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## Czech refuseniks



Canada is expected to impose visas on Czechs any day now, and Czech officials are perplexed. If there's a problem of too many Czech asylum-seekers, they say, it's the immigration laws in Canada that need to be changed. Ex-Vice PM Alexandr Vondra told Czech Radio that Canada's liberal immigration policy falls outside the Western mainstream. It is odd that visas are supposed to be the filter that keeps immigrants out. Shouldn't it be harder to get political asylum than a visa? Czechs have also battled with immigration anomalies. For years, visas and residence permits for some non-Westerners were issued more on the basis of whom you knew or how much you paid. Manufacturers always managed to find cheap hands, regardless of the societal costs. The rules have been tightened, but most Czechs still have no idea what their country's immigration policy is and what the Lisbon treaty will do to it.

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