



Institute of Molecular Genetics AS CR, v. v. i.

www.img.cas.cz

INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Welcome to the Institute of Molecular Genetics! This booklet was created to help you with your first steps on our territory even before you get there. In the following chapters, we will try to get you acquainted with our country and Institute and to cope with your problems before and during your stay with us.

Advisor for international employees:



name: Kateřina Sedláčková
phone: +420 241 063 134
e-mail: sedlack@img.cas.cz

Our Advisor, who is proficient in English, is here to help answer your questions, arrange matters relevant to your stay, and mediate contacts with people and institutions in our country.

Other useful contacts:

Office of the Director:

Leona Krausová, phone: +420 241 063 215
Gabriela Marešová, phone: +420 241 063 217
fax: +420 224 310 955
e-mail: office@img.cas.cz

Human Resources:

Jitka Emanuelová, phone: +420 241 063 253
e-mail: emanuelova@img.cas.cz

IMG Secretary:

Šárka Takáčová, phone: +420 241 063 227
e-mail: takac@img.cas.cz

Contents

Chapter 1. Who We Are	p. 3
Chapter 2. Immigration Documents	p. 7
Chapter 3. Getting Settled in Prague	p. 9
Chapter 4. Living in Prague	p. 11
Chapter 5. Family Issues	p. 16
Chapter 6. International Students	p. 18
Chapter 7. Relating with Czech People	p. 21
Chapter 8. Appendices, References	p. 22

Some illustrations of our Institute:



Terrace with dining hall and cafeteria

Kindergarten and gym



Entrance hall

Chapter 1: Who We Are

Director's Foreword

The Institute of Molecular Genetics (IMG) is one of 52 Institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (AS CR). At present, we have more than 350 employees (including part-time staff), of whom 93 are scientists, more than 100 technical university graduates, 90 technicians, and 126 doctoral and diploma students. We closely collaborate with three Prague Universities, where several of our group leaders act as teachers. We also interact with a number of other institutions in the Czech Republic and abroad.

In 2007, our Institute entered a new era of existence – we moved into our new, modern building on the Krč campus of Biomedical Institutes of AS CR. This was a fulfilment of our dream after many years and a substantial step to improving our working conditions.

We are a typical institution of basic research but many “by-products” of our research can be practically useful, and therefore we are also partially involved in applied research and collaborations with biotech companies.

Our major objective, however, is to produce important scientific results in relevant areas of molecular and cell biology and to publish them in prestigious international journals. I believe that after moving into the new building we have all prerequisites to soon become the best biology research institution in the Czech Republic.

During reorganization of the 20 groups conducting research at IMG, six new research groups, led by young scientists selected in an international competition, were established in 2007, and three more in 2008. I believe that these new group leaders with extensive international experience will be a great help in our efforts to notably improve our scientific productivity.

We definitely want to become an international Institute, attracting excellent scientists and students not only from the Czech Republic but also from other countries. To this aim, we implemented a number of improvements to our PhD programme. It goes without saying that our Institute seminars and conferences are held in English and that all scientists routinely communicate in this language.

Thus, we are happy that you are also willing to join us and help us achieve the demanding goals outlined above. I hope that you will enjoy working at IMG and that work and life at the Institute will be rewarding for you both scientifically and personally!

To get an idea of our research groups, projects, seminars, and other activities have a look at <http://www.img.cas.cz/main.php?lang=en&subject=1>.

Brief History of the Institute

The history of our Institute started in 1962, when the Department of Experimental Biology and Genetics of the Institute of Biology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, headed since 1953 by Milan Hašek, co-discoverer of immunological tolerance, was transformed into the Institute of Experimental Biology and Genetics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (IEBG). Milan Hašek became its first Director and he played a prominent role until his retirement in 1970.

The 1960s mark the most memorable chapter of the Institute - the "Czechoslovak Immunogenetic School" was born at that time, represented by such names as Milan Hašek, Pavol and Juraj Iványi, Jan Klein, Tomáš Hraba, Ivan Hilgert, Věra Hašková, Alena Lengerová, and others. It is generally known that Milan Hašek came close to the Nobel Prize (for the discovery of immunological tolerance, it was awarded to P. Medawar and M.

Burnet); Pavol Iványi contributed significantly to the experiments whose results later brought the Nobel Prize to Jean Dausset; Jan Klein, after emigration to the USA, in the 1970s became probably the most eminent immunogeneticist worldwide (co-discoverer of the fundamental immunological significance of MHC proteins). Great attention was also paid to the development of the worldwide priority research of retroviruses (Jan Svoboda).

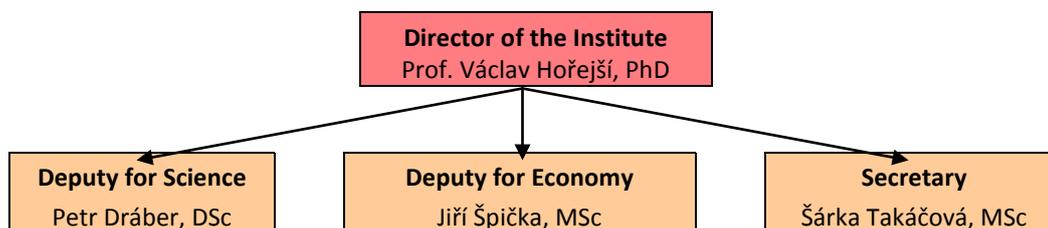
The end of the „Prague Spring“ after August 1968 marked the end to this famous era - many promising young scientists had emigrated (and were very successful at their new institutions abroad), Milan Hašek was removed from the post of Director of the Institute and contacts with other countries were drastically limited.

In 1977, IEBG was joined with several biochemical laboratories of the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry and renamed the Institute of Molecular Genetics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (IMG). The post of Director of IMG was conferred upon Josef Říman.

After 1989, the Institute continued the trend of enhancing the molecular biology approaches to the traditional as well as newly introduced topics. The Institute was first headed by Jan Svoboda (1991-1999) and then by Václav Pačes (1999-2005). After V. Pačes had been elected President of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, in 2005, Václav Hořejší became Director of the Institute.

Current Structure of the Institute

The Institute is headed by the Director, whose work is assisted by deputies and advisory bodies (IMG Council, special committees). Financial management of the Institute is supervised by the Supervisory Board.



The Institute comprises 23 research groups and three service laboratories, whose list and description is given in detail on our web page, together with the IMG Council, Supervisory Board, and other departments (see www.img.cas.cz). A former part of the Institute, the Biotechnology Division and its six laboratories, became a new, independent Academy Institute in January 2008 (Institute of Biotechnology AS CR, v. v. i.).

In 2008, a new transgenic facility became functional as part of one of the research groups. In May 2008, construction of a new conference hall for almost 300 people with adjacent dining hall was completed, and a nice park with a small pond was created in front of the main building. In November 2008 the lecture hall was officially named “Milan Hašek Auditorium” to honour the founder of the Institute. Construction of the last part of our research complex – kindergarten for 15 children with a sports centre including a squash court, and a new guest house – was completed at the end of 2010. All these newly built facilities now serve the entire research campus.

The Campus of the Biomedical Institutes

As mentioned above, the Institute is located in the Prague district called Krč, on a large campus comprised of several buildings and facilities of different Academy institutes. These institutes are:

- ✚ Institute of Microbiology AS CR, v. v. i.
- ✚ Institute of Physiology AS CR, v. v. i.
- ✚ Institute of Experimental Medicine AS CR, v. v. i.
- ✚ Institute of Biotechnology AS CR, v. v. i. (as mentioned above)
- ✚ Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics AS CR, v. v. i. (detached site)
- ✚ Institute of Experimental Botany AS CR, v. v. i. (detached site)
- ✚ Institute of Analytical Chemistry AS CR, v. v. i. (detached site)

The institutes share some of the facilities – the scientific library and information centre, the canteen, and the medical centre. Most animal facilities and service laboratories are used based on particular contracts between the institutes.

More about the campus can be found at <http://www.biomed.cas.cz>.

Practical issues

Once you become a member of a research team, you will be introduced to the way of life and work at the Institute by the others. Here is a list of the main practicalities:

The Institute is situated in a new four-storey building. The administration is located on the ground floor, as well as the small lecture room and part of service laboratories (the rest are located underground). Research laboratories are situated on the floors, divided in two halves by a central staircase. Each floor has a small seminar room and a kitchenette and also locker rooms and showers.

Also on the ground floor is a cafeteria. Face to face to the cafeteria, adjacent to the main building is the new conference centre with a dining hall where you can have a lunch, or you can choose to eat at the campus canteen located in the main building of the campus. As an employee you will be entitled to meal tickets with employer's financial contribution. These tickets can even be used in some restaurants and supermarkets.

Additionally, Academy employees are entitled to free language courses provided by the Language Department. Czech is taught at various levels and the main international languages follow the recognized international programmes such as the Cambridge certificates. Information about these courses can be obtained at the Office of the Director of our Institute. Here, you can also get information on the possibility to visit the gym and squash court and the possibility of getting accommodation on the campus.

Among other benefits are free tickets to a swimming pool at a sports centre located in the same part of Prague as the Institute and to some theatre performances – ask your colleagues about them and the way to get them.



Animal facility on the right



Milan Hašek Auditorium

New guest house

Chapter 2. Immigration documents

Basic Travel Documents

To enter the Czech Republic you need a valid passport and, depending on your country of residence, a visa. For long-term stays (exceeding 90 days) it is recommended to apply for a residence permit for the purposes of scientific research (green-coloured application form) due to faster and easier processing.

You also need valid health insurance until the starting date of your working contract – from that date the health insurance is arranged by our Institute through salary deductions.

More information can be obtained from the Czech consulate of your residence country together with information on other relevant documents concerning health and social security.

Visa Regulations

Applicants from non-EU countries (third countries) should submit, together with the application, a hosting agreement and a written commitment of the research organization. Applicants could also be asked to submit a medical certificate confirming that they do not suffer from any serious disease, together with an extract from the police records from the country of origin and also from all countries where they spent more than six months over the past three years.

Foreign Police Bureau

-  Within three days after your arrival you must register at the Bureau.
-  Our contact person will accompany you because of possible communication problems.

From May 2011, citizens of third countries will be issued with cards detailing their residency status and carrying biometric data. In connection with this, you should visit a dedicated Ministry of the Interior facility to provide this data (your facial image and fingerprints will be taken). Those already staying in the Czech Republic and applying for a residence permit will be invited by the Ministry of the Interior to present themselves at one of these facilities. When your card will be ready, you will be asked to collect it.

Existing resident cards will remain valid until their original expiry date or until the personal data listed therein changes, at which point they will be replaced by biometric cards.

Health Insurance Company

-  After signing a contract we automatically register you for your entire stay here.
-  In case you come with your family members, we will help you to arrange the insurance for them; our contact person will help you communicate with the company (more information on health insurance – see next chapter). We recommend these companies for your family members:

-  Maxima Pojišťovna a.s. (<http://www.maxima-as.cz/?language=en>)
-  VZP Pojišťovna (<http://www.vzp.cz/en/index.php>)
-  VICTORIA-VOLKSBANK pojišťovna (<http://www.victoria.cz/index.php?id=engldoktor00000201>)

Health insurance can be arranged with these companies on-line from the country of your stay. If you arrange health insurance with a foreign company, you will have to submit the attested translation of this contract together with its general conditions.

Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities

The legal system of the Czech Republic is being harmonized with the jurisdiction of the European Union. The rights and duties of employees and employers are defined by the Labour Code; the relationships in the business sphere are regulated by the Trade Code.

More details can be found at:

<http://www.mpsv.cz/en/>

Trips Outside the Czech Republic

There are no special regulations concerning short stays outside the Czech Republic. For long stays, however, there may be requirements connected with the application for permanent residence in CR. In case of need, our contact person will enquire about the particular details for you.

Income Tax, Social Security

Like in other countries, as an employee of our Institute your wages are subject to income tax and health and social security deductions. The deductions are done by our Economy Department and at the end of the fiscal year, the income tax record is done individually according to the particular person's country of residence and sources of income. At the end of your stay in our country you will receive the record of your social security deductions for retirement purposes.

More information about social security in the Czech Republic can be found at:

<http://www.en.domavcr.cz/advices-for-living-in-the-czech-republic/social-security>

Becoming a Permanent Resident

Czech citizenship is – as perceived by the law – the highest attainable level of a foreigner's integration in the Czech society. The following web pages explain what are the practical benefits of acquiring Czech citizenship by foreigners, in what cases do newly-born obtain Czech citizenship, what a foreigner can do to be granted Czech citizenship, how a person can lose Czech citizenship, and many other related issues.

<http://www.en.domavcr.cz/advices-for-living-in-the-czech-republic/residence-in-cr/permanent-residence-based-on-residence-permit>



Large official state sign



Small official state sign



Czech national flag

Chapter 3. Getting Settled in Prague

Housing and Housing Market

Before finding your own accommodation, we suggest booking for you an apartment for a short-term stay. The prices vary according to the number of persons and length of the stay between CZK 3000 – 9000 per month.

-  [Mazanka](#) - lodging house of the Academy situated in Prague 8 – should be reserved long enough in advance because of a limited capacity
 - rooms and apartments with their own WC and bathroom
 - also available for stays together with family members
 - another, similar lodging house is situated in Prague 6 ([Sedlec](#))

-  [IMG Guest House](#) - some rooms may be available directly on the Institute campus for a starting period, especially for students, but the reservation should also be done with sufficient advance

-  [Rent an Apartment](#) - if you prefer to rent a private apartment, we can help you communicate with a real estate agency

Many real estate agencies operate in Prague and it should not be difficult to find a comfortable apartment with all equipment. However, the prices of living are rather elevated and you should be prepared to pay about CZK 15,000 for a flat with a kitchen, living room and a bedroom (rent + services).

Internet Connection

In most flats and apartments, Internet connection is ensured through the “fixed” telephone line. However, other connection possibilities may be provided by a cable or wireless network, depending on the location.

Medical Care and Expenses

Health Insurance

-  Your health insurance will be arranged for you by our Institute.

-  If you come with your family members, they should do the following:
 - 1) Pass through a medical examination (paid by yourself)
Entrance examinations:

Men	CZK 2 566
Women, girls 15–18	CZK 2 759
Pregnant women	CZK 2 276
Children up to 15	CZK 2 043
Boys 15–18	CZK 2 276

(1 EUR = approx. 27 CZK)

For more information have a look at: <http://www.fnmotol.cz/foreigners-department/html/foreigners-department.php?menu=1>

- 2) Register in a health insurance office

3) Pay the fee for all stay in CR

Prices:		CZK per month
a.	Children under 18 years	1240
b.	Adults	
	30 – 32 years	1850
	33 – 35 years	1975
	36 – 38 years	2105
	39 – 41 years	2295
	etc.	

Medical Care

Medical care in our country is of standard quality. Specialized medical departments may be found in most large cities. We will help you orient yourself in the system and provide necessary contacts. We will

- ✚ help you contact the nearest physician and dentist (both are available on the Institute campus)
- ✚ in case of need find contact to a specialist

Management of Money, Banking Services

The network of banks is rather dense in Prague, including ATM counters, which can be found in most shopping centres and metro stations. Internationally recognized credit cards are accepted in most banks and shops. You should not have problems when dealing with banks and financial institutions because they are used to communicating with foreign tourists. Some international banks have their affiliations in the Czech Republic. However, if you wish we can inform you about financial institutions and accompany you there to avoid communication problems.

For more information look at:

<http://www.gemoney.cz/ge/cz/1/nase-spolecnosti/about-us>

<http://www.csob.cz/bankcz/en/>

<http://www.rb.cz/en/>

Identification Documents

To prove their identity, Czech citizens use identification cards. As a foreigner you should carry your passport, but it is advisable to carry only its photocopy or a photocopy of the identification and visa pages (or another identification document such as a driver's license), except for official negotiations.

At the Institute, you will be provided with an entrance card enclosing an identification card carrying your photo. This may be used to complement your passport photocopy.

Chapter 4. Living in Prague

The capital of Prague is enclosed in the Vltava river valley surrounded by small hills. The historic centre contains many old buildings, dominated by the Prague Castle towering over the oldest part of the city and the well-known Charles Bridge. The “real centre”, Wenceslaus square, is a meeting point for people visiting shops, cinemas, theatres, and restaurants. The plateau around Prague is now being populated by rapidly growing satellite sites based on former villages.

The population of central Prague is about one million people; about another million live in the surrounding area.

Our Institute is situated in the south-eastern part of the city in the district called Prague 4 – Krč. Although there is no direct connection from the airport, located on the opposite side of the city, it can be reached by combination of public transport – buses and metro (see below). Train and bus stations are located closer to the centre, so the way to our Institute is easier.

Safety and Security

Moving in Prague is relatively safe; just beware of pickpockets especially in public transport or shopping centres. It is not recommended to leave your possessions without guard and to walk through isolated places at night – although there is no danger in most cases, extremist attacks (especially by groups of skinheads) may sometimes be encountered. Some places in the centre are patrolled by the City Police (black uniforms, silver cars with blue pattern); the State Police is usually guarding in white cars with a green belt. In case of emergency, you can call the numbers below:

City Police	156
State Police	158
Ambulance	155
Fire Brigade	150

These emergency numbers, however, are serviced in Czech and the only emergency service in English can be reached at the integrated emergency system phone number 112 (operating in most EU countries).

Some police stations are also joined to the stations of metro and trains.

Transport in Prague, Cars, Bicycles

Due to a rather compact historic centre, Prague is a city with dense transport and a tendency to rush-hour congestions. Parking in the centre is especially difficult if not impossible in some places. Cars are therefore advised to be used outside the centre and rush hours; for the rest, we recommend public transport, which is quite cheap and relatively comfortable. Compared with public transport, taxis are quite expensive and sometimes have a tendency to be overpriced – when using them, it is advisable to ask the fare before starting the journey.

For those who are used to bicycles, the sad news is that Prague is not very bicyclist-friendly. First, the terrain is not flat and the streets are very crowded with cars. However, some bicycle paths exist in the city and some new ones have been introduced recently. It all very much depends on where you live – as there are many parks in Prague, it may be possible for you to commute on the bike. Transport of bikes is permitted in the metro only; in trams and buses it is prohibited.

On the other hand, our country is great for bicycle trips. There is a network of cycling paths and transport of bikes is facilitated in some trains, especially during the season.

Public Transport

Public transport in Prague is based on buses, trams and metro. The tickets are rather cheap and are of two basic kinds – transfer, used for connection of travel lines and means (valid for 75 min on normal days and 90 min on holidays and during the night, 20.00-5.00), and non-transfer, used only for one means of transport (valid for 20 min in buses and trams, and for five metro stations additionally to the entry station – transfer in metro lines is possible, but the journey must not exceed 30 min). The tickets can be purchased at some tram stations, in all metro stations (see machines below) and in some shops (namely tobacconist kiosks). They can also be bought from the driver, but then they are more expensive – non-transfer tickets for CZK 25 and 15, respectively. Ultimately, tickets can also be purchased with mobile phone by an SMS message, using body text ‘DPT’ addressed to phone No. 902 06.



Looking for transport connections in Prague:

<http://194.213.60.6/idos/connform.aspx?tt=pid&cl=E5>

Metro:

Line A – terminus “Dejvická” – terminus “Depo Hostivař” (West – Southeast connection)

Line B – terminus “Zličín” – terminus “Černý most” (West – Northeast connection)

Line C – terminus “Háje” – terminus “Letňany” (South – North connection)

Fares (from January 1st, 2008)

	Transfer ticket	Non-transfer ticket
Adults over 15 years	CZK 26	CZK 18
Children 6–15 years inclusive	CZK 13	CZK 9

Short-term tickets

24-hour ticket	CZK 100
3-day ticket (72 hours)	CZK 330
5-day ticket (120 hours)	CZK 500

Long-term tickets

Monthly, full-price	CZK 550
Quarterly, full-price	CZK 1480
Annual, full-price	CZK 4750

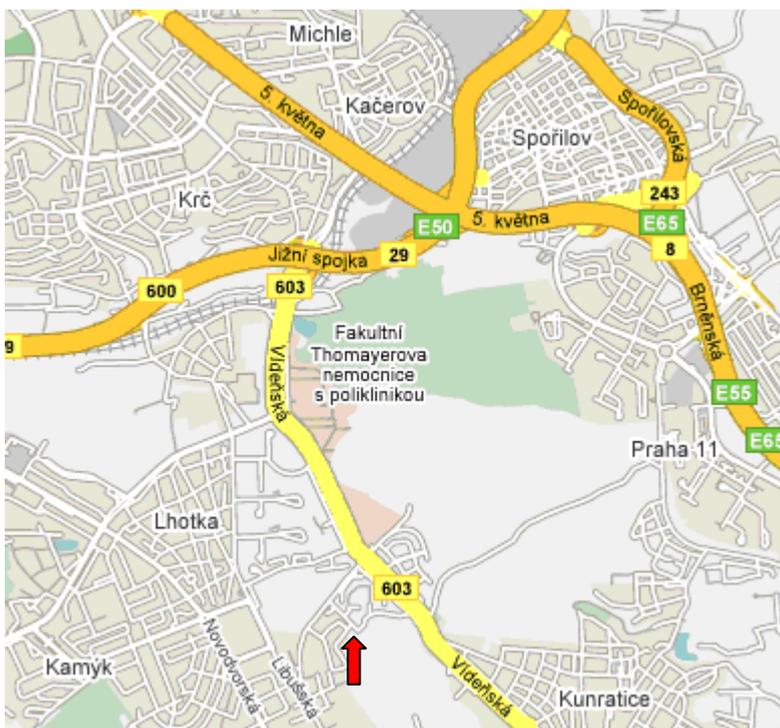
Prices of tickets are reduced for children 6–15 years of age, students, and seniors.

More details about public transport in Prague can be found at: <http://www.dpp.cz/en>

How to Get to Our Institute

✚ **By bus:** line 193 from metro station ‘Budějovická’ (line C) to the terminus ‘Institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic’

✚ **By car:** follow the map below



Religion

Czech Republic is considered as being mostly a secular country. According to the 2001 census, 59% of the country is agnostic, atheist, non-believer or no-organized believer, 26.8% Roman Catholic and 2.5% Protestant. According to the recent Euro barometer Poll 2005, 19% of Czech citizens responded that "they believe there is a god", whereas 50% answered that "they believe there is some sort of spirit or life force" and 30% that "they do not believe there is any sort of spirit, god, or life force", the lowest rate of EU countries after Estonia with 16%.

However, many kinds of congregations can be found, especially in Prague. The Catholic Church is rather important in Moravia, mainly in the country. Almost every Czech town and village boasts a historic church building and in some of them there are regular services.

Weather

The weather in our country is of a mild continental type. The seasons alternate quite regularly, lasting almost the same time and copying the solar calendar – the winter officially starting on 21st December. the spring on 21st March, the summer on 21st June and the fall on 23rd September. However, there may be deviations and the real season may start earlier or later.

The usual temperatures range between 35°C in summer and -20°C in winter, but these are extremes. For the individual seasons, the averages are about 20-25°C in summer and 0°C in winter. with 10-15°C for the spring and fall. These temperatures are valid for Prague; for the rest of the country they mostly depend on the altitude – the weather in the mountains may be much colder.

Precipitation is mostly average; spring and fall are considered to be wetter seasons. Heavier snow can be expected mostly in the mountains; in Prague it sometimes falls, but its quantities usually don't exceed 10 cm below surface and it doesn't last. Below is a table with official average (24-hour) temperatures in Prague:

	°C	°F
January	-1.7	28.9
February	-0.9	30.4
March	3.8	38.8
April	8.5	47.3
May	13.5	56.3
June	16.7	62.1
July	18.3	64.9
August	17.8	64.1
September	14.0	57.2
October	9.3	48.7
November	3.7	38.6
December	0.1	32.2

Shopping

The city is well provided with shops, especially large shopping centres all around Prague. They are easy to be found as they are mostly located close to the metro stations. This also means that you don't need a car to reach them, although they all have their own parking lots. Among them, there are well-known international supermarkets such as Tesco, Billa and Ikea. In general, shop assistants speak English poorly or not at all, but all goods are visibly marked by prices.

To have an idea how Czech shopping centres look like, have a look at two examples at:

<http://www.novysmichov.eu/en/>

<http://www.centrumchodov.cz/cz/indexen.php>

Hairdressers are situated mostly in shopping centres; men can come directly but ladies should make an appointment.

Culture

The cultural life in the Czech Republic is really very rich in opportunities: concerts, theatres, museums, cinemas, night clubs, etc. Prague also has a large ZOO with some precious species (e.g. gorillas) and two botanical gardens.

Concerts

If you are interested in classical music, we recommend you to visit:

<http://www.ceskafilharmonie.cz/en/index.php>

If you prefer different kinds of music, have a look at:

<http://www.ticketpro.cz/?@en/index>

On these sites, you can find theatre programmes, sport events, social events, activities for children, and much more.

Theatres

Some tips about what is good to see are at:

<http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz/Default.aspx?jz=en>

<http://www.opera.cz/en/?PHPSESSID=eb0a2dddc1c54f287f70a655cd5b7af4>

Museums

Famous museums in the centre of the city:

<http://www.nm.cz/english/>

<http://www.ntm.cz/en>

<http://www.jewishmuseum.cz/>

A number of art galleries are available as well, depending on your interest.

Cinemas

They are mostly located in shopping centres, so you just can come, have a look at the programme, buy a ticket and then enjoy the film.

Possible Culture Differences

Social Issues

Czech society resembles most other Western Europe societies, although there are some specificities. Priority should be given to older people over the young and to women over men. Women are considered to have the same rights and duties as men and it is not seen as improper for a woman to walk and visit public places alone.

The age of majority is reached at 18 years and partial legal responsibility at 15. Young people are rather independent, although they usually stay with their parents longer than in other Western countries, some even after finishing their studies. Recently, less emphasis is laid on marriage and it has become quite common for young couples to live together without being officially bound.

Visits, Social Events

Similarly as in other countries, when invited to someone's home you are expected to bring a small present, such as flowers for the lady of the house or a bottle of good wine. Unless explicitly mentioned, formal dress is not needed; this is, in contrast, expected during official visits, in large theatres and concert halls. You may be asked in some homes to take off your shoes and you will be offered slippers instead; this is mostly meant for your better comfort and is quite a usual habit in this country. You will probably be offered some refreshment and it is not considered impolite if you refuse something you don't like. Czech cuisine is rather typical; some consider it heavy because it has traditionally been based mostly on nourishing soups, meat and "dumplings", dough complements to roast meat in sauce. The traditional cuisine, however, is not done so much any more and you will meet it more often in restaurants and canteens. Czech people have recently adopted healthier eating habits and introduced more vegetables, fruit, poultry and fish into their meals. There are also many international restaurants to be found throughout the country (McDonald's, KFC, pizzerias, and many more).

If you have any questions or problems, don't hesitate to contact our contact person.



Concert hall Rudolfinum



National Theatre

represent unique historic monuments, while



shopping centres in Prague are the same as everywhere

Chapter 5. Family Issues

Introduction

If you intend to come with your family, we will help you integrate your children into the Czech schooling system. We have many public and private schools, so you have a number of options. Housekeeping services can be provided as well.

Housekeeping

Housekeeping possibilities can be found at <http://www.agharmonie.cz/index.php?lang=en&contentH>.

Day-Care System

Nursery

- for babies between 6 months and 3 years
- skilled employees able to care about your babies

Kindergarten

- for children of 3–6 years (see e.g. <http://www.mstrojlistek.cz/bezova/>)
- pre-school education, where the child's communication skills are developed and at the same time children are prepared to move to the higher level of the schooling system

Babysitting

If you prefer having your child at home, you can choose among many babysitting agencies. An example is at: <http://www.bibo.cz/babysitting-brno-prague/>

Schooling System

The Czech schooling system is divided into three basic levels. which sometimes overlap:

Primary school - for children over 6 years

- 9-year elementary education
(or 5-year elementary + 4-year 1st degree of grammar school)

Apprenticeship - for children over 15 years with manual skills and not willing to study further

- 2–4-year practical education

Secondary school

- for children over 15 years
- 4-year secondary education – general (grammar school) or specialized

University

- Bachelor's programmes (3 years)
- Master's programmes (another 2–3 years)

Each school level (except for the elementary school) is ended by a final examination and the next level requires successful passing of an entrance examination (this also includes the transition between the elementary education and the 1st degree of grammar school).

How to study in the Czech Republic and more about the educational system can be found at:
<http://portal.gov.cz/wps/portal/ s.155/699/ s.155/19105?clk=105543&top=1876&ks=1701>

Recreation

Our country provides many interesting possibilities to spend leisure time. In the summer, places offering swimming and water sports close to the lakes and rivers can be found with accommodation in small hotels or camps. In winter, our mountains offer alpine as well as cross-country skiing. Many of these options can be found at the web pages of one of the most traditional Czech travel agencies: <http://www.cedok.com>.

To experience something interesting in any season, have yourselves guided by the 'Kudy z nudy' ('Escape from boredom') website, a project of the Czech Tourist Authority – CzechTourism – <http://www.kudyznudy.cz/en/index.html>

Useful information about travelling in the Czech Republic can be found at:
<http://portal.gov.cz/wps/portal/ s.155/699/ s.155/19105?clk=105519&ks=1693>

In Prague itself, beside many cultural opportunities, you can choose among sports activities such as jogging or roller-skating in one of the large city parks, swimming in open and covered pools, or doing exercises in a fitness centre (aerobic, spinning, callanetics, and many others). Sports have traditionally been very popular in the Czech Republic, as documented by the activities of the Czech Sokol Organization, whose offer can be seen at <http://www.vitejte.cz/objekt.php?oid=219&j=en>.

Fitness <http://www.solariumbbc.cz/index.php>
http://www.factorypro.cz/index_praha.php



Our Institute's training and recreation centre in Southwest Bohemian mountain range – great for tourism and cross-country skiing

Chapter 6. International Students

Understanding the Academic System

Secondary education in the Czech Republic is of three main types and usually lasts four years. The three types are:

- ✚ general secondary school or grammar school
- ✚ specialized secondary school
- ✚ apprenticeship finished by school-leaving examination equivalent to secondary school certificate

To enter the University, students are required to present their school-leaving certificate and successfully pass the entrance examination.

After completing the University studies by passing the state examinations and defending their diploma, students can apply for entering the PhD programme (doctoral programme).

The basic requirements for applying for the PhD programme are a Master's degree or equivalent in a particular research area and an agreement between a prospective PhD student and his/her supervisor. Subsequently, prospective students undergo an interview with a university committee where they are expected to have a basic idea of a project/research area for their thesis. Other extra-curriculum activities such as participation in special courses or student competitions are also taken into account.

Student Services

Intramural students are entitled to some benefits. These include:

- ✚ reduced-price travel cards for city transport
- ✚ accommodation in student colleges
- ✚ reduced-price food at student canteens

They also have access to the library and other University facilities.

PhD International Programme

As the PhD degree is officially provided only by universities, our Institute does not have its own official PhD programme. Instead, the PhD studies at IMG are performed in collaboration with four faculties of the Charles University in Prague (Faculty of Science, 1st Faculty of Medicine, 2nd Faculty of Medicine, 3rd Faculty of Medicine – specializations molecular and cellular biology, genetics and virology; developmental biology; immunology; microbiology) and with the Institute of Chemical Technology in Prague (biochemistry). Many improvements to the existing system of PhD studies have been incorporated recently, e.g. "Presentation Day for Prospective Students" at IMG (applications in January, presentations in February), a series of lectures in English – for more information look at <http://www.img.cas.cz/main.php?lang=en&subject=14>.

PhD studies are of two basic types:

- ✚ intramural (internal) – the student fully prepares for his thesis at the supervising laboratory and is entitled to all student benefits (maximum duration 3 years)
- ✚ combined (external) – the student is fully employed by the supervising laboratory and not entitled to student benefits (usually after the first three years of internal studies. maximum duration internal+external 8 years)

There is no single office at Charles University that handles admissions for all students to all programmes. Instead, each faculty maintains its own admissions office and specialized staff to meet the needs of their prospective students. The information on them can be found at the particular faculty websites. Comprehensive survey of PhD programmes is at <http://www.cuni.cz/UK-1024.html>. In any case, the entire process of entering the PhD program should start with finding labs of interests, contacting group leaders, and arranging interviews with them. One cannot submit an application without having a granted position in a lab. At the same time, there is no simple system for finding a lab. There are over a hundred labs scattered throughout the university and in many institutes where PhD students can go. Many of the open PhD positions are advertised in a system maintained by the university. Students also contact group leaders directly, to find an open position. In 2008, IMG is starting its own PhD selection system, where prospective PhD students can apply at the IMG website. The best candidates will be invited for interviews with group leaders, which will take place in the middle of February.

As an example, below is the information for PhD students at the Faculty of Science.

According to their knowledge of the Czech language, foreign students have three options:

- ✚ study in Czech in programmes accredited for Czech students – the conditions are the same as for Czech students. It should be stressed that the effort to study in Czech is appreciated by the authorities and their approach is quite helpful, even if the language level is rather elementary; so we strongly encourage you to try it. Moreover, internal students studying in Czech are entitled to stipends amounting to CZK 5750 per month in the first year and CZK 7000 – 10,500 in the following years.
- ✚ governmental scholarship holders – these students undergo a 1-year course of the Czech language prior to PhD studies and their studies are covered by a governmental programme based on international agreements – information on this option may be obtained at the Czech consulate of a particular country (e.g. UNESCO scholarships).
- ✚ study in English in programmes accredited in English – these students pay a fee. The fee at the Faculty of Science is in the range of EUR 820 – 6500 according to the specialization.

Application:

- ✚ There is no deadline for applications; students may apply during the entire academic year (note that other faculties may set deadlines!). However, to apply for PhD at our Institute, you should usually send your application by the end of February (see current deadlines at <http://www.img.cas.cz/main.php?lang=en&subject=14&page=2>)
- ✚ The recommended procedure is following:
 - The student selects a study programme and a topic of interest.
 - He/she contacts a specialist dealing with the topic and consults the possibility of prospective studies in his/her laboratory.
 - He/she fills in the application form that can be found at <https://www.natur.cuni.cz/faculty-en/studium/phd-studies/applicants> and adds the following documents:
 - attested diploma (attestation is done according to international legal agreements. for more details see <http://www.cuni.cz/UKENG-124.html>)
 - attested survey of Master study examinations & nostrification
 - annotation of the scientific project and written consent of the prospective supervisor
 - curriculum vitae
 - other recommendations, list of publications, other documents on the applicant's qualifications
 - He/she pays a fee, which is about EUR 20, attaches the payment record to the application, and sends all to the Faculty of interest
 - He/she is then invited to the entrance examination.
 - He/she comes to the examination on a tourist visa.
 - After obtaining the exam result, he/she applies for the student visa (see chapter 2).

The structure of PhD studies (courses, lectures, seminars, etc.) is individual for each student and is determined by the supervisor. The programme must be approved by the study board for the particular specialization. Studies are completed by passing the state doctoral examination and defending the thesis (based on publications in peer-reviewed international journals).

Grants & Scholarships

Charles University itself and Czech grant agencies do not offer special scholarships to international students. However, many students have succeeded in obtaining some form of scholarship or student loan to help them with their studies (from their government or grant agencies). In some countries, it is also possible for international students to apply for a Czech government scholarship (for studies in Czech only). Further information and assistance can be obtained in representative offices of the Czech Republic in foreign countries or in foreign Ministries of Education.

A comprehensive survey of financial support for studying in the Czech Republic can be found at <http://www.czech.cz/en/work-study/education-and-studying/how-to-study-in-the-czech-republic-as-a-foreigner/scholarships-for-foreign-students/>

Some of our special departments ...



Flow cytometry service laboratory



Functional genomics and bioinformatics



Data centre room



Cryopreservation - storage containers



... and typical laboratories – welcome!

Chapter 7. Relating to Czech People

Characteristics of Czech People

In general, Czechs are easy-going, friendly people. They are rather conservative and like their comfort; they love good food and drinks, especially beer. As they like to discuss, pubs are popular debating places. Czechs also love humour and you should take care because they use sarcasm rather often – it means that what they say is sometimes ironical or exaggerated.

Due to their past exposed to frequent external pressures, Czechs do not like authorities and tend to disrespect rules. This is exemplified in traffic – Czech drivers are fast, aggressive and inconsiderate, but pedestrians and bicycles may also be reckless. However, in stress situations, Czechs are good at improvising and finding solutions.

Communications

There are two general attitudes towards foreigners. Older people, due to history, are sometimes rather reserved towards strangers. They also have a more pronounced language barrier. In many cases they are quite fluent in German. Russian had been a compulsory language at school for many years, so that people should understand it. Young people are usually better equipped with languages, especially with English, and more open to contact with foreigners. Once introduced to a community, a foreigner is well accepted and people are very friendly and helpful.

Communication problems may be encountered in the institutions, where forms are mostly in Czech and officials do not speak English. For these cases, our Institute contact person will accompany you and help you.

Guidelines for Practical Situations

The usual Czech greeting is “Good day” and is used rather generally in public places (small shops, restaurants). When introduced, people usually shake hands. Official acquaintances are addressed by family names and appropriate titles, which in this country are used quite regularly. Informal contacts are usually proposed after some time by the person at a higher social rank.

In some places such as restaurants, hairdressers or other services, tipping of about 5–10% of the price is expected.

Time Schedules

Normal business hours in shops and services start at 8 in the morning and end about 17 or 18 in the evening. There may be a lunch break in the period 12–13 o'clock. In larger supermarkets and shopping centres, however, the working hours are longer and move around 9–20 without interruption, depending on the products. Groceries, for instance, may usually be purchased from 7 o'clock.

In state offices, the working hours are shorter and the “long” official days are Monday and Wednesday for the period 8–18. The remaining days, the offices may work only in the morning or not at all, and some are closed on Fridays.

The Czech Republic observes the daylight saving programme, which means that from the end of October until the end of March (with slight deviations) we have the “summer time”, an hour earlier than the “winter time”. The shifts of time are done during weekends and are usually announced in the news (and marked in calendars).

The official working hours at our Institute are from 7.15 until 15.45. These are, however, valid mostly for the administration. The research laboratories start and end later, according to their need. Your colleagues will inform you about the usual hours in your laboratory.

8. Appendices

Useful Websites

General Information on the Czech Republic

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czech_republic

Useful phrases in Czech

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/czech.php>

http://www.myczechrepublic.com/czech_language/czech_phrases.html

<http://www.locallingo.com/czech/phrases/index.html>

Embassies in Prague

[Http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/diplomatic_missions/foreign_missions_to_the_czech_republic/index.html](http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/diplomatic_missions/foreign_missions_to_the_czech_republic/index.html)

Currency Conversion

<http://finance.yahoo.com/currency?u>

Governmental Links

More info about work and life in the Czech Republic can be found at: www.cizinci.cz
<http://www.czech.cz/en/>
www.en.domavcr.cz
www.eracareers.cz

or at the portal of public administration: http://portal.gov.cz/wps/portal/_s.155/19005

The Academy research mobility website: www.cas.cz/en/ostatni.php?m=4-03&ID=126

Tax Information

<http://www.euraxess.cz/services/practical-information/>

TV

Czech television has several channels, with the main CT1 – channel for general public, CT2 – another channel for more specific programmes in arts, sports, and education, CT24 – channel for news, Nova – a private channel with more advertisement and commercial programmes, and Prima – another private channel, rather similar to Nova. There is also CT4, channel for sports, and TV Barrandov for movies. Satellite and cable broadcasting is also available, depending on the location and equipment of the apartment. The prices for

these services are quite reasonable, official TV broadcasting costs CZK 120 per month, the cheapest cable programme pack can be obtained at CZK 200-300 monthly.

Home Telephone Services

A “fixed line” telephone can be arranged in your apartment. There is only one provider of the connection, O₂, but the calls may be operated by other companies as well. For more information look at

<http://www.cz.o2.com/home/en/guidepost/index.html>

<http://www.gtsnovera.cz/en/index.shtml>

<http://www.gity.cz/en/>

Mobile Phones

In the Czech Republic we have three operators providing mobile phone services. Information on these providers can be found at:

<http://www.cz.o2.com/home/en/guidepost/index.html>

<http://t-mobile.cz/Web/English/Default.aspx>

<http://www.vodafone.cz/en/index.htm>

Services

All general services you are used to enjoying in your country are available here as well. In case of special need or wish, don't hesitate to ask our contact person by email to find out whether the service can be arranged in Prague.

Rent a car

<http://www.e-sixt.cz/en/>

<http://www.praguerentacar.cz/>

References

Contributors: Dominik Filipp, Václav Hořejší, Kateřina Sedláčková, Petr Svoboda, Šárka Takáčová

Photos: Volodymyr Stepanets, Šárka Takáčová

Websites as cited in the text