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EURAXESS

CZECH REPUBLIC

Newsletter

Dear friends,

I am happy to share with you our new October edition of the EURAXESS newsletter. You can enjoy reading during the time which we call „babí léto“ (something like Indian summer), a time when the sun is still shining, the leaves are getting coloured and it's almost time to pull our hats out of the closet.

In this issue, you'll discover the EURAXESS Service Centre in Brno and its beautiful head, Martina. I am also happy to share the success story of Simin, our previous volunteer, who came to the Czech Republic as the spouse of a researcher, and is now a PhD student working in a lab. Our current volunteer Anastasiia prepared an article about our September „Let's meet“ meeting which was very special. There were six spouses, one small child and our special guest, Mary K. Kobia from University of Copenhagen and we baked „štrůdl“ together. If you want to find out more, just read the article, or even better – come next time, too! As a bonus, you can try to prepare this delicious dessert at home - the recipe is included in this edition. After that there is a bit of history about the origin of Halloween traditions. And finally, as usual, you'll find the list of events which are organized by EURAXESS Service Centres in the whole country for researchers and their family members.

I wish you a nice and calm autumn! ZM

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CZECH
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Brno ★



CONTACT POINT IN BRNO



MARTINA ŠANTISKÁ

Welcome to Brno, the second biggest city in the Czech Republic, the 6th most favorite student city in the world, the city of science, research and Innovation. It has a great potential for becoming a center of top science considering both its advantageous position and the background of its 6 high-quality public universities.

Individual scientific research institutes help current basic and applied research to reach the highest level. These include CEITEC Central European Institute of Technology, CzechGlobe Global Change Research Center, NETME Center for New Technologies for Mechanical Engineering, ICRC International Clinic Research Center, RECETOX Research Center for Toxic Substances in the Environment and many others.

Many projects initiate international cooperation and bring top scientists and technology companies from all over the world to the region. THE EURAXESS CENTRE BRNO has supported research mobility in the region since 2008. The office is situated in a historic building at Česká 11 and is open to not only foreign researchers but also to their family members as well as to the university staff and employers in R&D. The office helps and advises with a range of related issues before and after the foreigners arrival (entry permit, accommodation, integration to life in Czech Republic). Centre activities have been very positively evaluated by foreigners especially before their arrival and during first few weeks in the Czech

Republic, when they are not well oriented in the area of entry and residence permissions in the Czech Republic. The centre coordinates appointments to the Ministry of the Interior Office-Department for Asylum and Migration Policy and is about to organize a private Adaptation-Integration Course. Also we've expanded cooperation with the Center for Foreigners not only in the field of Czech language courses (now also for EU citizens) but also in the field of legal and social counseling and leisure activities. The centre organizes sport and cultural events occasionally.

If considering a move to the Czech Republic, and to Brno, please remember the best address for you is Česká 11.

See you there!



EURAXESS SUCCESS STORY



SIMIN, MEHDI AND SOPHIA IN PRAGUE

As a newlywed couple, my husband and I spent 3 months in Prague which was a memorable experience for us. So 3 years after, when he received a post-doctoral offer at the University of Chemistry and Technology (VSCHT), we didn't even doubt accepting it. We moved from the beautiful country of Iran to the lovely city of Prague in 2018.

At that time, our daughter was only 7 months old and we had no relatives to rely on. So I stayed home to take care of her for the first two years of her life as a full-time mother. After her second birthday, she could attend the nursery that belongs to VSCHT university and thanks to the professional teachers and great environment she got adapted to the new situation in a short time. Now it was time for me to continue my professional life. I had a Master's Degree in Cell Biology but all that mattered to me first was to enter the Czech market. Therefore, I applied for many different positions - even some that were not fully consistent with my background. I sent my CV for any job position (Academic or nonacademic) I found in job-seeking-websites but most of them required at least an "intermediate level" of Czech language or they needed a reference from the last job (which I did not have). As a newcomer to the Czech Republic and as a mom with an employment gap since her graduation, it was a big challenge to gain the employer's trust and attention. So I changed the plan.

SIMIN SAKAKI



Institute of Molecular Genetics of
the Czech Academy of Sciences

First things first, I started learning the Czech Language. I took courses at a language institute, meanwhile, I had a chance to work with EURAXESS as a volunteer. This experience was a big peak in my journey. I could broaden my circles of friendship and expand my professional network quickly which was so helpful to find my current job. I restored the confidence to present myself using my hidden potentials. Moreover, it was a bright point in my CV because finally I had a Czech reference. It is so important to have a Czech reference when you're applying for a job in the Czech Republic.

Meanwhile, I was looking for a job which matched my education. I applied for a scientific position and unfortunately, I was not the right candidate they were looking for. But thanks to the "strong network" mentioned earlier, I was introduced to my current supervisor and was accepted for a Ph.D. position at Charles University. Throughout all this time, EURAXESS was a great support for every issue we've had. Now I'm a Ph.D. student, working at the Institute of Molecular Genetics (IMG) of Czech Academy of Science (CAS). So far, it's been nearly 3.5 years that I've lived in Prague and this city still amazes me with all the hidden beauty in every corner.

LET'S MEET! A story about September edition



When you are brand new in a city or even a country, it's often very difficult to find friends and start a life there. Especially, if you move away from your cozy and comfortable life with no specific purpose other than to be with a person you love. This is definitely the case for a lot of the members of our Euraxess Dual Career Network. We know how hard it can be for the newly arrived family members of researchers and bright scientific minds to adjust to a new life in the Czech Republic. That is why Zuzana Maršálová and Andrea Augustinová decided to start a monthly informal event organized specifically for spouses/partners of researchers that we call "Let's meet!". It is a truly wonderful place for people from different cultures to get together, socialize, discuss the struggles that

they have encountered in Prague, ask for advice, and just simply feel like they are not alone in this.

Our September event was especially wonderful for many reasons. First, we had a very special guest at the meeting – Mary Kagendo Kobia from the University of Copenhagen who is the head of the Dual Career project, career consultant and coach. She not only brightened the meeting with her fun and kind personality, but also told us a lot about how the Dual Career project helps spouses in Copenhagen and worldwide to fulfil their career potential. We all shared our stories of different experiences in new countries and laughed a lot as many of them were rather entertaining.

LET'S MEET! A story about September edition

Also, there was a special activity at the September "Let's meet!" event! Zuzana and Andrea prepared everything for us to bake a traditional Czech (and Austrian) desert – Jablečný štrúdl (Apple strudel). A lot of spouses decided to join the September meeting, thus, making strudel was quite easy: two people



were peeling apples, two people were cutting them, then others were grating apples, and rolling the dough. The job is always easier if you share it with a friend!



Every month there is a special topic that helps to start a conversation, and during our September event we discussed all the fun things you can do in Prague in autumn. For instance, you can enjoy wine tasting in different places if you like wine, or take a walk in one of many amazing gardens in the city center. Prague is very rich in colors during autumn, so don't miss your chance to experience its beauty to the fullest!

Every month we invite our dear spouses to join the "Let's meet!" event as we would always love to meet you. If you have any questions, please, feel free to contact volunteer@lib.cas.cz for more information on this and other events.



ŠTRŮDL

(CZECH APPLE "PIE")



Let's try to pronounce it!

The word štrůdl comes from the German "Apfelstrudel". "Apfel" means apple of course, and "strudel" derives from the German word for "swirl". It is a very common dessert in Czech restaurants and at Czech homes, usually during this season, thanks to the apple crops.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 package of puff pastry dough
- 8 sweet apples (peeled, grated)
- 100 g walnuts (chopped)
- 50 g raisins
- ground cinnamon
- cane sugar (optional if needed)
- flour for flourishing
- 1 egg for brushing

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C and cover a tray with baking paper.
- Put grated apples, chopped walnuts, raisins and cinnamon into a large bowl and mix everything together. If the apples are not sufficiently sweet add some cane sugar according to your taste.
- Divide the dough into two pieces and roll it out on a flourished table into a rectangular shape. The dough should be an even thickness (not too thin, not too thick) fitting your baking tray. Put one half the apples in the middle of the dough and roll it up. Carefully transfer the štrůdl to the tray, seam side down. Brush with the egg. Prepare the second dough the same way. Once the štrůdl is on the tray, pierce with a fork, so the steam can get out.
- Bake about 25 minutes until golden.
- Serve sprinkled with powdered sugar, hot and with vanilla ice cream!

MY PERSONAL TIPS:

- I always have my jar with raisin soaked in rum in my cupboard. After baking, there is almost no alcohol, but the taste is delicious.
- If the apples are too juicy, mix some breadcrumbs to the apple mixture.

Trick or Treat!

Or Koledu, Nebo ti Něco Provedu



One of the most anticipated holidays of the autumn season without a doubt is Halloween. All Hallows' Eve, or sometimes All Saints' Eve, is celebrated on October 31, when people dress up in scary (and sometimes not so scary) costumes, decorate their houses and go trick-or-treating to ask for candy and other sweets. Halloween most likely originated in Ireland around 2000 years ago as a pagan holiday Samhain and was celebrated in some other Celtic-speaking countries as well. The 1st of November marked the beginning of a new year for the ancient Celts which meant the end of warm summer and fruitful harvest and the beginning of cold, grim, and dangerous winter. These ancient tribes believed that on October 31, on the evening before the first day of their new year, the spirits of the dead were able to return to earth because the barrier between our world and the world of the dead became obscure.

Despite the fact that the Celts started celebrating Halloween first, the Western Christian Church played probably the most important role in the development of this holiday. The feast of All Hallows, which is observed the next day after Halloween, was established in the 4th century in Rome as a celebration dedicated to honoring Christian martyrs. It was later expanded to include all saints, and the date of the feast was changed to November 1. With the spread of Christianity throughout the world, the holiday established by the church gradually mixed with the older Celtic traditions. Even though people who believe that Halloween originated in then pagan Celtic-speaking countries still disagree with those who think that it started solely as a Christian holiday, in the present day All Saints' Eve is a part of the Western Christian season Allhallowtide in the vast majority of countries. This season also includes All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day that are observed after All Hallows' Eve.

In the 19th century a large number of new immigrants from Ireland and Scotland brought many Halloween traditions to North America from their home countries, where they had been celebrating it for many centuries. Finally, by the beginning of the 21st century Halloween spread to almost every country with the help of American influence.

Halloween now is mostly a secular holiday for many people all over the world. Children and adults dress up in costumes, carve pumpkins to make jack-o'-lanterns, and visit haunted attractions. In some countries people decorate their houses to create a spooky atmosphere for children who go trick-or-treating in the neighborhood. It is popular among young adults to go to Halloween-themed parties in night clubs or house parties wearing costumes.



However, in many parts of the world there are still a lot of people who observe this or similar holidays because of the spiritual meaning: Christians honor the deceased. In some countries it is customary to visit graveyards of family members and friends on All Hallows' Eve in order to pray and place flowers or candles on the graves.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

BOOK THESE DATES:

NOVEMBER

- 4th, 13:00 How to apply for a job in the Czech Republic at Technical University of Ostrava, seminar for international students and employees
- 25th, 10:00 – 12:00 webinar How to open your own business in the Czech Republic, for spouses of researchers; registration [here](#) 🖱️
- 31st, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! with the ice-breaker topic „My favourite season“, for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited – take your children with you, we will bake and decorate some gingerbread; registration [here](#) 🖱️

DECEMBER

- 6th, 9:00 – 13:00 4th Adaptation and Integration Course for researchers and their family members (Prague), **registration already closed**
- 21st, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! with the ice-breaker topic „The best Christmas holiday in my life“, for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited; registration [here](#) 🖱️
- TBD 6th edition of EURAXESS Newsletter

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

From 17th December to 2nd January, the EURAXESS office will be partially closed, as well as the Ministry of Interior. Please, check the validity of your residence cards and apply for the prolongation on time. If you plan to leave home for some time, ask for a bridging visa.

THANKS FOR READING!

Feel free to send any comments, suggestions or questions to volunteer@lib.cas.cz.

