

CZECHIA



FLAG

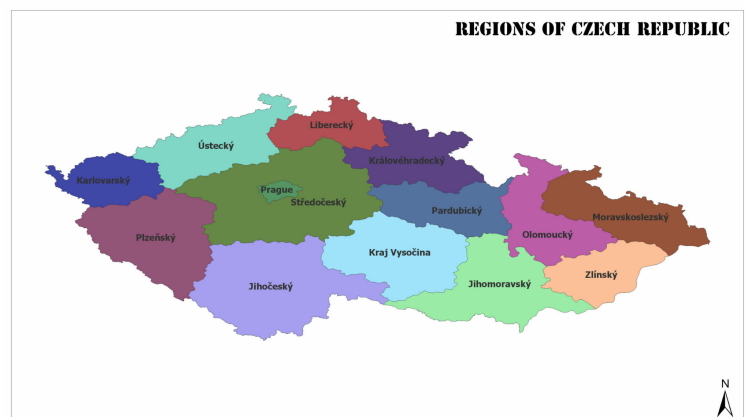
The national flag of the Czech Republic is the similar as the flag of previous Czechoslovakia. Upon the closure of Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic reserved the Czechoslovak flag though Slovakia approved its own flag. Czech Republic Flag was originated on the flag of Bohemia and was white over red. This was nearly equal to the flag of Poland, so a blue triangle was added at the hoist in 1920.

The flag of Czech Republic was barred by the Nazis in 1939, and a flat tricolor of white, red, and blue was enforced. The 1920 flag was reinstated in 1945. Later, the blue triangle was added to the flag in an exertion to distinguish it from the Poland flag, and blue is said to signify the State of Moravia.

There are numerous versions that clarify origin of the Czech Republic flag colors. The Czech Republic flag colors are rented from the coat of arms of Bohemia. The blue trio was added to the Czech flag in 1920 in order to distinguish it from the flag of Poland. Blue in the flag reprints the State of Moravia. There is an significant symbolic connotation behind the colors of the Czech flag. The white color depicts people of the Czech Republic and their diplomatic nature and honesty. Red color means courage, valor and patriotism of the nation. The blue indicates vigilance, reality, loyalty and perseverance.

FACTS AND STATISTICS

- Location: Central Europe, bordering Austria 362 km, Germany 646 km, Poland 658 km, Slovakia 215 km
- Capital: Prague
- Population: 10,627,448 (July 2014 est.)
Ethnic Make-up: Czech 81.2%, Moravian 13.2%, Slovak 3.1%, Polish 0.6%, German 0.5%, Silesian 0.4%, Roma 0.3%, Hungarian 0.2%, other 0.5% (1991)
- Religions: Roman Catholic 39.2%, Protestant 4.6%, Orthodox 3%, other 13.4%, atheist 39.8%





LANGUAGES OF CZECHIA

95% of the population speak Czech.

- 3% of the population speak Slovak, which is closely related to Czech.
- 2% of the population speak Czech but are also mother tongue speakers of German, Hungarian, Romani and Polish.

CZECHIA SOCIETY & CULTURE

The Family

- The family is the centre of the social structure.
- Obligation to the family is a person's first priority.
- Practicality
- Czechs prize forward thinking, logical, practical, and efficient.
- Careful planning, in both one's business and personal life, provides a sense of security.
- Rules and regulations allow people to know what is expected and to plan their life accordingly.

Privacy

- Czechs are private people until they get to know you.
- They are formal and reserved.
- Once you develop a personal relationship Czechs open up a bit, but they are never overly emotional.
- Although always polite, they seldom move to a first-name basis with people outside their extended family or very close friends.
- Czechs tend not to acknowledge people whom they do not know as they walk along the street or ride the train.

CZECH ETIQUETTE AND MANNERS

Meeting and Greeting

- Initial greetings are formal and reserved.
- Most greetings include a handshake, direct eye contact, and the appropriate greeting for the time of day.
- Wait to be invited before using someone's first name or an informal greeting, as these are all signs of friendship.
- The offer to move to the informal is generally offered by the woman, the older person, or the person of higher status.
- Moving to the informal without an invitation insults the person and may be viewed as an attempt to humiliate them.

Giving and Accepting Gifts

- If you are invited to dinner, bring a box of good quality chocolates, or flowers to the hostess or a bottle of wine or good brandy to the host.
- In general, you should be cautious about giving flowers, since people over the age of 35 often see flowers as having a romantic connotation.
- If you give flowers, give an odd number, but not 13, which is considered unlucky.
- Do not give calla lilies as they are used at funerals.
- Gifts are usually opened when received.

Dining Etiquette

- If you are visiting a Czech's house:
- Arrive on time.
- Remove your shoes..
- Expect to be treated with great honour and respect.
- Dress modestly and well.
- Do not discuss business. Czechs separate their business and personal lives.
- Table manners are rather formal in Czech Republic.
- Remain standing until invited to sit down. You may be shown to a particular seat.
- Table manners are Continental -- the fork is held in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating.
- Do not begin eating until the hostess starts.
- Unless the meal is formal, the napkin remains folded next to the plate. At formal meals, the napkin is unfolded and put on your lap.



-
- The oldest woman or honoured guest is generally served first.
 - Always refuse second helpings the first time they are offered. Wait for the hostess to insist.
 - Compliment the meal while you are eating. This allows the hostess to discuss the food and the preparation.
 - Indicate you have finished eating by laying your knife and fork parallel across the right side of your plate.

SLOVAKIA



FLAG

The Slovakia flag was formally approved on September 1, 1992. Slovakia flag has Red, white and blue are outdated Pan-Slavic colors. The centered Slovakian arms feature a leading white cross atop a blue representation reference to the nation's mountains.

Slovakia's coat of arms is a red protection covering a silver double cross standing on a blue three-peaked mountain. Flag of Slovakia has cross represents the Christian faith of the country, while the blue mountain embodies the Tatra, Fatra and Matra ranges.

Before they separated, Slovakia and the Czech Republic passed a resolution to prevent either country from continuing to use the Czechoslovakian flag. Once the separation was complete, Slovakia adopted a new flag, but the Czech Republic continued to use the old flag of Czechoslovakia, violating the resolution and refusing to create a new flag. Despite this violation, Slovakia didn't take any legal action and the Czech Republic maintained that they were no longer bound by the agreements.

The Slovakian flag has an interesting history steeped in the stories of the Slavic people, and those of Slovakian heritage may find special meaning in this flag.



FACTS AND STATISTICS

Location: Central Europe, south of Poland and sharing borders with Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Ukraine

Capital: Bratislava

Climate: temperate; generally warm summers; cold, cloudy, humid winters

Population: 5.4 million

(2019 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: Slovak 85.8%, Hungarian 9.7%, Roma 1.7%, Ruthenian/Ukrainian 1%, other and unspecified 1.8%

Religions: Roman Catholic 68.9%, Protestant 10.8%, Greek Catholic 4.1%, other or unspecified 3.2%, none 13%

Government: parliamentary democracy

LANGUAGE



The Slovak language, sometimes referred to as "Slovakian", is an Indo-European language belonging to the West Slavic languages (together with Czech, Polish, Kashubian and Sorbian). Slovak is mutually intelligible with Czech.

-
- Slovak, as a written language, did not exist until the end of the 18th Century, when Anton Bernolak, a Roman Catholic priest set about to create a Slovak literary language.
 - He based his creation on the Western Slovakian dialect and produced a phonetic spelling (one that is written as it is pronounced).
 - Bernolak published his new language in his "Grammatica Slavica" in 1790. The language was further developed in 1843, when an agreement on the codification of Slovak as a written language was made. This was led by Ludovit Stur, who now chose the Central dialect as the basis, believing it to be the purest form.

SLOVAK PEOPLE, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The People

The people of Slovakia descend from the Slavic peoples who settled around the Danube river basin in the 6th and 7th centuries. Traditionally, Slovaks were what could be termed the "peasant class." Their links to the earth and land still remain to this day. Under communism some industrialization was undertaken and today Slovak society includes both elements of folk traditions and modern society.

- The political transformations of 1989 brought new freedoms that have considerably widened the societal outlook of the populace, yet many of the cultural movements are still in their infancy and consequently a large part of the elderly population is still rural and dependent on agriculture.
- On January 1, 1993 Slovakia became an independent nation-state, recognized by the United Nations and its member states. Although some aspects of the society already had a unique national character, namely the language, many of the customs, laws and conventions were still deeply influenced by past rulers: Czechs, Hungarians and the Austrian Habsburgs.

The Family

- The family is the centre of the social structure. It, together with close friends, forms the basis of financial and emotional support.
- Obligation to the family is a person's number one priority.

A Spa Culture

- Slovakia has a large number of natural curative springs as well as extensive deposits of high-quality healing peat and mud.

-
- Throughout the ages people have taken advantage of these resources to cure a variety of diseases and ailments.
 - The country has more than 1,160 registered mineral and thermal springs. Even Marcus Aurelius' Roman legions tried out the thermal water, and several of the better-known spas are visited every year by people from many countries.

A Private People

- Slovaks value their privacy. It takes a while for them to open up to and trust new people.
- As a result they can seem overly formal and reserved. They are not exuberant and are not given to emotional displays.
- Once you develop a personal relationship Slovaks will start to open up.
- Although always polite, they seldom move to a first-name basis with people outside their extended family or very close friends.

ETIQUETTE AND MANNERS IN SLOVAKIA

Meeting and Greeting

- Greetings are warm but not effusive.
- The most common greeting will be a handshake, direct eye contact and the relevant greeting for the time of day: The formal greeting is "dobry den". "Dobre rano" is used early in the morning and "dobre popoludie" is only seldomly used - better is "dobry den". After 18.00 you use "dobry vecer" and finally "dobru noc" means good night. The informal greeting "ahoj" (hi) is often used among friends.
- People are generally introduced by the honorific titles "Pan" (Mr.) or "Pani" (Mrs.) and their surname.
- Close friends may refer to each other using the honorific title and first names.
- Always wait to be invited before using someone's first name.

Gift Giving Etiquette

- If you are invited to a Slovak's home, take wine, flowers or good quality chocolates for the hostess.
- If giving flowers, do so in odd numbers, except for 13, which is considered unlucky.

-
- Do not give chrysanthemums or calla lilies and do not wrap flowers in purple ribbon, as these are traditions reserved for funerals.
 - Gifts are usually opened when received.

Dining Etiquette

- Slovaks generally entertain in pubs or taverns (called "pivnice"), wine bars (called "vinárne"), restaurants and sometimes in their homes.
- The home is considered private and only family and close friends are generally invited to visit.

If you are invited to a Slovak's house:

- Remove your shoes at the door.
- Arrive on time - punctuality is appreciated.
- Dress well, i.e. like you are going to work, as this shows respect for your hosts.
- Try not to discuss business in social situations unless your host brings up the topic.
- Reciprocating any hospitality you receive goes towards strengthening a relationship.
- Table manners are rather formal in Slovakia.
- Table manners are Continental, i.e. hold the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating.
- Wait for the host to say "do brou chut" before you begin eating.
- The napkin remains folded next to the plate. It is not unfolded and put on your lap.
- To refuse the first offer of a second helping is polite; wait until the hostess insists before accepting more.
- The most common toast is "na zdravie" (to your health).
- It is imperative that you look the person who is being toasted in the eye.
- When at home, it is polite to eat all what you have on your plate, especially when the food is hand made.