**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

USA is situated in the south of North America. It borders Canada in the north and Mexico in the south. It lies between the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean. Alaska lies between the Pacific Ocean and the Artic Ocean. The longest rivers are: the Mississippi and the Missouri. The Mississippi is the third longest river in the world. In the west the longest rivers are the Colorado, the Rio Grande and the Columbia (The Rio Grande on the Mexican borders). The border with Canada is in its central part make by the great lakes region lakes Superior, Ontario, Michigan, and Erie.

**History**

In 1620 the ship named Mayflower brought 102 English men, women and children to America. They were Puritans, members of a religions sect. They called themselves the Pilgrim Fathers. The winter was very cold and half of them died. In spring, they planted corn and other plants with help and advice from the Indians. In the autumn (October 1621) they celebrated good harvest and had a feast with much food. They called this day of Thanksgiving.

**Foundation of United States**

British government started to charge new tax on sugar; coffee, textiles and the colonist refused to pay and so British soldiers were sent to Boston. In 1773 a group of patriots dressed as Indians threw British tea into the British harbour. This event is known as the Boston Tea Party. In 1775 the war between England and American colonist began. Later George Washington took over the command of American army. The war of Independence lasted till 1783, when Britian signed the peace treaty and recognized the US. The day of Independence is celebrated on the 4th July.

**Civil War**

Negroes first came to America from Africa as slaves. They worked on the cotton fields of south. Northern states wanted to abolish slavery but southern economy was based on large plantations where slaves were used to grow cotton, rice and tobacco. About 60 years of never disputes lead to the Civil War between the North and the South. It was the worst episode in American history. It started after Abraham Lincoln was elected president. The North won in April 1865. Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865 short after the end of the war. The war had two main good results – it put an end to slavery which was abolished in 1865 and it also decided that America was a single and indivisible nation. This war however took more American lives than any other war conflict (635,000 dead).

**Big cities:**

* New York

It is the biggest city in the U.S. It belongs to the largest cities in the world. The population is about 14 million. It has five parts- Manhattan, Queen, The Bronx, Staten Island, and Brooklyn. The black quarter Harlem is in the northern part of Manhattan. The original inhabitants were Indians. The Dutch bought Manhattan Island from the Indians in 1625 for goods worth 25$. The original name was New Amsterdam. In southern part of Manhattan there used to be a wall against Indians. Now there is Wall Street – the centre of financial. The city was built on a modern plan of streets and avenues, which follow a geometry shape and are numbered. Streets run east west and avenues north south, for example 5th avenue is the shopping centre. Only a few of them – the oldest- have got their names for example Wall Street or Broadway. Broadway is centre of cultural live. New York is famous for its Manhattan skyline- a large number of skyscrapers on a small area. They started to build skyscrapers because of the lack of space and the high price of land on the island.

* Washington, D.C.

Is the capital of the USA. It is not as large as New York. Only about 1 million people live there. The city is named after the first American president George Washington. Washington is a city of government offices, some music halls and art galleries. There are some well-known monuments for example Washington’s Mo­numents and the Lincoln Memorial. There are the most important buildings in the US. The White House is residence of the American president. The Capitol is the seat of the Congress. The Pentagon is the centre of military forces. There are no factories and industries in Washington and that is why the city is so clean and nice. No building can be higher than the Capitol. That is why you cannot see any skyscrapers there.

**Interesting places:**

Besides Washington and New York there are many places worth seeing such as many national parks and large cities. On western coast the most famous places are Los Angeles and San Francisco. In L.A. we can find the famous film centre Hollywood and luxurious grater Beverly Hills. The American academy awards Oscars for the best film of the year in April of every year. L.A. is also the centre of crime. The bigest ZOO in the world is here. San Francisco is one of the cleanest cities. It is the victim of frequent earthquakes. There is a large Chinatown. It is the largest settlement outside Asia [ejša]. Florida is a tourist area with long beaches in Miami - the biggest centre in the east Philadelphia. It is one of the oldest cities. It used to be the first US capitol. Chicago lies on the banks of lake Michigan. Detroit is the centre of U.S. car industries - Ford, Chrysler and General Motors. Yellowstone National Parks is the world’s widest geyser area. There are about 3000 geysers and hot spring.

**Political parties**:

There are two main political parties - Republican and Democratic. The Congress is divided into two parts- The House of Representatives and The Senate. The House of Representatives consist of 435 lawmakers. They are elected according to the population of each state. The Senate has 100 members, two members of each state. They serve six years. The Presidents can be elected every four years in November. The president can be elected too only two terms.

**Flag**:

The American flag consists two parts - one smaller blue oblong with 50 white starts (one stars for each state) and one larger oblong with six white and seven red stripes for the original 13 states. The flag is sometimes called Stars and Stripes.

**INTERESTING PLACES IN THE USA**

There are many national parks in the USA with beautiful and preserved nature.

**Yellowstone** national park is the largest and best - known park in the USA. It is located  in the Rocky Mountains on the territory of  Wyoming, Idaho and Montana. It is visited by thousand of people every day. The nature in this park is very diverse. For instance, there is everything from volcanic activity to a variety of forms of nature beauty. The geysers called Old Faithful are the biggest one in this park. It erupts every 10 minute or so. There are wild buffaloes, which are very dangerous.

**Grand Canyon**. It is the largest canyon in the world in Arizona. The creator is the Colorado River. There is also the biggist crater in the world in Arizona.

**The Monument Valley** is in Utah and the best known western films were shot here. There are many red stone spires, columns and chimneys on a plateau which is often called „Desert Gothic“.

**Niagara Falls** are the most famous waterfalls in the world. Niagara Falls lie about halfway on the Niagara River, which connects Lake Erie and Lake Ontario – two lakes of  The Great Lakes. There is one of great American tourist attraction.

In Wyoming is natural landmark called the **Devil’s Tower**, which is known from Spilberg’s famous sci-fi film „Close Encounter of the Third Kind“.

**Mt.Rushmore** is high mountain with colossal portrait heads of the US presidents - Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt. It is national monument called „Shrine of Democracy“.

On Western coast the most well known places are Los Angeles and San Francisco. In **Los Angeles** (City of Angeles) we can find the famous film centre - Hollywood and luxurious quarters - e.g. Beverly Hills. American Film Academy awards Oscars for the best film of the year. Chinese Theatre – Walk of Fame with bronze stars on the sidewalk, which are marked with names of the famous actors. Everybody know Hollywood, Beverly Hills or Melrose Place from the TV and movies. On Hollywood Hill there are famous letters fifteen meters high. LA is also the centre of crime. There is the biggest ZOO in the world.

**San Francisco**, which is one of the cleanest, is also the victim of frequent earthquakes. It is known for the Golden Gate Bridge spanning between the Pacific and San Francisco Bay as well. There you can find for example Alcatraz. It is super security prison for famous criminals like Al Capone.

**Las Vegas** in Nevada is known for gambling and night life. It has the reputation of being the entertainment capital of the world. Every hotel has a casino and several playing rooms. Casinos are open twenty-four hours a day and they are designed to keep the guest inside and entertained all the time, most of them offer inexpensive and moderate accomodation and reasonably priced food which is served all day and night. Bussines stopped only once and that was just for three hours when the news of John F. Kennedy’s death reached the city. The Death Valley isn’t far from here. Because of  Nevada’s liberal marriage laws, one out of 20 nation’s weddings are performed in Las Vegas. The two busiest days for Las Vegas wedding chapels are Valentine’s Day and New Year’s Eve.

In the south there are following important centres:

**New Orleans** is the city where jazz was born. The sounds of live jazz coming out the doors into the early morning hours. Thanks to its founders, New Orleans has old houses built in the French style. Therefore, New Orleans is calles an American Paris. Lousiana used to be a French collony until 1803 when it was boughr from France by Thomas Jefferson. This act is called Lousiana Purchase. Due to history, there are restaurants specialising in „Creole“ cooking - a hot and spicy mix of French and Spanish dishes. The main attraction for visitors is the city’s night life – the night clubs, exotic dancers, unique shows, shops, restaurants and bars. Another great attraction is the Mississippi river, which flows to the Gulf of Mexico.

**Florida** is mainly a tourist area with long beaches on Miami. Evrybody is afraid of hurricanes. There is the biggist amusement park in the world – Disneyworld. Other park is called Disneyland in California.  
   
The biggest centres in the East (north) are:

**Philadelphia** is one of the oldest cities. It used to be the first US capital. And Declaration of Independence was adopted there on 4th July 1776.

**Chicago** lies on the banks of Lake Michigan. Chicago has been nicknamed the „Windy City” because of the breezes that blow in from the lake. We can find here the highest skyscraper in the USA - Sears Tower. Chicago  is a centre of steel and iron industries. Old building were pullde down and new ones were bulit there. It is city of modern art. There are statues by Piccasso and artistic works of European artists from the turn of the century in Gallery of Modern Art.

**Detroit** is the centre of USA car industry (Ford, Chevrolet, Chrysler and General Motors).

**Dallas** is in Texas. The president John Figerald Kennedy was assassinated there in 1963. Texas is known for its cowboys and extracting oil.

**Boston** is one of the oldiest cities in the US. It is proud to call itself the birthplace of America, because it is remembered for the Boston Tea Party which is the begning the American Revolution in 1775. Boston has the charm of a European city. You can meet a fascinating mix of old settlers there - Irish, Spanish and Italian.

**WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK**

**WASHINGTON**

Washington DC (District of Columbia) is a capital city of the USA, which is named after the first president, George Washington. It is the seat of the federal government and the residence of the president. The capital is located in a special district called „The District of Columbia“ which is not a state because it is the seat of the federal government. Washington is situated on the Potomac River and has four sections: northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest.

623,000 people inhabit the capital city. Some of 360 000(three hundred sixty thousannd) people living in the metropolitan area and they are employed by the Federal Government. All of them work in the federaly buildings, which occupy 40 per cent of the city’s land.

Very importance buildings are located in Washington: The White House, Pentagon, the Capitol, the Library of Congress atc.

The **White House** is the tradition residence of President, it has 132 rooms and 20 baths and showers. For example Blue Room is for the President and First lady, Eeast Room is decorated in white and gold colour and it is used for the state receptions.The White House is built in Pennsilvania Ave (Avenue).

On Capitol Hill, is the **Capitol** where the Congress meets and the Library of Congress is the US national library.

In this city there are also many famous museums. There is the National Space and Air Museum, the Museum of African Art, National Gallery of Art, and many others.

Interesting place is also Folger Shakespeare Library where is the world’s largest collection of Shakespeare’s wor­ks.

**NEW YORK**

New York is the largest city in the US. It is also one of the most important financial, commercial, and cultural centres in the world. Many people calls New York as a Big Apple, the Melting Pot or The city that never sleeps“ because it is alive with action all day and night. Eight million people live in the five boroughs: Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, Richmond and Brooklyn. During the working day, the population grows twenty million when people come to work in New York. More than 80 languages are spoken in New York. 43% of the population is white, 25% African American, and 24% Hispanic.

There are many interesting places to visit in New York. The most famous site in the city is the **Statue of Liberty**. It is symbol of freedom and of the United States itself.

Many people come to New York for its culture and entertainment.

New York is famous for its Skyscrapers. I think that everbody in the world knows **Empire State Building** or the twin towers of the **World Trade Center**, which was damaged by terorist from Alkaida.

# THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Britain lies off the north-west coast of Europe across the English Channel, the Strait of Dover and the North Sea. It consists of two large islands (Great Britain and Ireland) and about 5,000 smaller ones. Its neighbours are Ireland to west and France to south - east. It covers the area of 250 thousand square kilometres. England is a rolling land, rising to the Uplands of southern Scotland. Mountains: the Cambrians, the Cumbrian Mountains, the Pennines, the Highlands of Scotland (Ben Nevis) are the highest mountains in Britain. The longest rivers are the Severn and the Thames. There are beautiful lake areas in Cumbria and the Highlands of Scotland. British Isles have milder climate due to the Gulf Stream. The highest pick of England is Scafell Pike.

**People:**

Population is 59 mil. people. The density is one of the highest in the world. People live mostly in urban areas. In Britain we can find the following ethnic groups: English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh and others. The majority of people speaks English. There are minority languages that are of Celtic origin – Welsh, Scottish and Irish Gaelic.

**National economy:**

The main industries are steel, metals, vehicles, shipbuilding, shipping, banking, insurance, textiles, chemicals, electronics, aircraft, machinery, distilling. The main agricultural products are grain, sugar, beet, fruit and vegetables. Worldknown is British sheep and cattle breeding. Britain’s natural riches are coal, tin, oil, gas, limestone, iron, salt, clay, chalk and lead.

**Government type and administration:**

Great Britain is a constitutional monarchy with the Queen as the head of state. Britain is divided into four parts: England (London), Wales (Cardiff), Scotland (Edinburgh) and Northern Ireland (Belfast). Locally Britain is divided into counties. The capital of the whole Britain is London. Other big cities according to population are Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and Bristol.

Besides London, which is in the centre of each tourist’s atten­tion, there are many other fascinating places:

**Oxford** and **Cambridge** are the old university towns.

**Stratford upon Avon** is the birthplace of William Shakespeare

In towns Brighton, Bournemouth, Portsmouth, Blackpool, Sunderland or Scarborough have fine sandy beaches and a nice atmosphere.

**Canterbury** is an ancient city with a majestic cathedral. The other old cathedral town is **Winchester** (once was the capital of England).

**Salisbury in Salisbury Plain**, there we can see a beautiful historic monument of Stonehenge.

**Plymouth** has a proud maritime heritage. Both is worth seeing for the remains of its Roman bath built 2000 years ago. Exeter is country of many national parks (Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks).

**Birmingham** is the second largest city in Britain. We can see Victorian architecture here and the network of canals, which is evidence of industrial heritage.

In **Manchester** we can visit the Museum of Science and Industry, the Air and Space Museum. The other big cities are Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and York.

In **Durham** we can find a massive 11th century castle and a beautiful cathedral.

In the **Lake District National Park** is beautiful Windermere Lake. This is area popular with mountaineers, painters and tourists. The lakes are good for water sports.

**WALES**

Beautiful country with many highlands and castles (Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech). There aren’t many industrial towns, the biggest are Cardiff, Newport and Swansea.

**SCOTLAND**

Scotland is a historically and culturally separate country from England. Scotland is the land of many special traditions, which cannot be found elsewhere in the world – playing the pipes, wearing kilts made of tartan, Scotch whisky.

The biggest city is Glasgow. It is culture centre and heart of the arts in Scotland. Edinburgh is dominated by its imposing 12th century castle – Holy Rood House. The city is full of attractive squares, three-lined avenues and elegant shopping centres. In the North of the country there are many lakes as Loch Lomond, which is the largest and Loch Ness, which is famous for its “Loch Ness Monster” called “Nessie“.

# LONDON

London is the capital of the United Kingdom. It is the 9th largest city in the world – its population is about 10 million. London is situated on the river Thames in south-east England. It was founded as a Roman settlement. The great fire in 1666 destroyed almost all the city.

Various means of transport: red double - deckers, underground – the oldest in the world, 5 airports – the most important is Heathrow.

**The Houses of Parliament** are in gothic style but were built after the old building had burnt down. The only part, which escaped the fire, was Westminster Hall.There is also a famous clock - tower with Big Ben.

**Whitehal**l is the street where the government offices are. Horse Guards Parade takes place here.

**Downing Street** 10 is the official home of British Prime Ministers.

**Westminster Abbey** was founded in the 11th century. Britain’s Kings and Queens are crowned here. England’s famous people are buried here in the Poet’s Corner (e.g. Newton, Handel, etc.), WA is in gothic architecture, i tis a place where many state occasions and royal weddings take place.

**St. Paul’s Cathedral** is one of the largest cathedrals in the world. It stands in the City. The Cathedral is known for its Whispering Gallery.

**The City** is the oldest part of London around St. Paul’s Cathedral. There are many banks (the most important is Bank of England) and offices here.

**The Tower** was built in the 11th century It served as royal palace first, then prison and fortress. It is a museum now. The Crown Jewels are guarded by the Beefeaters here.

**Tower Bridge** is one of the most famous symbols of London. It can open and rise in the middle and let large ships go through.

**Trafalgar Square** was named after Admiral Nelson’s victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Trafalgar. Nelson’s statue is situated on a high column. The square with its fountains is a very popular place for various meetings and demonstrations.

**The National Gallery** is in Trafalgar Square. It houses paintings by nearly all the great European artists and a large collection of British paintings and sculptures.

**The British Museum** is the largest museum in the world. It houses the biggest collection of all kinds of animals and minerals and rocks. There is a collection of fine and applied arts of all countries, periods and styles. The British Museum’s library is the largest in the world.

**Buckingham palace** is the Queen’s residence in London. One of the biggest London’s parades is Changing the Guard here.

The most famous shopping centres in London are in Piccadilly Circus, Regent Street and Oxford Street. There are many parks in London, e.g. St. James’s Park, Green Park, Regent’s Park. The largest of them is Hyde Park. It is also known for its Speaker’s Corner where anybody can have a speech.

**The Post Office Tower** is the tallest building in Great Britain. It is adapted for telephone and TV services.

* Theatres: The National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company
* Concert halls: The Royal Festival Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Queen Elizabeth Hall

**Windsor Castle** is the residence of nearly all the British sovereigns outside London.

**Kew Gardens** are the Royal Botanical Gardens with the largest collection of living plants in the world.

**Greenwich** is the seat of the National Maritime Museum where the Royal Observatory is.

**INTERESTING PLACES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**

ENGLAND

STONEHANGE- is prehistoric megalithic complex of standing stones close to Salisbury. It is believed to have some religious or astronomical purpose. It was built by Celts.

LAKE DISTRICT- there is beautiful scenery and nature. You can admire hundreds of lakes, which gave name to Lake poets, who found there inspiration. The biggest lake is the Windermere and it is the largest lake in Britain.

NOTTINGHAM- and the nearby Sherwood forest is known as home of Robin Hood. In the town, there is the oldest pub in England.

BATH- was built by Romans 43 AD as a spa town. It was built over hot springs. It is also know like a place of living of Jane Austen. You can admire beautiful town architecture from the 1700s here.

PORTSMOUTH- you can visit the Royal Naval museum here.

CANTERBURY- is the spiritual centre of the Church of England, because there is a cathedral, which was built 1000s and the early 1500s. And it is a destination of travelers in the Canterbury Tales.

BRIGHTON- it is seaside resort south of London. You should visit Royal Pavilion built in the 19th century in Indian style with Chinese decorations inside.

PLYMOUTH- is a historic seaport. It´s departure and return point of Christopher Drake´s voyage around the world. And it is the departure point of Mayflower.

STRATFORT-UPON-AVON- Is the birthplace of William Shakespeare. You can visit the house where Shakespeare was born and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre .

OXFORD-is situated on the Thames. It’s a very old city. Some buildings were built before the 12th century. It is famous for its university, which is the oldest university in the English- speaking world. Oxford is known as the “City of Spires” because of its beautiful skyline of Gothic towers and steeples.

CAMBRIDGE- The city is famous for its university, the University of Cambridge, which is considered one of the best universities in the world. The river Cam is popular for punting.

LIVERPOOL-is a place where the Beatles were formed. It is a very old port and a part of the city centre with docks is in UNESCO. There are two modern cathedrals. There is the lowest crime levels compared to other big UK cities.

YORK- in York there is a largest gothic cathedral in England.

HADRIAN´S WALL-it was built around 122 AD by Roman Emperor Hadrian to keep out enemies .

SALISBURY- There is a beautiful medieval cathedral. It is a house of Magna Charta.

CORNWALL- it is said to be a birth place of King Arthur. It is very popular to its long coastlines.

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW- is the largest city in Scotland. It is industrial city and seaport.

EDINBOURGH- is a hilly city dating from the medieval times

LOCH NESS- is a lake, which is home of lake monster Nessie

WALES

CARDIFF-Is the capital city of Wales. it is a centre of light industry.

LANGOEN- is a home of the International Musical Eisteddfod, a famous singing and dancing festival.

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST-Is the capital city, an industrial port and a university city surrounded by hills. There is the Ulster Museum and Botanical Gardens

GIANT´S CAUSWAY-Is a natural wonder along the north coast

National parks:

-in the UK there are 15 national parks:

1 • Brecon Beacons National Park

2 • Broads National Park

3 • Cairngorms National Park

4 • Dartmoor National Park

5 • Exmoor National Park

6 • Lake District National Park

7 • Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park

8 • New Forest National Park

9 • North York Moors National Park

10 • Northumberland National Park

11 • Peak District National Park

12 • Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

13 • South Downs National Park

14 • Snowdonia National Park

15 • Yorkshire Dales National Park

LAKE DISTRICT-there is beautiful scenery and nature. You can admire hundreds of lakes, which gave name to Lake poets, who found there inspiration. The biggest lake is the Windermere and it is the largest lake in Britain

NORTHUMBERLAND- Is the most northern NP in England. Due to its hostility environment it is very attractive for tourists.

DARTMOOR- It´s park mainly consisted of wetlands. It´s place where the story of the Hound of Baskerville took place.

**AUSTRALIA**

Australia is located in south-east Asia. The Indian Ocean is west and south, the Pacific (Coral and Tasman Seas) is east. Nearest is Indonesia, Papua New Guinea on north, The Solomons, Fiji and New Zealand are on east. Its area is 7.7 mil sq. km. Australia is an island continent. The Great Dividing Range along the Eastern coast (The Australian Alps) has the highest Australian mountain Mt. Kosciusko. Arid and hot are the north-western part of Western Australia and northern Territories and also Great Sandy and Great Victoria Deserts. The North-East has heavy rainfalls and Cape York Penninsula has jungles. Rivers (the Murray River, the Darling), Lakes (Lake Eyre, Lake Torrens and Lake Gairdner).

The Australian climate varies from warm to subtropical. The Continent is in the southern hemisphere which means that Australia has summer when we have winter and vice versa. The Animals of Australia are numerous and some of them, like the kangaroo, koala, bear, dingo, platypus, Tasmanian devil, wombat cannot be found elsewhere.

**People:**

The population of Australia is some 17 million. The density is one of the lowest in the world. People live in urban areas mainly along the south-east coast. Deserts and the tropical northern part are practically uninhabited. Inhabitants are mainly of British origin, the rest is made by other European ethnic groups and by aborigines. Australian English and aboriginal languages are spoken here.

**History:**

Captain James Cook explored the eastern coast in 1770 when the continent was inhabited by a variety of different tribes. Within decades Britain got the entire continent which became a convict colony from 1788 till 1850s when immigration increased because gold was found here. Aborigines and part-aborigines are mostly detribalized but there are several preserves in the Northwest Territory.

**National economy:**

Main industries are iron, steel, textiles, electrical equipment, chemicals, car, aircraft, ship and machinery. Australia belongs to the top exporters of beef, lamb, wool, oats, hay, sugar, wine, fruit and vegetables. Natural riches contain mainly bauxite, coal, copper, iron, lead, nickel, silver, tin, uranium and zinc ores. Currency used in Australia is Australian Dollar.

**Government type and administration**

The official title is The Commonwealth of Australia and it is a British dominion. It has a democratic, federal system and the head of state is Queen Elizabeth II represented by the Governor-General. The head of government is the Prime Minister.

The Commonwealth of Australia consists of 6 states and 2 territories: New South Wales (capital Sydney), Victoria (Melbourne), Queensland (Brisbane), South Australia (Adelaide), Western Australia (Perth), Tasmania (Hobart). The capital of whole country is Canberra.

The Australian national flag consists of the British Flag symbol and a larger blue field in which 5 stars are arranged in the form of the Southern Cross constellation.

**NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand consists of two large islands (north and South Island) in south-west Pacific Ocean. Nearest are Australia on west, Fiji, Tonga on north. Its area is 270 tausent sq. km. Each of the two main islands is mainly hilly and mountainous. The east coast consists of fertile plains (Canterbury Plains). A volcanic plateau is in the centre of North Island.

**People:**

The population is more than 3 million people. Density is much higher than in Australia. The most of people live in urban areas. People are of European (above all British) origin, the rest are Polynesian. Officially English is spoken here but some people still speak Maori.

**History:**

The Maoris, a Polynesian group reached New Zealand before and during the 14th century. The first Europeans were Abel Tasman and James Cook. Now it is an independent member of the Commonwealth.

**National economy:**

Food processing, textiles, machinery and forest industry are the main industries here. Only 2 per cent of land is arable and the main crops is grain. Natural riches are: oil, gas, iron ore and coal. The main trading partners of new Zealand are the USA, Australia, Japan, Great Britain.

**Government type and administration**

NZ has a parliamentary system where the head of state is Queen Elizabeth II represented by the Governor General. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The country is divided into counties. The capital is Wellington, other big cities are Manukau, Christchurch and Auckland.

**CANADA**

**Geography:**

Canada occupies the whole of the northern part of North America (except Alaska) and many islands Baffin Island, Newfoundland, Vancouver, Prince Edward Island etc.). Canada is the second largest country in the world – its area is about 10 mil. sq. km. It neighbours with the USA – with Alaska and with the continental states and the Great Lakes Area. This border is the longest undefended border in the world.

The Great Lakes Region is the largest area of fresh water in the world. There are famous Niagara Falls between Lake Erie and Ontario. We can find also other big and beautiful lakes in Canada, e.g. Great Bear Lake, Great Slave Lake, Lake Winnipeg etc.

Canada has large mountain areas – the Rocky Mountains, the Mackenzie Mountains and the Melville Hills. The highest mountain is Mt. Logan in the Alaska Region, the longest river is the Mackenzie, other big rivers are the Yukon, the Fraser, the Columbia and the River St. Lawrence.

**Climate:**

The climate varies from Arctic climate in the North to moderate climate in the east and west. The north of the country near the Arctic is a cold tundra with large and beautiful forests to the south. The central plains form the prairie.

**People:**

Canada have more than 27 mil. people. The density is one of the lowest in the world. 80 per cent Canadians live in large urban centres located within 300 km of the southern border. People are mainly of British and French origin and of continental European origin and the rest is made by Eskimos or Indians (Eskimos are sometimes called the Inuits). Two main languages in Canada are English and French.

**History:**

The original inhabitants came to Canada some 10 or 25 thousand years ago from Asia. The first Europeans here were the Vikings. During the Age of Discoveries (the 15th and 16th centuries) some navigators (e.g. Jacques Cartier) landed on the Canadian coast. Since the 16th century large territories were occupied by the French but France lost this country in wars with England and Canada became a British dominion.

**Economy:**

Canada has mainly coal, metal, oil and gas, machine-building and chemical industries. The main mining province is Alberta. Motorcar industry has its works in Chatham and Oshawa, ship are built on the banks of Great Lakes, in Montreal and Toronto. Hydroelectric industry is highly developed in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

**Agriculture:**

Almost half the land area of Canada is covered by forests. Only about 7 per cent of land is suitable for farming (wheat). Other important agriculture items are e.g. livestock production, oats, vegetables, fruits and leather.

Natural resources: gold, uranium, other metal ores, oil and gas. Most people work in services, the rest work in manufacturing, agriculture, finance, fishing etc.

**Government type and administration:**

It is and independent federal parliamentary system with Queen Elizabeth II as the head of state. She is represented in Canada by the governor-general. The federal parliament consisting of two houses: The House of Commons and The Senate.

Canada is divided into 10 provinces ant 2 territories. The biggest province is Quebec (capital Quebec city). Other provinces are:

* Newfoundland
* Prince Edward Island
* Nova Scotia
* New Brunswick
* Manitoba
* Ontario
* Saskatchewan
* Alberta
* British Columbia

The capital of Canada is Ottawa. The biggest city is Toronto, other Montreal, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg… Canada is the member of many international organisations such as the UN and NATO. Its flag is red and in the centre there is whit square with a red maple leaf.

# THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic is a state in Central Europe. It occupies an area of 78 864 sq km and has about 10.33 million inhabitants. The head of the Czech Republic is the President (Václav Klaus). He’s elected for a 5-year period by the Parliament. The state flag consists of 2 horizontal stripes (pruh)- white on the top, red on the bottom, and a blue wedge.

The Czech Republic has four **neighbours**. In the north it borders with Poland, in the south with Austria, in the east with Slovakia and with Germany in the west.

Our state has a varied **landscape**. Bohemia is surrounded by a ring of mountains – the Šumava range, the Czech Forest, the Ore Mountains, the Jizerské Mountains, the Giant Mountains ( with the highest Czech mountain Sněžka), and the Eagle Mountains. The Moravan Plain is protected on the West by the Bohemian-Moravian Highland, and on the North by the wooded mountainous ranges of Jeseníky and Beskydy. Fertile lowlands can be found in the valleys of big rivers – the Vltava, the Elbe (flowing into the North Sea), the Oder (flowing into the Baltic Sea), and the Morava (flowing into the Danube and thence into the Black Sea). The **climate** is mostly continental, the warmest area is in South Moravia.

Our country is rich in **minerals**. Black coal (Ostrava Coal Basin, area of Kladno) and brown coal and lignite (North Bohemia Coal Basin), sand for glass-making, iron ore, uranium, kaolin, etc., are mined in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic is traditionallly an **industry country**. The most important part of our economy is engineering (machine tools, locomotives, tractors, agricultural machines). Other important branches are metalurgical and chemical industries and tourism. Textile and glass industries have a long tradition as doing cut glass. In animal production , cattle-breeding and pig-breeding are most important. Fish-breeding, especially carp-breeding has a long tradition in South Bohemia ponds.

Now I’d like to speak about the most important events in our history:

* our territory has been inhabited by Slavonic tribes since the 5th cent. A.D.
* in 623 bas founded the first Slavonic state – Samo’s Empire.
* then Slavonic tribes were united and Great Moravian Empire was formed in the 9th cent.
* in the 9th cent. power bas taken over by the Přemyslid family
* the first historicaly documented Czech prince Bořivoj I. ruled over the territory of the Czech lands and over big part of Great Moravia
* when the Přemyslid dynasty died out by the sword in 1306 the Czech throne went by way of dynastic wedding to the Luxemburgs, and the Czech Kingdom became also the centre of the Holy Roman Empire during the reign of Charles IV. and his son Wenceslas IV.
* Charles IV. was the most important person of the 7 electors of the emperors
* during his reign Prague grew into one of the largest European metropolis, was important centre of education, architecture and the arts
* in 1348 Charles IV. founded Ch. University – the oldest one in Europe
* the first part of the 15th cent. is marked by the Hussite Movement
* it’s named after Jan Hus, professor, dean, and later rector of Charles University
* he was preacher in Bethlehem Chapel and he was in 1415 in Constance burnt at the stake as a heretic
* the big leaders of Hussite Movement were Jan Žižka and Prokop Holý
* J. Žižka was never defeated and P. Holý was a prominent Hussite diplomat
* after the reign of King Jiří of Poděbrady – who is knowned for hi appeal to other European kings to make a Treaty Securing Peace, and after the period of the rule of Jagiellonian dynasty, on the Czech throne came the period of the Habsburg dynasty
* these rulers tried to oppress the Czech nation in favour of the Germans and the Romans Catholic Church, but unsuccesfuly until the Battle on the White Mountain in 1620
* followed by 300 years of Germanization and many non-catholic artists and scientists had to leave the country, and the Czech literature was liquidated
* the 19th cent. was a time of national revival
* at the end of World War I. in October 1918 was established Czechoslovak Republic
* though this was destroyed by the German occupation (1939–1945), it appeared again after World War II.
* in 1948 the power was taken over by communists directed by the Soviet Union
* the „Prague Spring“ in 1968 was oppressed by the invasion of the Soviet army and the „normalization“ lasted about another 20 years till the „velvet revolution“ in 1989
* the following development led to the splitting of the republic, and in 1993 two new states appeared – the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic

**PRAGUE**

Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, lies in the middle of Bohemia on the Vltava River and has a population of 1.2 million people. It is the largest and the most hectic city in Czech Republic. It is seat of the President, government and parliament and the political, cultural and economic centre of the country.

The old centre of Prague consists of five historical districts. Old Town, New Town and Josefov (the former Jewish Town) are situated on the right bank of the Vltava. The Lesser Quarter and Hradčany (the Castle District) are on the left bank.

The origin of the name Praha is rather associated with the word prah (that means a threshold), which is a rapid on the river. At the beginning of the 19th century, Bernardo Bolzano, a famous mathematician and philosopher, counted 103 towers and spires in Prague and that’s how the city got its nickname “City of a hundred spires”.

History: The city, established in the 9th century, was the seat of Czech princes and later kings of Bohemia and became the political heart of the Czech State. Charles IV (1316 – 1378), Bohemian King and Holy Roman Emperor, chose the city as the capital of his whole Empire. He founded Charles University, St. Vitus Cathedral, Charles Bridge and the New Town. Many of the most beautiful things we associate with Prague can be traced back to Charles IV. Many important figures have passed through Prague, and many events have occurred in the city as well. Prague is connected with the Czech religious reformer Jan Hus and the Hussite movement. Later on, the kingdom was absorbed into Habsburg Empire and Prague had to stand aside, because the capital was Vienna. During the period of Rudolf II, who was elected King of Bohemia in 1576, it was the centre of art and alchemy. The alchemist lived in Golden Lane. Famous people living there in that age include the astronomers Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler, the painter Arcimboldo, the alchemists Edward Kelley and John Dee, the poetess Elizabeth Jane Weston, and others. It was also last time, when Prague was the seat of Hamburg Emperor. The Czech National Revival in the 19th century restored once again Prague’s prominence and the National Theatre was built to express this feeling of national pride for Czechs. The building itself was financed from money collected by the Czech people. In 1918, the city became the capital of the independent Czechoslovakia and after the peaceful division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, it became the capital of the Czech Republic.

Sights: Without any doubt, the Prague Castle, the seat of the President, is the dominant of the city. It was founded after 880 by the first Přemyslid Prince Bořivoj. The monumental complex of the castle includes three courtyards and over 700 rooms among which the late Gothic Vladislav Hall, and the newly redecorate Spanish Hall and Rudolph Gallery are the most renowned. The Cathedral of St. Vitus is the biggest church in Prague and holds the treasury of the Czech coronation jewels. There are many interesting parts to the cathedral: It has the oldest reticulated vault in Europe and the southern Golden Gate has an amazing mosaic decoration. St. Wenceslas Chapel was built to protect the relics of the most important Czech saint and national patron – St. Wenceslas. Wenceslas Square is one of the centres of the city. It is about 750 m long and 60 m wide. The statue of Czech patron – St. Wenceslas – made by J. V. Myslbek is a symbol of a free and independent republic. The Old Town Square is another significant historical spot. It used to be the most important market place in Prague and the scene of many historical events. Its main monument is the Old Town Hall with its world‑famous astronomical clock. There are also two famous churches on the Old Town Square: the Gothic Týn Church and the Baroque St. Nicholas Church. The Charles Bridge – commissioned by Charles IV in 1357 and built by a famous Gothic architect Petr Parléř. A cornerstone was put on 9 July 1357 at 05:31 – this date had an astrological meaning and it can be written as 1-3-5-7-9-7-5-3-1. Charles Bridge is 516 meters long and 10 meters wide. It is an open-air gallery of unique Baroque statues. In about the middle of the bridge stands the statue of St. John of Nepomuk. He lived in the 14th century and held the position of General Vicar. On both edges of the bridge there are Gothic Bridge Towers. It is the second oldest bridge in Central Europe. Near Charles bridge lies Kampa Island, separated from the Lesser Quarter by a small canal called Čertovka. In the past there used to be many mills on Kampa and two big wooden mill wheels are still preserved today. Vyšehrad Castle is situated on a rock overlooking the Vltava River. Legend has it that Czech Princess Libuše prophesied the glory of Prague from here. Vyšehrad has an important place in Czech history and the Czech national cemetery was founded here. Writer Karel Čapek, sculptor J. V. Myslbek, composers A. Dvořák and B. Smetana, poet J. Neruda and artist M. Aleš are all buried here. Petřín Hill - Prague’s skyline is defined by Petřín Hill. There is a 60‑meter tall viewing tower on the hill, which was built in 1891. It was modelled on the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Apart from the tower, there’s a mirror labyrinth and the Prague Municipal Observatory.

Prague and other cities

**UNESCO**

**TELČ-** the town square of Telč is famous for a unique complex of historical houses in the Renaissance

and Baroque styles. You can found there large Renaissance chateau complex prom the 17th

century. It originally was a Gothic castle

**TŘEBÍČ**- in centre of the city you can found Romanesque- Gothic Basilica of St. Procoppe.

-there is the Jewish quarter, which is the only Jewish site on the UNESCO list beside Israel.

**LITOMYŠL**- unique arcade palace , which is in Renaissance style. You can see there beautiful

sgraffitos.

- It is also the birthplace of the great composer Bedřich Smetana.

**LEDNICKE-VALTICE AREA**- Lednice is situated in South Moravia and consists of a palace and the

largest park in the Czech republic.

-there is a minaret too.

**KUTNÁ HORA-** There is the Cathedral of St. Barbara,which was founded around 1380 and it’s one of

the most valuable monument of the Gothic style in Bohemia

-There is the Gothic Royal Mint too

-this city became rich, because of its silver deposit

**KROMĚŘÍŽ**-there is a beautiful chateau, which was originally summer residence of Olomouc bishops.

-chateau is surrounded by beautiful gardens

-you can found there art collection where are works by Titian for example

**ČESKÝ KRUMLOV**- There is a castle and chateau complex (the second largest in the country, after the

Prague castle)

-there is the famous Turning auditorium.

-for lovers of nature there is meander of Vltava

-in the past it was a seat of Rosenbergs

**THE CHURCH OF JAN NEPOMUK IN ZELENÁ HORA**-it´s place of pilgrimage

-in Baroque-Gothic style

**HOLAŠOVICE**-there are buildings in style which is known as folk baroque

**HOLY TRINITY COLUMN IN OLOMOUC**- Olomouc is on the Morava River

- In the past, the city was capital city of Moravia.

-It’s the sixth largest city in Czech Republic and

- It is famous for its Palacký University, the second oldest

university in Czech republic and Olomouc Town Hall with

astronomical clock.

- Is still the seat of the **archbishop**

-it´s monument to a plaque epidemic

**VILLA TUGENDHAT**- it´s functionalist building named by its owners

-it´s situated in Brno

**SPA TOWNS**

**CARLSBAD, MARIENBAD**- are the oldest and the most remounted spa towns

**KARLOVY VARY**- It is a city situated in western part of Czech Republic

-it´s spa city known for Bohemian crystal and Becherovka

**THE OTHER CASTLES AND CHATEAUX**

**KARLŠTEJN**- Karlštejn is a big Gothic castle founded in 1348 by Charles IV

-The castle is used as a place for the Czech crown jewels, holy relics, and other treasures.

- It is located about 30 km southwest of Prague near the village called Karlštejn.

- It is the one of the most famous and most visited castles in the Czech Republic

**ČERVENÁ LHOTA**- Červená Lhota is a château situated in south Bohemia

-It stands at the middle of a lake on a rocky island.

-it´s great place for wedding

**HLUBOKÁ-** is a town in the South Bohemian Region

-is best known for its famous Windsor style chateau

-The castle is opened to public.

-There is a winter garden and riding-hall where the Southern Bohemian gallery exhibitions

have been housed since 1956

**ROŽMBERK CASTLE**-Rožmberk is a castle situated in South Bohemia

-is one of the oldest castles in Bohemia

-It is regarded as the cradle of the House of Rožmberk

-it stands on rock

**KONOPIŠTĚ**-It has become famous as the last residence of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria

-you can find there a large collection of antlers, the third largest European collections of

armoury and medieval weapons, a shooting hall with moving targets and a garden with

Italian Renaissance statues and greenhouses.

**ORLÍK**-it is in the South Bohemia Region

-The original position of the chateâu, on a rock 60 m above the Vltava valley, was altered by

the creation of the Orlík reservoir in 1954-62, and the chateâu is now barely a few metres

above the water level.

**ZVÍKOV**-it is often called “the king of Czech castles”

-it´s in the South Bohemian Region

-it´s placed on the island

**CITIES**

**BRNO**- Is the second largest city in the Czech Republic and it´s the capital of Moravia

-it main attractions are: **The Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul**-it´s located on Petrov hill and it´s

national cultural monument

**Špilberk castle**

**The Capuchin Crypt** - is a funeral room mainly for Capuchin friars.

The crypt was founded in the mid 17th century in

the basement of the Capuchin .

**OSTRAVA**- is the third largest city in the Czech Republic

- In 18th century, large deposits of black coal were discovered there

-you can visit there Vítkovice- It´s national technical monument

**NATURE**

- Czech nature can offer very much to tourists.

**ADRŠPACH ROCK TOWN**-are an unusual set of sandstone formations covering 17 km²

-They are named after two nearby municipalities: Adršpach, and Teplice nad Metují.

**MACOCHA GORGE** –is situated close to Brno in the Moravian Karst

-The Punkva River flows through it

-it´s stalactite cave

**BOUBÍN**- Most of the hill is covered by a former primeval forest

**NATIONAL PARKS-Šumava national park**- is in South Bohemian Regions along the border with

Austria and mostly Germany

-**Krkonoše national park**

- **National Park Podyjí**

- **České Švýcarsko National Park**

# EDUCATION IN THE UK AND THE USA AND EDUCATION IN OUR COUNTRY

**The United States**

**Age**:

4–6 years **kindergarten /preschool program**

6–10 / 12 years **elementary / grade school**

10–14 years **junior high school / middle school**

14–18 years **high school**

After 18 years **college/university**

Similar to other countries, little children start their education with **kindergarten**between

the ages of five and six. They are divided into groups and spend their time playing.  Parents have to pay for this pre-school education.

**Elementary/grade school**formally starts their **compulsory**education, and covers five grades/years. The **curriculum**is determined by a particular school district but usually essential subjects include English, math and science.

Most children go to public schools without **charge,**or they have a choice of private schools, which they must pay for. Students are graded on a system of A-F; with A being the best and F meaning fail.

In grade six students go to j**unior high/middle school**and in the ninth grade they change to high school. **High school**includes four grades. Each has a special name in American English. First year students are called freshmen, second year sophomores, then juniors and finally seniors. This usually lasts until students are 18-years-old, but some states allow children to leave school as young as 16.

Compared to other countries, most American students are in school much longer. High school offers academic lessons as well as more **vocational**courses such as mechanics, computers etc.  Most of the testing takes place in the form of quizzes, essays and other projects. When students are juniors, they take the **SAT test** (Scholastic Aptitude Test). This four-hour test quizzes students on their language, writing, math and critical thinking skills, among other things.

The scores on this national test determine whether you succeed when applying to the

university of your choice. The completion of high school is celebrated with a graduation ceremony in which students dress in long gowns**,** receive their diplomas and toss their flat hats – called **mortarboards** – in the air. At the end of every school year students attend a dance, called the **prom**.

There are more than 2,000  **universities**and **colleges**ranging from private elite institutions such as **Yale** or **Harvard**, known as ‘Ivy League schools’, to state universities or local community colleges. There you can earn your Bachelor’s and then Master’s degree.

A Bachelor’s degree is designed to take four years, but some students take longer. This is also sometimes called your undergraduate degree. After that students continue with their education for about another two years to earn their graduate, or Master’s degree. If they really like studying, they can keep going and earn their PhD or doctorate.

**Great Britain**

**Aged:**

5–11 **Primary school**

11–16   **Secondary School**

14–16 **Studying towards GCSEs**

16–18 **Studying towards A levels**

18 **University**

British children begin their schooling quite early; very small children aged three and four are sent to **nursery school**or a **playgroup**. At the age of five they have to start attending primary school which can be either state-funded or private. Both types of school have to follow a prescribed national curriculum. **Primary school**is divided into two cycles: **infant schools**where children acquire basic skills like writing, reading and maths. At seven they go on to **junior school**with more complex subjects such as history, geography and science.

The transfer to **secondary school**takes place at the age of 11. Here, pupils also have

to follow a national curriculum, including a foreign language and a broader range of subjects, taught by different teachers.  At the age of 14 they start to study for their GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) that consist of eight or nine exams in maths, English, a foreign language, a science and a humanities subject. Core subjects like maths and English are compulsory.  Some pupils can enter more than nine GCSEs. At the age of sixteen, pupils are free to leave school. If they carry on with their education, they study for two more years in the sixth form in their school or in a **sixth form college**.

Usually, they take four subjects in the first year, which ends with an exam. If they pass,

they can go on to study three of them at A-Level (Advanced GCSEs).

If pupils don’t want an academic education after GCSEs, they can choose a vocational one. There are **apprenticeships**, where young people learn a trade as they work. There are also vocational courses, where pupils go to school and take exams in practical subjects such as mechanics or painting and decorating. Some students drop out altogether.

After the age of eighteen, most pupils find jobs or go to university. There are a lot of universities in the UK offering bachelor’s degrees for either three or four years. After receiving their degree, a person is a graduate and can **pursue**a master’s degree in science or arts. Most people in the UK have to fund part of their university education. Universities **are subsidised**by the government, but can’t survive on the money they get, so they charge **tuition fees**. If you come from a poor background you may be excused all or part of your tuition fees. You can also apply for a loan from the government, which you have to pay back later.

**Oxford**(est. 11th century) and **Cambridge**(est.1209) are the most famous British universities.

**Private education**

Some children go to private schools called **independent schools.** Parents have to pay a tuition fee for these schools. Some secondary schools are **boarding schools**, i.e. pupils live at the school.  The most famous schools are called **public schools** and they have long history and tradition. **Eton** is the best known of these schools.

**THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

School attendance is compulsory for 9 years, usually from the age of 6 to 15.  Most children attend state schools but there are also private and church schools. Education at state schools is free of charge but students have to pay for their textbooks. Private and church schools charge fees. All schools are coeducational. Children in our school system do not wear uniforms.

The school starts on 1st September and ends on 30th June of the following year. The school year is divided into two terms (Sept.-Jan., Febr.- June). The number of lessons at a secondary school is around thirty a week, primary schools have fewer lessons. Pupils are evaluated by marks from 1 to 5. Education in our country includes these stages: **pre-school**(kindergartens, nursery schools)**, primary, secondary and tertiary**.

At the age of 15 pupils transfer from primary to secondary schools. Some pupils can transfer to grammar schools at 11 after they have passed an entrance examination.

**secondary schools:**

* **grammar schools** offer academic education and prepare students for further study at universities
* **special** schools – business schools, agricultural schools, nursing  schools, conservator
* **vocational schools** – training for practical jobs

Secondary education takes 4 or 8 years and may be finished with a **school-leaving** **examination** which is held in May and June and comprises four subjects, two compulsory: Czech and a foreign language or Maths, and two **electives.**The exam includes a written part and oral part. The oral part takes between 15 and 20 minutes for each subject. A student chooses from the topics by drawing a number. If they are successful, they get a **school-leaving certificate** and can apply for study at universities.

University education lasts from 3 up to 6 years. You have to pass an **entrance examination** before. Students can enrol at three-year courses for a **Bachelor’s Degree** or five-year courses for a **Master’s Degree.** The university study is finished with a **state exam** and you have to write a **thesis** in order to get a **diploma.**It is handed over at a **graduation ceremony**.

**Doctoral Degrees** are awarded after another few years of study and completion of another thesis.

The best-known universities in our country are e.g. Charles University in Prague or Masaryk University in Brno.

**POLITICAL SYSTEM IN GB, USA AND CZ**

**The head of the state:**

Great Britain: The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy. This means that it has a monarch (a king or a queen) as its Head of state. The monarch has very little power over the government, which is run by the Prime Minister, and reign only with the support of Parliament. Parliament and the monarch have different roles, and they meet together only on special occasions such as the coronation in Westminster Abbey or the opening of parliament after its holiday in November. Queen is also the Head of the Church of England and the Commonwealth. Her signature has to be on all new laws and many state papers. For many people she is a symbol of the unity of the nation, because since 1707 Great Britain has been united under one ruler. She has the right to be informed, so she meets the Prime Minister every week and receives copies of all Cabinet papers. However, she is supposed to be impartial, to be above politics, and any advice she offers to the Prime Minister is secret.

USA: The president not only represents the country as the Head of the State, but he also has real political power. Elections for President are held every four years and no presidents may hold office for more than two terms. Presidential candidates are chosen by the political parties at their conventions. When a candidate has been chosen by a party, he or she will campaign to win the elections- tour the country, make speeches etc. People vote the president of the United States directly.

Czech Republic: Our president only represents the country, but he has some rights. He has a veto right. He can give a pardon and he appoints the Prime Minister, judges and governor of the Czech National bank. He is elected each five years by deputies and senators. He has to get absolute majority.

**Parliament and Government:**

Great Britain: Parliament consists of two chambers known as the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The house of Commons is the law-making body. New laws are passed here.

Law-making process – First law is proposed and debated. If the majority of the members are in favour of the bill, it goes through the same process in the House of Lords. The House of Lords may disagree with the bill and ask the House of Commons to reconsider it. Finally it goes to the monarch to be signed. This is only a formality, as no monarch has refused to sign a bill since 1707. Only then it becomes valid.

USA: Congress is the place where new laws are proposed and made. It consists of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Law-making process – Bills cannot become laws until they have been passed by a two- third majority in both houses and they can still be vetoed by the President.

Czech Republic: Parliament consists of two chambers Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

Law-making proces. First, law is proposed and debated. If the majority of the members are in favour of the bill, it goes through the same process in the Senate. The House of Lords may disagree with the bill and ask the Chamber of Deputies to reconsider it. Finally it goes to the president to be signed. If he doesn´t sign it, the Chamber of Deputies can outvote the decision of the president. Only then it becomes valid.

**System of elections**

Great Britain: General elections are held every five years, but the Prime Minister may decide to call them earlier. For the purpose of General Elections Britain is divided into many small areas called constituencies. In each constituency one MP is elected to the House of Commons. Only the candidate, who wins most of the votes, becomes the MP for that constituency. The second candidate gets nothing. It is called the winner takes it all system. The party which wins the majority seats in the House of Commons gets to the power. Its leader becomes the Prime Minister and moves to Number Ten Downing Street.

USA: Elections for President are held every four years and no presidents may hold office for more than two terms. Presidential candidates are chosen by the political parties at their conventions. When a candidate has been chosen by a party, he or she will campaign to win the elections- tour the country, make speeches etc. People vote the president of the United States directly.

Czech Republic: General elections are held every four years. For the purpose of General Elections Czech Republic is divided into areas called regions. Recently there are 14 regions. People vote for one political party. Each party has own slate, where are written their members. From this slate people can choose candidates, whom they want to give preferential vote.

**Political parties**

Great Britain:

There are just two political parties in Britain that have a significant influence on British politics.

The Conservative (also called Tory) party- This party can be described as the party of the middle and upper classes. Most of his voters live in rural areas, small towns and suburbs of large cities. Much of its financial support comes from large industrial companies.

The Labour Party- Most of his voters comes from working class. This party gets its strongest support in industrial areas.

Sinn Fein, The Ulster Unionists, The Scottish Nationalist Party, The Welsh Nationalist Party

USA:

Democratic Party – They are liberal party. They support equal opportunity for all Americans from each social background. They fight for an environment protection. They don´t want to give money to military.

Republican Party – It is a traditional pro-business party.

Other smaller parties do not play an important role in national politics.

Czech Republic:

ČSSD

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TOP 09

KDU – ČSL

Pirátská strana…