

# Artists' project aims to help foreigners in ČR

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Prague, Jan 9 (CTK) - The Welcome to Prague information kiosk that has been located in Prague's Kampa island since Tuesday is designed to prepare foreigners for obstacles they face in obtaining a residence permit or renewing visas in the Czech Republic, the daily Mlada fronta Dnes wrote on Friday.

The mobile kiosk that has been designed by artists Tamara Moyzes and Shlomo Yaffe and that can be easily moved to any place will be stationed on Kampa until January 12.

The visitors of the kiosk can see an instruction video in which the authors try to give advice to foreigners from non-EU countries who apply for residence in the Czech Republic.

"Welcome to Prague. In our info centre we will extend helping hand to you on your path to obtaining an entry visa to the Czech Republic," Shlomo Yaffe says in the introduction.

"First we would like to show you a picturesque environment of Czech foreigner policy," Tamara Moyzes says.

Immediately after the introduction, a very long line of people waiting outside foreigner police offices appears on the screen. In order to obtain a residence permit or renew their visas foreigners have to queue long hours and they often have to come to the foreigner police premises as early as 4:00 a.m.

The authors of the project interviewed several foreigners from non-European Union countries who complained that they had to come to the police many days in a row to have their matter settled.

Art critic Jiri Ptacek says the Welcome to Prague project points to one of the most important paradoxes of the Czech state apparatus.

"On the one hand, the authorities boast of their steps against far-right extremism, but on the other they are unwilling to correct their own shortcomings," he says.

"The Czech foreigner police offices are known to foreigners as a place where they face humiliation and where they realise that they are second-rate persons," Ptacek says.

The Welcome to Prague project is one of the projects prepared by the Cell art gallery, the paper writes.

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