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# April Belongs to Citizen Science. People Help Solve Problems Scientists Have Been Tackling for Years

April is celebrated worldwide as Citizen Science Month — a time highlighting activity in which members of the public contribute to both data collection and analysis. Globally, tens of millions of people are involved; in the Czech Republic, participation reaches hundreds of thousands each year. There are dozens of projects available to those interested — from monitoring birds and environmental changes to working with sensor data, analysing images of galaxies, or processing camera trap recordings. Anyone can take part in Citizen Science Month: all it takes is a smartphone, a computer, and the willingness to contribute to research whose results end up in scientific publications and international databases — and in some cases significantly accelerate the pace of discovery.

## Citizen Science Gains a Common Framework

Citizen science has a strong tradition in the Czech Republic, but until recently, it has often been fragmented across individual projects. In recent years, efforts have emerged to connect these activities, share experience, and unify approaches to data. “A key milestone was the signing of a memorandum in Brno in November 2025, establishing the [Czech and Slovak Citizen Science Platform](#). For the first time, we have a structure that connects these activities and provides them with a shared framework,” explains one of the platform’s founders, **Jakub Trojan**. The platform now brings together researchers, institutions, and the public through the [CitizenScience.cz](#) portal, which serves as both a gateway and a database of national projects. Users can select activities based on their interests and get involved accordingly. A wide range of opportunities is also available through international platforms such as SciStarter.com, Zooniverse, and CitizenScience.eu.

Citizen science aims to connect the public with research, strengthen collaboration between scientists, and ensure that collected data has real meaning and use. Working with data is becoming increasingly important in the broader context of the Czech e-infrastructure. “Our goal is to build an environment where research data complies with FAIR principles — meaning it is findable, accessible, and reusable across disciplines and countries. Citizen science fits naturally into this framework, as it generates large volumes of data while expanding the range of people involved in its creation,” says **Dominika Králiková**, Head of Communications of the [EOSC CZ initiative](#).

## From Birds to Enzymes — and Unexpected Discoveries

Most citizen science projects fall within the natural sciences, particularly biodiversity monitoring. “For example, the annual ‘Birdwatching Hour’ attracts tens of thousands of participants who record bird species in their surroundings over a short period of time. In recent editions, nearly 40,000 participants recorded more than 850,000 birds,” Trojan notes. Similar approaches are used in projects focused on climate data, such as Intersucho, where hundreds of volunteers regularly report soil and vegetation conditions. Their data feeds into maps used in practice.



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Participation is also possible entirely online. Many projects allow people to analyse galaxy images, classify camera trap data, or model protein structures. *“For example, in 2011, players of the citizen science game Foldit managed to determine the 3D structure of an enzyme (M-PMV) in just three weeks — something scientists had been unable to solve for more than 15 years. Earlier, in 2007, a Dutch schoolteacher, Hanny van Arkel, discovered a mysterious green cloud in a galaxy image (IC 2497), later identified as ionized gas illuminated by a past quasar, now known as Hanny’s Voorwerp. There are thousands of such examples,”* Trojan adds.

## Participation That Makes an Impact

Getting involved in citizen science does not require formal education or specialized equipment. People can observe nature, monitor protected areas, build and deploy their own air quality sensors, or contribute to data analysis. *“You don’t need to be an academic. What matters is curiosity and the willingness to spend time on something that has real impact,”* says Trojan.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of people in the Czech Republic contribute data that undergo validation and feed into research, mapping, modelling, and environmental decision-making. *“Citizen science is not a hobby or a marginal activity. It is a fully-fledged research tool that anyone curious enough can join and use to make a meaningful contribution,”* Trojan concludes.

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### About EOSC CZ

The European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) is a European initiative aimed at developing infrastructure to support open science practices in research data management. Within this broader European effort, the IPs EOSC-CZ project implements the initiative at the national level in the Czech Republic. The main goal of EOSC CZ is to build a national data infrastructure (NDI) — a future platform for sharing, managing, and accessing research data. The NDI will support scientific activities as well as multidisciplinary research across a wide range of fields. Participation in EOSC CZ is open to everyone through its ten working groups.

### About CitizenScience.cz

CitizenScience.cz is the national Czech portal dedicated to supporting and developing citizen science — an approach that actively involves the public in the collection, processing, and analysis of research data. The portal serves as a central hub and database of citizen science projects in the Czech Republic, connecting researchers, institutions, and volunteers. It provides information about ongoing projects, opportunities for participation, educational resources, and current developments in the field. CitizenScience.cz is the backbone platform of the Czech and Slovak Citizen Science Platform, established in November 2025 to create a shared framework for collaboration and the exchange of best practices. Anyone can get involved — visit [citizenscience.cz](http://citizenscience.cz), choose a project that matches your interests, and start contributing to research with real scientific and societal impact.



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