

PŘÍPRAVA NA MATURITU Z ANGLIČTINY

TÉMA Č. 1

# THE CZECH REPUBLIC

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT CZECH REPUBLIC

**Area:** 74,000,000 sq. km

**Population:** 10,000,000 inhabitants

**Capital:** Prague (1,400,000)

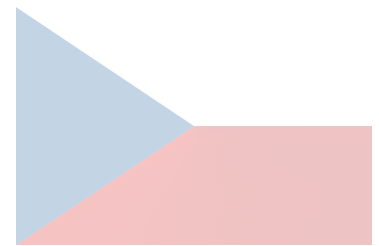
**Other cities:** Brno, Plzeň, Ostrava, Liberec

**Inner parts:** Bohemia (Prague), Moravia (Brno), Silesia (Ostrava)

**Borders on:** Slovak Republic (SE), Austria (S), Germany (S, W, NW), Poland (N, NE)

**Currency:** Czech Crown

**Languages:** Czech, various dialects



geography

**Mountains:** mainly bordering ranges - The Ore Mts. (NW-N), The Giant Mts. (NE), Eagle Mts. (NE), Ranges of Jeseníky and Beskydy (NE-E), Western Carpathia (E), Bohemian-Moravian Highland (Middle S), Šumava (S), Bohemian Forest (SW)

**Basins and lowlands:** Lowlands are situated around valleys of biggest rivers - Vltava Lowland, Lowland of Elbe, Lw. of Morava, Lowland of Haná

**Rivers and Lakes:** Rivers: Elbe, Vltava, Morava, Lužice. Ohře, Sázava, Berounka, Oder. Lakes: district of Southern Bohemia, dams along the rivers - Orlík, Slapy, Vranov, Lipno.

The Head of state is The President, the executive power is in hands of The Prime Minister and his Cabinet. The legislative power belongs to the Parliament of two chambers - the Senate and the House of Commons.

**Main political parties are:** Civil Democrats, Social Democrats, Communists, Union of Liberty, Christian Democrats.

political system



**Animal breed:** Mainly raising cattle (milk and beef c.), pigs, poultry. Goats, sheep and horses are rare.

**Growing agricultural plants:** fruit and vegetables, mostly potatoes; crops (wheat, barley), hops.

agriculture

industry

Metallurgy, heavy, mining and chemical industry is very traditional. Quite common is also food, textile and electromechanical industry. Czech Republic is famous for its porcelain and glass. **Main coal mining areas** are in Most Basin, Kladno Basin and District of Ostrava. **Main industrial zones** are in Prague, Northern Bohemia and Northern Moravia.

## 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. 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 Moravian 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 traditionally 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.

## THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS IN CZECH 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 historically 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 his 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 unsuccessfully 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.

## NEJČASTĚJŠÍ OTEVŘENÉ OTÁZKY A VZOROVÉ ODPOVĚDI

Cíl: Umím odpovědět na otázky týkající se tématu Česká republika.

Abyste tohoto cíle dosáhli a získali maximum bodů, je nutné dodržet následující tři body. Jejich dodržením totiž naplníte přesně to, co od Vás zkoušející u této části ústní zkoušky z angličtiny očekává:

Odpověď na otázku musí být detailní, věcná, logická a vhodně zakončená.

Odpověď musí obsahovat minimálně 30-50 slov.

Odpověď by měla obsahovat fakta o tématu Česká republika.

1. Where is the Czech Republic (the CR) situated? Tell me about it.

Well, it is said the Czech Republic is situated in the heart of Europe, which, in other words, means the Central Europe.

2. Which are the neighbouring countries of the CR? Tell me about it.

There are four neighbouring countries: Poland, Slovakia, Austria, and Germany. The history of those countries in relation to the Czech Republic is very rich.

3. Where are the neighbouring countries situated? Tell me about it.

Well, we can describe the locations of our neighbouring countries by means of the world directions. Poland is in the north, Slovakia is in the east, Austria is in the south and Germany is in the west.

4. What is the geography of the CR like? Tell me about it.

Although the Czech Republic isn't a large country, the geography is quite diverse. You may find mountainous areas such as the highest Krkonoše mountains, you may find lowlands with large fields and large rivers, such as the Labe, Vltava or Morava. There are so many interesting facts about the geography of the Czech Republic.

5. What is the climate of the CR? Tell me about it.

The climate is continental. The summer is quite hot with days with the temperature of more than 30 centigrades. On the other hand, in winter you may experience days with more than minus 30 centigrade, especially in January or February. The spring comes usually in March or April and the autumn comes before the winter. Sometimes the autumn is sunny and you may enjoy the pleasant mood of the colourful falling leaves.

6. What is the population of the CR? Tell me about it.

The population of the Czech Republic is about ten or eleven million; it is similar to the population of Portugal, for example. About a half of the people live in the cities, a significant part of the population lives in the country. The largest cities are the capital city Prague, next Brno (in Moravia), Ostrava, Olomouc, Liberec, well-known Plzeň, České Budějovice, and others.

7. What is the capital city of the CR? Tell me about it.

The capital is in the center of Bohemia. Prague has a population of about a million and a half residents, foreigners or for example students. It is the center of government, business, culture, and other fields. If you travel around the worlds and people ask you where you are from, they might be confused when you answer you are from the Czech Republic or Czechia... But if you say you are from Prague, most of them have the idea. Prague is a world-famous city.

8. Into which three political parts can the CR be divided? Tell me about it.

There are three political parts in the Czech Republic. It is Bohemia in the west, Moravia in the south-east and Silesia in the north-east. Each region is somehow special, especially for their dialect, culture, and habits.

9. Which are the main administrative parts of the CR? Tell me about it.

The main administrative parts are Regions (for example the Liberec Region, the Královehradecký Region) and so on, usually named after the regional city. Other, smaller administrative parts are districts.

## NEJČASTĚJŠÍ OTEVŘENÉ OTÁZKY A VZOROVÉ ODPOVĚDI

10. What is the political system of the CR like? Tell me about it.

The political system is democratic. We have a parliament divided into a House of Deputies and the Senate and the Presidential office. The most powerful part of the parliament is the House of Deputies; people vote their preferred political party every four years.

11. Which are the biggest political parties? Tell me about it.

It is quite a common division as in any other country in the world. The right-wing parties are for example TOP 09 or ODS, the left-wing parties are ČSSD (social democrats) or KSČM (the communists) and there are ANO and KDU-ČSL (the people's Christian party) standing in the middle of the political spectrum.

12. How can you travel in the CR? Tell me about it.

You may use the usual spectrum of travelling possibilities. The most common is travelling by car and by bus. People also use trains and planes for holidays and business trips. In some cities, you may travel by trams and in Prague, there is a subway. Taxis are popular in cities and towns. The infrastructure in 2015 is not as good as in Germany (roads), but it is at quite a good level.

13. Where are the international airports of the CR? Tell me about it.

The most important airport is the Václav Havel Airport in Prague. Other international airports are situated in Brno, Ostrava, and Karlovy Vary.

14. Which places of the CR are the most popular for tourists? Why? Tell me about it.

Well, definitely, it is the capital – Prague. It is full of tourist from all over the world for all over the year. Other popular places are ski centres (Špindlerův Mlýn, Harrachov etc.), Moravia is famous for its wine culture and hospitality. The Czech Republic is also full of historical monuments such as castles (most famous Karlštejn). You may enjoy the Czech countryside or the cities. It is up to you.

15. Which holiday destinations are popular for the Czech tourists? Why? Tell me about it.

It depends. But I think most of the Czechs prefer travelling to the mountains or camps. They like hiking, cycling or relaxing around lakes. Máchovo lake (close to Doksy) is a very popular camping, for example.

16. What are the traditional Czech meals? Tell me about it.

Well, it is said that the Czech cuisine is not very healthy. I don't think so, although it is true that the Czechs are "meat-eaters". Typical Czech meal is "Knedlo zelo vepřo" – dumplings, sauerkraut, and pork meat. It is funny that tourists also like eating the "Smažák" – fried cheese with french fries and Tartar sauce. The national beverage is definitely beer.

17. How would you describe a typical Czech? Tell me about it.

Well, everyone is different and that is nice. The typical Czech listens to rock music, drinks beer, goes to the pub every Friday and thinks the Czech Republic is in the centre of the world. I think the Czechs complain a lot, but they usually don't do anything to fix the problem. I think Czechs are too passive as citizens. But as I said, it depends.

18. How would you describe a typical Moravian? Tell me about it.

The typical Moravian has a good mood, smiles, is helpful and hospitable. Maybe it is the warmer climate and wine growing, which all the Moravians are proud of.

19. Which people from the CR are world-famous? Why? Tell me about it.

I think Mr. Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia is quite famous for his enlightened view of the European world of his time. Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius) – the Teacher of Nations, Mr. Václav Havel – the first democratic president, Miloš Forman – a great world director, or Mr. Karel Gott – a famous singer known not only in the Czech Republic but also in Germany.

# NEJČASTĚJŠÍ OTEVŘENÉ OTÁZKY A VZOROVÉ ODPOVĚDI

## OSOBNÍ OTÁZKY A PŘÍKLADOVÉ ODPOVĚDI

1. Which place in the CR is your favourite? Why?

I can't say I have a favourite place in my country. I like being in my town, sometimes I enjoy visiting a large city, Brno, or Prague. Hiking in the Bílé Karpaty mountains is fine.

2. Which place in the CR would you recommend to a tourist? Why?

Definitely the capital. Prague is full of monuments, cultural events and it is definitely the highlight of the Czech Republic for tourists.

3. What is your favourite Czech music? Why?

I like Charlie Straight – they don't speak Czech but they are great musicians. Sometimes, I like listening to Czech rap music, such as the PSH.

4. What is your favourite Czech meal? Why?

The Czech meal I like the most is "Párek v rohlíku" – a sausage in the roll. I like it with ketchup or mustard. I talked to my friend from Britain and they said it is definitely a speciality of the Czech Republic.

5. Which Czech film do you think is the most popular abroad? Why?

I think Kolja is very famous, it also got the Oskar award. The story of the film is very deep and it shows many things related to the Czech Republic.

6. Which means of transport do you think is the most popular for Czechs? Why?

I suppose Czechs like driving their cars because it is the most comfortable means of transport. When I pass the driving license tests, I will do my best to get a car too.

7. What is better for you: living in Prague or in the Czech countryside? Why?

For me, it is the city. I am from Brno and I like when all the service is close: the shops, pubs and so on.

8. Do you understand Slovak? Tell me about it

Yes, I do. The Slovak language is quite similar to Czech and I also listen to Slovak music bands, such as Kontrafakt or Dara Rollins.

9. Do you think people from the neighbouring countries like the CR? Why? / Why not?

As far I know, there are more and more tourists from Poland and Germany in Brno every year. So I think yes.

10. Have you ever thought of living in another country? Why? / Why not?

I have. Many times. I think everyone should leave the homeland for some time, for a month at least or half a year. After the experience obtained abroad you may compare your own country to another and have your eyes wide open. After I finish school, I am going to try to find a job abroad, in Germany or in Greece.