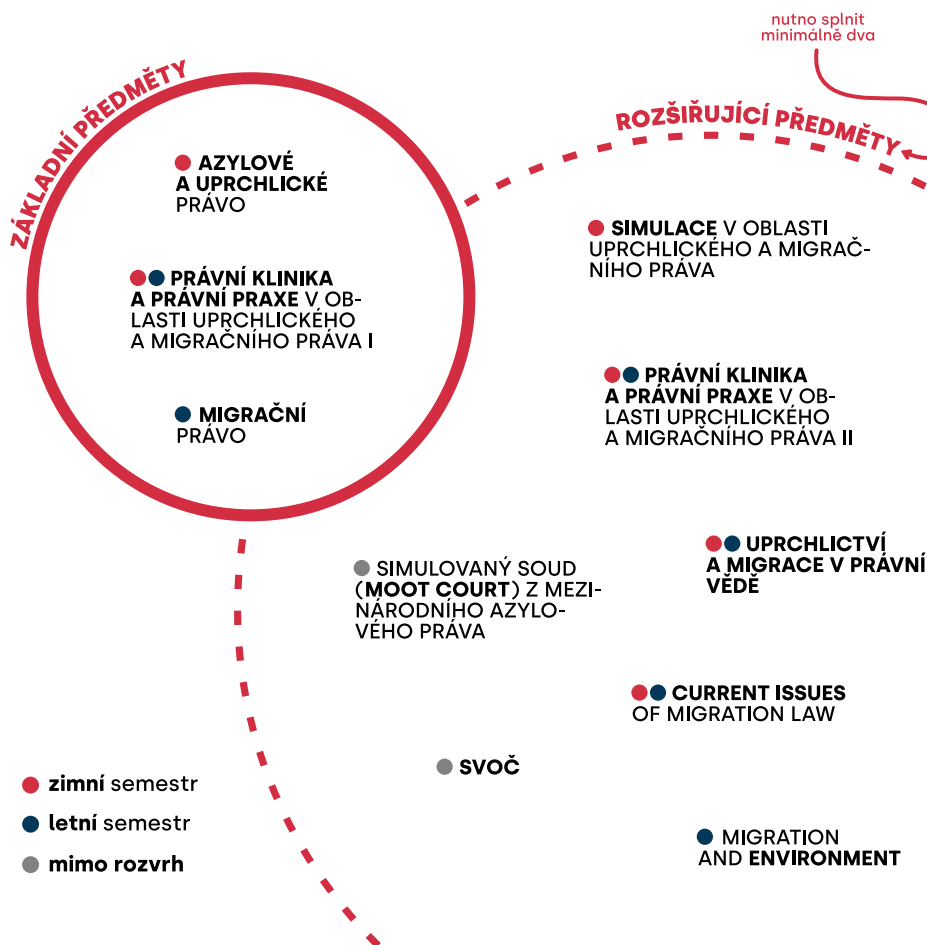
Organizing Events

We organise events for the general and professional public and bring together important stakeholders.

Teaching Migration

The year 2024 was, in many ways, transformational for the Centre. Thanks to the support of UNHCR, we had the opportunity to stop and critically evaluate our teaching methods and focus. The result of this process is a reformed version of the Migration and Refugee Law module, which aims to provide students with a comprehensive introduction to migration and refugee issues. We approach teaching through a combination of innovative approaches such as the flipped classroom method, the inclusion of simulations and moot courts, and opportunities to engage in legal clinics. As a result, we are not only providing students with a theoretical foundation, but also with the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have gained in practice.

Uprchlické a migrační právo profilací modul — HMOD0005



Organized events and activities

International conference

„Legal Discourses on International and EU Migration and Refugee Law in Central and Eastern Europe: Emerging New Narratives or Business as Usual?“

9—10 May 2024

The major event of this year, which we prepared together with the Corvinus University of Budapest, took place at our faculty on 9 and 10 May 2024 and was attended by almost a hundred colleagues from many countries. We examined refugee law doctrine in Central and Eastern European countries, which share a distinct historical background from Western Europe. In a packed two-day programme, we explored whether and how the doctrine in these countries is influenced by their shared past.

The quality of the programme was assured by the scientific board of the conference, which consisted of senior experts from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. After the opening of the conference by the head of the UNHCR office in Prague, the participants had the opportunity to hear opening remarks by ECtHR Judge Kateřina Šimáček and Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the EU, Laila Medina. The programme was framed by two roundtables, which brought together colleagues from our part of Europe who have been working on refugee and migration law for a long time and whose voices are heard internationally; the three panels that form the core of the conference featured young colleagues who are now establishing themselves in the field of international and European law. The event was made possible thanks to support from the CORE programme and the European Commission Representation in Prague.

Conference Report



Other events

Distinction as a necessary attribute of a human rights perspective?

3 April 2024

A discussion with Gwendolyn Albert, an American who has lived in the Czech Republic for a very long time, and who is involved in issues that Czech society itself cannot see without outside help.

Discussion with Linda Janků on the activities of the Public Defender of Rights in the field of alien law.

25 April 2024

Linda Janků is a lawyer at the Czech Ombudsman's Office focusing on alien and asylum law.

The limits of humanity: the instrumentalization of migration

20 November 2024

Debate with Nataša Chmelíčková (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic) and Ota Hlinomaz (UNHCR) at the student festival Faculty Night.

Cílová stanice Evropa (Destination Europe)

18 December 2024

An afternoon in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. An interactive simulation allowing students to engage in migration policy-making processes.

Forever undesirable? Working with the Schengen Information System and other EU databases in the field of internal security and migration.

15 April 2024

Lecture by Michael Weiss from the Police of the Czech Republic (SIRENE National Headquarters) on the topic of information systems (Schengen Information System and others).

Camp Peira 2024

18–20 October 2024

Traditional multi-day simulation of international armed conflict with overlap into humanitarian and refugee law.

Information
Video



Discussion with Ana Samobor from the University of Ljubljana

4 November 2024

Debate on the decisions of international courts in the field of migration against Slovenia and the current refugee situation in Slovenia.

Stateless persons: Invisible neighbours among us

26 December 2024

Workshop organized in cooperation with UNHCR on the issue of stateless persons. Speakers included Gábor Guylai (Hungarian Helsinki Committee), Kateřina Radová (Office of the Government Commissioner for Representation of the Czech Republic before the ECHR), Sam Mosollai (UNHCR), Alžběta Králová (Masaryk University), Michal Pitař (The Organization for Aid to Refugees) and Enes Zaimović (CeMiReLa).

Research and Publications

Conference papers

Prague: Conference Legal Discourses on International and EU Migration and Refugee Law in Central and Eastern Europe: *Emerging New Narratives or Business as Usual?*

9—10 May 2024

Enes Zaimović – Administrative courts as promoters of public international law? Protection of stateless individuals and the emergence of the sovereignty narrative: the case of Czechia

Sára Barčáková and Tomáš Svoboda – Teaching Migration and Refugee Law

Pardubice: Conference Thinking Conflict and Resilience in Society

16—18 September 2024

Věra Honusková – Thinking conflict in Migration and Refugee Law

Enes Zaimović and Sára Barčáková – Balancing the Right to Stay of Ukrainians: The Perspective of the Czech Republic and Ukraine

Uppsala: Conference Time, Temporalities and Migration Law: *International seminar on the role and meaning of time in migration law*

5—6 September 2024

Enes Zaimović and Věra Honusková – Temporariness of protection: Can we justly reflect the passage of time?

Brno: Conference at the Czech Ombudsman's office *Current questions of asylum and migration law*

14—15 November 2024

Enes Zaimović and Veronika Víchová – Beyond the temporariness: extension of temporary protection and "special long-term stay" for its holders

Tomáš Svoboda – How do Czech courts rule on the detention of families with children?

online conference SORM

23—25 September 2024

Věra Honusková – The Future of Temporary Protection under the EU Crisis Regulation

Articles

SVOBODA, Tomáš. Zajištění nezletilých cizinců a zvláštní standardy Evropské úmluvy o lidských právech: jejich výklad a použití v českém právu.

Časopis pro právní vědu a praxi. 2024, roč. 32, č. 1, s. 113–135.

Available from: <https://doi.org/10.5817/CPVP2024-1-4>.

HONUSKOVÁ, Věra. The Migration Law Programme Inspiration for Teaching of International Law.

In: GAUCI, Jean-Pierre a SANDER, Barrie (ed.). Teaching International Law. Routledge, 2024. ISBN 9781003429265.

International Cooperation

COST

/European Cooperation in Science and Technology

CeMiReLa is now part of Blue Rights Action, an interdisciplinary network of European scientists working on the topic of human rights at sea. More at: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA23103/>

Odysseus Network

An international academic network that brings together experts on migration and asylum in Europe. The member of the network is Věra Honusková.
<https://odysseus-network.eu/>

Shelter law-making

/Legal response to massive migration caused by Russian aggression against Ukraine

In this project, funded by the Visegrad Fund, Věra Honusková and Enes Zaimović, together with colleagues from the V4 countries, are addressing issues related to the arrival of displaced persons from Ukraine in the context of the Visegrad Four countries.

Participation in the Public Debate

This year, with the support of the UNHCR, we created a series of four videos called The Refugee. The videos aim to introduce the general public to the topic of refugeehood, explain basic legal concepts and explain the reasons why people may make the journey. Students and graduates of the Faculty of Law of Charles University collaborated in the creation of the videos.

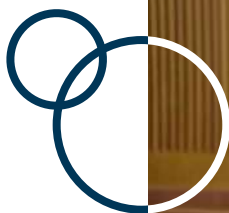
The first video introduces viewers to the definition of a refugee. It asks the question: Who is a refugee? It focuses on the reasons for being a refugee, but also on who is not a refugee. The second video explains in more detail the principle of non-refoulement, which is the cornerstone of refugee law. It guides the viewer through this principle in the form of the popular true crime genre against the backdrop of the story of Jens Soering. The third video in the series makes it even more dramatic. Viewers can follow the story of Alex, a refugee who decides to flee his country in the face of persecution. Alex's story begins at home and ends at the border. His journey is full of twists and turns, dangerous and challenging, and he even encounters smugglers along the way. The fourth video immerses viewers in the process of applying for international protection. It explains the different steps of the procedure, from the application itself, to the interview, to the final decision by the Ministry of the Interior.

Filming took place largely on the premises of the Faculty of Law of the Charles University, but also in the forests, at Prague Airport, in the reception centre and in front of the Ministry of the Interior.

The screenplay was written by Konstantin Sulimenko and the camera and editing was provided by Ted Burski.

**„The Refugee“
Series**





*preview from the
series The Refugee*



Stories of the Czech Refugee Experience

In cooperation with the Memory of the Nation, we are currently launching the project called **Stories of Czech Refugee Experience**. Supported by UNHCR, the project takes a journey through Czech and Czechoslovak refugee history and follows the stories of its important actors. It particularly focuses on the period of the first post-Velvet Revolution years, when the modern, post-communist chapter of Czech asylum and migration policy began to be written and which brought the first stress test of the system, namely the arrival of thousands of people in the context of the war in Yugoslavia.

This series of memoir interviews presents the stories of those who were forced by circumstances to leave their homeland and seek refuge on Czech territory. Additionally, it also follows the lives of those who helped them in this difficult situation and contributed to their acceptance or integration into society. The project is implemented by the Centre for Migration and Refugee Law at the Faculty of Law of Charles University with the support of UNHCR Czech Republic.

Media appearances and interviews

Members of the Centre frequently provide comments and interviews to the media. In an interview with EURACTIV, for example, Věra Honusková described the impact of the European Migration Pact on the future of migration in Europe.



Legislative and advisory work

Finally, CeMiReLa is involved in the development of migration and refugee policies. Two activities are worth mentioning in this area. Tomáš Svoboda and Věra Honusková were members of a working group of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic on alternatives to detention of families with children. Věra Honusková is also a member of the Advisory Panel of the Government Commissioner for Human Rights, which deals with issues of adaptation and integration of persons from Ukraine in the Czech Republic.

Partnerships and Funding

Centre for Migration and Refugee Law could not exist without the support of our partners. The backing of the UNHCR, with whom we confirmed a long-term partnership in 2024 through a Memorandum of Cooperation, is crucial for the Centre. We are deeply grateful for all the support!

*Memorandum
of UK and UNHCR*



Zastoupení v České republice



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