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# The Rector of the VŠE has Received the Highest Honour that France can Bestow: The *Order of the Légion d'Honneur*

His Excellency, M. Jean-Pierre Asvazadourian, the Ambassador of the French Republic to the Czech Republic, conferred the Order of the Legion d'Honneur upon the Rector of the VSE, Professor Hana Machkova, on 7th April, 2016. The conferral ceremony took place at the Embassy of the French Republic in Prague, in Buquoy Palace, which houses the embassy.

Prague, 8 April, 2016

Prof. Machková has dedicated her entire professional life to France. She has been in charge of the „Institut franco-tcheque de gestion“ ( the French-Czech Institute of Management), which is the only institution specializing in French management in the Czech Republic; since 1990.

The most important project which has emerged from this joint cooperation, and which was supported by the French Embassy, is the program *MASTER – Management et Administration des Entreprises* (the French equivalent of the MBA). Over 600 students have already participated in this program, and they now feature prominently in the area of Franco-Czech economic cooperation. In recognition of her contributions to this project, Prof. Machková received the *Ordre des Palmes académiques* (the Order of Academic Palms) in 1996. As a Vice-Rector, and currently reigning Rector of the VŠE, Prof. Machková has contributed greatly to the development of cooperation among French and Czech universities; for instance, by her support of joint-degree and double-degree educational programs, the development of exchange programs, as well as cooperation in the area of academic research. Prof. Machková has also been visiting professor in France for more than 20 years. She is one of the very few persons to have been awarded a second French order.

"This honour is an appreciation of her exceptional life path and of her extraordinary service to the benefit of our respective countries," stated the Ambassador of France, Jean-Pierre Asvazadourian. "Prof. Hana Machková's personality is a symbol of French-Czech universities' relations", he added. In her speech, Prof. Machková thanked her family, her friends, colleagues, and last but not least, she paid special tribute to all the Ambassadors of the French Republic to have been accredited to the Czech Republic since 1990, the year when the *French-Czech Institute of Management* was established.

The Order of the Légion d'Honneur is the highest French national honour, and is well-known, and revered, all over the world. It is awarded by the President of France, on the basis of a



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presidential decree. As on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 it had over 93 000 members from France. A Presidential award, the Légion d'Honneur may be conferred upon citizens of other countries in recognition of their services to France itself, or, more broadly, in recognition of achievements which uphold the ideals of the French Republic. About 400 foreigners are conferred with this honour every year.

Amongst Czech recipients of the Order there are the important statesmen: Edvard Beneš, Václav Havel, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk; military leaders: František Fajtl, Jan Syrový; churchmen: Cardinal Dominik Duka; representatives of the academic community: Lubor Niederle, Otakar Quadrat; or figures from the cultural sphere: Marta Kubišová, Miloš Forman or Alfons Mucha.

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**The University of Economics, Prague** (Vysoká škola ekonomická v Praze) is the leading university in the field of management and economics in the Czech Republic. The University of Economics, Prague is composed of more than 20,000 students and has six faculties – five in Prague and one in Jindřichův Hradec in South Bohemia. These include: the Faculty of Finance and Accounting, the Faculty of International Relations, the Faculty of Business Administration, the Faculty of Statistics and Informatics and the Faculty of Economics and Public Administration. The faculty based in Jindřichův Hradec is specialized in management. Graduates of the University of Economics, Prague occupy responsible positions in the private as well as in the public sector. Most of them are employed in the sectors of industry and services, trade, marketing, banking, public administration, accounting, audit, tourism and the field of information technology. Many significant Czech and foreign economists have obtained the University's Honoris Causa Title; for example, the Nobel Prize winner Prof. Robert A. Mundell, Prof. Milton Friedman and Prof. Gary S. Becker. More information at <http://www.vse.cz/english>.

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