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Living and working conditions in the Czech Republic

Information for EU/EEA and Swiss citizens



www.eures.cz
www.eures.europa.eu



MINISTRY OF LABOUR
AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Introduction

Dear Readers,

The brochure that you are holding in your hands was not written in order to patronize you or to give you the lessons of life. The aim of the brochure is to make your first steps in living in a country that is not your native homeland a little easier. Our intention is to offer you a brief overview of the administrative procedures that are part of living and working in the Czech Republic and provide you with a lot of important links and references that you can use to obtain additional information on subjects in which you have a particular interest.

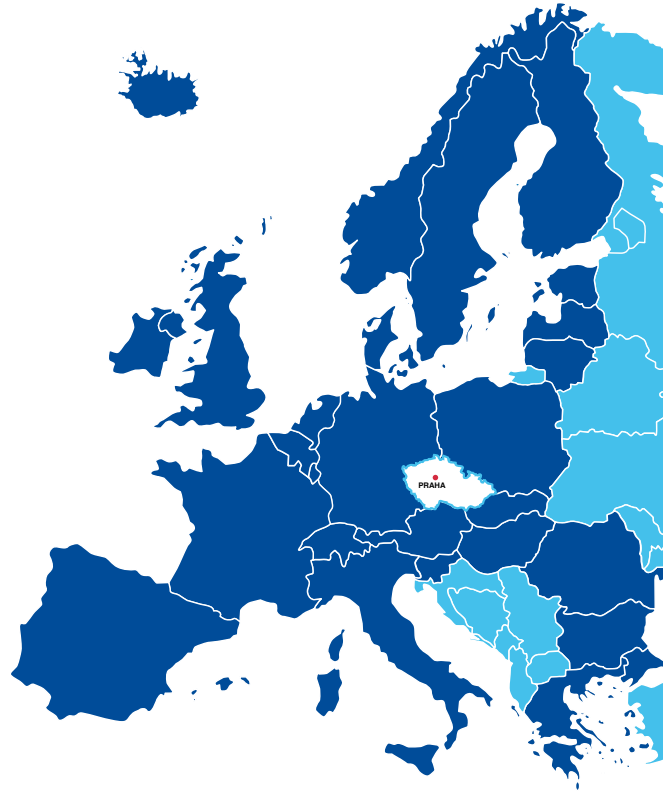
We believe that this brochure will help you to orientate yourself better in the sometimes complex administrative procedures and that living and working in the Czech Republic will be a pleasant experience for you.

Your EURES advisers in the Czech Republic



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About the Czech Republic

Czech Presidency of the EU Council 1/1/2009 – 30/6/2009.

There are 12 objects of cultural interest in the Czech Republic entered in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The renovated synagogue in Prague is the oldest functioning synagogue north of the Alps in Europe.

Contact lenses and the artificial polyamide fibre Nylon are the best-known discoveries of the Czech chemist Otto Wichterle.

The Czech Republic (CR) is a continental country with a rich history and an exquisite present. After the change in the country's political system in 1989 and the subsequent breakup of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic as two separate countries, the CR focused on the successful completion of its social and economic reforms, which led the country into membership in NATO and, in 2004, into membership in the European Union.

The Czech Republic is located in the very heart of Europe. The country is surrounded by extensive mountain ranges, which form most of its borders. The cultural background of Czech cities, country mansions and spa resorts has always been an attractive inspiration for visitors and guests coming in from all over the world.

In terms of its religious background, the Czech population is fairly homogenous. The dominant religious orientation is Christian. However, after having lived through 40 years of communism, most Czechs consider themselves as atheists. Neither there is a great deal of diversity in terms of ethnic breakdown, with the Czech and Moravian ethnic groups making up 94 % of the population. The largest minority is composed of Slovaks (early 2 % of the population).

Czechs are competitive by nature, so it's no surprise that a large percentage of Czechs take part in sports. Many people are actively engaged in cultural activities. Although foreigners often find Czechs not to be particularly forthcoming, the truth is that once they get to know them better, they realize how friendly and polite they can be.

In the past, the Czech economy was mostly rooted in heavy industry, especially mining and machinery manufacture. Currently, the economy is primarily based upon the automobile industry and related sectors, along with electronics, energy and consumer goods. In terms of the accessibility and scope of services, the Czech Republic compares favourably with the usual norms for the European Union.

- Establishment of the CR:** 1/1/1993
- Area:** 78,864 km²
- Number of inhabitants:** 10.4 million
- Capital city:** Prague
- Largest cities:** Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Plzen, Olomouc
- Currency:** Czech Crown (CZK)
- Official language:** Czech
- Neighbouring countries:** Germany, Poland, Austria, Slovakia



www.czech.cz
 Official website of the Czech Republic
www.czechtourism.cz
 Official tourist presentation of the CR

Work permits, residency permit

Work permits

Citizens of the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland do not require work permit in the Czech Republic. Upon entry into employment, the Czech employer is obligated to register you with the appropriate labour office on the day you enter employment at the latest. Upon termination of employment, the employer must also give notice of the fact within 10 days of the day termination occurs.

Residency permit

Citizens of the EU member countries may enter and reside in the CR without any special limitations, simply on the basis of their passport or national ID card. For periods of residency up to 3 months, you do not require any special residency permit. If you wish to reside in the CR for a period longer than 3 months (e.g., for purposes of employment), you are required to apply for a "Residency Permit for Nationals of Member States of the European Community".

Request for a residency permit

The request for a residency permit may be submitted to the consulate in your home country or directly to the Foreign Nationals Department of the Police of the CR. You will require your passport, documentation of the purpose for your residency (e.g., your work contract) and documentation showing that you have accommodation in the CR. For residency other than on the basis of employment, you will also require health insurance documentation. If you are to be accompanied by family members, you will also need to show proof that they are members of your family (dependent persons).

Mandatory registration

Citizens of the EU must register their place of residency in the CR within 30 days of entering the country with the Foreigners' Police if their intended stay will be longer than 30 days.

How to find work in the CR

If you are interested in obtaining employment in the CR, we have several useful tips for you which you may use in combination. They'll increase your chances for finding a suitable job. Czech jobseekers do the same, to make sure they get all the information they can about open positions. Many positions require a knowledge of the Czech language, which is often a key to successfully finding work.

EURES

European job mobility portal EURES offers jobseekers not only the possibility to search for vacancies retrieved from the database of Czech labour offices, but users of the European portal can also create their own account "My EURES". Jobseekers may also visit the Czech website of EURES network on the portal of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, where you will find a link "Looking for work in the CR?" (available also in English). You can also visit one of the 15 EURES advisers working in labour offices in all regional cities and in the city of Frýdek-Místek.



www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam
 Integrated website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
www.aucj.cz
 Association of teachers of Czech as a foreign language

As of January, 2009, there were more than 133 000 citizens of EU/EEA countries working in the Czech Republic (95 000 Slovaks, 19 500 Polish workers, 4 400 Bulgarians).

Labour offices

Labour offices offer jobseekers a number of options to help to improve their position when looking for new employment. Labour offices make it possible to search through the database of open positions. Employers must enter all open positions in the database by law. In addition to their basic services, labour offices provide for example vocational counselling or advice on retraining.

Employment agencies

When looking for work in the Czech Republic through an employment agency, it is important to make sure that the agency is holding a licence to tender recruitment services – www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obcane/zpr_prace. This website also provides contact information for licensed employment agencies. No fee may be charged for arranging employment. The majority of agencies have their own websites, where you will find the necessary information and often current offerings for open positions as well.



Media and the Internet

Nationwide press in the CR often have a supplement published on a regular basis that attends to the employment issues and lists job offers. Additional printed resources of employment classifieds are for example periodicals

Jobmaster, Avízo and Annonce. Great sources of job offers are various internet portals. These sites can be used not only to search for vacancies offered by employers and employment agencies but, in addition, they often allow you to post your CV online and make it available to employers looking for employees. Knowledge of other languages will open doors for you mainly with multinational corporations. Most positions are in large cities where there is a greater concentration of international companies.

www.jobs.cz	www.sprace.cz
www.profesia.cz	www.cvonline.cz
www.jobsinprague.cz	www.jobdnes.idnes.cz

www.eures.cz
Czech EURES website
www.portal.mpsv.cz/eures/kontakty
contacts for EURES advisers in the CR
www.eures.europa.eu
European EURES website
www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obcane/vmjedno
database of open positions
www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/local
Labour offices contact details

For entrepreneurs:

To receive information about doing business in the Czech Republic, we recommend contacting the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of the CR.

www.mpo.cz
Ministry of Industry and Commerce
www.businessinfo.cz
Official website for business and export
www.hkcr.cz
Chamber of Commerce of the Czech Republic
www.enterprise-europe-network.cz
Enterprise Europe Network

Recognition of qualifications

The recognition of foreign qualifications is required for certain professions in the Czech Republic. These are regulated professions and, if applying for such a position, it will be necessary to have your foreign professional qualifications recognized by the respective authority in the Czech Republic, which will either accept or deny your request. There is an act on the recognition of professional qualifications that regulates the process for the recognition of such qualifications of applicants (EU citizens) who intend to perform a regulated profession in the Czech Republic. Regulated professions are jobs and activities, which are subject to certain special requirements that must be met by the person in order to perform such work or activity (e.g. degree and type of education, prior experience, lack of any criminal conviction, etc.).

Under “Recognition of Qualifications and Education in the EU” on the website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, you’ll find database of regulated professions and activities, list of recognition bodies in the Czech Republic and contact addresses, application form for the recognition of professional qualifications and other related information.

Recognition of foreign university education

Graduates of foreign colleges and universities can apply for the recognition of their foreign academic achievements and qualifications. Academic recognition takes place on the basis of a detailed comparison of study plans, resulting in a decision as to whether the education obtained in the foreign country is on an equal par with education provided in the CR.

Recognition of foreign academic credentials is decided by public universities (for a particular case, the school providing accreditation of the contents of the parallel study program). In some cases, certification for recognition of academic qualifications is provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. A necessary prerequisite is possession of documentation concerning studies or the completion of studies.

Procedure for recognition of foreign university education and qualifications in the Czech Republic

Proceedings are initiated on the basis of a written request by the graduate of the foreign university (applicant) submitted to the public university (Rector) or ministry. The application must be accompanied by: an original or certified copy of the diploma or other document concerning the completion of studies, along with an attached explanation or list of examinations taken.

The university or ministry may require the legalization of a university diploma, i.e., verification of the authenticity of the signatures and stamps on the diploma by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country in which the foreign university is located. They may also require verification by a so-called apostille issued by the authorized national body in which the diploma was granted. Public university rectors verify matters to do with the application.

Public universities pass judgment on university qualifications and either recognize or reject the application. If recognition is granted, the applicant will obtain a decision recognizing his university education, attached to which is a certificate confirming equivalence with the education obtained after studying in a program of corresponding type at a public university in the CR or certification of the right to use a recognized foreign title. If the qualification is not recognized, the applicant has the right to appeal within 15 days of receipt of the decision.

Recognition (nostrification) does not apply to specialist courses (e.g., massage, cosmetics, etc.) undertaken abroad since they are not degree courses.

www.mpo.cz
Ministry of Industry and Trade
www.msmt.cz
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
www.atlaskolstvi.cz
Information server on education

Job applications

One's interest in employment is ordinarily declared by sending both a curriculum vitae and a cover letter – a request for work which specifies your interest in the field or position. This is not always the best way to go about it. If you are seeking manual labour, you will do better to contact the employer in person. Most employers require active knowledge of the Czech language. It's thus a good idea to find out in advance which language is preferred.



Cover (motivation) letter

This letter should be brief and to the point. The information it contains should relate to the position you seek. You should indicate why you are interested in the position and briefly present your employment background. Some employers require documentation of your education and references from prior employers. In many cases, the employer will provide you with a questionnaire about your professional experience to be filled out.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A structured CV should be attached to your application, containing the following information in general:

1. Personal information: name, contact address, telephone, e-mail, date and place of birth, nationality.
2. Education, qualifications: this portion should contain information about your education, training sessions and courses in which you have taken part.
3. Work experience: this very important part of your CV contains a description of each of your prior positions.
4. Other qualifications: languages, computer literacy, driving license and other certificates or training undertaken
5. Personal interests: here you should briefly describe your personal interests and hobbies, especially insofar as they relate to the position in which you're interested
6. References: here you should provide the names and contact information of former employers who may provide a reference about you.

The cover letter and the CV should both be written on a computer. Don't forget to sign your CV.

The interview

If the employer invites you to a personal interview, don't forget to bring a copy of your CV, diploma and references. The type of interview varies. Sometimes there is also a psychological test, often for managerial positions and state administration positions. Preparing well for the interview also means having some knowledge about the activities of the business for which you wish to work..

www.europass.cz

Europass – summary of education and work experience

www.europass.cedefop.eu.int

European Europass website

Employment contracts and labour law

In the CR, employment negotiations include an employment contract, whether the job be for a definite or indefinite period, short-term or long-term or seasonal labour. Before signing an employment contract, the employer is required to inform the prospective employee about their rights and obligations. The contract must be written and one copy must be handed over to the employee. If the contract does not include the rights and obligations of the parties, the employee must be provided with such information in writing within one month after the starting date of the employment.

For fixed-term contracts negotiated with an employer, employment terminates after the agreed-upon period. If the employee continues to work past the end of the agreed-upon period with knowledge of the employer, the labour relationship is automatically transformed into one with an indefinite period, without any written change having been made to the original employment contract (unless the employer and employee agree otherwise).

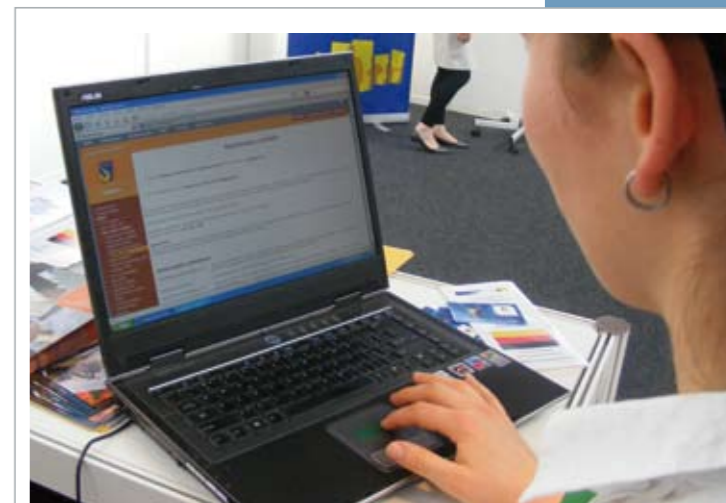
The employment contract must contain:

- 1) the type of work the employee is to carry out for the employer,
- 2) the location or locations at which work is to take place,
- 3) the day employment begins.

When signing the contract, make sure that you completely understand the requirements and conditions for the job you're negotiating. Find out who (you or the employer) will pay the cost of getting to work and the cost of housing. Study your job description carefully. We recommend that you verify whether the employer pays for health insurance and Social Security.

Under normal circumstances, a trial period of three months will be included in the contract, unless a shorter period is directly called for. The law never allows for a trial period of longer than three months. During this period either you or your employer may terminate employment immediately without giving a reason. Employment starts on the day indicated in the contract for work to begin. Changes in the labour contract may be made only if the employer and employee agree to the change. The employment relationship may be broken off only by agreement, termination, dismissal and dismissal during the trial period.

If you have a problem performing your job, first turn to your superior and then to the union. If your employer fails in some way to uphold the labour code, you may contact the State Labour Inspection Office or the local jobs office with a complaint. Jobs offices in the CR have the power to enact fines for illegal behaviour.



Only 2 % of employees in the CR work for the minimum wage.

Minimum wage

The minimum wage is the lowest allowable amount of remuneration for work in an employment relationship. The basic law is contained in the labour code. The basic minimum wage for the designated 40-hour workweek is CZK 8000 gross per month, or 48.10 per hour.

The level of wages varies by region. Employees in Prague, where the cost of living in terms of things like accommodation are also highest, have the highest wages.

Holidays

In the CR, the basic length of the holiday is four weeks. Holidays maybe extended on the basis of collective bargaining. Of course, it may happen that you do not work for an employer for the entire year. If, however, you're employed for more than 60 days, you have the right to a certain portion of the holiday. For each complete month worked, you obtain one-twelfth of the holiday for the calendar year.



www.eures.cz
EURES Czech Republic
www.eures.europa.eu
European website of the EURES network
www.portal.mpsv.cz
Integrated website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
www.suip.cz
State Labour Inspection Office
www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/3221/labour_code.pdf
Labour code in English

State holidays

Work during state holidays depends upon the activities of the individual organization or company. If you work on a state holiday, you must receive supplementary pay under law.

National Holidays

January 1	The Day of Recovery of the Independent Czech State
May 8	Liberation Day
July 5	The Day of Slavonic Apostles Cyril and Methodius
July 6	Jan Hus Day
September 28	Day of Czech Statehood
October 28	The Day of Establishment of the Independent Czechoslovak Republic
November 17	Day of Students' Fight for Freedom and Democracy

Other holidays:

January 1	New Year's
	Easter Monday
May 1	Labour Day
December 24	Christmas Day
December 25	First Christmas Feast
December 26	Second Christmas Feast

Working hours

The workweek in the CR is 40 hours, ordinarily divided into eight hour shifts over five working days. Lunch breaks are not counted as working hours. Normally, working hours at government institutions differ from those at private companies. Most businesses in the CR have collective bargaining contracts dealing with selected working conditions, for example, working hours, payment of overtime, holidays in lieu of pay, various contributions for holidays, retirement, company nursery schools, etc.

Taxes

Income tax on natural persons

The personal income tax rate for 2009 has been set at 15 %. Personal income taxpayers are natural persons with a permanent address in the Czech Republic or ordinarily resident there (resident at least 183 days in the applicable calendar year). This tax applies to the incomes of employed persons and self-employed persons.

The employer deducts tax from employee wages. Self-employed persons pay tax deposits and submit income tax returns each year. The tax basis must be calculated to determine the amount of tax. This is then adjusted by items reducing the tax basis (the untaxable portion and deductible items). The adjusted tax basis is then taxed at a 15 % rate. Tax discounts are then deducted (e.g., contribution to the public good, retirement contributions, contributions to the union and the applicable amount for each dependent child, etc.). Employees deduct a further 4.5 % for health insurance and 6.5 % for social security from their gross wage.

Income tax on legal entities

The income tax rate for legal entities has been set at 20 % for 2009. The subject of taxation for income tax on legal entities is income (yield) from all activities and property management. The tax period is either the calendar year or the fiscal year.

Other taxes

Inheritance and gift tax is between 7 % – 40 %. For inheritance tax, the resulting amount is multiplied by the coefficient 0.5. Direct relations, spouses and indirect relations are exempted from inheritance and gift tax.

Real estate tax – parcels and buildings are subject to real estate tax. Land is taxed based on its extent or the value of the soil. The tax rate depends upon the quality of soil, its location and use. For buildings, the tax basis is determined as a function of the size of the built area

and tax rate is based on building use. The taxation period is the calendar year.

Highway tax – motor vehicles and trailers are subject to highway tax if they are used for business purposes.

Indirect taxes

Value added tax has been harmonized with applicable EU regulations. Most goods manufactured in the Czech Republic are subject to VAT, along with services provided and goods imported into the CR. The basic rate is 19 % and the reduced rate is 9 %. Most goods and services are taxed at the basic rate.

Consumption taxes have also been harmonized with applicable EU regulations. Consumption taxes apply to the manufacture and import of mineral oils, alcohol, beer, wine and tobacco products within the EU. Tax rates on the applicable commodities are fixed in nature. Ecological tax went into effect starting 1/1/2008. Among items subject to the ecological tax are electricity, natural gas and solid fuels.



www.mfcr.cz
Ministry of Finance
www.portal.gov.cz
Czech Republic Administration Portal
www.business.center.cz
taxes and fees at the Business Center website

Taxes and deductions – institutions

Type of deduction	Accountable institution	Link to institution
Tax	Tax Office	www.cds.mfcr.cz
Social security	Regional Social Security Administration	www.cssz.cz
Health insurance	Health insurance companies	www.cmu.cz

Social security

Every person working in the CR has social security insurance through the Czech Social Security Administration. Employers and employees participating in health and retirement insurance, along with self-employed persons and persons voluntarily contributing to retirement insurance must pay insurance premiums. Employers are legally bound to deduct social security contributions from employee wages. 6.5 % is deducted from the gross wage of employees for these purposes. This system is designed to help people in situations in which assistance is needed and it is provided in the form of social benefits or access to special services.



The Czech social security system has three primary components:

1. Mandatory social insurance

Insurance premiums for social security include payments for disability insurance, retirement insurance and contributions to the state unemployment fund.

Sickness insurance

Sickness benefits are made to ensure the financial security of economic activities on the part of citizens who would lose earnings because of illness or maternity. Participation in sickness insurance by employees is based upon the law and is obligatory. Four kinds of payments are made from sickness insurance: sickness benefits, family care, financial aid for motherhood and equalization contributions during pregnancy and maternity. Self-employed persons may make voluntary contributions to sickness insurance. Financial assistance during maternity are provided from sickness insurance for self-employed persons.

Retirement insurance

Under the law on retirement insurance, participating individuals in this insurance are protected in life situations like aging, disability and death of the breadwinner. Under such circumstances, insured individuals may claim payments from the retirement fund.

2. State social support

This support is used by the state to contribute to living costs and other basic personal needs of children and families. The state social security system provides: contributions for children, parents' benefits, social settlements, contributions for accommodation, giving birth, burial and foster care. Claims for payment may be made only by natural persons and persons assessed with them who have permanent residency in the Czech Republic, and citizens of the European Union covered by Council Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 and 1612/68.

3. Social Assistance

Assistance is provided to those who are in financial distress and unable to attend to their basic or necessary needs. Regulation (EC) 1408/71 does not apply to this social assistance system.

If an EU citizen or their family member applies for assistance under the Czech act on social services or under the act on social neediness, the respective authority must review whether or not the applicant would be an unjustified burden on the social system. The authorities do not make such assessment if the applicant is a permanent resident or works in the Czech Republic.

Sick leave

If you become ill, you are required to notify your employer on the first day of your illness-related absence and deliver a work inability note from your doctor to your employer. Without a properly issued work inability note, you cannot qualify for sickness benefits under the Czech law. You will be paid disability monthly on your usual pay date, together with your wage.

Work-Related Injury

If you are injured on the job, you should immediately notify your employer and, together with the employer, you must fill out a report on the incident, provided your medical condition permits you to do so. If there are any witnesses to the incident, they must be questioned.

For further information on this topic, you can contact your local branch of the Czech Social Security Administration.

www.cssz.cz
Czech Social Security Administration
www.portal.mpsv.cz/soc
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – state social support
www.suip.cz
State Labour Inspection Office
www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/3221/labour_code.pdf
Labour code in English

Loss of employment

If you lose employment in the CR, you have the opportunity to register at the closest labour office. Any labour office employee will be glad to discuss conditions for registration and the opportunity to file a claim with you. When going to register, do not forget to bring your identification documents, a document verifying your last employment (employment credit sheet or the E301 form) and the documents verifying your academic achievements.

Usual office hours:

Monday and Wednesday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.



Unemployment benefits

Employment applicants are entitled to unemployment benefits if they had had prior to employment for at least 12 of the 36 months preceding their application for help in finding employment. Periods of employment in other EU/EEA countries and Switzerland will also be taken into account on the basis of submission of Form E301. Unemployment benefits are paid by the appropriate labour office.

Unemployment benefits are paid to job applicants for a time period as follows:

until 50 years of age	5 months
from 50 to 55 years of age	8 months
over 55 years of age	11 months

The amount of unemployment benefits paid is calculated based upon the average monthly net income received in the last job held or upon the assessment base.

Unemployment benefits are paid in the following amounts:

first two months	65 %
next two months	50 %
remaining period	45 %

(of the average net monthly income)

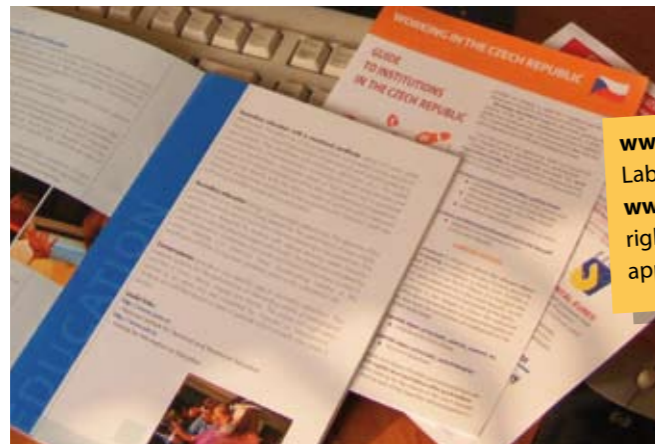
The maximum amount of benefits may not exceed 0.58 times the average wage.

If you are unemployed and have the right to unemployment payments in the country in which you last worked (EU/EEA or Switzerland) and wish to seek employment in the CR, you may request that your payment be exported

to the CR for a period of up to three months (consideration is being given to prolonging this period to six months starting in 2010).

Contact the local labour office in your country and notify them of your decision to seek work in the CR. You will need to fill out a standard form which you will then bring with you to the CR. If you are entitled to the payment of benefits in the course of the upcoming three months, obtain Form E303 before you leave your country.

Upon arriving in the CR, submit this form to the nearest labour office within 7 days of leaving your country. Make sure you have enough money with you to get started. Your payments may be delayed. If you register later than seven days from the date of your departure, your payments will be calculated from the day of your arrival. Be prepared for new rules and procedures. Don't forget that you must act in keeping with Czech law. During the time you are job seeking in the CR, you may collect payments for unemployment from the country of your prior employment. To preserve your entitlement to support for unemployment in your country, you must return before three months has expired.



www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/local
Labour offices contact details
www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obcane/pravpov_uch
rights and obligations of employment applicants and candidates in the CR

Pensions

Any person who has been paying social security contributions for the minimum required number of years, i.e. 25 years, and has reached retirement age, or any person who has been making social security contributions for at least 15 years and reached the age of 65, qualifies for retirement pension benefits. The necessary period of time includes alternative insurance periods (such as maternity leave). More information can be found at www.eures.europa.eu in this section labelled "Life and Work". Precise conditions and pension claim amounts may be learned from any regional Social Security Administration office in the CR.

Early Retirement Pension Benefits

A person becomes eligible for early retirement pension benefits if he or she has been making social security contributions for at least 25 years and is currently receiving partial disability pension benefits. In other cases, a person becomes entitled to this type of pension benefit after making social security contributions for at least 25 years and there are no more than three years left until the person's retirement age.

Widow's/widower's Pension Benefits

A widow's/widower's pension is granted upon the fulfilment of certain conditions and may be used for a period of one year after the death of your spouse or for an unlimited period if the applicant fulfils further conditions (e.g., he is older than 55 years of age, has charge of underage children, is totally disabled, etc.).

Orphan Pension Benefits

These benefits can be paid to an unprovided child whose parent, adoptive parent or guardian has died.

Disability Pension Benefits

The insured has the right to full or partial early retirement if he is an invalid (or partial invalid) and has been insured for the required period.

The Czech Republic does not have any special insurance for the compensation of workers affected by work related injuries or illnesses on a national level. These risks are covered by the social insurance system and the pension benefits such as the disability pension benefits and the survivor pension benefits. However, specific products covering such risks are offered by private insurance providers.

Additional information on eligibility criteria and the amount of pension benefits available can be obtained from the Czech Social Security Administration.

All information regarding retirement pension benefits in the Czech Republic can be obtained at the information centre of the Czech Social Security Administration (Křížová 25, Prague 5) or you can call information line at: 257 062 860.



www.cssz.cz
Czech Social Security Administration
www.mpsv.cz/en/
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Life in the Czech Republic

Moving to the Czech Republic

Before you decide to leave for the Czech Republic, read about the living and working conditions you will find under "Life and Work" on the European EURES website or contact EURES in your country who will be able to provide you with a lot of useful information related to your relocation. In addition to your personal identification documents, you should remember to bring documents verifying your education and a CV, ideally written in Czech.

Staying in the Czech Republic – EU Citizens and Family Members

(temporary and permanent residence permits)

EU citizens can stay in the Czech Republic for an unlimited amount of time without any permit. They do not have to apply for a temporary residence permit. However, such a permit can come in handy when attending administrative procedures and dealing with the authorities, for example when applying for social benefits.



www.domavcr.cz
practical information about the Czech Republic
www.policie.cz/sluzba-cizinecke-policie.aspx
Police for foreign nationals
www.eures.europa.eu
European website of the EURES network

An EU citizen can become a permanent resident of the Czech Republic upon meeting any of the following criteria:

- 1) After 5 years of an uninterrupted stay in the CR,
- 2) The individual is no longer employed in a member state, i.e. a person becomes eligible to live in the Czech Republic after ending employment,
- 3) The individual is an EU citizen under the age of 18 who was assigned into alternate custody, based on a decision issued by the relevant authority,
- 4) The individual is eligible on humanitarian grounds or for other reasons worthy of special consideration,
- 5) The individual's presence is in the interest of the CR.

Family members of EU citizens are subject to slightly different rules. A family member of an EU citizen is a person who is a spouse, child under the age of 21, an unprovided-for direct relative or an unprovided-for direct relative of the spouse of an EU citizen. The provisions of the Residency Act also apply to persons living in the same household with an EU citizen or to persons who are unable to take care of themselves for medical reasons without the assistance of an EU citizen or to persons who are the family members of a citizen of the Czech Republic. If you are staying in the CR as a family member of an EU citizen, you cannot be the recipient of a long-term residence status.

Registering in the Territory of the CR

As a foreign national you are required to register in the territory of the CR for the anticipated length of your stay within 30 days of entering the CR. If you are paying for accommodation (for example in a hotel), the accommodation provider is legally required to take care of your registration duty for you. To register in the territory of the CR, you will need to complete and sign a registration form, which can either be submitted to the Foreign Police or to your accommodation provider. Such an accommodation provider is any party providing and charging for accommodation.

Moving animals

Non-commercial transfer of animals serving as pets (e.g. dogs, cats) may take place only if the animals show no sign of illness, will be tattooed or have a microchip implanted for identification purposes and have been vaccinated against rabies on a yearly basis. Dogs must also be vaccinated against canine distemper. Animals must be accompanied by individual papers enabling their clear identification. Member states may permit travelling with animals younger than three months who have not been vaccinated against rabies if they are accompanied by a passport and have resided in the same location since birth, with no contact with wild animals, or are accompanied by the mother upon which they are dependent.

Moving your car

If the automobile you intend to bring is no older than eight years and has been registered in an EU member country, it is automatically allowed to drive on roadways in the Czech Republic. Automobiles which have been globally approved in keeping with European Directive 70/156 needed not undergo further testing. Used cars that are older than 8 years and not globally licensed under European regulations cannot be brought into the Czech Republic. Vehicles must be registered at the appropriate City Hall, where you may obtain more information. Registration fees related to the relocation of registered vehicles can vary. These fees are often waived, for example, for workers from one EU country living in another EU country or for students. The fees also do not apply if the owner uses the vehicle in another EU country for only every 6 out of 12 months. These rules apply to both personal vehicles and vehicles used for business. However, they do not apply to buses and lorries carrying goods for trade.

Driving-Licence

An EU citizen who is the holder of a European Community driving-licence and who is a resident of the Czech Republic may (but is not required to) apply for a Czech driving licence as a replacement for their EC driving-licence by contacting the local municipal authorities. This can also be done if the person's driving-licence got lost, stolen or damaged. A person who applies for a replacement driving-licence may ask the issuing authority to store the original driving-licence for them until the following replacement.

If you stay longer than 12 months in the CR and do not possess a recognized European driving license, you must request to have it exchanged using the prescribed form at the appropriate City Hall or city offices. You may also pick it up here within 20 days. The driving license is issued for a period of 10 years because of the lifetime and readability of the plastic card, or for a shorter period if the capacity or health state of the driver is limited. A driving license may only be received by graduates of driving school.



www.svscr.cz
State Veterinary Administration
www.vetkom.cz
Veterinary Chamber
www.profiautoskoly.cz
Association of driving schools

Bank account

After arriving in the Czech Republic, we recommend setting up a bank account at any bank in the CR. To establish an ordinary account, you must be 18 years or older, present a valid passport and other valid proof of identity with a photograph (e.g.: driving license, national ID) or a residency permit. If necessary, the identity of other persons with access to your account must be demonstrated. Some Czech banks require a verified reference from your home bank. Every banking institution in the CR provides ATMs, which are chiefly found in large shopping centres, railway stations and nearby public transportation. Aside from cash withdrawals, these ATMs also provide services such as refilling mobile telephone credit, simple cashless transactions, etc. In the CR there are often fees for the administration of accounts and banking transactions.

Accommodation

Short-Term Accommodation

If you are looking for a temporary accommodation arrangement when visiting the Czech Republic or staying in the country for a short period of time, you can select from a broad range of accommodation facilities at various economic levels. The most affordable places to stay are guest houses, hostels and camps, which are abundant throughout the Czech Republic. There are also a large number of inns, motels and hotels.

Long-Term Accommodation

The availability of housing and the rental rates are largely tied to the geographical location. You are likely to pay a lot more for renting a place in a large city, compared to renting in a small town or in the countryside. Flat rentals are very common in larger cities and the rental rates depend on the flat's size, location, amenities and the age of the building. Prices in Prague are higher than in the rest of the Czech Republic but the rates have also been recently rising in larger regional cities as well.

Offering housing arrangements as part of employment is not a very common practice in the CR. In most cases, employees have to find their own housing arrangements without the assistance of the employer. More information about this subject can be obtained from the local municipal authorities or real estate agents in the area where you are looking for accommodation. Classified advertising with flats/houses for sale and rent can also be found on numerous specialized internet sites. You can also place your own classified advertisement with your accommodation requirements. You may make use of want-ad publications (Avizo, Annonce).

Rent is usually charged and paid on a monthly basis and a security deposit of at least one month's rent is usually required. When budgeting for housing expenses, it is important to remember that there will be other expenses such as charges for property maintenance, property taxes (if you own the flat) and utilities (waste disposal, electricity, water, heating, etc.).

If you are looking to buy property in the CR (house or flat) and if you are a citizen of another country that is part of the EU or the EEA, you have to possess a residence permit as issued to a citizen of the European Community. When buying, selling or completing other property-related transactions, all actions need to be notarized and the terms and conditions of the entire transaction verified. Such services are usually included in the services provided by real estate agencies.

www.bydleni.cz

website about housing

www.reality.cz

website about housing

www.reality.avizo.cz

real estate offers

www.byty.hyperinzerce.cz

real estate offers

www.domavcr.cz

practical information

Healthcare and insurance

Before leaving for the Czech Republic, you should remember to visit your medical insurance provider. This is because in order to receive medical care in the Czech Republic, you will need a special form or the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which is issued by the medical insurance provider in your home country. You will need to obtain the form before travelling to the Czech Republic. The same applies to your family members.

Once you have settled in the CR and started work on the basis of an employment contract, your healthcare costs will be covered by the health insurance in the CR you choose.

The list of all medical insurance providers in the Czech Republic and their contact information can be found on the website of the Centre for International Reimbursements. The Czech healthcare system is based on publicly provided healthcare, which is largely financed through the government. Subscribing to the Czech public health insurance programme is mandatory under the law and no special negotiations with the insurance provider are required in order to subscribe.

Besides individuals working in the Czech Republic, EU citizens and their family members, who are permanent residents or who qualify under special EU regulations related to employees, sole proprietors, business owners and their families, are also eligible for coverage as part of the Czech public health insurance system. In order to get coverage, you must register with the medical insurance provider you have selected. Only employees are registered by their employers. EU citizens and their family members qualify for participation in the Czech public health insurance system and are entitled to the same rights and benefits as Czech citizens.

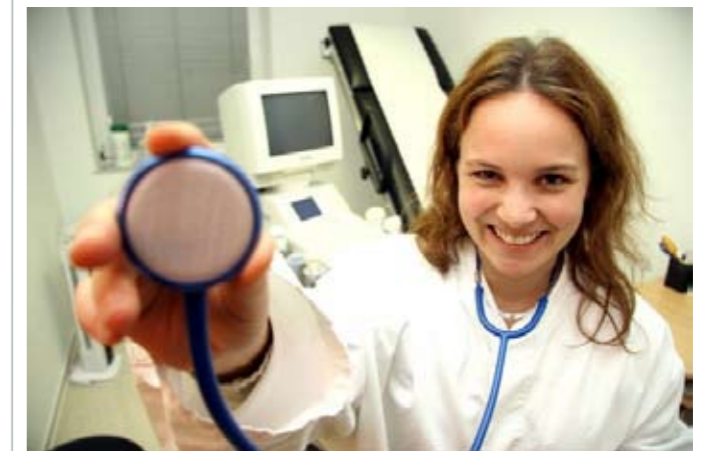
Public hospitals are used primarily in the CR. Healthcare is free of charge (regulated fees are charged, however, for visits to the doctor, prescription medications, hospital

stays, etc.) if you are insured by a Czech health insurance company, hold an EHIC card or Form E111. You may also take advantage of private hospitals, often with superior care, for which you must pay.

If you do not have Czech health-insurance, your physician should issue a "Confirmation of Claim".

Medicines prescribed by your physician are partially reimbursed by your health insurance. You must pay the full price of over-the-counter drugs.

For more information on health insurance and disability payments, contact any local health insurance branch.



www.cmu.cz

Centre for International Reimbursements

www.mzcr.cz

Ministry of Health

www.cmu.cz/cmu/duleziteodkazy/126

list of Czech health insurance companies

Charles University was founded in 1348 and it is one of the oldest universities in the world. Currently, one of the most important educational and scientific institutions in the Czech Republic.

Education system

Citizens of other EU countries and their family members have access to education and school services under the same conditions as the citizens of the Czech Republic. The educational system is broken down as follows:

Preschool Education

The preschool education for children aged 3 to 6 is usually provided by kindergartens.

Basic Education

Basic education is composed of nine grades and it is broken down into 2 levels. The first level (grades 1–5) takes place at basic schools and the second level (grades 6–9) takes place at the senior level of a basic school or in the junior grades of a grammar school (“gymnázium”) or at an eight-year conservatory.

Compulsory School Attendance

Children are required to attend school from ages 6–15. The required schooling takes place at a basic school, the junior grades of a grammar school or at a conservatory. Regional authorities are obliged to arrange for the free preparation



for entering basic education system for children of EU citizens, including teaching of the Czech language.

Secondary education

Secondary educational programs are divided as follows:

Secondary education with school-leaving exam (4 years) prepares students for work demanding higher qualifications or study at the tertiary level, and is completed with a school-leaving examination (“maturitní zkouška”).

Secondary education with a vocational certificate (2–3 years) prepares students for qualified activities, primarily of a manual labour nature. The programme ends with a final exam and the receipt of a vocational certificate. Students who complete this type of programme can enter follow-up courses and receive a “maturitní zkouška” certificate.

Secondary education (1 or 2 years) – this programme is designed for students with special educational needs. The programme ends with a final examination.

Types of secondary schools: grammar school, secondary technical school and secondary vocational school. All courses are taught in the Czech language but there are schools that offer bi-lingual courses.

Conservatory Education

Conservatories provide a very special type of education in music, dance, singing and drama. The studies are completed by “maturitní zkouška” examination or “absolutorium”.

Higher vocational education

The program of higher vocational education (3–3.5 years) deepens the knowledge and skills gained in secondary education and provides practical preparation for carrying out more demanding activities. These programmes can be also taught in a foreign language and are completed by “absolutorium”.

University education

The higher education system is provided at three levels: The bachelor’s degree program (3–4 years) focuses on pre-

paring for a profession or studying in a related master’s degree program and terminates with the state exam.

Master’s Programme (1– 3 years, as a follow-up to a Bachelor’s Programme or 4 – 6 years, when completed as a standalone Master’s Programme). This programme focuses on theoretical knowledge and it is completed with a final state examination (or a rigorous examination), part of which is the defense of a thesis.

The doctoral program (3 – 4 years) is designed for graduates of masters degree programs and terminates with the state doctoral exam and defence of the dissertation.

Some colleges and universities offer courses taught in foreign languages, mainly in English or German.

www.msmt.cz
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
www.nvf.cz/estia
National Educational Fund
www.uiv.cz
Educational Information Institute
www.atlaskolstvi.cz
comprehensive, up-to-date overview of schools in the CR
www.vzdelavani.cz
Information on studying at university, postsecondary and secondary schools
www.csvs.cz
Centre for comparing the equivalence of diplomas and education, featuring a schema of the educational system
www.nuov.cz
National Institution for Technical and Vocational Education
www.edu.cz
Educational and informational website on schooling
www.domavcr.cz
Home in the CR, Education section

Transportation

Thanks to its position in the heart of Europe, the Czech Republic has become an important transit country.

The Czech Republic has a very dense transportation infrastructure and the country has the densest rail network in the EU. Besides railways, the country has an extensive network of road and municipal transportation systems, including airlines, which are mostly used for international travel.



Road Transportation

The motorway and expressway infrastructure in the Czech Republic is still being built. The use of the motorway and expressway infrastructure in the Czech Republic is subject to tolls based on a permit system. The rates vary based on the length of the validity period of the toll permit. The toll permits for personal vehicles, which are in the form of a windscreen sticker, can be purchased at post offices, petrol stations, border crossings and at other locations that provide services to road users. The locations where such permits are available are marked with a special logo and

The maximum speed limit on a motorway is 130 km/h, on regular roads 90 km/h outside of town and 50 km/h in town.

The Czech Republic has a zero-tolerance policy with regard to driving and alcohol.

Prices for motorway coupons for 2009 (personal automobiles up to 3.5 tn.): whole year – CZK 1000, 1 month – CZK 330, 1 week CZK 220.

with purchase of the permit you will receive a brochure with basic information on the working of the system. Cargo transport is paid for using an electronic toll system.

Point System

The point system used for the rating of drivers is one of the many tools used to reduce the number and the severity of traffic accidents in the Czech Republic.

Once the driver accumulates the maximum allowable number of violation points (12), his or her driving-licence is suspended for one year. The person also has to retake a driving test before the return of their licence. The total number of accumulated points is reduced each year by four points for each year in which there are no additional violations.

Buses

The Czech Republic has a standard bus system, which is frequently used by the local population. The country has a number of private bus line operators and you will be able to find convenient and direct connections between cities and connections servicing less populated, more remote areas. The country has a well-developed system of municipal public transportation services, which are available in all larger cities.



Trains

The Czech rail network covers most of the country. Czech trains feature preferred fares for certain groups like families and students and have a variety of discounts available. The system offers a variety of products, one of which is the rail pass, which significantly cuts the cost of fares. The railways are a popular mode of transportation in the Czech Republic. The 'Intercity' and 'Eurocity' trains, which connect the Czech Republic to the neighbouring countries, are the fastest. Czech Railways has introduced modern SuperCity trains (Pendolino type) on routes between Prague and Ostrava, Vienna and Bratislava.

Air Transportation

Direct and indirect flights to the CR come to the Prague - Ruzyně International Airport, situated about 20 km northwest of the city centre, and to Brno-Tuřany Airport. Czech Airlines (ČSA) offers domestic service between Prague, Ostrava, Brno and Karlovy Vary.

www.mdcz.cz
Ministry of Transport
www.novapravidla.cz
new traffic rules
www.mapy.cz
route planner and map search
www.idos.cz
nationwide information system for bus/train timetables
www.cd.cz
Czech Railways
www.dpp.cz
Prague public transport
www.dpmb.cz
Brno public transport
www.ruzyne-letiste.cz
Prague-Ruzyně Airport
www.airport-brno.cz
Brno Airport

Cultural and social life

The cultural and social life of the Czech Republic is greatly varied and its originality is based upon many years of tradition. Czechs are a social and communicative nation.

Leisure time activities primarily include sports, travelling, going to the theatre or cinema or historical sites and castles. Spas are widespread, thanks to the wide occurrence of mineral springs. Popular sporting activities include football, tennis, cycle, hiking and sports like archery and mountain climbing. Cross-country and downhill skiing are very popular in mountain areas in the winter months and, when summer comes, hiking.

Some cultural and social traditions are connected to particular areas – for example, winemaking is widespread in Southern Moravia. Every tourist area and large city has an information centre available to provide information about sporting and cultural opportunities. Most cities and natural areas have their own informational websites.

www.portal.gov.cz
Czech Public Administration Portal
www.czech.cz
Czech Republic website
www.unesco.cz
culture in the CR
www.visitczech.cz
overview of cultural and social activities in the CR
www.fan-tom.cz
cultural and information service



According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Prague Castle is the largest on earth.

The Czech Republic has one of the best, most dense networks of marked tourist footpaths in the world.

Private life

Births

The parents of a child born in the Czech Republic have a number of bureaucratic requirements to fulfil. If a child is born in the CR to a foreign national, the duty to report the birth lies with the hospital in which the child was born. This hospital must report the birth to the Registry Office. The clerk at the registry office enters the newly born child into the Birth register and issues a Czech birth certificate (to be collected by the parents).

In order to make sure that the child's birth certificate is accepted and recognized in the parents' native country, the Czech birth certificate that is issued by the Registry Office must be translated into the parents' mother tongue by a court-appointed Czech translator and the translation must then be certified by the local municipal authority. (This process is referred to as „super legalization“. Parents can inquire from their consulate as to whether or not their country requires this type of apostille certification.) Once the above steps have been completed, the parents have to contact their consulate and request having the child entered into their passports or apply for the child's own travel document.

All information on bus, rail and municipal public transport timetables and connections can be found on the following website: www.idos.cz; or, by calling (24-hours per day): 900 144 444.

When a pregnant woman, who is an EU national, but not a permanent resident of the CR, is being admitted to a maternity hospital, she should be able to provide the European Health Insurance Card (the hospital needs to be assured that the costs for the delivery will be covered).

Children are automatically insured on birth with the health insurance company which insures the mother. Parents may, however, change the insurance company of their child at any time. Mothers receive a onetime contribution called a birth payment. The amount of the birth payment depends upon the number of children born. The child becomes a Czech citizen if at least one of its parents is also a Czech citizen.



www.domavcr.cz
practical information
www.portal.gov.cz
Czech Public Administration Portal
www.portal.mpsv.cz
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Weddings

Every person who is unmarried and has attained 18 years of age may marry. Persons younger than 18 years of age may marry only with permission of the court. Both civil and church weddings are available in the CR.

A couple can get married in any of the following ways:

- At the Registry Office (RO) in the location where one of the two persons getting married has their official permanent residence or at any other Registry Office.
- At a municipal office or the office of a municipal district or the office of the municipal area of a statutory city, which falls within the jurisdiction of a Registry Office and which concurrently does not act as a Registry Office, provided that at least one of the two persons getting married is a permanent resident of that municipality.
- In front of an official representing a state-registered church or religious organization.

If neither of two persons getting married is or ever was a permanent resident of the CR, the marriage is the responsibility of the Registry Office serving the area in which the couple is getting married. If the couple plans to get married in front of an authority other than the Registry Office which has jurisdiction over the marriage or at any other appropriate location, the couple must contact the RO in the area where one of the two persons has a permanent residence. This RO will provide detailed information.

Divorce

The court may grant a divorce based on an application by one of the married parties. Breakdown of the marriage must be serious and long-lasting. Divorce is possible when the crisis has continued for at least one year and the partners have not lived together for at least six months. The court determines the cause of the crisis and takes into consideration the interests of the children. Before granting the divorce, the subsequent care of underage children must be decided.

Useful internet links

www.eures.europa.eu	European website of the EURES network
www.eures.cz	EURES Czech Republic
www.portal.mpsv.cz	Portal of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
www.mpsv.cz	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
www.uradprace.cz	jobs offices in the CR
www.cssz.cz	Czech Social Security Administration
www.mfcr.cz	Ministry of Finance
www.mpo.cz	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
www.mvcr.cz	Ministry of the Interior
www.msmt.cz	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
www.mzcr.cz	Ministry of Health
www.portal.gov.cz	Czech Public Administration Portal
www.cmu.cz	Center for International Reimbursements
www.czso.cz	Czech Statistical Office
www.czech.cz	official website of the Czech Republic
www.domavcr.cz	practical information about the Czech Republic
www.idos.cz	nationwide timetables information system

Informational websites:

- www.ihned.cz
- www.idnes.cz
- www.lidovky.cz
- www.aktualne.cz

Important telephone numbers

112	Emergency number
150	Fire brigade
155	Ambulance
158	Police
156	Municipal police
1180	Information on telephone numbers
900 144 444	Information on bus, train and municipal public transportation timetables



EURES network in the Czech Republic

City	Labour office address	E-mail	Telephone/Fax
Praha	Úřad práce hl. m. Prahy Domažlická 11, 130 11 Praha 3	eures@aa.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 950 178 366 Fax: +420 257 325 634
České Budějovice	Úřad práce v Českých Budějovicích, Klavíkova 7, 370 04 České Budějovice	eures@cb.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 387 709 130 Fax: +420 387 315 267
Příbram	Úřad práce v Příbrami nám. T. G. Masaryka 145, 261 01 Příbram	eures@pb.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 318 427 535 Fax: +420 318 627 401
Plzeň	Úřad práce v Plzni Kaplířova 7, 320 73 Plzeň	eures@pm.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 377 411 481 Fax: +420 377 411 445
Karlovy Vary	Úřad práce v Karlových Varech Svahová 24, 360 01, Karlovy Vary	eures@kv.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 353 239 570 Fax: +420 353 239 598
Ústí nad Labem	Úřad práce v Ústí nad Labem Dvořákova 18, 400 02 Ústí nad Labem, Kancelář: Bělehradská 15	eures@ul.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 474 728 475 Fax: +420 474 728 493
Liberec	Úřad práce v Liberci Dr. M. Horákové 23, 460 31 Liberec 1	eures@lb.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 950 132 443 Fax: +420 950 132 302
Hradec Králové	Úřad práce v Hradci Králové Wonkova 1142, Hradec Králové, 500 02	eures@hk.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 495 868 476 Fax: +420 495 213 248
Pardubice	Úřad práce v Pardubicích B. V. Kunětické 2011, 530 02 Pardubice	eures@pa.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 466 751 121 Fax: +420 466 310 039
Jihlava	Úřad práce v Jihlavě Brtnická 21, 586 01 Jihlava	eures@ji.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 567 128 188 Fax: +420 567 309 965
Brno	Úřad práce Brno–město Křenová 25, 659 59 Brno	eures@bm.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 543 517 235 Fax: +420 543 517 178
Zlín	Úřad práce ve Zlíně Čiperova 5182, 760 42 Zlín	eures@zl.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 577 577 326 Fax: +420 577 432 318
Olomouc	Úřad práce v Olomouci Vejdovského 4, 772 00 Olomouc	eures@ol.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 950 141 320 Fax: +420 950 141 401
Ostrava	Úřad práce v Ostravě 30. dubna 2c, 701 60 Ostrava	eures@ot.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 950 143 643 Fax: +420 595 132 537
Frýdek–Místek	Úřad práce Frýdek–Místek Na Poříčí 3510, 738 01 Frýdek–Místek	eures@fm.mpsv.cz	Tel.: +420 950 113 453 Fax: +420 950 113 302