

Mission Atlas Project

Europe

Snapshots of the Country Profile

Country Name: Czech Republic

Country Founded in: Czechoslovakia—October 28, 1918; Czech Republic—January 1, 1993

Population: 10,241,138 (July 2005 est.)

Government Type: (national, regional and local): Parliamentary Democracy

Geography/location in the world: Central Europe, Southeast of Germany. The Czech Republic is a landlocked nation with a landscape of wooded hills, valleys, and plateaus.

Number of people groups: 26

Picture of flag:



Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and % of population: Agnosticism/Atheism-59%

All religions and % for each:

Christian- 28.9%

- Roman Catholic-26.8%
- Protestant-2.1%
- Unspecified-8.8%
- Other-3.3%

Government interaction with religion: (is the government cooperative [i.e. official church-state], supportive, tolerant, non-tolerant, antagonistic, etc.):

The Czech government respects religious freedom. There was an anti religious policy during the community era, however freedom of religion is guaranteed by the Czech constitution.

Basic Facts

Demographics

The Czech Republic has a population of approximately 10.2 million. The majority of the population (95%) is ethnically and linguistically Czech. Moravians, Slovaks, Germans, Roma, Poles, Greeks, and a growing number of Vietnamese are minorities that contribute to the rest of the population.

Ukrainians comprise the largest group living in the Czech Republic without citizenship.

The age structure is as follows: 14.7% 0-14 years of age, 71.1% 15-64 years of age, and 14.2% 65 years of age and older. The median age is 38.97 years.

The population is on a decline, and the growth rate is reported at -.05%, with a birth rate of 9.07 births per every 1000 population. The death rate is 10.54 per every 1000 population. Families typically only have one or two children, and it is not uncommon to have grandparents living with their families.

More than 70% of the Czech population lives in the urban areas, and specifically in crowded high rise apartment type buildings. Life expectancy is 76.02 years, (Male-72.74years/female-79.49years)

Language

Czech is the official language of the Czech Republic. Czech is a Slavic language which uses the Roman alphabet; it is very similar to the Slovak language, and fairly similar to Polish.

The Czech language is divided into a formal written Czech, or standard Czech known as *spisovna cestina*, and an everyday conversational Czech, or common Czech, known as *hovorova*. Common Czech is spoken mainly in Bohemia, and the Moravians tend to always use standard Czech.

Many Czechs understand the Russian language, but rarely use it; English, French, and German are common in business transactions, but are not spoken by the general population. Russian and English both are taught in the schools as second languages.

Society/Culture

As opposed to life in the States, space is limited in the Czech Republic, which contributes to different spatial perceptions. For instance, in the Czech Republic, while one typically enjoys traveling, a one hour drive is considered a significant undertaking. The entire country can be traveled across in a few hours.

In accordance with most western cultures, Czechs value time and are expected to be punctual with appointments. It is inappropriate to be more than 5 minutes late, particularly with business meetings.

Czechs value and respect knowledge and ability.

Czechs tend to disapprove of untidy or shabby clothing. Their work attire, nevertheless, is usually informal. Czechs take more care with and value their appearance for outings such as theaters and restaurants. Eating in restaurants is not common and seen as a special treat.

Czechs are quite modest and unassuming. The proper response to a compliment is a statement of disagreement rather than thank you.

Czechs place high value on cleanliness. They have a proverb which translates, "Cleanliness is half your health." Nevertheless, most are not conscious to body odor, and tend not to wear deodorant. However, the cleanliness of the home is very important, and shoes must always be removed upon entrance into the home.

Czech families tend to be close. Most often grown children live near their parents, and sometimes even live with parents even after marriage due to housing shortages.

Czechs tend not to smile at people they do not know. Smiling in the street is an exception to the norm, but not to be taken as unfriendliness.

Czech cuisine is heavy. They tend to eat lots of meat and potatoes, usually in some type of sauce. Pork, cabbage, sauerkraut, and fruit are staples in Czech meals.

Czechs celebrate name days. Name day celebrations are more common than birthdays. They are celebrated at work, home, and among friends. Each day of the year represents one female and one male Czech name. Typical name day gifts are candy, flowers, or small trinkets.

National Holidays

January 1—New Year's Day

May 1—Labor Day

May 9—Anniversary of Liberation

July 5—Saint Cyril and Methodius

July 6—Jan Hus Memorial Day

October 28—Czechoslovak Independence Day

November 17—Velvet Revolution Commemoration

December 5—Saint Nicholas

December 25—Christmas

December 26—Saint Stephen's Day

Traditionally, on Christmas Eve, families will gather together and sit down to a large dinner of soup, salad, vegetables, fish and a special Christmas cake with currents and almonds for dessert. There is an old Czech myth that there should always be an even number of people sitting

together around the table, no one should sit with his back to the door, and that if anyone is to leave the table early—it is a sign that they will die within the next year. (Thus everything is prepared and on the table, rather than one course at a time!)

Worldmark Encyclopedia of Culture & Daily Life: Vol. 4—Europe. Worldmark Press, Detroit: 2001.

www.wikipedia.org

<http://www.bohemica.com>

<http://www.myczechrepublic.com>

Government

The Czech government consists of a parliamentary democracy. The country is divided into 13 regions, or *kraji*, plus 1 capital city (Prague). They are further subdivided in 6,000 self governing units, or municipalities. Their constitution was ratified December 16, 1992, and became effective January 1, 1993.

The Czech civil law is based on the Austro-Hungarian codes. Their legal code has been modified to bring it in line with Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe obligations and to obliterate Marxist-Lennist Legal theory.

There is universal suffrage (18 years of age).

The government is divided into an Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, and Judicial Branch.

- Executive
 - President: elected by Parliament for a five year term. Plays the role of chief of state.
 - Prime Minister: appointed by the President. Serves as the head of government.
 - Cabinet: appointed by the president and recommended by the prime minister.
- Legislative (bicameral Parliament)
 - Senate—81 seats, members are elected by popular vote for six year terms. One-third is elected every two years.
 - Chamber of Deputies—200 seats, members are elected by popular vote for four year terms.
- Judicial
 - Supreme Court
 - Constitutional Court

The Bohemian and Moravian Trade Union Confederation exists as a political pressure in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic joined the European Union in 2004.

Economy

The Czech Republic has proven to be one of the most stable as well as prosperous states in Central Eastern Europe. It is ranked at 12 in the ranking of the world's open markets. They have far surpassed that of other former Communist bloc states. Germany is their biggest trade

partner. The Czech government initiated a massive privatization program in 1990, allowing the private sector to generate between 70-80% of the GDP. They have a low inflation rate, marked at 2% in 2005. The GDP was estimated at \$184.9 billion in 2005, showing a growth rate of 4.6%. The purchasing power per capita is \$18,100. Unemployment rate is 9.1%.

Czech Republic Budget

- Revenues—\$48.16 million
- Expenditures—\$53.04 billion

GDP Composition Breakdown:

- Agriculture—3.4%
- Industry—39.3%
- Services—57.3%

Industries

- Machinery
- Metallurgy
- Food processing
- Chemical industry
- Steel industry
- Electrical engineering
- Electronic industry

www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook

Literacy

The Czech Republic has held to an almost 100% literacy rate since the early 20th century. Currently it is recorded as approximately 99%. Education, which is under state control, is free through the university level.

Land/Geography

The Czech Republic is a landlocked nation in Central Europe. Germany shares borders on the west, Poland on the north, Slovakia on the east, and Austria on the south. The Czech Republic is slightly smaller than the US State of South Carolina.

The climate is temperate with cool summers and cold, humid winters.

The country is divided into two regions: Bohemia on the west Moravia in the east. Bohemia consists of rolling plains, hills, and plateaus surrounded by low mountains. The Ore Mountains lie in the northwest, and the wooded hills of the Bohemian Forest lie in the southwest. Moving towards the southeast, the Moravian Hills separate Bohemia from the Moravian plains. Moravia primarily consists of hilly country.



History

Early Bohemia and Moravia

A Celtic *Boii* tribe was the first reported people living in the present day Czech lands. They arrived around 50 BC. Later in the early modern era they were displaced by the *Marcomanni* and *Quidi* German tribes, and later by the Slavs who arrived from the east during the Migration of the Peoples. The new inhabitants adopted the Roman version of the *Boii* name—*Boiohaemum*, which was later known as *Bohemia*.

Great Moravian Empire

After the regional peace was shattered by *Avar* invasions in the 6th century, a Frankish merchant named *Samo*, led in creating the first unified state of Slavic tribes in 625. By the 9th century, the empire developed into the Moravian Empire. The Moravian Empire expanded to incorporate Bohemia, Slovakia, Southern Poland, and Western Hungary. This area became known as the *Great Moravian Empire*.

This empire was strategic to both the East and the West. Missionaries from both churches were sent to reach the Moravian people. Two of the first monk/missionaries were Cyril and Methodius, sent out in 863. They converted large numbers to the Byzantine Church, but the Roman Catholic missionaries nevertheless gained the majority of converts.

Premysl Dynasty (9th to 1306)

By the early 10th Century the Hungarians invaded and destroyed the Moravian Empire. The Moravian and Bohemian tribes split and the Kingdom of Bohemia inherited the lands and people to the west. The political center of the Czech tribes moved to Bohemia. In 1085, *Prince Vratislave* became the first Bohemian prince to receive royal status from the Byzantine Empire.

A century later, the *Premyslid Dynasty*, who was allied with Germany, took control of Bohemia in order to stop the Hungarian invasions. This sparked a substantial German migration into both Bohemia and Moravia. In 1212, *Premysl Otakar I* received the Golden Bull of Sicily, proclaiming Bohemia its own kingdom.

Luxembourg Dynasty (1310-1437) and Hussite Revolution (1419-1436)

Within the next century, John of Luxembourg came to power and reigned as king of Bohemia. He reigned from 1310-1346, immediately the rise of a time of social and religious dissension. Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV of Luxembourg, succeeded John as King of Bohemia in 1346, ruling until 1378. As the Holy Roman Emperor, he was able to guide the Czech peoples into the “golden age.”

The Bohemian Kingdom reached its height of power during this reign. Charles converted Prague into an imperial city, where he founded Charles University in 1348. Charles University was one of the first learning institutions that operated independently of the monasteries of the Church. Charles was a beloved Czech king, nevertheless, the ties that he developed with the Roman Catholic Church eventually led to a split in the Kingdom.

After Charles’ death in 1378, his son Wenceslas IV ruled the Kingdom of Bohemia. During this time, Bohemia began experiencing economic and political crises which lasted through the early 15th century, including the Hussite wars.

Wenceslas IV was commonly referred to as “the Drunkard.” The Czech struggles, including the *Hussite* reform, were somewhat intertwined with the European crisis of the era, the Great Schism. *John Huss* (Jan Hus) was the master behind the Hussite movement and even after his martyrdom in 1415, the reform of the Church continued.

Wenceslas was succeeded by *Sigismund*, who was the Holy Roman Emperor. By 1420 the country was in open rebellion, and *Sigismund* conducted six crusades in Bohemia to attempt to end the Hussite revolution. He finally succeeded in 1434. The *Compact of Basle* was signed by both sides in 1436, becoming a short lived model of religious tolerance.

Jagellon Dynasty (1471-1526)

From 1471 to 1515, *Vladislav Jagellon*, son of *Poland King Cazimir*, was elected as King of Bohemia. Royal power diminished during this era. The era experience conflicts between royal towns and nobles as well as religious struggles between the Hussites and the Catholics.

Hapsburg Dynasty (1526-1918)

Hungary extended its control and territory into Bohemia in 1462. In 1471 Bohemia elected *Polish Vladislav II* to be king, who was also Hungary’s king. After Hungary fell in 1526 to the Ottoman Turks, *Ferdinand*, who was a part of the *House of Hapsburg* was elected as Bohemia’s

king. Bohemia and Slovakia became a part of Austria-Hungary under Hapsburg reign for nearly four centuries.

While the Czechs were Protestant, their new rulers were Catholic, and this created civil stress. Religious freedom and peace became fragile. In the 17th Century, the Protestant Czech's deposed their Catholic king, replacing him with *Frederick of Palatinate*—who was Protestant. The Bohemian Protestant forces were defeated at the *Battle of White Mountain* in 1620, and continued to be ruled by the Catholic Austrians for the next three centuries. The Czech lands were seized and many leaders were executed. Over 30,000 fled. The Thirty Year's War finally ended in 1648 through the *Peace of Wesphalia*, which sanctioned a large scale German immigration.

Baroque culture became a heavily ingrained aspect of the Czech lands in the era immediately following the War. Czech architecture reflected the Baroque style for several centuries. The 18th century was a period of Enlightenment reforms. *Maria-Theresa* with her son *Joseph II*—Holy Roman Emperor, reigned over the land, and Bohemia actually became a part of Austria, suppressing the Czech language and culture. Bohemia and Moravia became independent components of the Hapsburg Monarchy. The reforms aided the Germanization movement and the centralization of power, which later came to be hazardous to the Slavic national identities of the empire.

Modern Czech (1918—)

The Czech lands continued to be under the control of the Austro-Hungarian Empire through the 19th and early 20th century. In 1918, after the close of WWI and the fall of the Hapsburg monarchy, an independent nation named Czechoslovakia was formed. The Czechs and the Slovaks were on different levels of economic and technological development, but shared similar aspirations for independence from the Hapsburgs.

Czechoslovakia maintained a parliamentary democracy until 1938, being the only central European country to do so, nevertheless, they struggled with ethnic minorities, particularly the German population. The German's made up more than 22% of the population, living mainly in a region called the Sudetenland. In September 1938, Czechoslovakia was forced to cede the Sudetenland to Nazi Germany.

On March 14, 1939, Slovakia declared independence from the Czech nation, and yielded to Nazi control. Then, on March 15, Germany invaded Bohemia and Moravia, establishing a German protectorate. At the close of WWII, Soviet forces invaded all of Slovakia, Moravia, and most of Bohemia. U.S forces liberated most of western Bohemia.

The reunited Czechoslovakia fell under Soviet influence after Nazi Germany's surrender. More than 2.9 million ethnic Germans were forced out of the Czech lands into Germany and Austria. The Czechs and the Slovaks hoped for national freedom and to be able to serve as a bridge between the East and the West, and thus held national elections in the spring of 1946. Nevertheless, the Communist Party gained many government positions and in time silenced the anti-communist forces.

The Communist Party formally seized power in February 1948, with *Stalinist Klement Gottwald* in power. Following the Stalinist pattern of the other eastern European states, the government sentenced 11 of its former leaders to death. *Antonin Novotny* came into power next, and the Czechoslovak nation was under strict communist control for more than a decade. In the 1960s discontent and dissatisfaction arose in the party, and *Alexander Dubcek*, a Slovak, replaced Novotny as president in 1968. *Dubcek* led the nation towards political, social, and economic reform.

This time period is known as the “*Prague Spring*.” In April of 1968, a program was adopted setting guidelines for a more modern, humanistic socialist democracy guaranteeing freedom of religion, press, assembly, speech, and travel. *Dubcek* hoped that it would give socialism “a human face.” These reforms caused concern among many of the other Warsaw Pact governments, and on August 20, 1968, Soviet, Hungarian, Bulgarian, East German, and Polish troops invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia. This invasion put an end to “socialism with a human face.” *Dubcek* and many of his party allies were removed from their positions. *Dubcek* was replaced by *Gustav Husak*, another Slovak, in April of 1969. Anti-Soviet demonstrations began in August 1969, ushering in an era of tyranny through the 1980s, known as “normalization.”

Czechoslovakia regained its freedom in 1989, at the collapse of the Soviet powers. The “*Velvet Revolution*,” which was a bloodless revolution which led to the overthrow of the Czechoslovak communist regime, began November 17, 1989, in Prague. A coalition government was created in December 1989, and free elections took place in June 1990. More than 95% of the population voted. A law passed December 27, 1992, peacefully separating the two nations, and on January 1, 1998, the “velvet divorce” took place, independently establishing the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia.

U.S. Library of Congress
World Mark Encyclopedia of the Nations, 10th ed.
Wikipedia

Christian History

The Czech lands had an early Christian presence beginning with German missionaries who came with Roman Catholicism around the 7th century AD. Located in the heart of Europe, both the East and the West had claims to the lands and contributed to the development of the Christian community. As tensions between the East and the West grew, many of the southern Slavic peoples began adhering to the Byzantine (Eastern) church.

The 9th century brought early Christian missionaries Cyril and Methodius, to the Slavic lands, particularly to Moravia. They taught the people in the vernacular languages, contributing greatly to the development of the alphabets and written Slavic languages, rather than forcing Latin upon them. This contributed to many choosing to align with the Byzantine church, where they were allowed to use their own languages in corporate study and worship.

But, in the 10th century, under *King Wenceslas*, Bohemia officially became a Catholic kingdom. Soon, Catholic Bohemia began to flourish, particularly in the 14th century, while *Charles IV*, King of Bohemia, also reigned as Holy Roman Emperor. He established Prague as an archdiocese in 1344. Christianity flourished as the congregations grew and monasteries were built. In fact, Catholicism was thriving to the point that it was beginning to attract condemnation.

John Huss (Jan Hus) a Bohemian preacher emerged as an early pre-Reformation protestant figure. He primarily combated and denounced various abuses of the Church, such as the authority of the pope and the worldliness of the clergy. Huss was excommunicated in 1412 for insubordination. In 1414 he was summoned to the *Council of Constance*, where he was found guilty of heresy. He was burned at the stake July 6, 1415. His followers continued with the Hussite reform movement, and became known as the Czech Brethren and later as Moravians. A later reform movement, Lutheranism, continued and developed many of the ideas of Huss. In 1573, the reform movements united and the Czech Reformation reached its pinnacle. Notably, the rulers at the time were Hussite and Calvinist.

Catholicism again came to the forefront and the Protestant movement was subdued in 1621, as the Austrian Catholic Hapsburgs came to power. During this time, Protestants, like the Moravians, suffered a large-scale persecution and were forced into exile.

In 1781, Joseph II issued an *Edict of Toleration* allowing the Protestants to start congregations. Nevertheless, the Protestants were required to claim adherence to the Lutheran or Calvinist denominations, as the Moravian Brethren faith was forbidden. In 1848, another edict was given, giving Protestants equal rights with the Catholics.

The World Wars each greatly contributed to the ecclesial community. After WWI, Slovakia was removed from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, requiring new ecclesiastical alignments, where all but 2 of the Lutheran Churches (largest recognized Protestant tradition) were confined to Slovakia. After WWII, the rise of Communism radically affected the Church community and Christian life. With a strict atheistic government in play, all of the religious orders and congregations were completely dissolved in 1950.

But, in 1968, during the *Prague Spring*, the orders were somewhat able to reorganize themselves, and the Czech committee of religious congregations was organized. After the fall of *Dubcek* leadership and the end of the *Prague Spring*, religious activities were again repressed and closely monitored. In 1969 the Greek Catholic parishes had the choice to either align with the Orthodox, or the Catholic Church. Out of 246, 200 voted to join the Roman Catholics. Only 2 voted to be a part of the Orthodox Church, while 40 did not report a decision. By 1989, after the fall of Communism, the church gained freedom from the government and was somewhat restructured. The Vatican has diplomatic relations with the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic guarantees religious freedom today. In fact, interestingly article 32 of their 1948 and 1960 constitutions reads, "Freedom of religion is guaranteed. One may profess any religion or no religion. Religious practices may be observed inasmuch as they do not transgress

the law. Religious faith or convictions cannot be used as a pretext for refusing to carry our individual civil responsibilities fixed by law.”

The Czech Republic’s International Religious Freedom Report in 2005, given by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, stated, “The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respects this right in practice. The Government at all levels strives to protect this right in full, and does not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors.” It further states that the Department of Churches at the Ministry of Culture is responsible for all religious affairs. Any group officially registered is eligible to receive financial support from the State. In the 2005 report, there were 26 state recognized religious organizations.

Interestingly, it has been found that many discrepancies in census reflections over the past 2 decades could be due to the new found religious freedom of the Czechs after the Velvet Revolution. Sociologist Ivan Gabal wrote, “after four decades of communism, there was an eagerness to proclaim a religious identity,” (Behind the Numbers, *The Prague Post*). After the fall of communism, Czechs were asked to choose a religious identity on a census form, and many claimed association, whether or not they had ever had any connection with the religious group. The more recent, and drastically lower numbers, are more apt to be a true reflection of the Czech people.

- *The World Christian Encyclopedia*, Second Edition, Volume 1.
- <http://www.unityofthebrethren.org/history.htm>
- Mainville, Michael. “Behind the Numbers.” *The Prague Post*, 18 July 2001
<http://www.praguepost.com/P02/pp.php/?id=33784&a=3>
- US Department of State, “Czech Republic International Religious Freedom Report 2005.”
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51548.htm>

Religions

Non-Christian

Atheists

Atheism is essentially an absence of belief in the existence of deities. This definition can include both those who claim there is no god, as well as those who make no claim as to if god even exists (sometimes referred to as agnostic).

Atheism and agnosticism play a weighty role in Czech life. Atheism is the official ideology of the reigning governmental powers. (*World Christian Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, 2001, p. 233)

The Czech Statistical Office provided census information in 2001 as to the overall population. It reported that 59% had no religion, 32.2% were religious, and 8.8% did not answer, suggesting the Czech Republic to be *the most atheistic country in the world*.

Judaism

Judaism is a monotheistic religion with a 4,000 year history. Jews devote themselves to the study and observance of spiritual and ethical principles provided through and embodied in the Hebrew Scriptures and Talmud. They are still awaiting the promised Messiah.

The Jewish population in the Czech lands decreased by 85% due to the Nazi massacres of the 1930s and 1940s. Jews now make up less than .1% of the Czech population. (*WCE*, Vol. 1, 232-33).

There are an estimated 5,000 Jews in the Czech Republic's population of 10.5 million, mostly residing in Prague.

Jewish organizations include the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic; the Society for Jewish Culture, the Franz Kafka Society, and the Union of Jewish Youth.

Islam

Islam is a dominant world religion, with more than 840 million followers. Islam's foundation is in the *Qu'ran*, which is the Islamic holy book written by Muhammad, Allah's (God) prophet, in the 7th century. Islam holds that there is only one God, who they believe is the same God of the Christians and Jews.

The Center of Muslim Communities was officially registered in the Czech Republic in 2004. Local Muslim leaders report an estimate between 20,000-30,000 Muslims living within the country.

There are mosques in Prague and Brno.

<http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw99-2000/czech.htm>
<http://www.ce-review.org/99/8/roth8.html>
www.adherents.com

Jehovah's Witness

The Jehovah's Witnesses first began work in Czech lands in 1912.

In 1998 they reported 17,061 Czech adherents with 241 units. This was .17% of the current population. The Memorial attendance reports 30,698 adherents. This is .02% less than the reported number 1997.

Unitarian Universalist

Before WWII, Prague housed the largest Unitarian congregation in the world. Unitarian Minister and Czech native, *Norbert Capek* played a huge role in shaping the Unitarian Universalists in the Czech Republic.

In 1998, statistics reported only 600 adherents to Unitarian Universalism in the Czech Republic.

Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints (Mormon)

The Mormons claimed 1500 adherents from the Czech Republic in 1997, with 20 congregational units.

Erslev, Kate Tweedie. "Unitarian Universalist Identity" Unitarian Universalist Association Young Adult and Campus Ministry Covenant Group Series. Vol. 1. Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations: Boston, 2003. www.uure.com; www.adherents.com

Christian Groups

Hussite Church

The Czechoslovak Hussite Church became an official church January 8, 1920. It was created by reformed Roman Catholic priests, as they attempted to reform the Church, particularly by using Czech instead of Latin in services. The underlying mission of the early reformers had been to "rehabilitate the gospels and the open attempts of plain Christians at creating a Church that is better and more devout to Christ." (The Czechoslovak Hussite Church, www.czech.cz) The church is named for the martyred Czech reformer, Jan Hus. The structure of the church contains elements from the Roman Catholic mass.

The Hussite's claimed 180,000 adherents in 1996. In 2003 the Hussite Church reported 340 congregations with 118, 881 members and 170,000 adherents.

www.adherents.com; *Operation World*

Protestant/Evangelicals/Pentecostals

The International Religious Freedom Report of 2005 claimed the number of practicing Protestants is only approximately 1% of the Czech population.

Baptist

Baptist Union of Czech Republic/Baptist World Alliance/Unity of Baptist Brethren

The Baptists reported 2,379 adherents in 1998, with 26 congregational units. In 2003, the Baptists had 2500 members in 25 congregations. This represented .02% of the population.

Baptist work in Czech lands began in the 1850s. The First Czech Baptist congregation (Congregation of Christians Baptized in Faith) was established in Bohemia on March 15,

1884. By 191, 15 congregations had been established, calling themselves The Unity of Brethren Baptists.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptist_Union_in_the_Czech_Republic

<http://www.en.bjb.cz/>

www.adherents.com *Operation World*

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

Bohemian Evangelical Brethren Church---came about in 1918, when the group joined the Calvin and Lutheran Evangelical Churches in Bohemia and Moravia.

The church administration follows that of the Presbyterian Synods.

In 1996, the church claimed 200,000 adherents. Reports in 2003 claimed 267 congregations with some 13,700 members.

www.czech.cz

<http://web.archive.org/web/20050208153834/http://www.czech.cz/index.php?section=1&menu=154>)

http://www.volny.cz/kocna/sbor/en_sbor1.htm *Operation World*

www.adherents.com

The Seventh Day Adventists

The Seventh Day Adventist Church reported 178 congregations with 17,500 members in 2003

The Congregational Church

The Congregational Church claimed over 4500 members in 167 congregations in 2003.

The Moravian Church of Brethren

The Moravian Church of Brethren in 2003 claimed 25 congregations with over 2500 members

The Church of the Brethren

The Church of the Brethren had 56 congregations with over 2000 members in 2003.

Silesian Evangelical Church

This Luthern Church reported 34 congregations with 27000 members in 2003

The Christian Fellowship of Prague

The independent Christian Fellowship of Prague has 64 congregations and over 2400 members

Slovak Evangelical Church

The Slovak Evangelical Church has 3 congregations and over 4300 members

The Pentecostal Church

The Pentecostal Church reports over 31 congregations with more than 2000 members

The Evangelical Free Church

The Evangelical Free Church has 8 congregations with over 1700 members

Some 29 other denominations serve in the Czech Republic with total of 139 congregations and over 12000 members

Catholic/Orthodox Churches

Catholic

The Czech Catholics reported in November of 2005, that approximately 34% of the Czech population is Catholic, with 3,519,000 adherents. They reported 3,139 parishes. Nevertheless, the government census in reported only 26.8% claimed to be Catholic adherents.

While the Catholic Church outnumbers all other denominational groups, by nearly 7 to 1, *they are in serious decline.*

Only an estimated 5% of the Czech population weekly attends Catholic services.

US Department of State, "Czech Republic International Religious Freedom Report 2005.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51548.htm>

<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/sc1.html>

www.adherents.com. *Operation World*

Eastern Orthodox

The Eastern Orthodox Church is closely connected with the Slavic missionaries—Cyril and Methodius. Many Catholic adherents converted in the 20th century to Eastern Orthodox in an effort to return to/maintain Slavic roots.

In 1997, the Eastern Orthodox Church in the Czech Republic claimed 312,000 adherents.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czech_and_Slovak_Orthodox_Church

<http://web.archive.org/web/20050208153834/http://www.czech.cz/index.php?section=1&menu=154>

www.adherents.com

Operation World

People Groups

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American (10,000)

English is the primary language of the American people living in the Czech Republic. They are a North American people of the Anglo American people cluster. They are primarily Christian.

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Arab (300)

Arabs represent the largest, most diverse, and politically influential Muslim ethnic group in the world. Today, around 40% have migrated into the cities from the desert lands, and have created somewhat of a Diaspora “middle class” Arab. While the Diaspora has broken down family and tribal ties, it has allowed for greater educational and employment opportunities. Some alternate people names include: *Anglolan Arab, Baggara, Bedouin Arab, Bosnian Muslims, Coast, Hemat, Iraqi Arab, Lebanese Arab, Levantine Arab, Nawar, Palestinian Arab, Saudi Arab, Syrian Arab,* and *Syro-Lebanese Arab*. They primarily speak Standard Arabic and adhere to Islam. About 5% are Christian adherents.

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Bavarian (9,200)

The Bavarian people, also known as Austrian, or Austro-Bavarian, are a Germanic Eurasian People. They speak Bavarian and primarily adhere to Christianity. They speak the Austro-Bavarian language.

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British (800)

The British people living in the Czech Republic are English speakers. They are 1 % Christian Evangelicals. Alternate names for this people group are Anglo-Pakistani, Euronesian, Scottish, White, and Anglophones. They are a Eurasian People of the Anglo Celt people cluster.

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Chinese (10,000)

The Chinese living in the Czech Republic are an East Asian people and primarily speak Mandarin. China has been involved in a massive migration trend, trafficking large numbers throughout Europe. Nothing is reported as to their religious or evangelical status.

000

Croat (3,000)

The Croats are a Eurasian people of a Southern Slavic people cluster who speak Croatian and are considered 90% Christian, specifically Roman Catholic. Their alternate people names include Bosnian, Serbian, and Muslimani.

768

Czech—Bohemian (9,524,000)

The Bohemian Czechs are a Western Slavic Eurasian People. They speak Czech and primarily adhere to Christianity. They are 61.8% Christian, and .25% Evangelical. They are inhabitants of the former kingdom of Bohemia, which is in the present day Czech Republic.

769

Deaf—Czech (50,000)

The Deaf in the Czech Republic primarily use Czech Sign Language and are considered as adherents to Christianity. They are less than 2% Evangelical.

000

French (1,000)

The French, alternately referred to as Franco-Mauritian Mulatto, are a Eurasian people and natively speak the French language. They are 76% Christian.

771

German (50,000)

The German people in the Czech Republic are a Eurasian people who speak the German language. Alternate names for this group include Saxon, Volga German, High German, and Transylvanian. They are 81% Protestant Christian adherents.

000

Gypsy—Slovak (62,000)

The Slovak Gypsies are a South Asian People. They are 75% Christian adherents.

000

Gypsy—Traveler (7,000)

The Traveler Gypsies living in the Czech Republic, are a South Asian people, who primarily speak the *Shelta* language. Alternate people names include *Mos Negrito*, *Tinker*, *Tonga*, *Shengwe*, *Toka*, and *Western Nyasa*. They are 60% Christian. They need the Bible translated into their language.

000

Hungarian (19,000)

The Hungarians are a Eurasian people. Alternate names include *Magyar*, *Szekely*, and *Siculi*. They speak the Hungarian language and are 78% Christian adherents.

000

Italian (1,600)

The Italians are a Eurasian people who speak the Italian language. They are said to be 83% Christian adherents, specifically Roman Catholic.

000

Jew—Czech (2,000)

The Jews of Europe arrived on the continent at least 2,000 years ago during the early days of the Roman Empire. Since that time, they have been a significant influence in the history and culture of Europe. Much of what is considered "Jewish" today finds its roots among the European Jews.

The Czech Jews speak Czech and primarily adhere to Judaism. About .06% are Christian adherents.

773

Polish (58,000)

The Polish, also known as Poles or *Silesians*, are a Eurasian people of the Western Slavic people cluster. They are 90% Roman Catholic Christians.

000

Portuguese (300)

The Portuguese are a Eurasian people of the European Portuguese cluster. Alternate names include *Branco*, *Brazilian*, and *Portuguese Jew*. They speak Portuguese and are 90% Christian adherents.

766

Romani—Carpathian (220,000)

The *Carpathian Romani people* are a South Asian people, of the Gypsy people cluster. Alternate names include *Galicja*, *Karpachi Roma*, *Sarvika*, and *Ungrike*. They speak Carpathian Romani and Western Slovakian Romani. 60% are Christian adherents. They are less than 2% Evangelical, but there has been widespread church planting through multiple agencies taking place in the past couple of years. They only have portions of the Bible in their mother language.

000

Romani—*Sinte*, *Manush* (5,100)

The Romani are a Gypsy, South Asian people. Alternate names for them include: *Croatian Gypsy*, *Kazakhstani Gypsy*, *Manuche*, *Manush*, *Rom*, *Rommane Gypsy*, *Sasitka*, and *South German Romany*. They speak *Sinte Romani* and are 70% Christian adherents. They still need portions of the Bible translated into their language.

000

Romani—*Vlax* (500)

Gypsies, often called *Romani* or *Domari*, are made up of two separate groups: the *Ghorbati* and the *Nawari*, originating from India. They speak the *Vlax Romani*. Alternate people names include *Arhagar*, *Baltic Gypsy*, *Cingane*, *Gitano*, *Gypsy*, *Kalderash*, *Lovar*, *Lowara*, *Norwegian Gypsy*, *Cale*, and *Colombian Gypsy*. The Romani are 70% Christian adherents. They do not have the complete Bible translated into their language.

000

Russian (33,000)

The Russians, also known as *Eluosi*, *Olossu*, and *Russ*, are a Eurasian people, of an Eastern Slavic people group. They speak Russian and are 35% Christian adherents.

000

Ruthene (4,100)

The *Ruthene* people are a Eurasian originated Gypsy people. Alternate names include *Balkan Gypsies*, *Hungarian Gypsies*, *Jerides*, *Rusin*, and *Ruthenian*. They are Eastern Slavic, and primarily speak Rusyn. Their primary religion is Christianity,

775

Slovak (300,000)

The Slovak people, with alternate names being *Rusyn*, *Ruthene*, and *Ruthenian*, are a Eurasian people, of the Western Slavic people cluster. They speak Slovak and are 78% Christian adherents.

000

Spaniard (400)

The Spaniards are a Spanish Eurasian people. Alternate people names include *Argentinian white*, *Camba*, *Chilean*, *Colombian*, *Cuban*, *Dominican*, *Dominican Mulatto*, *Hispanics*, *Latin American*, *Latin American White*, *Latinos*, *Mestico*, *Mexican*, *Peruvian*, and *Puerto Rican White*. They speak Spanish and are 90% Roman Catholic Christian adherents.

776

Ukrainian (225,000)

The Ukrainians, also known as “Russian Speaking”, are an Eastern Slavic Eurasian people. They are actually the second largest ethnic group from the former Soviet Union. Their historic ties to Poland and Cossack tradition contribute to their colorful folk heritage. They primarily speak Ukrainian and are 65% adherents to the Orthodox division of Christianity.

777

Vietnamese (35,000)

A large population of Vietnamese, attracted by work and educational opportunities, migrated to what was known as Czechoslovakia in the 1970s. They primarily adhere to Buddhism

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Missiological Implications

Due to years of oppression and the scars of communism, Czechs are hesitant to trust anyone or anything other than themselves. They have a long Christian history, and have even been a center for reform, yet Christianity has apparently seldom been more than a religion. Czechs need to see true examples of Christianity and they need to hear and see the truth in their daily lives. They need to have an encounter with the living Christ and experience the hope and joy he offers, as opposed to the bleakness that has consumed so much of central Eastern Europe.

1. Evangelical Christians should accept the challenge of the peoples in the Czech people. The rampant non-religious (atheism) stance will not continue to satisfy. Christians should be prepared to offer God’s salvation and teach the truth of Grace.
2. Evangelical Christians should pray that the present religious freedom will continue and increase.

3. Evangelical Christians should seek to work with Christians in the Czech Republic to provide fuller leadership training for the local believers. As with most nations, the presence of a committed national leadership is a priority.
4. Evangelical Christians should help the Christians in the Czech Republic to begin to share the Good News of Jesus with Roman Catholic. Since Roman Catholics outnumber all other groups 7-1), these people represent a major target group.
5. Evangelical Christians should seek to provide Christian literature and radio, television programming for the people in the Czech Republic. Continuing use of the Jesus Film will greatly contribute to evangelism and church starting.

Links –

<http://www.pragueteam.org/homepage.htm>

www.czech.cz.

http://www.volny.cz/kocna/sbor/en_sbor1.htm

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51548.htm>

<http://www.bohemica.com>

<http://www.myczechrepublic.com>