**1. Everyday life information about Czech Republic**

**How do we greet people?**

One of the things you´ll immediately notice in the Czech Republic is that people say hello and goodbye to complete strangers in various situations, and if you come from an English-speaking country this can take a little getting used to.

For example, if you enter or leave a shop you should say Dobrý den/Dobrý večer (Hello/Good Evening) or Na shledanou (Goodbye) respectively. Obviously in larger shops such as hypermarkets you don´t need to greet people as you enter, but you should certainly acknowledge the person at the counter. And if you´re sharing a table with strangers in a restaurant or pub it´s common courtesy to greet the people sitting there. The same goes for lifts, and also compartments in trains. And in some ordinary trains, which usually don´t have compartments, you´ll notice people saying goodbye to each other if they´ve had some form of contact, whether it be a brief conversation or if one person has helped another in some way, e.g. with a suitcase.

**What's a polite behaviour when invited at someone's place?**

You should take off your outdoor shoes when entering a Czech flat or house. Your host may tell you it´s okay, not to worry, but it´s normal practice to change your footwear. Even if you´re told to keep your shoes on you should at least go through the motions of taking them off – it shows good manners.

A suitable gift could be some chocolates or other food item, or a bottle of wine. Flowers, especially roses, might be a bit a less safe option given their romantic connotations. If however you think it´s acceptable to bring flowers, avoid buying an even number of stems or chrysanthemums – traditionally they are put on graves.

If you have guests, it´s considered polite to open their gift straight way.

**How to behave at the restaurant concerning tips and bills?**

If no service charge is included, it is good etiquette to tip the waiter or waitress 10% to 15%. Remember to keep extra cash separate for tips and give your money directly to the waiter or waitress. You should inform them how much you wish to pay including the tip.

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**Small talk in Czechia:**

Certain topics are just universal. Hobbies are always a good thing to talk about. Outdoor activities are popular here. Pets, especially dogs, are another favorite topic. Football and ice hockey may depend on how the national team is performing at any given time.

Asking “How are you?” will often result in a truthful answer rather than the perfunctory “I’m fine”.

**What about parents/children relationship?**

Whereas the generation of today's 30- and 40-year olds experienced physical punishments quite often in their childhood, today these kinds of punishments are much less common. Even so Czech parents still remain rather stricter then their counterparts in most western countries.  Democracy and freedom have affected all aspects of social life. Consequently, people are becoming more laid back; the young generation especially tends to be much more self-confident in comparison to what their parents used to be like at their age.

**Where to buy meds?**

We can buy medication from a chemist’s.

**2. Legal issues in Czech Republic**

**What about human Rights?**

The law provides for freedom of expression, including for the press, and the government generally respected this right. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to promote freedom of expression, including for the press. The law provides for some limitations to this freedom, including in cases of hate speech, Holocaust denial, and denial of communist-era crimes.

**What about minorities' Rights (gay, handicapped etc.)?**

The [Czech Republic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czech_Republic) is one of the most liberal [Central European](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Europe) countries with regard to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) rights. In 2006, it legalized [registered partnerships](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recognition_of_same-sex_unions_in_the_Czech_Republic) ([Czech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czech_language): registrované partnerství) for same-sex couples and a law legalizing same-sex marriage is being considered by the [Parliament](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_of_the_Czech_Republic) as of 2019.

Czech law bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Czech Republic is regarded as one of the most tolerant [Central European](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Europe) and former [Eastern Bloc](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Bloc) nations with regard to homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Opinion polls have found increasing levels of support for same-sex marriage. A 2013 [Pew Research Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) poll showed that 80% of Czechs thought homosexuality should be accepted by society, one of the highest among the 39 countries surveyed. The capital city of [Prague](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prague) is famous internationally for its LGBT nightlife and openness.

**What about State and Religion?**

Czech Republic is a very atheist country, only 4% of people are religious, mostly Roman Catholics and Protestants.

**What about the Right to smoke?**

Laws restricting smoking are in effect in the Czech Republic. Smoking is prohibited in public areas (public transport platforms – bus and tram stops, train stations; on public transport; in cultural facilities; in healthcare facilities). On May 31, 2017, a new law comes into effect which prohibits smoking in all dining establishments.

Tobacco products may not be sold to persons under the age of 18.

**How to become estate owner?**

The following can buy real estate without any restriction:

* Legal entities headquartered in the Czech Republic
* Foreigners with a permanent residence permit for the Czech Republic
* People granted asylum in the Czech Republic

Though after long and intense parliamentary discussions, it was decided that citizens of the EU without Czech residence permit would be restricted from buying property for a 7 years transition period, i.e., until 2009, in practice things have become much less restrictive.

**How to obtain Czech citizenship?**

Citizenship law is quite complicated. As a rule of thumb, you need to have at least one parent who is a Czech citizen or who holds a Residency Permit to become a Czech citizen yourself.

If this is not the case, you may apply for naturalisation, under the following conditions. You must

* have held a Residency Permit for at least five years and have spent most of that time in the Czech Republic
* prove that you are going to give up your current citizenship
* prove that you are proficient in the Czech language (this is done by an interview at the local application office)
* provide a criminal history record stating that there has not been a sentence for any criminal act within the last five years

The application has to be filed at a local office of the Ministry of the Interior.

**How to have free healthcare?**

In particular, EU citizens have access to free medical care in the Czech Republic through their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Expats in the Czech Republic without an EHIC, who do not have permanent residency and are not employed by a Czech company are not entitled to free medical care. They can buy a medical insurance in commercial insurance companies.

**How to integrate children to the school system?**

Each child can go to school according to the place of residency. Foreigners with non-Czech-speaking kids in Czech schools are entitled to free language help. For more information visit [Prague for All](https://metropolevsech.eu/en/sluzby-pro-migranty/kurzy-ceskeho-jazyka/) or the [Association for Opportunities for Young Migrants.](https://www.meta-ops.cz/en/)

**How to obtain a driving licence?**

You can get a Czech driving licence by showing yours at the driving licence office (Na Pankráci 1685/17, 140 00 Prague 4), being aware that requirements change depending on where the driving licence was issued.

If you’re an EU-citizen (or Norwegian, Swiss, Icelander, Liechtensteiner), you have to change your driving licence for a Czech driving one if you’re planning to stay in the Czech Republic for more than 6 months (185 days). To prove it, you can provide a lease agreement or work contract.

**3. Daily life useful information in Czechia**

**What are the Czech emergency numbers?**

112 – European Emergency Number

(Police, Fire Service, Emergency Medical Service)

158 – Police

156 – Municipal Police

150 – Fire and Rescue Service

155 – Emergency Medical Service

**Public transport in Czechia:**

 Transportation around the Czech Republic is centralized in its major cities, with local buses and trains extending into the rest of the regions. When traveling to large cities, trains are preferable. Otherwise, if your clients do not wish to rent a [**car**](http://www.czechtourism.com/a/transport/), they will need to use one of the many bus companies operating within the country. Three of the largest public transportation operators are as follows:

* **České Dráhy** [**(Czech Railways)**](https://www.cd.cz/en/): The dominant railway company in the Czech Republic. Tickets can be purchased at the station or online ahead of time.

* **Student Agency** [**and Regiojet**](https://www.studentagency.eu/en/): Since 1993, the Student Agency company has operated high quality train and bus services within the Czech Republic and beyond to nearby cities and countries. Rides typically include a personal movie options, beverages, and reading materials. Tickets can be purchased at the station or online ahead of time.

* **Leo Express**: For additional transportation within the Czech Republic and surrounding countries, Leo Express is another privately owned Czech company that is driven by its mission to make traveling enjoyable. Tickets can be purchased at available ticket offices located in stations and online ahead of time.

* **Eurolines**:A cooperation of bus lines across the European continent. Available departure stations in the Czech Republic include Prague, Brno, Ústí nad Labem, Plzeň and Hradec Králove. Tickets can be purchased at the station or online ahead of time.

More info: <https://www.czechtourism.com/p/us-guide-to-czech-public-transportation/>

**How to find a job?**

A prospective foreign employee has to apply for a work permit at the Labor Office before moving to the Czech Republic. A work permit can only be issued for the exact job and employer specified in the application. It is non-transferrable and only valid for two years, after which a new application must be submitted

**Where to find meeting points for foreigners?**

You can go to the Foreigners´centre and they will give you useful information: cizincijmk@jmk.cz

**Typical Czech food**

There is a vast variety of meat the Czechs prepare, from pork, beef and chicken to goose, duck, rabbit, wild game, lamb, or turkey. As Czech Republic does not have access to sea, eating fish or seafood is not that usual. There are, however, plenty of lakes, streams and artificial lakes or fishfarms where Czechs get fish from. In summer time, mackerel is very popular to grill over open fire.

The dishes are generally accompanied with potatoes, rice, pasta, bread, or dumplings. Different delicious cream sauces are Czech speciality.

**What about insurance?**

**Czech Health Insurance for foreigners**

* **Medical insurance** for foreigners is a prerequisite for obtaining a Czech visa.
* In case you need for Long –term visa for your business in Czech Republic you need to have a full set of documents which must also include Czech comprehensive medical insurance with a full coverage of 1 500 000 crones or 60 000 EUR.

**Where to learn the Czech language?**

You can learn Czech in many language schools and foreigner help centres, e.g. in Brno at cizincijmk@jmk.cz

There are a lot of language schools in the Czech Republic, most of them in Prague. They usually offer crash courses of one to four weeks with around six to eight hours of classes a day. Their teachers are usually specially trained language teachers and almost all native Czech. You will get a good grasp of the language in a very short time. This enables you to handle every day situations in the Czech Republic. However, these courses are a very pricey way of learning the language.