



The invisible burden of migraine: the need of a systemic change

A white paper on the consequences of current system inefficiencies and policy recommendations on improving patient care

Country profile: Czechia 

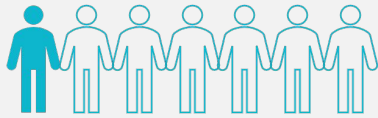
CRA Authors: Michele Pistollato, Hannah Armstrong, Angelina Petrova, Jade Si-Ahmed

Expert Contributors: Rýza Blažejovská, Tomáš Doležal, Tomáš Nežádal



Organon commissioned Charles River Associates to bring together experts from seven countries – Canada, Czechia, France, Israel, Italy, Romania, and Spain – to examine current migraine policy challenges. Through evidence review and expert discussions, the work identified key gaps in diagnosis, access, and care pathways, and highlighted opportunities for policy change to improve outcomes and system efficiency. The comprehensive findings are detailed in a full white paper; this document is a Czechia-specific country profile

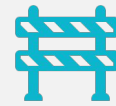
Migraine at a glance



Neurological disorder that affects **1 in 7** people worldwide¹



3x more common in **women**¹



Diagnostic delays, stigma, and access barriers persist despite new treatments



People with migraine face **several years on average** before receiving a formal diagnosis from symptom onset



Migraine causes **physical, psychological, social and functional impairments**



Global **reimbursement and access restrictions limit uptake** of effective migraine treatments

Methodology



Literature review

Conducted a country-level review of existing literature (academic, medical, and grey) on migraine barriers and manifestation of burden



Interviews with experts

Validated the identified challenges with country experts (HCPs, Health Economist, Patient Representative)



Expert focus group

Held expert focus groups to discuss country-specific and broad challenges with country experts and developed actionable recommendations

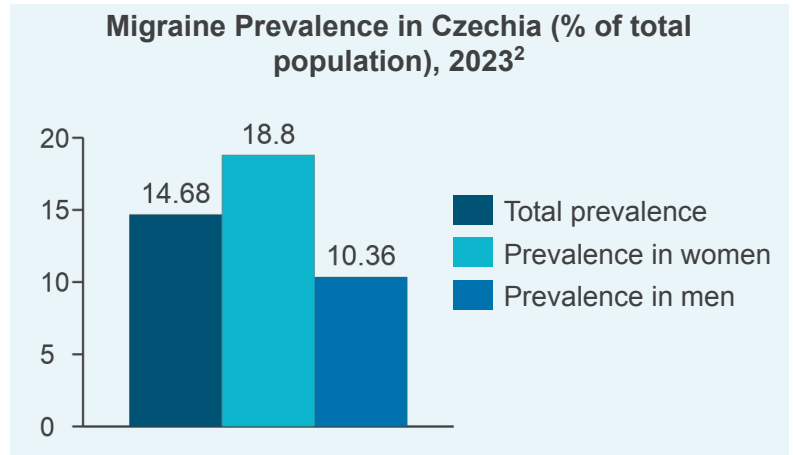


Whitepaper drafting

Developed a whitepaper capturing collected insights as well as tailored country profiles (Canada, Czechia, France, Israel, Italy, Romania, Spain)



Expert contributors: Rýza Blažejovská (Founder and chair, Migrena-help), Tomáš Doležal (Managing Director, Institute of Health Economics and Technology Assessment), Tomáš Nežádal (Neurologist, Military University Hospital)



The burden of migraine on patients and societies in Czechia

Impact on quality of life

Migraine has a **significant impact on a person's physical, emotional, and social wellbeing** as well as on **their family and caregiver(s)**



Daily function

- **70%** of people with migraine **who are parents** must use **childcare support** due to their illness³
- Adults with migraine **may limit contact with friends** due to the negative effects of migraine⁴

Psychological impact

- People with migraine are **over 3 times more likely to experience anxiety or depression** than those without migraine⁴

Direct medical costs for the healthcare system and the patient

Direct medical expenditure includes both **healthcare system costs** and **patient out-of-pocket spending** related to **diagnosis, treatment, and complementary management approaches**



Out-of-pocket

- **26%** of adults with migraine reported spending **~€40 on medicines a month**
- **34%** of adults with migraine reported that the **cost of treatment** has a significant impact on their **finances**⁵

Healthcare utilisation

- Adults with migraine report **increased use of healthcare services**
- **15%** ended up in the emergency room³
 - **5%** were **hospitalised**, most more than once³

Broader economic burden

The broader economic burden includes the **hidden economic impacts of migraine**, arising from **presenteeism, absenteeism, and additional household expenses**



€13 631
Average estimate of productivity loss per migraine patient (including absenteeism and presenteeism)⁶



€313 mn

Extrapolated to the total number of patients eligible for treatment with targeted) in the Czech Republic⁶

How can we achieve better migraine diagnosis and care in Czechia?

Awareness

! Many patients endure and minimise symptoms without identifying them as a legitimate medical issue, which can delay diagnosis; 40% of surveyed migraine patients did not know that migraine is the cause of their symptoms⁵



Recommendation: Increase public and patient education to reframe migraine as a neurological disease, detail the frequent symptoms, raise awareness of effective treatments, and combat misinformation

Diagnosis and Referral

! There is limited migraine awareness among GPs; 15% of surveyed adults with migraine experienced indifference or misunderstanding from HCPs⁷



Recommendation: Empower HCPs to efficiently diagnose migraine by improving formal medical education and additional certified training on migraine for GPs and neurologists

! 43% of people with migraine must see 2-3 specialists before receiving the correct diagnosis; about half wait over 2-5 years before receiving their first treatment³



Recommendation: Provide clearer referral guidance and targeted education for GPs to support earlier referral when indicated for patients to ensure mitigation of diagnostic delay

! A shortage of headache centres, and regional variance, severely restricts access to specialist migraine care, with 65% of patients struggling to obtain an appointment³



Recommendation: Set up and leverage telehealth tools to provide remote access to headache specialists for migraine management advice and prescription renewal, ensuring that patients in rural areas receive timely specialist support even when in-person visits are not feasible

Treatment

! SÚKL reimbursement of CGRP mAbs is restricted by criteria requiring failure or intolerance of multiple prior migraine preventives, potentially delaying patient access and limiting uptake of these therapies⁷



Recommendation: Improve alignment between migraine treatment reimbursement policies and the benefits recognised in clinical guidelines and by society

! GPs and pharmacists are under-utilised in migraine management (such as prevention of medication overuse, prescription renewal), even though overloaded specialist centres cause delays in accessing care⁷



Recommendation: Expand the role of GPs and pharmacists in providing migraine management advice, renewing prescriptions of appropriate treatments, and preventing medication overuse

Bibliography

1. Rossi, Maria Francesca, et al. "Sex and Gender Differences in Migraines: A Narrative Review." *Neurological Sciences*, vol. 43, no. 9, 2022, pp. 5729–34. PubMed Central, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10072-022-06178-6>.
2. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. (2025). GBD Results. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington. Available from <https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-results/>
3. Value Outcomes s.r.o. & Migréna-help. (2023). Dopady migrény na pacienty, společnost a ekonomiku České republiky: Analýza perspektivy pacienta – souhrn závěrečné zprávy [PDF]. [https://2fe5c4f39a.clvaw-cdnwnd.com/b8520ffc0272574e5f24bb5115ca862a/200003018-9a6f99a6fc/Migrena_analyza_souhrn_2023-05-03%20\(1\).pdf?ph=2fe5c4f39a](https://2fe5c4f39a.clvaw-cdnwnd.com/b8520ffc0272574e5f24bb5115ca862a/200003018-9a6f99a6fc/Migrena_analyza_souhrn_2023-05-03%20(1).pdf?ph=2fe5c4f39a)
4. Riedlova, P., Zahradnikova, B., Skybova, D., Slachtova, H., Jirik, V., & Tomaskova, H. (2023, September 25). Associations between migraine and possible risk factors in the Czech Republic. *Frontiers in Neurology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fneur.2023.1256650>
5. European Migraine & Headache Alliance. (2022). When your life turns into a waiting room: Expert seminar – Improving access to migraine care in Czechia [PDF]. <https://www.emh Alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/WHEN-YOUR-LIFE-TURNS-INTO-A-WAITING-ROOM.pdf>
6. Doleckova, K., Schimmerova, A., Mazalova, M., Mlcoch, T., Dolezalova, H., & Doležal, T., et al. (2023). PCR234 The burden of migraine in Czech Republic: Patient, payer, and societal perspective. *Value in Health*, 26(12, Supplement), S494. [https://www.valueinhealthjournal.com/article/S1098-3015\(23\)05801-1/fulltext](https://www.valueinhealthjournal.com/article/S1098-3015(23)05801-1/fulltext)
7. Nežádal, T. (2024, July 1). Moderní léčba migrény se nedostává ke všem včas. *Medical Tribune*. <https://www.tribune.cz/medicina/moderni-lecba-migreny-se-nedostava-ke-vsem-vcas/>

About Charles River Associates

Charles River Associates is an economic and strategy consultancy with offices in North America, Europe, Latin America and Australia. CRA offers services to all the key functions of the life sciences industry and specialises in public policy issues. CRA focuses on delivering high quality, robust analysis in a compelling fashion that is accessible to the target audience and has worked for the industry, national trade associations, and individual companies on a wide range of issues over the last 20 years. www.crai.com/industries/life-sciences/

The conclusions set forth herein are based on independent research and publicly available material. The views expressed herein are the views and opinions of the authors and do not reflect or represent the views of Charles River Associates or any of the organizations with which the authors are affiliated. Any opinion expressed herein shall not amount to any form of guarantee that the authors or Charles River Associates has determined or predicted future events or circumstances and no such reliance may be inferred or implied. The authors and Charles River Associates accept no duty of care or liability of any kind whatsoever to any party, and no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by any party as a result of decisions made, or not made, or actions taken, or not taken, based on this paper. Detailed information about Charles River Associates, a registered trade name of CRA International, Inc., is available at www.crai.com.

CRA hereby grants a non-exclusive, royalty-free right to individuals and associations to use, copy, reproduce and display the report or sections thereof for non-commercial purposes. Such license is subject to CRA being clearly cited as the owner of the report, and for the names of the authors and co-authors to be clearly displayed. Detailed information about Charles River Associates is available at www.crai.com