

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in the Czech Republic

Introduction

Although the Czech Republic has constitutionally recognized the importance of legal aid since its establishment in 1993, it has historically lacked an entrenched pro bono culture. However, the Czech Republic's continued integration with its EU neighbours and growing prominence of local and international law firms and NGOs is contributing to increased public awareness of, and greater opportunities for lawyers to engage meaningfully in, pro bono legal work. Efforts by the Pro Bono Alliance and their legal clearinghouse Pro Bono Centrum have encouraged collaboration between law firms and NGOs in the Czech Republic in recent years and the increasing advocacy work by these groups is contributing to the development of a stronger pro bono tradition.

At a glance

Minimum pro bono hours requirement for lawyers?	Specific pro bono licence required?	May foreign lawyers practice pro bono?	Insurance required for law firm pro bono?	Insurance required for in-house pro bono?	Rules to limit advertising pro bono work?	Does pro bono work count to CLE credit?	Limitations for in-house lawyers to do pro bono?
No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	No	No	Yes

The landscape

Professional regulation	
<p>1. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of legal services, including any licensing required to provide legal services. Please highlight any differences for lawyers working as in-house counsel.</p>	<p>Act No. 85/1996 Sb., on the Legal Profession (the “Advocacy Act”) governs the provision of legal services in the Czech Republic. The Advocacy Act describes how legal services can be provided, admission criteria for prospective lawyers, form of practice and rights and duties of lawyers.²</p> <p>The Czech Bar Association (“CBA”) is the central self-governing non-governmental organization responsible for the legal profession in the Czech Republic. The CBA produces professional rules and codes of conduct relating to the provision of legal services and maintains the register of lawyers in the Czech Republic. The CBA is supervised by the Ministry of Justice and</p>

¹ Note that insurance is required to provide pro bono legal services and so in-house lawyers are typically not able to provide such services to the general public, as they do not tend to have insurance coverage.

² See https://www.cak.cz/assets/zoa-2017_ens-dodatkem_final_1.pdf (link not working).

	<p>membership is mandatory for all lawyers practicing in private practice (excluding in-house counsel and government lawyers).³</p> <p>Legal services can only be provided in the Czech Republic by lawyers: (1) qualified to practice in the Czech Republic or (2) qualified in an EU member state.</p> <p>To be eligible to practice in the Czech Republic as a Czech Republic qualified lawyer, such persons must be registered with the CBA. To be registered, the following criteria must be satisfied: (i) full legal capacity; (ii) no criminal record; (iii) obtained a master's degree in law; (iv) served at least three years as a trainee lawyer; (v) passed the professional bar examination for lawyers; and (vi) taken an oath before the president of the CBA.</p>
Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>Although there are several regulations relating to the provision of legal aid (Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁴, Civil Procedure Act⁵, Advocacy Act as well as certain provisions of the Criminal Procedure Act, Administrative Procedure Act and Constitutional Court Act), there are no rules that explicitly regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p> <p>However, the CBA's Code of Conduct encourages lawyers to participate, if called to do so, in projects aimed at the protection of human rights and freedoms, without entitlement to remuneration.⁶</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>No. In the Czech Republic, pro bono legal services are not specifically regulated by law — lawyers may provide free legal assistance voluntarily without special licensing</p>

³ See <https://www.cak.cz/en/> (last visited on November 29, 2024).

⁴ Art 47; Art 37 and 40 of Act No. 2/1993 Sb., on Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, available at: https://www.usoud.cz/fileadmin/user_upload/ustavni_soud_www/Pravni_uprava/AJ/Listina_English_version.pdf (last visited on November 29, 2024).

⁵ Act No. 99/1963Sb., Civil Procedure Act §§30, 138, available at <http://www.czechlegislation.com/law-no-99-1963-coll-civil-procedure/> (link not working).

⁶ Art 18, Resolution No. 1/1997 on Rules of Professional Conduct and Rules of Competition of Lawyers, available at: https://www.cak.cz/assets/code-of-conduct_as-of-march-2018.pdf (last visited on November 29, 2024).

	<p>requirements, though they are subject to the general legal regime for legal services.</p> <p>In-house lawyers do not have the opportunity to provide general legal advice to the public as part of their legal practice. As a result, the ability of in-house lawyers (who are not attorneys) to provide pro bono legal services is more limited. They are restricted to activities that do not involve direct client representation before courts and administrative authorities, such as mentoring programmes or participation in charitable projects.</p>
<p>4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>Foreign lawyers are eligible to apply to the CBA for registration upon passing a recognition exam. However, such lawyers are only permitted to provide legal services in the Czech Republic relating to (1) the law of their country of admission; and (2) matters of international law.⁷</p> <p>EU-qualified lawyers: A lawyer qualified in an EU member state may practice law in the Czech Republic on a long-term basis once he/she has been registered with the CBA.⁸ EU lawyers must have provided legal services for at least three years prior to practicing law in the Czech Republic, although this requirement may be waived by the CBA under certain circumstances.</p> <p>An EU qualified lawyer does not need to register with the CBA if such lawyer wishes to practice in the Czech Republic temporarily.⁹</p> <p>Beyond the aforementioned, no additional qualifications are required to provide pro bono legal services.</p>
<p>5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</p>	<p>Lawyers in the Czech Republic are not required to work a minimum number of pro bono hours.</p>
<p>6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed</p>	<p>Aspiring lawyers in the Czech Republic are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become</p>

⁷ See <https://www.cak.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=6942> (last visited on November 29, 2024).

⁸ See <https://www.cak.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=6811> (last visited on November 29, 2024).

⁹ See <https://www.cak.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=6830> (last visited on November 29, 2024).

lawyers?	licensed lawyers.
7. Aside from mandatory targets (if any), are there aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body?	There is no specific, explicitly recommended number of pro bono hours. The CBA's Code of Conduct states that, when called upon, a lawyer is obliged to participate in projects aimed at promoting or defending human rights and freedoms "to a reasonable extent", unless prevented from doing so for serious reasons, and this participation is without entitlement to remuneration.
8. Do lawyers receive any "Continuing Legal Education" (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	Lawyers do not receive any "Continuing Legal Education" or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked in the Czech Republic.
Insurance and advertising	
9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers? If insurance is required, can lawyers meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider, e.g. in partnership with a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?	Attorneys in the Czech Republic must have professional indemnity legal insurance to practice, which would also cover any pro bono legal work. However, in-house lawyers who are excluded from CBA membership do not typically have professional indemnity insurance if they are employed as an employee under a labor contract. No, in-house lawyers do not have this option.
10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?	There are no rules that prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients in the Czech Republic.
Pro bono practice and culture	
11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?	The main areas of law that present opportunities for pro bono legal services in the Czech Republic include contractual law, civil law and regulatory law matters, particularly relating to data protection and the EU GDPR data privacy regime. Specifically, this includes areas such as family law, healthcare law, debt counselling, consumer law, or asylum law, as well as compensation for damages or non-material harm, enforcement proceedings, and corporate advice for non-profit

	organisations.
12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?	<p>In the Czech Republic, a number of entities provide pro bono legal assistance to varying extents.</p> <p>The Czech Bar Association¹⁰ itself, for example, with its programs “Lawyers for Children’s Homes” and “Lawyers for Schools”.</p> <p>A leading Czech intermediary for pro bono assistance is also the clearinghouse Pro Bono Centrum¹¹, organised by the Pro Bono Alliance. It does not provide legal services to individuals, but to non-profit organisations.</p> <p>Pro bono legal assistance is also provided by international and Czech law firms or individual lawyers as part of their CSR programmes.</p> <p>In a limited scope, pro bono legal assistance is also offered by civil law and community counselling centres, or universities through “legal clinics”, in which senior law students are involved.</p> <p>The Association of Civic Counselling¹² also provides free professional social counselling to citizens in difficult life situations.</p>
13. Are there any noteworthy examples of how innovative technology or artificial intelligence is being used to enable access to pro bono or otherwise as part of pro bono cases or matters?	<p>In the Czech Republic, AI is not yet commonly used as a direct tool for providing pro bono legal advice. However, some AI technologies are beginning to be applied in the legal sector. These are usually supportive tools that allow lawyers to work more efficiently on cases or that provide quick basic information to clients. Areas where AI could be used include chatbots for answering basic legal questions, legal research, or the preparation of simple documents or contracts based on clients’ responses to simple questions. They are expected to be used in pro bono legal advice more and more. The key issue remains ethical and legal responsibility, as AI cannot replace a lawyer in situations requiring detailed legal analysis or an individual approach.</p>

¹⁰ <https://www.cak.cz/pravni-pomoc> (Last viewed on 12 January 2026).

¹¹ <http://www.probonocentrum.cz/> (Last viewed on 12 January 2026).

¹² <https://www.obcanskeporadny.cz/> (Last viewed on 12 January 2026).

Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>Notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in the Czech Republic include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Czech Bar Association: The Czech Bar Association invites lawyers to participate in two flagship pro bono programs: Lawyers for Schools and Lawyers for Children’s Homes. Volunteers deliver legal education sessions to students aged 12+ or to young people and staff in institutional care. The aim is to promote legal awareness, support vulnerable youth, and inspire trust in the rule of law.¹³ • Pro Bono Centrum (PBC): Pro Bono Centrum mediates free legal services. Participating non-profit organizations send requests to PBC based on their clients’ needs and PBC searches for a suitable attorney for them, who is willing and able to provide free legal advice. PBC facilitates the cooperation between pro bono lawyers and the clients of non-profit organizations. The involvement of non-profit organizations in the PBC programme ensures that the law firms are only offered cases that qualify for pro bono assistance.¹⁴
<p>15. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?</p>	<p>There are two public organizations with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Czech Bar Association: The Czech Bar Association invites lawyers to participate in two flagship pro bono programs: Lawyers for Schools and Lawyers for Children’s Homes. Volunteers deliver legal education sessions to students aged 12+ or to young people and staff in institutional care. The aim is to promote legal awareness, support vulnerable youth, and inspire trust in the rule of law.¹⁵

¹³ More information can be found at <http://probonocentrum.cz/english/contacts>

¹⁴ More information can be found at <http://probonocentrum.cz/english/contacts>

¹⁵ More information can be found at <http://probonocentrum.cz/english/contacts>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro Bono Centre (PBC): Pro Bono Centre mediates free legal services. Participating non-profit organizations send requests to PBC based on their clients' needs and PBC searches for a suitable lawyer for them, who is willing to act pro bono. PBC facilitates the cooperation between the pro bono lawyers and clients of the non-profit organizations. The involvement of non-profit organizations in the PBC programme ensures that the law firms are only offered cases which qualify for pro bono legal services.¹⁶
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>In the traditional Czech competition Lawyer of the Year, organised jointly by the Czech Bar Association and Epravo.cz, among the regularly announced awards is the Pro Bono award for free legal services provided to those in need.</p> <p>There is also a Pro Bono/CSR category in the Czech competition Law Firm of the Year, organised by Epravo.cz.</p>

Acknowledgements

Name of law firm: Havel & Partners

Name of lawyers: Dvorakova Veronika and Jonakova Eva

Learn more

[Navigate the full Global Pro Bono Guide](#) to explore the global landscape and pro bono practices and opportunities across 100+ jurisdictions.

¹⁶ More information can be found at <http://probonocentrum.cz/english/contacts>