

The Czech Republic

short version

Basic Facts

The Czech Republic is situated in Central Europe. It has a population of 10.5 million. The capital and the largest city is Prague. The currency is the Czech Crown. The local language is Czech. The Czech Republic consists of the historic lands of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, and 14 regions.

Geography

The Czech Republic borders Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria. The highest point is Sněžka. It is located in the Krkonoše Mountains. There are four national parks. The oldest one is Krkonoše National Park. The climate is mostly continental. Summers are warm and winters are cold, cloudy and snowy. The warmest area is the South Moravian Region. Many rivers such as the Labe, the Vltava and the Morava flow through the country.

Government and Politics

The Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy. The parliament consists of the House of Deputies (200 members) and the Senate (81 members). The head of state is the President. He appoints the Prime Minister, who is head of government.

Economy

Engineering plays the most important role in Czech industry. Škoda Auto is one of the largest car manufacturers in Central Europe. Other important branches are metallurgical and chemical industries. Typical Czech products are cars, beer, coal, glass and jewellery.

Places of Interest

There are many historical sights and natural wonders in the Czech Republic. The most popular tourist attraction is the historical centre of Prague. There are many castles in the country, for example Karlštejn, Křivoklát, Hluboká and Konopiště. There are also famous spa towns. The oldest ones are Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně.

Doplňující otázky

1. What does the flag of the Czech Republic look like?

It consists of a blue triangle and two horizontal bands: one white and one red.

2. What do you know about the foundation of the Czech Republic?

On 1st January 1993, Czechoslovakia was peacefully split into the independent Czech Republic and Slovakia. The first President was Václav Havel.

3. Which Czechs have won the Nobel Prize?

Two Czech personalities in history have won the Nobel Prize. Jaroslav Heyrovský was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1959 for the invention and development of the polarographic method. The poet Jaroslav Seifert was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1984.

4. Which places of interests have been listed as UNESCO sights?

The historical centre of Prague, the historical centre of Český Krumlov, the historical centre of Telč, the Pilgrimage Church of Jan Nepomuk in Zelená Hora, Kutná Hora, Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape, Holašovice, Kroměříž Castle and Gardens, Litomyšl Castle, Holy Trinity Column in Olomouc, Villa Tugendhat in Brno and Třebíč.

5. What do you know about the national anthem of the Czech Republic?

The national anthem of the Czech Republic is Kde domov můj (Where is my home). It was written by the composer František Škroup and the playwright Josef Kajetán Tyl.

6. What do you know about sport in the Czech Republic?

The two most popular sports are football and ice hockey. They get the most attention from the media and the public. The Czech national ice hockey team is one of the most successful teams in the world. The other sports with professional teams are for example basketball, volleyball, athletics, handball and floorball. Winter sports such as skiing and biathlon are also popular.

7. Which composers were born in the Czech Republic?

The most famous ones are Antonín Dvořák, Bedřich Smetana and Leoš Janáček. Antonín Dvořák is the author of Slavonic Dances and the symphony From the New World. Bedřich Smetana composed a symphonic poem called Vltava. Leoš Janáček is famous for his operas which are based on Czech stories.

8. What do you know about Czech cuisine?

Czech meals typically consist of three courses. The first one is soup, the second one is the main dish and the third one is dessert. The most popular traditional main dishes are roast pork with cabbage and dumplings, beef sirloin with cream sauce and fruit dumplings. The most popular drink is beer.

9. What do you know about Czech language?

Czech is a Slavic language. 10 million people speak it. It is very similar to the Slovak language.

Důležitá slovíčka

currency	(karnsi)	měna
border	(bóldr)	hranice, hraničit
appoint	(apojnt)	jmenovat
House of Deputies	(haus of depjtís)	Poslanecká sněmovna
government	(gavment)	vláda
branch	(bránč)	odvětví
coal	(koul)	uhlí
jewellery	(džúlry)	šperky
spa town	(spa taun)	lázeňské město
Pilgrimage Church	(pilgrimidž črč)	poutnický kostel
Holy Trinity Column	(houly trinity kolm)	Sloup Nejsvětější Trojice
anthem	(entm)	hymna
composer	(kompouzr)	skladatel
playwright	(plerajt)	dramatik
cabbage	(kebidž)	zelí
dumplings	(damplins)	knedlíky
sirloin	(sirlá-jn)	svíčková