

NEW OBLIGATION FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS AS OF 1 JANUARY 2021: ADAPTATION AND INTEGRATION COURSE

Every foreign national who, as of 1 January 2021, is issued a long-term residence permit for the territory of the Czech Republic, and also every foreign national who is issued a permanent residence permit after this date without the precondition of previous authorised stay in the territory is **obliged to take** the adaptation and integration course **within one year of the date of collecting their residence permit**.

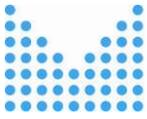
WHAT IS THE ADAPTATION AND INTEGRATION COURSE? This is a course during which foreign nationals will be acquainted with the rights and obligations connected with their stay in the territory of the Czech Republic, with the fundamental values of the Czech Republic, with everyday life, culture and customs prevailing in the Czech Republic. Course participants will also be provided information on organisations and institutions that provide advisory services to foreign nationals free of charge. For details, go to: <http://www.vitejtevcr.cz/>

WHO EXACTLY MUST TAKE THE COURSE? The obligation to take the adaptation and integration course applies to every foreign national who has been issued a long-term residence permit for the territory pursuant to § 42 or § 45 of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic and on amendment to certain acts, as amended, and also applies to every foreign national who is issued a long-term residence permit for the territory pursuant to § 66 or § 67 of this Act. Specifically, the course must be taken and completed by every foreign national who has been issued:

- a long-term residence permit for the territory
- a long-term residence permit for the territory due to a change in purpose of stay
- a permanent residence permit for the territory for humanitarian reasons, specifically for a foreign national who is the spouse of an asylee, whose marriage took place before the asylee entered the territory; for an asylee's minor child or a child dependent on the care of an asylee if that child has not applied for asylum; or for a foreign national who was a citizen of the Czech Republic in the past
- a permanent residence permit for the territory for reasons worthy of special consideration
- a permanent residence permit for the territory, if the foreign national's stay is in the national interest of the Czech Republic
- a permanent residence permit for the territory for the child of a foreign national who holds a permanent residence permit for the territory of the Czech Republic and if the reason for the application is family unification of such foreign nationals in the territory
- a permanent residence permit for the territory after the cancellation of a previous permanent residence permit due to the former holder spending an uninterrupted period of six years outside the territory of the Czech Republic, or due to the former holder spending an uninterrupted period of twelve months outside the territory of the European Union
- a permanent residence permit having spend an uninterrupted period of four years in the territory for a foreign national residing in the territory after the completion of international protection proceedings

WHO DOES THIS OBLIGATION NOT APPLY TO? Foreign nationals who have already taken this course or who have been issued a long-term residence permit or a permanent residence permit pursuant to § 66 or § 67 before 1 January 2021 are not obliged to take the adaptation and integration course, under condition that their permit was valid as at 1 January 2021. The obligation to take the adaptation and integration course does not apply also to foreign nationals residing in the territory of the Czech Republic on the basis of:

- a long-term residence permit for the purpose of study (residence purpose code "21", "22", "23" and "30")
- a long-term residence permit for the purpose of protection in the territory (residence purpose code "88")
- a long-term residence permit for the purpose of investment (residence purpose code "78")
- a long-term residence permit issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic
- an intra-company employee transfer card (residence purpose code "79")



- a European Union Member State intra-company employee transfer card (residence purpose code “80”)

The obligation to take the adaptation and integration course furthermore does not apply to foreign nationals under 15 years of age on the date of legal effect of the decision to issue their residence permit, or to foreign nationals 61 years of age or over on that date. Nor will holders of employee cards and blue cards issued under the Highly Qualified Employee and Key and Scientific Personnel governmental programmes be required to take adaptation and integration courses.

AND WHAT ABOUT EUROPEAN UNION CITIZENS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS? The obligation to take the adaptation and integration course does not apply to European Union citizens and their family members.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR TAKING THE COURSE? A foreign nationals to whom the obligation to take the adaptation and integration course applies must take this course at latest within one year of the date of collecting their residence permit, or more precisely, within one year of the date of legal effect of the decision to issue their residence permit.

WHO IS THE COURSE ORGANISED BY AND WHERE DOES IT TAKE PLACE? Adaptation and integration courses are administered by Centres for Support of Integration of Foreign Nationals (<http://www.integracnicentra.cz>). There are eighteen such centres in the Czech Republic and it is up to the foreign national to choose which centre to take the course at. The course may be also organised by a different legal entity cooperating with a Centre for Support of Integration of Foreign Nationals. Taking a course that is neither directly organised nor administered by a Foreign National Integration Support Centre established pursuant to § 155a of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic and on amendment to certain acts, as amended, will not be recognised as satisfaction of the obligation.

WHO WILL TEACH THE COURSE AND IN WHAT LANGUAGE? The course is taught by a qualified educator, in the Czech language. The course content is interpreted into English, French, Mongolian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Ukrainian or Vietnamese by a qualified interpreter.

HOW CAN I ENROL FOR THE COURSE? Adaptation and integration courses are divided into courses intended for the public and courses not intended for the public. Courses intended for the public may be attended by every foreign national who:

1. registers via the portal <https://frs.gov.cz>
2. pays the fee of CZK 1,500 and receives confirmation of payment
3. enrolls for a specific course and receives an e-mail confirmation of this fact

Courses not intended for the public take place on the basis of orders from legal entities in cooperation with a particular Foreign National Integration Support Centre. Again this **requires registration via the portal <https://frs.gov.cz>** – then the necessary steps involving payment, organisation and course attendance of foreign nationals are organised by the legal entity itself. Payment for such courses is not made directly to the state!

HOW MUCH DOES THE COURSE COST AND HOW CAN I PAY? The amount payable to the state for a foreign national for attending an adaptation and integration course intended for the public is CZK **1,500**; for courses not intended for the public, this amount is CZK 800 (the foreign national does not pay directly to the state, but pays to the legal entity). For a course intended for the public, a “variable symbol” will be generated for the foreign national after registering via the portal <https://frs.gov.cz>; the foreign national should then pay the amount into the Ministry’s bank account either by bank transfer or postal order. **If the foreign national does not quote the variable symbol during payment, the payment will be acknowledged.** For a course not intended for the public, the payment for all those attending is made collectively by the legal entity that requested the course to be held and it will contact the participants directly.

WHERE IS INFORMATION ON COURSE DATES PUBLISHED? Updated information concerning the type of course, the dates on which they are to be held and the language into which they will be interpreted will be made available to the foreign national after payment of the amount payable for courses for the public, or payment directly to the legal entity in the case of courses not intended for the public.



HOW LONG DOES THE COURSE LAST? The adaptation and integration course last four hours.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR ATTENDING THE COURSE? The foreign national must report on the date and time at which and at the place where the course will be held, present their residence permit (ePKP) and confirm their attendance by signing the attendance sheet. The foreign national must attend for the entire duration of the course. There is no exam or test at the end of the course.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? After attending the course the foreign national receives an attendance certificate.

WHAT HAPPENS FOR NOT SATISFYING THIS OBLIGATION? Failure to satisfy the obligation of taking the adaptation and integration course within one year of the foreign national collecting their residence permit is an offence which carries a fine of up to CZK 10,000.