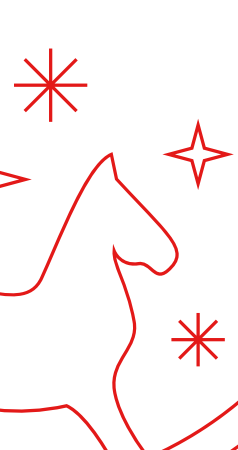





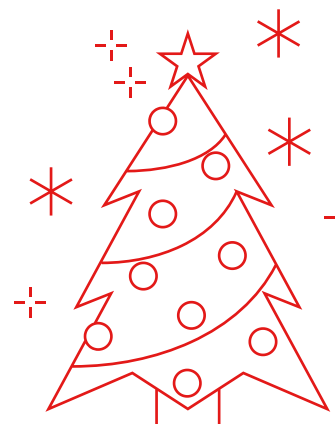
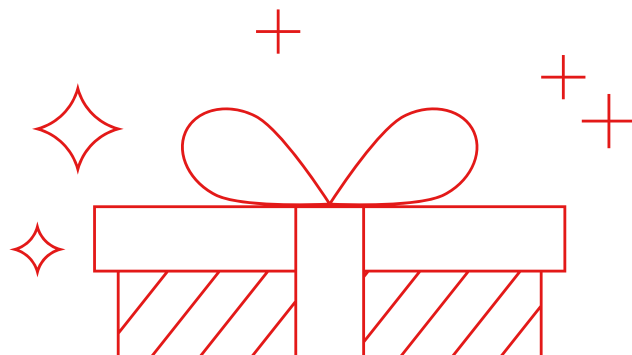

## Dear friends from Europe!

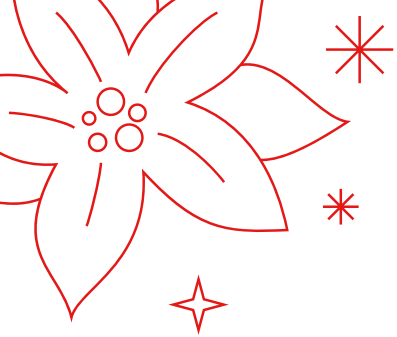


We come from Pardubice, a lovely city in the heart of the Czech Republic. It's known for its beautiful old centre, a big castle, and a famous horse race called the Velká Pardubická. Every year, the city celebrates "Advent Scented with Gingerbread." Many cafés and restaurants take part, offering delicious food, cakes, and drinks with a festive spice flavour. Visitors from other towns come to taste these sweet treats and enjoy the magical Christmas atmosphere. The streets smell wonderful, because families at home bake lots of perníčky — our traditional gingerbread cookies!

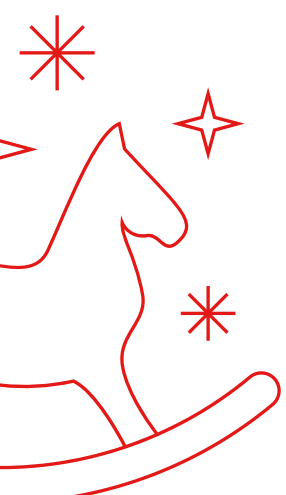


The Czech Republic is a small but beautiful country in Central Europe, full of mountains, forests, and castles. Our capital, Prague, is full of history, lights, and beautiful bridges. In Pardubice, there is a centre called EUROPE DIRECT where people can learn more about the European Union and take part in fun international projects, just like this one!

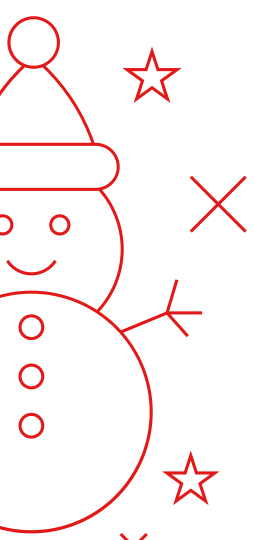




The Christmas ornaments you received were handmade by children from the local primary school in Srch, a nearby village. Our decorated tree will be displayed in a shopping arcade in the city centre, so everyone can admire it and feel the European Christmas spirit!



At Christmas, we decorate a tree, sing carols, and enjoy a special dinner on Christmas Eve. Instead of Santa Claus, Ježíšek — Baby Jesus — brings our presents. We usually eat carp with potato salad, and after dinner, we open our gifts. Some families float little candles in walnut shells on water to see what the new year will bring.



Before Christmas, on 5th December, we celebrate St Nicholas Day (Mikuláš). Children meet three visitors: Mikuláš, an angel, and a devil (čert). The angel praises good children, the devil warns the naughty ones, and Mikuláš gives small gifts like sweets or fruit. It's a fun and exciting tradition that we love!

We wish you a Merry Christmas (**Veselé Vánoce**) and a Happy New Year (**šťastný nový rok**)!

With love,

*Renata and Martin*

