**The C# Language and the .NET Platform**

The first version of C# was developed by Microsoft between 1999 and 2002 and was officially released to the public in 2002 as a part of the .NET platform. The .NET platform aims to make software development for Windows easier by providing a new quality approach to programming, based on the concepts of the "virtual machine" and "managed code".

C# is a modern, general-purpose, object-oriented, high-level programming language. Its syntax is similar to that of C and C++ but many features of those languages are not supported in C# in order to simplify the language, which makes programming easier.

The C# programs consist of one or several files with a .cs extension, which contain definitions of classes and other types. These files are compiled by the C# compiler (csc) to executable code and as a result assemblies are created, which are files with the same name but with a different extension (.exe or .dll).