

MARCH 2021

Issue #1



EURAXESS

CZECH REPUBLIC

Newsletter

INTRODUCING THE FIRST EURAXESS NEWSLETTER!

Dear Friends,

You are reading the first edition of the EURAXESS newsletter. Over time we will introduce you to all 13 service centres in the Czech Republic, as well as news, events and attractions that may relate to your stay in the Czech Republic. We hope that you like our newsletter and will send us some feedback on the [EURAXESS Czech Republic Facebook page](#).

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NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, PRAGUE

In this first edition we will introduce you to the **EURAXESS National Organization** – the head office of the EURAXESS Czech Republic network. Our office is located in Prague, Vodičkova street 40, near Václavské Square. There are five of us working here as employees, plus two assistants and one volunteer under the Dual Career project.

Our services are focused on foreign researchers and their family members coming to Prague and also on the universities and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences. We provide services regarding the entry conditions before arrival to the Czech Republic, to the administrative details of your arrival at the Ministry of the Interior as well as assistance with daily life matters. We organize networking events for researchers, socio-cultural events for families of researchers as well as educational seminars (or webinars) for HR professionals from public research institutions.



We have been deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and it has forced us to adapt to a new way of working almost overnight. Everyone is looking for ways to adjust to the "new normal". We cannot meet you in person, we cannot assist you personally at official places, we cannot discuss ordinary things such as the name of a newborn baby or where to organize a bachelor party. We miss the old days, and are looking forward to seeing you face to face again, maybe at a summer party like last year.

We look forward to continue bringing you more news in upcoming editions and hope you are staying safe & healthy! We sincerely thank you for spending your precious time with us. We're flattered and grateful.



ZUZANA T.



ANDREA



MARKETA



ZUZANA M.



JITKA



OFFICIAL BUSINESS CORNER

Starting on January 1, 2021, there is an obligation for foreigners coming to the Czech Republic from countries outside of the EU to attend a one-day **Adaptation and Integration Course**. We have prepared the first course for our clients with the cooperation of the Integration Centre Prague in April 2021. The course will be organized by EURAXESS Praha, will be held in English and will be specialized for researchers and their family members. It will be possible to meet newly arrived foreign researchers who are in the same position and recently started their career in the Czech Republic. Some of them will

have their families with them. Within our target group, the course is mandatory for researchers and family members older than 15 years and younger than 61 years and for those who plan to stay in the Czech Republic for more than 1 year. To get more official information click on the [website](#) of the Ministry of Interior.



DUAL CAREERS

The **Dual Career** project has been created as a part of the EURAXESS TOP IV project with the aim of helping spouses of researchers relocate to another country.

Because we know that there are lots of talented researchers - men and women - coming to the Czech Republic with their wives and husbands, last year we created webinars for spouses of researchers with the topic **How to apply for a job in the Czech Republic?** and we plan to continue in 2021. The main aim of the webinar is to help the spouses of researchers orient themselves to the Czech labour market and to prepare the applicants for job interviews.

We also created a time-limited volunteer position for one spouse who helps us to compile this newsletter and organize the webinars and events for other spouses of researchers such as an informal meeting called **Let's Meet** and a **Video Conversation Club** for those who want to improve their Czech language skills. The greatest benefit of this volunteer job is the work experience and the reference from a Czech employer.

Let's Meet will be held every last Tuesday of the month at the same time and will include some short introductions of upcoming events and

official updates from our team, but the rest will be informal discussion. To break the ice we choose one topic for the meeting, but assume we'll talk about things you are currently interested in.

As a way to practice your Czech language skills and to show a bit of Czech film culture at the same time, we created the **Video Conversation Club**. The film we are going to talk about during our conversation club will be announced in advance and it is up to you if you'd like to join us. The films will be connected to Czech culture. For example, it could have a Czech director, with Czech actors, about Czech people or history. We will talk mainly in Czech, but you do not need to worry about joining in even if you don't speak Czech like a professional.



Our Dual Career Volunteer, Simin



BOOK THESE DATES:

MARCH

- 25th, 15:00 – 16:30 Video Conversation Club with the film Amadeus (director Milos Forman, 1984; [review](#)) 🖱️
- 30th, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's Meet (online) with the „ice-breaker“ topic Springtime
- 31st, 10:00 – 12:00 In-depth consultation for the implementation of the process HRS4R for organisations who are in various stages of the HR Award process

APRIL

- 2nd edition of EURAXESS Newsletter
- 27th, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's Meet (online) with the “ice-breaker” topic “A cat or a dog?”
- 30th, 19:00 – 11:15 Communication skills - workshop for foreign employees of Charles University, more information [here](#) 🖱️

MAY

- Date/Time TBD 1st Adaptation and Integration Course for newly coming researchers and their family members
- Date/Time TBD Webinar „How to apply for a job in the Czech Republic“
- Date/Time TBD Video Conversation Club – The Unbearable Lightness of Being (director Philip Kaufman, 1988; [review](#)) 🖱️
- 25th, Time TBD Let's Meet online – meeting for spouses of researchers

JUNE

- Date/Time TBD Webinar „Hard life in the Czech Republic“
- Date/Time TBD 2nd Adaptation and Integration Course (for researchers and family members)
- 3rd edition of EURAXESS Newsletter
- 29th, Time TBD Let's meet online or personally – meeting for spouses of researchers

JULY

- 27th, TBD Let's Meet online or personally – meeting for spouses of researchers

AUGUST

- 31st, Time TBD Let's Meet online or personally – meeting for spouses of researchers

SEPTEMBER

- Date/Time TBD Webinar „How to apply for a job in the Czech Republic“
- Date/Time TBD 3rd Adaptation and Integraton Course (for researchers and family members)
- 4th edition of EURAXESS Newsletter
- 28th, Time TBD Let's Meet online or personally – meeting for spouses of researchers

OCTOBER

- Date/Time TBD Video Conversation Club – Kolja (director Jan Sverak, 1996; [review](#)) 🖱️
- 26th, Time TBD Let's Meet online – meeting for spouses of researchers

NOVEMBER

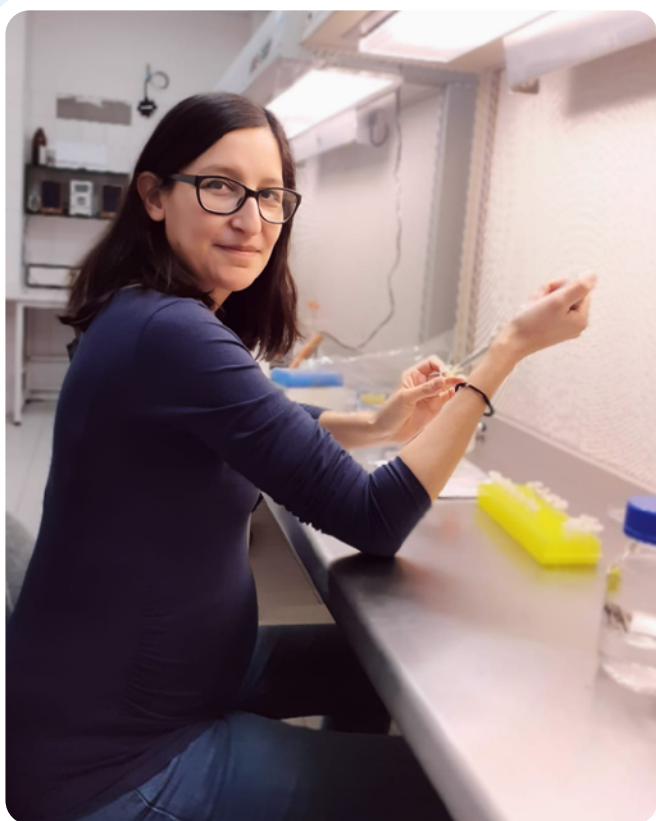
- Date/Time TBD Webinar „Hard life in the Czech Republic“
- Date/Time TBD 4th Adaptation and Integration Course (for researchers and family members)
- 5th edition of EURAXESS Newsletter
- 30th, TBD Let's Meet online or personally – meeting for spouses of researchers

DECEMBER

- Date/Time TBD Let's “Christmasly” Meet online or personally
- Date/Time TBD Video Conversation Club – we will see 😊



EURAXESS SUCCESS STORY



Mariana Limones

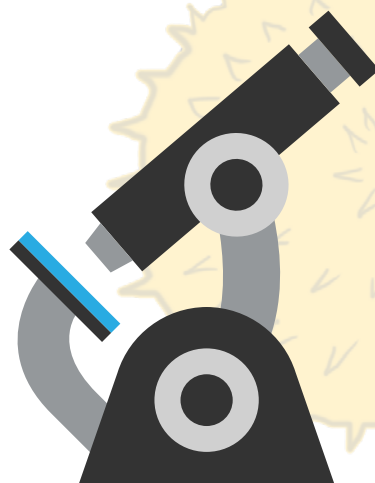
I have been in the Czech Republic for almost 2 years now. I was lucky to be able to start working only one month after my arrival. I am also very thankful for Euraxess, where I got a lot of help to facilitate my arrival, especially in administrative matters.

I obtained my Ph.D. in France in Agronomical Science. About 6 months before the defense of my Ph.D., I started looking for laboratories in the city of Prague that were working on the field that I specialized in. I looked for postdoc offers, but what really worked out for me was to contact directly the head of the laboratories that I was interested in. Also, I got help from the head of my husband's institute (the Institute of Plasma Physics), who contacted the heads of other

institutes that might be interested in my profile. So I organized some interviews and squeezed them into a short visit to Prague. I was very happy to have two job proposals, and all my visits and interviews within the different laboratories were a great way to see how the research of experimental plant biology works in this country. Now I work in the Institute of the Experimental Botany (IEB) of the Academy of Sciences, specifically at the Laboratory of Pollen Biology. The IEB has a great environment of motivation and empathy, in addition to the highly scientific level of its researchers. It is also a very international place, so my adaptation to the Czech culture has been gradual. The institute also contributes to my Czech language education (which I am eager to learn!). Within the lab of Pollen Biology, I have made great relationships with my colleagues, where a strong feeling of teamwork prevails.

As a Mexican who lived 6 years in France, I already have an adaptation to the slightly colder European vibe. Nevertheless, I find Czech people very warm! Often foreigners complain about the cold expressions of Czechs at the supermarket cashiers or at restaurants, mainly close to touristic spots. In my experience, from the moment that you switch your greeting from "hello" to "dobry den", they change their expressions and you can tell they are actually happy to help or talk to you. You just need to make that first step of acknowledging their language and hence their culture.

- Mariana Limones



HAPPY Nowruz



photo courtesy of: @hoor_artshop

Nowruz *(pronounced no-rooz)*

is celebrated in the Persian, Turkish and Central Asian (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, India, Pakistan) communities.

Nowruz is a combination of two Persian words; the first word "now" means "new" and the second word "ruz" means "day", together they mean "New Day."

The celebration is thousands of years old, having begun in the reign of the Achaemenids, 550–330 B.C. The exact beginning of the New Year occurs when the season changes from winter to spring on the vernal equinox, which

usually happens on 20th or 21st March each year, the first day of spring.

The festivities of Nowruz reflect the renewal of the Earth that occurs with the coming of spring. It is a time for family and friends to gather and celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the next.

The exact moment when the vernal equinox occurs, in Persian called *Tahvil*. This year, it is expected to occur precisely on:

Saturday, March 20, 2021 at 10:37:28 am.



The most important activity in the celebration of Nowruz is making the **haft-seen table**. "Haft" is the Persian word for the number seven and "seen" is the Persian word for the letter S. Literally, the haft-seen table means a "table of seven things that start with the letter S".

Creating the haft-seen table is a family activity that begins by spreading a special family cloth on the table. Next the table is set with the seven S items, for example:

- **SUMAC** (crushed spice of berries): For the sunrise and the spice of life.
- **SENJED** (sweet dry fruit of the lotus tree): For love and affection.
- **SEEB** (apples): For Health and beauty.
- **SIR** (garlic): For good health.

The haft-seen table remains in the family home for thirteen days after the beginning of Nowruz. The thirteenth day is called *Sizdeh Bedar*, which literally means in Persian "getting rid of the thirteenth". The celebrations that take place on *Sizdeh Bedar* are just as festive as those on the first day of Nowruz.

On this day, families pack a special picnic and go to the park to enjoy food, singing and dancing with other families. It is customary to bring new sprouts, or *sabzeh*, grown especially for this occasion. At the park, the green blades of the *sabzeh* are thrown on the ground or in a nearby river or lake to symbolize the return of the plant to nature. *Sizdeh Bedar* marks the end of the Nowruz celebrations.



- **SAMANU** (wheat pudding): For fertility and the sweetness of life.
- **SABZEH** (sprouted wheat grass) or **SONBOL** flower (Hyacinth): For rebirth and renewal of nature.
- **SEKKE** (coin) : As a symbol of wealth.



Photo credit: @Haniye_mirhashemi

Just like other cultural celebrations, many special foods are prepared during Nowruz. One of the common dishes is called *sabzi pollo mahi* (fish served with special rice mixed with green herbs).





Persian Walnut Cookies

Persian walnut cookies have only 4 important ingredients, are gluten free & easy to make. Traditionally cooked for Nowruz in Iran.

Ingredients:

1 & 1/2 cups (200g) finely ground walnuts
3 egg yolks
3/4 cup (150g) white sugar
1 tablespoon (2g) ground cardamom
1 teaspoon (5g) baking soda

1 tablespoon (15ml) rose water
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon (5ml) water
1/2 cup (70g) pistachio pieces for decoration

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (177 C). In a medium bowl, mix together the ground walnuts, 3 egg yolks, sugar, cardamom, baking soda and rose water until well blended. Roll teaspoon sized pieces of dough into balls and place onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Cookies should be spaced 2 inches (5cm) apart. Whisk together the remaining egg yolk and water using a fork. Press a walnut piece into each cookie, then brush with the egg yolk glaze.

Bake for 20 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Although the cookies will look soft and under baked, they will harden considerably when cooled. Allow them to cool on the baking sheets for at least 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Photo courtesy of:
Shayesteh Karami @founse_cake_house