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Issue #3



EURAXESS

CZECH REPUBLIC

Newsletter

Dear Friends,

Here is our third edition of the EURAXESS newsletter. In this issue, you will find a success story of Tiziana De Luca from Italy. She relocated to the Czech Republic with her family and now works as a teacher in a Czech school. We introduce you our next EURAXESS Service Centre – this time in Hradec Králové. We are near to the summer holidays, so we thought you would enjoy reading about the Summer Solstice and prepare a great Ukrainian barbeque recipe. If you do research in Artificial Intelligence you can join the group [prg.ai](#) which connects researchers in this field and creates a networking base for them. We created a new FB page for spouses of researchers [Dual Career Network – Czech Republic](#). It's a private group. You may already have got the invitation to join the group from Anastasiia, our new volunteer colleague. And finally, check out some events which we have organized for you on the last page.

If you want to share your experience, your feedback or your success story, do not hesitate to contact us or join at [EURAXESS Czech Republic Facebook page](#).

In This Issue:

(YOU CAN CLICK TO GO TO EACH SECTION)



EURAXESS BRANCH INTRODUCTION

EURAXESS SUCCESS STORY

SUMMER SOLSTICE

PORK SHASHLIK RECIPE

RECIPE

INTRODUCING prg.ai

MEETINGS & EVENTS

BRANCH INTRODUCTION

euraxess
CZECH REPUBLIC

CONTACT POINT IN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ



KATEŘINA KŘIKAVOVÁ

Dear Readers,

I bet you have already heard of the University of Hradec Králové, if not, please, continue reading. The University of Hradec Králové, or what's commonly used, "UHK", has 4 faculties. All of them offer a variety of job opportunities for fellow researchers. Find out more [here](#).

Our university has approx. 6,5k students enrolled, more than 800 employees and we are currently hosting 130 scientific and academic workers from more than 30 countries. So, one might assume it is a multicultural city and it really is. Hradec Králové has been repeatedly voted as the best place to live in the Czech Republic. It is not all about the basic facts but also about the environment that would surround you. Our modern university campus is located just a few steps from the historical city centre. The city itself dates back to the 12th century and there is plenty to explore.



We are aware of the fact that it is not easy to work abroad and that is why we have a team of qualified administrative workers at the UHK. Who are you going to meet with? First, it will be me, Kateřina Křikavová, from the international office. I have been working with foreign employment contracts for more than 12 years now. I've been a Euraxess consultant since 2018 and the #1 when it comes to visas and work permit issues for you and your family member. I also deal with the process of social insurance making sure you have proper documents. I will give you advice on how to find the right health insurance, accommodation or health care in Hradec Králové. We can even employ your partner if he/she is willing to work for our university. Do not hesitate to contact me with any issue related to living or working conditions in Hradec.



UNIVERSITY OF HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

EURAXESS SUCCESS STORY



Tiziana with her husband Lorenzo and children, Nicolò and Lucia

TIZIANA DE LUCA

Next October it will be 7 years since I settled in Prague. I arrived here, because of my husband's job. He is a Physics researcher at ELI Beamlines Centre.

After a month in Prague, I found out about a Czech state school opening an Italian/Czech section that was looking for an Italian teacher of Math and Science at the Primary level. It suited me, since I had been teaching these subjects for several years in Italy. However, it hadn't been long since I moved here. Moreover, I had a little son to take care of, and my husband and I were planning to have another baby, so I decided not to send my application.

Years went by, and my little boy was already attending nursery school and our little girl was going to follow him the next year. On my birthday, I came across a job ad from the same school that was searching for a Math teacher again. It was the opportunity I had lost years before! A great birthday present for me! I sent my CV and a few days later, had my interview.

In September 2018 I started this new adventure at Jiří Gutha-Jarkovský Gymnasium, a Czech school in Prague 1, attended by students ages from 6 to 18. I started with a part-time schedule



teaching in three Primary level classes as an Italian assistant for Math in collaboration with my Czech colleagues. The workplace though, was completely Czech language based. As a consequence I was thrown into this new culture and language. Unfortunately, I hadn't begun to study Czech yet, and I had some difficulties at the beginning. Czech people are a bit careful if you don't speak their language.

After three years I can admit that things have changed considerably. Thanks to the school I have been able to study this extremely difficult language and now I am able to say something more than "Ahoj" and "dobrý den". All in all, this has improved my work place as well as personal relationships, I have made good friends with several colleagues and at the moment I have a full-time permanent job, teaching both at primary and low secondary school.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Photo © David Wiinikka-Lydon

The summer solstice is an astronomical phenomenon that happens every six months, once annually in every hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere it usually occurs in June and in the Southern Hemisphere - in December. The astronomical reason behind this event is the change in Earth's tilt towards the Sun. This year the North Pole will have its maximum tilt toward the Sun on June 21. At the same time, the winter solstice will occur in the Southern Hemisphere due to the South Pole having its maximum tilt away from the Sun. Thus, June 21 will be the longest and the shortest day of the year simultaneously in the two hemispheres respectively.

Nowadays, the summer solstice marks the first day of summer in some calendars (for example, in North America). However, in many different countries (particularly in the European region), the summer solstice is commonly called "midsummer" as it is considered to occur halfway through the summer and the cycle of

agricultural seasonal work (between planting and harvesting). Various rituals and festivals are organized to celebrate this day that has considerable significance for different cultures. This holiday was originally created during pagan times and devoted to celebrating the longest day of the year as well as life, love, and fertility which was very important for all agrarian societies. However, in the 4th century, the undivided Christian Church decided to connect this popular pagan holiday to Christianity, establishing the feast day of Saint John the Baptist. Today, Midsummer is still celebrated in a lot of countries such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Croatia, Germany, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Russia, and many others. The exact dates vary from culture to culture, but festivities are usually organized around the summer solstice.

MIDSUMMER CELEBRATIONS IN SWEDEN, FINLAND AND DENMARK

Midsummer is a very popular national holiday in Sweden and Finland. In Sweden and Swedish speaking parts of Finland, one of the popular traditions is raising and dancing around a maypole or midsummer pole. There is also a believe that if an unmarried girl collects 7 types of summer flowers in the quite of this special night and places them under her pillow, she will see her future husband in her dream. In addition, a big part of celebration in both of these countries is getting together with families, eating traditional food, and drinking.

In Denmark, the solstitial celebration is accompanied by bonfires and songs, speeches, and picnics that are often held on the beach. The fires are lit to ward off witches and evil



Photo: Roberto Galan / Shutterstock.com

creatures, since the burnings are believed to send the "witch" away. Danish families often get together and go to churches for Saint John's worship services. On Saint John's Eve and Saint John's Day, eating, drinking and talking in a family circle afterwards.

KUPALA NIGHT IN SLAVIC COUNTRIES

Saint John the Baptist's birth is also celebrated in Slavic countries. For example, in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, there is an ancient pagan holiday named Kupala Night or Ivan-Kupala, that used to have a different meaning and was historically celebrated on the shortest night of the year. However, the Eastern Orthodox Church that played an important role in Christianizing this holiday, uses an "old" Julian calendar which does not match the actual solstice. As a result, Ivan-Kupala is celebrated on July 7, which is the "new" June 24 according to more modern Gregorian calendar. On Kupala day, those who are in love jump over the flames of bonfires while holding hands. If they do not succeed in completing the jump, holding hands till the very end, it is considered a prediction of their future separation. Those single people who want to test their courage and confidence also jump over bonfires. Young girls float



gorgeous flower wreaths on rivers. They make these wreaths themselves and put on them a lit candle. Men try to catch a wreath, hoping to attract the attention of the woman who made it. Collecting wild flowers to make wreaths and magnificent crowns is also an important tradition in Sweden. There is an interesting legend in Slavic countries as well as in Finland, that ferns blossom only once a year - on Kupala Night. Their flowers are magical and valuable rewards are promised to those who find the flowers.

The summer solstice is not only an interesting natural phenomenon, it also has a significant cultural meaning for various nations around the globe. With roots in pagan times, Midsummer is a celebration of the longest day of the year, still important for people in different countries.



Photo: home for heroes / Shutterstock.com

Making flower wreaths to celebrate the feast day of Saint John the Baptist is still a popular tradition in Sweden, Ukraine, Russia, and other countries.





SHASHLIK

INGREDIENTS:

- 1800 - 2000g of pork
- 6 - 8 onions (depending on the size)
- 1.5 - 2 tablespoons salt
- 1.5 teaspoons ground black pepper
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 bay leaf
- Dill and green onions or other herbs of your choice

The first thing you need to know about cooking shashlik is that it's an art, not a science! Choosing the right kind of meat is important. The best part would be pork neck or pork shoulder. For juicy shashlik buy the meat that is fattier. This way your shashlik will be more flavorful because the drops of fat release an amazing smoke flavor into the meat as the droplets burn. If you choose a part with no fat, shashlik will be very dry.

STEP 1. PREPARING THE MEAT

- Slice the meat into small pieces
- Cut the onions into whole onion ring slices
- Mix the meat with onions, add salt, ground black pepper, bay leaf. You may add more or less salt or black pepper. You may also use some other spices of your choice. You are the artist, so trust your muse and create your own masterpiece!
- Cut 2 lemons in half and squeeze the juice into the meat
- Mix everything very well, cover and refrigerate overnight or at least for 4 hours

STEP 2. GRILLING

Traditionally this dish is cooked on a long narrow open style bbq called *mangal*, over wood charcoals, but gas grill will work as well. To follow all the rules, you might need to buy long steel skewers, called *shampuri*. However, bamboo skewers are a good option if you don't want to pay a lot of money.

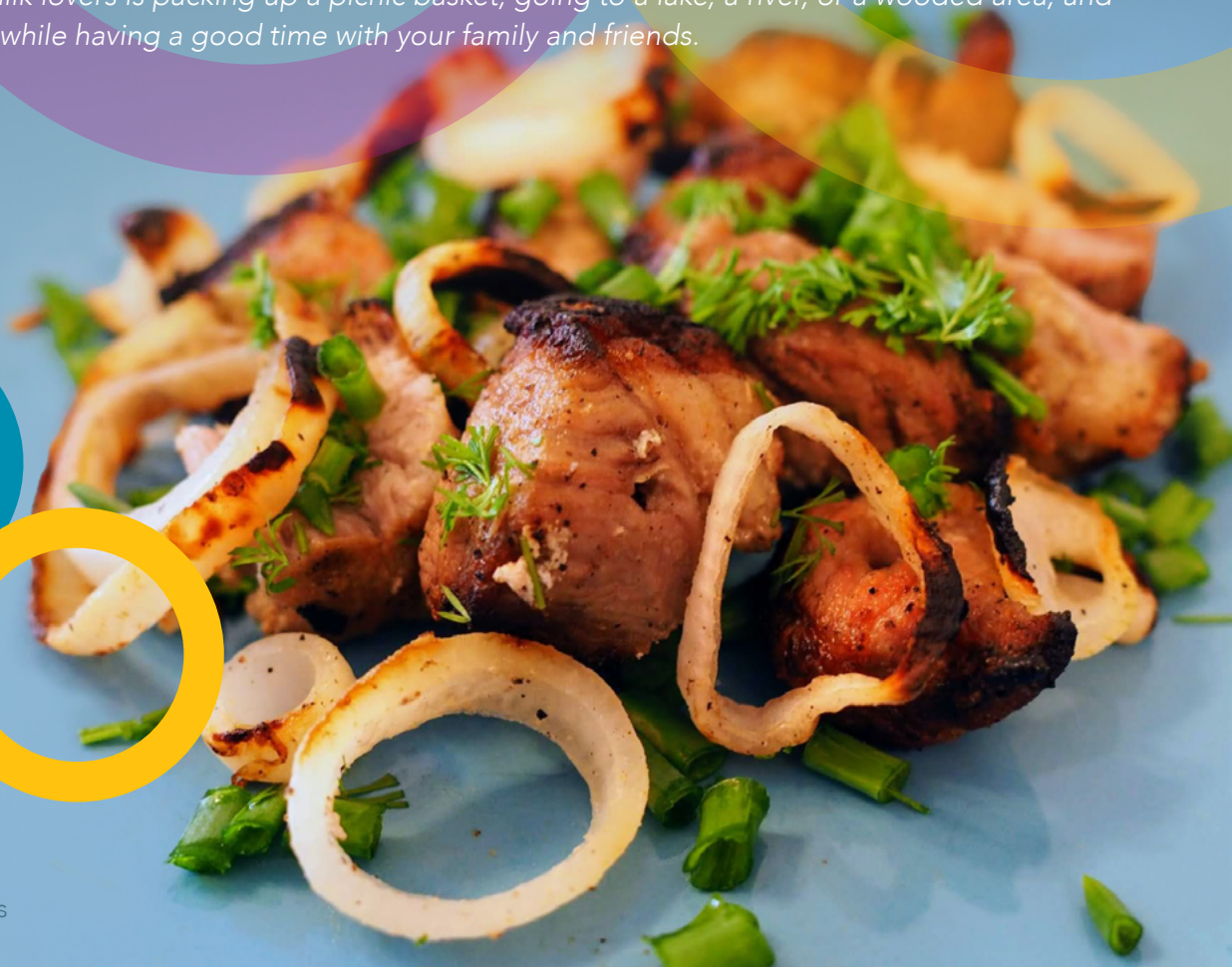
Grill the meat skewers, turning them on all sides. The grilling time will largely depend on the type of the grill that you are using, the size of those pieces of meat, the number of pieces you put on one skewer and many other things. Thus, there is always only one rule: cook until done! Cut the largest piece of meat in half: if you see that the juices run clear, then it's ready. Sprinkle shashlik with dill and green onions and enjoy!

Smachnoho! (Enjoy your meal! in Ukrainian)

SHASHLIK FACTS:

Various types of meat skewers or kebabs are popular in a lot of countries: Azerbaijan, China, Greece, India, Iran, Levant, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and many others. Shashlik, as a type of marinated and grilled over charcoal or wood fire kebab, is particularly popular across Central Asia, the Caucasus, Russia, and Ukraine. Nowadays, it is mostly considered a picnic food or a food that you might order when you eat out. However, a lot of people cook shashlik on the grill at home as well.

Originally, shashlik was made of lamb. However, pork, chicken, sometimes beef, and even fish are popular alternatives nowadays. There are unique recipes of shashlik in every country and often even different families from the same country have their own recipe of shashlik. Every professional and amateur chef claims that his or her unique marinade recipe is the best, despite the fact that sometimes they suggest some very odd tips. For example, popular recipes recommend marinating meet in vinegar, beer, wine, yogurt, mayonnaise, kefir, mustard, tomato juice, mineral water, and even Coca-Cola! However, the thing that unites all shashlik lovers is packing up a picnic basket, going to a lake, a river, or a wooded area, and grilling some meat while having a good time with your family and friends.



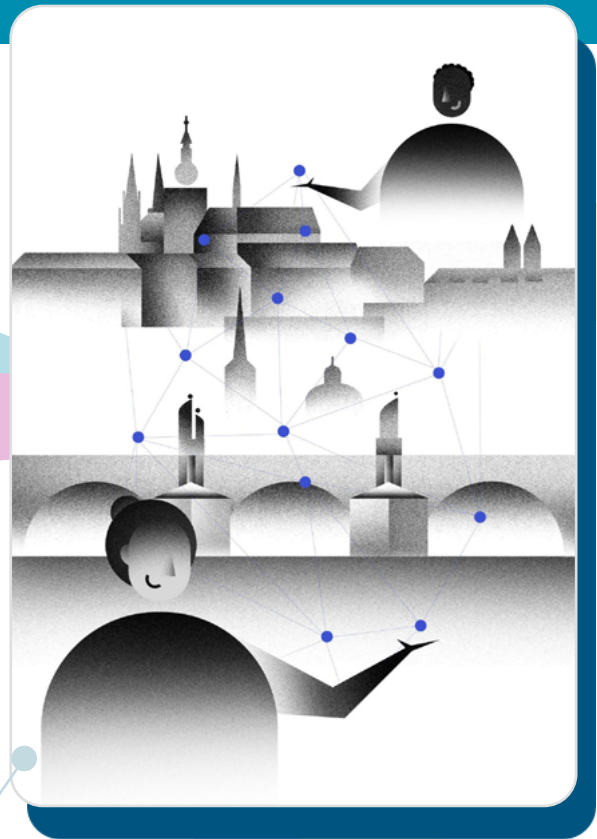
INTRODUCING



Artificial intelligence is playing an increasingly more important role in our lives and economy, and is already driving much of the innovation we are seeing today. With first-class research, successful companies and talents across all industries, Prague has all it takes to spearhead progress in this field.

The mission of [prg.ai](#) is to transform Prague into a significant European AI hub. A thriving community of international researchers and academics who bring the essential dose of diversity of thought, experience, backgrounds and networks is an indispensable ingredient in achieving our ambitious goal. Since our inception in August 2019, we have launched [a number of projects](#) for international researchers.

To acquaint incoming researchers with our metropolis and make their transfer easier, we have created a [Practical Guide for a Happy Life in Prague](#) which includes tips, tricks and



recommendations not only from the prg.ai team but, more importantly, from researchers themselves. We have also launched the Prague's International Researchers community, which aims to facilitate the sharing of useful information and insights related to living and working in Czechia and help researchers establish personal ties and multidisciplinary professional synergies.

Up until now, the community was being formed primarily on Slack organised into channels based on topics such as news, events, healthcare, culture & leisure, outdoors, working & living in CZ and so on. As soon as the situation permits, our goal is to organise regular offline gatherings and events. International researchers can sign up to [join the Slack here](#).



MEETINGS & EVENTS

BOOK THESE DATES:

JUNE

- 23rd, 10:00 – 11:30 Webinar Hard life in the Czech Republic – the intercultural insight also for the newcomers; contact [here](#). 🖱️
- 29th, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! – finally personally with the ice-breaker topic "My dream holiday"; for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited; contact [here](#). 🖱️
- 29th, 9:30 – 11:30 Seminar Work with Czech for international employees and PhD students of University of Pardubice, more information [here](#). 🖱️

JULY

- 1st, 9:00 - 13:00 First Adaptation and Integration Course for researchers and their family members – already fully booked (Prague)
- 27th, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! with the ice-breaker topic „My favourite book“; for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited; contact [here](#). 🖱️
- 28th, 9:00 – 13:00 Second Adaptation and Integration Course for researchers and their family members – space still available, contact [here](#). (Prague) 🖱️

AUGUST

- 31st, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! with the ice-breaker topic „Guilty pleasure“, for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited; contact [here](#). 🖱️
- Date and time TBD Adaptation and Integration course for researchers and their family members in Brno.
- Release date TBD 4th edition of EURAXESS Newsletter

SEPTEMBER

- 8th, 10:00 – 12:00 webinar/seminar How to apply for a job in the Czech Republic – for the newly coming spouses of researchers
- 21st, 13:00 – 15:00 Let's meet! for spouses of researchers in Prague, the number of participants is limited; contact [here](#). 🖱️

THANKS FOR READING!

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

