



## INTEGRATION COURSES

Welcome to the Czech Republic



# WELCOME TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Information for newly  
arriving foreigners



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY



Brochure for newly arriving foreigners

# WELCOME TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY



This project supporting the integration of foreigners is financed by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. The project is implemented by Slovo 21, z.s.

This brochure is additional material to **the adaptation-integration courses** intended for **third-country nationals**.

The aim of the courses is to introduce the foreigners to their rights and duties related to their stay in the Czech Republic as well as local culture and to warn them against negative phenomena.

The obligation to participate in the adaptation-integration course is stipulated by Act no. 326/1999 Coll. on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic, which also defines the group of foreigners who are obliged to participate.

If you need advice or assistance, don't hesitate to contact a non-governmental non-profit organization (NGO) or an integration centre (Support Centres for the Integration of Foreigners), which can be found in almost every region of the country. Such organizations provide professional legal and social counselling on all issues covered in this brochure and do so free of charge. They also provide Czech language courses, courses on culture and life in Czech society, assistance in communication with authorities; they can accompany newly arrived foreigners to appointments with authorities, doctors or schools, and provide interpreting or translation. You can apply for help or advice by calling any NGO.

Integration centres will help you understand which institution to go to with your issue and they also provide Czech language courses, counselling, interpretation and many other services free of charge. Integration centres always provide a computer with free access to the Internet – their staff will help you use it, if needed.

You can find contact details of integration centres and some non-profit organizations at the end of this brochure in the Contacts section.

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear readers,

Welcome to the Czech Republic.

We know that it is not always easy to begin a new life in a different country. We would like to help you find your way around during the first months of your life in the new environment, and help you overcome any obstacles. We would like to present to you a half-day introduction course, which will provide you with basic information on your rights and duties, advice for everyday situations, and warnings against risks that can be avoided.

During the course, you will see a film introducing you to the Czech environment – its landscape, weather, customs and inter-personal habits. This brochure is also a part of the course. It will provide you with a summary of the information you will hear during the course, as well as with a list of organizations you can contact – mainly NGOs and integration centres. Their staff is ready to provide free advice and help you, or to provide you with personal assistance. Please, do not hesitate to turn to them any time you will feel you need help. We hope that you make a good use of this offer.

We are pleased that you have chosen to relocate to the Czech Republic. We hope that you feel at home here, and that you will play an active role in our society.

We wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavours.

Welcome to the Czech Republic.

Department for Asylum and Migration Policy Staff  
Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic  
Coordinator of activities related to the integration of  
foreigners in the Czech Republic



## THE COUNTRY YOU ARE LIVING IN

Týn Church and Prague Astronomical Clock, Prague



## CZECH REPUBLIC

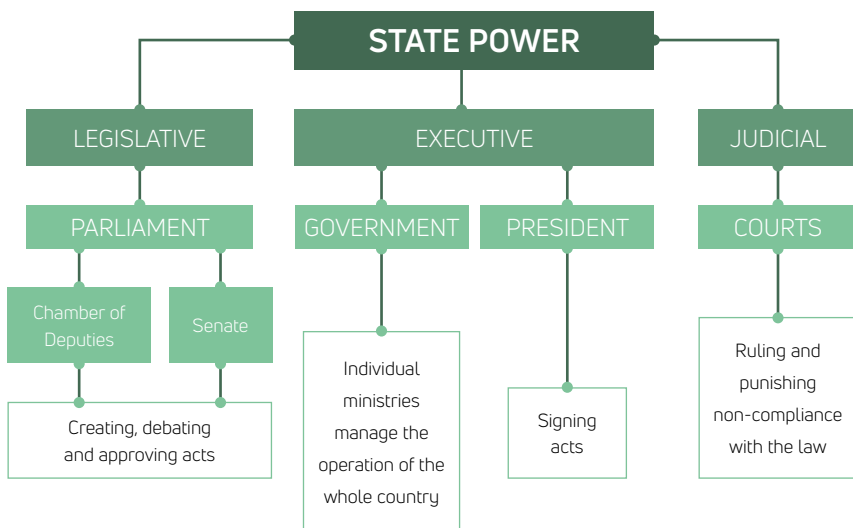
The Czech Republic is a country in Central Europe. It borders on Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria.

The Czech Republic was established on 1 January 1993 after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. It is a member of NATO (12 March 1999), the European Union (1 May 2004) and the Schengen Area (21 December 2007).

The Czech Republic has more than 10 million inhabitants. The capital city is Prague with approximately 1.2 million inhabitants. Other large cities include Brno, Ostrava, Plzeň, Liberec, Olomouc, Ústí nad Labem, Hradec Králové, České Budějovice and Pardubice. The official language is Czech.

The country is divided into 14 self-governing administrative regions with more than 6,000 municipalities. Municipalities provide their inhabitants, if needed, with housing assistance, health protection, social care, etc. Regions are part of public administration. People contact these self-governing units (regional or municipal authorities) when they need to process administrative issues. Both municipalities and regions enjoy the right to self-governance exercised by municipal and regional assemblies elected by the people.

The Czech Republic is a democratic country with the rule of law. Its political system is based on the free competition of political parties and movements. The fundamental laws of the Czech Republic are the Czech Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms enshrining equality in rights and dignity and granting basic human rights



and freedoms to everybody, providing for equal treatment with no discrimination. Every inhabitant of the Czech Republic can claim their rights at a court. Only some rights and freedoms are conditioned on Czech citizenship, such as a right to vote and to be elected.

The head of state is the **President** who appoints the government, signs laws, negotiates and ratifies international agreements, announces elections and grants pardons and amnesties. New laws are proposed and passed by the **Parliament of the Czech Republic** consisting of the **Chamber of Deputies and Senate**.

The **government** is the supreme body of executive power. The government as a collective body is mainly responsible for management and creation of state legislation; it manages activities of the state apparatus, implements laws, and issues decrees within limits set by laws. The government is accountable to the Chamber of Deputies, which can initiate a motion of no confidence.

Legislative power is represented by a system of independent courts. The system abides the laws determined by the legal code of the Czech Republic.

The President as well as representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate and the regional and municipal authorities are directly elected by citizens of the Czech Republic. Democratic elections are based on the principles of universality, secrecy and equality of votes. Every citizen of the Czech Republic gets one vote in elections after they come of age (the age of 18).

In the Czech Republic, civil society functions at a quite high level. It is formed by different independent organizations, associations, interest groups and institutions. These NGOs and other associations and activities of citizens form civil society, as an addition or counterweight to state structures and the commercial sphere and its interests. You will be in contact with NGOs focusing on counselling and services for foreign nationals. You can read about them in several chapters of this brochure.

### **Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman)**

The ombudsman protects people from the actions of authorities and other institutions, if these actions are contrary to law or the principles of a democratic rule of law. The ombudsman seeks respect for fundamental human rights and contributes to the promotion of the right to equal treatment and protection against discrimination.

The ombudsman can assist foreigners in situations when they face injustice or when state institutions are idle.



<b>Official name</b>	The Czech Republic, or shortened to Czechia
<b>Date of establishment</b>	1 January 1993
<b>Capital city</b>	Prague
<b>Administrative division</b>	14 regions
<b>Political system</b>	Parliamentary democracy, the President is the head of state
<b>Majority</b>	Reaching 18 years of age (with exceptions stipulated by the Civil Code)
<b>Criminal liability</b>	Reaching 15 years of age (with exceptions stipulated by the Criminal Code)
<b>Area</b>	78.865km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Telephone country code</b>	+420
<b>Climate</b>	<p>Temperate climate with four seasons.</p> <p>The usual winter temperature ranges between 0 to -5°C with occasional snowing; in extreme cases it can drop down to -20°C.</p> <p>In summer, it is usually around 25°C, in extreme cases over 30°C.</p>
<b>Important telephone numbers (available 24/7 and free of charge)</b>	<p>112 European emergency number</p> <p>150 Firefighters</p> <p>155 Ambulance (medical assistance)</p> <p>156 Municipal police</p> <p>158 State police</p> <p>116 111 Linka bezpečí (child helpline)</p>

## STATE SYMBOLS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic has a total of 7 state symbols (the large state emblem, the small state emblem, the presidential standard, the national flag, the national colours, the national stamp and the national anthem). The most frequently used ones are the following:



### Large state emblem

The large state emblem consists of a shield with four fields. The individual fields symbolize the historical territories of the Czech Republic: Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, with the fourth field represents the country as a whole. The large state emblem represents the union of these historical lands of the state. It is used for external representation of the state and to mark buildings, state institutions and offices.

### National flag

The flag of the Czech Republic is the official state symbol representing the Czech Republic both domestically and internationally. It consists of upper white and lower red stripes with a blue wedge inserted between them on the side of the flagpole. These colours are the national colours of the Czech Republic.



### Presidential standard

The banner of the President of the Czech Republic is square in shape. It was created during with the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918 as one of the symbols of the state. It expresses superiority of the presidential authority over other state institutions and authorities. It is used to indicate the seat of the president at the Prague Castle when the president is present there, as well as during press conferences, and it also decorates the presidential limousine.

## National anthem

Since 1992, the anthem of the Czech Republic has been the slightly amended first verse of the song “Kde domov můj” (Where Is My Home) from an original Czech play called Fildovačka. The lyrics were written by Josef Kajetán Tyl and the music was composed by Frantisek Škroup. The song quickly became popular and gained the status of a folk song. The national anthem is performed and sung on public holidays and other similar occasions (e.g. at the start of international sporting events and at cultural events of international or ceremonial significance, etc.).



## Lyrics of the anthem

Where is my home,  
where is my home?  
Water roars across the meadows,  
pinewoods rustle among crags,  
the garden is glorious with spring blossom,  
paradise on Earth it is to see.  
And this is that beautiful land,  
the Czech land, my home,  
the Czech land, my home.

Kde domov můj,  
kde domov můj?  
Voda hučí po lučinách,  
bory šumí po skalínách,  
v sadě skví se jara květ,  
zemský ráj to na pohled!  
A to je ta krásná země,  
země česká, domov můj,  
země česká, domov můj!

Václav Havel was the first president of the independent Czech Republic.

## INFORMATION AND HELP

### **State administration**

[www.statnisprava.cz](http://www.statnisprava.cz)

### **Public administration website**

[www.portal.gov.cz](http://www.portal.gov.cz)



# IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Autumn view of Český Krumlov and the Vltava river

After its establishment in 1993, the Czech Republic became an attractive country for immigration, and the number of immigrants settling here has gradually increased, both due to spontaneous migration (for instance, for employment, business and studies) and due to conflicts in the home countries of immigrants.

At the end of 2022, over 1,116,000 foreigners were registered in the Czech Republic, out of which more than 334,000 have permanent residency in the Czech Republic (*source: Directorate of Foreign Police, Ministry of the Interior*).

The largest groups of foreigners relocating to the Czech Republic or already living here are citizens of Ukraine, Slovakia, Vietnam, Russia, Poland, and Germany (*source: Czech Statistical Office*).

Inclusion of foreigners in society, i.e. integration, is crucial for coexistence of the majority society and immigrant communities and individuals. Integration of foreigners is part of an active government policy. The Czech government has approved the Concept of the Integration of Foreigners. The Ministry of the Interior coordinates integration policy in the Czech Republic. Other ministries implement integration tasks that fall within their competence.

Integration priorities of the Czech government include helping foreigners learn Czech, secure economic independence, find their way in society, and fostering positive relations between foreigners and the majority society.

Integration measures are mainly focused on foreigners from third countries with long-term or permanent residence; however, some measures also apply to newly arriving foreigners from third countries to facilitate their basic orientation in the Czech Republic soon after their arrival.

One of the integration measures is the adaptation-integration course which aims to give newly arriving third-country nationals an opportunity to learn basic information relevant to their orientation in Czech society, especially in the initial period of their stay in the Czech Republic. Foreigners who obtain a long-term residence permit (except for long-term residence permits issued for the purpose of studying, protection in the territory, intra-company employee transfer card, and investment) or a permanent residence permit pursuant to § 66 or § 67 of the Foreigners Residence Act issued after **1 January 2021** will have to take a mandatory adaptation-integration course. This obligation must be fulfilled within 1 year from the issuance of the residence permit. The course is not mandatory for foreigners younger than 15 years of age and older than 61 years of age, and those who took it in the past.

**Tip:** Not sure if you need to take the adaptation-integration course? To find the answer do **the quiz prepared by the Integration centre in Prague.**

## CONTRIBUTION OF FOREIGNERS TO SOCIETY

Foreigners enrich society with their skills, traditions, qualifications, etc. They increase the diversity of society, which is natural and necessary in the globalized world. Both immigrants and the host society need to ensure that all new skills, qualifications and advantages brought by newcomers benefit both the society and the immigrants themselves.

Restoration of civil society and citizen participation in the Czech Republic has been underway since 1989. Foreigners can also participate in leisure or volunteer activities in their respective communities or regional associations, as they can also engage in activities of foundations, NGOs and Integration Centres.





# RESIDING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Park in the town of Telč



## INSTITUTIONS

### **Granting of short-term visas:**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Czech Embassies

### **Residence-related issues, extensions of residence permits, notification of changes, requirements of applications:**

Offices of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (OAMP MVČR), Foreigners Residence Office

### **Residence inspections, invitation form validation, obligatory registration upon arrival:**

Foreign Police Service

Information in this section is intended for third-country nationals. The information provided here is not intended for EU citizens and their family members, persons seeking international protection and refugees, as there may be different rules for them.

Third-country nationals, for example Blue Card and Employee Card holders, also have specific conditions for life in the Czech Republic with respect to their residency permits, employment or family reunification. For more information, see the website of the Ministry of the Interior ([www.mvcr.cz/cizinci](http://www.mvcr.cz/cizinci)).

## BASIC INSTITUTIONS

**Offices of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (*Odbor azylové a migrační politiky Ministerstva vnitra České republiky, OAMP MVČR*), Foreigners Residence Offices (Ministry of the Interior offices).** This is the place where you will go to with your residence-related issues, when you extend your residence or report changes. For details, see the chapters below or the contacts at the end of this brochure.

**Foreign Police Service.** The Foreign Police Service controls foreigner's stay and validates invitation forms. This is where you will perform your duty to notify of your arrival in the Czech Republic, unless your accommodation provider does it for you. For details see chapters below or contacts at the end of this brochure.

It is very important to be aware of the difference between a Ministry of the Interior office (OAMP MVČR) and the Foreign Police Service! They are two different institutions with different competences. Make sure you go to the right institution when addressing your issue.

## BASIC TERMINOLOGY

**A third-country national** is a citizen of a state that is not a member of the EU, who is neither a citizen of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway nor Switzerland.

**EU Member States** are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

**A long-term visa is a visa for a stay exceeding 90 days.** A long-term visa is granted for a specific period of residence relevant to the desired purpose of the stay (e.g. doing business, invitation, family, culture, sports, some forms of study) and validity of submitted documents. The long-term visa is valid for a maximum of 1 year. This visa is most frequently applied for when first arriving in the Czech Republic.

**Long-term residence permit in the Czech Republic.** If you wish to extend your stay in the Czech Republic for more than one year, and you will continue to perform the same activity and purpose of stay for which you first came, and you are staying based on a long-term residence permit, you can extend your stay by applying for a long-term residence permit in the Czech Republic at the Ministry of the Interior, the Department



of Asylum and Migration Policy (OAMP). A long-term residence permit is a residence status in the Czech Republic, for which you can apply in selected cases at a **Czech embassy** (for the purpose of studying, scientific research, family reunification, Blue Card, Employee Card or investments). The long-term residence permit is issued for a maximum period of 2 years (except for long-term residence for the purpose of an intra-company employee transfer from a different EU member state, which can be granted for up to 3 years, and long-term residence for the purpose of family reunification, which can be granted for up to 5 years). Long-term residence permit is always issued for a specific purpose (purpose of stay) and can be extended repeatedly.

**Purpose of stay** is a basic concept in legislation regulating residence. To simplify it, purpose of stay can be explained as the main reason of your residence in the Czech Republic, which was also approved by the Ministry of the Interior of CR. The purposes of stay may include **employment, business, studies, scientific research or family reunification**.

You must be able to prove your purpose of stay when applying for a long-term visa and a long-term residence permit. You are obliged to meet your purpose of stay for the whole time you reside in the Czech Republic; otherwise your residence permit may be cancelled. The fact that you meet the same purpose of stay must be proved by relevant documents (e.g. work contract, marriage certificate, confirmation of study, etc.) throughout your whole stay.

You can have only one purpose of stay; however, you may be in a situation when more options are relevant to you. You may change your purpose of stay under certain conditions. Your current purpose of stay is indicated as a code on your residence permit. What the various codes stand for can be checked on the **website of the Ministry of the Interior**.

If your situation changes and you intend to reside in the Czech Republic for a purpose other than the one that has already been granted, you are required to apply for a new long-term residence permit. The law, however, stipulates the following restrictions:

- Foreigners staying in the Czech Republic based on a long-term visa cannot apply for a long-term residence permit for a purpose other than the purpose of the long-term visa. The following exceptions apply: holders of a long-term visa (with another purpose) may apply for a long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification. Also those who have a long-term visa for the purpose of studies or scientific research may apply for a long-term residence permit with the purpose of job seeking or starting a business. Also, based on a long-term visa a foreigner may apply for an employee card.

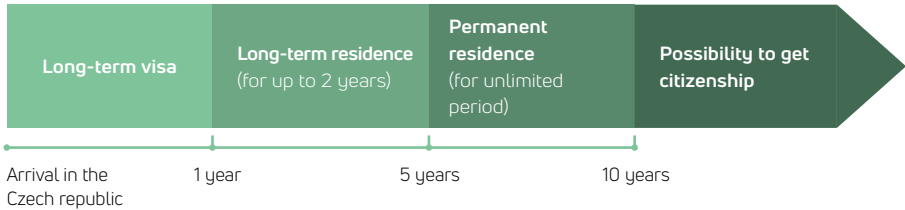
- If you intend to stay in the Czech Republic with the purpose of doing business, you may apply for such a change if you are a holder of a valid long-term residence permit and you have stayed in the Czech Republic for more than 5 years.
- If you have a long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification, after 3 years of your stay in the Czech Republic or after reaching 18 years of age, you can apply to the Ministry of the Interior for a long-term residence permit with a different purpose.
- If you are a holder of a long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification but you have divorced from the holder of the residence permit, you may apply for a new long-term permit, if the marriage lasted for at least 5 years and you had stayed in the Czech Republic for at least 2 years prior to the date of divorce. You must submit this application within one year after the divorce.

If you are changing the purpose of long-term residence permit to family reunification or if you wish to apply for an Employee Card or Blue Card, or for a long-term residence permit with the purpose of scientific research or investment, you can submit your application from any long-term visa or long-term residence permit directly in the Czech Republic. This does not apply to you if you are staying in the Czech Republic for seasonal employment or on a leave to remain or on an extraordinary work visa.

There are substantial differences between a long-term visa and a long-term residence permit. Both impose different rights and obligations. For this reason, it is important to use the correct term when communicating with the authorities (or integration centres)!



## TIMELINE OF RESIDENCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND EXTENSIONS OF RESIDENCE



### Application for an extension of the period of stay on a long-term visa (extension of visa validity)

An application for an extension of the period of stay on a long-term visa and extension of the long-term visa validity must be filed at an office of the Ministry of the Interior, the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (also known as OAMP).

If your existing and planned stay does not exceed one year, you can apply for an extension of the period of stay (visa validity). The condition is that the same purpose of stay is retained, and all requirements of the application are met.

An administrative fee is charged for the application for an extension of the period of stay and validity of the long-term visa (see the website of the Ministry of the Interior for specific amounts). The fee is not charged to children under 6 and persons who were granted a visa for the purpose of studies. The fee is payable in the form of a duty stamp which can be purchased at offices of the Czech Post.

Failure to pay the administrative fee or submit all elements of the application makes the application inadmissible. The proceedings on an inadmissible application are not initiated and the application is returned to the applicant.

### Transition to a long-term residence permit in the Czech Republic

If you have resided in the Czech Republic on a long-term visa and you decide to extend your stay (your stay will exceed 1 year), you may file an application for a long-term residence permit by the deadline stipulated by the law. If this day is a Saturday, Sunday or a national holiday, the deadline for applying for a long-term residence permit is the closest following working day. On the last day of the timeframe, the application must be filed at an office of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry

of the Interior (OAMP MVČR). The condition is that you retain the same purpose of stay and meet all requirements of the application.

Applying for a long-term residence permit is subject to a fee.

### **Application for an extension of the period of stay based on a long-term residence permit**

If you have resided in the Czech Republic based on a long-term residence permit and you decide to extend your stay, you may file an application for its extension by the deadline stipulated by the law. If this day is a Saturday, Sunday or a national holiday, the deadline for applying for a long-term residence permit is the closest following working day. Also in this case, you must meet all of the statutory requirements.

If you fail to file the application in the stipulated period (without an objective reason), in most cases, it means the end of your stay in the Czech Republic!

Applying for an extension of the long-term residence permit is subject to a fee.

### **Permanent residence permit**

An application for a permanent residence permit can be filed at an office of the Ministry of the Interior after 5 years of continuous stay in the Czech Republic. The Foreigners Residence Act stipulates which periods of stay are included in the required duration of stay (periods spent in the Czech Republic for the purpose of studies are counted by a half of their actual duration). Apart from other requirements, the applicant must prove knowledge of the Czech language by passing an exam at the A2 under the Common European Reference Framework for Languages (this duty does not apply to foreigners under 15 or over 60, or with a physical or mental disability). The exam has a written and an oral part. If you pass it, you will receive a certificate.

Applying for a permanent residence permit is subject to a fee.

## **BIOMETRICS**

Biometric data is a term used for facial image and fingerprints. They are captured through special technical devices at the offices of the Ministry of the Interior. These offices also issue residence cards containing the biometric data. Therefore you must always carry the original of the biometric card with you, showing its copy will not do.

The obligation to provide biometric data concerns citizens of third countries residing in the Czech Republic with a long-term or permanent residence permit. Biometrics do not apply to third-country nationals residing in the Czech Republic with a long-term visa.

This procedure was established based on EU legislation.

If your application for a residence permit has been approved, you will be asked to attend an OAMP office in the Czech Republic where you will provide your biometric data and digital signature for further processing.

Within 60 days of providing your biometric data, you will be asked to come to the same Ministry of the Interior office to collect your residence card. Before receiving the card, you will be required to provide your biometric data one more time so that the office can verify that the residence card works properly.

**Warning!** If you do not collect your card within 60 days from the first day when you provided the biometric data, your data will be automatically erased and your stay will be terminated!

If any data entered in the residence card changes (e.g. your surname or marital status after entering into marriage), you are required to report any such change to the Ministry of the Interior within 3 working days.

If your address (domicile) changes, you are required to report it within 30 days if you plan to reside at a different address for more than 30 days (if you are a holder of a long-term visa or long-term residence permit). If you hold a permanent residence permit, you are required to report it within 30 days if you plan to reside at a different address for more than 180 days.

To report the change of data, use the following form: **Tiskopis pro oznámení změn**. You can report the changes in person at OAMP offices or by post. It is not possible to report changes via e-mail; electronic reporting is allowed only in specific cases (i.e. if you have a data box, etc.)

Make sure you do not damage or lose your biometric card. You would have to pay a high fee for a new card issued due to loss or damage. Also, an invalid card must be returned to the Ministry of the Interior of the CR.

## SCHENGEN AREA

The Czech Republic has been a member of the Schengen Area since 2007.

The Schengen Area is a joint territory of countries that do not carry out border controls of people crossing their common borders. Lack of such border controls is compensated by enhanced cooperation and joint rules for protecting the external borders, police and judicial cooperation, protecting personal data, issuing short-term (Schengen) visas and data sharing within the Schengen Information System. Schengen Area member states share information. If a foreigner breaks the law in one member state, they might not be able to enter any other Schengen member state.

### Schengen member states

Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and newly from 2023 also Croatia.

Other EU member states (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland and Romania) are not members of the Schengen area.





## The right to travel within the Schengen Area

If you hold a valid long-term visa or a long-term or permanent residence permit, together with a valid passport, you can travel to other Schengen countries and stay in their territories for up to 90 days during a 180 day-long period. The stay begins from the first day of entering the other state of the Schengen Area. It is necessary to leave the member state of the Schengen Area after 90 days within the 180 day-period and come back to the Czech Republic (or leave the Schengen Area as such). The rule is that any time you look backwards into the last 180-day period, your overall stay in other states of the Schengen Area mustn't exceed 90 days in total.

To check the maximum possible stay, you can use this calculator:

<https://ec.europa.eu/assets/home/visa-calculator/calculator.htm?lang=en>  
(Instructions on how to use the calculator: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/border-crossing/docs/short\\_stay\\_schengen\\_calculator\\_user\\_manual\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/border-crossing/docs/short_stay_schengen_calculator_user_manual_en.pdf)).

Select the "Planning" feature to check the duration of stay.

When travelling to EU member states that are not members of the Schengen Area, check conditions for travelling at their embassy. It is possible that you will need a visa to visit these countries (even for the airport transit area).

The list of embassies is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at [www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz).

## Schengen Information System – SIS

The Schengen Information System (SIS) is used to exchange information about persons wanted for arrest, persons who are refused entry or stay in Schengen countries, missing persons, and stolen or lost documents.

Violation of the law in one state and entry into the SIS can result in refusal to enter or stay in other Schengen states.

## Gainful activity in other Schengen states

Gainful activity permitted in the Czech Republic may be conducted in the Czech Republic only. To conduct gainful activity in other Schengen states, you must check the rules of each individual country specifically. Be aware that gainful activity conducted without a permit may be illegal in other countries!

## SHORT-TERM VISIT

If you wish to invite a visitor from a non-EU-member state, your guest can **apply for a short-term (Schengen) visa** for up to 90 days at a Czech embassy. The embassy will review the application and grant the visa. The police (**Foreign Police**) decides whether a stay on a short-term visa will be extended.

One option for your visitor is to use an "Invitation". The invitation needs to be submitted on a special invitation form validated by the Foreign Police Service. Your guest will present this invitation form at a Czech embassy together with the visa application.

Visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website at [www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz) and check under "Entry & Residence" for details on conditions.

## FAMILY MEMBERS

### Conditions under which family members can stay in the Czech Republic

If your family members want to stay with you in the Czech Republic for a period longer than 90 days, they can apply for a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit. The type of residence permit determines all the requirements and the length of the application proceedings as well as subsequent rights and duties in the Czech Republic.

A long-term visa is granted for a maximum of 1 year after which it is possible to apply for a long-term residence permit. The validity of the residence permit for your family members will depend on the type of your residence permit (either a long-term or permanent residence permit); it can be issued for the maximum of up to 2 years.

A foreigner holding a long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification has unrestricted access to the labour market and does not need a work permit, Employee Card nor Blue Card. You may inquire about more details regarding work permits at a Czech Labour Office or regarding Employee Cards at the Czech Ministry of the Interior.



If your family members wish to stay in the Czech Republic for a period longer than 90 days, they can apply for:

### **Long-term visa for “family purposes”**

Your family members will be contacted by a Czech embassy which will inform them about the result of their application and put a visa label into their passport. After arriving in the Czech Republic, your family (holders of a long-term visa) must report their arrival to the Foreign Police within 3 days.

### **Long-term residence permit with the purpose of “family reunification”**

This type of long-term residence permit may be sought by your family members (spouse, minor under 18, non-minor dependent child, an individual older than 65 living alone and unable to take care of themselves due to poor health) if they intend to stay with you for a long period of time in the Czech Republic.

Your family members may be granted a long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification in the Czech Republic if you are a holder of a long-term or permanent residence permit and you have resided in the Czech Republic for at least 15 months. If it is a reunification of a married couple, at the same time, both of you must be at least 20 years old. There is an exception for family members of Employee Card holders. If you are a holder of an Employee Card and you have resided in the Czech Republic for at least 6 months, your family members are entitled to long-term residence permit with the purpose of family reunification.

If your family members do not require a visa for tourist visits, they may, after having been informed that their application for long-term residence permit has been successful, travel to the Czech Republic. Upon arrival, they must come to an office of the Ministry of the Interior (to comply with their reporting obligation and to provide biometric data for the residence permit card). This is where they will later collect their residence permit card.

If they are subject to visa requirements, the embassy will issue them a “visa with the purpose of collecting a residence permit” (so-called D/VR visa) for the journey. After arriving in the Czech Republic, they have three working days to report to an office of the Ministry of the Interior and meet all the obligations. Failure to do so is considered a reason for suspending the proceedings (the permit will not be issued).

Before you start applying for your family members’ permits, you must be sure that your family has sufficient financial means to reside in the Czech Republic. You will have to

prove your ability to support them with sufficient income as defined by law when they apply for a visa or a residence permit.

Deadlines for the issuance of a decision on a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit application are defined by the Foreigners Residence Act. You can find more information at the website of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (<http://www.mvcr.cz/foreigners>).



## SUMMARY

You are obliged to report your presence in the Czech Republic to the relevant Foreign Police Department or a Ministry of the Interior office (if you arrived in the Czech Republic with a visa for collecting your long-term or permanent residence permit (D/VR)) within 3 days from your arrival. The obligation to report their presence does not apply to foreigners whose registration forms were submitted by their accommodation providers (hotel, student dormitory). This obligation also does not apply to minors aged under 15. **WARNING!** If you arrive in the Czech Republic with a visa for collecting a long-term or a permanent residence permit, the so-called D/VR, you must appear in person at an office of the Ministry of the Interior within 3 working days from your arrival in the Czech Republic, otherwise the application proceedings will be suspended.

You are required to meet the purpose for which you were granted a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit during the entire time of stay.

You are also required to report a change of surname or marital status and changes in a travel document or in a residence permit card within a timeframe of 3 working days.

You must also report a change of your Czech address within 30 days.

All changes are reported by providing supporting documents relevant to the change. In case of failure to report the change, a fine may be imposed.

Make sure you observe statutory deadlines. In the Czech Republic, deadlines in communication with authorities must be observed meticulously!

You must undergo a process of providing biometric data when your long-term residence permit card is issued.

If checked by Foreign Police Service, you must present a valid travel document, a residence permit card and a proof of health insurance (including a receipt confirming payment of the insurance).

## INFORMATION AND HELP

### Granting of short-term visas:

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic:** Czech embassies

[www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz)

### Residence-related issues, extensions of residence permits, reporting changes, requirements of applications:

**Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic offices** (OAMP MVČR), Dept. of Residence of Foreigners [www.mvcr.cz/foreigners](http://www.mvcr.cz/foreigners) – here you will find contact information of the regional offices of the Ministry of the Interior.

You may address your inquiries also to:

Ministry of the Interior info line: **(+420) 974 820 680**

### Residence inspections, invitation form validation, obligatory registration upon arrival:

#### Foreign Police Service

[www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyt-cizincu.aspx](http://www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyt-cizincu.aspx)

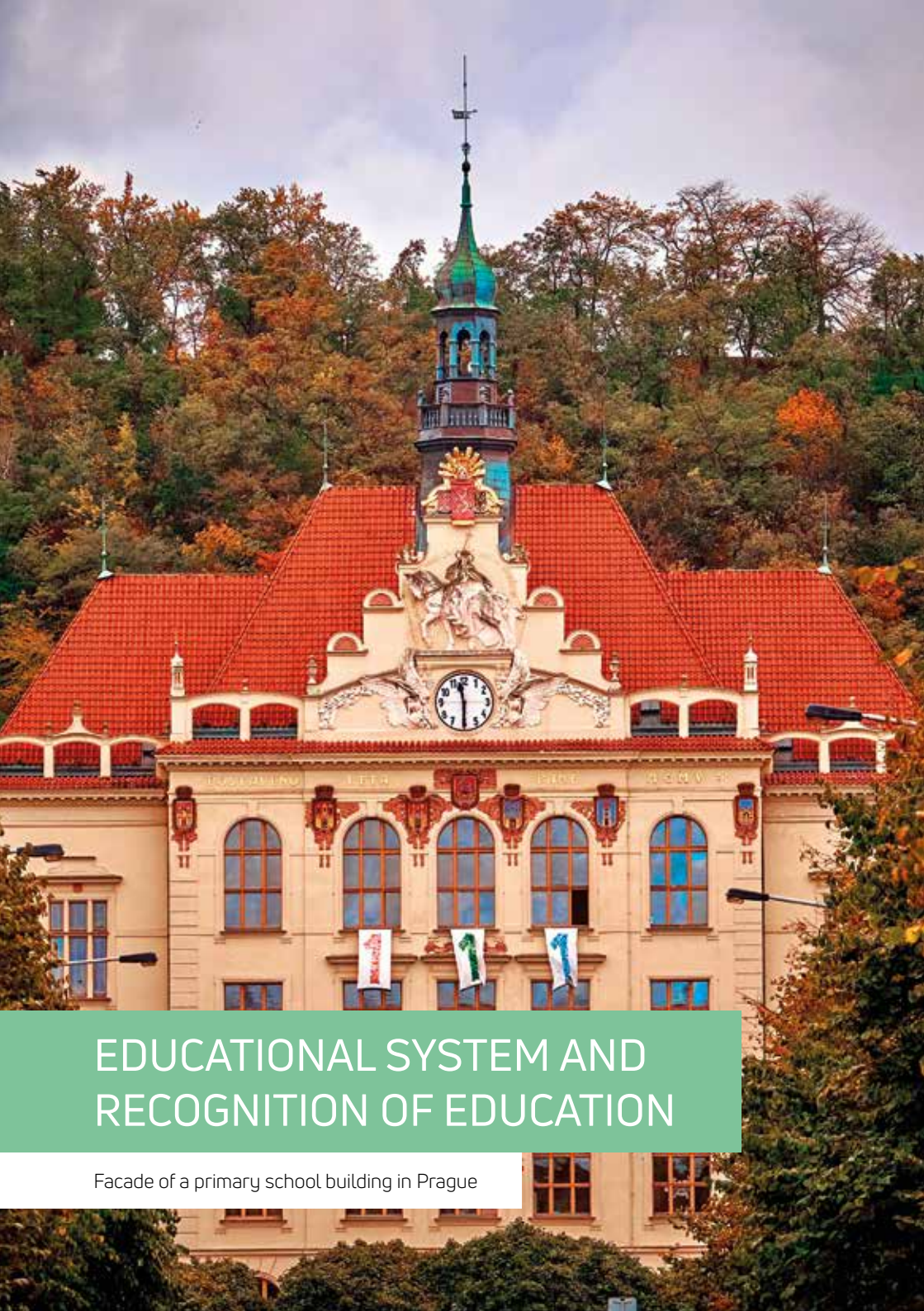
### Information and counselling provided free of charge:

Integration centres – [www.integracnicentra.cz](http://www.integracnicentra.cz)

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – [www.cizinci.cz](http://www.cizinci.cz) – address book

Selected contact details can be found at the end of this brochure.





# EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND RECOGNITION OF EDUCATION

Facade of a primary school building in Prague

## INSTITUTIONS

### **Education, training, register of schools, recognition of education, information and legislation:**

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

### **Enforcement of regulations regarding education, inspections:**

Czech School Inspectorate

Regional authorities (Department of Education of the regional administrations)

Municipal authorities (Department of Education of municipal administrations)

## CZECH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The educational system is managed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in compliance with the Education Act and the Higher Education Act that define the process of qualifying on the individual levels of the educational system.

**Education in the Czech Republic is divided into the following levels:** primary, secondary, secondary vocational, secondary with a final exam, tertiary vocational, and tertiary.

### **Types of schools in the Czech Republic:**

- Preschool;
- Primary school;
- Secondary school: secondary general school, secondary technical school, secondary vocational school;
- Conservatory;
- Higher vocational school;
- Primary school of arts (provides education in arts and is established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; but it stands outside of the educational system);
- Language school with the right to organize state language exams;
- University.

Schools can be divided into state, public, private and church schools in the Czech Republic. Private and church schools usually charge a fee for tuition.

The school year lasts from September to June (preschools, primary schools, secondary schools). The main summer holidays last two months – July and August. The academic year is determined by each university's president and usually lasts from 1 October until 30 September.



## PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Preschools or kindergartens (*mateřská škola* or *školka* in Czech) provide education to children aged 3–6. The preschool attendance is voluntary except for 1 year before the child is expected to begin primary school attendance. If a child has turned five before the end of August of the calendar year, preschool attendance is obligatory for them.

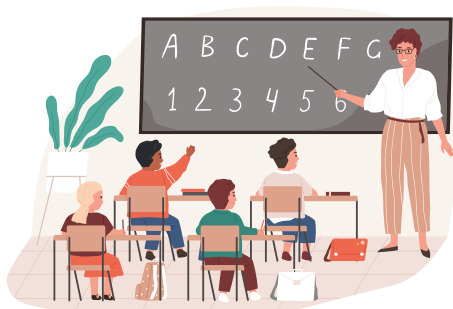
Preschools are established by the state, regions, municipalities, or private entities, and attendance can either be free of charge or a tuition fee may apply. All preschools charge fees for meals.

Kindergartens have an enrolment process. Make sure you begin the process early enough as many kindergartens have been full in the recent years. Enrolment procedure is usually scheduled for spring. The exact place and date are determined by the principal of the preschool, and such information is announced well in advance on the website of the preschool and on the website of the entity which established it (e.g. district or municipality administration).

## PRIMARY EDUCATION – COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Compulsory school attendance lasts, in total, 10 years (final year of preschool and nine years of primary school). At primary school level, it applies to children aged six and above, unless they postpone the beginning of school attendance (the decision is made based on the child's insufficient health or mental maturity). School attendance is mandatory for Czech citizens and foreigners with a permitted stay of over 90 days, even if they do not speak Czech.

Parents are required to enrol children aged 6-15 (alternatively until the age of 17) in compulsory education. Failure to do so by a parent (or statutory guardian) is deemed an illicit act which may result in sanctions.



All foreigners residing in the Czech Republic have access to primary education. You are not required to show proof of legal residence when you enrol your children in primary schools in the Czech Republic.

The law guarantees free-of-charge education in primary and secondary public schools to everyone. Private schools charge tuition fees.

Schools generally offer lunches, after-school centres and after-school activities that are usually provided at a charge.

It is necessary to enrol at a primary school on a specific date announced by individual schools (usually between 1 and 30 April). It is advisable to visit the school for more information early, preferably after arriving in the Czech Republic. Primary schools inform about enrolment dates on their notice boards and websites in advance.

Some schools provide foreign children with preparatory Czech language courses. It is also possible to participate in Czech language courses offered by selected NGOs, integration centres, and language schools. NGOs specializing in education may help you in communicating with teachers in the school that your children attend.

Usually, the school report from the ninth grade of the primary school is a document of completing the primary education in the Czech Republic (NGOs and integration centres can provide you information about any exceptions).

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

After completing primary education or meeting the criteria of compulsory school attendance, it is possible to continue education at a secondary school (high schools or two types of vocational schools) or conservatories. This type of education is not mandatory.

Secondary schools prepare their students for further studies or train them in an occupation. Depending on the type of secondary school and area of education, the student becomes either a graduate of secondary education (1-2 years of full-time study), secondary education with a vocational certificate (2-3 years of full-time study), or of secondary education with a graduation exam (4 years of full-time study).

The graduation exam ("maturita" in Czech) is a necessary pre-condition for being accepted to a tertiary vocational school or university. Nowadays, all students take the same national graduation exam. More information is available at [www.novamaturita.cz](http://www.novamaturita.cz).

Secondary education graduate receives a final report (secondary education), a vocational certificate (secondary education with a vocational certificate) or a graduation exam report (secondary education with a graduation certificate).

## HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

This type of education further broadens secondary education and provides both general and practical training for a profession. With full-time daily attendance, this type of education takes 3 years, including practical training, while medical programs last 3.5 years.

Tuition fees charged by public tertiary technical schools go as high as CZK 5,000 per year; contractual tuition fees are charged by private institutions.

Higher vocational education is completed by a graduate examination. Graduates receive a graduate examination report and they may use the academic title "diplomovaný specialista" (certified specialist), abbreviated "DiS." after their name.



## UNIVERSITIES

There are public, state (military and police universities) and private universities. To enrol, students must pass an entrance examination and have completed secondary general or technical education (with the graduation exam "maturita").

Foreigners are admitted to study at universities under the same conditions as Czech citizens if instruction is provided in the Czech language. Education at public and state universities is free of charge.

Most universities require the B1 level of knowledge of the Czech language, which is a rather high level. Some schools verify this knowledge by their own exams.

Foreigners who want to study at a public university in a language other than Czech must pay a tuition fee.

In the Czech Republic, you can take a bachelor (3 year) or a master (usually 2 years, sometimes 5 or more years) program.

University graduates may use the academic title "bakalář" (bachelor) abbreviated "Bc.", "magistr" (master) abbreviated "Mgr.", or "inženýr" (engineer) abbreviated "Ing." before a person's name and other possible titles.

## RECOGNITION OF EDUCATION

A foreigner is required to submit a document certifying their competence to perform the required job. Recognition of foreign certificates and diplomas is also important if the individual wants to continue their studies in the Czech Republic. So that documents proving the education (diplomas and certificates) are considered equivalent to the Czech ones and valid, it is necessary to have them recognized and obtain an appropriate proof of recognition.

**Nostrification** is the recognition of equivalence of an attained degree of foreign education (primary, secondary, tertiary vocational or university level) with education provided in the Czech Republic.

Certificates and diplomas from **primary, secondary and higher vocational schools can be nostrified at Education Departments of regional administration**. The validation procedure will require foreigners to provide the original foreign education certificate or a certified copy of a document explaining the content and scope of their studies abroad. Sometimes it is necessary to prove the fact that the school is recognized by the relevant state, unless it is clear from the education certificate. Applications can be filed with regional administration. Unless stipulated by an international treaty (Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, Hague Convention) otherwise, all documents must be legalized and supported with an official certified translation into Czech. Education is recognized only if studies abroad correspond with the content and scope of studies at a Czech school. If the scope and content of foreign education does not correspond completely, recognition will be rejected. If there is partial difference or the student submits incomplete documents, they must pass a so-called nostrification exam. After taking the exam, the student receives a protocol and, having passed the exam successfully, this protocol must be submitted to regional administration which will deliver a validation clause.

## RESIDENCE OF FOREIGNERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF STUDIES

Since 31 July 2019 the term “studies” has been more strictly defined by the Foreigners Residence Act. “Studies” include when you study in an accredited program at a university. “Studies” also include secondary education and tertiary technical education at a secondary school, conservatory or a higher vocational education facility as a part of an exchange program (if secondary education is not a part of an exchange program, such studies are not classified as “studies” pursuant to Foreigners Residence Act). Scholarships, study visits, and European voluntary service are also classified as “studies”.

If a foreigner has a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit to study, they **must remain a student for the entire duration of your stay**, which means they must meet their purpose of stay. This means that they must be able to prove their student status by confirmation of study covering the whole validity of their purpose of stay during their residence for the purpose of studying. **Confirmation of study** must be provided by the school also for the summer break period or until they graduate (term exams, final state exam, etc.).

**Foreigners may also work or do business during studies**, but their main purpose of stay must be studies. More information regarding work by students can be found under Employment.

Foreigners may leave the Czech Republic during summer holidays. If they have any residence application pending during this time, they must report their departure to the Ministry of the Interior and ensure that somebody collects their mail.

If they decide to **change schools**, they must terminate studies at their previous school properly, and their study program at the new school must follow directly after their previous program. The previous school will notify the Ministry of the Interior that their studies were terminated, and it is their responsibility to report the change of school to the Ministry of the Interior! They may do this at one of the Ministry offices within 3 days of this change occurring.

If they are **expelled**, law requires the school to notify the Ministry of the Interior, and their visa or residence permit may be cancelled.

Applications for validation of elementary, secondary or tertiary technical education are subject to a fee. The fee is collected by regional administrations.

For **recognition of university education received abroad**, it is necessary to **apply directly to a public university** that has an accredited program with similar contents or, if the education was obtained in a country with which the Czech Republic has concluded an international agreement on mutual recognition of attained education, directly to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Applications for validation of university education are subject to a fee. The fee is collected by the university reviewing the application.

During the legalization process (authentication of documents), you may come across such terms as **apostille and superlegalization**. The purpose of the apostille and superlegalization is to credibly demonstrate that the document was issued or verified by a certain judicial or administrative authority of a certain state, or signed before this authority. Verification applies to the authenticity of the stamp and signature on the document, not the contents of the document as such. Documents are verified to confirm their authenticity and eliminate counterfeits.

More information on legalization process is available on the [website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#).

Information on recognition of education is available on the website of the Ministry of [Education, Youth and Sports](#).

## BULLYING AT SCHOOL

Bullying is one of the most serious negative phenomena at schools nowadays. However, this issue is not present only in school environment and it is not relevant only to students. There is a risk of bullying in all institutionalized systems and larger groups of people.

Bullying is any type of behaviour that is aimed at repeatedly threatening, blackmailing or harming another person or a group. It includes physical attacks (beating, damaging property) as well as verbal attacks (blackmailing, scolding, slandering, threatening or humiliating). Most cases of bullying take place among children at school, on the way to school or home, or in the neighbourhood. Bullying is dangerous as it is a serious and long-term threat and it affects mental and physical health of the victim.

Types and methods of bullying can be very varied. The aggressor always has physical dominance, they are superior in number or more powerful. Bullying has an impact on lives of all the involved parties, but, clearly, the most affected one is the victim.

If you have a suspicion that your child is involved in bullying, don't hesitate to address the issue. Get as much information as possible about the attack on your child. Contact the school director or class teacher and insist on a personal meeting. Integration centres and NGOs (their contacts can be found at the end of this brochure) can assist you in communicating with the school.

## CZECH LANGUAGE EXAM FOR FOREIGNERS AND CZECH LANGUAGE COURSES

An A2 level Czech language exam is required for obtaining a permanent residence permit in the Czech Republic and B1 is required for applying for Czech citizenship. You can get help in preparing for the exam from NGOs, integration centres or language schools. There is a mock exam available that you can take and books which can help you pass the exam.

More information is available at: <http://cestina-pro-cizince.cz>.

You can find many Czech language courses in the Czech Republic; they will facilitate your integration in the new country. You can attend paid courses at a language school or, as part of preparation for university studies, also at some of the universities. Or you can approach some NGOs and integration centres and check out their offer of Czech language courses offered free of charge or at a small fee.



## INFORMATION AND HELP

**Education, training, register of schools, recognition of education, information and legislation:**

**Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports**

[www.msmt.cz](http://www.msmt.cz)

**Recognition of education:**

- Education departments of regional administration
- Public universities

**Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT)**

Department of Higher Education Institutions (Odbor vysokých škol) or Department of Education System (Odbor vzdělávací soustavy)

Karmelitská 7

118 12 Praha 1

<https://www.msmt.cz/eu-and-international-affairs/uznavani-kvalifikaci>

**Social consultation provided by NGOs and integration centres**

**Non-governmental organization META**

Czech language courses, education counselling, communication with teachers, assistance with the enrolment of children into schools, recognition of education, etc.

[www.meta-os.cz](http://www.meta-os.cz)

**Czech language for foreigners:**

<http://cestina-pro-cizince.cz>





## EMPLOYMENT

Moving monument of Franz Kafka made by the artist David Černý, Prague

## INSTITUTIONS

**Work in the Czech Republic, information, recruitment agencies and vacancies (also for foreigners):**

**Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs**

**Issuing employee cards:**

Offices of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (OAMP MVČR), Foreigners Residence Offices

**Issuing work permits and binding opinions:**

Labour Office of the Czech Republic

**Inspection of working conditions and work safety:**

Labour Inspection Office

## ENTERING THE LABOUR MARKET

To successfully enter the labour market in the Czech Republic, it is important to have a valid residence permit and to know whether you have unrestricted access to the labour market or whether you need a permit to get employed.

Unrestricted access to the labour market depends on your residence permit type, type of work and other conditions.



### **The following citizens have unrestricted access to the labour market:**

- EU citizens and their family members;
- Foreigners with a permanent residence permit;
- International protection status holders (asylum or other protection);
- Foreigners who have a valid long-term permit with the purpose of family reunification in the Czech Republic with a foreigner with a permanent or long-term residence, or with recognized asylum;
- Foreigners who are continuously preparing for future jobs (students of full-time secondary school programs, conservatories, tertiary technical education facilities and language schools authorized to organize state-certified language exams, as well as full-time university study);
- Foreigners who received secondary, tertiary technical or university education in a conservatory or university education as defined by law.

To be able to work legally, these foreigners do not need a work permit, Employee Card nor Blue Card. The employer is only required to report their employment to the regional branch of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic on the day of starting the work at the latest.

The information whether you have the unrestricted entry to the labour market can be found on your biometric card. If it states: Unrestricted Access – YES, you do not need another permit. If your card states that it is Employee Card, then the information is not given there, because the purpose of your stay is employment.

If an employer intends to employ a foreigner who does not have unrestricted access to the labour market (the biometric card states NO), a signed employment contract or an agreement to perform work (DPČ) is required and the foreigner is also required to obtain a work permit, an Employee Card or a Blue Card or a different type of permit.

## **EMPLOYEE CARD AND BLUE CARD**

**The Employee Card is a special type of long-term permit** with the purpose of employment. It is common that it **combines long-term residence with a maximum possible period of stay of two years and a work permit linked to a certain job position (2 in 1)**.

### **Some of the conditions for issuance of Employee Cards:**

- An employer advertised a vacancy available also to foreigners – Employee Card holders;
- The position was not occupied by a Czech or an EU citizen or a citizen with unrestricted access to the labour market;

- The foreigner proves that they meet qualification requirements for the position, i.e. they have necessary professional qualification for the position in question;
- Monthly wage reaches at least the amount of minimum monthly wage;
- Weekly working hours per work contract or agreement to perform work (DPČ) for at least 15 hours, etc.

The **Blue Card** is a type of residence permit **designed for highly qualified foreigners who will be employed in a position requiring a high qualification**. The foreigner must present a labour contract for at least one year and with a monthly or annual gross salary in the amount of at least 1.5 times the annual national average in the Czech Republic.

If an Employee Card holder intends to change their job position, be employed in a different position or change their employer, they must report this change to the Ministry of the Interior (Offices of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy – OAMP) at least 30 days in advance, prior to the change. This must be reported using the relevant form. Both the foreigner and the future employer will be notified whether the conditions for change of employer have been met. Before this permission is granted, it is not possible to work at this new position or with the new employer.

It is not possible to change the employer or the position, or to notify of another employment if you are staying in the country with your first Employee Card and 6 months have not passed since you collected it in person at OAMP.

The six-months long restriction period does not apply if the employment was terminated due to a clearly defined reason (i.e. the employer fails to pay the salary, the employer is closed down or relocated, the employee is made redundant due to reorganisation of the company, health reasons of the employee which prevent them from being employed, etc.). It is the foreigner's duty to prove that employment was terminated due to that reason when they report the change.

If the Employee Card was issued for an employer which is an employment agency registered in the official list of approved recruitment agencies at the portal of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it is not allowed to change an employer, change a position, begin a new employment or employment with a different employer if the future employer is another employment agency.

If the foreigner doesn't change the job position or employer and they want to extend the Employee Card, they must apply with the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic for an extension, not earlier than 120 days before, and not later than the last day before the expiration of its validity. In this case the Labour Office issues a binding opinion on

whether it is possible to continue employing the foreigner with respect to the situation in the labour market.

## WORK PERMIT AND SPECIAL CASES OF EMPLOYEE CARDS

In cases when the purpose of long-term residency of a foreigner is employment and, at the same time, the foreigner:

- a) has unrestricted access to the labour market,
  - b) or holds a valid work permit,
- the Employee Card serves as a long-term residence permit only (the so-called “non-dual Employee Card”).

**Work permits are issued by the Labour Office of the Czech Republic to those foreigners who don't have unrestricted access to the labour market. The permits are issued for instance when the foreigner:**

- is sent by their foreign employer to work in the Czech Republic,
- is a partner, member or statutory body of a company or a cooperative, and carries out tasks related to the scope of business of the company/cooperative (generally, this is applicable to any foreigners with a long-term residence with the purpose of “business”),
- is an intern with employment relationship, and in similar cases.

The work permit may be extended with respect to the situation in the labour market, also repeatedly, always for maximum of 2 years. You must apply with the Labour Office for this extension, not earlier than 3 months and not later than 30 days before the existing permit expires. The condition for extending the work permit is that you keep the same job with the same employer and at the same place of work.

If the foreigner is a holder of a special Employee Card which serves as a long-term residence permit only, and they are changing the employer or working position, they are obliged to announce this change to the Ministry of the Interior (Offices of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy – OAMP) within 3 working days.

## TERMINATION OF AN EMPLOYEE CARD

If an Employee Card holder who is working under an employment contract loses their job (i.e. employer-employee relationship is broken), **they are protected for 60 days,**

**during which they can find a new job**, regardless for the reason of employment relation termination.

**If they fail to find a new job and notify of change of the employer within the protected period of 60 days, at the end of this period, their Employee Card will be automatically terminated by law.** In this case, they will most likely have to return back to their home country and cover the related costs themselves.

## EMPLOYER EMPLOYING FOREIGNERS

Foreigners may be employed only on the basis of a work contract or an agreement concluded outside an employment relationship (an agreement to perform work (dohoda o pracovní činnosti, DPČ) or an agreement to complete a job (dohoda o provedení práce, DPP), concluded in writing, if the foreigner is either a holder of an Employee Card, a Blue Card or a card of an employee transferred within one company, or a holder of a valid long-term visa or long-term residence permit and a work permit issued by the Labour Office of the Czech Republic, or if they have unrestricted access to the labour market.

## WORKING ILLEGALLY

Labour Inspection Offices, customs authorities and the Foreign Police Service check the validity of work permits and residence permits. In case of illegal work, both the employer and the employee may face large financial penalties, and illegal work may be the reason why extension of work permit is turned down, also for cancelling the residence permit and administrative expulsion of the foreigner. Your application for an extension of the Employee Card may be turned down if you have performed illegal work.

If you work in the Czech Republic illegally (without a relevant permit or without an employment contract/agreement to perform work/agreement to complete a job), it will be difficult for you to demand your rights. Very often, the employer doesn't pay the agreed salary or doesn't pay at all. In a situation like that, you become very vulnerable and you face numerous risks related to illegal work, including the possibility of being expelled from the Czech Republic.

## VACANCIES

The Czech Republic protects its labour market. Czech and EU citizens including their family members come first when a vacancy appears. Third country nationals (from

countries outside the EU) who don't have an unrestricted access to the labour market can be employed only at a position listed in the register of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic.

The Labour Office intermediates employment through its regional branches. You may view vacancies for foreigners at the webpage of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the section called Foreign Employment:

## Blue Cards

### Employee Cards

Besides Labour Offices, vacancies may be also offered by private employment agencies. The fee for arranging work by a private employment agency should be covered by the employer, not the employee. The agencies may try to go around this rule by charging other fees (i.e. fees for translations, verification of documents, consultations, etc.). Judge very carefully what you can arrange yourself and what you need to have arranged by the employment agency. The official list of registered employment agencies can be found on the [website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#). An employment agency can arrange employment in the form of a temporary assignment of a worker for an employer, if the worker is a holder of an Employee Card, a Blue Card or a restricted work permit.

## EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AND WORK CONTRACTS

An **employment relationship** is a legal relationship between an employee and their employer. It is established when **a work contract is signed**, is valid from the date when the contract enters into force (i.e. from the first day on the job), and is terminated only under conditions regulated by law, usually by expiration or by a written agreement between the employer and the employee.

You should always request your own copy of a signed work contract from your employer. Only sign contracts that you understand. A work contract must contain important statutory provisions such as: **type of work, place of work, and the starting date**. A work contract should also include other provisions that are in the interest of the parties concerned. These include employee and employer identification, working hours, duration of the contract (definite or indefinite), salary conditions, payment date of salary, overtime payments, vacation, probation period, business trips, etc.

A work contract must be made in writing. A dismissal or an agreement to terminate employment must be in written form as well.

## IN/DEFINITE WORK CONTRACT

A work contract can either be established for an indefinite period (the contract does not specify when employment ends) or a definite period (the contract specifies when employment ends).

The common probation period is three months (or even six months for top management). A probation period is not mandatory. Both the employer and the employee may decide to terminate employment during the probation period without providing the reasons. If employment is terminated, we remind you that there is the 60 days protective period during which you can find a new job and notify the Ministry of the Interior of change of the employer, because otherwise foreigners face the risk of having their Employee Card and their residence in the Czech Republic terminated.

An employee is entitled to vacation time (minimum of 160 hours in a calendar year in full-time employment) and, in some cases, also to severance pay (usually, if the termination notice comes from the employer).





A work contract may be changed or extended by an **amendment**. Both parties, the employee and the employer, must agree to this change. The amendment must be made **in writing**.

Employment is terminated **by agreement, by notice** (the usual notice period is at least 2 months), **cancellation during probation period** (without stating the reasons on both sides), **expiry of employment period, immediate cancellation** (only in cases stipulated by law) or **due to an expiration or cancellation of a residence permit**.

A work contract can also be arranged for part-time work. Anyone can work simultaneously for two or more employers, with one main and one side employment. A foreigner must hold a work permit for each employment relationship (this does not apply to Employee Card holders or foreigners with unrestricted access to the labour market).

## AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED OUTSIDE AN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

Agreements concluded outside an employment relationship are used for short-term jobs, such as one-week jobs; flexible jobs, such as one-day jobs to perform specific work; or for temporary assignment of employees for a short period of time. Generally, the same (or similar) principles apply as with an employment relationship; however, in some respects, the rights and obligations are regulated specifically (e.g. the scope of work, vacation, sick leave, social and health insurance, etc.). Also agreements must be made in writing. Always ask your employer for a copy of the signed agreement contract.

The Labour Code distinguishes two types of agreements outside employment:

**Agreement to complete a job (*Dohoda o provedení práce, DPP*)** – limited by hours of allowed work (currently up to 300 hours per year) with one employer. Due to this provision, it is not used for long-term work for one employer, but it is very suitable for casual employees who do monthly work for more employers. If income is over CZK 10,000 per month, the employer must pay health and social insurance premiums as in the case of an employment relationship. Unlike in an employment relationship based on a work contract, the notice period is 15 days.

**Agreement to perform work (*Dohoda o pracovní činnosti, DPČ*)** – limited by weekly half-time (maximum 20 hours). The employer must pay health and social insurance premiums as in the case of an employment relationship if the agreed salary exceeds CZK 3,500. It must be concluded in writing and may be for a definite or indefinite period.

An employee is not entitled to vacation and severance pay upon termination. Unlike in an employment relationship based on a work contract, the notice period is 15 days.

## WAGE

If you work the statutory 40-hour week, you are entitled to at least a **minimum gross wage**, the amount of which is determined by the government. Information about the minimum wage can be found on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In 2023, it amounts to CZK 17,300 per month, or CZK 103.80 per hour.

When concluding a work contract (or an agreement to complete a job/agreement to perform work), you may come across two terms: gross and net wage. A **gross wage** is your wage before deduction of all charges (advance payment of income tax, social and health insurance premiums). A **net wage** is calculated after all statutory deductions are made from the gross wage, i.e. the above-mentioned advance income tax – 15%, health insurance and social security contributions), and the net amount is the employee's take-home wage, which is usually paid by wire transfer. Work contracts usually specify your gross wage, not your net wage. Similarly, vacancies are advertised with a gross wage.

All data on gross and net wages and statutory deductions should be clearly indicated on your pay slip.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL INSURANCE

Employers must register their employees to pay health and social insurance contributions (i.e. these have the form of a payroll tax).

Health insurance is paid at 13.5% of the gross wage. From this rate, 4.5% is paid by the employee and 9% is paid by the employer.

Social insurance is paid at 31.5% of the gross wage. From this rate, 6.5% is paid by the employee and 24.8% is paid by the employer.

Your employer's duty is to pay health insurance on your behalf. You can check this with your insurance company. It is your duty to always carry your health insurance card on you.

## INCAPACITY TO WORK

If you get sick or injured and cannot come to work, you can stay at home on a so-called sick leave. In this case you must see your doctor who will issue a confirmation of your incapacity to work with its expected duration. During this time you do not receive your wage, but you receive a contribution from your sickness insurance. Your doctor will send all necessary documents in electronic form directly to your employer and the Czech Social Security Administration. However, it is your duty to let your employer know of your incapacity to work (by phone, text message, or e-mail).

An employer must also release a woman for maternity leave (later, parental leave). Maternity leave commences 6-8 weeks before the planned delivery date. The total duration of maternity leave is 28 weeks (with one child) or 37 weeks (with two or more children). In this case also the employee does not receive a wage, but receives a contribution from sickness insurance. This contribution is conditioned by paying sickness insurance for at least 270 days in the last 2 years prior to the beginning of maternity leave and this insurance must be valid to the day when the woman becomes entitled to receiving this benefit.

Furthermore, law allows parents to stay home to care for a sick child (under the age of 10). This benefit is called attendance allowance and the child's doctor will issue a necessary form that a parent needs to deliver to their employer.

## STUDENTS AND EMPLOYMENT

Full-time students studying at high schools, colleges, conservatories, and students of accredited university programs in the Czech Republic do not need an Employee Card or a work permit, regardless of their purpose of long-term residence or visa. They have unrestricted access to the labour market.

Graduates who have completed secondary or higher vocational education or higher professional education at a conservatory under the Education Act, or university education under the Higher Education Act, also do not need an Employee Card or work permit. After graduating they need to apply for a residence permit for a different purpose if they wish to stay in the Czech Republic.

Students who have unrestricted access to the labour market can earn extra money by working for several employers on the basis of the above-mentioned types of contracts (for example, several concurrent agreements to complete a job).

An employed student must submit a tax return just like any other taxpayer if they have concurrent jobs from which advance tax payments are deducted (the so-called 15% “pay-as-you-earn tax”) or if they had other taxable income during the year (income exceeding CZK 30,000 in the given calendar year). Students under 26 are entitled to a tax relief if they provide their employer with a confirmation of their studies.

## RISKS AND PROTECTION OF EMPLOYEES

**In the Czech Republic, conditions for employment are regulated by the Labour Code** which defines rights and duties of employees and employers.

Please, make all arrangements related to your employment **in writing. Only sign a contract that you understand. Carefully keep all documentation signed by the employer.**

**Verify the credibility of employment agencies.** The list of accredited agencies is available on the [website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#).

According to the Czech Labour Code, working more than the agreed working hours, on weekends and on public holidays entitles you to supplement pay for overtime work. If you work in degrading, unhealthy or unsanitary conditions, please contact the local Labour Inspection Office, Integration Centre or an NGO. If you have documents signed by your employer and you are willing to testify, it is possible to file a complaint against your employer at a Labour Inspection Office, or you can file a lawsuit in court.

If your employer officially pays you only a portion of your actual wage, you might not be able to prove the required income needed for your next application for a residence permit or you will be entitled to a lower old-age pension!

Working in a position other than the one specified in the work permit or for a different employer is considered illegal. A foreigner who is sent by a foreign employer to perform work in the Czech Republic based on a contract with a Czech legal entity or an individual must also have a work permit.

If, upon your arrival to the Czech Republic, you are **forced to conduct different work** than what was previously agreed, and you do not agree to this change, do not hesitate to contact specialised NGOs listed in the Contacts chapter at the end of this brochure or the Police of the Czech Republic which will help you defend your rights. Your employer may be violating the law and committing the crime of fraud and, in the worst case, human trafficking for work (or even sexual) exploitation. Your testimony will help punish the offender and protect other potential victims from exploitation.

## INFORMATION AND HELP

**Work in the Czech Republic, information, recruitment agencies and vacancies (also for foreigners):**

**Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs**

<https://www.mpsv.cz/web/cz/hledani-volnych-mist-1>

<https://www.mpsv.cz/web/cz/hledani-volnych-mist>

<https://www.mpsv.cz/web/cz/hledani-volnych-mist-2>

### List of recruitment agencies

**Employee and Blue Cards:**

**Website of the Ministry of the Interior**

[www.imigracniportal.cz](http://www.imigracniportal.cz)

<https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/employee-card-682810.aspx>

**Issuing work permits:**

**Labour Offices**

[www.uradprace.cz](http://www.uradprace.cz)

**Inspections of working conditions and work safety:**

**State Labour Inspection Office (regional offices)**

[www.suip.cz/kontakty](http://www.suip.cz/kontakty)

**Information and counselling provided free of charge:**

Integration centres

Non-governmental non-profit organizations

**La Strada Czech Republic** – assistance to victims of exploitation and human trafficking (forced labour and sexual exploitation)

**Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague – Magdala Project** – counselling and assistance to victims of human trafficking (forced labour and sexual exploitation)

You can find all the contacts at the end of the brochure.



# BUSINESS

Dancing House, Prague

## INSTITUTIONS

**Conducting business in the Czech Republic, information and legislation:**  
**Ministry of Industry and Trade**

**Issuing of trade licenses:**

**Trade Licensing Offices** (part of municipal administration)

## WHAT IS BUSINESS?

**Conducting business** is a systematic activity carried out by an entrepreneur in their own name and on their own account with the aim to gain profit. You can conduct business as a natural person (you work on your own) or as a legal entity (you set up a commercial company).

**Systematic activity** – your business activity must be repeated. If, for example, you sell excess apples from your garden just once, this cannot be classed as doing business. But, if you continue in this activity (even if it is only in your free time next to your regular job or only in a particular season of the year) and you keep selling apples repeatedly, then this is classed as doing business even if it is only several times a year.

**In your own name and on your own account** – while doing business you act on your own behalf, in your name or in the name of your commercial company. This means that you are responsible for the results of your activity. You decide which orders you will realize and what activities you will select, because unlike in employment you make your own decisions, you are your own master and you do not have a boss. If you do business as a natural person, you are liable for all your business obligations with all of your assets.

With the aim to gain profit – your aim to get financial reward, you do not work free of charge. You will issue invoices (unlike in employment where your employer pays your salary and makes tax and insurance deductions on your behalf). You yourself are responsible for paying health and social insurance and also tax. For this reason it is necessary to keep tax records.

**The following text concerns primarily trade-licensed business** performed by natural persons, i.e. individuals. Information about business performed by legal persons can be found, for example, at “Points of single contact” established by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (for more information visit [www.businessinfo.cz](http://www.businessinfo.cz)).

## CAN FOREIGNERS DO BUSINESS IN THE CR?

**Foreigners can conduct business in the Czech Republic under almost the same conditions as Czech citizens, provided they have been issued a long-term visa or residence permit on the territory of the Czech Republic** (whether for long-term or permanent stay).

**The purpose of the long-term visa or residence permit can be any, it doesn't have to be for the purpose of "business"**. If you have a different purpose (such as family reunification, study, or employment), you can start a business, but **under the condition that you continue to fulfil the purpose of your visa/residence permit**. For example, if you want to engage in business while working (studying), you can obtain the authorization for business, but you mustn't stop working (studying).

## RESIDENCE OF A FOREIGNER FOR THE PURPOSE OF DOING BUSINESS

However, if you decide to cease working (studying, or being united with family) and focus only on business, it is necessary to change the purpose of your residence to business. In general, **it is possible to change the purpose of residence to business** if you hold **a valid long-term residence permit** and have been residing in the Czech Republic for at least **5 years**.

In the case of **residence for the purpose of family reunification**, you can request a change of purpose of residence (for example, to business) only **after 3 years** of residence or upon reaching the age of 18.

**Warning!** For the purposes of a long-term residence permit, participating in the governing body of a commercial company or cooperative engaged in business activities by that company or cooperative (collectively referred to as 'participation in a legal entity') is also considered as engaging in business.

However, if you are simultaneously fulfilling tasks arising from the subject of activity of your legal entity (as a partner, member of the statutory or other body of a commercial company for that company, or as a member of a cooperative or a member of the statutory or other body of a cooperative for that cooperative), it is considered as employment



in terms of activity content. In these cases, foreigners must hold a work permit issued by the relevant regional branch of the Czech Labour Office for this specific activity.

For example: if the business activity of a limited liability company involves providing cleaning services and the director of the company also participates in cleaning, a work permit is required.

## HOW TO START A BUSINESS?

Anyone who wishes to do business in the Czech Republic must first obtain the relevant authorization, register for advance payments towards social and health insurance, and also maintain tax records for tax payment purposes. Entrepreneur individuals are referred to as 'self-employed persons' or 'OSVČ' in Czech, which stands for "osoby samostatně výdělečně činné".

In the Czech Republic, business is most commonly conducted based on **a trade licence**. However, it is also possible to engage in business activities based on **other specific permits according to special regulations** (such as doctors, tax advisors, lawyers, etc.).

## TRADE LICENSED ENTERPRISE

Trade licensed enterprise is governed by the Trade Licensing Act (also known as the 'Trade Act'), in its current version. All matters related trade licensing enterprises are processed by trade licensing departments at municipal offices.

### How to apply for a trade licence?

You can start business as a self-employed person (also known as a sole trader) in person at the trade licensing office, by mail, or electronically (with a qualified electronic signature or to the electronic mailbox of this office). You can also submit the application in person through **Czech POINT** service centres. The fee is 1,000 CZK and is paid in cash, typically at the office's cashier or through a bank transfer. The office will issue you a trade licence based on the field and type of trade you intend to pursue. At the trade licensing office, you will also obtain **an extract from the Trade Register**.

To obtain a trade licence, the following conditions must be met:

- age of at least 18 years,
- legal capacity,

- no criminal record - this is evidenced by an extract from the criminal record (not older than 3 months) issued by the relevant authority of the country of which you are a citizen, including a certified translation.
- for certain trades, professional qualification (education or experience) is also required.

Trades are divided into **notifiable** (**unqualified**, **vocational**, and **regulated**) trades, which only require notification, and **licensed trades**, which require approval (known as a concession). In the case of free trades, you don't need to provide any professional education. Examples include clothing production, accommodation services, retail trade, photography, translation, interpretation, and more. For craft and regulated trades, you need professional education or experience in the field. A complete list of individual trades, along with information on how to obtain authorization, can be found in Czech on the [businessinfo.cz](http://businessinfo.cz) website.

Furthermore, you will be asked to **prove the rightfulness of your residence** in the Czech Republic.

Every entrepreneur conducting a trade is required to have their registered office within the territory of the Czech Republic. Therefore, you must also submit **a declaration – the consent of the property owner (apartment owner) to locate your business there**.

## STEP 2: Register for Advance Payments for Social and Health Insurance

At the trade licensing office, you will fill out the **Unified Registration Form**. The trade licensing office will inform other authorities on your behalf – the health insurance company, social security administration, and tax office.



Your business can be your **main** or **supplementary** (for example, while studying, being employed, etc.). The amount of advance payments for health and social insurance depends on this distinction.

**Tip:** Unified contact points provide you with free information (including in English) necessary for starting a business in the Czech Republic, as well as contacts for the required authorities. They can also forward your application for business authorization or notifications and reports in the areas of health and social insurance to the relevant offices. Contact details for individual offices can be found on the **businessinfo.cz** website, and for inquiries, you can also use an **online form**.

## TRADE LICENSED ENTERPRISE – DUTIES

Every entrepreneur is obliged to properly state their name, registered office, and information that they are registered in the Trade Register, including their identification number, on business documents. They must regularly make advance payments for health and social insurance. If they are not registered under the so-called lump-sum taxation regime (see below), they must also file a tax return and pay taxes.

### Health insurance

Law requires that everyone who resides in the Czech Republic must have valid health insurance.

Self-employed persons (OSVČ) and other entrepreneurs, unlike employees, must pay health insurance themselves.

Foreigners staying in the Czech Republic based on a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit with the purpose of business (with the exceptions stipulated by international treaties, e.g. US citizens) are not included in the public health insurance system and, therefore, are required to purchase **comprehensive commercial health insurance** themselves. Comprehensive health insurance is paid upfront for the whole agreed period (usually, for the expected period of stay). Entrepreneurs who are included in the public health insurance system, on the contrary, pay monthly deposits.

## Social security

Social security is composed of three levels – social insurance, state social security and social assistance. These three systems are interrelated, creating a comprehensive system.

The system of social insurance includes pension insurance, a contribution to the state policy of unemployment and sickness insurance. Social insurance is used to collect funds for the national budget to pay for:

- Pension insurance benefits (old-age pension, disability pension, widow's and widower's pension, orphan's pension),
- Unemployment benefit paid under predefined conditions to applicants registered with the Labour Office, and other costs related to the right to employment,
- Sickness insurance benefits (sick-leave, maternity leave, nursing allowance, compensatory benefit in pregnancy and maternity).

The social insurance system is operated by the Czech Social Security Administration (*Česká správa sociálního zabezpečení, ČSSZ*). It is the largest financial organization of the Czech public administration. Its primary task is to pay pensions and sick leaves. ČSSZ oversees Local Social Security Administrations (*Okresní správa sociálního zabezpečení, OSSZ*). The branch in Prague is the Prague Social Security Administration (*Pražská správa sociálního zabezpečení, PSSZ*).

Conditions under which participation of self-employed persons (OSVČ) in pension insurance and payment of contributions to the state employment policy are mandatory are regulated by law. Sickness insurance is voluntary but if the entrepreneur does not pay sickness insurance, they are not entitled to any benefits during sick leave. These include, for example, sick-leave (when you have an incapacity to work) and maternity benefit (to take care about a newborn child) or paternity benefit (to allow fathers to care about their newborn children).

A foreigner with a trade license must register with the local OSSZ. Besides proof of identity and a valid visa/residence permit, the foreigner is required to submit an excerpt from the Trade License Register. Any changes related to independent gainful activity (commencement/ending/termination or suspension) must be reported to the relevant OSSZ by the 8th day of the new calendar month following the month in which the change happened.

## Paying insurance contributions

OSSZ will issue a confirmation of registration and designate a variable symbol to identify an individual's **insurance payments**. Insurance is usually paid on monthly basis. The advance premium payment for a calendar month is due from the **1st to the 20th day of the following calendar month**. Payments must be made on time (i.e. the payment for the month of May must be credited to ČSSZ account by 20 June)!

A self-employed person must submit an **annual income and expenses report** to the responsible social security administration for each calendar year, not later than one month after the date on which the person was obliged to submit their tax return to the Tax Authority.

**Warning!** If a foreigner was granted a residence permit with the purpose of business, they must remain registered with OSSZ, even if they do not conduct business activity for some time or leave the Czech Republic for some time, etc. A foreigner who has debts with OSSZ might find their visa or residence permit terminated!

Foreigners should **not have any payments pending** with OSSZ, otherwise their long-term visa or long-term residence permit will not be extended.

Even statutory bodies or members of a legal entity/company and cooperative must pay social insurance, if they reached the minimum monthly income stipulated by law (CZK 3,500).

## TAXES – TAX AUTHORITY (FÚ)

**A foreigner who received a trade license must register with the Tax Authority** (*Finanční úřad*, FÚ) with jurisdiction over the relevant place of business (usually, residence address). Within 30 days of registration, the applicant obtains a certificate of registration with the tax authority and is designated a tax identification number (*daňové identifikační číslo*, abbreviated "DIČ").

Except for some cases, self-employed persons must **keep records of income and expenditures**. Records of income and expenses must be kept in way so that the entrepre-

neur can calculate a tax base and that a possible inspection of the tax office can review this calculation. Furthermore, a self-employed person has the **obligation to submit a tax return** by 31 March of the following year, even if their business was established less than a year before or they made no profit at all (for example, if a foreigner does business in 2023, they must file a tax return for 2023 by 31 March 2024).

A self-employed person (OSVČ) pays their income tax (on declared income) based on the tax return. If a foreigner fails to pay the assessed tax and a debt incurs with the tax authority, this can be considered by the Ministry of the Interior (OAMP) a reason for not extending the long-term visa or the long-term residence permit (similarly to social security insurance debts).

**Warning!** Starting from 1 January 2021 OSVČ may ask the tax office for registration in the lump-sum taxation regime. The lump-sum taxation regime means that income tax, pension insurance premiums and contribution for state unemployment policy together with health insurance premiums are collected in a lump-sum payment. In this case, there is no need to file a tax return.

## RISKS AND PROTECTION

There are many distinctions between business and employment. You may think that you are performing a business activity, but instead you are performing an activity that is considered dependent activity (employment) according to Czech law. In this case, you may face substantial penalties for violating the Employment Act.

If you arrive in the Czech Republic for business purposes, you will need to comply with conditions related to doing business, especially, pay taxes and health and social insurance throughout your entire stay.

If you wish to extend your stay in the Czech Republic and apply for an extension of your residence, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient funds and that you do not have any debts on taxes, health and social security insurance. Therefore, it is not advisable to conduct independent gainful activity (do business) just to obtain to a residence permit because Czech law considers such a stay as dishonest.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT

As previously mentioned, a natural person – **entrepreneur** works **for themselves, in their own name and at their own responsibility**, without having a superior. They personally choose the contracts they will carry out, set their own working hours, and provide their own work tools and everything needed. Typically, they handle multiple contracts and do not collaborate with just one customer. They independently pay health and social insurance contributions and keep tax records.

On the other hand, an employee is someone who performs **dependent activity – they have a superior (employer) to whom they are subordinated**. The work is carried out on behalf of the employer, following their instructions. Dependent work must be remunerated, at the expense and liability of the employer, during working hours at the employer's workplace, or at another agreed-upon location. An employee works based on an employment contract or agreement (part-time or full-time), which must always be in writing.

**You should be cautious about the distinction between entrepreneurship and employment.** Make sure that the conditions of your entrepreneurship comply with the applicable Czech laws. If your entrepreneurship exhibits characteristics more in line with dependent work, then it's necessary to have an employment contract or agreement with your employer. Working casually as a "contractor" (based on a trade license) for your employer is a way of circumventing the law. In case of inspection, for example, by the Labour Inspection Office, you could face not only significant fines but also non-extension or complete revocation of your residence permit. If you're unsure whether this constitutes concealed employment (so-called **švarcsystém**), seek free legal advice.



## INFORMATION AND HELP

**Conducting business in the Czech Republic, information and legislation:**

**Ministry of Industry and Trade**

<http://www.mpo.cz>

**Official website about business and export**

<http://www.businessinfo.cz>

**Granting of trade licenses:**

**Trade Licensing Offices (part of municipal administration)**

<http://www.statnisprava.cz/rstsp/ciselniky.nsf/i/d0056>

**Healthcare in the Czech Republic, health insurance, information, legislation:**

**Ministry of Health**

[www.mzcr.cz](http://www.mzcr.cz)

**Social system, information, legislation:**

**Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs**

[www.mpsv.cz](http://www.mpsv.cz)

**Social security, information, contacts:**

**Czech Social Security Administration (ČSSZ)**

[www.cssz.cz](http://www.cssz.cz)

**Public finances, taxes, customs:**

**Ministry of Finance**

[www.mfcr.cz](http://www.mfcr.cz)





# HEALTHCARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Old Town, Prague



## INSTITUTIONS

### **Healthcare in the Czech Republic, health insurance, information, legislation:**

Ministry of Health

## HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Everyone who resides in the Czech Republic has a statutory obligation to have health insurance.

This chapter provides basic information about health insurance, however, there are many exceptions when it comes to health insurance, so we definitely recommend you consult your situation with a social worker or lawyer from an integration centre or NGO (contacts can be found at the end of this publication).

There are two types of health insurance in the Czech Republic – public and commercial (also called “contractual”).

**Public health insurance** is based on the principle of solidarity. This means that all economically active persons make monthly contributions to this system. Therefore, if needed, they can also benefit from the system. Health care is provided free of charge by the public health insurance system.

Foreigners with a planned residence exceeding 90 days who are not included in the public health insurance system or who are not provided with health insurance based on a different officially recognized condition must purchase commercial health insurance from Pojišťovna VZP, a.s. The scope of health care in such cases, including facilities where it is provided, is determined by contractual terms of the insurance company.

## PUBLIC HEALTH INSURANCE

Public health insurance is regulated by the Public Health Insurance Act. It is generally better because it provides a wider scope of health care and includes most health care providers (except for specialized private care such as plastic surgery, dentistry, etc.). Public health insurance may be provided by insurance companies with a special license only.

### **Public health insurance is designated for the following categories of foreigners:**

- Foreigners with a permanent residence permit,

- Foreigners who are employed by an entity with a registered address or a permanent residence permit in the Czech Republic),
- EU citizens and their family members (under certain conditions),
- Children of foreigners with permanent or long-term residence permits born in the Czech Republic till the end of the calendar month when they reach 60 days of age (further participation of children in the public health insurance system is determined by their residence permit; for this reason, we recommend you contact workers at an integration centre as soon as possible, as they can help you with this issue),
- Other selected groups of foreigners based on international treaties with the Czech Republic.

## COMMERCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Commercial health insurance is purely a private relationship between the insured person (the foreigner) and the insurance company Pojišťovna VZP, a.s. It is intended for all foreigners staying in the Czech Republic (or those wishing to apply for a residence permit) who are not included in the public health insurance system. Typically, these are foreigners with a long-term visa or long-term residence permit (purposes of stay: business, studies, family reunification, etc.).

There are two types of commercial health insurance that concern foreigners – **insurance covering necessary and urgent healthcare** (also called “travel insurance”) and **comprehensive health insurance**.

### **Insurance covering necessary and urgent healthcare (“travel insurance”)**

Foreigners who apply for a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit **with a Czech embassy abroad** must have a commercial health insurance for their stay in the Czech Republic. **For the first 90 days of their stay, they can purchase an insurance coverage in the scope of necessary and urgent healthcare, and at the same time, they need to show a confirmation of a comprehensive health insurance purchased from Pojišťovna VZP, a.s. for the remaining period. Or they can show a confirmation of a comprehensive health insurance purchased from Pojišťovna VZP, a.s. for the entire stay.**

For a stay of up to 90 days (Schengen visa), health insurance requirements are stipulated by an EU directive known as the Visa Code.

## Comprehensive health insurance

For applications for visa for a stay of over 90 days, extension of their validity and residence in the Czech Republic, applications for long-term residence permit (in situations determined by the law) or their extension, the health insurance document must indicate that the extent of such insurance covers **comprehensive healthcare** and needs to be purchased from Pojišťovna VZP, a. s.

Comprehensive health insurance means that healthcare will be provided to the insured person without direct payment of costs of treatment. Such insurance must include dispensary preventive healthcare (i.e. regular care) or healthcare related to pregnancy and childbirth of the insured mother.

Proof of travel medical insurance is not required from a foreign national who has the costs for healthcare covered based on an international agreement or can show that healthcare is otherwise covered by a legal entity who undertook a written obligation to do so, a state institution, or based on an obligation included in an invitation validated by Foreign Police Service.

**It is necessary to pay for the comprehensive health insurance in advance for the entire period of intended stay.** Depending on the length of stay, this may mean a relatively large amount of money. Insurance premiums vary according to the age of the insured person, their physical condition and the marketing policy of the insurance company.

## HEALTH INSURANCE WHEN TEMPORARILY LEAVING THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Since you have paid for your private health insurance in advance, it is not possible to cancel or suspend it when you travel abroad. Public health insurance (for example, if you are an employee or have a permanent residence permit) may be suspended if your stay abroad is continuous and longer than six months. If you apply to suspend your health insurance, upon your arrival back in the Czech Republic you will be required to deliver proof that you had relevant health insurance abroad, otherwise the health insurance company will impose additional premiums to cover for the period of your absence.

## HEALTHCARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE

It is advisable to ask your insurance company to give you a list of contracted physicians and facilities. Most healthcare providers are contracted in the public health insurance

system. In the case of commercial insurance, only a limited number of physicians and facilities are included in your insurance, and that is why you need a list of available providers.

If you purchased commercial health insurance and you visit a doctor or a healthcare facility which does not have a contract with Pojišťovna VZP, a.s., you will be required to pay for the service, otherwise (unless there is immediate threat to your life or health) you will, most likely, be rejected.

Carefully read the terms and conditions of your commercial health insurance so that you know what types of health care are covered by your insurance to prevent any unpleasant surprises such as if your insurance company refuses to pay for a surgery after it was done.

Doctors may (and, for commercial health insurance, this is quite common) require you to pay for treatment in cash. Ask for a medical report, a bill, and a proof of payment; your health insurance company will reimburse you.

If you need to see a doctor or seek help at a medical facility outside of the regular surgery hours (typically, in the evening, at night, on a national holiday or on a weekend), you need to know that **a regulatory fee of CZK 90** applies in the Czech Republic for using emergency medical service or dental emergency service.

## HEALTHCARE – CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Pregnant women regularly attend counselling and gynaecological centres.

It is necessary to register in advance for the delivery at your chosen hospital. The counselling centre for pregnant women will also help you with other essentials such as the registration in a hospital, announcement of the name of the child at the registry office, obtaining parental benefits, etc.

Children in the Czech Republic attend a paediatrician.



If a pregnant woman is not included in the public healthcare system (typically, being a holder of a long-term visa or long-term residence permit and not being employed), it is suitable to purchase a special type of commercial health insurance for pregnant women (usually, there is a special offer for pregnant women/mother and child) which covers prenatal care, childbirth and postnatal care both for the mother and the newborn child. By purchasing this type of insurance, you will avoid the costs of possible high-risk pregnancy and childbirth, which can amount up to several hundred thousand Czech crowns.

## HEALTH INSURANCE OF CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN – POSSIBLE SITUATIONS

### A. **The woman has commercial health insurance**

It is preferable to have extra insurance for prenatal and obstetric care, but such insurance is not mandatory. The newborn is covered by this insurance until they are discharged from the hospital.

This insurance covers prenatal examinations, regular examinations, childbirth, care for the newborn, etc.

The minimum period of coverage is usually 12 months but watch out for the waiting period regarding insurance (some insurance companies have a rule that coverage will be provided only three months after conclusion of the contract).

Some insurance companies impose an age bracket for pregnant women (lower and upper limit).

A child born in the territory of the Czech Republic is insured within the public health insurance system since the day they were born till the end of the calendar month when they reach 60 days of age. The insurance is paid by the parents. Within 6 days, a newborn must be reported to the insurance company the child's father is insured at; if the father doesn't have Czech public health insurance, the child needs to be reported to VZP ČR.

### B. **The woman has public health insurance, but she does not have a permanent residence permit (and neither does the father of the child)**

The woman does not need additional insurance during pregnancy. The child will also be insured within the public health insurance system till the end of the calendar month when they reach 60 days of age (the newborn must be reported to the insurance company) – see the previous paragraph. It is also necessary to contract

a commercial health insurance at Pojišťovna VZP, a.s., for the child subsequent to the period during which the child is insured within the public health insurance system.

**C. The woman has public health insurance, and she (or the father of the child) has a permanent residence permit**

The woman does not need additional insurance during pregnancy and childbirth. If the parents (mother or father of the child) apply for permanent residence permit for their child within 60 days from the day of birth, the newborn is included in the public health insurance system from the day of birth similarly to one of the parents for the entire period when the child's application for the residence permit is being processed.

## HEALTHCARE, SPECIAL CARE, URGENT TREATMENT

Each person should be registered with a general practitioner who knows the patient's medical history, provides routine health care, and sends them to specialists, if necessary.

Register with a general practitioner as soon as possible so you don't have to look for urgent help in a complicated way when you need it! Integration centres can help you find a general practitioner (you can find more in the **Contacts** section).

To use the services of a specialist, you will need a referral from your general practitioner.

Specialists (gynaecologists, dentists, etc.) may not accept you because they are fully booked, and you may have to look for a different specialist.

If you need medical attention outside of working hours, you may use an emergency room (medical emergency service for adults, children and dental emergency service).

## INFORMATION AND HELP

**Healthcare in the Czech Republic, health insurance, information, legislation:  
Ministry of Health**

[www.mzcr.cz](http://www.mzcr.cz)

**Information on patients' rights and medical law**

[www.ferovanemocnice.cz](http://www.ferovanemocnice.cz)

**Searching for doctors by specialization or region**

[www.znamylekar.cz](http://www.znamylekar.cz)



# SOCIAL SYSTEM AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Picturesque streets in the city of Znojmo, South Moravia



## INSTITUTIONS, INFORMATION

### **Social system, information, legislation, bilateral agreements on social security:**

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

[www.mpsv.cz](http://www.mpsv.cz)

### **Social security, information, an overview of bilateral agreements on social security, contacts:**

Czech Social Security Administration (ČSSZ)

[www.cssz.cz](http://www.cssz.cz)

## SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Social security is a systemic instrument for prevention, mitigation and overcoming difficult social situations. It is built on the solidarity principle (economically active people make contributions towards those who are economically inactive), the subsidiarity principle (aid/assistance) and participation (co-payment).

Social security has three pillars – **social benefits** (social insurance, state social support and social assistance), **social services** (provided by state-funded organizations or NGOs) and **shelters** (social housing). These three pillars are interconnected and work together as a whole.

Social security in the Czech Republic is managed by the **Czech Social Security Administration (ČSSZ)**, an agency which is in charge of paying pensions and sickness insurance benefits. It works under the **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs operates the Labour Office of the Czech Republic** (its regional branches and contact offices) which is in charge of employment-related issues, payment of state social support benefits, material need benefits and benefits for persons with physical disabilities.

## SOCIAL INSURANCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The system of social insurance includes pension insurance, contribution to the state policy of unemployment and sickness insurance. Social insurance is used to collect funds for the national budget to pay for:

- Pension insurance benefits (old-age pension, disability pension, widow's and widower's pension, orphan's pension),

- Unemployment benefit paid to job applicants and other costs related to the right to employment,
- Sickness insurance benefits (sick-leave, maternity leave, nursing allowance, compensatory benefit in pregnancy and maternity).

Participation in the social security insurance system is mandatory for all economically active persons, both those conducting dependant activity (employment) and independent gainful activity (OSVČ). Employees get registered in the system by their employer; OSVČ must register themselves.

As we already mentioned in the Business section, conditions of mandatory participation of self-employed persons (OSVČ) in pension insurance and payment of contributions to the state employment policy are regulated by law. Sickness insurance is voluntary. Self-employed persons must register and report any changes on their own.

## INTERNATIONAL BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Social security remains a purely national matter in many respects. However, some benefits are, under certain conditions, also available to foreigners.

As the world is becoming more globalized and many people migrate to other states, the Czech Republic has begun coordinating its social system with other countries. The aim is to make sure that movement of persons across borders does not jeopardize their entitlements to social security. The website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has lists concerning all international agreements on social security in its section on International Relations, as well as a list of social security areas to which individual agreements relate. Such agreements have been concluded by the Czech Republic with the following states: Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and the USA. A detailed overview of such agreements, including their text, can be found at the above links.

It is not possible to reimburse social security contributions to the insured person who, for example, returns to their country of origin. It is only possible to claim this money back based on an international agreement, for instance, in the form of old-age pension.

## INFORMATION AND HELP

**Social system, information, legislation, bilateral agreements on social security:**

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

[www.mpsv.cz](http://www.mpsv.cz)

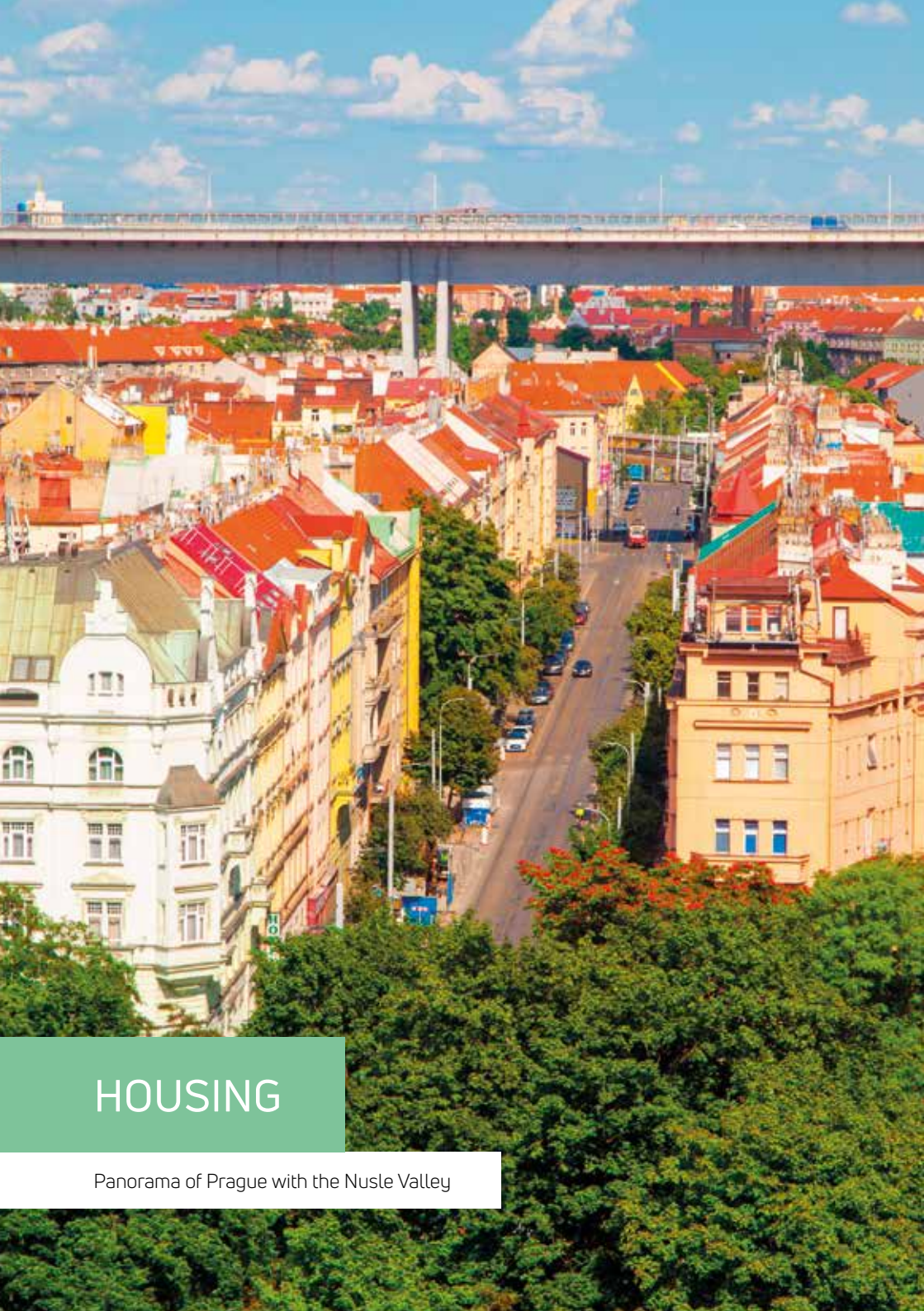
**Social security, information, an overview of bilateral agreements on social security, contacts:**

Czech Social Security Administration

[www.cssz.cz](http://www.cssz.cz)

**An overview of bilateral agreements on social security concluded by the Czech Republic:**

[www.cssz.cz/cz/mezinarodni-smlouvy/smlouvy-uzavrene-cr/prehled-smluv.htm](http://www.cssz.cz/cz/mezinarodni-smlouvy/smlouvy-uzavrene-cr/prehled-smluv.htm)



# HOUSING

Panorama of Prague with the Nusle Valley

## HOUSING POSSIBILITIES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Forms of housing in the Czech Republic probably do not differ much from other countries. People live permanently in properties that they own (or in cooperative ownership) or rent. It is also possible to lease or sublease or stay in various dormitories or temporary residences which are available, mainly, to students.

It is important to know that foreigners may become property owners in the Czech Republic, including apartments or houses, without any restrictions. However, the fact of ownership of a property in the Czech Republic does not entitle a foreigner to a residence permit.

### Searching for a house or an apartment

A wide variety of advertising portals and print materials can be used for searching for a house or an apartment (e.g. Annonce classifieds) or social networks, or you can search through a real estate agency.

Real estate agencies charge a fee for their services; the level of service and fee can vary. It is also good to check references of the real estate agency or compare offers from different agencies. After seeing an apartment, you usually pay **a reservation fee** which gives you first choice of renting (buying) the apartment or the house. When you rent, a security deposit is paid; it can amount up to three months' rent. The security deposit is paid to the owner (landlord) of the house/apartment, who is obligated to give you a written confirmation that the deposit was paid. The owner (landlord) must return the deposit after the lease is terminated, with the right to deduct outstanding amounts (rent or related services, such as water, heating, waste disposal, etc.).

## HOUSING CONTRACTS

### Lease

A contractual relationship between the owner (the landlord) and you as a tenant is called a lease. A lease begins on the day of signing a written contract, which must contain some basic provisions (indication of parties concerned, indication of the apartment or house, its accessories, extent of use, method of calculating rent, etc.). If the lease period is not specified, it is presumed that the contract is for an indefinite period.

It is not permitted to stipulate fines for the tenant or impose special obligations in the contract which are not adequate to the lease relationship. Such stipulations are automatically considered invalid. The landlord is not allowed to forbid you to report the leased

apartment address as your place of residence in the Czech Republic (for foreigners, “reported residence address”). As a foreigner, it is your duty to inform the Ministry of the Interior about your address in the Czech Republic.

If it is a cooperative apartment, the lease agreement is concluded with the cooperative (a community of persons established, for example, with the purpose of conducting business – a housing cooperative is intended to provide and manage the housing of its members). In case of sublease, the sublease fee and other fees will be paid directly to the tenant.

We recommend reading the lease contract carefully before signing. Do not sign any contract you do not understand. You can also approach an NGO or an integration centre providing social and legal counselling free of charge.

### **Sublease**

A sublease is a relationship between a tenant and a subtenant. The tenant enters into a sublease agreement with a third party (the subtenant); typically, the tenant lets the subtenant use the apartment or a part of it. In some cases, the leased apartment – or its



part – may not be subleased without a written consent of the landlord (the owner of the property).

Subtenants have less rights than tenants – a sublease may be terminated without providing a reason, unless the parties agreed otherwise; a sublease expires when the lease is terminated. Subtenants are never entitled to a substitute sublease because the landlord has obligations vis-à-vis the tenant only, not the subtenant.

## FEES RELATED TO HOUSING

Living in a leased property means you must pay rent, usually every month, and advance payments for utilities (electricity, gas), as well as payments related to using the apartment or the house (e.g. payment for water, sewage, waste disposal, elevator, lighting of areas of common use, etc.).

All advance payments are settled on an annual basis. If you paid too much, you will receive the difference, or it will be used towards the next period; if there is an outstanding amount, you must pay the difference within a given period.

TV or radio fees (so called “concessionary fees”) must be paid to the broadcast operator directly (i.e. they are not included in the fees related to using the apartment or the house), and they are applicable only if there is a TV set or a radio in the apartment/house (or both). Cable television or Internet fees are paid directly to the provider based on a contract you have with them.

Take care to keep all relevant documents and proof of payments related to a lease or sublease of an apartment or a house and other services!

## LOSS OF ACCOMMODATION

If you lose your housing and you don't have relatives or friends to turn to for help, you can temporarily turn to any charitable organization such as the Salvation Army, Caritas of the Czech Republic, etc. These organizations provide emergency housing to homeless people in the form of temporary shelters or accommodation. This is a social service which is only provided to bridge the crisis when a person loses housing and lacks necessary funds. You can get more information from NGOs or in integration centres.

## RISKS AND PROTECTION

You should handle your financial resources with caution and prudence. If you fail to pay rent, you may face eviction or even enforcement of debt (seizure of property).

Enforcement, i.e. seizure of property, may occur due to seemingly trivial matters such as an unpaid fine for using public transport without a valid ticket, unpaid fees for television and radio usage, unpaid loans or purchased goods, or unpaid collection of waste bins or containers, unpaid phone bills, TV, radio fees, rent, gas or electricity, health and social insurance, etc.

## REPORTING THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND ITS CHANGES

### **Number of registered persons**

If two people are registered in a leased property, only two people can live there. Czech immigration law defines the requirements for the quality of accommodation provided to a foreigner, which is mainly assessed in terms of the adequacy of the number of persons living there regarding hygienic conditions and the floor area of housing, which must be at least 8m<sup>2</sup> if one person is accommodated, 12.6m<sup>2</sup> for two persons; 5m<sup>2</sup> of additional floor area is required for each additional person accommodated.

### **Reporting the change of address and registered mail**

You must report the change of your address in the Czech Republic to an office of the Ministry of the Interior within the deadline stipulated by law.

State institutions can send you registered mail with important contents to the address you have reported. This mail is considered delivered after 10 days from delivery, even if you do not pick it up. You will find an announcement that you have mail at the post office in your mailbox or it will be left at another appropriate place.

You must label your mailbox and bell visibly with your name and surname, so that the postman can reach you and deliver your mail.





## FAMILY, EQUALITY, CHILDREN

Portrait of two boys in the center of Prague

In the Czech Republic, family is understood as a relationship of people constantly living in marriage or partnership. A basic family consists of parents and their children; family in a broader sense includes all their relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins...). Family is monogamous; it is banned by law to have more than one wife or husband. Both parents are responsible for bringing their children up.

Marriage can be celebrated in a civil or in a church ceremony in the Czech Republic. Single-sex relationships can be established in the form of a legal registered partnership.

## MARRIAGE

Men and women are completely equal within a family, as well as in other rights and obligations, and decisions about family matters are made together by both spouses. Spouses are entitled to the same standard of living.

Marriage in the Czech Republic is concluded before a representative of Civil Registry Office or before an authority of a church or religious society authorized to do so, in the presence of two witnesses. You must present documents that are officially translated into Czech (if they are issued in a foreign language), and they must also be duly legalized if they were issued in a foreign country (unless provided otherwise in an international agreement or treaty).

When one of the fiancés is a foreigner who doesn't speak nor understand Czech, or is deaf or mute, you need an interpreter for the wedding ceremony. In these cases, the marriage cannot be contracted without the presence of an interpreter.

Community property of spouses is established by marriage. It is a specific form of co-ownership, which can only exist between spouses and which has its own treatment different from the general co-ownership. Community property is property acquired by either spouse, or both, as long as the marriage lasts, and it includes obligations that one spouse or both spouses jointly incurred during the marriage. **Therefore, both a house and for example the mortgage, are a common asset of the spouses.** The scope of community property can be changed either by a contract between the spouses, which must be in the form of a notary deed, or by a decision of court.

All assets are used and maintained jointly by both spouses. Ordinary errands (shopping, repairs) can be done by either of the spouses independently. Except for routine matters, such as the use of the property for business, consent of both spouses is required.

In the Czech Republic, there are also families in which the adult couple lives in a partnership without getting married. Such a couple has equal rights as well and it is a common way of living together. Children born to partners and children born to a married couple enjoy the same rights.

## BIRTH OF A CHILD

If you are planning to start a family, you need to know that a newborn child must be registered at the locally relevant register office (based on the place of birth) within 3 working days after the birth. This office then registers the child in a birth register and issues a *birth certificate*. The maternity ward (more specifically the attending physician) usually does this, however if they don't, it is up to the parents to report the childbirth to the register office. To get a birth certificate issued you need to submit several documents. The list of documents needed will be provided to you by any register office, your gynaecologist or attending physician at the maternity ward. The birth certificate is issued within 30 days from the day when the childbirth was registered.

If a child of foreigners born in the Czech Republic leaves the country within 60 days from birth, the statutory guardian (parent) is not required to apply for a residence permit for the child (if the parent or guardian has their own visa or residence permit); the child's stay is considered "temporary" during this period. Any stay in the Czech Republic in the future will have to be applied for from abroad, through an embassy in the country of origin.

In the opposite case, when the child is expected to stay in the Czech Republic longer than 60 days from birth, the statutory guardian (parent) is required to apply for a residence permit within the 60-day period.

Parents can apply for the same type of residence permit for their child that they themselves have; this means that parents can apply for the following types of permit for their child:

- **Visa for up to 90 days (short-term visa)** – if at least one of the parents is staying in the Czech Republic with a short-term visa;
- **Visa for over 90 days (long-term visa)** – if at least one of the parents is staying in the Czech Republic with a long-term visa;
- **Long-term residence permit** – if at least one of the parents is staying in the Czech Republic with a long-term residence permit;
- **Permanent residence permit** – if at least one of the parents is staying in the Czech Republic with a permanent residence permit.

To apply for a residence permit for a child born in the Czech Republic you will need to fill in the application form (long-term visa/long-term or permanent residence permit), the child's travel passport issued by the state of which the child is a national or the parent's travel passport in which the child is entered, and a confirmation of health insurance (not needed for permanent residence application). Until the application for the child's residence permit is processed and the long-term visa/residence permit card is collected, the child may not leave the Czech Republic, otherwise the child will not be allowed to return.

For permanent residence applications, if the application is filed within the specified time-frame, the child's residence is understood to be permanent from birth to the date the decision comes into effect (and thenceforth, if the decision is positive), which means that the child will be included in the public health insurance system. When submitting the application, you don't need to have all the documents ready (e.g. there is no need to wait to have your child's passport issued), if waiting would cause exceeding the statutory timeframe. You can submit the application without these documents and present the documents immediately after receiving them. If you don't submit a permanent residence permit application within the statutory time limit, your child won't be eligible for public health insurance from the day of birth.



## MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

Both spouses should have an equal share in upbringing of their children. Parents have a maintenance obligation until their children complete their education (up to 26 years of age).

There are several forms of support provided to new parents by the Czech state. One of these is the statutory right to take a leave at work (maternity or parental leave) and financial allowances (e.g. maternity benefit and parental allowance). In Czech these terms are often called by their short names "mateřská" (maternity benefit) and "rodičovská" (parental allowance) and they are used to speak about both types of support – leave at work as well as the financial allowance. As both these terms mean something different with different conditions and specifics, we will briefly describe them here. If you need more detailed information on this, contact employees of an integration centre or NGO - contacts can be found at the end of this brochure.

Maternity leave (a period when you don't work) is intended for employed women only. This period usually starts 6 to 8 weeks before the expected date of birth and it lasts 28 weeks (37 when giving birth to two or more children). In some special cases, the law provides for a shorter period of maternity leave. Maternity leave cannot be shorter than 14 weeks and may not in any case be terminated or interrupted before the end of 6 weeks from the date of delivery. An employee does not have to request maternity leave. The employee just needs to notify the employer in writing that her maternity leave begins. During the maternity leave period, the employer must grant the mother unpaid leave.



If the mother isn't eligible for the maternity leave and subsequently the maternity benefit, she can apply for the parental leave after giving birth.

Unlike maternity leave, which is only for the mother, parental leave is intended either for the mother or the father of the child. Parental leave is granted upon request to a mother after her maternity leave, for a period of up to 3 years. The father can apply for the parental leave starting when the child is 14 weeks old and it can be granted until the child reaches the age of 3. An employer is obliged to grant parental leave if the mother or father apply for it. An employee is entitled to unpaid leave during this time.

During maternity leave, the mother is entitled to state support provided from the sickness insurance system (the amount of the benefit is calculated based on documented income from the employer). To be eligible for the maternity benefit, the statutory conditions must be met (e.g. the woman needs to have sickness insurance for at least 270 days in the last two years).

During parental leave, the mother or father receive a parental allowance from the state social support system. This parental allowance is paid monthly and can be stretched up to the date when the child turns four. The total amount of parental allowance is CZK 300,000 in case of having one child. The period for which you plan to take this allowance has an impact on the monthly amount paid (the longer you use the allowance, the lower is the monthly amount).



## WOMEN IN CZECH SOCIETY

Women are fully equal to men in the Czech Republic.

Women are independent and emancipated in the Czech Republic.

In the Czech Republic, women usually work, do business, and they stay at home to raise children mostly during maternity and parental leave only. At the same time, more and more fathers tend to take parental leave.

Women visit restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other places on their own.



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ITS PREVENTION

Domestic violence includes long-term and often escalating physical, psychological, economic or sexual violence that happens mainly in a shared household and between close relatives. Individual attacks can vary, ranging from ridiculing, scolding and social isolation to blackmailing, threatening, or physical and psychological abuse.

Protection of victims of violent behaviour against all forms of violence is guaranteed primarily by the Czech Constitution, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and in other laws, including the Penal Code. Domestic violence is most often qualified as “an abuse of a person living in a shared household”, and the perpetrator can be sent to prison for up to 8 years.

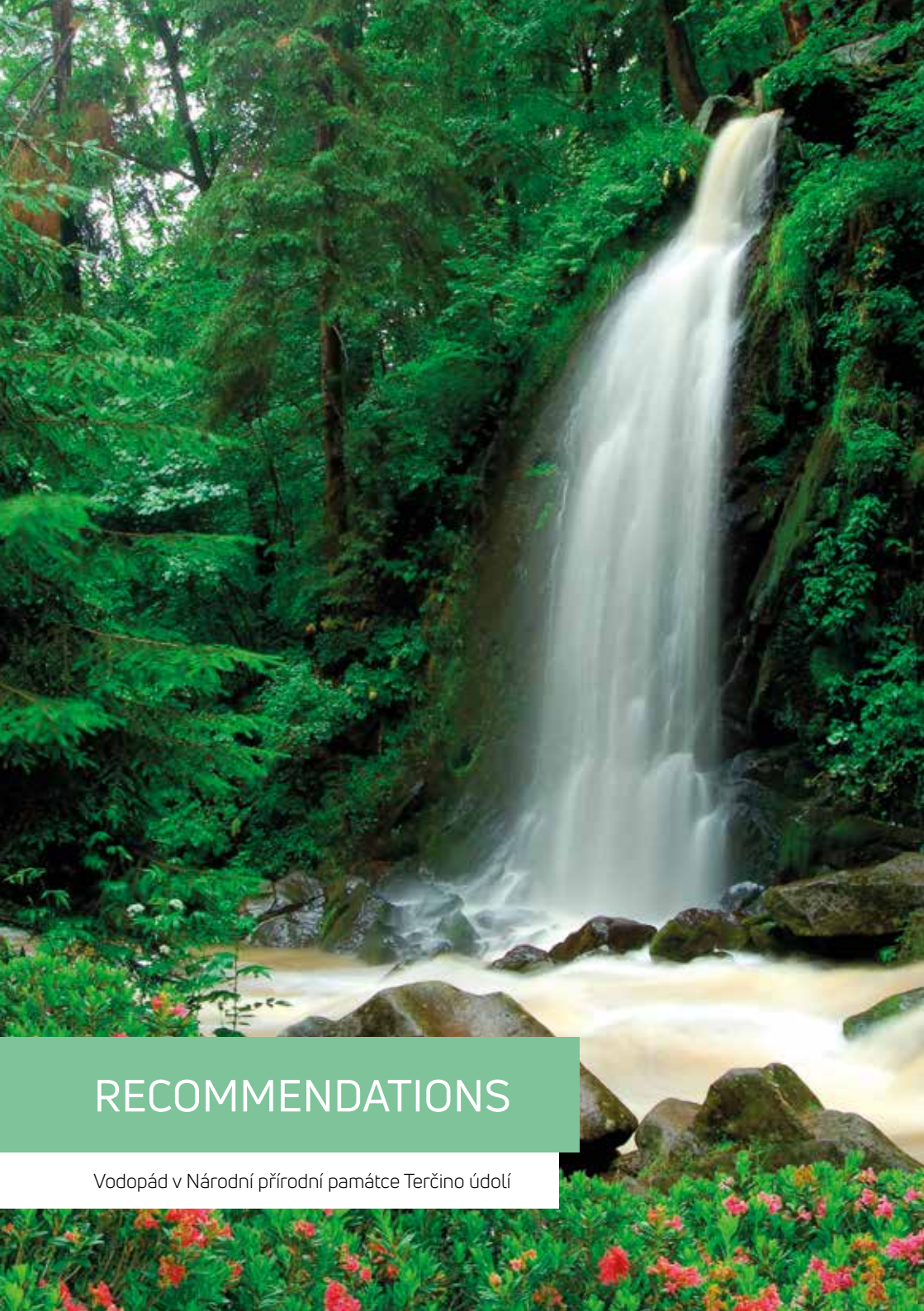
We advise victims of domestic violence (it doesn't always have to be physical or sexually motivated violence) to contact the Police of the Czech Republic; in urgent cases, the police can evict the perpetrator (the aggressor) from the shared household for 10 days. If the case is taken to court, the eviction period can be extended up to the date when the court delivers a decision (so-called preliminary measure). If you are afraid to contact the police directly, we recommend you use at least help provided by relevant NGOs.

These organizations can help you with the following:

- Urgent help – emergency accommodation at a secret address;
- Shelter accommodation at a secret address;
- Counselling for people suffering from domestic violence;
- Legal information for victims of criminal offences linked with domestic violence;
- Apartments for subsequent help at a secret address.

A list of contacts helping with domestic violence is available at the end of this brochure.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

Vodopád v Národní přírodní památce Terčino údolí



## FREE HELP AND INFORMATION

If needed, turn to integration centres or non-governmental organizations whose job is to provide you with assistance and legal and social counselling free of charge.

## AGENCIES

Verify the credibility of intermediation agencies. The list of accredited agencies is available on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Don't pay for having your arrival in the Czech Republic arranged; it is not necessary as you can arrange most of it yourself! Find enough credible information through a Czech embassy, the official immigration portal of the Ministry of the Interior or through official NGOs and integration centres in the Czech Republic. Do not automatically rely on information other than that from official sources.

## PERSONAL AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Do not let go of your personal documents (passport and your biometric card) and make simple or certified copies of important documents.

It is best to bring with you to the Czech Republic or have someone send you any other documents related to your education, education of your children (if they came with you), vaccination certificates and other supporting documents.

Take good care of your Czech biometric residence card because its loss or damage will result in a high fee for the issuance of a new card.

## POWER OF ATTORNEY

Do not sign a general power of attorney to be represented in matters that you can or must arrange yourself (such as signing of contracts, receiving mail, etc.). A power of attorney is used for a precisely defined scope of representation for an individual or for a precise date on which this representation is intended. If necessary, a power of attorney should only be issued to trustworthy persons (family members or good friends).

Store all your documents carefully and always make any agreements and contracts related to your work (as well as accommodation and other) in writing, so that you can claim your rights.

## WORKING CONDITIONS

Your employment contract and job description must be concluded in writing. If, upon your arrival to the Czech Republic, you are forced to perform different work than what was previously agreed, and you do not agree to this change, your employer may be violating the law and committing the crime of fraud and, in the worst case, human trafficking for work (or even sexual) exploitation. Both men and women may find themselves in such a situation, and you can identify it, for instance, by demeaning treatment, poor working conditions (excessive overtime, unsanitary conditions, hazardous work or work that puts your health in jeopardy), fictitious debt repayment or sexual exploitation. In this case, immediately contact a specialized NGO (see the Contacts section) or the Police of the Czech Republic that will help you defend yourself. Your testimony will help punish the offender and protect other victims from exploitation.

## DEBTS AND INDEBTEDNESS

Be wary of borrowing money (especially, from non-banking institutions, “quick loans without documents”, etc.) so that your debts and a possible enforcement, i.e. the seizure of property, do not get you trapped and do not cause you problems that could lead to an illegal stay. Enforcement, or seizure of property, may occur due to seemingly trivial matters such as an unpaid fine for using public transportation without a valid ticket, unpaid TV or radio fees, failure to repay loans or purchased goods or waste disposal, unpaid phone bills, rent, gas or electricity, health and social insurance, etc.

The Czech Republic has a Register of Debtors. It is necessary to prove you are free of debts when doing business in the Czech Republic or when you apply for residence.

## ABIDING THE LAW

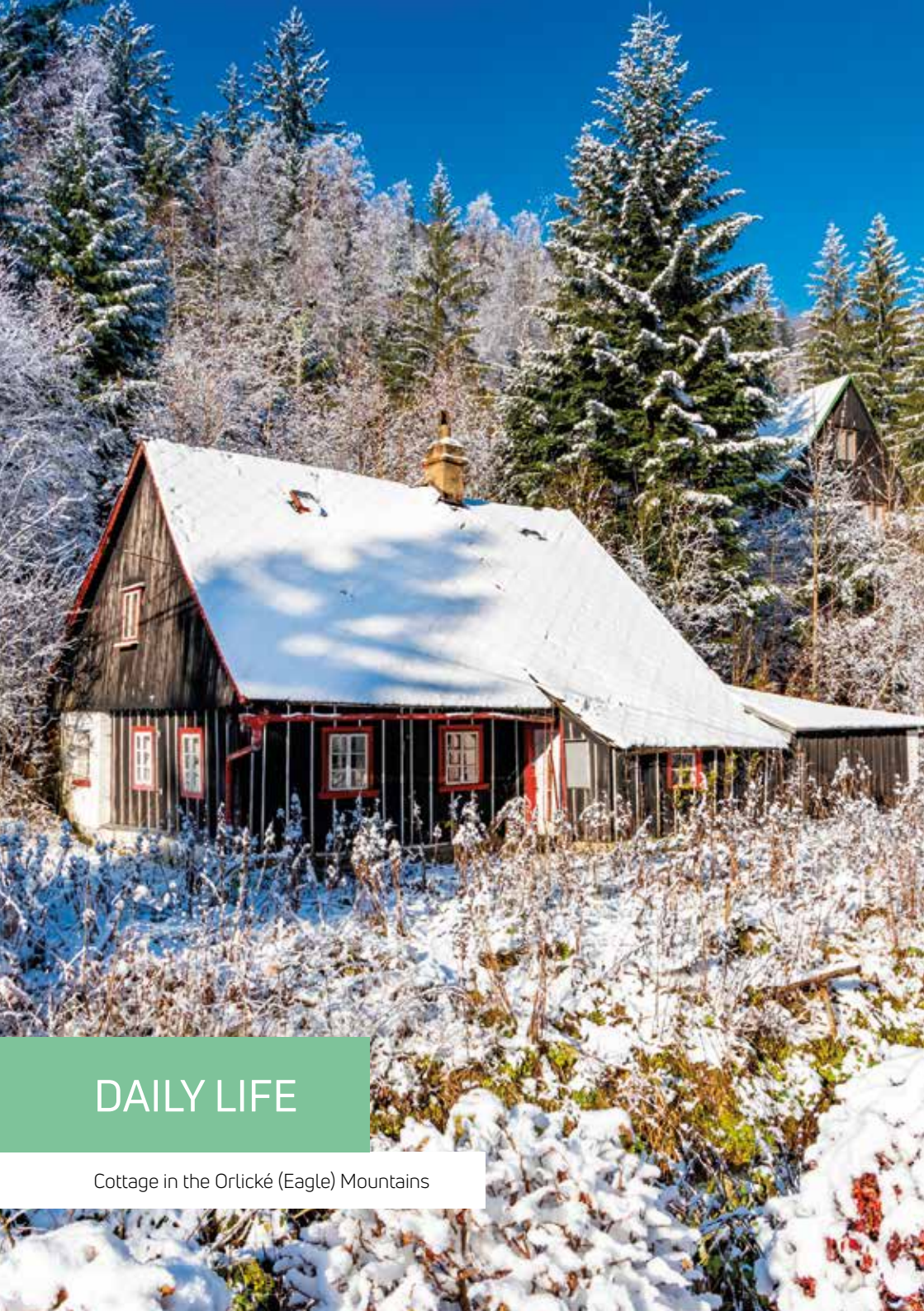
A violation of immigration or employment responsibilities and, in general, laws of the Czech Republic may lead, in the worst case, to expulsion from the Czech Republic, but also to having your name entered in the Schengen Information System (SIS). This would mean that you will be denied entry to all Schengen states.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Report the change of your address in the Czech Republic to an office of the Ministry of the Interior in compliance with the statutory deadline. State institutions can send you registered mail to the address you have reported. This mail is considered delivered after 10 days from delivery, even if you do not pick it up. You will find an announcement that you have mail at the post office in your mailbox or it will be left at another appropriate place.

## SAVINGS FOR CRISIS SITUATIONS

If possible, keep a financial reserve for unexpected needs or for the return to your home country.



## DAILY LIFE

Cottage in the Orlické (Eagle) Mountains

## EMERGENCIES

### **112 emergency line**

112 is an emergency line which can be used to reach rescue services in any EU member state. You can dial it from both landlines and mobile phones. Calling 112 is free of charge anywhere in the EU. The location of the caller can be identified.

The **112 line** can be called in emergency by any person in the European Union and some other countries seeking urgent help from rescue or security services (fire-fighters, police and emergency medical service).

You can call 112 even if you do not speak Czech, as operators speak different languages. You can call it from any phone, even if you do not have money on your phone account or a SIM card, or if you have limited signal.

For medical problems or if you want to report a crime, etc., dial national emergency lines directly:

### **150 firefighters**

### **155 emergency medical service**

### **158 state police**

### **156 municipal police**

**These services are equal with 112.**

In a life-threatening situation, everyone will be provided with urgent help (the state will collect the due amount from the foreigner later even if the foreigner does not have health insurance).

## TRANSPORTATION

City public transport includes – based on the local situation – buses, trams, trolleybuses and the metro (only in Prague). Transportation can be used for a fee, and each city has its own fare system. After buying a ticket, you must validate it in a ticket machine. Fares also apply to transportation of dogs and luggage, unless they meet the conditions

for free transport. Payment of fares is enforced by ticket inspectors, and heavy fines apply if the fare is not paid.

Some cities have an integrated transportation system, which means that tickets for zones within city limits can also be used for suburban zones. In an integrated transportation system, different types of transport (bus, train, etc.) cooperate and create a network of interconnected lines.

Certain groups can get a discounted fare. Commonly, discounts for children, students, disabled persons and seniors are available. Some other groups of people are also eligible for a discount, for example parents travelling with a child in a pram. More information about fare discounts can be found on the website of the carrier or at their information centre or ticket offices. You can find this information about trains at train stations, about buses at bus stations, and information on local public transport can usually be found on the webpage of the local transport company. To be eligible for a discount, usually you need to get a special document issued by the carrier.

Czech intercity transportation is provided by a relatively dense network of buses and trains. Timetables are available online (e.g. [www.idos.cz](http://www.idos.cz)) and some tickets can be purchased directly online. All information on connections is also available at information centres of individual carriers or larger bus stations, where you can also buy tickets. In some cases, it is necessary to make a reservation, which allows you to reserve your seat for the most convenient bus or train connection.

## DRIVING

Anyone with a valid driving license can drive a motor vehicle in the Czech Republic. It is possible to drive a car after reaching the age of 18. It is common that women drive cars as well.

The Czech Republic drives strictly on the right-hand side of the road.

You prove that you are eligible to drive by showing your driving license. A driving license is issued after successful completion of a course at a driving school and a final examination. Driving licenses in the Czech Republic are issued by the competent municipal authorities with extended



powers. When driving, you must always carry your driver's license on you, as well as an ID, a proof of car insurance (so-called "green card") and car documents; and you must present these for inspection on demand.

Third-country nationals who hold a permanent or a long-term residence permit for a period longer than one year must apply to the competent municipal authority with extended powers for a driving license in exchange for a driving license issued by a foreign state within three months from the effective date of the permanent or long-term residence permit. However, not every driver's license can be exchanged for a Czech license.

Generally, you can only exchange driver's licenses which comply with the requirements of the Convention on Road Traffic (Vienna, 1968). For more information, you can contact your municipal or regional administration (or the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic) whether you can exchange your driver's license, or whether you are going to have to sit for a driving test.

All motor vehicles must be registered with the appropriate municipal authority. Each vehicle must have mandatory third-party liability insurance. Vehicles are subject to regular technical and emissions inspections.

Mainly in cities, parking is allowed only at designated places and usually you must pay a fee (normally by using a parking meter). Many municipalities address high traffic volumes by creating so-called "parking zones" where only residents of the neighbourhood can park their vehicles. That is why it is necessary to make sure you understand the system of parking zones. Otherwise, you might get an unnecessary fine for incorrect parking or your car might be towed away.



When using highways in the Czech Republic, it is necessary to have a vignette purchased.

**The speed limit in the Czech Republic is:**

Municipality: 50 km/h

Outside of municipality: 90 km/h

Highway: 130 km/h



The legal limit for blood alcohol concentration for drivers in the Czech Republic is zero – driving under the influence of any amount of alcohol or intoxicating substances is strictly prohibited.

## POSTAL SERVICE, OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

You can use the services of Česká pošta (Czech Post) to send ordinary letters, registered mail, parcels, letters abroad, etc.

To send official documents, correspondence with authorities, etc. it is best to send **a registered letter**. Czech Post will issue a certificate of mailing and will assume liability for any loss or damage to the shipment. You may show the certificate of mailing to the institution to which your letter was addressed.

If your postman does not reach you at home to deliver registered mail, he will leave a slip in your mailbox confirming that you, the addressee, were not present. In this case, you can pick up your mail at the relevant post office by presenting a valid identity document (passport, residence permit).

To receive mail, you must have your name **labelled** on the **doorbell**, as well as on the **mailbox**. If you change your address, you must report this change within the prescribed timeframe to an office of the Ministry of the Interior.

Your local post office is the place where you can find Czech Point (Czech Point is also available in other places), an assisted public administration service point. Czech Point offices provide certified excerpts from several information systems of public administration; here you can also, for example, report the establishment of a trade license or its change, or apply for an excerpt from the Land Registry, notarize (authenticate) copies of documents, etc.

For details see [www.ceskaposta.cz](http://www.ceskaposta.cz).



## SELECTED INFORMATION ON CZECH SOCIETY

Hluboká nad Vltavou State Chateau

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

**1 January:** New Year's Day, Restoration Day of the Independent Czech State

**Good Friday** (date changes)

**Easter Monday** (date changes)

**1 May:** Labour Day

**8 May:** Victory in Europe Day

**5 July:** Saints Cyril and Methodius Day

**6 July:** Jan Hus Day

**28 September:** Czech Statehood Day

**28 October:** Independent Czechoslovak State Day

**17 November:** Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day

**24 December:** Christmas Eve

**25 December:** Christmas Day

**26 December:** Second Christmas Day/Boxing Day

## CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

The most distinct Czech customs and traditions are those associated with the two major Christian holidays, Christmas and Easter. Throughout the year, Czechs celebrate some days associated with folk traditions, such as Walpurgis Night (30 April), when people light fires and celebrate the beginning of spring. Another folk custom that most people follow is Saint Nicholas Day (6 December), when Saint Nicholas accompanied by a devil and an angel visits children on the eve of the holiday and gives them sweets (if the children behaved) or coal (to those who were naughty). The date of 1 June is also associated with children; International Children's Day is celebrated and many entertainment and cultural events are organized for children. On 1 May, Czechs celebrate the Day of Love, and, according to tradition, men kiss their ladies under a blossoming cherry tree.

All Souls' Day, 2 November, is also an important date for Czechs. On this day, commonly known as "Little Souls" ("dušičky" in Czech), people visit cemeteries and remember their ancestors.

## RELIGION

The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms guarantees freedom of religion. Many people are not religious and do not belong to any church. The most common religion is Christianity. Many traditions and customs are celebrated in Czech society are linked to the Christian tradition.

## BASIC CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Many historical sites in the Czech Republic are popular destinations for tourists from around the world. Twelve of the most important monuments and important sites are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The most important cultural and educational institutions include the Charles University, the National Theatre, the National Museum and many others.

The Czech Republic is proud of its famous artists, writers and thinkers. Some of the worldwide famous composers are Bedřich Smetana, Antonín Dvořák and Leoš Janáček. Some famous names of Czech history are Jan Hus (14th – 15th cent.) and Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius, 16th – 17th cent.). Contemporary writers and philosophers with a global reputation include Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (the first president of Czechoslovakia after 1918), Jaroslav Seifert (laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature), Jaroslav Hašek, Franz Kafka, Karel Čapek, Bohumil Hrabal, Božena Němcová, Milan Kundera and Václav Havel (the first president after the revolution of 1989).

Some of the prominent scientists are Jaroslav Heyrovský, laureate of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, Otto Wichterle, the inventor of contact lenses, or Antonín Holý, discoverer of antiviral drugs used to treat HIV/AIDS.

An artist to be mentioned is, for example, František Kupka, the founder of abstract painting, or Alfons Mucha, who lived during the Art Nouveau period.

Various newspapers and magazines refer about cultural life in the Czech Republic. A good way to get information about what is happening in society is by monitoring public media – Czech Television and Czech Radio.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Czech culture distinguishes between a formal and informal form of addressing people. The formal form is always used with adults who you do not know well, or in an official environment. If two people use the formal form, a switch to the informal should always be suggested by a woman, the older one of the two, or the superior. The offer to use the formal form is an expression of friendship and fondness. The informal form is common among family and friends.

A specific feature of the Czech language is the use of two forms of Czech – the literary and the colloquial form. The colloquial form of language is mainly used among friends, while the literary form is mainly used at official level or in writing. This can be confusing for foreigners at the beginning. If you learn Czech from friends, they can teach you the informal ways of speaking, which you should not use, for instance, in communication with your teachers at school or in an official setting.

Czechs arrive at business meetings at designated time, visitors respect the agreed times and program, and any changes are expected to be announced early and with an apology. It is considered rude to let someone wait longer than 15 minutes.

At first glance, Czechs may seem unfriendly and reluctant. They like to keep their distance from strangers (as well as from other Czechs) and do not show too many emotions. In a closer relationship, Czechs are generous and friendly. If a Czech person invites you to their home, it is not merely an empty gesture or a polite phrase, but a genuine expression of friendship. You are expected to visit.

In their spare time, Czechs enjoy sports, both actively and passively. Ice hockey and soccer are considered national sports and enjoy collective support. People do sports themselves – many Czechs like to ride bicycles; in the summer they go canoeing, trekking, and in winter they ski. People often spend weekends at their summer houses or country cottages. The most common places to meet are various pubs, restaurants and cafés. People also enjoy going to the cinema and theatre and enjoy reading.

## SMOKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

In the Czech Republic, smoking tobacco products and drinking alcoholic beverages is legal. The most popular drinks are beer and wine. However, it is forbidden to smoke at restaurants, public offices and institutions, such as schools or hospitals. Smoking is also banned on trains, buses and in public transport. You can legally buy alcoholic beverages and cigarettes only after reaching the age of 18.

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

Recently, recycling has become commonplace in Czech households thanks to the large colourful recycling containers. Green and white containers are intended for glass, blue containers are for paper, yellow ones are for plastics, and brown ones are for biodegradable waste. There are also special containers for drink cartons, metals, and old clothing and shoes. Black dustbins are intended for small residual waste.

Large objects, e.g. a lamp or anything larger, shouldn't be thrown into a regular dustbin. These objects can be left at recycling centres where you can hand in large objects or dangerous waste free of charge (this also includes electrical appliances, paints, polishes, polystyrene, metals, etc.).

**Do not throw away rubbish on street. You can get fined for doing so.**



## CONTACTS

Hrubá skála Castle, Bohemian Paradise

## RESIDENCE-RELATED ISSUES, EXTENSIONS OF RESIDENCE PERMITS, REPORTING CHANGES

**Offices of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, Department of Asylum and Migration Policy (OAMP MVČR), Foreigners Residence Office**

[www.mvcr.cz/cizinci](http://www.mvcr.cz/cizinci) – This is where you will find all residence-related information and contact details of all the Ministry of the Interior offices in the country.

You can address your inquiries to the helpline of the Ministry of the Interior: **(+420) 974 820 680**

## RESIDENCE INSPECTION, INVITATION FORM VALIDATION, REGISTRATION AFTER ARRIVAL

**Foreign Police Service**

[www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyt-cizincu.aspx](http://www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyt-cizincu.aspx)

## INFORMATION AND COUNSELLING PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE

If you need help or advice, do not hesitate to ask an NGO (often using the Czech abbreviation NNO) or an integration centre (“integrační centrum” in Czech) which are here to help foreigners. These organizations provide counselling and information in all areas of life in the Czech Republic. They can also provide legal assistance, organize Czech language courses, provide interpreting, etc. These organizations employ professionals who were trained in providing professional help and they have up-to-date and correct information. Their services are free of charge; some Czech language courses may require you to pay a fee.

We also recommend participating in culture-related activities of such organizations; they will help your integration in Czech society.

## INTEGRATION CENTRES (CENTRES FOR INTEGRATION OF FOREIGNERS)

There are integration centres in all the regions of the Czech Republic. They can tell you which institution will help you with your inquiries, where you can learn Czech, what to do in most of the life situations. They can provide you with an interpreter and they can



also check any contracts before you sign them. In all the integration centres, there is a computer with an Internet connection that you can use free of charge.

Most services provided by these centres are free of charge, some services can be charged. Employees of the centres will always tell you all the conditions of the services in advance.

More detailed information on the services provided by integration centres can be found on their websites.

You can find all the contacts at [www.integracnicentra.cz](http://www.integracnicentra.cz).

### **Integration Centre Prague (ICP)**

Žitná 1574 / 51, 110 00 Praha 1

tel.: +420 252 543 846

Arbesovo náměstí 70/4, 150 00 Praha 5

tel.: +420 253 253 984

e-mail: [info@icpraha.com](mailto:info@icpraha.com)

[www.icpraha.com](http://www.icpraha.com)

Integration Centre Prague has offices in Prague 1, Prague 13 and Prague 14.

ICP was established by the Prague City Hall. Information about integration and life in Prague can be found in the mobile app Prager or on Prague's website

[www.metropolevsech.eu](http://www.metropolevsech.eu).

### **Support Centres for Integration of Foreigners – Central-Bohemian region**

#### **Office in Mladá Boleslav**

tr. Václava Klementa 467

293 01 Mladá Boleslav

tel.: +420 311 584 406

e-mail: [icmladaboleslav@suz.cz](mailto:icmladaboleslav@suz.cz)

#### **Office in Kladno**

Cyrila Boudy 1444

272 01 Kladno – Kročehlavy

tel.: +420 325 630 546

e-mail: [ickladno@suz.cz](mailto:ickladno@suz.cz)

**Office in Benešov**

Žižkova 360  
256 01 Benešov  
tel.: +420 326 905 279  
e-mail: icbenesov@suz.cz

**Office in Příbram**

U nemocnice 85  
261 01 Příbram I.  
tel.: +420 326 905 249  
e-mail: icpribram@suz.cz

**Office in Kutná Hora**

Hornická 642  
284 01 Kutná Hora  
tel.: +420 326 905 408  
e-mail: ickutnahora@suz.cz

**Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – South-Bohemian region**

Kněžskodvorská 2296  
370 04 České Budějovice – behind Česká spořitelna bank, parallel to Pražská street,  
1st floor  
tel.: +420 387 202 508  
e-mail: icceskebudejovice@suz.cz

**Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Vysočina**

Tolstého 15  
586 01 Jihlava  
tel.: +420 567 212 257, +420 778 401 506  
e-mail: icjihlava@suz.cz

**Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Karlovy Vary region**

Závodu Míru 876/3a  
360 17 Karlovy Vary, – 1st floor  
tel.: +420 353 892 559  
e-mail: ickarlovyvary@suz.cz

**Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Liberec region**

Voroněžská 144/20  
460 10 Liberec

tel.: +420 482 313 064  
e-mail: icliberec@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Moravia-Silesia region**

Československá 2227/7  
702 00 Ostrava  
ICQ: (600-235-100); Skype: (cpic\_ostrava)  
tel.: +420 596 112 626, +420 607 860 812  
e-mail: icostrava@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Olomouc region**

Hálkova 171/2  
779 00 Olomouc  
tel.: +420 585 204 686, +420 608 119 971  
e-mail: icolomouc@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Pardubice region**

Pernerova 444  
530 02 Pardubice  
tel.: +420 466 989 228, +420 725 148 519  
e-mail: icpardubice@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Pilsen region**

Americká 39  
301 00 Plzeň  
tel.: +420 725 874 976, +420 377 223 157  
e-mail: icplzen@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – Zlín region**

Štefánikova 167  
760 01 Zlín  
tel.: +420 577 018 651  
e-mail: iczlin@suz.cz

### **Support Centre for the Integration of Foreigners – South-Moravia region**

[www.cizincijmk.cz](http://www.cizincijmk.cz)  
Kounicova 271/13 (ground floor)  
602 00 Brno  
tel.: +420 734 510 213  
e-mail: info@cizincijmk.cz

## **Support Centre for the Integration of Third Country Nationals in Ústí nad Labem region**

[www.centrumcizincu.cz](http://www.centrumcizincu.cz)

Velká Hradební 33

400 21 Ústí nad Labem

tel.: +420 475 216 536

e-mail: [usti@centrumcizincu.cz](mailto:usti@centrumcizincu.cz)

## **Integration Centre for Foreigners – Hradec Králové**

[www.cizincihradec.cz](http://www.cizincihradec.cz)

Šafaříkova ul. 666/9 (YMCA building – 3rd floor)

500 02 Hradec Králové

tel.: +420 492 604 940

e-mail: [poradna.cizinci@hk.caritas.cz](mailto:poradna.cizinci@hk.caritas.cz)

## **NON-PROFIT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)**

All contact details can be found at [www.cizinci.cz](http://www.cizinci.cz)

This brochure only provides a selection of these organizations. Telephone counselling can be provided to anyone in the Czech Republic, and if you require personal counselling, it is a good idea to arrange an appointment with an organization that works in the area where you live.

- **Organization for Aid to Refugees – OPU** (Prague, Brno, Hradec Králové, Pilsen, Ostrava) – legal and social counselling – [www.opu.cz](http://www.opu.cz), tel.: (+420) 730 158 779, 739 413 983, 730 158 781 (legal counselling), email: [opu@opu.cz](mailto:opu@opu.cz)
- **Integration Counselling Center – PPI** (Prague, Ústí nad Labem) – legal and social counselling – [www.p-p-i.cz](http://www.p-p-i.cz), tel.: (+420) 603 281 269 (Prague), email: [paha@p-p-i.cz](mailto:paha@p-p-i.cz), tel.: (+420) 475 216 536 (Ústí nad Labem), email: [usti@p-p-i.cz](mailto:usti@p-p-i.cz)
- **International Organization for Migration – IOM** (Prague) – counselling, work migration, voluntary returns – [www.iom.cz](http://www.iom.cz), tel.: (+420) 233 370 160, email: [prague@iom.int](mailto:prague@iom.int)
- **Support Centres for the Integration of Foreigners – CIC** (Prague) – labour and social counselling – [www.cicpraha.org](http://www.cicpraha.org), tel.: (+420) 222 360 452 (social counselling), (+420) 702 150 630 (labour counselling), email: [info@cicpraha.org](mailto:info@cicpraha.org)

- **Association for Integration and Migration – SIMI** (Prague) – legal and social counselling – [www.migrace.com](http://www.migrace.com), tel.: (+420) 224 224 379, (+420) 603 547 450 (legal counselling), (+ 420) 605 253 994 (social counselling), email: [poradna@refug.cz](mailto:poradna@refug.cz)
- **InBáze, z.s.** (Prague) – legal, social, labour, psychosocial counselling – [www.inbaze.cz](http://www.inbaze.cz), tel.: (+420) 739 037 353, email: [info@inbaze.cz](mailto:info@inbaze.cz)
- **Caritas Czech Republic** – assistance to foreigners in need – [www.charita.cz](http://www.charita.cz). Infoline for foreigners in Mongolian (+420) 733 676 667, in Vietnamese (+420) 605 999 969 [www.charita.cz/infolinka](http://www.charita.cz/infolinka). Caritas Czech Republic has a network of branches across the country.
- **Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague – Migration Center** – legal and social counselling, short-term shelter in emergency situations, assistance to victims of human trafficking – <https://praha.charita.cz/en/>, tel.: (+420) 224 813 418, email: [migrace@praha.charita.cz](mailto:migrace@praha.charita.cz)
- **European Contact Group** (Prague) – employment and career counselling – [www.ekscr.cz](http://www.ekscr.cz), tel.: (+420) 222 211 799
- **MOST PRO** (Pardubice) – social counselling – [www.mostlp.eu](http://www.mostlp.eu), tel.: (+420) 467 771 170, email: [info@mostlp.eu](mailto:info@mostlp.eu)
- **Association of Citizens Helping Emigrants SOZE** (Sdružení občanů zabývajících se emigranty) – legal and social counselling – [www.soze.cz](http://www.soze.cz)  
  
**SOZE Brno** – tel.: (+420) 545 213 643, email: [soze@soze.cz](mailto:soze@soze.cz),  
  
**SOZE Olomouc** – tel.: (+420) 585 242 535, email: [soze.olomouc@soze.cz](mailto:soze.olomouc@soze.cz)

## SPECIALIZED NON-PROFIT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

### Guidance in education, employment opportunities, recognition of education:

**META, o. p. s.** – [www.meta-ops.cz](http://www.meta-ops.cz),  
tel.: (+420) 775 339 003  
email: [poradenstvi@meta-ops.cz](mailto:poradenstvi@meta-ops.cz)

### Prevention of trafficking in human beings and assistance to victims:

**La Strada Czech Republic** – [www.strada.cz](http://www.strada.cz) – assistance to victims of exploitation and trafficking (both forced labour and sexual exploitation), SOS helpline: (+420) 222 717 171, Infoline: (+420) 800 077 777

**Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague – Magdala Project** – [www.praha.charita.cz](http://www.praha.charita.cz) – advice and assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings (both forced labour and sexual exploitation), tel.: (+420) 251 552 790, email: [magdala@praha.charita.cz](mailto:magdala@praha.charita.cz)

### Prevention of domestic violence:

[www.domacinasili.cz](http://www.domacinasili.cz) – information and a list of regional intervention centres

### **Bílý kruh bezpečí (White Circle of Safety)**

Assistance to victims of crime. Tel.: 116 006 NONSTOP  
[www.bkb.cz](http://www.bkb.cz)

### **ROSA**

Assistance to persons at risk of domestic violence  
tel.: (+420) 602 246 102, email: [info@rosa-os.cz](mailto:info@rosa-os.cz)  
[www.rosa-os.cz](http://www.rosa-os.cz)

### **ACORUS**

Assistance to persons at risk of domestic violence  
tel.: (+420) 283 892 772 (NONSTOP line)



# INTEGRATION COURSES

Welcome to the Czech Republic



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY

