

21. Life in Czechia



13th

Working abroad
index



22nd

Quality of life
Index



7th

Health infrastructure

History

Czech countries were born more than one thousand years ago. The Czech history which has always been interwoven with the European history is very rich and offers many interesting facts about lives of societies through the centuries.

In 1918, after the defeat of Austria-Hungary, several centuries of Habsburg rule came to an end with the birth of independent Czechoslovakia, uniting the Czechs and Slovaks in one nation-state. During the years between the two World Wars, the First Republic (as it is referred to) was a rapidly developing industrial society, with a stable democratic system of governance and a vibrant cultural and intellectual life. However, the Munich Agreement, signed in October 1938, essentially sealed Czechoslovakia’s fate and led to the occupation by the Nazi Germany in March 1939. At the end of the World War II, Czechoslovakia fell under the sphere of the Soviet influence. In 1948, the Communist Party had taken full control of the state and Soviet dominance extended for the next 40 years.

„The Velvet Revolution“ took place in November 1989 and is referred to as „velvet“ simply because there were no casualties. On November 17th, following the events in the neighboring East Germany (the Berlin Wall was taken down), a student demonstration confronted the police in the center of Prague. More extensive demonstrations followed with Vaclav Havel at the forefront, until the Communist government resigned on December 3rd, 1989. Vaclav Havel was elected president on December 29th, 1989.

The separation of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic into Czech Republic and Slovak Republic took place in January 1993. Although the Czechs did not want the country to be separated from Slovakia, the economic circumstances and objectives of the two newly emerging market economies varied significantly.

Czechia applied for EU membership in 1996 and started negotiations in March 1999. On 16 April 2003 the Treaty on Accession of Czechia, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia was signed in Athens. On 1 May 2004, Czechia became a full member of the European Union. In the beginning of 2009 Czechia undertook the presidency of the European Union for six months period starting in January 2009.

Source: Businessinfo.cz, 2024

Quality of life

Czechia ranks 22nd of 63 countries in the worldwide quality-of-life index and has the best result among the countries of Central and Eastern European.

Quality of life index, 2023

Rank	Country	Score
1	Switzerland	9.64
2	Austria	9.60
3	Denmark	9.53
...
22	Czechia	7.73
41	Slovakia	6.31
51	Poland	5.01
53	Hungary	4.80

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Online, 2024

Selected international schools

International secondary school	City
German School in Prague - Foreign grammar school	Prague
Lycée français de Prague	Prague
Riverside School Prague	Prague
International School of Prague	Prague
Prague British International School	Prague
The Ostrava International School	Ostrava
International School Olomouc	Olomouc
International School of Brno	Brno
Meridian International School	Prague
Park Lane International School	Prague
Townshend International School	Hluboka nad Vltavou
Central Point	Prague
Christian International School of Prague	Prague
Bulharská základní škola a gymnázium Dr. Petra Berona	Prague
American Academy in Prague	Prague
PORG International School	Ostrava
American Academy in Brno	Brno
Japonská škola v Praze	Prague
Basis International School Prague	Prague
German School in Prague - Foreign grammar school	Prague
Lycée français de Prague	Prague
Riverside School Prague	Prague
International School of Prague	Prague
Prague British International School	Prague
The Ostrava International School	Ostrava
International School Olomouc	Olomouc
International School of Brno	Brno
Meridian International School	Prague

Source: National Institute of Children and Youth, 2024 | **Note:** Internationally accredited schools outside of the Network of Czech Schools following foreign curriculums.

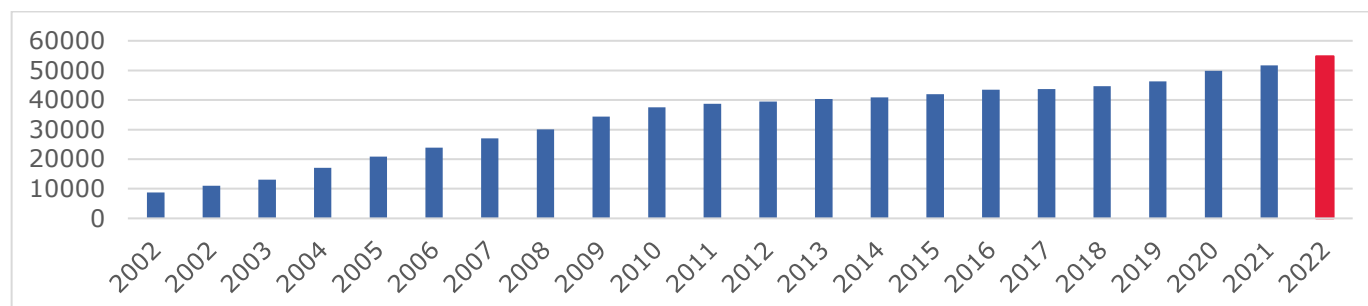
Universities

There are over 58 universities, public, state and private, offering courses in foreign languages (mostly in English) and almost 10 accredited institutions offering MBA education. The courses are usually paid, but there may be exceptions (e.g. language course as

part of a scholarship). The Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies (ujop.cuni.cz/en/) offers teaching of Czech language to foreigners and preparing them for university studies. Foreign students can receive a scholarship under bilateral international agreements on cooperation in the field of education (offered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Czechia) or within the framework of the Foreign Development Aid (offered by the Government of Czechia). Information about these scholarships is available at Czech embassies and consulates. Some higher education institutions offer student mobilities under bilateral university agreements or grant scholarships for excellent study results or in cases of hard circumstances of a student. European students can take the advantage of number of exchange programmes (e.g. Erasmus, EEA/Norway Financial Mechanisms, Aktion, Ceepus). The Erasmus Mundus programme offers scholarships also for non-European students to study selected degree courses.

Source: CzechInvest, National Agency for European Educational Programmes, 2024

Foreign students at Czech universities



Source: Ministry of Education, 2024

Medical care

The Czech healthcare system is inspired by the European tradition, founded on public services and financed by predominantly public means. Czech physicians are at least of the same quality as in Western European countries. Prague and other cities enjoy wide range of public and private hospitals and clinics – these are some examples of them - Top Moravia Health Brno (www.tmhklinika.cz), Doctor Health Centre Prague (doctor-prague.cz/), GHC Clinic Prague and Brno (www.ghc.cz/en), Canadian Medical Care Prague (www.cmcp Praha.cz/en).

Transport

Public transport in Czechia is comprehensive, efficient and very reasonably priced compared to Western Europe. Large towns all boast excellent local networks.

Foreigners who spend more than 185 days per year in Czechia must obtain a Czech driving license in addition to their own license by presenting the original license at the local authority at place of residence. The deadline for applying for a Czech license is 90 days after the issue date of the long-term visa.

Shopping

Retail in Prague and all larger cities has undergone a revolution in the past decade with many big shopping centres now located within and around the cities. Local concepts of shopping and customer service are now comparable to those of Western European countries, and major international retail chains (e.g., Tesco, Billa, Makro, IKEA, OBI, Bauhaus and others) as well as boutique stores (e.g., Zara, C&A, Marks&Spencer, Promod, H&M, Next, Max Mara and others) are found in abundance.

Sport

In keeping with its reputation as a highly successful sporting nation, Czechia provides a wealth of sporting opportunities. The most popular sports are ice hockey, football (soccer), basketball, tennis, volleyball, swimming and table tennis, for which there are many clubs and stadiums in all regions of the country. In addition to these sports, all kinds of other sports are also catered to, including rowing, canoeing, squash, beach volleyball, baseball, gliding, paragliding, parachuting, bungee jumping, go-cart racing, paintball, curling, etc. For more information, see the website of the Czech Sports Association at www.cstv.cz.

Other leisure activities

Most embassies run clubs, groups and even bars for fellow nationals and will be happy to give you details of family-oriented events. There are many international cultural institutes in Prague and other cities, e.g. the British Council in Prague, Brno and Pilsen

(<http://www.britishcouncil.cz/en>), the Goethe-Institut Prag (www.goethe.de/ins/cz/prag), the American Culture and Trade Center Prague, Österreichisches Kulturinstitut Prag, L'Institut Français de Prague (www.ifp.cz), the Japanese Information and Culture Centre Prague, Istituto Italiano di Cultura Praga (www.iic-praga.cz), Instituto Cervantes Praha (praga.cervantes.es/es) etc.

The International Women's Association of Prague (www.iwa-prague.com) is a highly popular club for Czech and foreign women (approx. 300 women from over 35 different countries) that organises classes, international activities, charity and social events and children's groups of all types. IWAP is an independent, non-political, non-profit making organization, whose purpose is to welcome all women living in the CR.

For further information about life in Czechia, you can also visit the website www.expats.cz.

Housing

Prague and all larger cities in the CR boast a wide range of rented furnished and unfurnished housing for expatriates and their families, ranging from centrally-located apartments to spacious villas in leafy suburbs. Many real estate agencies offer relocation services for a charge of one to two months' rent.

The sale and rental prices of residential premises can vary widely depending on the city, location, size and quality. The average purchase price in Prague per m² is EUR 4,884, in Brno EUR 4,063 and in Ostrava EUR 1,798. The average monthly rent per m² is in Prague EUR 16, in Brno EUR 16 and in Ostrava 9. The prices in other cities are lower than those in Prague or Brno.

Source: Reality Mix, 2024

Weather and climate

Czechia is a landlocked country located in moderate geographical latitudes in the Northern Hemisphere. The climate of Czechia is mild but variable locally and throughout the year.

The climate differs markedly among the various regions of Czechia, depending on the height above sea level. Generally speaking the higher you are, average temperatures may drop more and rainfall is more likely. Many other factors also play a role in this – the border mountain ranges, for example, significantly influence ground-level air flow and rainfall.

Various height levels of the sun during the year cause the changing of the seasons, differentiated from each other mainly by the development of temperatures and precipitation. Similarly to the whole moderate northern band, the beginning of the year in Czechia is also characterized by a cold winter. After this comes spring, followed by a warm summer and chilly autumn.

Entertainment, arts and food

Prague and many cities in Czechia are famous for their architectural heritage (see, e.g., the UNESCO World Heritage List at whc.unesco.org/en/list, which includes 17 places in Czechia), museums, theatres, cinemas, galleries, historic gardens and cafes. An overwhelming choice of cultural events is on offer, embracing all types of music and an outstanding theatrical tradition. A number of foreign culture centres, ranging from the British Council to the Goethe-Institut, also offer a wide range of events and services (see "Other Leisure Activities" below).

A wealth of foreign language publications exists in Czechia, including the *Prague Post*, *Prague Business Journal*, *The Prague Tribune* (English) and *Prager Zeitung* (German).

Restaurants in Czechia cater to a wide range of tastes. In larger cities all types of international cuisine are available, from renowned traditional Czech food to Asian specialities. Alongside the country's famous Czech pubs (with the famous Czech beer brands), larger cities and especially Prague boast an extensive number of pubs and restaurants catering especially to foreigners, ranging from Irish pubs to Indian restaurants. For more information, see the restaurants guides at, e.g., www.grand-restaurant.cz.

