

## **General information for foreigners**

Free consulting and, in some cases, legal advice for expats is provided by such organizations as Integration Centre Prague; InBaze.z.s.; Association for integration and migration (SIMI). All foreigners in Czechia must always carry their identity proof (passport or residence permit card), and health insurance proof.

Adaptation and Integration Course

<https://ipc.gov.cz/en/obligations-for-foreigners/adaptation-integration-courses/>

## **Health insurance**

Foreigners residing in the territory of Czechia for more than three months must have a health insurance subscription for the entire duration of stay - travel health insurance or insurance from the home country for EU/EAA residents can only be used until receiving their first residence permit from Czechia, and not after first three months of stay. Carriers of EHIC may use it for receiving emergency care, which will be billed to their foreign health insurance company through the International Reimbursement Centre. Changing a EHIC card to the Czech EHIC requires a form to be filled in the country of card origin, stamped E142 (S1). Stamp is essential, even if country of origin does not want to give it.

Official employment enforces participation in statutory health insurance from the first day. Health insurance usually covers preventive care, diagnostic care, emergency and hospital care, medicines and medical aids (fully or partially), ambulance ride in case of acute need, some dental procedures and does not cover cosmetic procedures. Exact conditions and insurance cost vary depending on the insurance company (if private). Employees of the IBT have access to public health insurance from the day of the contract validity. There are 7 public health insurance companies. You can find them on this [link](#) (page is in the Czech language only). The biggest and most well-known is the VZP (Všeobecná zdravotní pojišťovna), yet it is not recommended for holders of EHIC card. Changing EHIC for Czech one via this company by default results in obtaining 'green' version of it, while any other of 6 companies from the list, with the same package of initial documents, can likely issue 'blue' EHIC, which has better coverage. Opting out of the Czech public health insurance system is only possible if you have been staying abroad for a long period of time, i.e. at least 6 months.

Spouses, if unemployed and have no history of statutory insurance in EU, must sign up for complex commercial insurance. In this case it is recommended to consult the insurance company before receiving healthcare as reimbursements might be limited to those hospitals and doctors who've signed a contract with selected commercial insurance company. Children must be insured separately from their parents, type of insurance again depends on their legal status – children (incl. newborns) holding/eligible for a residence permit in

Czechia must participate in the statutory insurance at parents' expense, otherwise they require own policy of comprehensive private health insurance.

Foreigners, which were never insured in EU or by equivalent programs, will be automatically insured via employer: health insurance card will be sent to the institute by the insurance company and will be given to the employee. Foreigners, previously insured, are strongly recommended to exchange the existing insurance for the Czech one, following protocols from their insurance company (they may get better insurance coverage due to the exchange). In Czechia, general practitioner deals with regular checkups and diagnostics of illnesses, redirecting to various specialists, if needed. Finding pediatrician is necessary for families with children, and one must start searching for them in advance, as capacity is usually overdue. Databases for initial search are [www.znamylekar.cz](http://www.znamylekar.cz), [www.kataloglekaru.cz/cz/](http://www.kataloglekaru.cz/cz/), <http://www.akademed.cz>

List of **emergency hospitals** in the Prague area:

Motol University hospital (Fakultní Nemocnice v Motole) – V Úvalu 84, 150 06 Prague 5

Motol hospital has extensive websites in English dedicated to health care services for foreigners.

Municipal polyclinic (Městská poliklinika), including emergency dental care - Spálená 12, 110 00 Prague 1

Hospital na Františku (Nemocnice na Františku) - Na Františku 847/8, 110 00 Prague 1  
General University Hospital in Prague (Všeobecná Fakultní Nemocnice v Praze) – U Nemocnice 499/2, 128 08 Prague 2

Na Homolce Hospital (Nemocnice na Homolce) - Roentgenova 37, 150 00 Prague 5

Military University Hospital Prague (Ústřední Vojenská Nemocnice) - U Vojenské nemocnice 1200, 169 02 Prague 6

Polyclinic Prosek (Poliklinika Prosek) - Lovosická 440, 190 00 Prague 9

Bulovka hospital (Nemocnice na Bulovce) - Budínova 67/2, 180 81 Prague 8

Thomayer hospital (Thomayerova Nemocnice) - Vídeňská 800, 140 59 Prague 4

University hospital Vinohrady (Fakultní Nemocnice Královské Vinohrady) - Šrobárova 1150/50, 100 34 Prague 10

## **Pension insurance**

It is a part of the mandatory social security payments, which you cannot cancel. Additional pension plan, which can be made for the employee with the Institute payroll department, is optional.

### **Benefits from the government, for which foreigners are eligible**

State social support for the families with children are available to expats with permanent residence in the Czech Republic and to EU citizens. Non-EU citizens registered for residence in Czech Republic are eligible for these benefits after 365 days starting from the date of registration for residence.

To be eligible for the unemployment benefits from the state, you need to prove at least 12 months of employment in the last 24 month (Czechia and, in some cases, employment in other EU/EAA countries & Switzerland counts).

### **Taxes**

You will be considered to have tax residency in the Czech Republic If you spend at least 183 days in total in the Czech Republic within one calendar year.

Annual tax declaration (till end of March for the previous year) is submitted for employee by the payroll department, unless they are legally required to file a tax return individually, which would be the following cases:

person has additional income (>6000 CZK/year) to the one, received from the Institute, including income in the other countries, even passive; person wants to apply discount for tax calculation, which cannot be applied by the Institute (e.g. discount due to the care of the minor family member/unemployed spouse without Czech personal number). Individual submitting of tax declarations can be done in person in the Ministry of Finances, online via tax portal, or with the help of the tax advisor.

There is a license fee for public broadcast services that must be paid on a per-household basis irrespectively if you own any receiver devices (usually it is not part of the accommodation fee).

### **Banks**

Some (but not all) banks, operating in Czechia are: Česká spořitelna, ČSOB, KB Komerční banka, mBank, AirBank, Raiffeisenbank, UniCredit Bank, MONETA, Fio banka.

## Practical

**Time zone and date formats.** The time zone for the Czech Republic is Central European Time (CET) UTC +01:00. In the summer, the time used is a Central European Summer Time UTC +02:00. Daylight saving time starts on the last Sunday in March at 02:00 AM. On that day, you have to set your clock ahead for 1 hour. Daylight saving time ends on the last Sunday in October at 03:00 AM, when the clock needs to be set back 1 hour. The common formula for date writing is: DD.MM.YYYY

**Public holidays:** January 1, Easter (floating dates, Friday + Monday), May 1, May 8, July 5, July 6, September 28, October 28, November 17, December 24-26.

Sales in large establishments are restricted during selected holidays: New Year's, Easter Monday, Liberation Day, Czech Statehood Day, Independent Czechoslovak State Day, Christmas Eve (from 12:00), Christmas Day, St. Stephen's Day. Shops larger than 200 square meters have to stay closed, supplies can be bought in small shops, online or at petrol stations, pharmacies, shops at airports, railway stations, and hospitals.

**Currency.** The Czech Republic is a member of the European Union, but not the Eurozone, therefore the currency is the Czech Crown, not the Euro.

**Electricity.** The standard voltage is 230 V, and the standard frequency is 50 Hz. You can use your electric appliances in the Czech Republic if the standard voltage in your country is in between 220-240 V. In the Czech Republic, the power plugs and sockets are of type C and type E.

**Accommodation.** When arranging private accommodation, one has to be prepared to pay deposit (returnable upon property vacation, provided that the accommodation is left in acceptable condition). Rental prices usually consist of monthly rent and utilities advance. Agency fees are non-refundable. There are several websites that offer private rooms or apartments, for example [Bezrealitky.com](http://Bezrealitky.com), [Expats.cz](http://Expats.cz), [Foreigners.cz](http://Foreigners.cz), [Forstudents.cz](http://Forstudents.cz), [Sreality.cz](http://Sreality.cz). Pay greater attention to check that the accommodation is actually registered for housing purposes (otherwise the rental contract will not be accepted for visa/permit application). If searching flats via rental websites, while sending the first message to the flat owner/realtor, it is helpful to not only state, that you are interested in renting/viewing the property, but also introduce yourself: casually mentions, that you seek long-term rent due to the obtained long-term employment, that you do not smoke or have pets (if applicable) significantly increase number of responses to such messages. Doctor title, if you hold one, causes order of magnitude increase in number of responses, so do not forget it, when signing. Valid types of accommodation proofs, if required for visa, would be following rental agreement, accommodation agreement (original or notarized copy), or written 'confirmation

of the owner's consent to a foreign national's accommodation' with signature authenticity confirmed by notary or Czech Point authority (found on many posts and town halls).

**Mobile phone plans.** There are three main mobile network providers in the Czech Republic: Vodafone. T-Mobile and Telefónica O2, and they are all comparable in terms of services and prices. All three offer 4G/LTE coverage on pre-paid plans or a contract which usually run for a minimum of 24 months. The price of a prepaid SIM card differs according to the services and usually costs around CZK 200-500. Part of that money is also your starting credit. Prices for calls within the Czech Republic range from CZK 3-7 per minute, and SMS messages cost between CZK 1-4.

**Waste collection and recycling.** Waste in Prague is collected using container posts, curbside collection, and permanent drop-off centres. About 99% of households use the system of container posts with recycling stations where you bring and separate your waste. The residents of Prague have the opportunity to recycle paper and cardboard, colored and clear glass, plastics, beverage cartons, sizable waste, hazardous waste, mixed waste, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, electrical and wooden waste, construction debris, tires, green maintenance waste. Among the most common containers that you can find in Prague are: Blue - Paper/Cardboard (papir), Yellow - Plastic (plasty), Orange - Beverage Containers Napojové kartony, tetrapak, Green Glass (sklo); Brown – Biowaste, Black – Rests.

#### **Useful apps:**

First aid & healthcare – Zachranka; Bike sharing service – Rekola, Nextbike; Maps - Mapy.cz; Public transport - pid litačka, IDOS, CG transit; Parking - Parkuj v klidu; eParkomat, Citymove, MPLA; Taxi service – Liftago, Bolt, Uber; Food: Wolt, Foodora, Bolt food, Nesnezeno; Online supermarkets - rohlik.cz, kosik.cz, iTesco, Billa; Cultural tips and tickets (concerts, theatres, exhibitions, etc.) - Go out, ticketportal.eu

#### **Arriving to Czech Republic with children (for parents)**

For child's visa granted future employee will need additional documents from the Institute, which include Salary statement, and declaration (česni prohlášení) from him, that he will cover expenses for child also. Also, child has to be registered in Czech Republic (have a place to live) from the date of visa start, usually, name of the child should be explicitly stated in the rental contract together with names of parents.

#### **Education (for parents)**

The education system of the Czech Republic follows a three-level structure. The first level (9 years) is compulsory elementary education that is divided into two stages, 5+4 years. The first stage starts when the child is 6 years old. After the completion of the first stage, children may change schools in favor of an eight-year academy (gymnázium). There are also 6-year academies, which children can join after the 7th grade. These academies continue into the secondary education, which is no longer mandatory and also includes: vocational schools (Střední odborné učiliště or SOU), professional schools (Střední odborná škola or SOS), 4-year academies (gymnázium), conservatories (konzervator) and lyceums. Secondary education is finished with a state exam (maturita) or by receiving a vocational certificate. University stage follows completed secondary education.

Not included in this system are pre-schools, which can either be run by the state or are privately owned. For children aged 2-5 years, they are not compulsory. State pre-schools are available for children aged 3, and each year Czech Academy of Sciences offers some limited number of places for children of scientists above age 1.5. If the child reaches 5 years of age before the start of the school year in September, a pre-school becomes compulsory. To enroll at a pre-school, you need to fill out an application form (which can usually be downloaded on the website of the pre-school), bring an ID, and, in most cases, proof of vaccination of the child, birth certificates. As mentioned before, 9-year elementary schooling is compulsory, even for children of foreigners (if stay in the Czech Republic longer than 90 days). To enroll at an elementary school, you need to present: the ID of the parent (such as a passport), the ID of the child passport or birth certificate), health insurance card of the child, a school certificate if the child has already completed school years abroad. The standard enrollment period starts in late March and finishes in mid-May for the following school year, enrollment in the middle of the school year depends on the negotiations with the school.

### **Having a child in Czech Republic**

The Czech Republic has a judicial and social security system that greatly favors new parents, even if they are not Czech citizens. In the Czech Republic, under normal circumstances, children should be born only in special medical facilities (porodnice). After the 13th week of pregnancy, the gynecologist issues a Pregnancy card. With it, you can register and reserve a spot at a special hospital of your choice. After the child is born, the hospital asks the Registry Office of the municipality to which the hospital belongs to create birth certificate. Immediately after returning home from the hospital, parents should inform the pre-chosen pediatrician about the birth. During the visit the doctor will inspect the baby's birth certificate, the discharge report from the maternity hospital, as well as the vaccination card and the insurance card. After the first examination, the doctor fills in the registration form

with the relevant health insurance company. Within days of the receiving of the child's birth certificate, the child should be registered at the health insurance company with which the mother or father was registered on the day of birth. The birth of a child must be also announced for your employer and for the owner of your apartment.

Maternity support is paid by the Czech Social Security Administration for a period of maternity leave, which is 28 weeks of childcare. The mother decides when to start her maternity leave on her own, but it must be within 6-to-8 weeks before giving birth. To be entitled to maternity support, a mother must hold a valid work contract, pay for sickness insurance at the time of the beginning of maternity leave and be insured for at least 270 calendar days in the last 2 years. The Request for Maternity Financial Assistance application is issued by the mother's gynecologist. The parental allowance is paid by the Social Support Department established under the Labour Office. A parent (either mother or father) can benefit from it up to four years of age of the child. Parents, who come back to work before child is aged 2 years, can get support from IBT.

### **Driving license/ Car registration (for car owners)**

In order to drive in the Czech Republic, you must have reached the minimum age required to drive/ride a vehicle (In most cases this is 18) and hold a valid driving licence. When driving in the Czech Republic, the following documents should be carried: A full valid driving licence; ID or a passport; Vehicle registration certificate part I (so-called small technical licence), Proof of insurance (so-called green card).

If you have a valid driving licence from another country, it may or may not be valid in the Czech Republic. It depends on whether the licence follows all the necessary criteria as set by the Conventions on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention on Road Traffic 1949, Vienna Convention on Road Traffic of 1968). This means that the licence needs to: be in the form of a document, be made of plastic or paper; have the title "Driving Licence" in the national language (or languages) of the country which issued the card, as well as the name and/or distinguishing sign of the issuing state, and have all particulars written in Latin letters (or dubbed in the Latin alphabet). Additionally, licence has to contain the following information (numbered as shown). 1 Surname; 2 First name, other names; 3 Date and place of birth; 4a Date of issuance; 4b Expiry Date; 4c Name or stamp of the issuing authority; 4d Identification number for the purposes of registration; 5 Card number; 6 Photograph of the holder; 7 Signature of the holder; 8 Category (subcategory) of vehicles for which the licence is valid; 9 Date of issue for each category (subcategory) of vehicles (AM, A1, A2, A, B1, B, C1, D1, D, BE, C1E, CE, D1E, DE, T).

International driving licence (addition to an existing driving licence) may still grant a right to legally drive in Czech Republic, even if abovementioned criteria were not met. It is valid for one year (Geneva Convention) or three years (Vienna Convention) and only the state that issued your licence can renew it (e.g. by mail).

Driving licence from EU member states, Norway, Switzerland, Island or Lichtenstein are valid in the Czech Republic unconditionally and one doesn't need to exchange them for a Czech licence. Those who possess a licence that follows the criteria of the above-mentioned conventions on road traffic, but it is not from the EU, have to exchange it (depending on the status). Holder of a long-term residence permit (up to 1 year) or a visa can use a foreign driving licence in the Czech Republic under the same conditions as EU citizens as long as usual residence is in the Czech Republic. If a residence permit exceeds 1 year, person is required to exchange the driving licence for a Czech one at a municipality office. In Prague it is the vehicle registry near the Vyšehrad metro station, at the address: Business Centre Vyšehrad, Na Pankráci 1685/17, 140 00 Praha 4-Nusle.

Registering a car. Vehicles manufactured in non-EU states must go through the so-called import technical inspection (including emission measurement), which has approved these technical capabilities for operation. First, one needs to make an appointment with the Czech Technical Inspection (STK) to get a Vehicle registration report. There technical certificates (parts I and II) are presented, and necessary documents are received. If the vehicle is imported from EU member state, or from Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein, and the vehicle still has a valid technical certificate from this state, one doesn't need to undergo the import technical inspection with it. Visit to the STK is needed only to carry out a registration inspection of the vehicle.

You will also need compulsory car insurance (a so-called green card) from an insurance company of your choice. Without this insurance (povinné ručení) you are not allowed to drive in the Czech Republic. Finally, you need to register the vehicle at one of the Vehicle Registries of the Municipality office In Prague, except of the vehicle registry is near the Vyšehrad metro station, which does not perform this agenda (<https://praha.eu/pracoviste-registru-vozidel>).

You will also be asked to pay a fee: the amount depends on the type of vehicle and its ecological impact. An average car could cost you between CZK 800 and CZK 10,800 according to the vehicle's compliance with the EURO emission standards.

When it comes to parking, comply with the rules set for paid parking zones. Pay attention to traffic signs and also be careful of trams. Trams are an integral part of the traffic in Prague and in certain situations, they have the right way if you follow a tram and it stops at a tram stop situated in the middle of the street, you must stop too. You can't legally pass the tram



on the right side in this case, as that area is reserved for the passengers getting on and off the tram. When you drive in the same direction as a tram and you must get on the tram tracks, for example when the tram is taking a right and you continue straight, the tram always has priority. On the crossings that include tram traffic, follow the traffic lights as usual. Parking anywhere on tram tracks is prohibited. Badly parked cars will most likely be towed away and the owners will pay a fine.

### **Arriving to Czech Republic with pets (for owners)**

Dogs in the Czech Republic have to be vaccinated against rabies. Vaccinations against canine distempers, parvovirus, infectious hepatitis, parainfluenza leptospirosis and others are not obligatory but are recommended. Before reaching 3 months of age, dogs also have to be marked with a microchip for Identification (this is done at the veterinarian). Dog owners are also required to pay a fee for dogs older than 3 months. All dogs must be registered in the town district's office within 15 days of ownership. In public places, dogs have to be kept on a leash, and they have to wear a muzzle on public transport. In Prague, the registration is done at the Prague City Hall, using the owner's registration card (Magistrát hlavního města Prahy, odbor živnostenský a občanskosprávní, Jungmannova, 35/29, 110 00 Praha 1). Cats are not required to be vaccinated or have an identification mark. Again, the vaccination is still recommended. Since cats often roam around outside, microchips are also recommended. In public transport, cats (and small dogs) have to be carried in a transporter with an impermeable bottom.