



## **Your passport decides about your expertise**

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### **Abstract:**

*Over the last years the Czech Republic became a favourable place for business. More and more foreign companies move their production to the Czech Republic or outsource their services. This changes the structure of the labour market and the requirements on workers. Also more and more people from different countries see the possibility to perform their profession in the Czech Republic. They want to try their luck in business or gain new professional experience. Or they want to feel what it is like to work in an international team. However, for the citizens of some countries this is not easy at all. Especially for those who come from the countries with a visa duty. Frequently, they can gain new experience with working abroad only with the help of mediation services.*

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For workers within the EU, the possibility of working in a country outside their own is within their reach. However, for the citizens of for example Russia, Ukraine or Moldova the opportunity to enjoy global mobility is an unattainable dream because they have to go through a lot of difficulties connected with bureaucracy. Even those, who have something to offer on global labour market.

Despite all the obstacles and prejudice, these people are curious and they want to live, work and do business abroad. However, moving (even for a short time) is often connected with numerous risks, financial and time costs. When you are a citizen from country with a visa duty to most of the countries, everything is even more complicated. That is why everyone tries to get information in advance: what are the business possibilities or the chances to find a job in a certain profession? The applicants collect recommendations and various information about the job search and companies.

### **Help on the internet forums**

Many people look for information and help within the group of their compatriots who already live in the Czech Republic. The internet forums are one of many sources of information. They

are full of desperate pleas for help and advice from the newcomers to the Czech Republic or those who only plan to come.

Companies react on that – the so called “mediators” use the lack of knowledge of the newcomers and try to make profit on them. For setting up a company and help with an application for business visa mediators charge around 1,500 Euros. For help with the work permit they charge 250 Euros, sometimes more.

These companies do not give any guarantee though, and inexperienced people often become victims of fraud.

The citation from a Russian internet forum gives an example: *“We are in the same situation as many of you – we would like to come to the CR. To look around at first, spend there some time and stay if we like it. The problem is – there are TOO many offers. If you type “emigration to the CR” on the internet you get hundreds of companies and natural persons that are willing to “do everything turnkey” for a few thousands Euros. Via telephone they promise that everything will be beautiful and guaranteed. But when you read forums afterwards you understand that it is not that nice. Many people complain that they relied on “frauds” who promised hundred percent results. But all the documents were refused by the Czech consulate. The company that prepared these documents said it was not their problem.”*

Despite bad experiences of people with the mediators, the so called “migration industry” is widely spread in the Czech Republic. Why do people look for help in mediation companies and get their fingers burnt repeatedly? I think that one of the reasons is the non-transparency and sometimes also malfunction of the system of recruitment of migrant workers or the process of business establishment in the Czech Republic. People who tried to arrange everything on their own do not have good experience.

Such as in the case quoted from the internet forum: *“Please, anybody, help. Does anyone have any experience with the green card in the IT field? I begun to look for a job but when the recruitment workers found out I do not have a visa to the CR they refused to hand the CV over to the appraisal.”*

Also this citation warns about the problems: *“I have been following the IT market in the Czech Republic for a long time – the specialists are needed in different fields but nobody wants to have to do anything with the work permit, work visa etc. Almost everywhere they want – EU citizenship or knowledge of the Czech language. If the language is an obstacle hard to overcome, the EU citizenship is an insoluble problem. Not even a flash of light is to be expected in the darkness...”*

## Complications on the consulate

Even in those cases when people succeed in finding a job without the mediator and they make an appointment with the employer who provides all the documents needed, the obstacles with the visa on the Czech consulates abroad emerge.

*A woman from Ukraine tells her story: “My husband fell in love with the Czech Republic. He is an expert on milling machines and lathes. We begun to look for a job in his professional field and there are loads of offers. We have written over 50 letters to the employers but they wanted only those workers who were already in the CR. They probably did not want to arrange the documentation. Then we posted CV on an official web page (praceprocizince.cz) and one employer answered. He was willing to take care of everything, but we had to come for an interview (on a short-term visa) and in order to arrange all the documents. The employer sent an official invitation and my husband went to the Czech consulate with all the documents needed. A week later a refusal letter arrived. The employer said he would wait and he wrote an invitation with the police and sent it. We will wait and we will ask for a visa once more. We will not give up!”*

A person can be a really good expert or have an interesting business plan, but he or she is evaluated according to his origins. For people from some countries the doors are sealed, for another slightly opened and for some wide opened. This is often another evidence of the global inequality; the workers from one country are considered for so called “expats” and others for unwanted migrants – even if they come to work on a highly qualified position.

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