# 12 - The Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is a state in Central Europe. It has about 80 000 sq km and about 11milion inhabitants. Parts of Czech Republic are **Bohemia**, **Moravia** and **Silesia**. **Neighbors** of CR are Poland, German, Austria and Slovenian Republic.

## Landscape

Bohemia is surrounded by mountains – the **Šumava**, the **Czech** **Forest**, the **Ore** **Mountains** (Krušné hory), The **Jizerské** **Mountains**, the **Giant** **Mountains** (Krkonoše) and the **Eagle** **Mountains** (Orlické hory). The Moravian Plain is protected on the West by the **Bohemian**-**Moravian** **Highland** (Česko-moravská vysočina) and on the North by **Jeseníky** and **Beskydy**. Lowlands can by found next to big rivers such us **The** **Vltava**, **The** **Elbe** (Labe), **The** **Oder** (Odra)or **Morava**. Our highest mountain is **Sněžka** with 1603 meters, situated in **Giant** **Mountains**.

## Climate

Climate is mostly the **same** by the whole country. Warmest areas are in South Moravia.

## Materials

We have a lot of **coal**. Many black coal mines are in the **Ostrava** but also near **Kladno** and so on. **Brown** coal is in the **North** **Bohemia** and near **Sokolov**. We also have some **iron** **ore**, **uranium** and **oil**. We have **ceramics** and **glass** **industries** on quite high level so it is good that we have also lot of **kaolin** and **clay** (jíl) in our country.

## Industry

Czech Republic is **industrial** **country**. The most of it is **engineering** industry. But there is lot of **chemical**, **food** or **textile** (zemědělství) industry as well. Also **agriculture** industry is on high level, we are able to feed our citizens and even export.

## History

Our territory was inhabited by **Slavonic** tribes at **6th century** A.D. First Slavonic state was called **Samos’s Empire**, which was founded in 623. By the time this empire developed into **Great Moravian Empire** which was formed in the **9th century**. First dynasty was founded in Czech Republic when Přemysl married Libuše, so the first dynasty was The **Přemyslovo** **dynasty**. First historically documented Czech prince was **Bořivoj I**. Czech Republic had also important role in Central Europe. **Přemyslid** dynasty died out by the sword. Then came **Luxemburg dynasty** and Czech Kingdom became centre of **The Holy Roman Empire**. But we were still quite independent of the Holy Roman Empire. Mainly during the reign of **Charles IV**, CR grew into one of the largest European metropolises. Czech Republic was **centre** **of** **education**, **architecture** and **art**. By the reign of Charles IV there were built many significant building such us **Charles** **University** – the oldest one in Europe; and so on.

In the **15th century** there was **Hussite Movement**. It has its name after **John** **Huss**, professor, dean (děkan) and also lector of Charles University. He was tried by the Church council in Constance and burnt at the stake (hranice) as a heretic (kacíř). This provokes **Hussite** **war**. The leader was **Jan** **Žižka**; other important person was **Prokop Holý**. Žižka was never defeated as a Hussite leader. Hussites won many battles with **Catholic Church** and **Holy Roman Empire**.

After the reign of **King Jiří z Poděbrad** came **Jagiellonian** **dynasty** and then **Hapsburg** **dynasty**. These rules tried to make Czechs weak for **Germans** and the **Roman Catholic Church**. There weren’t successful till the **Battle** on the **White** **Mountain** in **1620**, followed by germanization, liquidation of Czech literature and culture and re-catholization.

In the **19th century** when Word War I ended, Czech nation was able to take its fate into its own hands in newly established Czechoslovak Republic. After the second Word War, in the **1948**, we were occupied by the **communist** **Russian** **union**. We were occupied till **1968** when the season called “**Prague** **spring**” ended. But the **normalization** **continued** by political power of communists. That continued till **Velvet** **revolution** in **1989**. Then in **1993** The Czechoslovak Republic was splitted to independent **Czech** **Republic** and Slovak Republic.

## Government

The Czech Republic is **sovereign**, **united** and **democratic** state. Government is divided into three branches. **Legislative** branch represented by **Parliament**, **executive** branch represented mainly by the **president** and **government** and **judicial** branch represented by **courts**.

**Parliament** is consisted of two chambers (komory). The **Chamber** **of** **Deputies** (poslanecká sněmovna) and **Senate**. There are **200** **Deputies** and **81** **senators** which have duty to **make** **laws**. Deputies are elected every **four** **years** and every **two years one third of the Senators** is renewed. Deputies and senators are voted by inhabitants of CR. Everyone older than 18 years with clear criminal record have right to **vote** **universally** (všeobecně), **equally** (rovně), **directly** (přímo) and **secretly** (tajně). Parliament **makes** **laws**, **pass** **laws** and also have **control** of **military** **forces**. Law has to pass the Deputies and then Senators. Then it has to be signed by head of Chamber of Deputies (**prime** **minister**) and president.

**The president** is elected every **five** **years** by the Parliament but every president can by elected just two times. President mainly represents the country. He has also many duties in government. He **sign** **laws**, he is **General** **of the Army**. He can **grant** a **pardon** to some convicted person or declare an amnesty.

**The government** is composed of the **premier**, the **vice**-**premiers** and the **ministers**. Smallest parts of the government are **local** **authorities**. It is executive branch.

**The judicial power** is divided into a system of courts, starting with **Constitutional** court and **Supreme** court.