

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

BASIC FACTS

- It *lies in* the middle / centre / **heart of Europe**.
- Its **neighbours** are **Germany** to the west, **Poland** to the north, **Slovakia** to the east and **Austria** to the south.
- The **population** is about **10 million people**/inhabitants.
The **capital city** is **Prague**.
- The local **currency** is the **Czech Crown**.
- The head of the country is **the president**, it is a republic, with its parliament.
- **The current president** is **Petr Pavel**, the Prime Minister is Petr Fiala.



GEOGRAPHY

- The Czech Republic has a **continental climate** / **four different seasons**.
- There are **hills & mountains around the borders** / the Giant's mountains, The Orlické mountains, Jeseníky, Šumava.. and it is **flatter in the centre**.
- A number of rivers such as the **Labe(the Elbe)**, the **Vltava** and the **Morava river** flow through the country. There are **many ponds in South Bohemia**. **The country often suffers from floods**.
- The land is quite heavily forested. There are a lot of woods. Šumava in the south has some of the oldest forests in the country. **Český ráj** (Bohemian Paradise) is a **popular area for hiking** and has many interesting rocks. Moravian Karst is famous for its cave systems.

THE THREE PARTS of the Czech Republic

The country / nation can be **divided into 3** broad historical / cultural **regions**: **BOHEMIA** (in the west), **MORAVIA** (in the east) and **SILESIA** [silesia](Slezsko) (in the north-east). Traditionally / typically,

- **Bohemia** the central part is more **cosmopolitan** / industrial, Prague is its capital
- **Moravia** in the south is more traditional / rural / religious, in the south of Moravia there are famous vineyards(vinice) in Valtice, Mikulov. **Brno is the second largest city and unofficial capital of Moravia**. **Moravia is known for its wines**. Brno is famous for the Tugendhat Villa protected by Unesco.

- **Silesia** in the north together with Moravia are areas full of UNESCO monuments, castles and chateaux, wine, folklore traditions and unique technical monuments

Ostrava is *known for* its **mining** (hornictví) history. **Plzeň** and **České Budějovice** are internationally famous for their **beers**.

Karlovy Vary is a famous **spa town** (lázně).



THE NAME OF THE COUNTRY

- *The country has had a lot of names -*

the **Czech lands**, the **Kingdom of Bohemia**.

(Království české), the lands of the **Bohemian crown**, it was a part of the **Holy Roman Empire** [empajr], **Czechoslovakia** or the **Czech Republic**.

(The **Holy Roman Empire** [impajr] (Svatá říše římská) included present-day Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, parts of eastern France, northern Italy, Slovenia, western Poland and the Czech and Slovak Republics.)

IMPORTANT CZECH KINGS, PRESIDENTS

There have been many important kings and presidents in the history of the Czech Republic.

- **14th CENTURY - Charles IV** has been the most popular king of all times, the **Holy Roman Emperor** (svatý římský císař) crowned in 1355/ in the **14th century**. His rule/ the times he was on the throne/ is known as "**the Golden Age**" of the Czech history. He *established* Charles University, the first university in Central Europe, in 1348.



- **AFTER the 1st WORLD WAR** on **October 28, 1918** an independent **Czechoslovakia** was formed **Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk** was the first president of

Czechoslovakia. He is quite *famous for* his enlightened [enlaj-t@nt] (osvícený – moudrý/calm and **clever**) **view of the European world** of his time. He *used to wear* a **black hat**, **glasses** and a **well-kept** (dobře udržovaný) **white moustache** [mustáš] and a **beard** [bird] vousy. Masaryk was an **excellent rider**, he was *often seen on a horse*.



- **AFTER the 2nd WORLD WAR, in 1948**, the **Communist Party** and **Russia** took power in our country.

In 1939 Germany invaded [invejdyd] Czechoslovakia, the 2nd world war started. After the 2nd world war, in 1948, the Communist Party and Russia took power. In August 1968 Russian army – 2000 tanks invaded our country.

Jan Palach was a Czech student of history and political economy at Charles University who burnt himself in January 1969 protesting against the Russian invasion. He was 20 years old.



- On 17th November 1989 over 250.000 people gathered (shromáždili se) in the Wenceslas Square to protest against the communist regime [režim]. The 'VELVET REVOLUTION' ENDED THE COMMUNIST REGIME IN A PEACEFUL WAY. VÁCLAV HAVEL became the first president of the new democratic Czechoslovakia in 1989.

- In 1993 Czechoslovakia separated [sep@- rejtyd](rozdělit se) into the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Vaclav Havel became the president of the Czech Republic.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

- The Czech Republic has a parliament. The parliament has two parts - the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.
- There are elections for the Chamber of Deputies every 4 years.
- The parliament creates the government.
- The head of the government is the prime minister – Petr Fiala.
- The head of state is the president, who is elected every 5 years and can only be elected twice. The current president is Petr Pavel

FAMOUS CZECH PEOPLE

Charles IV is famous for being the only Czech to be Holy Roman Emperor. Jan Hus was an important religious leader of the 14th and 15th centuries. Jan Komenský was an important teacher and reformer in the 17th century. Karel Čapek, Milan Kundera, Franz Kafka and Jaroslav Hašek are famous Czech writers. Miloš Forman is an Oscar-winning director. Antonín Dvořák and Bedřich Smetana are significant composers. Two Czechs have won the Nobel Prize: Professor Jaroslav Heyrovský for chemistry and Jaroslav Seifert for literature. Contact lenses are the invention of / were invented by the chemist Otto Wichterle. Some famous athletes are Jaromír Jágr for ice-hockey, Petra Kvitová -tennis

Další použitelná témata: Means of transport People travel by cars, buses, trains, on bikes, in Hradec they can walk because the town is flat

Popular sports People like playing/ watching football, tennis, icehockey, biathlon, snowboarding and anything when our team or sportsman is winning on TV



Popular food Popular meals in the CR are řízek which is fried meat dipped in roll crumbs, dumplings, chlebíčky which is a kind of open sandwich, carp and potato salad at Xmas etc. **Public holidays, Prague, Hradec Králové, My hometown, My favourite places/ towns/ landmarks**

©Ali

UNESCO protected areas:

Holy Trinity Column in Olomouc		Landscape for Breeding and Training of Ceremonial Carriage Horses at Kladruby nad Labem	
Jewish Quarter and St Procopius' Basilica in Třebíč		Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region	
Kutná Hora: Historical Town Centre with the Church of St Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec		Gardens and Castle at Kroměříž	
Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape		Historic Centre of Český Krumlov	
Litomyšl Castle		Historic Centre of Prague	
Pilgrimage Church of St John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora		Historic Centre of Telč	
Tugendhat Villa in Brno		Holašovice Historical Village Reservation	