

The Czech Republic

- Official name: the Czech Republic
 - National flag: red, white and blue
 - Area: 78842 square kilometers
 - Population: 10 314 000 people
 - Official language: Czech
 - Currency: 1 Czech crown
 - Highest peak: Sněžka (1602 m)
 - Major rivers: Elbe (Labe), Vltava, Odra, Morava, Berounka
 - Form of government: republic
 - Head of state: President
 - Head of government: Prime Minister
 - Capital city: Prague
 - Largest cities: Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Pilsen, Olomouc...
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- The Czech Republic is a country situated in central Europe. It has **4 neighbours** – Germany in the west, Poland in the north, Slovakia in the east and Austria in the south. It has 78 842 km² and its **population** is about 10 314 000 people. Maximum distance from west to east is about 490 km and the distance from north to the south is about 280km. The **capital city** is Prague, other important cities include Brno, Ostrava, Pilsen, Olomouc.
 - The Czech Republic consists of **3 parts** – Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Bohemia is a part where there are hills and plains surrounded by mountains, while Moravia and Silesia are mostly lowland parts.
 - The **highest peak** is Sněžka (1602m) in the Krkonoše Mountains; other mountains include Krušné hory, Šumava mountains, Jizerské mountains, Orlické mountains, Jeseníky, Beskydy.
 - The main **rivers** in the Czech Republic are the Labe, the Vltava, the Ohře, the Morava, the Sázava, the Odra. The Labe is the most important river for shipping and it flows into the North Sea. The Vltava river which is the longest river in the Czech Republic flows into the Labe and is famous for its dams, for example Lipno, Slapy. Orlik. The Morava is the most important river in Moravia and it flows into the Danube and then into the Black Sea.
 - The **climate** of the Czech Republic is continental and humid, there are cold winters and warm summers.
 - There are more than 10 000 000 **people** in the Czech Republic. The major ethnic groups are the Czech people who include both the Bohemians and the Moravians. Other ethnic groups include Slovaks, Poles, Vietnamese, Germans, Hungarians, Russians and Ukrainians. More than 75% people live in urban areas.
 - The Czech Republic is a **parliamentary democracy**, the Parliament consists of 2 parts – the Chamber of deputies and the Senate. The head of the state is the president and the head of the government is the Prime Minister. The new president is elected directly by people who are over 18 years old. The last election was in January 2023.
 - There are **14 regions** in the Czech Republic (Prague Region, Central Bohemian region, South Bohemian region, Pilsen region, Carlsbad region, Usti nad Labem region, Liberec region, Hradec Kralove region, Pardubice region, Olomouc region, Moravian-Silesian region, South Moravian region, Zlin region, Vysocina region).

- **Largest cities** in the Czech Republic include Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Pilsen, Olomouc. **Prague** is the capital city of the Czech Republic and also the largest one. **Brno** is the second largest city in the Czech Republic, situated in Moravia, famous also for Špilberk which was built in the 13th century as a royal castle, later turned into a Baroque fortress with a prison, now it is the seat of Brno museum. **Ostrava** is a centre of metallurgical industry and is situated in Silesia. **Pilsen** is the fourth largest city in the Czech Republic situated in western Bohemia and famous for its breweries and Škoda factory. **Olomouc** is an educational, cultural and industrial centre in Moravia. Other Czech places of interest include spa towns such as **Karlovy Vary**, **Mariánské Lázně**, **Františkovy Lázně**, medieval castle **Karlštejn** near Prague, **Hluboká Chateau** in southern Bohemia, **Lednice Chateau** in southern Moravia and many others, the caves in **Moravian Karst**, virgin forest called **Boubín** in southern Bohemia. There are also many natural beauties in the Czech Republic –for example rocks in the Czech Paradise, Bohemian Switzerland, Teplice-Adršpach rocks.
- Some places are protected as nature reserves or national parks. In the Czech republic we have 4 national parks. The oldest one is the Krkonoše national park, the biggest one is the Šumava national park. In Moravia there is the National park Podyjí and the youngest national park is Bohemian Switzerland.
- There are also places which are on the list of **UNESCO World Heritage list of Cultural and Natural Properties**. These places include:
 - **Český Krumlov**, which is famous for its statues and unique medieval town planning
 - **Prague** and its historical centre famous for architectural styles
 - **Telč** with its squares and historical townhouses
 - **Holašovice** which an example of a traditional Central European village
 - the **Lednice-Valtice complex** famous for its cultural landscape, many castles and chateaux
 - the **Pilgrimage Church of St. John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora** famous for its Baroque structure
 - **Kutná Hora** famous for medieval silver mines, historical centre with the Church of St. Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady in Sedlec
 - **Kroměříž** famous for its early Baroque castle with a large park and unique flower garden
 - **Litomyšl** famous for its chateau
 - **Tugendhat Villa in Brno** the first piece of modern architecture in the Czech Republic
 - **Olomouc** is the seat of the archbishops of Moravia and famous for its Holy Trinity Column
 - **Třebíč** known for its former Jewish quarter, Jewish cemetery.
 - **Krušnohoří** – it was written on the list in 2019. Example of mining countryside with its unique sights
 - **Kladruby nad Labem** – the countryside suitable for horse-breeding. Written on the list in 2019.
 - **Spa cities** – so called Spa triangle (Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Františkovy Lázně). They are unique for their number of hot and mineral springs. Written on the list in 2021.
 - **Beechwood of Jizerské hory** – it is a national natural reserve, written of the list in 2021.
- Life in the Czech Republic:
Many Czech people play or watch football and hockey. Families often spend weekends at their country houses, cottages. Culture is also very important for Czech people, they like going to cinemas, theatres, and young people like going clubbing. Typical Czech dishes are dumplings, roast pork and sauerkraut, pork sirloin in cream sauce. Open-faced sandwiches, sandwiches, frankfurters are served at snack bars. Many foreign companies opened their restaurants and fast food places in the Czech Republic – McDonalds, KFC, Chinese restaurants, Italian restaurants... Typical Czech drink is beer, which is world known and also wine, especially in Moravia.