

# NEXT STOP THE CZECH REPUBLIC

INFORMATION FOR FOREIGNERS  
WHO INTEND TO RELOCATE TO  
THE CZECH REPUBLIC ON A LONG-TERM BASIS



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY



This information brochure entitled "Next Stop - Czech Republic" was created by an expert group composed of staff of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic – Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, representatives of Integration Centers, non-governmental organization Slovo 21 and the International Organization for Migration.

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# **NEXT STOP**

# **THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

## **INFORMATION FOR FOREIGNERS**

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## **THE CZECH REPUBLIC ON A LONG-TERM BASIS**



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This brochure is an information material for foreigners from third countries who plan on relocating to the Czech Republic on a long-term basis. This brochure will introduce to foreigners the rules on obtaining and maintaining their legal status, while an accompanying documentary on DVD will introduce the Czech Republic itself. Attached is also a check-list of items that foreigners can follow to make sure they have not forgotten any of their duties before and after arriving in the Czech Republic. This brochure was created along with other material such as a short documentary film and brochure entitled „Welcome to the Czech Republic“ and related documents that are handed to foreigners after arriving to the Czech Republic.

The aim of this material is to support the integration of foreigners in the Czech Republic, support their awareness of their rights and duties in the Czech Republic and to ease their orientation in the Czech Republic and their specific region of domicile. It shall also provide information on legal means of residence in the Czech Republic and warn about possible negative elements. Through the information contained therein, we aim to support to the greatest extent possible the independence and self-sufficiency of newly arrived immigrants. Foreigners can manage most issues related to their residence in the Czech Republic on their own. If you need further advice or assistance, do not hesitate to turn to a non-governmental organization (NGOs) or an Integration Center.

## WHO IS THIS BROCHURE FOR?

This brochure IS intended for citizens of non-EU countries who are planning on staying in the Czech Republic for more than 90 days and who will be applying for a long-term visa or a long-term residency permit.

## WHO IS THIS BROCHURE NOT FOR?

This brochure is NOT intended for EU citizens and their family members nor for applicants for a Schengen visa or a permanent residency permit.

## WHAT IS A LONG-TERM VISA?

A long-term visa is a visa for a stay over 90 days, which is issued for a maximum of 6 months and which is the most common visa applied for by newcomers who wish to spend more than 90 days in the Czech Republic. If the person later decides to extend their stay while keeping the original purpose of their stay, they may then apply for a permit for a long-term residency in the Czech Republic. A long-term visa has the form of **a sticker placed in your passport**.

## WHAT IS A LONG-TERM RESIDENCY PERMIT?

A long-term residency permit is a residential status for which a foreigner may – in certain cases – apply before their first arrival in the Czech Republic. Most frequently, however, it follows up on a long-term visa. It is issued for up to 2 years.

**A long-term residency permit has the form of a biometric card with a chip.**

**You are strongly advised to remember the difference between a long-term visa and a long-term residency permit, as it is very important.!**

## WHO DECIDES ABOUT AN APPLICATION?

An application for a Schengen visa is processed by the embassy where the application is filed. An application for a long-term visa and a long-term residency permit is processed by the Ministry of the Interior, who receives the application from the embassy.

# CONSIDERING RELOCATION TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

## I WOULD LIKE TO STUDY IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

If you wish to study in the Czech Republic and you have already chosen a post-secondary school or a university that you like, verify the following:

- Will the course be considered "studies" according to the Czech Immigration Law or not? (verify with the school or visit [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) and read "Information for education providers and students")
- How long are you going to study in the Czech Republic? (verify with the school)

If you are planning on studying for more than 90 days, you may apply for the following visas or residency permits depending on the type of course:

- **Long-term residency permit for the purpose of "studies"**, which is to be filed at a Czech embassy and is available to foreigners who intend to study in the Czech Republic for *more than 3 months* and whose course is considered to be "studies" according to Czech Immigration Law, except for studies at secondary schools and conservatories that are not part of an exchange program or are qualified as paid professional training.

The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 60 days. If you do not need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, you may come to the Czech Republic after having obtained the decision and within 3 days from your arrival, you will go to an office of the Ministry of the Interior to register your stay and to provide biometric data for your residency card. You will later pick up your residency card at the same office. If you do need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, the Czech embassy will provide you with a "visa for the collection of a residency permit".

- **Long-term visa for the purpose of "studies"**, which is to be filed at a Czech embassy and is available to foreigners who intend to study in the Czech Republic for *more than 3 months* and whose course is considered to be "studies" according to Czech Immigration Law. Education at a secondary school or a conservatory need not, in this case, be part of an exchange program and you can also apply for the visa if your purpose of stay is paid professional training.

**The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 60 days and it will also provide you with the visa. When you arrive in the Czech Republic, you are obliged to register your stay at the Foreign Police within 3 days from arrival.**

- **Long-term visa for the purpose of "other"** (including education), which is to be filed at a Czech embassy and is available to foreigners who intend to study in the Czech Republic for *more than 3 months* and whose course is not considered to be "studies" according to Czech Immigration Law.

The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 90-120 days, although sometimes the waiting time may be prolonged because of certain circumstances. The same embassy will also provide you with the visa. When you arrive in the Czech Republic, you are obliged to register your stay at the Foreign Police within 3 days from arrival.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your application.

All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation.

- Confirmation of your enrollment in a school or an educational institution
- Confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of sufficient financial resources to which you have access in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from your home country
- Medical report from your home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)

**It is necessary** that you read more about all the requirements for your application, studies and stay at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section "Information for education providers and students".

### Do not forget that:

- If you were issued a long-term visa, you must report your stay in the Czech Republic within 3 days from arrival at the Foreign Police, unless your accommodation provider (e.g. a student dormitory) does it for you.
- If you are arriving in the Czech Republic to pick up a long-term residency permit, you may register your arrival simultaneously with providing your biometric data for your residency card at an office of the Ministry of the Interior.
- If you are issued a visa or a residency permit for the purpose of studies, **you must be a student for the entire duration of your stay**, thus fulfilling your purpose of stay. **Students may also work or have a business** but their main purpose of stay must always be studies.
- If you decide to **change schools**, you must first complete the academic year at your current school, as your new studies must follow up on your previous studies without any interruption. Your previous school will inform the Ministry of the Interior that you have terminated your studies there but reporting a change of schools to the ministry is your responsibility and it must be done within 3 days from the change.
- Your confirmation of enrollment must also cover the period of summer holidays and it must be valid until the completion of your studies, which usually has the form of regular exams or final exams. You may leave the Czech Republic during summer holidays but if you have any residency application pending during this time, you must report your departure to the Ministry of the Interior and ensure that your mail is collected by someone else.
- If you are **expelled**, the school will report this to the Ministry of the Interior and your visa or residency permit may be revoked.

## I WOULD LIKE TO WORK IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

If you wish to work in the Czech Republic, you must have a job offer before coming here.

**Take a look at** the current job offers in the Czech Republic at [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam/prociz/vmciz](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam/prociz/vmciz). You don't always need the assistance of an employment agency to find a job.

If you decide to use the services of an employment agency, you should verify on the following website that it has the proper license for operating as an employment agency in the Czech Republic: [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr\\_prace](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr_prace). Do not cooperate with an agency that is not on this list.

It is your future employer who should pay the fee to the agency, not you!

### 1. LONG-TERM VISA FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYMENT

Foreigners from third countries (i.e. non-EU countries) may work in the Czech Republic in positions that could not be filled by suitable candidates among job seekers in the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic has the right to set a quota of third-country nationals who will be allowed to work here and it also has the right to decide not to extend a work permit already issued. It further has the right to change the conditions regarding the work of foreigners in the Czech Republic at any time, based on the situation on the Czech labor market.

If you already have a job offer in the Czech Republic, you will then need a:

- Work permit, which should be arranged for by your employer
- Long-term visa for the purpose of "employment"

The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 90-120 days, although sometimes the waiting time may be prolonged because of certain circumstances. The same embassy will also provide you with the visa. When you arrive in the Czech Republic, you are obliged to register your stay at the Foreign Police within 3 days from arrival.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your application.

All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation.

- Work permit
- Confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of travel medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from your home country
- Medical report from your home country (upon request of the Czech Embassy)

**It is necessary** that you read more about the requirements for an application for a work permit at [www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam](http://www.portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam) and about the requirements for a visa application at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section "Third country nationals" – "Visa for a stay over 90 days".

### 2. LONG-TERM RESIDENCY PERMIT – GREEN CARD

You may apply for 3 types of Green Cards based on your highest level of education completed:

- type A – intended for skilled workers with university education and for key personnel
- type B – intended for skilled workers with an apprenticeship certificate or higher education
- type C – intended for unskilled workers

You may apply for a Green Card if you are the citizen of Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Japan, Macedonia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Serbia, South Korea, Ukraine and the United States of America.

The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 30 days, although sometimes the waiting time may be prolonged because of certain circumstances. If you do not need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, you may come to the Czech Republic after having obtained the decision and within 3 days from your arrival, you will go to an office of the Ministry of the Interior to register your stay and to provide biometric data for your residency card. You will later pick up your residency card at the same office. If you do need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, the Czech embassy will provide you with a "visa for the collection of a residency permit".

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your application. All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- The work position's number (for Green Cards)
- A diploma confirming your education, validated by Czech authorities (only for type A cards)
- If applying for a regulated position, you need to present a confirmation of having met the requirements for this position
- Confirmation of travel medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from your home country
- Medical report from your home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)
- After your arrival, you will be asked to present a confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic

**It is necessary** that you read more about the requirements for an application at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section "Third-country nationals" – "Long-term residence permit" – "Green Card" or at [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam/zelka/vm](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam/zelka/vm).

**Take a look at** vacancies for Green Card holders on the employment portal of the Czech Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs at [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam/zelka/vm](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam/zelka/vm). You don't always need the assistance of an employment agency to find a job.

### 3. LONG-TERM RESIDENCY PERMIT – BLUE CARD

Blue Cards are intended for foreigners with completed university education or higher specialized education that lasted for at least 3 years. Your work contract must be signed before coming to the Czech Republic, that is even before filing an application for a Blue Card. The work contract must be signed for a period of at least 1 year and must specify that your gross monthly or annual salary will be at least 1,5 times higher than the average gross annual salary in the Czech Republic.

The embassy will send you a decision regarding your application in approximately 90 days, although sometimes the waiting time may be prolonged because of certain circumstances. If you do not need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, you may come to the Czech Republic after having obtained the decision and within 3 days from your arrival, you will go to an office of the Ministry of the Interior to register your stay and to provide biometric data for your residency card. You will later pick up your residency card at the same office. If you do need a visa to come to the Czech Republic as a tourist, the Czech embassy will provide you with a "visa for the collection of a residency permit".

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your application.

All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- Work contract
- A diploma confirming your education, validated by Czech authorities
- If applying for a regulated position, you need to present a confirmation of having met the requirements for this position

- Confirmation of travel medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from your home country
- Medical report from your home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)
- After your arrival, you will be asked to present a confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic

**It is necessary** that you read more about this at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section "Third country nationals" – "EU Blue Card" or at [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam).

**Take a look at** vacancies for Blue Card holders on the employment portal of the Czech Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs at [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam/zelka/vm](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam/zelka/vm). You don't always need the assistance of an employment agency to find a job.

#### **Do not forget that:**

- A work permit (issued by the Czech Labor Office) entitles you to work and serves as the basis for your application for a visa or a residency permit. A work permit and a visa/residency permit are therefore two different permits. However, the Green and Blue Cards are called "dual permits", which means that the work and residency permits are combined into one.
- If you have arrived into the country on a long-term visa, which can be issued for up to 6 months, and you lose your job or wish to change jobs during this time, your previous and new jobs must directly follow up on each other. A gap between jobs can be considered not fulfilling your purpose of stay and your long-term visa may consequently be revoked.
- If you have a long-term residency permit and you lose your job or wish to change jobs during this time, your previous and new jobs must directly follow up on each other. A gap between jobs cannot be longer than 60 days. This period is called a "protective period" and it can be used only in situations specified by the Czech Labor Code. One of these situations is for example when you lose your job despite not having broken any rules. However, if you resign by agreement, you lose your 60 protective days.
- If you do not find a new job, your stay in the Czech Republic will be terminated and you will have to return to your home country at your own expenses.
- You should always have your own copy of your work contract. Make sure you safely store all the employment-related documents that you have signed. Insist on having all work-related agreements in writing. Sign only those documents that you understand. All types of work contracts and agreements must be concluded in writing. A resignation or an agreement on the termination of employment must also be in writing.
- If you work the legally required 40 hours per week, you are entitled to at least the Czech minimum wage (approx. CZK 8000 a month = approx. USD 427 = approx. EUR 333, or CZK 48.10 per hour).
- You should verify that your employer pays health and social insurance on your behalf. It is their duty! Always carry your health insurance card with you.
- If you work in degrading, unsanitary or unhealthy conditions, please contact the local Labor Inspection Office (contacts available at [www.suip.cz](http://www.suip.cz)), Integration Centers or NGOs. If you have documents signed by your employer and are willing to testify, you can file a complaint against your employer at a Labor Inspection Office.
- If you violate the conditions of your work permit or work without any work permit, you are breaking the laws of the Czech Republic. Working at a different location than the one specified in your work permit is also considered a violation. In such cases you and your employer may face high fines. In addition, it will be very difficult for you to defend your rights and demand your salary vis-à-vis your employer. In a situation like that, you become very vulnerable and are putting yourself at risk.

## **RECOGNITION OF DOCUMENTS**

If an employer requests professional qualification for a vacancy, a foreigner is required to present a document confirming they are qualified enough to do the job. Having your foreign certificates and diplomas recognized in the Czech Republic is also important if you decide to continue your studies in the Czech Republic. In order for these documents to be considered equal and valid, you must have them validated and receive a particular document that confirms this validation.

The term **validation** means that education received outside of the Czech Republic (primary, secondary, post-secondary and university education) is considered equal to that of the Czech Republic.

Diplomas from **primary and secondary schools and post-secondary professional schools are validated by Departments of Education at the relevant Regional Offices**. You will be asked to provide a description of the contents and scope of these studies. Unless stated otherwise by an international treaty, your diplomas will also need to be legalized and officially translated to Czech.

If you need a validation of your **university diploma**, you must **directly contact a Czech public university** that has a similar accredited study program or the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (if your diploma has been issued in a country with which the Czech Republic has a bilateral treaty on the mutual recognition of education).

When having your documents legalized, you may come across the terms Apostille and superlegalization. The purpose of an **Apostille and superlegalization** is to prove that the document has been issued or authenticated by a judicial or administrative authority of the given state or that it has been signed before this authority. Therefore, it is the authenticity of a stamp and a signature on the document that is legalized, not the contents of the document. The legalization of documents is carried out in order to confirm their authenticity and to eliminate counterfeits.

**It is necessary** that you read more about this at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/cestujeme/overovani\\_listin/index.html](http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/cestujeme/overovani_listin/index.html)) or the website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (<http://www.msmt.cz/mezinarodni-vztahy/uznavani-vzdelani>). You can also contact a specialized NGO.



## I WOULD LIKE TO DO BUSINESS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

If you are coming to the Czech Republic with a long-term visa for the purpose of business, you are considered an entrepreneur and as such you have a number of duties. Try to find out as much as you can on your own and trust only official sources of information.

If you arrive in the Czech Republic for a different purpose and you decide to start a business, you may apply for a change of the purpose of stay only after 2 years of legal residency in the Czech Republic (if your initial purpose of stay is family reunification, you have to wait for 3 years).

Doing business in the Czech Republic can take the form of a trade license or a participation in a business organization. If you are a member of a business organization, you can only be granted a residency permit if you are a member of its statutory body. Foreigners who are members of a business organization but not members of its statutory body may receive a work permit from the Labor office on the basis of which they will receive a residency permit for employment purposes.

You should pay attention to the differences between business and employment because an inspection by the Labor Inspection Office may potentially result in substantial fines. Make sure that the terms of your business are in accordance with Czech law. If you are a member or a statutory body of a business organization and you perform tasks arising from the activities of this organization (including cooperatives), it is considered employment. If you are sent to the Czech Republic by a foreign employer who has signed a commercial or other agreement with a Czech legal or natural person, your work activity in the Czech Republic is also regarded as employment.

The following text focuses on doing business with a **trade license**.

A person who independently carries out a gainful activity, i.e. operates a business or conducts other economic activities, is referred to as a **self-employed person (OSVČ)**. Trade license business is governed by the **Trade Licensing Act**. Foreigners may carry out business activities in the Czech Republic under conditions that are very similar to those for Czech businesspersons.

### TRADE LICENSING OFFICE

This office issues trade licenses. A person with a trade license is also considered to be an entrepreneur in the Czech Republic (as well as being called a self-employed person or OSVČ).

### HEALTH INSURANCE

Entrepreneurs must pay health insurance on their own.

If you arrive in the Czech Republic with travel health insurance obtained in your home country and you wish to extend your residency, you will need to get new comprehensive medical insurance from an insurance company that is authorized to provide medical insurance in the Czech Republic.

### LOCAL SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (OSSZ)

The social security system is managed by the Czech Social Security Administration (ČSSZ). Every foreigner with a trade license must register with the OSSZ and make regular premium payments before the 20th day of each calendar month. Any changes must be reported to the OSSZ by the 8th day of the calendar month following the month in which the change occurred.

If you have a visa or a residency permit for the purpose of business, you must be registered at the OSSZ at all times, including if your business is idle, you do not have any income or you are temporarily staying outside the territory of the Czech Republic.

If you are deficient in OSSZ payments, your visa or residency permit may be revoked.

### TAX AUTHORITY

A foreigner who has been issued a trade license must register at a Tax Office, which will provide them with a “tax identification number” (DIČ).

Anyone who undertakes business activities in the Czech Republic is obliged to keep records of income and expenditure on the basis of which they will be able to calculate their tax base. Furthermore, a self-employed person is obliged to submit a tax return by 31 March of the following year, even if their business was established less than a year ago or they had no income at all. A self-employed person pays their income tax on the basis of a filed tax return.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your application. All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- Confirmation of the entry of your business into the licensing or trade registry of the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of sufficient financial resources to which you have access in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from your home country
- Medical report from your home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)

**It is necessary** that you read more about this at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “Visa for a stay over 90 days“.

### Do not forget that:

- There is great difference between business and employment. You may think that you are performing a business activity, but instead you are performing an activity that is considered employment according to Czech law. In such case you may be facing substantial penalties for violating the Act on Employment.
- If you arrive in the Czech Republic for business purposes, you will need to pay taxes and health and social insurance throughout your entire stay.
- If you wish to extend you stay in the Czech Republic, you will need to prove that you have sufficient funds for you and your family. Therefore, it is not possible to use your business just to obtain a residency permit while having no income from your business in the long term.
- Get as much information as possible from official sources, Integration Centers or NGOs.



# ARRIVAL TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

## WHAT IS THE REPORTING DUTY?

Your first duty in the Czech Republic is to report your presence in the Czech Republic within 3 working days from your arrival in the Czech Republic.

If you have a long-term visa, report your arrival at the relevant Foreign Police Department based on your address in the Czech Republic.

If you have a **”visa for the collection of a residency permit”**, report your arrival to a Ministry of the Interior office, where you can also fulfill your duties related to providing biometric data and receiving a residency card (you can read more information on biometrics below).

When reporting your arrival, you need to present a valid passport and a filled out registration form (you will receive it at a Foreign Police office or at a Ministry of the Interior office).

You may also be asked to show proof of medical insurance.

The reporting duty does not apply to persons under 15 years of age or those whose arrival has been reported by an accommodation provider (hotel, student dorm).

The addresses of Foreign Police offices and Ministry of the Interior offices are available at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the Contacts section.

## WHAT IS BIOMETRICS AND A BIOMETRIC CARD?

If you are applying for a long-term visa, this chapter does not concern you.

The term “biometrics” stands for biometric data, i.e. a facial image, finger prints and a digital signature. Biometric data are captured and stored in a biometric card. The data are captured through a special device at the offices of the Ministry of the Interior, which also issues biometric cards.

Biometrics concerns citizens of third countries who reside in the Czech Republic on a long-term or permanent residency permit. It does not concern third-country nationals with visas.

A long-term residency permit is issued in the form of a residency card containing a carrier with biometric data.

If your application for a long-term residency permit has been approved, you are required to come to a Ministry of the Interior office within 3 days of your arrival in the Czech Republic to show your passport and provide biometric data so that your residency card can be issued.

Within 60 days from providing your biometric data, you will be asked to come to the same office where you will receive the residency card and pay the fee in the form of revenue stamps, which can be purchased at any post office. Before receiving the card, you will provide your biometric data one more time so that the office can verify that the residency card works properly.

This card serves as an ID in the territory of the Czech Republic. When traveling outside the Czech Republic, you will always need your passport as well.

If you do not arrive to the Czech Republic, if you fail to present yourself at a Ministry of Interior office to provide your biometric data or fail to pick up your residence card - without serious reasons for not having done so - your residence proceedings will be suspended.

Please avoid losing or damaging your biometric residency permit – the fee for issuing a new permit is high.

It is necessary that you read more about this at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “Biometrics”.

## HOW SHOULD I REPORT CHANGES?

During your stay in the Czech Republic, you are required to report any changes to your last name, marital status and the information in your travel document or residency card within 3 working days.

You must also report any change of your Czech address within 30 days. You are strongly advised to report this change in due time because the authorities may send you an important letter. The letter is considered delivered 10 days after its delivery to the post office, even if you do not pick it up.

Changes can be reported in person or in writing (via registered mail) at your office of the Ministry of the Interior. Find out in advance if a particular change must be reported in person or if it can be done in writing. Either way, you must respect the deadline for reporting the change and bring or send an original or authenticated copy of a document confirming the change.

If a particular change requires the issuing of a new residency card, you will be asked to pay a fee.

You can find more information about this at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “Reporting changes”.

## HOW CAN I EXTEND MY STAY?

If you have resided in the Czech Republic on a long-term visa and decide to extend your stay, you may file an application for a long-term residency permit 90 days at the earliest and 14 days at the latest before the expiry of your visa. You must keep the original purpose of your stay and meet all the requirements for the application.

If the total duration of your current and follow-up stay does not exceed 6 months, you can file an application to extend your visa. Again, you must meet all the application requirements, including the necessity to keep the original purpose of your stay.

If you have resided in the Czech Republic on a long-term residency permit and decide to extend your stay, you may file an application for its extension 90 days at the earliest and 14 days at the latest before the expiry of your current permit. As in the case of the previous applications, all application requirements must be met.

If you do not file the above applications in the prescribed period, your stay in the Czech Republic may be terminated.

## TRAVELING TO OTHER SCHENGEN AND EU STATES

The Schengen Area is a joint territory of countries that do not carry out border checks on people crossing their common borders. The lifting of border checks is compensated for by enhanced cooperation and joint rules for the protection of external borders, police and judicial cooperation, the protection of personal data, the issuing of visas and data sharing within the Schengen information system. The Schengen member states share information with each other. If a foreigner breaks the law in one member state and their name has been entered in the Schengen Information System, they may be prevented from entering any other member state and their stay in other member states may be terminated.

The Schengen Area is composed of Austria, Belgium, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Other EU or EEA member states, that is Bulgaria, Ireland, Cyprus, Lichtenstein, Romania and Great Britain, are not members of the **Schengen area**.



A third-country national may travel across the EU/Schengen with a valid passport. A residency card issued by the Czech Republic or another member state cannot be considered a travel document for travelling within the EU.

If you hold a valid long-term visa or a long-term residency permit, you can travel to other Schengen countries and stay in their territories, but you have to follow certain rules. As regards EU member states that are not members of the Schengen Area, please contact the embassies of these countries to inquire about travel possibilities. You may need a visa to enter these countries (even for the airport transit area). The list of embassies is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz).

You can find more information about this at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “Travelling in the EU/Schengen”.

## I WOULD LIKE MY FAMILY TO JOIN ME

### SHORT-TERM VISIT

In order to visit you for a short time, your family members can apply for a *Schengen visa* (for up to 90 days) at a Czech embassy. You, the inviting person, must fill out the invitation form, which is available at an office of the Foreign Police, where it also will be verified.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your family members’ applications. All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- Filled out and verified invitation form
- Documents allowing the assessment of their intention to leave the Czech Republic/Schengen before their visa expires (such as a booked travel ticket, proof of sufficient financial resources, proof of employment, proof of the ownership of real estate, proof of family or work relations, etc.)
- Confirmation of valid medical insurance in the Czech Republic

### LONG-TERM VISA FOR “FAMILY” PURPOSES

If you are a holder of a long-term visa or the conditions for applying for a long-term residency permit for the purpose of family reunification are not met (see below), your family members may apply for a long-term visa for “family” purposes. You are strongly advised to consider whether you will have sufficient financial resources to support your family. This application may take up to 120 days to process.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your family members’ applications. All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- Birth or marriage certificate proving family relations
- Confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of sufficient financial resources to which they have access in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of valid medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from their home country
- Medical report from their home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)

**It is necessary** that you read more about the different requirements of your family members’ applications at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “Visa for a stay of up to 90 days” and “Visa for a stay over 90 days”. You are advised to carefully consider whether you have sufficient financial resources to support your family.

### LONG-TERM RESIDENCY PERMIT FOR THE PURPOSE OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Your family members may also file an application for a long-term residency permit for the purpose of family reunification, provided you have resided in the Czech Republic for at least 15 months. Once again, you are advised to consider whether you have sufficient income to support them. The processing of this application may take up to 270 days.

Below is a list of some of the requirements of your family members’ applications. All documents must be in Czech, which means that foreign documents require an official translation:

- Birth or marriage certificate proving family relations
- Confirmation of the provision of accommodation in the Czech Republic
- Confirmation of regular income for you and your family
- Confirmation of valid medical insurance in the Czech Republic
- Statement of criminal records from their home country
- Medical report from their home country (upon request of the Czech embassy)

**It is necessary** that you read more about the different requirements of your family members’ applications at [www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) in the section “Third country nationals” – “long-term residency” – “Purpose of “family reunification”. You are advised to consider whether you have sufficient financial resources to support your family in the Czech Republic.

#### Do not forget that:

- Your family members may either apply for a long-term visa or a long-term residency permit (the latter only if you have lived in the Czech Republic for the past 15 months). A long-term visa is issued for up to 6 months while a long-term residency permit may be issued for up to 2 years.
- If your family members find a job after their arrival, they may work. However, in most cases, they will need a work permit.
- Before you decide to invite your family over to the Czech Republic, you must make sure that you have sufficient income to support them. You will be asked to prove your ability to support them when they will be submitting an application for a visa or a residency permit.
- You are obliged to enroll children aged 6–15 to school so that they can receive mandatory education. If you fail to do so, you may face sanctions.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL INSURANCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Everyone who resides in the Czech Republic must have valid health insurance. There are two types of health insurance in the Czech Republic: public and private.

**Public health insurance** is suitable mainly for the following categories of foreigners:

- All foreigners with a permanent residency permit
- Foreigners whose employer has their registered office or a permanent residency permit in the Czech Republic (the insurance premiums are paid by the employer regardless of the type of residency that the foreigner has – visa or long-term residency permit)
- EU citizens and their family members (if certain conditions are met)
- Other groups (such as asylum seekers)

**Private health insurance (also called travel medical insurance)**, which establishes a purely private legal relationship, is intended mainly for the following categories of foreigners (except for foreigners with a permanent residency permit):

- Self-employed persons and other entrepreneurs
- Economically inactive family members of employees, self-employed persons, other foreigners or even Czech citizens
- Students

The requirements for travel medical insurance for stays for up to 90 days (Schengen visas) are stipulated by an EU regulation called the Community Code on Visas.

If you apply for a long-term visa or a long-term residency permit at a Czech embassy abroad, you must have private health insurance covering necessary and urgent healthcare, including the costs associated with transport or, in the case of your death, repatriation. The amount of the insurance claim for one event must be at least EUR 60 000.

**The insurance policy must not exclude the coverage of injuries caused by willful action, fault or contributory fault on the part of the insured, including events caused by the consumption of alcohol and narcotic and psychotropic substances on the part of the insured.**

When you already are in the Czech Republic and you are applying for a long-term visa, a long-term residency permit or an extension of any of the two, you are obliged to take out private medical insurance that provides for comprehensive health care. This means that health care will be provided to the insured without them having to pay directly for treatment and that the aim of this healthcare is to maintain the health condition of the insured as it was before they took out the insurance. This insurance shall not exclude dispensary and preventive healthcare and healthcare related to the pregnancy of the insured mother and her child's birth. Private health insurance providing for comprehensive health care can only be arranged for with an insurance company authorized to provide this insurance in the Czech Republic.

A proof of private medical insurance is not required if you prove that the costs of health care will be covered on the basis of an international agreement or that it will be covered in another way, i.e. on the basis of a written undertaking by a legal person, a statutory body or on the basis of an undertaking in an invitation form verified by the Foreign Police.

If you are employed, your employer will also pay social insurance on your behalf. If you are an entrepreneur, you must pay social insurance on your own.

If you do not contribute to health and social insurance in accordance with Czech law, your visa or residency permit application may be turned down or your existing visa or permit may be revoked.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU BE WARY OF? WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### FREE HELP AND INFORMATION

- If in need, turn to Integration Centers or non-governmental organizations who are here to provide you with free legal and social counseling.

### INTERMEDIARIES

- Do not spend unnecessary money for arranging your departure from your home country and your stay in the Czech Republic. You can arrange most matters on your own! Find enough trustworthy information through a Czech embassy, the official immigration portal of the Ministry of the Interior or NGOs and integration centers in the Czech Republic. Do not automatically rely on information other than that from official websites.
- If you decide to use the services of an employment agency, make sure it has the proper license for operating as an employment agency in the Czech Republic. The list of accredited employment agencies is available on the website of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs: [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr\\_prace](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr_prace).

### PERSONAL AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Always keep your personal documents (passport) with you and make authenticated copies of important documents. It is recommended that you bring with you documents related to your education, the education of your children (if they are traveling with you), your vaccination records and other important documents.
- Take good care of your Czech biometric residency card, because its loss or damage incurs a high fee for the issuing of a new card.

### POWER OF ATTORNEY

- Do not sign a general power of attorney for representation in matters that you can or must arrange yourself (such as the signing of contracts, receiving mail, etc.). The power of attorney is used for a precisely defined scope of representation of a particular person or for a particular date. Take good care of all your documents and always conclude work-related agreements in writing so that you can claim your rights if necessary.

## WORK CONDITIONS

- Your employment contract and job description must be concluded in writing before your arrival to the Czech Republic. If, after your arrival in the Czech Republic, you are forced to perform different work than previously agreed and you are doing this against your will, your employer may be breaking the law and therefore committing a crime (fraud). In the worst case, this may also be qualified as human trafficking for forced labor. Both men and women may find themselves in this situation. You can identify it by demeaning treatment, poor working conditions (overtime, unsanitary conditions, unsafe or health-threatening work), fictitious debt repayment or sexual or psychological exploitation. If you experience anything like this, immediately contact a specialized NGO or the Police who will help you defend yourself. Your testimony will help punish the offender and protect other foreigners like you from similar exploitation.

## DEBTS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING DEBT-FREE

- Be wary of borrowing money so that you are not trapped by debts and a possible execution (i.e. the seizure of property) that could cause you problems and consequently make you an illegal immigrant. Fines and penalties may be imposed for seemingly trivial matters, such as riding on public transportation without a valid ticket or not paying television and radio fees and installments on consumer loans and not paying for waste collection, health and social insurance, etc.
- The Czech Republic has a Registry of Debtors. It is necessary to prove you are debt-free when doing business in the Czech Republic or when arranging your residency issues.

## ABIDING LAW

- Not respecting your immigration and employment responsibilities and breaking laws in general may lead to your expulsion from the Czech Republic and to having your name entered in the Schengen Information System (SIS). This would mean that you would be denied entry to all Schengen states.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

- Report any change of your Czech address to an office of the Ministry of the Interior within the legally stipulated timeframe. The authorities may send you registered mail with very important information. This mail is considered delivered 10 days from its delivery to the post office, even if you do not pick it up. It is necessary to label your mailbox as well as your bell with your name so that the mail carrier can reach you.

## SAVINGS FOR CRISIS SITUATIONS

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

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### BEFORE SETTING OFF FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC

#### Czech embassies, Schengen visas:

- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic** – Department for Consular Conceptions and Methodology  
[www.mzv.cz](http://www.mzv.cz), e-mail: [kkm@mzv.cz](mailto:kkm@mzv.cz)

### AFTER ARRIVING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

#### All residency-related issues, extensions of residency permits, reporting changes:

- **Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic** - Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (OAMP)  
[www.immigrationportal.cz](http://www.immigrationportal.cz) – contacts of regional offices of the Ministry of the Interior  
Address your inquiries to:  
Ministry of the Interior info line in Czech and English: phone: (+420) 974 832 421, (+420) 974 832 418  
E-mail: [pobyty@mvcv.cz](mailto:pobyty@mvcv.cz)

#### Residency checks, Invitation form, reporting arrivals:

- **Police of the Czech Republic - Foreign Police Service**  
[www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyty-cizincu.aspx](http://www.policie.cz/clanek/informace-pro-pobyty-cizincu.aspx)

#### Work in the Czech Republic, information, employment agencies, vacancies for foreigners:

- **Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs**  
Foreign employment in the Czech Republic: [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr\\_zam](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zahr_zam)  
Employment agencies: [http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr\\_prace](http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/zamest/zpr_prace)  
Labor offices: <http://portal.mpsv.cz/upcr>  
Labor Inspection Offices: [www.suip.cz/](http://www.suip.cz/)

#### Free information and counseling:

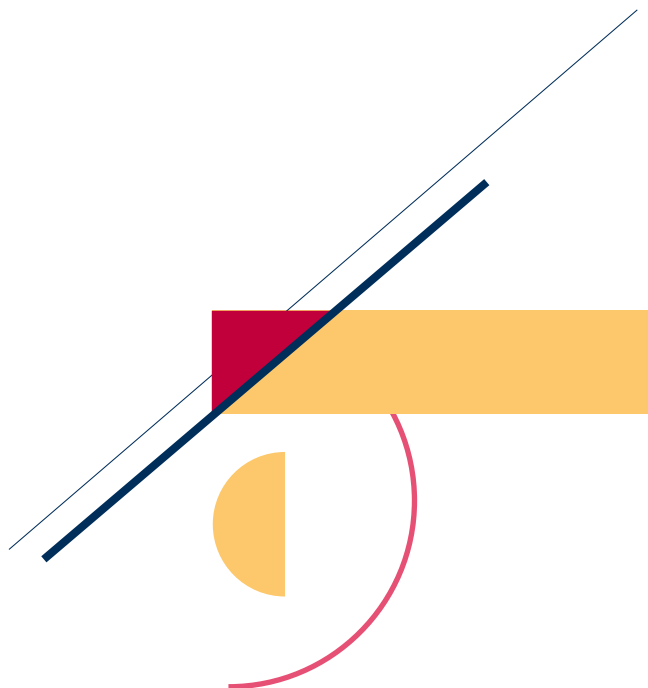
- **Integration Centers - [www.integracnicentra.cz](http://www.integracnicentra.cz)**  
Integration Centers are located in most regions of the country. They will assist you for free with choosing the right office to go to with your issue. They also provide Czech language courses, counseling, interpretation and many other services. Integration Centers always provide free access to the Internet – the staff will help you learn how to use it if you need it.
- **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)** - The website [www.cizinci.cz](http://www.cizinci.cz) lists all the contacts in the Directory section. NGOs offer free legal and social counseling, Czech language courses, interpretation and translation services and assistance or accompaniment for dealing with authorities, going to a doctor or dealing with schools. You can call any NGO for advice and assistance, even if it is outside your area of residency. There are also non-profit non-governmental organizations in various regions that you can visit personally and get advice.

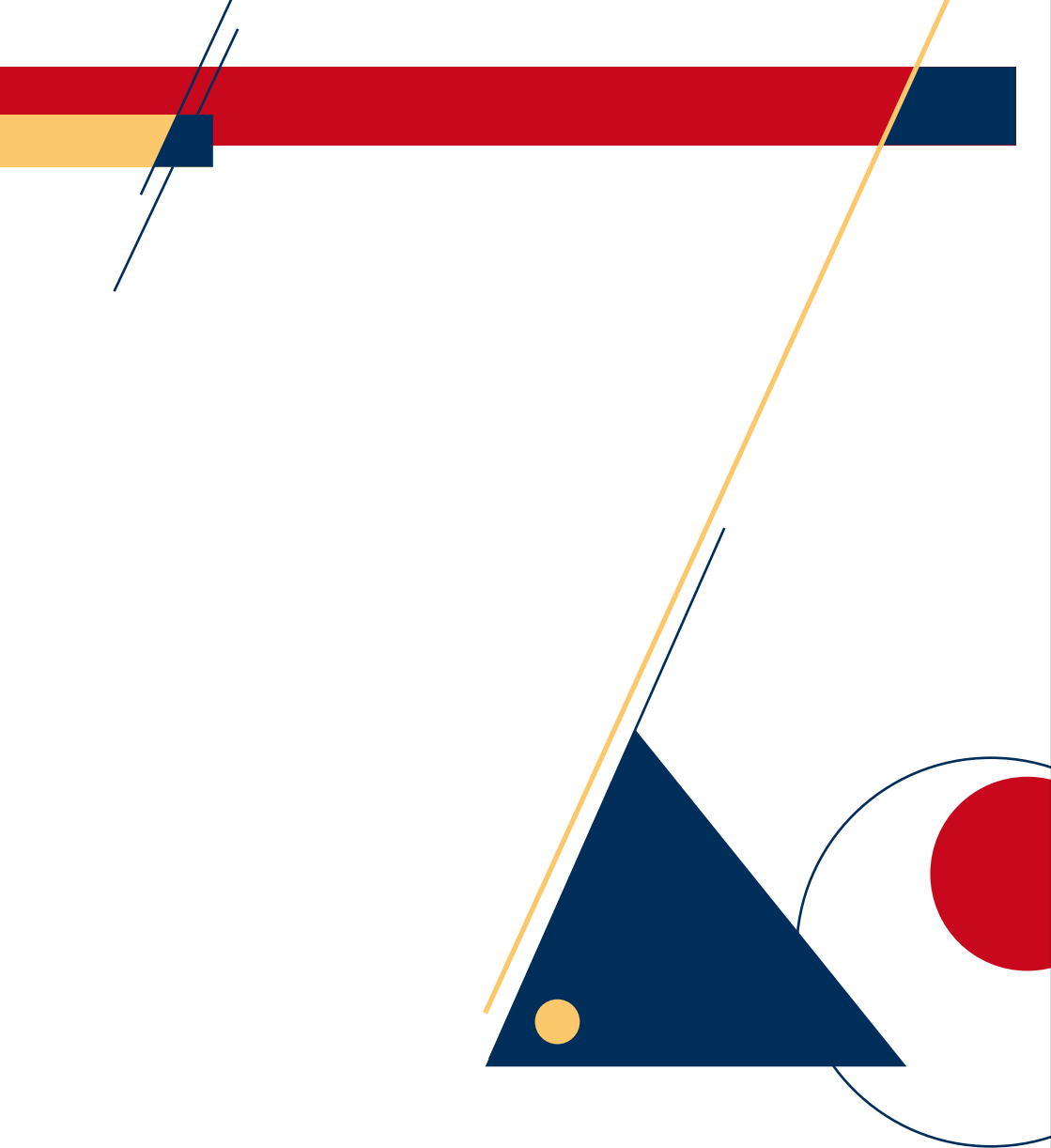
**The following is only a selection of these organizations:**

- **Organization for Aid to Refugees – OPU** – legal and social counseling  
www.opu.cz, phone: (+420) 284 683 714, e-mail: opu@opu.cz
- **Integration Counseling Centre – PPI** – legal and social counseling  
www.p-p-i.cz, phone: (+420) 224 213 426, e-mail: praha@p-p-i.cz
- **International Organization for Migration – IOM** – counseling, work migration, voluntary returns  
www.iom.cz, phone: (+420) 233 37 01 60, e-mail: prague@iom.int
- **Support Centers for the Integration of Foreigners – CIC** – legal and social counseling  
www.cicpraha.org, phone: (+420) 222 360 452, (+420) 222 362 142, e-mail: info@cicpraha.org
- **Association for Integration and Migration – SIMI** - legal and social counseling  
www.migrace.com, phone: (+420) 224 224 379, e-mail: poradna@refug.cz
- **InBáze Berkat** – legal and social counseling  
www.inbaze.cz, phone: (+420) 224 941 415, e-mail: info@inbaze.cz
- **Caritas Czech Republic** – assistance to foreigners in need  
www.charita.cz (Mongolian and Vietnamese: www.charita.cz/infolinka ).  
Caritas Czech Republic has a network of branches all across the country.
- **Caritas of the Archdiocese of Prague – Migration Centre**  
legal and social counseling, short-term shelter in crisis situations, assistance to victims of human trafficking  
www.praha.charita.cz, phone: (+420) 605 26 84 44.
- **META** – Education guidance for young people and adults, validation of diplomas  
www.meta-os.cz, phone: (+420) 222 521 446, e-mail: info@meta-os.cz
- **La Strada Czech Republic** – assistance to victims of exploitation and trafficking in human beings  
www.strada.cz, SOS helpline: (+420) 222 717171, Info line: (+420) 800 077 777

**EU Immigration Portal:**

- <http://ec.europa.eu/immigration>





MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY

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