

PRESS RELEASE

Introducing Česko.Digital - a community of professionals who want to change Czech Republic with the help of ones and zeros.

Prague, 21 May 2019 - **Czech programmer and entrepreneur Jakub announces the launch of the organisation Česko.Digital - a platform for IT professionals who believe that with the help of technology it is possible to develop websites and apps that make the Czech Republic a better place to live. Therefore, they want to use their spare time to help the state and non-governmental organisations solve social problems or even just make bureaucracy more people-friendly.**

The project was inspired by similar activities internationally which encourage collaboration between public institutions, the nonprofit sector and the IT community. The result of this collaboration is functional open source solutions that connect users with the state and respond to current societal challenges. Openness, efficiency, professionalism and emphasis on the real needs of the users are values that Česko.Digital wants to represent.

Quoting Jakub Nešetřil, director Česko.Digital

In the Czech Republic there is a high level of technical schools and a strong technology community. It is a pity that so far it has not been used to improve our common environment. We want to change that. Almost 50 volunteers who work with us testify to a great interest from IT professionals - and I believe that hundreds more will join us this year.

This is a response to a situation where the government and non-governmental organizations don't have the necessary resources to develop functional, user-friendly and effective public services. The community of Česko.Digital wants to bring a solution.

Quoting Robert Basch, Board member of Česko.Digital and President of the OSF Foundation

The OSF Foundation has long been supporting introducing to the Czech Republic concepts working abroad and the case of Česko.Digital is no different. We see the combination of technology, emphasis on openness and civic participation, on which this initiative is based, as an excellent response to current societal challenges in the digital age.

The first project Česko.Digital worked on was a website for generating voter registration applications for this year's European Parliament elections, developed for Hlídač Státu. The aim was to create an application that translates the electoral law into a simple form, making it easier to participate in elections outside the voter's place of residence.

This example has shown that even a small group of people who choose to spend their free time can make life easier and save people a lot of time thanks to technology - almost ten thousand people have used the web in a few weeks.

This is aided by the cooperation with the non-profit sector as well as with state institutions and municipalities. Together with Radek Hábl, creator of Mapa Exekucí, they are preparing a website that will allow citizens to easily find an overview of their debts to the state administration and thus avoid unnecessary increases in the amount owed and subsequent debt collection. It also cooperates on the further development of the CityVizor application, which visualizes data on the management of municipalities and towns.

“It turns out that open data projects make great sense in solving societal problems. If they are visualized, they become more comprehensible and understandable not only for legislators but also for ordinary citizens. That is why I am glad that this community, which will provide valuable know-how in the development of other data projects, is being created,” says Radek Hábl.

Česko.Digital is a community of IT professionals who, in collaboration with the state and the non-governmental sector, develop digital solutions in the Czech Republic in their free time. Together, they develop open source solutions that are tailored to the needs of end users, cost less and work better.

More about Česko.Digital at <https://cesko.digital/>.

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