



# STUDY SUPPORT





# I. GENERAL PART

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COUNTRY

### 1.1 GEOGRAPHY

From the geomorphological point of view, the Czech Republic lies on the intersection of two mountain systems. The western and central part is filled with the Czech Highlands (Šumava, Krušné hory, Krkonoše, Jeseníky and others). The Western Carpathians (Javorníky, Moravskoslezské Beskydy, etc.) hit the eastern part of the country. Of the total area of the Czech Republic 67% lies at an altitude of up to 500 m. **The capital city** is the largest city - **Prague** with 1 280 500 inhabitants. The main European divide passes through the Czech territory, separating it into the North Sea, Baltic and Black Sea areas. The Czech Republic is divided into 14 self-governing regions and more than 6200 self-governing municipalities. Municipalities and regions are managed by elected councils. The heads of the regions are governors, heads of statutory cities mayors and heads of other towns and municipalities mayors as well.



## 1.2 STATE AND TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

The Czech Republic has six national symbols: a large national emblem (coat of arms), a small national emblem, a national flag, a flag of the President of the Republic, a state seal, and the national anthem "Where My Home is." The official language is Czech.



Large national emblem



Small national emblem



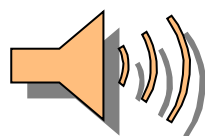
National flag



Flag of the President  
of the Republic



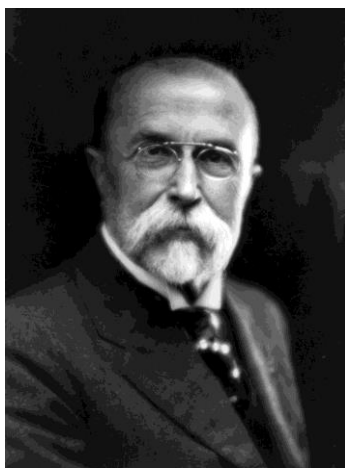
State seal



National anthem "Where My Home is."  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e12rGRO4JuA>



In the past Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was the first president after the birth of Czechoslovakia. In modern history it was, for example, Václav Havel and is currently Miloš Zeman.



Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk



Václav Havel



Miloš Zeman (2017)

### 1.3 TIME AND CLIMATE ZONES

Climate is moderate in the Czech Republic, intermediate between the continental and oceanic types. Typical is the alternation of the four seasons, with a significant influence on the climate's altitude and relief. The Czech Republic is in the time zone along with other major cities of Berlin, Vienna +1 hour.



## 2. HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

The first documented state body in the territory of today's Czech Republic was the tribal union of the Sam's empire. In the 9th century, the Great Moravian Empire was formed, later the Czech Kingdom. Since the time of Charles IV, it was the country of the Crown of Bohemia. Gradual integration into the Habsburg monarchy followed. After the expiration of Austria - Hungary in 1918, Czechoslovakia was established as a unitary state with a republican system. Czechoslovakia as a democratic state was restored in 1945. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was federalized in 1969 under the communist rule. The resistance to totalization and normalization gradually increased and culminated in the so-called Velvet Revolution of November 17, 1989, which overthrew the Communist regime, enabled the restoration of democracy and free enterprise. The Czech Republic has been a member of the EU since 2004.

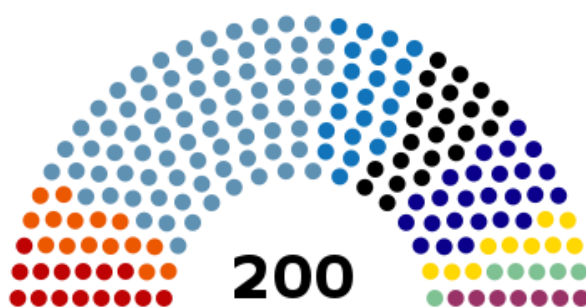




### 3. COUNTRY POLICY

#### 3.1 POLITICAL SITUATION

The Czech Republic is a parliamentary republic with a system of pluralist democracy. Legislative power is implemented through elected representatives in Parliament, which has 2 chambers: **The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate**. The executive power in the Czech Republic is divided between **the president and the government**. The President is elected for a period of 5 years, for a maximum of two consecutive periods. The range of political parties in the Czech Republic is made up of left-wing and right-wing thinking. The nature of left-wing thinking can be defined in ideas or movements such as socialism, liberalism, humanism, and multiculturalism, gender equality and the emphasis on environmental protection. Representatives are the KSČM (Communist Party) and the Social Democratic Party (CSSD). The characteristic of the right is based on the defense of property rights, loyalty to Western civilization and value conservatism. Representatives are the ODS (Civic Democratic Party) and TOP 09 (the Democratic Party).



Chamber of Deputies is  
made up of 200



The Senate is made up of 81  
Senators.



## 4. ECONOMY

### 4.1 CURRENCY

The economy of the Czech lands traditionally belongs to the most developed in Europe. Gross domestic product reaches the developed countries of the world. The Czech economy is the 16th most powerful in the EU, ahead of Portugal, Greece and reaches the level of Italy and Spain. The Czech Republic is among 22 the most developed countries in the world. In March 2016, the Czech Republic achieved the lowest unemployment rate across the EU. The currency used in the Czech Republic is **the Czech crown (CZK)**. It is issued by the Czech National Bank and the exchange rate of the currency is floating. Current exchange rate of the crown (20/11/2017): 1 EUR = 25,57 CZK, 1 \$ = 21,70 CZK.



### 4.2 WAGES, SALARY RATIOS

The minimum wage in the EU is usually set at half the average wage, or is roughly 2 times the minimum subsistence level. In the Czech Republic this was not always the case, in 2007 a minimum wage was CZK 8 000. It was gradually increased by the government regulations up to the present to 12 200 CZK.



### 4.3 SOCIAL SUPPORT, RETIREMENT

The Czech Republic distinguishes among four types of pensions: old-age, disabled, widow's (widower's) and orphan's. The basic condition for receiving a retirement pension is 65 years of age and 35 years of work, i.e. contributing to the pension fund. If these conditions are not met, the calculation of the amount of the pension is appropriately reduced.

### 4.4 PRŮMĚRNÉ CENY

Comparing prices of goods, energy, services, healthcare and others is very tricky. It is necessary to take into account the wages in the Czech Republic and abroad in euro. Some food and consumer products are cheaper in neighbouring countries, which is used by border residents for frequent purchases. However, many prices are comparable. In the Czech Republic is cheaper, for example, beer, cigarettes, petrol, rent, medical care and medicines.





## 4.5 TYPICKÉ ČESKÉ PRODUKTY

The most famous products of the Czech Republic include **glass**. It is lead crystal and cut glass. The Moser brand is the best of Czech glass. In the world are also known porcelain with onion pattern and porcelain from Thun



from Karlovy Vary.

The most famous and most popular products are **Czech beer**, especially Pilsner Urquell and Budweiser Budvar. Famous beverages include Becherovka - a liqueur called the 13th spring of the Karlovy Vary spa, and also Mattoni mineral water. We must mention **Škoda cars** from the engineering products. From the point of view of export products, **Bata** shoe giant has 50 production plants in 68 countries of the world.



ŠKODA AUTO

The Czech Republic is also the seat of a number of successful companies doing business in the field of information technology. The most well-known is Avast Software, which is one of the world's leading computer security companies.





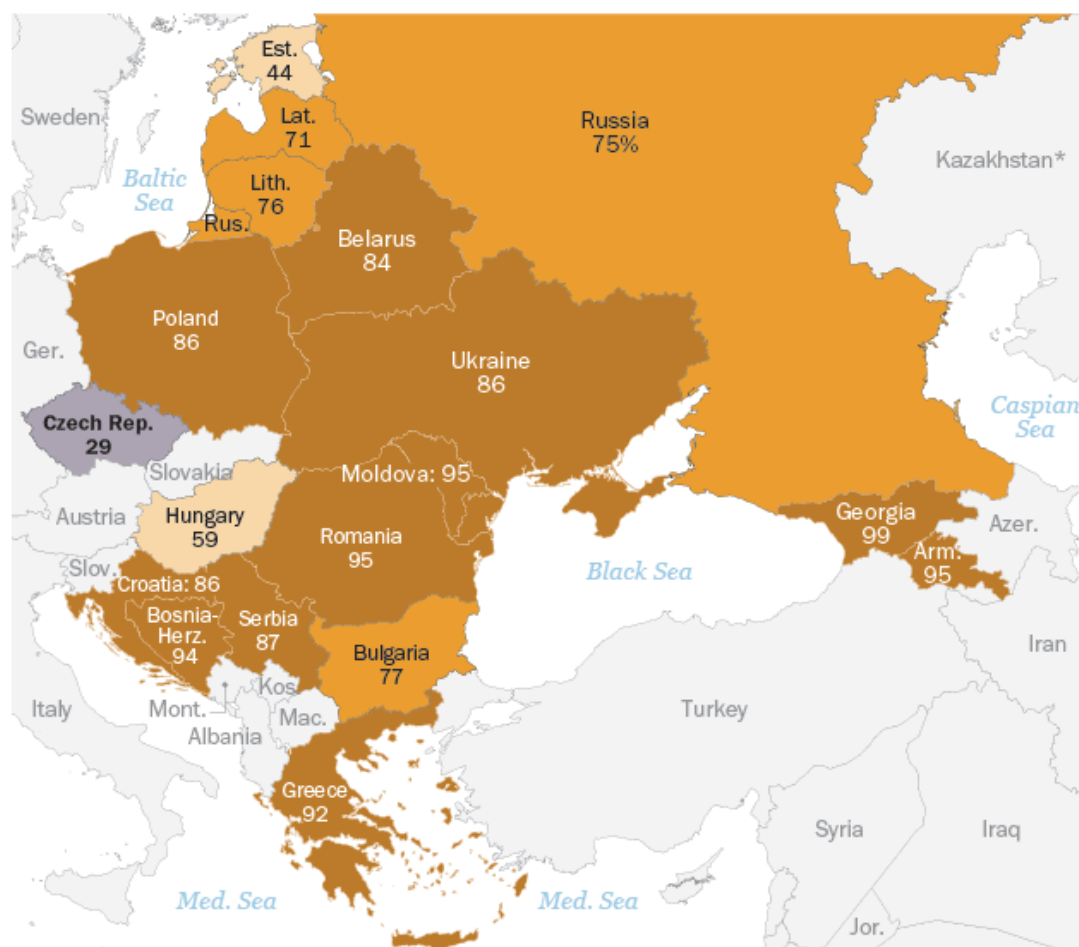
## 5. RELIGIONS, ETHNICS, MINORITIES

On the territory of the Czech Republic **5.1% of foreigners** live in the total population, i.e. about half a million people from 161 countries. The largest group is the population of Slovakia, followed by Ukraine, Hungary, Germany, and Russia. **An important community** in the Czech Republic is the Vietnamese. They are the third largest community, due to the migration that began in the 1950s. The Roma are the most numerous **national minority in the Czech Republic**. The Czech Republic is the most secularized within Europe and has the second lowest share of citizens reporting to any religion. **The Roman Catholic Church** has a dominant position.

### Belief in God much lower in Czech Republic than other Central and Eastern European countries

% who say they believe in God

■ < 40% ■ 40%-60% ■ 61%-80% ■ > 80% ■ Non-surveyed country



\*Kazakhstan was surveyed as part of this study, but results are not analyzed in this report.  
Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries. See Methodology for details.  
"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"



## 6. HOLIDAYS AND TRADITIONS OF THE COUNTRY

There are **12 officially recognized holidays** in the Czech Republic: New Year (1.1.), Good Friday, Easter Monday, Labour Day (1.5.), Victory Day (8.5.), Cyril and Methodius Day (5.7.), Day of burning of Master Jan Hus (6.7.), Czech Statehood Day (28.9.), Independent Czechoslovak State Day (28.10.), Day of Fight for Freedom and Democracy (17.11.), Christmas Eve (24.12.) And First Christmas Day (25.12.).

These days there is a working day off, pupils and school students are out of work, and the sales hours of large stores are reduced, or some are closed. Most of the inhabitants of the Czech Republic celebrate these holidays either as a tradition (e.g. Christmas, Easter) or perceive them as a day off. They mostly spend time with families and friends.



## 7. FAMILY

### 7.1 TRADITIONAL FAMILY, GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The basic, complete family in the Czech Republic is man, woman and their children. The extended family in the Czech Republic also includes other relatives - grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. In the traditional Czech family, both partners are usually given public or church marriages, but more and more pairs of unmarried couples have grown in recent years. Especially in the younger generation, families of unmarried couples are promoting partnerships without commitment. In the Czech Republic we can also meet the concept of an incomplete family, where one of the parents is missing.

### 7.2 MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, REGISTERED RELATIONSHIP

Marriage on the territory of the Czech Republic can have a form of civil or religious marriage. Non-religious marriages are more common and are a public and ceremonial ceremony, usually closed at the town hall in the presence of two witnesses. In recent years, marriages in unofficial places - in nature, on board, in aircraft, etc. have been growing more and more. However, the presence of an authorized official and witnesses is a condition.

### 7.3 CARE FOR AN UNAUTHORIZED CHILD

Adoption of the child is guaranteed by the Czech state. By adoption, the family relationship between the child and his / her original family ceases. Adoption must always meet legal requirements and must lead to the benefit of the child. The condition is the consent of biological parents or legal guardian with adoption.



## 8. LIFESTYLE OF THE COUNTRY

### 8.1 GENERAL

The lifestyle of the average Czech is based on individual needs. The choice of lifestyle is influenced by the family, their traditions, but also the financial level. New trends and modernity play a significant role for young people. Parents are usually tolerant of choosing the style of their offspring. Among the factors most damaging to the health of Czechs are smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, poor nutrition, low physical activity, drug abuse and excessive psychological stress. Data on morbidity show an increase in heart and blood vessel diseases or cancer.

### 8.2 EDUCATION

The education system in the Czech Republic is primarily based on the Education Act and the Higher Education Act. Education is provided by public schools (formerly the state, now established by the county), which are the majority, and are free for pupils and students. The smaller share of schools is ecclesiastical and private, they set charges of 3-10 thousand crowns a month per pupil or student. Their numbers are showing an increasing tendency and are regulated by the Ministry of Education. In colleges, students can undergo free studies for up to 26 years of age, then they have to pay health insurance, which was previously paid by the state, and tuition fees.



<http://www.msmt.cz/mezinarodni-vztahy/the-education-system-in-the-czech-republic>



### 8.3 PEOPLE'S APPEARANCE

Europeans, including Czechs, belong to Europoid race. Physically, its features are bright skin colour; a narrow, often protruding nose; a narrow or medium-wide face with relatively narrow lips. The men grow on an average height of 180cm. The type of figure is varied and very dependent on age, lifestyle and type of sports activities they run. This is true for women as well. The average women's height is 167cm. The Czech Republic belongs to countries with more obese people, i.e. 19.3% of adults, compared to the EU average of 15.9%. People's appearance depends on fashion, lifestyle, value system, economic possibilities, and personality.

### 8.4 SPECIFICS OF COMMUNICATION, ETIQUETTE

For the Czechs there is a typical communication with a high share of non-verbal messages, the importance of which the partner has to draw from the context. In non-verbal communication, the Czechs prefer a more reserved approach, and not too impulsive gesture. It is publicly unfair to point at someone by finger, spit on the floor, rip or pull the sleeve of someone we want to talk with. It is also not appropriate to interrupt someone.

### 8.5 MENTALITY

Czechs are proud to be members of the nation and Czech history. In addition, they are also proud of Czech personalities from the field of art, literature, sports, science and technology. Flexibility, ingenuity and adaptability are the typical qualities. For Czechs, there is also a typical mistrust of almost everything they do not know. Czechs often tend not to keep general rules, it is common to think about how to bypass the law. The friendship is important for the them, they place emphasis on specific human relationships, as well as on the good feeling that results from them.



## 8.6 FOOD

The Czech menu usually consists of two or more courses - the first is traditionally a soup. The main course usually consists of some meat with side dishes. The most commonly used meat is pork, beef, chicken, sometimes fish or rabbit. Traditional dishes are pork schnitzel (fried pork fillet wrapped in flour, eggs and breadcrumbs), pork with dumplings and cabbage, roast pork, goulash or fried carp. Specialities of Czech cuisine include sauces dumplings and many types of cakes and pastries.



Traditional Czech dishes – fried pork schnitzel (top left), pork with dumplings and cabbage (bottom left) and goulash with bread dumplings (in the middle).



## 8.7 SPORT, LEISURE

Working hours in the Czech Republic are set at 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. As for free time, Czechs have about 6.5 hours a day, the most at the weekends. The most popular activities that Czechs spend on average 2 hours per day include watching TV, using PCs and other media, following various sports activities and reading. 90% of Czechs are devoted to individual hobbies. Younger people do sports or spend more time by increasing their professional and language skills.

*Have you recognized historic figures on the front page? Here are their names (in the middle is the Czech King and Roman Emperor Charles IV).*



NEJSLAVNĚJŠÍ ČECH:

Karel IV.

